A work in progress....

Good food for thought - Part 2

What follows here are much of the new base, Criminally Insane Jew censored classic studies in needed faith and reason, historically taught until now for some two thousand years or so. In large part being the fundamentals now denied and censored by the now global criminally ruling New Jew Order such as; the existence of God, of the human soul, of the after life, of the Metaphysic of Morals, the reality of Free Will as the only cause of all sin and or evils, of Right Reason, etc., now all lied about only for the evil sake of earthly Jew witchcraft wherein they have for the first time been allowed to replace everybody's education with godless base insane Jew lies. Jew lies and nonsense taught to poison the minds of everybody's Gentile children wherein, hypothetical monsters are foolishly taught to hypothetically substitute for the only possible necessary Divine First Cause; not to mention the full denial of Christ repeated over and over by the base Jews who do not even understand that it is the only historical fulfillment of the Old Testament Messianic Law, even when being their own Law, just as it all was. None the less the First Divine Cause of creation is theologically sound as it is the only Sufficient Cause, as traditionally taught. They however are also now religiously taught the baseless fictions of the Darwinian and Big Bang theories which, again are baseless as to any actual fact and have been fully refuted over and over by a unknown number of logicians and alike from the beginning. This however, is fully censored now in violation of all established Law and, all needed Logic, all logic now unlawfully outlawed itself. As I have taught before long ago; only to then be plagiarized by John Paul II and others; all such fictions as just mentioned would still theologically require a Sufficient Divine First Cause as it is impossible to get anything at all from nothing, even if true. As for all the evils of the day now complained about by all, even the instigating Jews; the traditionally taught universal truths of Natural and Moral Law is going to be made problematic when ever so fully censored as they are now by the godless Jews and Jew taught Pagans. Thus, the following selections on all such basics traditionally taught until today will at least serve as some good food for thought.

Some basic key life & death truths then starting from a few basic rudiments,

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Descartes said, "I think therefore I am", a irrefutable truth, so very much hated by all base moderns wishing to deny all factual truth yet, it is none the less factual for all who think or say it in any place or
Kant rightly taught that both, the human mind’s natural reason together with man’s human senses, commonly understood to rightly be, seeing, hearing, smell, taste & touch, are all what allow a person to naturally understand, "things in and of themselves" such as to the factual, who, what, where, when, how & why.

Now as I have said before, evil is the product of the necessity of the Divine Gift of Free Will in order for creation to be the reality of creation & not just a slave to it like a rock or insect. It is only the Free Will of man as man that brings any true evils into the world, through such an abuse of the Free Will & thus, must be managed by man in various ways, in individual development and maturity, Law & civilization, so on and so forth.

The best minds of the, 17th, 18th and, 19th, centuries rightly taught that, man is responsible for his willful acts in this life, because in as much he or she is a Free Will Creature acting in a readily knowable world governed by both readily perceivable physical and or metaphysical Laws, all readily known to have cause & effect. All that as the reality of Law, Natural or Moral Law, not the old Pagan lie of karma as the law of karma. That old Pagan lie of karma if true, would instead result in a fully just & holy universe contrary to the given irrefutable reality of man’s, very imperfect if not, often truly evil universe.

That which is exists, that which exists is real & that which is real is true. Such is the given nature of truth, metaphysically or otherwise. Likewise as a natural related truth, the old Pagan lie of reincarnation falsely dictating your very human soul as somehow being a totally different & separate reincarnated reality, other than human, other than you, is contrary to the reality of all creation, the only fact based given reality of creation as creation, of you as you, of man as man. As I have said so many times before, there is nothing but reality, including the reality of Law.

Now, just as a negative can come from a negative or from a positive yet, no positive can ever come from any negative, it is likewise impossible to get something from nothing. In the end this is why, God Almighty as a required necessary sufficient Divine First Cause, likewise also requiring God alone to be God & thus likewise be the only possible Divinity, is thus the only given possible reality.

Now, as to the traditional necessity of the fundamental that is Logic, which Jews & Pagans have newly abolished so fully only for the sake of lies, I have often sufficiently said that,

The mindless Modernists perverting & mutilation, to the point of its loss, in that classic fundamental of basic logic necessary for productive human life is not Logic. For, logic is not mathematics and math is not logic. To reduce logic to such a notion is to discard the fundamental rules of logic for one thing &, to effectively negate the discipline all together regardless.

Logic is in truth, the classic systematic study of truth that is, the philosophical category of Logic. Logic by its very nature is one of the very most fundamental in the examination of any question in which, in order to be accurate any use of Logic must always be premised upon the subject in question & purely factual never including any potential error such as with any assumptions or bias in order to be accurate in reality. A fairly common classical example taken from a rather common 20th century introduction of philosophy is that “All men are mortal, and Caesar is a man; and we may see clearly that, given the truth
of these, we must admit that Caesar is mortal.” Then as to what are classically known as “the Rules of Logic” such as to the simple yet fundamental fact that although Logic is necessary & fundamental it is only what it is like all things are & therefore, is most certainly not what is classically known as, “Flawed Logic” which then being illogical is instead therefore in fact the absence of Logic & not Logic. Beyond & in relation to that, as stated here, the Rules of Logic necessarily require that in order to be accurate any Logic must always be premised upon the subject in question & purely factual never including any potential error such as with any assumptions or bias despite any final conclusion reached or in any non conclusion reached regardless. Then in relation, as most often traditionally understood & taught, within the course of a logical enquiry, if anything that remains after careful & accurate elimination of all other possibilities, commonly referred to as “the process of elimination”, that which remains is naturally therefore held to be most likely the truth. Fundamentals always naturally matter most.

Then, just as I have also said before while quoting others,

"Christianity spread through the Empire by the propaganda of the Apostles, and more especially St. Paul, from about the year 40. Its success was extremely rapid, especially among the populace, and little by little it won over the upper classes. As a general philosophy, primitive Christianity did not absolutely bring more than the Hebrew dogmas: the unity of God, a providential Deity, that is, one directly interfering in human affairs; immortality of the soul with rewards and penalties beyond the grave (a recent theory among the Jews, yet one anterior to Christianity). As a moral system, Christianity brought something so novel and so beautiful that it is not very probable that humanity will ever surpass it, which may be imperfectly and incompletely summed up thus: love of God; He must not only be feared as He was by the pagans and the ancient Jews; He must be loved passionately as a son loves his father, and all things must be done for this love and in consideration of this love; all men are brethren as sons of God, and they should love one another as brothers; love your neighbour as yourself, love him who does not love you; love your enemies; be not greedy for the goods of this world, nor ambitious, nor proud; for God loves the lowly, the humble, the suffering, and the miserable, and He will exalt the lowly and put down the mighty from their seats." As stated by Thomas Aquinas, "There are human virtues, well known to the ancient philosophers, temperance, courage, wisdom, justice, which lead to happiness on earth; there are divine virtues, inspired in man by God, which are faith, hope, and charity, and they lead to eternal happiness. We practice the virtues, when we are well-disposed, because we are free; but our liberty and our will do not suffice; it is necessary for God to help us, and that is "grace."

"The realists (of whom St. Anselm was one), said: "The ideas (idea of virtue, idea of sin, idea of greatness, idea of littleness) are realities; they exist, in a spiritual manner of course, but they really exist; they are: there is a virtue, a sin, a greatness, a littleness, a reason, etc. ....We have in us the instinct of happiness and we seek happiness; but we have also in us an instinct of goodwill which tends to make us seek the general happiness, and reason tells us that there is conciliation or rather concordance between these two instincts, because it is only in the general happiness that we find our particular happiness." "Let us believe, they said, in the reality of the external world; let us believe that there are causes and effects; let us believe there is an ego, a human person whom we directly apprehend, and who is a cause; let us believe that we are free and that we are responsible because we are free, etc." "But for man to be able to obey his law he must be free, must be able to do what he wishes. That is certain. Then it must be believed that we are free, for were we not, we could not obey our law; and the moral law would be absurd. The moral law is the sign that we are free. We are free because we must be so in order to do the good which our law commands us to do." "Let us examine further. I do what is right in order to obey the law; but, when I have done it, I have the idea that it
would be unjust that I should be punished for it, or that I should not be rewarded for it, that it would be unjust were there not concordance between right and happiness. As it happens, virtue is seldom rewarded in this world and often is even punished; it draws misfortune or evil on him who practises it. Would not that be the sign that there are two worlds of which we see only one? Would not that be the sign that virtue unrewarded here will be rewarded elsewhere in order that there should not be injustice? It is highly probable that this is so." "But for that it is necessary that the soul be immortal. It is so, since it is necessary that it should be. The moral law is accomplished and consummated in rewards or penalties beyond the grave, which pre-suppose the immortality of the soul. ...demonstrates that were there no immortality of the soul there would be no morality."

"GOD.—And, finally, if justice is one day to be done, this supposes a Judge. It is neither ourselves who in another life will do justice to ourselves nor yet some force of circumstances which will do it to us. It is necessary to have an intelligence conceiving justice and a will to realise it. God is this intelligence and this will." "The existence of God has been deduced from the idea of causality; for all that is, a cause is necessary, this cause is God. The existence of God has been deduced from the idea of design well carried out. The composition, the ordering of this world is admired; this world is well made; it is like a clock. The clock supposes a clock-maker; the fine composition of the world supposes an intelligence which conceived a work to be made and which made it." "For the moral law to be accomplished, for it not to be merely a tyrant over man, for it to be realised in all its fullness, weighing on man here but rewarding him infinitely elsewhere, which means there is justice in all that, it is necessary that somewhere there should be an absolute realizer of justice. God must exist for the world to be moral." "Why is it necessary for the world to be moral? Because an immoral world with even a single moral being in it would be a very strange thing." Far more to the point it should be pointed out here that the very most obvious answer regarding this question is the given reality that life in this world must be moral in relation to man in order for there to exist the necessary true good in any way at all within human life. Then furthermore, in addition to being explained here some what, as to the above mention human persecution of virtue in this earthly life it is all very much dependent upon environment as has now repeatedly been made fully evident over & over again such as those relevant differences in as much found between a godless environment in contrast overall to the highly healthy, productive & moral, historical Christian ones or, those of many Muslim ones as well. For, such has truly been shown to be a fundamental factor. For, that to in fact is Law.

Then, as I have often said, regarding this above issue of the Human Soul, it is in fact, existing in & of itself like with all things irrefutably metaphysical or otherwise, being also human, existence, not of worldly origin, in fact metaphysical &, is life itself. As the human soul, as I had said at times, is the driving spark of life, independent as its own existence, from the mind, will &, emotions, being known in fact, fully capable of existing independent from them all, at least in irrefutable part, again as to the example of what is known as a metaphorical medical vegetable in cases were individuals are kept alive through modern medical life support despite the failure of the body and the absence of their cognitive conscious mind &, despite all their interdependent relations to one another as to a whole & healthy person, is non the less in fact a necessity of human life, being above all else, the Divine gift of human life itself. Divinely created as that one & only, reasonable & logical possibility, that said soul & gift of life, is as C.S. Lewis is said to have basically said, not so much as you are a body with a soul but instead, "you are a soul with a body", and I would add further, a unique mind. Lewis, I believe as I understand, basically being a well known older contemporary English Pagan Mason, somewhat popular among some masonic Christians, although there be a natural conflict in all that, was converted to Christianity & obviously taught well by what was still in those days very much a academically healthy &
knowledgeable Christian Church, now fully martyred & lost by the masonic Zionists. Then as I have said, my fathers desire, with his life long faith & degrees in philosophy & law of a more fully legitimate time, in his writing to, in "clear & simple" language to "explain" the human soul, not establish it, prove it or, find it, but instead explain the obvious, traditionally understood, naturally made self evident to non insane persons, as that metaphysical spiritual reality, that in fact is equally unique to each human & known as the human soul there is all that. For, throughout most historical ages with enough education in truth man has always known both rationally & instinctively that man is in fact a living soul understanding the reality that man is so much more in fact than only the fleeting flesh of man. Further then, as many contemporaries of the Paganism of the Old World eastern thought, have often asked & then failed to answer it, as to that question of “what is life”, within the Christian tradition that answer is that it is, “a divine gift” for the purpose of its fulfillment, that must therefore be in accordance with the Divine Will that created it. How so? Creation & the creation of life for the sake of creation as creation (reality).

In a like manner, relating to this new said modern base mindless & delusional denial of the soul of man, the one contributing modern factor that has been, the baseless ever evolving ignorant popularity, of modern theoretical fictional frauds in the so called, scientific theories that have been called the, Big Bang & that of Human Evolution, should at least be mentioned here. Both being void of all fact based foundations. Being at first, nothing but a modern Atheistic proposal of wishful thinking within blind theory having no basis in the factual, yet was increasingly blindly presented as factual throughout the 1900s & beyond, only for the mindless sake of that said wishful thinking none the less. Throughout the historical thinking Christian world it was always fully rejected for the fictional nonsense it is among the vast majority of minds until, it was mindlessly promoted over so very many decades none the less. The so called, Big Bang, theoretically claiming the impossible concept that all creation somehow came out of nothing, a known absolute impossibility. The baseless Darwinian biological evolution of man within a supposed on going creation of the same, falsely stating that man biologically came from, marine life, to the first less lower mammals, to that of Ape life, then to some mysteriously fictional given so called "missing link." & then finally, to biological man, all void of both, any real factual evidence & right reason. Man, as man never evolves biologically in such ways, they have obviously instead, only devolved in the only known ways of necessary human evolution being, that of emotionally &, in a logical right reason, all necessary for the needed God fearing maturity of mankind. However, fiction is fiction, having no real basis in fact &, reality is reality, despite any such sinful mindless petty will. Such is not made sinful in its ignorance but, instead in its petty will. For, that is the greatest Jew taught, Jew evil, of the modern day &, in fact it is also, the greatest of all Deadly Sins. Again, not in the resulting ignorant delusion but, instead in the knowingly prideful & wilful opposition, to any related & understood factual truths. Finally, as I have so often had to point out, it is still a irrefutable given fact that, even if these said modern frauds were true, a given necessary Divine First Cause would still be necessary, in even those proposed given origins.

Drawing here then from Descartes as just one of many excellent classical modern sources there is the following quote: "Thus sure of himself, of God, and of the world, Descartes studies the world and himself. In the world he sees souls and matter; matter is substance in extensions, souls are substance not in extension, spiritual substance. The extended substance is endowed with impulse. Is the impulse self-generated, are the bodies self impelled? No, they are moved. What is the primary motive force? It is God. Souls are substances without extension and motive forces. In this respect they are analogous to God. They are united to bodies and act on them. How? This is an impenetrable mystery, but they are closely and substantially united to the bodies, which is proved by physical pains depressing the soul and
moral sufferings depressing the body; and they act on them, not by creating movements, for the quantity of movements is always the same, but by directing the movements after this fashion or that. Souls being spiritual, there is no reason for their disaggregation, that is, their demise, and in fact they do not die." Then, long before that Augustine, the classical early Church Father of Rome likewise stated the following: "Some understand God in three Persons as three Gods. This polytheism, this paganism must be rejected. But how to understand? How? You feel in yourself several souls? No. And yet there are several faculties of the soul, " That of your human, will, emotions &, reason. "The three Persons of God are the three divine faculties. Man has body and soul. No one ought to have doubts about the soul, for to have doubts presupposes thought, and to think is to be; above all things we are thinking beings. But what is the soul? Something immaterial, assuredly, since it can conceive immaterial things, such as a line, a point, surface, space. It is as necessary for the soul to be immaterial in order to be able to grasp the immaterial, as it is necessary for the hand to be material in order that it can grasp a stone.”

"Whence comes the soul? From the souls of ancestors by transmission? This is not probable, for this would be to regard it as material. From God by emanation? This is inadmissible; it is the same error as believing that the world emanates from God. Here, too, there is no emanation, but creation. God creates the souls in destination for bodies themselves born from heredity. Once the body is destroyed, what becomes of the soul? It cannot perish; for thought not being dependent upon the senses, there is no reason for its disappearance on the disappearance of the senses.” Far more to the point here as to the mentioned Pagan fallacies of transmission & or manation, the irrefutable facts that must be understood is the given absolute fact that, no matter who you are, if your metaphysical spiritual soul were those of ancestors or, likewise of Almighty God, you would not be the individual human being you in fact are in reality & you would instead be the given ancestor or, in the other instance Divinity contrary to all reality regarding who you are in fact as a individual. That much is simply called reality.

Further stating then as to the free will of mans soul Augustine continues in that, “we have an illusion of liberty, an illusion that we are free, which suffices for us to acquire merit if we do right and demerit if we do wrong, and that this illusion of liberty is a relative liberty, which leaves the prescience of God, and therefore His omnipotence, absolute. Man is also extremely weak, debilitated, and incapable of good on account of original sin, the sin of our first parents, which is transmitted to us through heredity and paralyses us. But God helps us, and this is what is termed grace. He helps us gratuitously, as is indicated by the word "grace"—if He wishes and when He wishes and in the measure that He wishes.”

"Thus, whilst the majority of philosophers deduced human liberty from God, and the spirituality of the soul from human liberty, the immortality of the soul from human spirituality, and morality from human immortality, Kant starts from morality as from the incontestable fact, and from morality deduces liberty, and from liberty spirituality, and God from the immortality of the soul with the consequent realization of justice." It should likewise be noted here that, in a like logical manner there must be a traditionally understood Divine Judgment as there must necessarily be a Divine First Cause which as such can only be Divinity & Divinity must be truly just while in turn mankind’s abuse of Free Will is more than capable of real sins or even a true evil & horrible injustice within creation.

So then just to further clarify, for those of a more difficult or disordered mind, which might well see contradiction & alike, where there is none in reality, given those increasing numbers of such base miseducated minds, two simple clarifications will be made here regarding these traditionally taught realities. One being the obvious given complexity of any given human soul, being in fact all that it has been stated to be here &, not just one simple given aspect. Likewise then, the same overall truth of the metaphysical universal Moral Law, being far more than just any one aspect of that Law, is traditionally understood as the Metaphysical Law in relation to human affairs which rightly govern as the true
metaphysical moral reality. That same reality of Natural Moral Law that naturally tells even a Thief or alike, that it is a moral wrong if someone were to steal from him or her, all that despite any involved, hypocrisy, cognitive level of thought in the matter, etc., it is the natural order of moral reality within and among humankind in that universal metaphysic, not the far lesser mere, social, political or, psychological &, so on. As I have taught, it is the moral utility for example but, not at all limited to just that one small portion of the metaphysical Moral Law. For there is that one small aspect of the Moral Law & then, there is all the rest of the governing Moral Law which, almost each & every one of the, historical & Christian, United States Founding Fathers, is said to have publicly recognized as a natural necessity in both, human society & just government alike. Such is the reality, like it or not with all of its natural consequences both good and bad depending on the actions & environments of men yet, always governing as the moral reality within this world.

Then there is that end of man wherein, as to those "final things" for all people, being mortal men as we all are in reality, are still no less increasingly disputed by the modern psychosis of such Pagan denials of reality. Those of us however, educated in these matters from within what was the Orthodox Catholic Church include these following factors, basically being that,

The human soul is basically, all that you are humanly or, all that you are in your very being, as a human soul. The biology of earthly man being the very least of all that, overall human soul that is you.

Heaven or Hell is the theological reality that is the necessary state of being within the afterlife, entered into immediately after leaving this world just as both right reason & scripture states, Hebrews 9:27 "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Fortunately God's loving judgement is Divine in all ways but, this involves Divine Justice as well. Hell is said to be void of all, good, peace, light, comfort, contentment, fellowship, etc, a self chosen self exile taken up in this life by choice through that level of chosen sin naturally contrary to all life.

Heaven theologically is said to be a, full communion first & foremost. One of Love, both with the Divine & communally with every body else. It is full security & contentment. It is the Church overall, apart from the earthly communion, hence the worship and other Church works that have been spoken of in relation to that state of being.

Then, the said new creation established by the second coming of Christ, so constantly & foolishly raised by the Pagan cults, is traditionally held to be, on gods terms & time alone. This is what Christ himself taught. Man dictates nothing to God & despite all the increased godless, Jew created occult attempts, etc., to dictate Divine Will in all such matters, God can not entertain such grave deadly sin and maintain his Divine Nature as God at the same time by allowing man to manipulate him or, by excepting such sinful pride & folly thus, he never has or will do so. All that just as theologically, the creation can not be the Creator &, in reality the Creator can not be the creation.

Why this intended natural true good of earthly human life, is not &, can not be the realities beyond that which are in fact known as Heaven and Hell. This earthly intended good of life is just that in reality. It in fact therefore, is less than of the Divine and all ever thought of as paradise. Likewise, it is in fact far more and, far more of the true good in life, than the reality of hell could ever be. This is traditional fact based Orthodox teaching despite the occult base Freemasonry stupidity that attempts to relegate it all to this earthly world at the total expense of everybody in this said world.
The necessary true good in this earthly state is why Jesus Christ the one and only Messiah had to come in accordance to that Messianic Law. It is the meaning and purpose, restorative in large part but not in it all, it being also a required spiritual redemption & salvation given for men who take it up in as much as well. This is the meaning & purpose of the Messianic Law fulfilled in Christ Jesus and, historically so. That same traditionally Orthodox Christian teaching of the old Messianic Law being historically fulfilled in Christ Jesus that built the Christian world & brought all possible redemption to mankind which, the mindless godless base modern Jews and Pagans have now so fully censored.

It is said by Christ himself that, "it is not for man to know all things" & naturally so. For, the life beyond is said to reveal all things in relation to us but one, the future, all knowledge including all foreknowledge, being a attribute of God alone. Other theological realities of course are likewise true but only as to those same types of realities said here. Such given Orthodox theological realities are why Luther was so very wrong about his mindless dogma of scripture alone, as all higher Divine truths of scripture are necessarily & naturally supported by fundamental truths, as with all truths. Likewise, Calvin was just as wrong in that mindless dogma of predestination that as such naturally as a result, denies both, God given Free Will & the need for the salvation of man in the Cross of Christ.

Then as I have said before, in relation to the most basic widely held Moral Law it has been said that,

Confucius himself had a simple moral and political teaching: to treat others well; to honor one's parents; to do what is right instead of what is of advantage.

That, the Greek & Roman Stoic Schools live on. Those classical Stoic Schools consisting in, the trademark Stoic disciplines of necessary fundamentals in, accurate logic, emotional stability through the dominate reasoned mind &, needed moral maturity recognized within the Natural Law. All that naturally later helping greatly in the historical related universal growth of reasoned mature Christianity.

Then, in relation to the other most basic widely held Moral Law, especially as to Divinity the Ten Commandments of God & Christ are foundational.

The Ten Commandments of God, also known as the Decalogue, are a set of biblical laws relating to ethics and worship, which play a fundamental role in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Later in the earthly teaching of the Christian Messianic Christ, Jesus Christ taught & spoke of, the first of these Divine Commandments when, he further commanded all people to, "love thy neighbor as you love yourself", in relation to love of God, all within that same top level of precedence.

That traditionally taught "Golden Rule" of Jesus Christ having been unmatched in its moral value among mankind historically ever sense. Likewise teaching as he did to, not be hypocritical by removing the "beem from your own eye before attempting to remove the speck from your neighbor's eye", is also almost as fundamental & essential, to any sane good human moral health. Not that the truth is still just as true when spoken by anyone, any base hypocrisy when claimed by the base is still unjustifiable, just by its very nature alone.

Then given the purely absent teaching of that Moral Law, in relation to all these basic specific fundamental objective Moral Laws, given that said dire need, the following traditional basic Church teachings as previously stated by the long gone American Bishops of old follows here as to the rest of the basic Moral Law.
"Morality

Made in the Image of God
The most basic principle of the Christian moral life is the awareness that every person bears the dignity of being made in the image of God. He has given us an immortal soul and through the gifts of intelligence and reason enables us to understand the order of things established in his creation. God has also given us a free will to seek and love what is true, good, and beautiful. Sadly, because of the Fall, we also suffer the impact of Original Sin, which darkens our minds, weakens our wills, and inclines us to sin. Baptism delivers us from Original Sin but not from its effects, especially the inclination to sin, concupiscence. Within us, then, is both the powerful surge toward the good because we are made in the image of God, and the impulses toward evil because of the effects of Original Sin.

But we should always remember that Christ's dying and rising offers us new life in the Spirit, whose saving grace delivers us from sin and heals sin's damage within us. Thus we speak of the value, dignity, and goal of human life, even with its imperfections and struggles. Human life, as a profound unity of physical and spiritual dimensions, is sacred. It is distinct from all other forms of life, since it alone is imprinted with the very image of its Creator.

The Responsible Practice of Freedom
The second element of life in Christ is the responsible practice of freedom. Without freedom, we cannot speak meaningfully about morality or moral responsibility. Human freedom is more than a capacity to choose between this and that. It is the God-given power to become who he created us to be and so to share eternal union with him. This happens when we consistently choose ways that are in harmony with God's plan. Christian morality and God's law are not arbitrary, but specifically given to us for our happiness. God gave us intelligence and the capacity to act freely. Ultimately, human freedom lies in our free decision to say "yes" to God. In contrast, many people today understand human freedom merely as the ability to make a choice, with no objective norm or good as the goal.

The Understanding of Moral Acts
Another important foundation of Christian morality is the understanding of moral acts. Every moral act consists of three elements: the objective act (what we do), the subjective goal or intention (why we do the act), and the concrete situation or circumstances in which we perform the act (where, when, how, with whom, the consequences, etc.).

For an individual act to be morally good, the object, or what we are doing, must be objectively good. Some acts, apart from the intention or reason for doing them, are always wrong because they go against a fundamental or basic human good that ought never to be compromised. Direct killing of the innocent, torture, and rape are examples of acts that are always wrong. Such acts are referred to as intrinsically evil acts, meaning that they are wrong in themselves, apart from the reason they are done or the circumstances surrounding them.

The goal, end, or intention is the part of the moral act that lies within the person. For this reason, we say that the intention is the subjective element of the moral act. For an act to be morally good, one's intention must be good. If we are motivated to do something by a bad intention—even something that is objectively good—our action is morally evil. It must also be recognized that a good intention cannot make a bad action (something intrinsically evil) good. We can never do something wrong or evil in order
to bring about a good. This is the meaning of the saying, "the end does not justify the means" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, nos. 1749-1761).

The Reality of Sin and Trust in God's Mercy
We cannot speak about life in Christ or the moral life without acknowledging the reality of sin, our own sinfulness, and our need for God's mercy. When the existence of sin is denied it can result in spiritual and psychological damage because it is ultimately a denial of the truth about ourselves. Admitting the reality of sin helps us to be truthful and opens us to the healing that comes from Christ's redemptive act.

The Formation of Conscience
The formation of a good conscience is another fundamental element of Christian moral teaching. "Conscience is a judgment of reason by which the human person recognizes the moral quality of a concrete act" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1796). "Man has in his heart a law inscribed by God... His conscience is man's most secret core, and his sanctuary (GS, no. 16).

Conscience represents both the more general ability we have as human beings to know what is good and right and the concrete judgments we make in particular situations concerning what we should do or about what we have already done. Moral choices confront us with the decision to follow or depart from reason and the divine law. A good conscience makes judgments that conform to reason and the good that is willed by the Wisdom of God. A good conscience requires lifelong formation. Each baptized follower of Christ is obliged to form his or her conscience according to objective moral standards. The Word of God is a principal tool in the formation of conscience when it is assimilated by study, prayer, and practice. The prudent advice and good example of others support and enlighten our conscience. The authoritative teaching of the Church is an essential element in our conscience formation. Finally, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, combined with regular examination of our conscience, will help us develop a morally sensitive conscience.

The Excellence of Virtues
The Christian moral life is one that seeks to cultivate and practice virtue. "A virtue is an habitual and firm disposition to do the good. It allows the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best of himself" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1803). An effective moral life demands the practice of both human and theological virtues.

Human virtues form the soul with the habits of mind and will that support moral behavior, control passions, and avoid sin. Virtues guide our conduct according to the dictates of faith and reason, leading us toward freedom based on self-control and toward joy in living a good moral life. Compassion, responsibility, a sense of duty, self-discipline and restraint, honesty, loyalty, friendship, courage, and persistence are examples of desirable virtues for sustaining a moral life. Historically, we group the human virtues around what are called the Cardinal Virtues. This term comes from the Latin word cardo meaning “hinge.” All the virtues are related to or hinged to one of the Cardinal Virtues. The four Cardinal Virtues are prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.

There are a number of ways in which we acquire human virtues. They are acquired by frequent repetition of virtuous acts that establish a pattern of virtuous behavior. There is a reciprocal relationship between virtue and acts because virtue, as an internal reality, disposes us to act externally in morally good ways. Yet it is through doing good acts in the concrete that the virtue within us is
strengthened and grows.

The human virtues are also acquired through seeing them in the good example of others and through education in their value and methods to acquire them. Stories that inspire us to want such virtues help contribute to their growth within us. They are gained by a strong will to achieve such ideals. In addition, God’s grace is offered to us to purify and strengthen our human virtues, for our growth in virtue can be hampered by the reality of sin. Especially through prayer and the Sacraments, we open ourselves to the gifts of the Holy Spirit and God’s grace as another way in which we grow in virtue.

The Theological Virtues of faith, hope, and charity (love) are those virtues that relate directly to God. These are not acquired through human effort but, beginning with Baptism, they are infused within us as gifts from God. They dispose us to live in relationship with the Holy Trinity. Faith, hope, and charity influence human virtues by increasing their stability and strength for our lives.

Each of the Ten Commandments forbids certain sins, but each also points to virtues that will help us avoid such sins. Virtues such as generosity, poverty of spirit, gentleness, purity of heart, temperance, and fortitude assist us in overcoming and avoiding what are called the seven deadly or Capital Sins—pride, avarice or covetousness, envy, anger, lust, gluttony, and sloth or laziness—which are those sins that engender other sins and vices.

Love, Rules and Grace
Our culture frequently exalts individual autonomy against community and tradition. This can lead to a suspicion of rules and norms that come from a tradition. This can also be a cause of a healthy criticism of a legalism that can arise from concentrating on rules and norms.

Advocates of Christian morality can sometimes lapse into a legalism that leads to an unproductive moralizing. There is no doubt that love has to be the essential foundation of the moral life. But just as essential in this earthly realm are rules and laws that show how love may be applied in real life. In heaven, love alone will suffice. In this world, we need moral guidance from the Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, the Precepts of the Church and other rules to see how love works.

Love alone, set adrift from moral direction, can easily descend into sentimentality that puts us at the mercy of our feelings. Popular entertainment romanticizes love and tends to omit the difficult demands of the moral order.

In our permissive culture, love is sometimes so romanticized that it is separated from sacrifice. Because of this, tough moral choices cannot be faced. The absence of sacrificial love dooms the possibility of an authentic moral life.

Scripturally and theologically, the Christian moral life begins with a loving relationship with God, a covenant love made possible by the sacrifice of Christ. The Commandments and other moral rules are given to us as ways of protecting the values that foster love of God and others. They provide us with ways to express love, sometimes by forbidding whatever contradicts love.

The moral life requires grace. The Catechism speaks of this in terms of life in Christ and the inner presence of the Holy Spirit, actively enlightening our moral compass and supplying the spiritual strength to do the right thing. The grace that comes to us from Christ in the Spirit is as essential as love and rules
and, in fact, makes love and keeping the rules possible.

......excerpted from the United States Catholic Catechism for Adults"

Finally, Just as the many Doctors of the Church have always taught, in addition to & not in spite of, the properly stated fact that what is morally wrong is always morally wrong, just as in the true statement made here that "the end does not justify the means", any necessary wrong that arises can only be justifiable if, the necessary moral good is far greater than the moral wrong required & secondly, that its requirement is a absolute necessity with no other option, such as being forced out of necessity to kill an unjust attacker who would kill you if you did not violate the moral commandment to not kill your fellow man, all in a needed self defense for example. Hence, it must be a necessary self defense in order for such a act to be morally justified.

A proposed fundamental antidote is proposed in light of, all these unnatural base Jew evils which all have been reduced to unlike ever before which now require a survival of, the full loss of humanity, the full loss of civilization, the full perversion of the life giving natural order & the full loss of good mental health. In relation to the Jew enemies of any legitimate civics & true humanity, G.H. Winters use to say, you build it, they take it. That has become the fully godless reality of all this compounded evil global Jewry. The only solution for individuals made to suffer daily with all that unlivable true evil, pertains to two fundamentals that all should adopt. First, the living out of the first commandment of Jesus Christ & secondly, to disallow for any of its godless alternatives to be entertained by you. In other words, two live the greatest Moral & Religious Law that benefits all above anything else ever known within history. The greatest ever necessary benefit to man, to love thy neighbor as you love your self, to do unto others as you would have them do unto you, but to do so at the same time as you deny anybody or anything any opportunity to do anything less to you. In other words to, employ a Cartesian type of Murphy's law, to religiously doubt, that you will not be wronged by anyone at any time because, even in a healthy world, what ever can go wrong eventually will & then even far more so assuredly within the godless global Jewry or any of its great many totally deadly, sister Pagan barbarisms. To, never give anybody a reason to doubt your word but, at the same time to never trust anyone's word for anything, etc., effectively disallowing for any further wrongs in your life first by not creating any of them & then by not allowing for their possible manifestations potentially brought by others. In light of all pure evils its not to much, it is only a fundamental necessity & not a total solution for all ills, its only on a personal level, but it is also a far better collective & personal good which can do no harm, it can instead only be a necessary good.

**Prologium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo by,**

St. Anselm
ANSELM’S PROSLOGIUM
OR DISCOURSE ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

PREFACE.
In this brief work the author aims at proving in a single argument the existence of God, and whatsoever we believe of God. --The difficulty of the task. --The author writes in the person of one who contemplates God, and seeks to understand what he believes. To this work he had given this title: Faith Seeking Understanding. He finally named it Proslogium, --that is, A Discourse.

AFTER I had published, at the solicitous entreaties of certain brethren, a brief work (the Monologium) as an example of meditation on the grounds of faith, in the person of one who investigates, in a course of silent reasoning with himself, matters of which he is ignorant; considering that this book was knit together by the linking of many arguments, I began to ask myself whether there might be found a single argument which would require no other for its proof than itself alone; and alone would suffice to demonstrate that God truly exists, and that there is a supreme good requiring nothing else, which all other things require for their existence and well-being; and whatever we believe regarding been copied by many under these titles, many urged me, and especially Hugo, the reverend Archbishop of Lyons, who discharges the apostolic office in Gaul, who instructed me to this effect on his apostolic authority --to prefix my name to these writings. And that this might be done more fitly, I named the first, Monologium, that is, A Soliloquy; but the second, Proslogium, that is, A Discourse.

CHAPTER I.
Exhortation of the mind to the contemplation of God. --It casts aside cares, and excludes all thoughts save that of God, that it may seek Him. Man was created to see God. Man by sin lost the blessedness for which he was made, and found the misery for which he was not made. He did not keep this good when he could keep it easily. Without God it is ill with us. Our labors and attempts are in vain without God. Man cannot seek God, unless God himself teaches him; nor find him, unless he reveals himself. God created man in his image, that he might be mindful of him, think of him, and love him. The believer does not seek to understand, that he may believe, but he believes that he may understand: for unless he believed he would not understand.

UP now, slight man! flee, for a little while, thy occupations; hide thyself, for a time,
from thy disturbing thoughts. Cast aside, now, thy burdensome cares, and put away thy toilsome business. Yield room for some little time to God; and rest for a little time in him. Enter the inner chamber of thy mind; shut out all thoughts save that of God, and such as can aid thee in seeking him; close thy door and seek him. Speak now, my whole heart! speak now to God, saying, I seek thy face; thy face, Lord, will I seek (Psalms xxvii. 8). And come thou now, O Lord my God, teach my heart where and how it may seek thee, where and how it may find thee.

Lord, if thou art not here, where shall I seek thee, being absent? But if thou art everywhere, why do I not see thee present? Truly thou dwellest in unapproachable light.

But where is unapproachable light, or how shall I come to it? Or who shall lead me to that light and into it, that I may see thee in it? Again, by what marks, under what form, shall I seek thee? I have never seen thee, O Lord, my God; I do not know thy form. What, O most high Lord, shall this man do, an exile far from thee? What shall thy servant do, anxious in his love of thee, and cast out afar from thy face? He pants to see thee, and thy face is too far from him. He longs to come to thee, and thy dwelling-place is inaccessible. He is eager to find thee, and knows not thy place. He desires to seek thee, and does not know thy face. Lord, thou art my God, and thou art my Lord, and never have I seen thee. It is thou that hast made me, and hast made me anew, and hast bestowed upon me all the blessing I enjoy; and not yet do I know thee. Finally, I was created to see thee, and not yet have I done that for which I was made.

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

O wretched lot of man, when he hath lost that for which he was made! O hard and terrible fate! Alas, what has he lost, and what has he found? What has departed, and what remains? He has lost the blessedness for which he was made, and has found the misery for which he was not made. That has departed without which nothing is happy, and that remains which, in itself, is only miserable. Man once did eat the bread of angels, for which he hungers now; he eateth now the bread of sorrows, of which he knew not then. Alas! for the mourning of all mankind, for the universal lamentation of the sons of Hades! He choked with satiety, we sigh with hunger. He abounded, we beg. He possessed in happiness, and miserably forsook his possession; we suffer want in unhappiness, and feel a miserable longing, and alas! we remain empty.

Why did he not keep for us, when he could so easily, that whose lack we should feel so heavily? Why did he shut us away from the light, and cover us over with darkness? With what purpose did he rob us of life, and inflict death upon us? Wretches that we are, whence have we been driven out; whither are we driven on? Whence hurled? Whither consigned to ruin? From a native country into exile, from the vision of God into our present blindness, from the joy of immortality into the bitterness and horror of death. Miserable exchange of how great a good, for how great an evil! Heavy loss, heavy grief, heavy all our fate!

But alas! wretched that I am, one of the sons of Eve, far removed from God! What have I undertaken? What have I accomplished? Whither was I striving? How far have I come? To what did I aspire? Amid what thoughts am I sighing? I sought blessings, and lo! confusion. I strove toward God, and I stumbled on myself. I sought calm in privacy, and I found tribulation and grief, in my inmost thoughts. I wished to smile in the joy of my mind, and I am compelled to frown by the sorrow of my heart. Gladness was hoped for, and lo! a source of frequent sighs!

And thou too, O Lord, how long? How long, O Lord, dost thou forget us; how long
dost thou turn thy face from us? When wilt thou look upon us, and hear us? When wilt thou enlighten our eyes, and show us thy face? When wilt thou restore thyself to us? Look upon us, Lord; hear us, enlighten us, reveal thyself to us. Restore thyself to us, that it may be well with us, --thyself, without whom it is so ill with us. Pity our toilings and strivings toward thee since we can do nothing without thee. Thou dost invite us; do thou help us. I beseech thee, O Lord, that I may not lose hope in sighs, but may breathe anew in hope. Lord, my heart is made bitter by its desolation; sweeten thou it, I beseech thee, with thy consolation. Lord, in hunger I began to seek thee; I beseech thee that I may not cease to hunger for thee. In hunger I have come to thee; let me not go unfed. I have come in poverty to the Rich, in misery to the Compassionate; let me not return empty and despised. And if, before I eat, I sigh, grant, even after sighs, that which I may eat. Lord, I am bowed down and can only look downward; raise me up that I may look upward. My iniquities have gone over my head; they overwhelm me; and, like a heavy load, they weigh me down. Free me from them; unburden me, that the pit of iniquities may not close over me. Be it mine to look up to thy light, even from afar, even from the depths. Teach me to seek thee, and reveal thyself to me, when I seek thee, for I cannot seek thee, except thou teach me, nor find thee, except thou reveal thyself. Let me seek thee in longing, let me long for thee in seeking; let me find thee in love, and love thee in finding. Lord, I acknowledge and I thank thee that thou hast created me in this thine image, in order that I may be mindful of thee, may conceive of thee, and love thee; but that image has been so consumed and wasted away by vices, and obscured by the smoke of wrong-doing, that it cannot achieve that for which it was made, except thou renew it, and create it anew. I do not endeavor, O Lord, to penetrate thy sublimity, for in no wise do I compare my understanding with that; but I long to understand in some degree thy truth, which my heart believes and loves. For I do not seek to understand that I may believe, but I believe in order to understand. For this also I believe, --that unless I believed, I should not understand.

CHAPTER II.

Truly there is a God, although the fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.

AND so, Lord, do thou, who dost give understanding to faith, give me, so far as thou knowest it to be profitable, to understand that thou art as we believe; and that thou art that which we believe. And indeed, we believe that thou art a being than which nothing greater can be conceived. Or is there no such nature, since the fool hath said in his heart, there is no God? (Psalms xiv. 1). But, at any rate, this very fool, when he hears of this being of which I speak --a being than which nothing greater can be conceived --understands what he hears, and what he understands is in his understanding; although he does not understand it to exist. For, it is one thing for an object to be in the understanding, and another to understand that the object exists. When a painter first conceives of what he will afterwards perform, he has it in his understanding, but he does not yet understand it to be, because he has not yet performed it. But after he has made the painting, he both has it in his understanding, and he understands that it exists, because he has made it.

Hence, even the fool is convinced that something exists in the understanding, at least, than which nothing greater can be conceived. For, when he hears of this, he
understands it. And whatever is understood, exists in the understanding. And assuredly that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, cannot exist in the understanding alone.

Therefore, if that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, exists in the understanding alone, the very being, than which nothing greater can be conceived, is one, than which a greater can be conceived. But obviously this is impossible. Hence, there is no doubt that there exists a being, than which nothing greater can be conceived, and it exists both in the understanding and in reality.

22

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

CHAPTER III.

God cannot be conceived not to exist. --God is that, than which nothing greater can be conceived. --That which can be conceived not to exist is not God.

AND it assuredly exists so truly, that it cannot be conceived not to exist. For, it is possible to conceive of a being which cannot be conceived not to exist; and this is greater than one which can be conceived not to exist. Hence, if that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, can be conceived not to exist, it is not that, than which nothing greater can be conceived. But this is an irreconcilable contradiction. There is, then, so truly a being 8 than which nothing greater can be conceived to exist, that it cannot even be conceived not to exist; and this being thou art, O Lord, our God.

So truly, therefore, dost thou exist, O Lord, my God, that thou canst not be conceived not to exist; and rightly. For, if a mind could conceive of a being better than thee, the creature would rise above the Creator; and this is most absurd. And, indeed, whatever else there is, except thee alone, can be conceived not to exist. To thee alone, therefore, it belongs to exist more truly than all other beings, and hence in a higher degree than all others. For, whatever else exists does not exist so truly, and hence in a less degree it belongs to it to exist. Why, then, has the fool said in his heart, there is no God (Psalms xiv. 1), since it is so evident, to a rational mind, that thou dost exist in the highest degree of all? Why, except that he is dull and a fool?

CHAPTER IV.

How the fool has said in his heart what cannot be conceived. --A thing may be conceived in two ways: (1) when the word signifying it is conceived; (2) when the thing itself is understood. As far as the word goes, God can be conceived not to exist; in reality he cannot.

BUT how has the fool said in his heart what he could not conceive; or how is it that he could not conceive what he said in his heart? since it is the same to say in the heart, and to conceive.

But, if really, nay, since really, he both conceived, because he said in his heart; and did not say in his heart, because he could not conceive; there is more than one way in 9 which a thing is said in the heart or conceived. For, in one sense, an object is conceived, when the word signifying it is conceived; and in another, when the very entity, which the object is, is understood.

In the former sense, then, God can be conceived not to exist; but in the latter, not at all. For no one who understands what fire and water are can conceive fire to be water, in accordance with the nature of the facts themselves, although this is possible according to the words. So, then, no one who understands what God is can conceive that God does
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

not exist; although he says these words in his heart, either without any or with some foreign, signification. For, God is that than which a greater cannot be conceived. And he who thoroughly understands this, assuredly understands that this being so truly exists, that not even in concept can it be non-existent. Therefore, he who understands that God so exists, cannot conceive that he does not exist.

I thank thee, gracious Lord, I thank thee; because what I formerly believed by thy bounty, I now so understand by thine illumination, that if I were unwilling to believe that thou dost exist, I should not be able not to understand this to be true.

CHAPTER V.
God is whatever it is better to be than not to be; and he, as the only self-existent being, creates all things from nothing.

WHAT art thou, then, Lord God, than whom nothing greater can be conceived? But what art thou, except that which, as the highest of all beings, alone exists through itself, and creates all other things from nothing? For, whatever is not this is less than a thing which can be conceived of. But this cannot be conceived of thee. What good, therefore, does the supreme Good lack, through which every good is? Therefore, thou art just, truthful, blessed, and whatever it is better to be than not to be. For it is better to be just than not just; better to be blessed than not blessed.

CHAPTER VI.
How God is sensible (sensibilis) although he is not a body. --God is sensible, omnipotent, compassionate, passionless; for it is better to be these than not be. He who in any way knows, is not improperly said in some sort to feel.

BUT, although it is better for thee to be sensible, omnipotent, compassionate, passionless, than not to be these things; how art thou sensible, if thou art not a body; or omnipotent, if thou hast not all powers; or at once compassionate and passionless? For, if only corporeal things are sensible, since the senses encompass a body and are in a body, how art thou sensible, although thou art not a body, but a supreme Spirit, who is superior to body? But, if feeling is only cognition, or for the sake of cognition, --for he who feels obtains knowledge in accordance with the proper functions of his senses; as through sight, of colors; through taste, of flavors, --whatever in any way cognises is not inappropriately said, in some sort, to feel.

CHAPTER VII.
How he is omnipotent, although there are many things of which he is not capable. --To be capable of being corrupted, or of lying, is not power, but impotence. God can do nothing by virtue of impotence, and nothing has power against him.

BUT how art thou omnipotent, if thou art not capable of all things? Or, if thou canst not be corrupted, and canst not lie, nor make what is true, false --as, for example, if thou shouldst make what has been done not to have been done, and the like. --how art thou
capable of all things? Or else to be capable of these things is not power, but impotence. For, he who is capable of these things is capable of what is not for his good, and of what he ought not to do; and the more capable of them he is, the more power have adversity and perversity against him; and the less has he himself against these.

He, then, who is thus capable is so not by power, but by impotence. For, he is not said to be able because he is able of himself, but because his impotence gives something else power over him. Or, by a figure of speech, just as many words are improperly applied, as when we use “to be” for “not to be,” and “to do” for what is really not to do, “or to do nothing.” For, often we say to a man who denies the existence of something: “It is as you say it to be,” though it might seem more proper to say, “It is not, as you say it is not.” In the same way, we say, “This man sits just as that man does,” or, “This man rests just as that man does”; although to sit is not to do anything, and to rest is to do nothing.

12

So, then, when one is said to have the power of doing or experiencing what is not for his good, or what he ought not to do, impotence is understood in the word power. For, the more he possesses this power, the more powerful are adversity and perversity against him, and the more powerless is he against them. Therefore, O Lord, our God, the more truly art thou omnipotent, since thou art capable of nothing through impotence, and nothing has power against thee.

CHAPTER VIII.

How he is compassionate and passionless. God is compassionate, in terms of our experience, because we experience the effect of compassion. God is not compassionate, in terms of his own being, because he does not experience the feeling (affectus) of compassion.

25

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

BUT how art thou compassionate, and, at the same time, passionless? For, if thou art passionless, thou dost not feel sympathy; and if thou dost not feel sympathy, thy heart is not wretched from sympathy for the wretched; but this it is to be compassionate. But if thou art not compassionate, whence cometh so great consolation to the wretched? How, then, art thou compassionate and not compassionate, O Lord, unless because thou art compassionate in terms of our experience, and not compassionate in terms of thy being. Truly, thou art so in terms of our experience, but thou art not so in terms of thine own. For, when thou beholdest us in our wretchedness, we experience the effect of compassion, but thou dost not experience the feeling. Therefore, thou art both compassionately, because thou dost save the wretched, and spare those who sin against thee; and not compassionate because thou art affected by no sympathy for wretchedness.

CHAPTER IX.

How the all-just and supremely just God spares the wicked, and justly pities the wicked. He is better who is good to the righteous and the wicked than he who is good to the righteous alone. Although God is supremely just, the source of his compassion is hidden. God is supremely compassionate, because he is supremely just. He saveth the just, because justice goes with them; he frees sinners by the authority of justice. God spares the wicked out of justice; for it is just that God, than whom none is better or more powerful, should be good even to the wicked, and should make the wicked good. If God ought not to pity, he pities unjustly. But this it is impious to suppose. Therefore, God justly pities.
BUT how dost thou spare the wicked, if thou art all just and supremely just? For how, being all just and supremely just, dost thou aught that is not just? Or, what justice is that to give him who merits eternal death everlasting life? How, then, gracious Lord, good to the righteous and the wicked, canst thou save the wicked, if this is not just, and thou dost not aught that is not just? Or, since thy goodness is incomprehensible, is this hidden in the unapproachable light wherein thou dwellest? Truly, in the deepest and most secret parts of thy goodness is hidden the fountain whence the stream of thy compassion flows.

For thou art all just and supremely just, yet thou art kind even to the wicked, even because thou art all supremely good. For thou wouldst be less good if thou wert not kind to any wicked being. For, he who is good, both to the righteous and the wicked, is better than he who is good to the wicked alone; and he who is good to the wicked, both by punishing and sparing them, is better than he who is good by punishing them alone. Therefore, thou art compassionate, because thou art all supremely good. And, although it appears why thou dost reward the good with goods and the evil with evils; yet this, at least, is most wonderful, why thou, the all and supremely just, who lackest nothing, bestowest goods on the wicked and on those who are guilty toward thee.

26

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm

by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

The depth of thy goodness, O God! The source of thy compassion appears, and yet is not clearly seen! We see whence the river flows, but the spring whence it arises is not seen. For, it is from the abundance of thy goodness that thou art good to those who sin against thee; and in the depth of thy goodness is hidden the reason for this kindness. For, although thou dost reward the good with goods and the evil with evils, out of goodness, yet this the concept of justice seems to demand. But, when thou dost bestow goods on the evil, and it is known that the supremely Good hath willed to do this, we wonder why the supremely just has been able to will this.

O compassion, from what abundant sweetness and what sweet abundance dost thou well forth to us! O boundless goodness of God how passionately should sinners love thee! For thou savest the just, because justice goeth with them; but sinners thou dost free by the authority of justice. Those by the help of their deserts; these, although their deserts oppose. Those by acknowledging the goods thou hast granted; these by pardoning the evils thou hatest. O boundless goodness, which dost so exceed all understanding, let that compassion come upon me, which proceeds from thy so great abundance! Let it flow upon me, for it wells forth from thee. Spare, in mercy; avenge not, in justice.

For, though it is hard to understand how thy compassion is not inconsistent with thy justice; yet we must believe that it does not oppose justice at all, because it flows from goodness, which is no goodness without justice; nay, that it is in true harmony with justice. For, if thou art compassionate only because thou art supremely good, and supremely good only because thou art supremely just, truly thou art compassionate even because thou art supremely just. Help me, just and compassionate God, whose light seek; help me to understand what I say.

Truly, then, thou art compassionate even because thou art just. Is, then, thy compassion born of thy justice? And dost thou spare the wicked, therefore, out of justice? If this is true, my Lord, if this is true, teach me how it is. Is it because it is just, that thou shouldst be so good that thou canst not be conceived better; and that thou shouldst work so powerfully that thou canst not be conceived more powerful? For what can be more just than this? Assuredly it could not be that thou shouldst be good only by requiting (retribuendo) and not by sparing, and that thou shouldst make good only those who are
not good, and not the wicked also. In this way, therefore, it is just that thou shouldst spare the wicked, and make good souls of evil. Finally, what is not done justly ought not to be done; and what ought not to be done is done unjustly. If, then, thou dost not justly pity the wicked, thou oughtest not to pity them. And, if thou oughtest not to pity them, thou pityest them unjustly. And if it is impious to suppose this, it is right to believe that thou justly pityest the wicked.

CHAPTER X.
How he justly punishes and justly spares the wicked. --God, in sparing the wicked, is just, according to his own nature because he does what is consistent with his goodness; but he is not just, according to our nature, because he does not inflict the punishment deserved. BUT it is also just that thou shouldst punish the wicked. For what is more just than that the good should receive goods, and the evil, evils? How, then, is it just that thou shouldst punish the wicked, and, at the same time, spare the wicked? Or, in one way, dost thou justly punish, and, in another, justly spare them? For, when thou punishest the wicked, it is just, because it is consistent with their deserts; and when, on the other hand, thou sparest the wicked, it is just, not because it is compatible with their deserts, but because it is compatible with thy goodness.

For, in sparing the wicked, thou art as just, according to thy nature, but not according to ours, as thou art compassionate, according to our nature, and not according to thine; seeing that, as in saving us, whom it would be just for thee to destroy, thou art compassionate, not because thou feelest an affection (affectum), but because we feel the effect (effectum); so thou art just, not because thou requitest us as we deserve, but because thou dost that which becomes thee as the supremely good Being. In this way, therefore, without contradiction thou dost justly punish and justly spare.

CHAPTER XI.
How all the ways of God are compassion and truth; and yet God is just in all his ways. --We cannot comprehend why, of the wicked, he saves these rather than those, through his supreme goodness: and condemns those rather than these, through his supreme justice. BUT, is there any reason why it is not also just, according to thy nature, O Lord, that thou shouldst punish the wicked? Surely it is just that thou shouldst be so just that thou canst not be conceived more just; and this thou wouldst in no wise be if thou didst only render goods to the good, and not evils to the evil. For, he who requiteth both good and evil according to their deserts is more just than he who so requites the good alone. It is, therefore, just, according to thy nature, O just and gracious God, both when thou dost punish and when thou sparest.

Truly, then, all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth (Psalms xxv. 10); and yet the Lord is righteous in all his ways (Psalms cxxiv. 17). And assuredly without inconsistency: For, it is not just that those whom thou dost will to punish should be saved, and that those whom thou dost will to spare should be condemned. For that alone is just which thou dost will; and that alone unjust which thou dost not will. So, then, thy compassion is born of thy justice.

For it is just that thou shouldst be so good that thou art good in sparing also; and this may be the reason why the supremely Just can will goods for the evil. But if it can be comprehended in any way why thou canst will to save the wicked, yet by no consideration
can we comprehend why, of those who are alike wicked, thou savest some rather than others, through supreme goodness; and why thou dost condemn the latter rather than the former, through supreme justice.

So, then, thou art truly sensible (sensibilis), omnipotent, compassionate, and passionless, as thou art living, wise, good, blessed, eternal: and whatever it is better to be than not to be.

CHAPTER XII.
God is the very life whereby he lives; and so of other like attributes.

BUT undoubtedly, whatever thou art, thou art through nothing else than thyself.

Therefore, thou art the very life whereby thou livest; and the wisdom wherewith thou art wise; and the very goodness whereby thou art good to the righteous and the wicked; and so of other like attributes.

CHAPTER XIII.
How he alone is uncircumscribed and eternal, although other spirits are uncircumscribed and eternal. --No place and time contain God. But he is himself everywhere and always. He alone not only does not cease to be, but also does not begin to be.

BUT everything that is in any way bounded by place or time is less than that which no law of place or time limits. Since, then, nothing is greater than thou, no place or time contains thee; but thou art everywhere and always. And since this can be said of thee alone, thou alone art uncircumscribed and eternal.

How is it, then, that other spirits also are said to be uncircumscribed and eternal?

Assuredly thou art alone eternal; for thou alone among all beings not only dost not cease to be but also dost not begin to be.

But how art thou alone uncircumscribed? Is it that a created spirit, when compared with thee is circumscribed, but when compared with matter, uncircumscribed? For altogether circumscribed is that which, when it is wholly in one place, cannot at the same time be in another. And this is seen to be true of corporeal things alone. But uncircumscribed is that which is, as a whole, at the same time everywhere. And this is understood to be true of thee alone. But circumscribed, and, at the same time, uncircumscribed is that which, when it is anywhere as a whole, can at the same time be somewhere else as a whole, and yet not everywhere. And this is recognised as true of created spirits. For, if the soul were not as a whole in the separate members of the body,
and which thou hast conceived him to be, with so certain truth and so true certainty? But, if thou hast found him, why is it that thou dost not feel thou hast found him? Why, O Lord, our God, does not my soul feel thee, if it hath found thee? Or, has it not found him whom it found to be light and truth? For how did it understand this, except by seeing light and truth? Or, could it understand anything at all of thee, except through thy light and thy truth? Hence, if it has seen light and truth, it has seen thee; if it has not seen thee, it has not seen light and truth. Or, is what it has seen both light and truth; and still it has not yet seen thee, because it has seen thee only in part, but has not seen thee as thou art? Lord my God, my creator and renewer, speak to the desire of my soul, what thou art other than it hath seen, that it may clearly see what it desires. It strains to see thee more; and sees nothing beyond this which it hath seen, except darkness. Nay, it does not see darkness, of which there is none in thee; but it sees that it cannot see farther, because of its own darkness.

Why is this, Lord, why is this? Is the eye of the soul darkened by its infirmity, or dazzled by thy glory? Surely it is both darkened in itself, and dazzled by thee. Doubtless it is both obscured by its own insignificance, and overwhelmed by thy infinity. Truly, it is both contracted by its own narrowness and overcome by thy greatness. For how great is that light from which shines every truth that gives light to the rational mind? How great is that truth in which is everything that is true, and outside which is only nothingness and the false? How boundless is the truth which sees at one glance whatsoever has been made, and by whom, and through whom, and how it has been made from nothing? What purity, what certainty, what splendor where it is? Assuredly more than a creature can conceive.

CHAPTER XV.

30
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
He is greater than can be conceived.
THEREFORE, O Lord, thou art not only that than which a greater cannot be conceived, but thou art a being greater than can be conceived. For, since it can be conceived that there is such a being, if thou art not this very being, a greater than thou can be conceived. But this is impossible.

CHAPTER XVI.

This is the unapproachable light wherein he dwells.
TRULY, O Lord, this is the unapproachable light in which thou dwellest; for truly there is nothing else which can penetrate this light, that it may see thee there. Truly, I see it not, because it is too bright for me. And yet, whatsoever I see, I see through it, as the weak eye sees what it sees through the light of the sun, which in the sun itself it cannot look upon. My understanding cannot reach that light, for it shines too bright. It does not comprehend it, nor does the eye of my soul endure to gaze upon it long. It is dazzled by the brightness, it is overcome by the greatness, it is overwhelmed by the infinity, it is dazed by the largeness, of the light.

22
O supreme and unapproachable light! O whole and blessed truth, how far art thou from me, who am so near to thee! How far removed art thou from my vision, though I am so near to thine! Everywhere thou art wholly present, and I see thee not. In thee I move, and in thee I have my being; and I cannot come to thee. Thou art within me, and about me, and I feel thee not.

CHAPTER XVII.
In God is harmony, fragrance, sweetness, pleasantness to the touch, beauty, after his ineffable manner.

STILL thou art hidden, O Lord, from my soul in thy light and thy blessedness; and therefore my soul still walks in its darkness and wretchedness. For it looks, and does not see thy beauty. It hearkens, and does not hear thy harmony. It smells, and does not perceive thy fragrance. It tastes, and does not recognize thy sweetness. It touches, and does not feel thy pleasantness. For thou hast these attributes in thyself, Lord God, after thine ineffable manner, who hast given them to objects created by thee, after their sensible manner; but the sinful senses of my soul have grown rigid and dull, and have been obstructed by their long listlessness.

31
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
CHAPTER XVIII.

God is life, wisdom, eternity, and every true good. --Whatever is composed of parts is not wholly one; it is capable, either in fact or in concept, of dissolution. In God wisdom, eternity, etc., are not parts, but one, and the very whole which God is, or unity itself, not even in concept divisible.

AND lo, again confusion; lo, again grief and mourning meet him who seeks for joy and gladness. My soul now hoped for satisfaction; and lo, again it is overwhelmed with need. I desired now to feast, and lo, I hunger more. I tried to rise to the light of God, and I have fallen back into my darkness. Nay, not only have I fallen into it, but I feel that I am enveloped in it. I fell before my mother conceived me. Truly, in darkness I was conceived, and in the cover of darkness I was born. Truly, in him we all fell, in whom we all sinned. In him we all lost, who kept easily, and wickedly lost to himself and to us that which when we wish to seek it, we do not know; when we seek it, we do not find; when we find, it is not that which we seek.

Do thou help me for thy goodness’ sake! Lord, I sought thy face; thy face, Lord, will I seek; hide not thy face far from me (Psalms xxvii. 8). Free me from myself toward thee. Cleanse, heal, sharpen, enlighten the eye of my mind, that it may behold thee. Let my soul recover its strength, and with all its understanding let it strive toward thee, O Lord. What art thou, Lord, what art thou? What shall my heart conceive thee to be? Assuredly thou art life, thou art wisdom, thou art truth, thou art goodness, thou art blessedness, thou art eternity, and thou art every true good. Many are these attributes: my straitened understanding cannot see so many at one view, that it may be gladdened by all at once. How, then, O Lord, art thou all these things? Are they parts of thee, or is each one of these rather the whole, which thou art? For, whatever is composed of parts is not altogether one, but is in some sort plural, and diverse from itself; and either in fact or in concept is capable of dissolution.

24

But these things are alien to thee, than whom nothing better can be conceived of. Hence, there are no parts in thee, Lord, nor art thou more than one. But thou art so truly a unitary being, and so identical with thyself, that in no respect art thou unlike thyself; rather thou art unity itself, indivisible by any conception. Therefore, life and wisdom and the rest are not parts of thee, but all are one; and each of these is the whole, which thou art, and which all the rest are.

In this way, then, it appears that thou hast no parts, and that thy eternity, which thou art, is nowhere and never a part of thee or of thy eternity. But everywhere thou art as a whole, and thy eternity exists as a whole forever.
CHAPTER XIX.

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

He does not exist in place or time, but all things exist in him.

BUT if through thine eternity thou hast been, and art, and wilt be; and to have been is
not to be destined to be; and to be is not to have been, or to be destined to be; how does
thine eternity exist as a whole forever? Or is it true that nothing of thy eternity passes
away, so that it is not now; and that nothing of it is destined to be, as if it were not yet?
Thou wast not, then, yesterday, nor wilt thou be to-morrow; but yesterday and
to-day and to-morrow thou art; or, rather, neither yesterday nor to-day nor to-morrow
thou art; but simply, thou art, outside all time. For yesterday and to-day and to-morrow
have no existence, except in time; but thou, although nothing exists without thee,
nevertheless dost not exist in space or time, but all things exist in thee. For nothing contains
thee, but thou containest all.

CHAPTER XX.

He exists before all things and transcends all things, even the eternal things.

--The eternity of God is present as a whole with him; while other
things have not yet that part of their eternity which is still to be, and
have no longer that part which is past.

HENCE, thou dost permeate and embrace all things. Thou art before all, and dost
transcend all. And, of a surety, thou art before all; for before they were made, thou art.
But how dost thou transcend all? In what way dost thou transcend those beings which
will have no end? Is it because they cannot exist at all without thee; while thou art in no
wise less, if they should return to nothingness? For so, in a certain sense, thou dost
transcend them. Or, is it also because they can be conceived to have an end; but thou by
no means? For so they actually have an end, in a certain sense; but thou, in no sense. And
certainly, what in no sense has an end transcends what is ended in any sense. Or, in this
way also dost thou transcend all things, even the eternal, because thy eternity and theirs
is present as a whole with thee; while they have not yet that part of their eternity which
is to come, just as they no longer have that part which is past? For so thou dost ever
transcend them, since thou art ever present with thyself, and since that to which they have
not yet come is ever present with thee.

CHAPTER XXI.

Is this the age of the age, or ages of ages? --The eternity of God contains the
ages of time themselves, and can be called the age of the age or ages
of ages.

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

Is this, then, the age of the age, or ages of ages? For, as an age of time contains all
temporal things, so thy eternity contains even the ages of time themselves. And these are
indeed an age, because of their indivisible unity; but ages, because of their endless
immeasurability. And, although thou art so great, O Lord, that all things are full of thee,
and exist in thee; yet thou art so without all space, that neither midst, nor half, nor any
part, is in thee.

CHAPTER XXII.

He alone is what he is and who he is. --All things need God for their being
and their well-being.
THEREFORE, thou alone, O Lord, art what thou art; and thou art he who thou art. For, what is one thing in the whole and another in the parts, and in which there is any mutable element, is not altogether what it is. And what begins from non-existence, and can be conceived not to exist, and unless it subsists through something else, returns to non-existence; and what has a past existence, which is no longer, or a future existence, which is not yet, --this does not properly and absolutely exist.

But thou art what thou art, because, whatever thou art at any time, or in any way, thou art as a whole and forever. And thou art he who thou art, properly and simply; for thou hast neither a past existence nor a future, but only a present existence; nor canst thou be conceived as at any time non-existent. But thou art life, and light, and wisdom, and blessedness, and many goods of this nature. And yet thou art only one supreme good; thou art all-sufficient to thyself, and needest none; and thou art he whom all things need for their existence and wellbeing.

CHAPTER XXIII.
This good is equally Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit. And this is a single, necessary Being, which is every good, and wholly good, and the only good. --Since the Word is true, and is truth itself, there is nothing in the Father, who utters it, which is not accomplished in the Word by which he expresses himself. Neither is the love which proceeds from Father and Son unequal to the Father or the Son, for Father and Son love themselves and one another in the same degree in which what they are is good. Of supreme simplicity nothing can be born, and from it nothing can proceed, except that which is this, of which it is born, or from which it proceeds.

34
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
THIS good thou art, thou, God the Father; this is thy Word, that is, thy Son. For nothing, other than what thou art, or greater or less than thou, can be in the Word by which thou dost express thyself; for the Word is true, as thou art truthful. And, hence, it is truth itself, just as thou art; no other truth than thou; and thou art of so simple a nature, that of thee nothing can be born other than what thou art. This very good is the one love common to thee and to thy Son, that is, the Holy Spirit proceeding from both. For this love is not unequal to thee or to thy Son; seeing that thou dost love thyself and him, and he, thee and himself, to the whole extent of thy being and his. Nor is there aught else proceeding from thee and from him, which is not unequal to thee and to him. Nor can anything proceed from the supreme simplicity, other than what this, from which it proceeds, is.

But what each is, separately, this is all the Trinity at once, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; seeing that each separately is none other than the supremely simple unity, and the supremely unitary simplicity which can neither be multiplied nor varied. Moreover, there is a single necessary Being. Now, this is that single, necessary Being, in which is every good; nay, which is every good, and a single entire good, and the only good.

CHAPTER XXIV.
Conjecture as to the character and the magnitude of this good. --If the created life is good, how good is the creative life!

AND now, my soul, arouse and lift up all thy understanding, and conceive, so far as thou canst, of what character and how great is that good! For, if individual goods are delectable, conceive in earnestness how delectable is that good which contains the pleasantness of all goods; and not such as we have experienced in created objects, but as
different as the Creator from the creature. For, if the created life is good, how good is the
creative life! If the salvation given is delightful, how delightful is the salvation which has
given all salvation! If wisdom in the knowledge of the created world is lovely, how lovely
is the wisdom which has created all things from nothing! Finally, if there are many great
delights in delectable things, what and how great is the delight in him who has made these
delecetable things.

CHAPTER XXV.
What goods and how great, belong to those who enjoy this good. --Joy is
multiplied in the blessed from the blessedness and joy of others.

WHO shall enjoy this good? And what shall belong to him, and what shall not belong
to him? At any rate, whatever he shall wish shall be his, and whatever he shall not wish
shall not be his. For, these goods of body and soul will be such as eye hath not seen nor
ear heard, neither has the heart of man conceived (Isaiah lxiv. 4; I Corinthians ii. 9).

Why, then, dost thou wander abroad, slight man, in thy search for the goods of thy
soul and thy body? Love the one good in which are all goods, and it sufficeth. Desire the
simple good which is every good, and it is enough. For, what dost thou love, my flesh?
What dost thou desire, my soul? There, there is whatever ye love, whatever ye desire.

If beauty delights thee, there shall the righteous shine forth as the sun (Matthew
xiii. 43). If swiftness or endurance, or freedom of body, which naught can withstand,
delight thee, they shall be as angels of God, --because it is sown a natural body; it is raised
a spiritual body (I Corinthians xv. 44) --in power certainly, though not in nature. If it is a
long and sound life that pleases thee, there a healthful eternity is, and an eternal health.

For the righteous shall live for ever (Wisdom v. 15), and the salvation of the righteous is
of the Lord (Psalms xxxvii. 39). If it is satisfaction of hunger, they shall be satisfied when
the glory of the Lord hath appeared (Psalms xvii. 15). If it is quenching of thirst, they shall
be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house (Psalms xxxvi. 8). If it is melody,
there the choirs of angels sing forever, before God. If it is any not impure, but pure,
pleasure, thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures, O God (Psalms xxxvi.
8).

If it is wisdom that delights thee, the very wisdom of God will reveal itself to them.
If friendship, they shall love God more than themselves, and one another as themselves.
And God shall love them more than they themselves; for they love him, and themselves,
and one another, through him, and he, himself and them, through himself. If concord,
they shall all have a single will.

If power, they shall have all power to fulfil their will, as God to fulfil his. For, as
God will have power to do what he wills, through himself, so they will have power,
through him, to do what they will. For, as they will not will aught else than he, he shall
will whatever they will; and what he shall will cannot fail to be. If honor and riches, God
shall make his good and faithful servants rulers over many things (Luke xii. 42); nay, they
shall be called sons of God, and gods; and where his Son shall be, there they shall be also,
hiers indeed of God, and joint-heirs with Christ (Romans viii. 17).

If true security delights thee, undoubtedly they shall be as sure that those goods,
or rather that good, will never and in no wise fail them; as they shall be sure that they will
not lose it of their own accord; and that God, who loves them, will not take it away from
those who love him against their will; and that nothing more powerful than God will
separate him from them against his will and theirs.
But what, or how great, is the joy, where such and so great is the good! Heart of man, needy heart, heart acquainted with sorrows, nay, overwhelmed with sorrows, how greatly wouldst thou rejoice, if thou didst abound in all these things! Ask thy inmost mind whether it could contain its joy over so great a blessedness of its own. Yet assuredly, if any other whom thou didst love altogether as thyself possessed the same blessedness, thy joy would be doubled, because thou wouldst rejoice not less for him than for thyself. But, if two, or three, or many more, had the same joy, thou wouldst rejoice as much for each one as for thyself, if thou didst love each as thyself. Hence, in that perfect love of innumerable blessed angels and sainted men, where none shall love another less than himself, every one shall rejoice for each of the others as for himself.

If, then, the heart of man will scarce contain his joy over his own so great good, how shall it contain so many and so great joys? And doubtless, seeing that every one loves another so far as he rejoices in the other’s good, and as, in that perfect felicity, each one should love God beyond compare, more than himself and all the others with him; so he will rejoice beyond reckoning in the felicity of God, more than in his own and that of all the others with him.

But if they shall so love God with all their heart, and all their mind, and all their soul, that still all the heart, and all the mind, and all the soul shall not suffice for the worthiness of this love; doubtless they will so rejoice with all their heart, and all their mind, and all their soul, that all the heart, and all the mind, and all the soul shall not suffice for the fulness of their joy.

If, then, the heart of man will scarce contain his joy over his own so great good, how shall it contain so many and so great joys? And doubtless, seeing that every one loves another so far as he rejoices in the other’s good, and as, in that perfect felicity, each one should love God beyond compare, more than himself and all the others with him; so he will rejoice beyond reckoning in the felicity of God, more than in his own and that of all the others with him.

But if they shall so love God with all their heart, and all their mind, and all their soul, that still all the heart, and all the mind, and all the soul shall not suffice for the worthiness of this love; doubtless they will so rejoice with all their heart, and all their mind, and all their soul, that all the heart, and all the mind, and all the soul shall not suffice for the fulness of their joy.

CHAPTER XXVI.
Is this joy which the Lord promises made full? --The blessed shall rejoice according as they shall love; and they shall love according as they shall know.

My God and my Lord, my hope and the joy of my heart, speak unto my soul and tell me whether this is the joy of which thou tellest us through thy Son: Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full (John xvi. 24). For I have found a joy that is full, and more than full. For when heart, and mind, and soul, and all the man, are full of that joy, joy beyond measure will still remain. Hence, not all of that joy shall enter into those who rejoice; but they who rejoice shall wholly enter into that joy.

Show me, O Lord, show thy servant in his heart whether this is the joy into which thy servants shall enter, who shall enter into the joy of their Lord. But that joy, surely, with which thy chosen ones shall rejoice, eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man (Isaiah lxiv. 4; I Corinthians ii. 9). Not yet, then, have I told or conceived, O Lord, how greatly those blessed ones of thine shall rejoice. Doubtless they shall rejoice according as they shall love; and they shall love according as they shall know. How far they will know thee, Lord, then! and how much they will love thee! Truly, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the heart of man in this life, how far they shall know thee, and how much they shall love thee in that life.

I pray, O God, to know thee, to love thee, that I may rejoice in thee. And if I cannot attain to full joy in this life may I at least advance from day to day, until that joy shall come to the full. Let the knowledge of thee advance in me here, and there be made full. Let the love of thee increase, and there let it be full, that here my joy may be great in hope, and there full in truth. Lord, through thy Son thou dost command, nay, thou dost counsel us
to ask; and thou dost promise that we shall receive, that our joy may be full. I ask, O Lord, as thou dost counsel through our wonderful Counsellor. I will receive what thou dost promise by virtue of thy truth, that my joy may be full. Faithful God, I ask. I will receive, that my joy may be full. Meanwhile, let my mind meditate upon it; let my tongue speak of it. Let my heart love it; let my mouth talk of it. Let my soul hunger for it; let my flesh thirst for it; let my whole being desire it, until I enter into thy joy, O Lord, who art the Three and the One God, blessed for ever and ever. Amen.

ANSELM'S MONOLOGIUM
ON THE BEING OF GOD.

PREFACE.

In this book Anselm discusses, under the form of a meditation, the Being of God, basing his argument not on the authority of Scripture, but on the force of reason. It contains nothing that is inconsistent with the writings of the Holy Fathers, and especially nothing that is inconsistent with those of St. Augustine. --The Greek terminology is employed in Chapter LXXVIII., where it is stated that the Trinity may be said to consist of three substances, that is, three persons.

CERTAIN brethren have often and earnestly entreated me to put in writing some thoughts that I had offered them in familiar conversation, regarding meditation on the Being of God, and on some other topics connected with this subject, under the form of a meditation on these themes. It is in accordance with their wish, rather than with my ability, that they enjoined on me such a form for the writing of this meditation; in order that nothing in Scripture should be urged on the authority of Scripture itself, but that whatever the conclusion of independent investigation should declare to be true, should, in an unadorned style, with common proofs and with a simple argument, be briefly enforced by the cogency of reason, and plainly expounded in the light of truth. It was their wish also, that I should not disdain to meet such simple and almost foolish objections as occur to me.

This task I have long refused to undertake. And, reflecting on the matter, I have tried on many grounds to excuse myself; for the more they wanted this work to be adaptable to practical use, the more was what they enjoined on me difficult of execution. Overcome at last, however, both by the modest importunity of their entreaties and by the not contemptible sincerity of their zeal; and reluctant as I was because of the difficulty of my task and the weakness of my talent, I entered upon the work they asked for. But it is with pleasure inspired by their affection that, so far as I was able, I have prosecuted this work within the limits they set.

I was led to this undertaking in the hope that whatever I might accomplish would soon be overwhelmed with contempt, as by men disgusted with some worthless thing. For I know that in this book I have not so much satisfied those who entreated me, as put an end to the entreaties that followed me so urgently. Yet, somehow it fell out, contrary to my hope, that not only the brethren mentioned above, but several others, by making copies for their own use, condemned this writing to long remembrance. And, after frequent consideration, I have not been able to find that I have made in it any statement which is
inconsistent with the writings of the Catholic Fathers, or especially with those of St. 39

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

Augustine. Wherefore, if it shall appear to any man that I have offered in this work any thought that is either too novel or discordant with the truth, I ask him not to denounce me at once as one who boldly seizes upon new ideas, or as a maintainer of falsehood; but let him first read diligently Augustine's books on the Trinity, and then judge my treatise in the light of those.

In stating that the supreme Trinity may be said to consist of three substances, I have followed the Greeks, who acknowledge three substances in one Essence, in the same faith wherein we acknowledge three persons in one Substance. For they designate by the word substance that attribute of God which we designate by the word person.

Whatever I have said on that point, however, is put in the mouth of one debating and investigating in solitary reflection, questions to which he had given no attention before. And this method I knew to be in accordance with the wish of those whose request I was striving to fulfil. But it is my prayer and earnest entreaty, that if any shall wish to copy this work, he shall be careful to place this preface at the beginning of the book, before the body of the meditation itself. For I believe that one will be much helped in understanding the matter of this book, if he has taken note of the intention, and the method according to which it is discussed. It is my opinion, too, that one who has first seen this preface will not pronounce a rash judgment, if he shall find offered here any thought that is contrary to his own belief.

CHAPTER I.

There is a being which is best, and greatest, and highest of all existing beings.

If any man, either from ignorance or unbelief, has no knowledge of the existence of 37

one Nature which is highest of all existing beings, which is also sufficient to itself in its eternal blessedness, and which confers upon and effects in all other beings, through its omnipotent goodness, the very fact of their existence, and the fact that in any way their existence is good; and if he has no knowledge of many other things, which we necessarily believe regarding God and his creatures, he still believes that he can at least convince himself of these truths in great part, even if his mental powers are very ordinary, by the force of reason alone.

And, although he could do this in many ways, I shall adopt one which I consider easiest for such a man. For, since all desire to enjoy only those things which they suppose to be good, it is natural that this man should, at some time, turn his mind’s eye to the examination of that cause by which these things are good, which he does not desire, except as he judges them to be good. So that, as reason leads the way and follows up these considerations, he advances rationally to those truths of which, without reason, he has no knowledge. And if, in this discussion, I use any argument which no greater authority adduces, I wish it to be received in this way: although, on the grounds that I shall see fit to adopt, the conclusion is reached as if necessarily, yet it is not, for this reason, said to be absolutely necessary, but merely that it can appear so for the time being.

40

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

It is easy, then, for one to say to himself: Since there are goods so innumerable, whose great diversity we experience by the bodily senses, and discern by our mental faculties, must we not believe that there is some one thing, through which all goods
whatever are good? Or are they good one through one thing and another through another? 38
To be sure, it is most certain and clear, for all who are willing to see, that whatsoever things are said to possess any attribute in such a way that in mutual comparison they may be said to possess it in greater, or less, or equal degree, are said to possess it by virtue of some fact, which is not understood to be one thing in one case and another in another, but to be the same in different cases, whether it is regarded as existing in these cases in equal or unequal degree. For, whatsoever things are said to be just, when compared one with another, whether equally, or more, or less, cannot be understood as just, except through the quality of justness, which is not one thing in one instance, and another in another. Since it is certain, then, that all goods, if mutually compared, would prove either equally or unequally good, necessarily they are all good by virtue of something which is conceived of as the same in different goods, although sometimes they seem to be called good, the one by virtue of one thing, the other by virtue of another. For, apparently it is by virtue of one quality, that a horse is called good, because he is strong, and by virtue of another, that he is called good, because he is swift. For, though he seems to be called good by virtue of his strength, and good by virtue of his swiftness, yet swiftness and strength do not appear to be the same thing.
But if a horse, because he is strong and swift, is therefore good, how is it that a strong, swift robber is bad? Rather, then, just as a strong, swift robber is bad, because he is harmful, so a strong, swift horse is good, because he is useful. And, indeed, nothing is ordinarily regarded as good, except either for some utility -- as, for instance, safety is called good, and those things which promote safety -- or for some honorable character -- as, for instance, beauty is reckoned to be good, and what promotes beauty. But, since the reasoning which we have observed is in no wise refutable, necessarily, again, all things, whether useful or honorable, if they are truly good, are good through that same being through which all goods exist, whatever that being is. But who can doubt this very being, through which all goods exist, to be a great good? This must be, then, a good through itself, since ever other good is through it. It follows, therefore, that all other goods are good through another being than that which they themselves are, and this being alone is good through itself. Hence, this alone is supremely good, which is alone good through itself. For it is supreme, in that it so surpasses other beings, that it is neither equalled nor excelled. But that which is supremely good is also supremely great. There is, therefore, some one being which is supremely good, and supremely great, that is, the highest of all existing beings.
CHAPTER II.
The same subject continued.
41
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
BUT, just as it has been proved that there is a being that is supremely good, since all goods are good through a single being, which is good through itself; so it is necessarily inferred that there is something supremely great, which is great through itself. But, I do not mean physically great, as a material object is great, but that which, the greater it is, is the better or the more worthy, --wisdom, for instance. And since there can be nothing supremely great except what is supremely good, there must be a being that is greatest and best, i. e., the highest of all existing beings.
CHAPTER III.
There is a certain Nature through which whatever is exists, and which exists
through itself, and is the highest of all existing beings.
THEREFORE, not only are all good things such through something that is one and the
same, and all great things such through something that is one and the same; but whatever
is, apparently exists through something that is one and the same. For, everything that is,
exists either through something, or through nothing. But nothing exists through nothing.
For it is altogether inconceivable that anything should not exist by virtue of something.
Whatever is, then, does not exist except through something. Since this is true, either
there is one being, or there are more than one, through which all things that are exist. But
if there are more than one, either these are themselves to be referred to some one being,
through which they exist, or they exist separately, each through itself, or they exist mutually
through one another.
But, if these beings exist through one being, then all things do not exist through
more than one, but rather through that one being through which these exist.
If, however, these exist separately, each through itself, there is, at any rate, some
power or property of existing through self (existendi per se), by which they are able to
exist each through itself. But, there can be no doubt that, in that case, they exist through
this very power, which is one, and through which they are able to exist, each through
itself. More truly, then, do all things exist through this very being, which is one, than
through these, which are more than one, which, without this one, cannot exist.
But that these beings exist mutually through one another, no reason can admit;
since it is an irrational conception that anything should exist through a being on which it
confers existence. For not even beings of a relative nature exist thus mutually, the one
through the other. For, though the terms master and servant are used with mutual reference,
and the men thus designated are mentioned as having mutual relations, yet they do not
at all exist mutually, the one through the other, since these relations exist through the
subjects to which they are referred.
Therefore, since truth altogether excludes the supposition that there are more beings
than one, through which all things exist, that being, through which all exist, must be one.
Since, then, all things that are exist through this one being, doubtless this one being exists
through itself. Whatever things there are else then, exist through something other than

Prologium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
themselves, and this alone through itself. But whatever exists through another is less than
that, through which all things are, and which alone exists through itself. Therefore, that
which exists through itself exists in the greatest degree of all things.
There is, then, some one being which alone exists in the greatest and the highest
degree of all. But that which is greatest of all, and through which exists whatever is good
or great, and, in short, whatever has any existence -- that must be supremely good, and
supremely great, and the highest of all existing beings.
CHAPTER IV.
The same subject continued.
FURTHERMORE, if one observes the nature of things he perceives, whether he will
or no, that not all are embraced in a single degree of dignity; but that certain among them
are distinguished by inequality of degree. For, he who doubts that the horse is superior
in its nature to wood, and man more excellent than the horse, assuredly does not deserve
the name of man. Therefore, although it cannot be denied that some natures are superior
to others, nevertheless reason convinces us that some nature is so preeminent among these,
that it has no superior. For, if the distinction of degrees is infinite, so that there is among
them no degree, than which no higher can be found, our course of reasoning reaches this conclusion: that the multitude of natures themselves is not limited by any bounds. But only an absurdly foolish man can fail to regard such a conclusion as absurdly foolish. There is, then, necessarily some nature which is so superior to some nature or natures, that there is none in comparison with which it is ranked as inferior. Now, this nature which is such, either is single, or there are more natures than one of this sort, and they are of equal degree. But, if they are more than one and equal, since they cannot be equal through any diverse causes, but only through some cause which is one and the same, that one cause, through which they are equally so great, either is itself what they are, that is, the very essence of these natures; or else it is another than what they are.

But if it is nothing else than their very essence itself, just as they have not more than one essence, but a single essence, so they have not more than one nature, but a single nature. For I here understand nature as identical with essence. If, however, that through which these natures are so great is another than that which they are, then, certainly, they are less than that through which they are so great. For, whatever is great through something else is less than that through which it is great. Therefore, they are not so great that there is nothing else greater than they. But if, neither through what they are nor through anything other than themselves, can there be more such natures than one, than which nothing else shall be more excellent, then in no wise can there be more than one nature of this kind. We conclude, then, that there is some nature which is one and single, and which is so superior to others that it is inferior to none. But that which is such is the greatest and best of all existing beings. Hence, there is a certain nature which is the highest of all existing beings. This, however, it cannot be, unless it is what it is through itself, and all existing beings are what they are through it.

For since, as our reasoning showed us not long since, that which exists through itself, and through which all other things exist, is the highest of all existing beings; either conversely, that which is the highest exists through itself, and all others through it; or, there will be more than one supreme being. But it is manifest that there cannot be more than one supreme being. There is, therefore, a certain Nature, or Substance, or Essence, which is through itself good and great, and through itself is what it is; and through which exists whatever is truly good, or great, or has any existence at all; and which is the supreme good being, the supreme great being, being or subsisting as supreme, that is, the highest of all existing beings. Hence, there is a certain Nature, or Substance, or Essence, which is through itself good and great, and through itself is what it is; and through which exists whatever is truly good, or great, or has any existence at all; and which is the supreme good being, the supreme great being, being or subsisting as supreme, that is, the highest of all existing beings.

CHAPTER V.
Just as this Nature exists through itself, and other beings through it, so it derives existence from itself, and other beings from it. Seeing, then, that the truth already discovered has been satisfactorily demonstrated, it is profitable to examine whether this Nature, and all things that have any existence, derive existence from no other source than it, just as they do not exist except through it. But it is clear that one may say, that what derives existence from something exists through the same thing; and what exists through something also derives existence from it. For instance, what derives existence from matter, and exists through the artificer, may also be said to exist through matter, and to derive existence from the artificer, since it exists through both, and derives existence from both. That is, it is endowed with existence by

Prologium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
both, although it exists through matter and from the artificer in another sense than that
in which it exists through, and from, the artificer.
It follows, then, that just as all existing beings are what they are, through the
supreme Nature, and as that Nature exists through itself, but other beings through another
than themselves, so all existing beings derive existence from this supreme Nature. And
therefore, this Nature derives existence from itself, but other beings from it.
CHAPTER VI.
This Nature was not brought into existence with the help of any external
cause, yet it does not exist through nothing, or derive existence from
nothing. --How existence through self, and derived from self, is
conceivable.
44
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
SINCE the same meaning is not always attached to the phrase, “existence through”
something, or, to the phrase, “existence derived from” something, very diligent inquiry
must be made, in what way all existing beings exist through the supreme Nature, or derive
existence from it. For, what exists through itself, and what exists through another, do not
admit the same ground of existence. Let us first consider, separately, this supreme Nature,
which exists through self; then these beings which exist through another.
Since it is evident, then, that this Nature is whatever it is, through itself, and all
other beings are what they are, through it, how does it exist through itself? For, what is
said to exist through anything apparently exists through an efficient agent, or through
matter, or through some other external aid, as through some instrument. But, whatever
exists in any of these three ways exists through another than itself, and is of later existence,
and, in some sort, less than that through which it obtains existence.
But, in no wise does the supreme Nature exist through another, nor is it later or
less than itself or anything else. Therefore, the supreme Nature could be created neither
46
by itself, nor by another; nor could itself or any other be the matter whence it should be
created; nor did it assist itself in any way; nor did anything assist it to be what it was not
before.
What is to be inferred? For that which cannot have come into existence by any
creative agent, or from any matter, or with any external aids, seems either to be nothing,
or, if it has any existence, to exist through nothing, and derive existence from nothing.
And although, in accordance with the observations I have already made, in the light of
reason, regarding the supreme Substance, I should think such propositions could in no
wise be true in the case of supreme Substance; yet, I would not neglect to give a connected
demonstration of this matter.
For, seeing that this my meditation has suddenly brought me to an important and
interesting point, I am unwilling to pass over carelessly even any simple or almost foolish
objection that occurs to me, in my argument; in order that by leaving no ambiguity in my
discussion up to this point, I may have the better assured strength to advance toward
what follows; and in order that if, perchance, I shall wish to convince any one of the truth
of my speculations, even one of the slower minds, through the removal of every obstacle,
however slight, may acquiesce in what it finds here.
That this Nature, then, without which no nature exists, is nothing, is as false as it
would be absurd to say that whatever is is nothing. And, moreover, it does not exist
through nothing, because it is utterly inconceivable that what is something should exist
through nothing. But, if in any way it derives existence from nothing, it does so through
itself, or through another, or through nothing. But it is evident that in no wise does anything exist through nothing. If, then, in any way it derives existence from nothing, it does so either through itself or through another.

But nothing can, through itself, derive existence from nothing, because if anything derives existence from nothing, through something, then that through which it exists must exist before it. Seeing that this Being, then, does not exist before itself, by no means does it derive existence from itself.

45

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
But if it is supposed to have derived existence from some other nature, then it is not the supreme Nature, but some inferior one, nor is it what it is through itself, but through another.

Again: if this Nature derives existence from nothing, through something, that through which it exists was a great good, since it was the cause of good. But no good can be understood as existing before that good, without which nothing is good; and it is sufficiently clear that this good, without which there is no good, is the supreme Nature which is under discussion. Therefore, it is not even conceivable that this Nature was preceded by any being, through which it derived existence from nothing.

Hence, if it has any existence through nothing, or derives existence from nothing, there is no doubt that either, whatever it is, it does not exist through itself, or derive existence from itself, or else it is itself nothing. It is unnecessary to show that both these suppositions are false. The supreme Substance, then, does not exist through any efficient agent, and does not derive existence from any matter, and was not aided in being brought into existence by any external causes. Nevertheless, it by no means exists through nothing, or derives existence from nothing; since, through itself and from itself, it is whatever it is.

Finally, as to how it should be understood to exist through itself, and to derive existence from itself: it did not create itself, nor did it spring up as its own matter, nor did it in any way assist itself to become what it was not before, unless, haply, it seems best to conceive of this subject in the way in which one says that the light lights or is lucent, through and from itself. For, as are the mutual relations of the light and to light and lucent (lux, lucere, lucens), such are the relations of essence, and to be and being, that is, existing or subsisting. So the supreme Being, and to be in the highest degree, and being in the highest degree, bear much the same relations, one to another, as the light and to light and lucent.

CHAPTER VII.

In what way all other beings exist through this Nature and derive existence from it.

THERE now remains the discussion of that whole class of beings that exist through another, as to how they exist through the supreme Substance, whether because this Substance created them all, or because it was the material of all. For, there is no need to inquire whether all exist through it, for this reason, namely, that there being another creative agent, or another existing material, this supreme Substance has merely aided in bringing about the existence of all things: since it is inconsistent with what has already been shown, that whatever things are should exist secondarily, and not primarily, through it.

49

First, then, it seems to me, we ought to inquire whether that whole class of beings which exist through another derive existence from any material. But I do not doubt that
all this solid world, with its parts, just as we see, consists of earth, water, fire, and air.

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

These four elements, of course, can be conceived of without these forms which we see in actual objects, so that their formless, or even confused, nature appears to be the material of all bodies, distinguished by their own forms. -- I say that I do not doubt this. But I ask, whence this very material that I have mentioned, the material of the mundane mass, derives its existence. For, if there is some material of this material, then that is more truly the material of the physical universe.

If, then, the universe of things, whether visible or invisible, derives existence from any material, certainly it not only cannot be, but it cannot even be supposed to be, from any other material than from the supreme Nature or from itself, or from some third being -- but this last, at any rate, does not exist. For, indeed, nothing is even conceivable except that highest of all beings, which exists through itself, and the universe of beings which exist, not through themselves, but through this supreme Being. Hence, that which has no existence at all is not the material of anything.

From its own nature the universe cannot derive existence, since, if this were the case, it would in some sort exist through itself and so through another than that through which all things exist. But all these suppositions are false.

Again, everything that derives existence from material derives existence from another, and exists later than that other. Therefore, since nothing is other than itself, or later than itself, it follows that nothing derives material existence from itself.

But if, from the material of the supreme Nature itself, any lesser being can derive existence, the supreme good is subject to change and corruption. But this it is impious to suppose. Hence, since everything that is other than this supreme Nature is less than it, it is impossible that anything other than it in this way derives existence from it.

Furthermore: doubtless that is in no wise good, through which the supreme good is subjected to change or corruption. But this it is impious to suppose. Hence, since everything that is other than this supreme Nature is less than it, it is impossible that anything other than it in this way derives existence from it.

Since, then, it is evident that the essence of those things which exist through another does not derive existence as if materially, from the supreme Essence, nor from itself, nor from another, it is manifest that it derives existence from no material. Hence, seeing that whatever is exists through the nothing Being, nor can aught else exist through this Being, except by its creation, or by its existence as material, it follows, necessarily, that nothing besides it exists, except by its creation. And, since nothing else is or has been, except that supreme Being and the beings created by it, it could create nothing at all through any other instrument or aid than itself. But all that it has created, it has doubtless created either from something, as from material, or from nothing.

Since, then, it is most patent that the essence of all beings, except the supreme Essence, was created by that supreme Essence, and derives existence from no material, doubtless nothing can be more clear than that this supreme Essence nevertheless produced from nothing, alone and through itself, the world of material things, so numerous a multitude, formed in such beauty, varied in such order, so fitly diversified.
CHAPTER VIII.
How it is to be understood that this Nature created all things from nothing.

BUT we are confronted with a doubt regarding this term nothing. For, from whatever source anything is created, that source is the cause of what is created from it, and, necessarily, every cause affords some assistance to the being of what it effects. This is so firmly believed, as a result of experience, by every one, that the belief can be wrested from no one by argument, and can scarcely be purloined by sophistry.

Accordingly, if anything was created from nothing, this very nothing was the cause of what was created from it. But how could that which had no existence, assist anything in coming into existence? If, however, no aid to the existence of anything ever had its source in nothing, who can be convinced, and how, that anything is created out of nothing? Moreover, nothing either means something, or does not mean something. But if nothing is something, whatever has been created from nothing has been created from something. If, however, nothing is not something; since it is inconceivable that anything should be created from what does not exist, nothing is created from nothing; just as all agree that nothing comes from nothing. Whence, it evidently follows, that whatever is created is created from something; for it is created either from something or from nothing. Whether, then, nothing is something, or nothing is not something, it apparently follows, that whatever has been created was created from something.

But, if this is posited as a truth, then it is so posited in opposition to the whole argument propounded in the preceding chapter. Hence, since what was nothing will thus be something, that which was something in the highest degree will be nothing. For, from the discovery of a certain Substance existing in the greatest degree of all existing beings, my reasoning had brought me to this conclusion, that all other beings were so created by this Substance, that that from which they were created was nothing. Hence, if that from which they were created, which I supposed to be nothing, is something, whatever I supposed to have been ascertained regarding the supreme Being, is nothing.

What, then, is to be our understanding of the term nothing? -- For I have already determined not to neglect in this meditation any possible objection, even if it be almost foolish. -- In three ways, then -- and this suffices for the removal of the present obstacle -- can the statement that any substance was created from nothing be explained.

There is one way, according to which we wish it to be understood, that what is said to have been created from nothing has not been created at all; just as, to one who asks regarding a dumb man, of what he speaks, the answer is given, “of nothing,” that is, he does not speak at all. According to this interpretation, to one who enquires regarding the supreme Being, or regarding what never has existed and does not exist at all, as to whence it was created, the answer, “from nothing” may properly be given; that is, it never was created. But this answer is unintelligible in the case of any of those things that actually were created.

There is another interpretation which is, indeed, capable of supposition, but cannot be true; namely, that if anything is said to have been created from nothing, it was created from nothing itself (de nihilo ipso), that is, from what does not exist at all, as if this very nothing were some existent being, from which something could be created. But, since this is always false, as often as it is assumed an irreconcilable contradiction follows.
There is a third interpretation, according to which a thing is said to have been created from nothing, when we understand that it was indeed created, but that there is not anything whence it was created. Apparently it is said with a like meaning, when a man is afflicted without cause, that he is afflicted “over nothing.”

If, then, the conclusion reached in the preceding chapter is understood in this sense, that with the exception of the supreme Being all things have been created by that Being from nothing, that is, not from anything; just as this conclusion consistently follows the preceding arguments, so, from it, nothing inconsistent is inferred; although it may be said, without inconsistency or any contradiction, that what has been created by the creative Substance was created from nothing, in the way that one frequently says a rich man has been made from a poor man, or that one has recovered health from sickness; that is, he who was poor before, is rich now, as he was not before; and he who was ill before, is well now, as he was not before.

In this way, then, we can understand, without inconsistency, the statement that the creative Being created all things from nothing, or that all were created through it from nothing; that is, those things which before were nothing, are now something. For, indeed, from the very word that we use, saying that it created them or that they were created, we understand that when this Being created them, it created something, and that when they were created, they were created only as something. For so, beholding a man of very lowly fortunes exalted with many riches and honors by some one, we say, “Lo, he has made that man out of nothing”; that is, the man who was before reputed as nothing is now, by virtue of that other’s making, truly reckoned as something.

CHAPTER IX.

Those things which were created from nothing had an existence before their creation in the thought of the Creator.

BUT I seem to see a truth that compels me to distinguish carefully in what sense those things which were created may be said to have been nothing before their creation. For, in no wise can anything conceivably be created by any, unless there is, in the mind of the creative agent, some example, as it were, or (as is more fittingly supposed) some model, or likeness, or rule. It is evident, then, that before the world was created, it was in the thought of the supreme Nature, what, and of what sort, and how, it should be. Hence, although it is clear that the being that were created were nothing before their creation, to this extent, that they were not what they now are, nor was there anything whence they should be created, yet they were not nothing, so far as the creator’s thought is concerned, through which, and according to which, they were created.

49

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

CHAPTER X.

This thought is a kind of expression of the objects created (locutio rerum), like the expression which an artisan forms in his mind for what he intends to make.

BUT this model of things, which preceded their creation in the thought of the creator, what else is it than a kind of expression of these things in his thought itself; just as when an artisan is about to make something after the manner of his craft, he first expresses it to himself through a concept? But by the expression of the mind or reason I mean, here, not the conception of words signifying the objects, but the general view in the mind, by the vision of conception, of the objects themselves, whether destined to be, or already existing. For, from frequent usage, it is recognised that we can express the same object in
three ways. For we express objects either by the sensible use of sensible signs, that is, signs which are perceptible to the bodily senses; or by thinking within ourselves insensibly of these signs which, when outwardly used, are sensible; or not by employing these signs, either sensibly or insensibly, but by expressing the things themselves inwardly in our mind, whether by the power of imagining material bodies or of understanding thought, according to the diversity of these objects themselves.

For I express a man in one way, when I signify him by pronouncing these words, a man; in another, when I think of the same words in silence; and in another, when the mind regards the man himself, either through the image of his body, or through the reason; through the image of his body, when the mind imagines his visible form; through the reason, however, when it thinks of his universal essence, which is a rational, mortal animal. Now, the first two kinds of expression are in the language of one’s race. But the words of that kind of expression, which I have put third and last, when they concern objects well known, are natural, and are the same among all nations. And, since all other words owe their invention to these, where these are, no other word is necessary for the recognition of an object, and where they cannot be, no other word is of any use for the description of an object.

For, without absurdity, they may also be said to be the truer, the more like they are to the objects to which they correspond, and the more expressively they signify these objects. For, with the exception of those objects, which we employ as their own names, in order to signify them, like certain sounds, the vowel a for instance — with the exception of these, I say, no other word appears so similar to the object to which it is applied, or expresses it as does that likeness which is expressed by the vision of the mind thinking of the object itself.

This last, then, should be called the especially proper and primary word, corresponding to the thing. Hence, if no expression of any object whatever so nearly approaches the object as that expression which consists of this sort of words, nor can there be in the thought of any another word so like the object, whether destined to be, or already existing, not without reason it may be thought that such an expression of objects existed.

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo with (apud) the supreme Substance before their creation, that they might be created; and exists, now that they have been created, that they may be known through it.

CHAPTER XI.
The analogy, however, between the expression of the Creator and the expression of the artisan is very incomplete.

BUT, though it is most certain that the supreme Substance expressed, as it were, within itself the whole created world, which it established according to, and through, this same most profound expression, just as an artisan first conceives in his mind what he afterwards actually executes in accordance with his mental concept, yet I see that this analogy is very incomplete.

For the supreme Substance took absolutely nothing from any other source, whence it might either frame a model in itself, or make its creatures what they are; while the artisan is wholly unable to conceive in his imagination any bodily thing, except what he has in some way learned from external objects, whether all at once, or part by part; nor can he perform the work mentally conceived, if there is a lack of material, or of anything without which a work premeditated cannot be performed. For, though a man can, by meditation
or representation, frame the idea of some sort of animal, such as has no existence; yet, by no means has he the power to do this, except by uniting in this idea the parts that he has gathered in his memory from objects known externally. Hence, in this respect, these inner expressions of the works they are to create differ in the creative substance and in the artisan: that the former expression, without being taken or aided from any external source, but as first and sole cause, could suffice the Artificer for the performance of his work, while the latter is neither first, nor sole, nor sufficient, cause for the inception of the artisan’s work. Therefore, whatever has been created through the former expression is only what it is through that expression, while whatever has been created through the latter would not exist at all, unless it were something that it is not through this expression itself.

CHAPTER XII.
This expression of the supreme Being is the supreme Being.

BUT since, as our reasoning shows, it is equally certain that whatever the supreme Substance created, it created through nothing other than itself; and whatever it created, it created through its own most intimate expression, whether separately, by the utterance of separate words, or all at once, by the utterance of one word; what conclusion can be more evidently necessary, than that this expression of the supreme Being is no other than the supreme Being? Therefore, the consideration of this expression should not, in my opinion, be carelessly passed over. But before it can be discussed, I think some of the properties of this supreme Substance should be diligently and earnestly investigated.

CHAPTER XIII.
As all things were created through the supreme Being, so all live through it.

IT is certain, then, that through the supreme Nature whatever is not identical with it has been created. But no rational mind can doubt that all creatures live and continue to exist, so long as they do exist, by the sustenance afforded by that very Being through whose creative act they are endowed with the existence that they have. For, by a like course of reasoning to that by which it has been gathered that all existing beings exist through some one being, hence that being alone exists through itself, and others through another than themselves -- by a like course of reasoning, I say, it can be proved that whatever things live, live through some one being; hence that being alone lives through itself, and others through another than themselves.

But, since it cannot but be that those things which have been created live through another, and that by which they have been created lives through itself, necessarily, just as nothing has been created except through the creative, present Being, so nothing lives except through its preserving presence.

CHAPTER XIV.
This Being is in all things, and throughout all; and all derive existence from it and exist through and in it.

BUT if this is true -- rather, since this must be true, it follows that, where this Being is not, nothing is. It is, then, everywhere, and throughout all things, and in all. But seeing that it is manifestly absurd that as any created being can in no wise exceed the immeasurableness of what creates and cherishes it, so the creative and cherishing Being cannot, in anyway, exceed the sum of the things it has created; it is clear that this Being itself, is what supports and surpasses, includes and permeates all other things. If we unite

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

this truth with the truths already discovered, we find it is this same Being which is in all
and through all, and from which, and through which, and in which, all exist.

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
CHAPTER XV.

What can or cannot be stated concerning the substance of this Being.

NOT without reason I am now strongly impelled to inquire as earnestly as I am able,
which of all the statements that may be made regarding anything is substantially applicable
to this so wonderful Nature. For, though I should be surprised if, among the names or
words by which we designate things created from nothing, any should be found that could
worthily be applied to the Substance which is the creator of all; yet, we must try and see
to what end reason will lead this investigation.

As to relative expressions, at any rate, no one can doubt that no such expression
describes what is essential to that in regard to which it is relatively employed. Hence, if
any relative predication is made regarding the supreme Nature, it is not significant of its
substance.

Therefore, it is manifest that this very expression, that this Nature, is the highest
61
of all beings, or greater than those which have been created by it; or any other relative
term that can, in like manner, be applied to it, does not describe its natural essence.

For, if none of those things ever existed, in relation to which it is called supreme
or greater, it would not be conceived as either supreme or greater, yet it would not,
therefore, be less good, or suffer detriment to its essential greatness in any degree. And
this truth is clearly seen from the fact that this Nature exists through no other than itself,
whatever there be that is good or great. If, then, the supreme Nature can be so conceived
of as not supreme, that still it shall be in no wise greater or less than when it is conceived
of as the highest of all beings, it is manifest that the term supreme, taken by itself, does
not describe that Being which is altogether greater and better than whatever is not what
it is. But, what these considerations show regarding the term supreme or highest is found
to be true, in like manner, of other similar, relative expressions.

Passing over these relative predications, then, since none of them taken by itself
represents the essence of anything, let our attention be turned to the discussion of other
kinds of predication.

Now, certainly if one diligently considers separately whatever there is that is not
of a relative nature, either it is such that, to be it is in general better than not to be it, or
such that, in some cases, not to be it is better than to be it. But I here understand the phrases,
to be it and not to be it, in the same way in which I understand to be true and not to be
true, to be bodily and not to be bodily, and the like. Indeed, to be anything is, in general,
better than not to be it; as to be wise is better than not to be so; that is, it is better to be wise
62
than not to be wise. For, though one who is just, but not wise, is apparently a better man
than one who is wise, but not just, yet, taken by itself, it is not better not to be wise than
to be wise. For, everything that is not wise, simply in so far as it is not wise, is less than
what is wise, since everything that is not wise would be better if it were wise. In the same
way, to be true is altogether better than not to be so, that is, better than not to be true; and
just is better than not just; and to live than not to live.

53

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
But, in some cases, not to be a certain thing is better than to be it, as not to be gold
may be better than to be gold. For it is better for man not to be gold, than to be gold; although it might be better for something to be gold, than not to be gold -- lead, for instance. For though both, namely, man and lead are not gold, man is something as much better than gold, as he would be of inferior nature, were he gold; while lead is something as much more base than gold, as it would be more precious, were it gold.

But, from the fact that the supreme Nature may be so conceived of as not supreme, that supreme is neither in general better than not supreme, nor not supreme better, in any case, than supreme -- from this fact it is evident that there are many relative expressions which are by no means included in this classification. Whether, however, any are so included, I refrain from inquiring; since it is sufficient, for my purpose, that undoubtedly none of these, taken by itself, describes the substance of the supreme Nature. Since, then, it is true of whatever else there is, that, if it is taken independently, to be it is better than not to be it; as it is impious to suppose that the substance of the supreme Nature is anything, than which what is not it is in any way better, it must be true that this substance is whatever is, in general, better than what is not it. For, it alone is that, than which there is nothing better at all, and which is better than all things, which are not what it is.

It is not a material body, then, or any of those things which the bodily senses discern. For, then all these there is something better, which is not what they themselves are. For, the rational mind, as to which no bodily sense can perceive what, or of what character, or how great, it is -- the less this rational mind would be if it were any of those things that are in the scope of the bodily senses, the greater it is than any of these. For by no means should this supreme Being be said to be any of those things to which something, which they themselves are not, is superior; and it should by all means, as our reasoning shows, be said to be any of those things to which everything, which is not what they themselves are, is inferior.

Hence, this Being must be living, wise, powerful, and all-powerful, true, just, blessed, eternal, and whatever, in like manner, is absolutely better than what is not it. Why, then, should we make any further inquiry as to what that supreme Nature is, if it is manifest which of all things it is, and which it is not?

CHAPTER XVI.

For this Being it is the same to be just that it is to be justice; and so with regard to attributes that can be expressed in the same way: and none of these shows of what character, or how great, but what this Being is.

54

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

BUT perhaps, when this Being is called just, or great, or anything like these, it is not shown what it is, but of what character, or how great it is. For every such term seems to be used with reference to quantity or magnitude; because everything that is just is so through justness, and so with other like cases, in the same way. Hence, the supreme Nature itself is not just, except through justness.

It seems, then, that by participation in this quality, that is, justness, the supremely good Substance is called just. But, if this is so, it is just through another, and not through itself. But this is contrary to the truth already established, that it is good, or great or whatever it is at all, through itself and not through another. So, if it is not just, except through justness, and cannot be just, except through itself, what can be more clear than that this Nature is itself justness? And, when it is said to be just through justness, it is the
same as saying that it is just through itself. And, when it is said to be just through itself, nothing else is understood than that it is just through justness. Hence, if it is inquired what the supreme Nature, which is in question, is in itself, what truer answer can be given, than Justness?

We must observe, then, how we are to understand the statement, that the Nature which is itself justness is just. For, since a man cannot be justness, but can possess justness, we do not conceive of a just man as being justness, but as possessing justness. Since, on the other hand, it cannot properly be said of the supreme Nature that it possesses justness, but that it is justness, when it is called just it is properly conceived of as being justness, but not as possessing justness. Hence, if, when it is said to be justness, it is not said of what character it is, but what it is, it follows that, when it is called just, it is not said of what character it is, but what it is.

Therefore, seeing that it is the same to say of the supreme Being, that it is just and that it is justness; and, when it is said that it is justness, it is nothing else than saying that it is just; it makes no difference whether it is said to be justness or to be just. Hence, when one is asked regarding the supreme Nature, what it is, the answer, Just, is not less fitting than the answer, Justness. Moreover, what we see to have been proved in the case of justness, the intellect is compelled to acknowledge as true of all attributes which are similarly predicated of this supreme Nature. Whatever such attribute is predicated of it, then, it is shown, not of what character, or how great, but what it is.

But it is obvious that whatever good thing the supreme Nature is, it is in the highest degree. It is, therefore, supreme Being, supreme Justness, supreme Wisdom, supreme Truth, supreme Goodness, supreme Greatness, supreme Beauty, supreme Immortality, supreme Incorruptibility, supreme Immutability, supreme Blessedness, supreme Eternity, supreme Power, supreme Unity; which is nothing else than supremely being, supremely living, etc.

CHAPTER XVII.

It is simple in such a way that all things that can be said of its essence are one and the same in it: and nothing can be said of its substance except in terms of what it is.

IS it to be inferred, then, that if the supreme Nature is so many goods, it will therefore be compounded of more goods than one? Or is it true, rather, that there are not more goods than one, but a single good described by many names? For, everything which is composite requires for its subsistence the things of which it is compounded, and, indeed, owes to them the fact of its existence, because, whatever it is, it is through these things; and they are not what they are through it, and therefore it is not at all supreme. If, then, that Nature is compounded of more goods than one, all these facts that are true of every composite must be applicable to it. But this impious falsehood the whole cogency of the truth that was shown above refutes and overthrows, through a clear argument.

Since, then, that Nature is by no means composite and yet is by all means those so many goods, necessarily all these are not more than one, but are one. Any one of them is, therefore, the same as all, whether taken all at once or separately. Therefore, just as whatever is attributed to the essence of the supreme Substance is one; so this substance is whatever it is essentially in one way, and by virtue of one consideration. For, when a man is said to be a material body, and rational, and human, these three things are not said in one way, or in virtue of one consideration. For, in accordance with one fact, he is a
material body; and in accordance with another, rational; and no one of these, taken by itself, is the whole of what man is. That supreme Being, however, is by no means anything in such a way that it is not this same thing, according to another way, or another consideration; because, whatever it is essentially in any way, this is all of what it is. Therefore, nothing that is truly said of the supreme Being is accepted in terms of quality or quantity, but only in terms of what it is. For, whatever it is in terms of either quality or quantity would constitute still another element, in terms of what it is; hence, it would not be simple, but composite.

CHAPTER XVIII.
It is without beginning and without end.
FROM what time, then, as this so simple Nature which creates and animates all things existed, or until what time is it to exist? Or rather, let us ask neither from what time, nor to what time, it exists; but is it without beginning and without end? For, if it has a beginning, it has this either from or through itself, or from or through another, or from or through nothing.
But it is certain, according to truths already made plain, that in no wise does it derive existence from another, or from nothing; or exist through another, or through nothing. In no wise, therefore, has it had inception through or from another, or through or from nothing.
66
56
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
Moreover, it cannot have inception from or through itself, although it exists from and through itself. For it so exists from and through itself, that by no means is there one essence which exists from and through itself, and another through which, and from which, it exists. But, whatever begins to exist from or through something, is by no means identical with that from or through which it begins to exist. Therefore, the supreme Nature does not begin through or from, itself.
Seeing, then, that it has a beginning neither through nor from itself, and neither through nor from nothing, it assuredly has no beginning at all. But neither will it have an end. For, if it is to have end, it is not supremely immortal and supremely incorruptible. But we have proved that it is supremely immortal and supremely incorruptible. Therefore, it will not have an end.
Furthermore, if it is to have an end, it will perish either willingly or against its will. But certainly that is not a simple, unmixed good, at whose will the supreme good perishes. But this Being is itself the true and simple, unmixed good. Therefore, that very Being, which is certainly the supreme good, will not die of its own will. If, however, it is to perish against its will, it is not supremely powerful, or all-powerful. But cogent reasoning has asserted it to be powerful and all-powerful. Therefore, it will not die against its will. Hence, if neither with nor against its will the supreme Nature is to have an end, in no way will it have an end.
Again, if the supreme nature has an end or a beginning, it is not true eternity, which it has been irrefutably proved to be above. Then, let him who can conceive of a time when this began to be true, or when it was not true, namely, that something was destined to be; or when this shall cease to be true, and shall not be true, namely, that something has existed. But, if neither of these suppositions is conceivable, and both these facts cannot exist without truth, it is impossible even to conceive that truth has either beginning or end. And then, if truth had a beginning, or shall have an end; before it began it was true that truth did not exist, and after it shall
be ended it will be true that truth will not exist. Yet, anything that is true cannot exist without truth. Therefore, truth existed before truth existed, and truth will exist after truth shall be ended, which is a most contradictory conclusion. Whether, then, truth is said to have, or understood not to have, beginning or end, it cannot be limited by any beginning or end. Hence, the same follows as regards the supreme Nature, since it is itself the supreme Truth.

CHAPTER XIX.

In what sense nothing existed before or will exist after this Being.

BUT here we are again confronted by the term nothing, and whatever our reasoning thus far, with the concordant attestation of truth and necessity, has concluded nothing to be. For, if the propositions duly set forth above have been confirmed by the fortification of logically necessary truth, not anything existed before the supreme Being, nor will anything exist after it. Hence, nothing existed before, and nothing will exist after, it. For, either something or nothing must have preceded it; and either something or nothing must be destined to follow it.

But, he who says that nothing existed before it appears to make this statement, “that there was before it a time when nothing existed, and that there will be after it a time when nothing will exist.” Therefore, when nothing existed, that Being did not exist, and when nothing shall exist, that Being will not exist. How is it, then, that it does not take inception from nothing or how is it that it will not come to nothing? -- if that Being did not yet exist, when nothing already existed; and the same Being shall no longer exist, when nothing shall still exist. Of what avail is so weighty a mass of arguments, if this nothing so easily demolishes their structure? For, if it is established that the supreme Being succeeds nothing [Nothing is here treated as an entity, supposed actually to precede the supreme Being in existence. The fallacy involved is shown below. --Tr.], which precedes it, and yields its place to nothing, which follows it, whatever has been posited as true above is necessarily unsettled by empty nothing.

But, rather ought this nothing to be resisted, lest so many structures of cogent reasoning be stormed by nothing; and the supreme good, which has been sought and found by the light of truth, be lost for nothing. Let it rather be declared, then, that nothing did not exist before the supreme Being, and that nothing will not exist after it, rather than that, when a place is given before or after it to nothing, that Being which through itself brought into existence what was nothing, should be reduced through nothing to nothing.

For this one assertion, namely, that nothing existed before the supreme Being, carries two meanings. For, one sense of this statement is that, before the supreme Being, there was a time when nothing was. But another understanding of the same statement is that, before the supreme Being, not anything existed. Just as, supposing I should say, “Nothing has taught me to fly,” I could explain this assertion either in this way, that nothing, as an entity in itself, which signifies not anything, has taught me actually to fly -- which would be false; or in this way, that not anything has taught me to fly, which would be true.

The former interpretation, therefore, which is followed by the inconsistency discussed above, is rejected by all reasoning as false. But there remains the other interpretation, which unites in perfect consistency with the foregoing arguments, and which, from the force of their whole correlation, must be true.

Hence, the statement that nothing existed before that Being must be received in the
latter sense. Nor should it be so explained, that it shall be understood that there was any
time when that Being did not exist, and nothing did exist; but, so that it shall be understood
that, before that Being, there was not anything. The same sort of double signification is
found in the statement that nothing will exist after that Being.
If, then, this interpretation of the term nothing, that has been given, is carefully
analysed, most truly neither something nor nothing preceded or will follow the supreme
Being, and the conclusion is reached, that nothing existed before or will exist after it. Yet,
the solidity of the truths already established is in no wise impaired by the emptiness of
nothing.

CHAPTER XX.
It exists in every place and at every time.
BUT, although it has been concluded above that this creative Nature exists everywhere,
and in all things, and through all; and from the fact that it neither began, nor will cease to
be, it follows that it always has been, and is, and will be; yet, I perceive a certain secret
murmur of contradiction which compels me to inquire more carefully where and when
that Nature exists.
The supreme Being, then, exists either everywhere and always, or merely at some
place and time, or nowhere and never; or, as I express it, either in every place and at every
time, or finitely, in some place and at some time, or in no place and at no time.
But what can be more obviously contradictory, than that what exists most really
and supremely exists nowhere and never? It is, therefore, false that it exists nowhere and
never. Again, since there is no good, nor anything at all without it; if this Being itself exists
nowhere or never, then nowhere or never is there any good, and nowhere and never is
there anything at all. But there is no need to state that this is false. Hence, the former
proposition is also false, that that Being exists nowhere and never.
It therefore exists finitely, at some time and place, or everywhere and always. But,
if it exists finitely, at some place or time, there and then only, where and when it exists,
can anything exist. Where and when it does not exist, moreover, there is no existence at
all, because, without it, nothing exists. Whence it will follow, that there is some place and
time where and when nothing at all exists. But seeing that this is false — for place and time
themselves are existing things — the supreme Nature cannot exist finitely, at some place
or time. But, if it is said that it of itself exists finitely, at some place and time, but that,
through its power, it is wherever and whenever anything is, this is not true. For, since it
is manifest that its power is nothing else than itself, by no means does its power exist
without it.
Since, then, it does not exist finitely, at some place or time, it must exist everywhere
and always, that is, in every place and at every time.
CHAPTER XXI.
It exists in no place or time.
BUT, if this is true, either it exists in every place and at every time, or else only a part
of it so exists, the other part transcending every place and time.
But, if in part it exists, and in part does not exist, in every place and at every time,
it has parts; which is false. It does not, therefore, exist everywhere and always in part.
But how does it exist as a whole, everywhere and always? For, either it is to be
understood that it exists as a whole at once, in all places or at all times, and by parts in
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

individual places and times; or, that it exists as a whole, in individual places and times as well.
But, if it exists by parts in individual places or times, it is not exempt from
composition and division of parts; which has been found to be in a high degree alien to
the supreme Nature. Hence, it does not so exist, as a whole, in all places and at all times
that it exists by parts in individual places and times.
We are confronted, then, by the former alternative, that is, how the supreme Nature
can exist, as a whole, in every individual place and time. This is doubtless impossible,
unless it either exists at once or at different times in individual places or times. But, since
the law of place and the law of time, the investigation of which it has hitherto been possible
to prosecute in a single discussion, because they advanced on exactly the same lines, here
separate one from another and seem to avoid debate, as if by evasion in diverse directions,
let each be investigated independently in discussion directed on itself alone.
First, then, let us see whether the supreme Nature can exist, as a whole, in individual
places, either at once in all, or at different times, in different places. Then, let us make the
same inquiry regarding the times at which it can exist.
If, then, it exists as a whole in each individual place, then, for each individual place
there is an individual whole. For, just as place is so distinguished from place that there
are individual places, so that which exists as a whole, in one place, is so distinct from that
which exists as a whole at the same time, in another place, that there are individual wholes.
For, of what exists as a whole, in any place, there is no part that does not exist in that place.
And that of which there is no part that does not exist in a given place, is no part of what
exists at the same time outside this place.
What exists as a whole, then, in any place, is no part of what exists at the same time
outside that place. But, of that of which no part exists outside any given place, no part
exists, at the same time, in another place. How, then, can what exists as a whole, in any
place, exist simultaneously, as a whole, in another place, if no part of it can at that time
exist in another place?
Since, then, one whole cannot exist as a whole in different places at the same time,
it follows that, for individual places, there are individual wholes, if anything is to exist as
a whole in different individual places at once. Hence, if the supreme Nature exists as a
whole, at one time, in every individual place, there are as many supreme Natures as there
can be individual places; which it would be irrational to believe. Therefore, it does not
exist, as a whole, at one time in individual places.
If, however, at different times it exists, as a whole, in individual places, then, when
it is in one place, there is in the meantime no good and no existence in other places, since
without it absolutely nothing exists. But the absurdity of this supposition is proved by the
existence of places themselves, which are not nothing, but something. Therefore, the
supreme Nature does not exist, as a whole, in individual places at different times.
But, if neither at the same time nor at different times does it exist, as a whole, in
individual places, it is evident that it does not at all exist, as a whole, in each individual
place. We must now examine, then, whether this supreme Nature exists, as a whole, at
individual times, either simultaneously or at distinct times for individual times.
But, how can anything exist, as a whole, simultaneously, at individual times, if these times are not themselves simultaneous? But, if this Being exists, as a whole, separately and at distinct times for individual times, just as a man exists as a whole yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow; it is properly said that it was and is and will be. Its age, then, which is no other than its eternity, does not exist, as a whole, simultaneously, but it is distributed in parts according to the parts of time.

But its eternity is nothing else than itself. The supreme Being, then, will be divided into parts, according to the divisions of time. For, if its age is prolonged through periods of time, it has with this time present, past, and future. But what else is its age than its duration of existence, than its eternity? Since, then, its eternity is nothing else than its essence, as considerations set forth above irrefutably prove; if its eternity has past, present, and future, its essence also has, in consequence, past, present, and future.

But what is past is not present or future; and what is present is not past or future; and what is future is not past or present. How, then, shall that proposition be valid, which was proved with clear and logical cogency above, namely, that that supreme Nature is in no wise composite, but is supremely simple, supremely immutable? -- how shall this be so, if that Nature is one thing, at one time, and another, at another, and has parts distributed according to times? Or rather, if these earlier propositions are true, how can these latter be possible? By no means, then, is past or future attributable to the creative Being, either its age or its eternity. For why has it not a present, if it truly is? But was means past, and will be future. Therefore that Being never was, nor will be. Hence, it does not exist at distinct times, just as it does not exist, as a whole, simultaneously in different individual times.

If, then, as our discussion has proved, it neither so exists, as a whole, in all places or times that it exists, as a whole, at one time in all, or by parts in individual places and times; nor so that it exists, as a whole, in individual times and places, it is manifest that it does not in any way exist, as a whole, in every time or place.

And, since, in like manner, it has been demonstrated that it neither so exists in every time or place, that a part exists in every, and a part transcends every, place and time, it is impossible that it exists everywhere and always.

For, in no way can it be conceived to exist everywhere and always, except either as a whole or in part. But if it does not at all exist everywhere and always, it will exist either finitely in some place or time, or in none. But it has already been proved, that it cannot exist finitely, in any place or time. In no place or time, that is, nowhere and never does it exist. For it cannot exist, except in every or in some place or time.

But, on the other hand, since it is irrefutably established, not only that it exists through itself, and without beginning and without end, but that without it nothing anywhere or ever exists, it must exist everywhere and always.

CHAPTER XXII.

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

How it exists in every place and time, and in none.

HOW, then, shall these prepositions, that are so necessary according to our exposition, and so necessary according to our proof, be reconciled? Perhaps the supreme Nature exists in place and time in some such way, that it is not prevented from so existing simultaneously, as a whole, in different places or times, that there are not more wholes than one; and that its age, which does not exist, except as true eternity, is not distributed among past, present, and future.
For, to this law of space and time, nothing seems to be subject, except the beings
which so exist in space or time that they do not transcend extent of space or duration of
time. Hence, though of beings of this class it is with all truth asserted that one and the
same whole cannot exist simultaneously, as a whole, in different places or times; in the
case of those beings which are not of this class, no such conclusion is necessarily reached.
For it seems to be rightly said, that place is predicable only of objects whose
magnitude place contains by including it, and includes by containing it; and that time is
predicable only of objects whose duration time ends by measuring it, and measures by
ending it. Hence, to any being, to whose spatial extent or duration no bound can be set,
either by space or time, no place or time is properly attributed. For, seeing that place does
not act upon it as place, nor time as time, it is not irrational to say, that no place is its place,
and no time its time.
But, what evidently has no place or time is doubtless by no means compelled to
submit to the law of place or time. No law of place or time, then, in any way governs any
nature, which no place or time limits by some kind of restraint. But what rational
consideration can by any course of reasoning fail to reach the conclusion, that the Substance
which creates and is supreme among all beings, which must be alien to, and free from,
the nature and law of all things which itself created from nothing, is limited by no restraint
of space or time; since, more truly, its power, which is nothing else than its essence, contains
and includes under itself all these things which it created? Is it not impudently foolish,
too, to say either, that space circumscribes the magnitude of truth, or, that time measures
its duration --truth, which regards no greatness or smallness of spatial or temporal extent
at all?
Seeing, then, that this is the condition of place or time; that only whatever is limited
by their bounds neither escapes the law of parts -- such as place follows, according to
magnitude, or such as time submits to, according to duration -- nor can in any way be
contained, as a whole, simultaneously by different places or times; but whatever is in no
wise confined by the restraint of place or time, is not compelled by any law of places or
times to multiplicity of parts, nor is it prevented from being present, as a whole and
simultaneously, in more places or times than one --seeing, I say, that this is the condition
governing place or time, no doubt the supreme Substance, which is encompassed by no
restraint of place or time, is bound by none of their laws.
Hence, since inevitable necessity requires that the supreme Being, as a whole, be
lacking to no place or time, and no law of place or time prevents it from being
simultaneously in every place or time; it must simultaneously present in every individual
62
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
place or time. For, because it is present in one place, it is not therefore prevented from
being present at the same time, and in like manner in this, or that other, place or time.
Nor, because it was, or is, or shall be, has any part of its eternity therefore vanished
from the present, with the past, which no longer is; nor does it pass with the present, which
is, for an instant; nor is it to come with the future, which is not yet.
For, by no means is that Being compelled or forbidden by a law of space or time to
exist, or not to exist, at any place or time -- the Being which, in no wise, includes its own
existence in space or time. For, when the supreme Being is said to exist in space or time,
although the form of expression regarding it, and regarding local and temporal natures,
is the same, because of the usage of language, yet the sense is different, because of the
unlikeness of the objects of discussion. For in the latter case the same expression has two
meanings, namely: (1) that these objects are present in those places and times in which they are said to be, and (2) that they are contained by these places and times themselves.

But in the case of the supreme Being, the first sense only is intended, namely, that it is present; not that it is also contained. If the usage of language permitted, it would, therefore, seem to be more fittingly said, that it exists with place or time, than that it exists in place or time. For the statement that a thing exists in another implies that it is contained, more than does the statement that it exists with another.

In no place or time, then, is this Being properly said to exist, since it is contained by no other at all. And yet it may be said, after a manner of its own, to be in every place or time, since whatever else exists is sustained by its presence, lest it lapse into nothingness. It exists in every place and time, because it is absent from none; and it exists in none, because it has no place or time, and has not taken to itself distinctions of place or time, neither here nor there, nor anywhere, nor then, nor now, nor at any time; nor does it exist in terms of this fleeting present, in which we live, nor has it existed, nor will it exist, in terms of past or future, since these are restricted to things finite and mutable, which it is not.

And yet, these properties of time and place can, in some sort, be ascribed to it, since it is just as truly present in all finite and mutable beings as if it were circumscribed by the same places, and suffered change by the same times.

We have sufficient evidence, then, to dispel the contradiction that threatened us; as to how the highest Being of all exists, everywhere and always, and nowhere and never, that is, in every place and time, and in no place or time, according to the consistent truth of different senses of the terms employed.

CHAPTER XXIII.

How it is better conceived to exist everywhere than in every place

But, since it is plain that this supreme Nature is not more truly in all places than in all existing things, not as if it were contained by them, but as containing all, by permeating all, why should it not be said to be everywhere, in this sense, that it may be understood rather to be in all existing things, than merely in all places, since this sense is supported by the truth of the fact, and is not forbidden by the proper signification of the word of place?

For we often quite properly apply terms of place to objects which are not places; as, when I say that the understanding is there in the soul, where rationality is. For, though there and where are adverbs of place, yet, by no local limitation, does the mind contain anything, nor is either rationality or understanding contained.

Hence, as regards the truth of the matter, the supreme Nature is more appropriately said to be everywhere, in this sense, that it is in all existing things, than in this sense, namely that it is merely in all places. And since, as the reasons set forth above show, it cannot exist otherwise, it must so be in all existing things, that it is one and the same perfect whole in every individual thing simultaneously.

CHAPTER XXIV.

How it is better understood to exist always than at every time.

It is also evident that this supreme Substance is without beginning and without end; that it has neither past, nor future, nor the temporal, that is, transient present in which we live; since its age, or eternity, which is nothing else than itself, is immutable and without
parts. Is not, therefore, the term which seems to mean all time more properly understood, when applied to this Substance, to signify eternity, which is never unlike itself, rather than a changing succession of times, which is ever in some sort unlike itself? Hence, if this Being is said to exist always; since, for it, it is the same to exist and to live, no better sense can be attached to this statement, than that it exists or lives eternally, that is, it possesses interminable life, as a perfect whole at once. For its eternity apparently is an interminable life, existing at once as a perfect whole.

For, since it has already been shown that this Substance is nothing else than its own life and its own eternity, is in no wise terminable, and does not exist, except as at once and perfectly whole, what else is true eternity, which is consistent with the nature of that Substance alone, than an interminable life, existing as at once and perfectly whole? For this truth is, at any rate, clearly perceived from the single fact that true eternity belongs only to that substance which alone, as we have proved, was not created, but is the creator, since true eternity is conceived to be free from the limitations of beginning and end; and this is proved to be consistent with the nature of no created being, from the very fact that all such have been created from nothing.

CHAPTER XXV.

64
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
It cannot suffer change by any accidents [Accidents, as Anselm uses the term, are facts external to the essence of a being, which may yet be conceived to produce changes in a mutable being,]

BUT does not this Being, which has been shown to exist as in every way substantially identical with itself, sometimes exist as different from itself, at any rate accidentally? But how is it supremely immutable, if it can, I will not say, be, but, be conceived of, as variable by virtue of accidents? And, on the other hand, does it not partake of accident, since even this very fact that it is greater than all other natures and that it is unlike them seems to be an accident in its case (illi accidere)? But what is the inconsistency between susceptibility to certain facts, called accidents, and natural immutability, if from the undergoing of these accidents the substance undergoes no change?

For, of all the facts, called accidents, some are understood not to be present or absent without some variation in the subject of the accident -- all colors, for instance -- while others are known not to effect any change in a thing either by occurring or not occurring -- certain relations, for instance. For it is certain that I am neither older nor younger than a man who is not yet born, nor equal to him, nor like him. But I shall be able to sustain and to lose all these relations toward him, as soon as he shall have been born, according as he shall grow, or undergo change through divers qualities.

It is made clear, then, that of all those facts, called accidents, a part bring some degree of mutability in their train, while a part do not impair at all the immutability of that in whose case they occur. Hence, although the supreme Nature in its simplicity has never undergone such accidents as cause mutation, yet it does not disdain occasional expression in terms of those accidents which are in no wise inconsistent with supreme immutability; and yet there is no accident respecting its essence, whence it would be conceived of, as itself variable.

Whence this conclusion, also, may be reached, that it is susceptible of no accident; since, just as those accidents, which effect some change by their occurrence or non-occurrence, are by virtue of this very effect of theirs regarded as being true accidents, so those facts, which lack a like effect, are found to be improperly called accidents.
Therefore, this Essence is always, in every way, substantially identical with itself; and it is never in any way different from itself, even accidentally. But, however it may be as to the proper signification of the term accident, this is undoubtedly true, that of the supremely immutable Nature no statement can be made, whence it shall be conceived of as mutable.

CHAPTER XXVI.
How this Being is said to be substance: it transcends all substance and is individually whatever it is.

BUT, if what we have ascertained concerning the simplicity of this Nature is established, how is it substance? For, though every substance is susceptible of admixture of difference, or, at any rate, susceptible of mutation by accidents, the immutable purity of this Being is inaccessible to admixture or mutation, in any form.

How, then, shall it be maintained that it is a substance of any kind, except as it is called substance for being, and so transcends, as it is above, every substance? For, as great as is the difference between that Being, which is through itself whatever it is, and which creates every other being from nothing, and a being, which is made whatever it is through another, from nothing; so much does the supreme Substance differ from these beings, which are not what it is. And, since it alone, of all natures, derives from itself, without the help of another nature, whatever existence it has, is it not whatever it is individually and apart from association with its creatures?

Hence, if it ever shares any name with other beings, doubtless a very different signification of that name is to be understood in its case.

CHAPTER XXVII.
It is not included among substances as commonly treated, yet it is a substance and an indivisible spirit.

IT is, therefore, evident that in any ordinary treatment of substance, this Substance cannot be included, from sharing in whose essence every nature is excluded. Indeed, since every substance is treated either as universal, i.e., as essentially common to more than one substance, as being a man is common to individual men; or as individual, having a universal essence in common with others, as individual men have in common with individual men the fact that they are men; does any one conceive that, in the treatment of other substances, that supreme Nature is included, which neither divides itself into more substances than one, nor unites with any other, by virtue of a common essence? Yet, seeing that it not only most certainly exists, but exists in the highest degree of all things; and since the essence of anything is usually called its substance, doubtless if any worthy name can be given it, there is no objection to our calling it substance. And since no worthier essence than spirit and body is known, and of these, spirit is more worthy than body, it must certainly be maintained that this Being is spirit and not body. But, seeing that one spirit has not any parts, and there cannot be more spirits than one of this kind, it must, by all means, be an indivisible spirit. For since, as is shown above, it is neither compounded of parts, nor can be conceived of as mutable, through any differences or accidents, it is impossible that it is divisible by any form of division.

CHAPTER XXVIII.
This Spirit exists simply, and created beings are not comparable with him.
IT seems to follow, then, from the preceding considerations, that the Spirit which exists in so wonderfully singular and so singularly wonderful a way of its own is in some sort unique; while other beings which seem to be comparable with it are not so. For, by diligent attention it will be seen that that Spirit alone exists simply, and perfectly, and absolutely; while all other beings are almost non-existent, and hardly exist at all. For, seeing that of this Spirit, because of its immutable eternity, it can in no wise be said, in terms of any alteration, that it was or will be, but simply that it is; it is not now, by mutation, anything which it either was not at any time, or will not be in the future. Nor does it fail to be now what it was, or will be, at any time; but, whatever it is, it is, once for all, and simultaneously, and interminably. Seeing, I say, that its existence is of this character, it is rightly said itself to exist simply, and absolutely, and perfectly. But since, on the other hand, all other beings, in accordance with some cause, have at some time been, or will be, by mutation, what they are not now; or, are what they were not, or will not be, at some time; and, since this former existence of theirs is no longer a fact; and that future existence is not yet a fact; and their existence in a transient, and most brief, and scarcely existing, present is hardly a fact -- since, then, they exist in such mutability, it is not unreasonably denied that they exist simply, and perfectly, and absolutely; and it is asserted that they are almost nonexistent, that they scarcely exist at all.

Again, since all beings, which are other than this Spirit himself, have come from non-existence to existence, not through themselves, but through another; and, since they return from existence to non-existence, so far as their own power is concerned, unless they are sustained through another being, is it consistent with their nature to exist simply, or perfectly, or absolutely, and not rather to be almost non-existent. And since the existence of this ineffable Spirit alone can in no way be conceived to have taken inception from non-existence, or to be capable of sustaining any deficiency rising from what is in nonexistence; and since, whatever he is himself, he is not through another than himself, that is, than what he is himself, ought not his existence alone to be conceived of as simple, and perfect, and absolute?

But what is thus simply, and on every ground, solely perfect, simple, and absolute, this may very certainly be justly said to be in some sort unique. And, on the other hand, whatever is known to exist through a higher cause, and neither simply, nor perfectly, nor absolutely, but scarcely to exist, or to be almost non-existent -- this assuredly may be rightly said to be in some sort non-existent.

According to this course of reasoning, then, the creative Spirit alone exists, and all creatures are nonexistent; yet, they are not wholly non-existent, because, through that Spirit which alone exists absolutely, they have been made something from nothing.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Proalogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

His expression is identical with himself, and consubstantial with him, since there are not two spirits, but one.

BUT now, having considered these questions regarding the properties of the supreme Nature, which have occurred to me in following the guidance of reason to the present point, I think it reasonable to examine this Spirit's expression (locutio), through which all things were created. For, though all that has been ascertained regarding this expression above has the inflexible strength of reason, I am especially compelled to a more careful discussion of
this expression by the fact that it is proved to be identical with the supreme Spirit himself. For, if this Spirit created nothing except through himself, and whatever was created by him was created through that expression, how shall that expression be anything else than what the Spirit himself is?

Furthermore, the facts already discovered declare irrefutably that nothing at all ever could, or can, exist, except the creative Spirit and its creatures. But it is impossible that the expression of this Spirit is included among created beings; for every created being was created through that expression; but that expression could not be created through itself. For nothing can be created through itself, since every creature exists later than that through which it is created, and nothing exists later than itself. The alternative remaining is, then, that this expression of the supreme Spirit, since it cannot be a creature, is no other than the supreme Spirit. Therefore, this expression itself can be conceived of as nothing else than the intelligence (intelligentia) of this Spirit, by which he conceives of (intelligit) all things. For, to him, what is expressing anything, according to this kind of expression, but conceiving of it? For he does not, like man, ever fail to express what he conceives.

If, then, the supremely simple Nature is nothing else than what its intelligence is, just as it is identical with its wisdom, necessarily, in the same way, it is nothing else than what its expression is. But, since it is already manifest that the supreme Spirit is one only, and altogether indivisible, this his expression must be so consubstantial with him, that they are not two spirits, but one.

CHAPTER XXX.
This expression does not consist of more words than one, but is one Word. Why, then, should I have any further doubt regarding that question which I dismissed above as doubtful, namely, whether this expression consists of more words than one, or of one? For, if it is so consubstantial with the supreme Nature that they are not two spirits, but one; assuredly, just as the latter is supremely simple, so is the former. It therefore does not consist of more words than one, but is one Word, through which all things were created.

CHAPTER XXXI.
This Word itself is not the likeness of created beings, but the reality of their being, while created beings are a kind of likeness of reality. --What natures are greater and more excellent than others.

But here, it seems to me, there arises a question that is not easy to answer, and yet must not be left in any ambiguity. For all words of that sort by which we express any objects in our mind, that is, conceive of them, are likenesses and images of the objects to which they correspond; and every likeness or image is more or less true, according as it more or less closely imitates the object of which it is the likeness. What, then, is to be our position regarding the Word by which all things are expressed, and through which all were created? Will it be, or will it not be, the likeness of the things that have been created through itself? For, if it is itself the true likeness of mutable things, it is not consubstantial with supreme immutability; which is false. But, if it is not altogether true, and is merely a sort of likeness of mutable things, then the Word of supreme Truth is not altogether true; which is absurd. But if it has no likeness to mutable things, how were they created after its example? But perhaps nothing of this ambiguity will remain if -- as the reality of a man is
said to be the living man, but the likeness or image of a man in his picture -- so the reality of being is conceived of as in the Word, whose essence exists so supremely that in a certain sense it alone exists; while in these things which, in comparison with that Essence, are in some sort non-existent, and, yet were made something through, and according to, that Word, a kind of imitation of that supreme Essence is found.

For, in this way the Word of supreme Truth, which is also itself supreme Truth, will experience neither gain nor loss, according as it is more or less like its creatures. But the necessary inference will rather be, that every created being exists in so much the greater degree, or is so much the more excellent, the more like it is to what exists supremely, and is supremely great.

For on this account, perhaps, -- nay, not perhaps, but certainly, -- does every mind judge natures in any way alive to excel those that are not alive, the sentient to excel the non-sentient, the rational the irrational. For, since the supreme Nature, after a certain unique manner of its own, not only exists, but lives, and is sentient and rational, it is clear that, of all existing beings, that which is in some way alive is more like this supreme Nature, than that which is not alive at all; and what, in any way, even by a corporeal sense, cognises anything, is more like this Nature than what is not sentient at all; and what is rational, more than what is incapable of reasoning.

But it is clear, for a like reason, that certain natures exist in a greater or less degree than others. For, just as that is more excellent by nature which, through its natural essence, 91

is nearer to the most excellent Being, so certainly that nature exists in a greater degree, whose essence is more like the supreme Essence. And I think that this can easily be ascertained as follows. If we should conceive any substance that is alive, and sentient, and rational, to be deprived of its reason, then of its sentience, then of its life, and finally of the bare existence that remains, who would fail to understand that the substance that is thus destroyed, little by little, is gradually brought to smaller and smaller degrees of existence, and at last to non-existence? But the attributes which, taken each by itself, reduce an essence to less and less degrees of existence, if assumed in order, lead it to greater and greater degrees.

It is evident, then, that a living substance exists in a greater degree than one that is not living, a sentient than a non-sentient, and a rational than a non-rational. So, there is no doubt that every substance exists in a greater degree, and is more excellent, according as it is more like that substance which exists supremely and is supremely excellent.

It is sufficiently clear, then, that in the Word, through which all things were created, is not their likeness, but their true and simple essence; while, in the things created, there is not a simple and absolute essence, but an imperfect imitation of that true Essence. Hence, it necessarily follows, that this Word is not more nor less true, according to its likeness to the things created, but every created nature has a higher essence and dignity, the more it is seen to approach that Word.

CHAPTER XXXII.
The supreme Spirit expresses himself by a coeternal Word.

But since this is true, how can what is simple Truth be the Word corresponding to those objects, of which it is not the likeness? Since every word by which an object is thus mentally expressed is the likeness of that object, if this is not the word corresponding to the objects that have been created through it, how shall we be sure that it is the Word?

For every word is a word corresponding to some object. Therefore, if there were no creature,
there would be no word.

Are we to conclude, then, that if there were no creature, that Word would not exist at all, which is the supreme self-sufficient Essence? Or, would the supreme Being itself, perhaps, which is the Word still be the eternal Being, but not the Word, if nothing were ever created through that Being? For, to what has not been, and is not, and will not be, then can be no word corresponding.

But, according to this reasoning, if there were never any being but the supreme Spirit, there would be no word at all in him. If there were no word in him, he would express nothing to himself; if he expressed nothing to himself, since, for him, expressing anything is the same with understanding or conceiving of it (intelligere), he would not understand or conceive of anything; if he understood or conceived of nothing, then the supreme Wisdom, which is nothing else than this Spirit, would understand or conceive of nothing; which is most absurd.

What is to be inferred? For, if it conceived of nothing, how would it be the supreme Wisdom? Or, if there were in no wise anything but it, of what would it conceive? Would it not conceive of itself? But how can it be even imagined that the supreme Wisdom, at any time does not conceive of itself; since a rational mind can remember not only itself, but that supreme Wisdom, and conceive of that Wisdom and of itself? For, if the human mind could have no memory or concept of that Wisdom or of itself, it would not distinguish itself at all from irrational creatures, and that Wisdom from the whole created world, in silent meditation by itself, as my mind does now.

Hence, that Spirit, supreme as he is eternal, is thus eternally mindful of himself, and conceives of himself after the likeness of a rational mind; nay, not after the likeness of anything; but in the first place that Spirit, and the rational mind after its likeness. But, if he conceives of himself eternally, he expresses himself eternally. If he expresses himself eternally, his Word is eternally with him. Whether, therefore, it be thought of in connection with no other existing being, or with other existing beings, the Word of that Spirit must be coeternal with him.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

He utters himself and what he creates by a single consubstantial Word.

BUT here, in my inquiry concerning the Word, by which the Creator expresses all that he creates, is suggested the word by which he, who creates all, expresses himself. Does he express himself, then, by one word, and what he creates by another; or does he rather express whatever he creates by the same word whereby he expresses himself?

For this Word also, by which he expresses himself, must be identical with himself, as is evidently true of the Word by which he expresses his creatures. For since, even if nothing but that supreme Spirit ever existed, urgent reason would still require the existence of that word by which he expresses himself, what is more true than that his Word is nothing else than what he himself is? Therefore, if he expresses himself and what he creates, by a Word consubstantial with himself, it is manifest that of the Word by which he expresses himself, and of the Word by which he expresses the created world, the substance is one. How, then, if the substance is one, are there two words? But, perhaps, identity of substance does not compel us to admit a single Word. For the Creator himself, who speaks in these words, has the same substance with them, and yet is not the Word. But, undoubtedly the word by which the supreme Wisdom expresses itself may most fitly be called its Word on the former ground, namely, that it contains the perfect likeness of that
Wisdom.
For, on no ground can it be denied that when a rational mind conceives of itself in
meditation the image of itself arises in its thought, or rather the thought of the mind is
itself its image, after its likeness, as if formed from its impression. For, whatever object
the mind, either through representation of the body or through reason, desires to conceive
of truly, it at least attempts to express its likeness, so far as it is able, in the mental concept
itself. And the more truly it succeeds in this, the more truly does it think of the object itself;
and, indeed, this fact is observed more clearly when it thinks of something else which it
is not, and especially when it thinks of a material body. For, when I think of a man I know,
in his absence, the vision of my thought forms such an image as I have acquired in memory.

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
through my ocular vision and this image is the word corresponding to the man I express
by thinking of him.
The rational mind, then, when it conceives of itself in thought, has with itself its
image born of itself that is, its thought in its likeness, as if formed from its impression,
although it cannot, except in thought alone, separate itself from its image, which image
is its word.
Who, then, can deny that the supreme Wisdom, when it conceives of itself by
expressing itself, begets a likeness of itself consubstantial with it, namely, its Word? And
this Word, although of a subject so uniquely important nothing can be said with sufficient
propriety, may still not inappropriately be called the image of that Wisdom, its
representation, just as it is called his likeness.
But the Word by which the Creator expresses the created world is not at all, in the
same way, a word corresponding to the created world, since it is not this world’s likeness,
but its elementary essence. It therefore follows, that he does not express the created world
itself by a word corresponding to the created world. To what, then, does the word belong,
whereby he expresses it, if he does not express it by a word, belonging to itself? For what
he expresses, he expresses by a word, and a word must belong to something, that is, it is
the likeness of something. But if he expresses nothing but himself or his created world he
can express nothing, except by a word corresponding to himself or to something else.
So, if he expresses nothing by a word belonging to the created world, whatever he
expresses, he expresses by the Word corresponding to himself. By one and the same Word,
then, he expresses himself and whatever he has made.

CHAPTER XXXIV.
How he can express the created world by his Word.
BUT how can objects so different as the creative and the created being be expressed
by one Word, especially since that Word itself is coeternal with him who expresses them,
while the created world is not coeternal with him? Perhaps, because he himself is supreme
Wisdom and supreme Reason, in which are all things that have been created; just as a
work which is made after one of the arts, not only when it is made, but before it is made,
and after it is destroyed, is always in respect of the art itself nothing else than what that
art is.
Hence, when the supreme Spirit expresses himself, he expresses all created beings.
For, both before they were created, and now that they have been created, and after they
are decayed or changed in any way, they are ever in him not what they are in themselves,
but what this Spirit himself is. For, in themselves they are mutable beings, created according
to immutable reason; while in him is the true first being, and the first reality of existence,
the more like unto which those beings are in any way, the more really and excellently do they exist. Thus, it may reasonably be declared that, when the supreme Spirit expresses himself, he also expresses whatever has been created by one and the same Word.

CHAPTER XXXV.
Whatever has been created is in his Word and knowledge, life and truth.

BUT, since it is established that his word is consubstantial with him, and perfectly like him, it necessarily follows that all things that exist in him exist also, and in the same way, in his Word. Whatever has been created, then, whether alive or not alive, or howsoever it exists in itself, is very life and truth in him.

But, since knowing is the same to the supreme Spirit as conceiving or expressing, he must know all things that he knows in the same way in which he expresses or conceives of them. Therefore, just as all things are in his Word life and truth, so are they in his knowledge.

CHAPTER XXXVI.
In how incomprehensible a way he expresses or knows the objects created by him.

HENCE, it may be most clearly comprehended that how this Spirit expresses, or how he knows the created world, cannot be comprehended by human knowledge. For none can doubt that created substances exist far differently in themselves than in our knowledge. For, in themselves they exist by virtue of their own being; while in our knowledge is not their being, but their likeness.

We conclude, then, that they exist more truly in themselves than in our knowledge, in the same degree in which they exist more truly anywhere by virtue of their own being, than by virtue of their likeness. Therefore, since this is also an established truth, that every created substance exists more truly in the Word, that is, in the intelligence of the Creator, than it does in itself, in the same degree in which the creative being exists more truly than the created; how can the human mind comprehend of what kind is that expression and that knowledge, which is so much higher and truer than created substances; if our knowledge is as far surpassed by those substances as their likeness is removed from their being?

CHAPTER XXXVII.
Whatever his relation to his creatures, this relation his Word also sustains:

yet both do not simultaneously sustain this relation as more than one being.

BUT since it has already been clearly demonstrated that the supreme Spirit created all things through his Word, did not the Word itself also create all things? For, since it is consubstantial with him, it must be the supreme essence of that of which it is the Word. But there is no supreme Essence, except one, which is the only creator and the only beginning of all things which have been created. For this Essence, through no other than itself, alone created all things from nothing. Hence, whatever the supreme Spirit creates, the same his Word also creates, and in the same way.

Whatever relation, then, the supreme Spirit bears to what he creates, this relation his Word also bears, and in the same way. And yet, both do not bear it simultaneously,
as more than one, since there are not more supreme creative essences than one. Therefore, just as he is the creator and the beginning of the world, so is his Word also; and yet there are not two, but one creator and one beginning.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.
It cannot be explained why they are two, although they must be so.

OUR careful attention is therefore demanded by a peculiarity which, though most unusual in other beings, seems to belong to the supreme Spirit and his Word. For, it is certain that in each of these separately and in both simultaneously, whatever they are so exists that it is separately perfected in both, and yet does not admit plurality in the two.

For although, taken separately, he is perfectly supreme Truth and Creator, and his Word is supreme Truth and Creator; yet both at once are not two truths or two creators.

But although this is true, yet it is most remarkably clear that neither he, whose is the Word, can be his own Word, nor can the Word be he, whose Word it is, although in so far as regards either what they are substantially, or what relation they bear to the created world, they ever preserve an indivisible unity. But in respect of the fact that he does not derive existence from that Word, but that Word from him, they admit an ineffable plurality, ineffable, certainly, for although necessity requires that they be two, it can in no wise be explained why they are two.

For although they may perhaps be called two equals, or some other mutual relation may in like manner be attributed to them, yet if it were to be asked what it is in these very relative expressions with reference to which they are used, it cannot be expressed plurally, as one speaks of two equal lines, or two like men. For, neither are there two equal spirits nor two equal creators, nor is there any dual expression which indicates either their essence or their relation to the created world; and there is no dual expression which designates the peculiar relation of the one to the other, since there are neither two words nor two images.

74

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

For the Word, by virtue of the fact that it is a word or image, bears a relation to the other, because it is Word and image only as it is the Word and image of something; and so peculiar are these attributes to the one that they are by no means predicable of the other.

For he, whose is the Word and image, is neither image nor Word. It is, therefore, evident that it cannot be explained why they are two, the supreme Spirit and the Word, although by certain properties of each they are required to be two. For it is the property of the one to derive existence from the other, and the property of that other that the first derives existence from him.

CHAPTER XXXIX.
This Word derives existence from the supreme Spirit by birth.

AND this truth, it seems, can be expressed in no more familiar terms than when it is said to be the property of the one, to be born of the other; and of the other, that the first is born of him. For it is now clearly proved, that the Word of the supreme Spirit does not derive existence from him, as do those beings which have been created by him; but as Creator from Creator, supreme Being from supreme Being. And, to dispose of this comparison with all brevity, it is one and the same being which derives existence from one and the same being, and on such terms, that it in no wise derives existence, except from that being.

Since it is evident, then, that the Word of the supreme Spirit so derives existence
from him alone, that it is completely analogous to the offspring of a parent; and that it
does not derive existence from him, as if it were created by him, doubtless no more fitting
supposition can be entertained regarding its origin, than that it derives existence from the
supreme Spirit by birth (nascendo).
For, innumerable objects are unhesitatingly said to be born of those things from
which they derive existence, although they possess no such likeness to those things of
which they are said to be born, as offspring to a parent. -- We say, for instance, that the
hair is born of the head, or the fruit of the tree, although the hair does not resemble the
head, nor the fruit the tree.
If, then, many objects of this sort are without absurdity said to be born, so much
the more fittingly may the Word of the supreme Spirit be said to derive existence from
him by birth, the more perfect the resemblance it bears to him, like a child’s to its parent,
through deriving existence from him.
CHAPTER XL.
He is most truly a parent, and that Word his offspring.
75
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
BUT if it is most properly said to be born, and is so like him of whom it is born, why
should it be esteemed like, as a child is like his parent? why should it not rather be declared,
that the Spirit is more truly a parent, and the Word his offspring, the more he alone is
sufficient to effect this birth, and the more what is born expresses his likeness? For, among
other beings which we know bear the relations of parent and child, none so begets as to
be solely and without accessory, sufficient to the generation of offspring; and none is so
begotten that without any admixture of unlikeness, it shows complete likeness to its parent.
If, then, the Word of the supreme Spirit so derives its complete existence from the being of that
Spirit
himself alone, and is so uniquely like him, that no child ever so completely derives existence from
its parent,
and none is so like its parent, certainly the relation of parent and offspring can be ascribed to no
beings so
consistently as to the supreme Spirit and his Word. Hence, it is his property to be most truly
parent, and its
to be most truly his offspring.
CHAPTER XLI.
He most truly begets, and it is most truly begotten.
BUT it will be impossible to establish this proposition, unless, in equal degree, he most
truly begets, and it is most truly begotten. As the former supposition is evidently true, so
the latter is necessarily most certain. Hence, it belongs to the supreme Spirit most truly to
beget, and to his Word to be most truly begotten.
CHAPTER XLI.
It is the property of the one to be most truly progenitor and Father, and of
the other to be the begotten and Son.
I should certainly be glad, and perhaps able, now to reach the conclusion, that he is
103
most truly the Father, while this Word is most truly his Son. But I think that even this
question should not be neglected: whether it is more fitting to call them Father and Son,
than mother and daughter, since in them there is no distinction of sex.
For, if it is consistent with the nature of the one to be the Father, and of his offspring
to be the Son, because both are Spirit (Spiritus, masculine); why is it not, with equal reason,
consistent with the nature of the one to be the mother, and the other the daughter, since both are truth and wisdom (veritas et sapientia, feminine)?

Or, is it because in these natures that have a difference of sex, it belongs to the superior sex to be father or son, and to the inferior to be mother or daughter? And this is certainly a natural fact in most instances, but in some the contrary is true, as among certain kinds of birds, among which the female is always larger and stronger, while the male is smaller and weaker.

At any rate, it is more consistent to call the supreme Spirit father than mother, for this reason, that the first and principal cause of offspring is always in the father. For, if the maternal cause is ever in some way preceded by the paternal, it is exceedingly inconsistent that the name mother should be attached to that parent with which, for the generation of offspring, no other cause is associated, and which no other precedes. It is, therefore, most true that the supreme Spirit is Father of his offspring. But, if the son is always more like the father than is the daughter, while nothing is more like the supreme Father than his offspring; then it is most true that this offspring is not a daughter, but a Son.

Hence, just as it is the property of the one most truly to beget, and of the other to be begotten, so it is the property of the one to be most truly progenitor, and of the other to be most truly begotten. And as the one is most truly the parent, and the other his offspring, so the one is most truly Father, and the other most truly Son.

CHAPTER XLIII.
Consideration of the common attributes of both and the individual properties of each.

NOW that so many and so important properties of each have been discovered, whereby a strange plurality, as ineffable as it is inevitable, is proved to exist in the supreme unity, I think it most interesting to reflect, again and again, upon so unfathomable a mystery. For observe: although it is so impossible that he who begets, and he who is begotten, are the same, and that parent and offspring are the same --so impossible that necessarily one must be the progenitor and the other the begotten, and one the Father, the other the Son; yet, here it is so necessary that he who begets and he who is begotten shall be the same, and also that parent and offspring shall be the same, that the progenitor cannot be any other than what the begotten is, nor the Father any other than the Son.

And although the one is one, and the other another, so that it is altogether evident that they are two; yet that which the one and the other are is in such a way one and the same, that it is a most obscure mystery why they are two. For, in such a way is one the Father and the other the Son, that when I speak of both I perceive that I have spoken of two; and yet so identical is that which both Father and Son are, that I do not understand why they are two of whom I have spoken.

For, although the Father separately is the perfectly supreme Spirit, and the Son separately is the perfectly supreme Spirit, yet, so are the Spirit-Father and the Spirit-Son one and the same being, that the Father and the Son are not two spirits, but one Spirit.

For, just as to separate properties of separate beings, plurality is not attributed, since they are not properties of two things, so, what is common to both preserves an indivisible unity, although it belongs, as a whole, to them taken separately.

For, as there are not two fathers or two sons, but one Father and one Son, since separate properties belong to separate beings, so there are not two spirits, but one Spirit;
although it belongs both to the Father, taken separately, and to the Son, taken separately, to be the perfect Spirit. For so opposite are their relations, that the one never assumes the property of the other; so harmonious are they in nature, that the one ever contains the essence of the other. For they are so diverse by virtue of the fact that the one is the Father and the other the Son, that the Father is never called the Son, nor the Son the Father; and they are so identical, by virtue of their substance, that the essence of the Son is ever in the Father, and the essence of the Father in the Son.

CHAPTER XLIV.
How one is the essence of the other.

HENCE, even if one is called the essence of the other, there is no departure from truth; but the supreme simplicity and unity of their common nature is thus honored. For, not as one conceives of a man’s wisdom, through which man is wise, though he cannot be wise through himself, can we thus understand the statement that the Father is essence of the Son, and the Son the essence of the Father. We cannot understand that the Son is existent through the Father, and the Father through the Son, as if the one could not be existent except through the other, just as a man cannot be wise except through wisdom. For, as the supreme Wisdom is ever wise through itself, so the supreme Essence ever exists through itself. But, the perfectly supreme Essence is the Father, and the perfectly supreme Essence is the Son. Hence, the perfect Father and the perfect Son exist, each through himself, just as each is wise through himself.

For the Son is not the less perfect essence or wisdom because he is an essence born of the essence of the Father, and a wisdom born of the wisdom of the Father; but he would be a less perfect essence or wisdom if he did not exist through himself, and were not wise through himself.

For, there is no inconsistency between the subsistence of the Son through himself, and his deriving existence from his Father. For, as the Father has essence, and wisdom, and life in himself; so that not through another’s, but through his own, essence he exists; through his own wisdom he is wise; through his own life he lives; so, by generation, he grants to his Son the possession of essence, and wisdom, and life in himself, so that not through an extraneous essence, wisdom, and life, but through his own, he subsists, is wise, and lives; otherwise, the existence of Father and Son will not be the same, nor will the Son be equal to the Father. But it has already been clearly proved how false this supposition is.

Hence, there is no inconsistency between the subsistence of the Son through himself, and his deriving existence from the Father, since he must have from the Father this very power of subsisting through himself. For, if a wise man should teach me his wisdom, which I formerly lacked, he might without impropriety be said to teach me by this very wisdom of his. But, although my wisdom would derive its existence and the fact of its being from his wisdom, yet when my wisdom once existed, it would be no other essence than its own, nor would it be wise except through itself. Much more, then, the eternal Father’s eternal Son, who so derives existence from the Father that they are not two essences, subsists, is wise, and lives through himself. Hence, it is inconceivable that the Father should be the essence of the Son, or the Son the
essence of the Father, on the ground that the one could not subsist through itself, but must subsist through the other. But in order to indicate how they share in an essence supremely simple and supremely one, it may consistently be said, and conceived, that the one is so identical with the other that the one possesses the essence of the other.

On these grounds, then, since there is obviously no difference between possessing an essence and being an essence, just as the one possesses the essence of the other, so the one is the essence of the other, that is, the one has the same existence with the other.

CHAPTER XLV.
The Son may more appropriately be called the essence of the Father, than the Father the essence of the Son: and in like manner the Son is the virtue, wisdom, etc., of the Father.

AND although, for reasons we have noted, this is true, it is much more proper to call the Son the essence of the Father than the Father the essence of the Son. For, since the Father has his being from none other than himself, it is not wholly appropriate to say that he has the being of another than himself; while, since the Son has his being from the Father, and has the same essence with his Father, he may most appropriately be said to have the essence of his Father.

Hence, seeing that neither has an essence, except by being an essence; as the Son is more appropriately conceived to have the essence of the Father than the Father to have the essence of the Son, so the Son may more fitly be called the essence of the Father than the Father the essence of the Son. For this single explanation proves, with sufficiently emphatic brevity, that the Son not only has the same essence with the Father, but has this very essence from the Father; so that, to assert that the Son is the essence of the Father is the same as to assert that the Son is not a different essence from the essence of the Father, nay, from the Father essence.

In like manner, therefore, the Son is the virtue of the Father, and his wisdom, and justice, and whatever is consistently attributed to the essence of the supreme Spirit.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Yet, some of these truths, which may be thus expounded and conceived of in another way.

YET, some of these truths, which are thus expounded may also be conceived of in another way.

How some of these truths which are thus expounded may also be conceived of in another way.

The Son is more appropriately conceived to have the essence of the Father than the Father to have the essence of the Son, so the Son may more fitly be called the essence of the Father than the Father the essence of the Son. For this single explanation proves, with sufficiently emphatic brevity, that the Son not only has the same essence with the Father, but has this very essence from the Father; so that, to assert that the Son is the essence of the Father is the same as to assert that the Son is not a different essence from the essence of the Father, nay, from the Father essence.

In like manner, therefore, the Son is the virtue of the Father, and his wisdom, and justice, and whatever is consistently attributed to the essence of the supreme Spirit.

CHAPTER XLVII.
The Son is the intelligence of intelligence and the Truth of truth
BUT if the very substance of the Father is intelligence, and knowledge, and wisdom,
110
and truth, it is consequently inferred that as the Son is the intelligence, and knowledge,
and wisdom, and truth, of the paternal substance, so he is the intelligence of intelligence,
the knowledge of knowledge, the wisdom of wisdom, and the truth of truth.
CHAPTER XLVIII.
How the Son is the intelligence or wisdom of memory or the memory of the
Father and of memory.
BUT what is to be our notion of memory? Is the Son to be regarded as the intelligence
conceiving of memory, or as the memory of the Father, or as the memory of memory?
Indeed, since it cannot be denied that the supreme Wisdom remembers itself, nothing can
be more consistent than to regard the Father as memory, just as the Son is the Word;
because the Word is apparently born of memory, a fact that is more clearly seen in the
case of the human mind.
80
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
For, since the human mind is not always thinking of itself, though it ever remembers
itself, it is clear that, when it thinks of itself, the word corresponding to it is born of memory.
Hence, it appears that, if it always thought of itself, its word would be always born of
memory. For, to think of an object of which we have remembrance, this is to express it
mentally; while the word corresponding to the object is the thought itself, formed after
the likeness of that object from memory.
Hence, it may be clearly apprehended in the supreme Wisdom, which always thinks
of itself, just as it remembers itself, that, of the eternal remembrance of it, its coeternal
111
Word is born. Therefore, as the Word is properly conceived of as the child, the memory
most appropriately takes the name of parent. If, then, the child which is born of the supreme
Spirit alone is the child of his memory, there can be no more logical conclusion than that
his memory is himself. For not in respect of the fact that he remembers himself does he
exist in his own memory, like ideas that exist in the human memory, without being the
memory itself; but he so remembers himself that he is his own memory.
It therefore follows that, just as the Son is the intelligence or wisdom of the Father,
so he is that of the memory of the Father. But, regarding whatever the Son has wisdom or
understanding, this he likewise remembers. The Son is, therefore, the memory of the
Father, and the memory of memory, that is, the memory that remembers the Father, who
is memory, just as he is the wisdom of the Father, and the wisdom of wisdom, that is, the
wisdom wise regarding the wisdom of the Father; and the Son is indeed memory, born
of memory, as he is wisdom, born of wisdom, while the Father is memory and wisdom
born of none.
CHAPTER XLIX.
The supreme Spirit loves himself.
BUT, while I am here considering with interest the individual properties and the
common attributes of Father and Son, I find none in them more pleasurable to contemplate
than the feeling of mutual love. For how absurd it would be to deny that the supreme
Spirit loves himself, just as he remembers himself, and conceives of himself! since even
the rational human mind is convinced that it can love both itself and him, because it can
112
remember itself and him, and can conceive of itself and of him; for idle and almost useless
is the memory and conception of any object, unless, so far as reason requires, the object
itself is loved or condemned. The supreme Spirit, then, loves himself, just as he remembers himself and conceives of himself.

CHAPTER LI.
81
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
The same love proceeds equally from Father and Son.

IT is, at any rate, clear to the rational man that he does not remember himself or conceive of himself because he loves himself, but he loves himself because he remembers himself and conceives of himself; and that he could not love himself if he did not remember and conceive of himself. For no object is loved without remembrance or conception of it; while many things are retained in memory and conceived of that are not loved.

It is evident, then, that the love of the supreme Spirit proceeds from the fact that he remember himself and conceives of himself (se intelligit). But if, by the memory of the supreme Spirit, we understand the Father, and by his intelligence by which he conceives of anything, the Son, it is manifest that the love of the supreme Spirit proceeds equally from Father and Son.

CHAPTER LI.
Each loves himself and the other with equal love.

BUT if the supreme Spirit loves himself, no doubt the Father loves himself, the Son loves himself, and the one the other; since the Father separately is the supreme Spirit, and the Son separately is the supreme Spirit, and both at once one Spirit. And, since each equally remembers himself and the other, and conceives equally of himself and the other; and since what is loved, or loves in the Father, or in the Son, is altogether the same, necessarily each loves himself and the other with an equal love.

CHAPTER LII.
This love is as great as the supreme Spirit himself.

HOW great, then, is this love of the supreme Spirit, common as it is to Father and Son! But, if he loves himself as much as he remembers and conceives of himself; and, moreover, remembers and conceives of himself in as great a degree as that in which his essence exists, since otherwise it cannot exist; undoubtedly his love is as great as he himself is.

CHAPTER LIII.
This love is identical with the supreme Spirit, and yet it is itself with the Father and the Son one spirit.

82
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
BUT, what can be equal to the supreme Spirit, except the supreme Spirit? That love is, then, the supreme Spirit. Hence, if no creature, that is, if nothing other than the supreme Spirit, the Father and the Son, ever existed; nevertheless, Father and Son would love themselves and one another.

It therefore follows that this love is nothing else than what the Father and the Son are, which is the supreme Being. But, since there cannot be more than one supreme Being, what inference can be more necessary than that Father and Son and the love of both are one supreme Being? Therefore, this love is supreme Wisdom, supreme Truth, the supreme Good, and whatsoever can be attributed to the substance the supreme Spirit.

CHAPTER LIV.
It proceeds as a whole from the Father, and as a whole from the Son, and yet does not exist except as one love.
IT should be carefully considered whether there are two loves, one proceeding from
the Father, the other from the Son; or one, not proceeding as a whole from one, but in part
from the Father, in part from the Son; or neither more than one, nor one proceeding in
part from each separately, but one proceeding as a whole from each separately, and likewise
as a whole from the two at once.

But the solution of such a question can, without doubt, be apprehended from the
fact that this love proceeds not from that in which Father and Son are more than one, but
from that in which they are one. For, not from their relations, which are more than one,
but from their essence itself, which does not admit of plurality, do Father and Son equally
produce so great a good.

Therefore, as the Father separately is the supreme Spirit, and the Son separately is
the supreme Spirit, and Father and Son at once are not two, but one Spirit; so from the
Father separately the love of the supreme Spirit emanates as a whole, and from the Son
as a whole, and at once from Father and Son, not as two, but as one and the same whole.

CHAPTER LV.

This love is not their Son.

SINCE this love, then, has its being equally from Father and Son, and is so like both
that it is in no wise unlike them, but is altogether identical with them; is it to be regarded
as their Son or offspring? But, as the Word, so soon as it is examined, declares itself to be
the offspring of him from whom it derives existence, by displaying a manifold likeness
to its parent; so love plainly denies that it sustains such a relation, since, so long as it is
conceived to proceed from Father and Son, it does not at once show to one who

83
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
contemplates it so evident a likeness to him from whom it derives existence, although
deliberate reasoning teaches us that it is altogether identical with Father and Son.

Therefore, if it is their offspring, either one of them is its father and the other its
mother, or each is its father, or mother, -- suppositions which apparently contradict all
truth. For, since it proceeds in precisely the same way from the Father as from the Son,
regard for truth does not allow the relations of Father and Son to it to be described by
different words; therefore, the one is not its father, the other its mother. But that there are
two beings which, taken separately, bear each the perfect relation of father or mother,
differing in no respect, to some one being --of this no existing nature allows proof by any
example.

Hence, both, that is, Father and Son, are not father and mother of the love emanating

116
from them. It therefore is apparently most inconsistent with truth that their identical love
should be their son or offspring.

CHAPTER LVI.

Only the Father begets and is unbegotten; only the son is begotten; only love
neither begotten nor unbegotten.

STILL, it is apparent that this love can neither be said, in accordance with the usage of
common speech, to be unbegotten, nor can it so properly be said to be begotten, as the
Word is said to be begotten. For we often say of a thing that it is begotten of that from
which it derives existence, as when we say that light or heat is begotten of fire, or any
effect of its cause.

On this ground, then, love, proceeding from supreme Spirit, cannot be declared to
be wholly unbegotten, but it cannot so properly be said to be begotten as can the Word;
since the Word is the most true offspring and most true Son, while it is manifest that love
is by no means offspring or son. He alone, therefore, may, or rather should, be called begetter and unbegotten, whose is the Word; since he alone is Father and parent, and in no wise derives existence from another; and the Word alone should be called begotten, which alone is Son and offspring. But only the love of both is neither begotten nor unbegotten, because it is neither son nor offspring, and yet does in some sort derive existence from another.

CHAPTER LVII.
This love is uncreated and creator, as are Father and Son; and yet it is with them not three, but one uncreated and creative being. And it may be called the Spirit of Father and Son.

84
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
BUT, since this love separately is the supreme Being, as are Father and Son, and yet at once Father and Son, and the love of both are not more than one, but one supreme Being, which alone was created by none, and created all things through no other than itself; since this is true, necessarily, as the Father separately, and the Son separately, are each uncreated and creator, so, too, love separately is uncreated and creator, and yet all three at once are not more than one, but one uncreated and creative being.
None, therefore, makes or begets or creates the Father, but the Father alone begets, but does not create, the Son; while Father and Son alike do not create or beget, but somehow, if such an expression may be used, breathe their love: for, although the supremely immutable Being does not breathe after our fashion, yet the truth that this Being sends forth this, its love, which proceeds from it, not by departing from it, but by deriving existence from it, can perhaps be no better expressed than by saying that this Being breathes its love.
But, if this expression is admissible, as the Word of the supreme Being is its Son, so its love may fittingly enough be called its breath (Spiritus). So that, though it is itself essentially spirit, as are Father and Son, they are not regarded as the spirits of anything, since neither is the Father born of any other nor the Son of the Father, as it were, by breathing; while that love is regarded as the Breath or Spirit of both since from both breathing in their transcendent way it mysteriously proceeds.
And this love, too, it seems, from the fact there is community of being between Father and Son, may, not unreasonably, take, as it were its own, some name which is common to Father and Son; if there is any exigency demanding that it should have a name proper to itself. And, indeed, if this love is actually designated by the name Spirit, as by its own name, since this name equally describes the Father and the Son: it will be useful to this effect also, that through this name it shall be signified that this love is identical with Father and Son, although it has its being from them.

CHAPTER LVIII.
As the Son is the essence or wisdom of the Father in the sense that he has the same essence or wisdom that the Father has: so likewise the Spirit is the essence and wisdom etc. of Father and Son.

ALSO, just as the Son is the substance and wisdom and virtue of the Father, in the sense that he has the same essence and wisdom and virtue with the Father; so it may be conceived that the Spirit of both is the essence or wisdom or virtue of Father and Son, since it has altogether the same essence, wisdom, and virtue with these.

CHAPTER LIX.
IT is a most interesting consideration that the Father, and the Son, and the Spirit of both, exist in one another with such equality that no one of them surpasses another. For, not only is each in such a way the perfectly supreme Being that, nevertheless, all three at once exist only as one supreme Being, but the same truth is no less capable of proof when each is taken separately.

For the Father exists as a whole in the Son, and in the Spirit common to them; and the Son in the Father, and in the Spirit; and the Spirit in the Father, and in the Son; for the memory of the supreme Being exists, as a whole, in its intelligence and in its love, and the intelligence in its memory and love, and the love in its memory and intelligence. For the supreme Spirit conceives of (intelligit) its memory as a whole, and loves it, and remembers its intelligence as a whole, and loves it as a whole, and remembers its love as a whole, and conceives of it as a whole.

But we mean by the memory, the Father; by the intelligence, the Son; by the love, the Spirit of both. In such equality, therefore, do Father and Son and Spirit embrace one another, and exist in one another, that none of them can be proved to surpass another or to exist without it.

CHAPTER LX.
To none of these is another necessary that he may remember, conceive, or love: since each taken by himself is memory and intelligence and love and all that is necessarily inherent in the supreme Being.

BUT, while this discussion engages our attention, I think that this truth, which occurs to me as I reflect, ought to be most carefully commended to memory. The Father must be so conceived of as memory, the Son as intelligence, and the Spirit as love, that it shall also be understood that the Father does not need the Son, or the Spirit common to them, nor the Son the Father, or the same Spirit, nor the Spirit the Father, or the Son: as if the Father were able, through his own power, only to remember, but to conceive only through the Son, and to love only through the Spirit of himself and his son; and the Son could only conceive or understand (intelligere) through himself, but remembered through the Father, and loved through his Spirit; and this Spirit were able through himself alone only to love, while the Father remembers for him, and the Son conceives or understands (intelligit) for him.

For, since among these three each one taken separately is so perfectly the supreme Being and the supreme Wisdom that through himself he remembers and conceives and loves, it must be that none of these three needs another, in order either to remember or to conceive or to love. For, each taken separately is essentially memory and intelligence and love, and all that is necessarily inherent in the supreme Being.

CHAPTER LXI.
Yet there are not three, but one Father and one Son and one Spirit.

AND here I see a question arises. For, if the Father is intelligence and love as well as memory, and the Son is memory and love as well as intelligence, and the Spirit is no less memory and intelligence than love; how is it that the Father is not a Son and a Spirit of some being? and why is not the Son the Father and the Spirit of some being? and why is
not this Spirit the Father of some being, and the Son of some being? For it was understood, that the Father was memory, the Son intelligence, and the Spirit love.
But this question is easily answered, if we consider the truths already disclosed in our discussion. For the Father, even though he is intelligence and love, is not for that reason the Son or the Spirit of any being; since he is not intelligence, begotten of any, or love, proceeding from any, but whatever he is, he is only the begetter, and is he from whom the other proceeds.
The Son also, even though by his own power he remembers and loves, is not, for that reason, the Father or the Spirit of any; since he is not memory as begetter, or love as proceeding from another after the likeness of his Spirit, but whatever being he has he is only begotten and is he from whom the Spirit proceeds.
The Spirit, too, is not necessarily Father or Son, because his own memory and intelligence are sufficient to him; since he is not memory as begetter, or intelligence as begotten, but he alone, whatever he is, proceeds or emanates.
What, then, forbids the conclusion that in the supreme Being there is only one Father, one Son, one Spirit, and not three Fathers or Sons or Spirits?
CHAPTER LXII.
How it seems that of these three more sons than one are born.
BUT perhaps the following observation will prove inconsistent with this assertion. It should not be doubted that the Father and the Son and their Spirit each expresses himself and the other two, just as each conceives of, and understands, himself and the other two.
But, if this is true, are there not in the supreme Being as many words as there are expressive beings, and as many words as there are beings who are expressed?
For, if more men than one give expression to some one object in thought, apparently there are as many words corresponding to that object as there are thinkers; since the word corresponding to it exists in the thoughts of each separately. Again, if one man thinks of more objects than one, there are as many words in the mind of the thinker as there are objects thought of.
But in the thought of a man, when he thinks of anything outside his own mind, the word corresponding to the object thought of is not born of the object itself, since that is absent from the view of thought, but of some likeness or image of the object which exists in the memory of the thinker, or which is perhaps called to mind through a corporeal sense from the present object itself.
But in the supreme Being, Father and Son and their Spirit are always so present to one another --for each one, as we have already seen, exists in the others no less than in himself -- that, when they express one another, the one that is expressed seems to beget his own word, just as when he is expressed by himself. How is it, then, that the Son and the Spirit of the Son and of the Father beget nothing, if each begets his own word, when he is expressed by himself or by another? Apparently as many words as can be proved to be born of the supreme Substance, so many Sons, according to our former reasoning, must there be begotten of this substance, and so many spirits proceeding from it.
CHAPTER LXIII.
How among them there is only one Son of one Father, that is, one Word, and that from the Father alone.
ON these grounds, therefore, there apparently are in that Being, not only many fathers and sons and beings proceeding from it, but other necessary attributes as well; or else
Father and Son and their Spirit, of whom it is already certain that they truly exist, are not three expressive beings, although each taken separately is expressive, nor are there more beings than one expressed, when each one expresses himself and the other two. For, just as it is an inherent property of the supreme Wisdom to know and conceive, so it is assuredly natural to eternal and immutable knowledge and intelligence ever to regard as present what it knows and conceives of. For, to such a supreme Spirit expressing and beholding through conception, as it were, are the same, just as the expression of our human mind is nothing but the intuition of the thinker.

But reasons already considered have shown most convincingly that whatever is essentially inherent in the supreme Nature is perfectly consistent with the nature of the Father and the Son and their Spirit taken separately; and that, nevertheless, this, if attributed to the three at once, does not admit of plurality. Now, it is established that as knowledge and intelligence are attributes of his being, so his knowing and conceiving is nothing else than his expression, that is, his ever beholding as present what he knows and conceives of. Necessarily, therefore, just as the Father separately, and the Son separately, and their Spirit separately, is a knowing and conceiving being, and yet the three at once are not more knowing and conceiving beings than one, but one knowing and one conceiving being: so, each taken separately is expressive, and yet there are not three expressive beings at once, but one expressive being.

Hence, this fact may also be clearly recognised, that when these three are expressed, either by themselves or by another, there are not more beings than one expressed. For what is therein expressed except their being? If, then, that Being is one and only one, then what is expressed is one and only one; therefore, if it is in them one and only one which expresses, and one which is expressed --for it is one wisdom which expresses and one

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

substance which is expressed --it follows that there are not more words than one, but one alone. Hence, although each one expresses himself and all express one another, nevertheless there cannot be in the supreme Being another Word than that already shown to be born of him whose is the Word, so that it may be called his true image and his Son.

And in this truth I find a strange and inexplicable factor. For observe: although it is manifest that each one, that is, Father and Son, and the Spirit of Father and Son equally expresses himself and both the others, and that there is one Word alone among them; yet it appears that this Word itself can in no wise be called the Word of all three, but only of one.

For it has been proved that it is the image and Son of him whose Word it is. And it is plain that it cannot properly be called either the image or son of itself, or of the Spirit proceeding from it. For, neither of itself nor of a being proceeding from it, is it born, nor does it in its existence imitate itself or a being proceeding from itself. For it does not imitate itself, or take on a like existence to itself, because imitation and likeness are impossible where only one being is concerned, but require plurality of beings; while it does not imitate the spirit, nor does it exist in his likeness, because it has not its existence from that Spirit, but the Spirit from it. It is to be concluded that this sole Word corresponds to him alone, from whom it has existence by generation, and after whose complete likeness it exists.

One Father, then, and not more than one Father; one Son, and not more than one Son; one Spirit proceeding from them, and not more than one such Spirit, exist in the supreme Being. And, although there are three, so that the Father is never the Son or the Spirit proceeding from them, nor the Son at any time the Father or the Spirit, nor the Spirit
of Father and Son ever the Father or the Son; and each separately is so perfect that he is self-sufficient, needing neither of the others; yet what they are is in such a way one that just as it cannot be attributed to them taken separately as plural, so, neither can it be attributed to them as plural, when the three are taken at once. And though each one expresses himself and all express one another, yet there are not among them more words than one, but one; and this Word corresponds not to each separately, nor to all together, but to one alone.

CHAPTER LXIV.
Though this truth is inexplicable, it demands belief.
IT seems to me that the mystery of so sublime a subject transcends all the vision of the human intellect. And for that reason I think it best to refrain from the attempt to explain how this thing is. For it is my opinion that one who is investigating an incomprehensible object ought to be satisfied if this reasoning shall have brought him far enough to recognize that this object most certainly exists; nor ought assured belief to be the less readily given to these truths which are declared to be such by cogent proofs, and without the contradiction of any other reason, if, because of the incomprehensibility of their own natural sublimity, they do not admit of explanation.

89 Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
But what is so incomprehensible, so ineffable, as that which is above all things?
Hence, if these truths, which have thus far been debated in connection with the supreme Being, have been declared on cogent grounds, even though they cannot be so examined by the human intellect as to be capable of explanation in words, their assured certainty is not therefore shaken. For, if a consideration, such as that above, rationally comprehends that it is incomprehensible in what way supreme Wisdom knows its creatures, of which we necessarily know so many; who shall explain how it knows and expresses itself, of which nothing or scarcely anything can be known by man? Hence, if it is not by virtue of the self-expression of this Wisdom that the Father begets and the Son is begotten, who shall tell his generation?

CHAPTER LXV.
How real truth may be reached in the discussion of an ineffable subject.
BUT again, if such is the character of its ineffability, -- nay, since it is such, -- how shall whatever conclusion our discussion has reached regarding it in terms of Father, Son, and emanating Spirit be valid? For, if it has been explained on true grounds, how is it ineffable?
Or, if it is ineffable, how can it be such as our discussion has shown? Or, could it be explained to a certain extent, and therefore nothing would disprove the truth of our argument; but since it could not be comprehended at all, for that reason it would be ineffable?
But how shall we meet the truth that has already been established in this very discussion, namely, that the supreme Being is so above and beyond every other nature that, whenever any statement is made concerning it in words which are also applicable to other natures, the sense of these words in this case is by no means that in which they are applied to other natures.
For what sense have I conceived of, in all these words that I have thought of, except the common and familiar sense? If, then, the familiar sense of words is alien to that Being, whatever I have inferred to be attributable to it is not its property. How, then, has any truth concerning the supreme Being been discovered, if what has been discovered is so alien to that Being? What is to be inferred?
Or, has there in some sort been some truth discovered regarding this incomprehensible object, and in some sort has nothing been proved regarding it? For often we speak of things which we do not express with precision as they are; but by another expression we indicate what we are unwilling or unable to express with precision, as when we speak in riddles. And often we see a thing, not precisely as it is in itself, but through a likeness or image, as when we look upon a face in a mirror. And in this way, we often express and yet do not express, see and yet do not see, one and the same object; we express and see it through another; we do not express it, and do not see it by virtue of its own proper nature.

90

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

On these grounds, then, it appears that there is nothing to disprove the truth of our discussion thus far concerning the supreme Nature, and yet this Nature itself remains not the less ineffable, if we believe that it has never been expressed according to the peculiar nature of its own being, but somehow described through another. For whatever terms seem applicable to that Nature do not reveal it to me in its proper character, but rather intimate it through some likeness. For, when I think of the meanings of these terms, I more naturally conceive in my mind of what I see in created objects, than of what I conceive to transcend all human understanding. For it is something much less, nay, something far different, that their meaning suggests to my mind, than that the conception of which my mind itself attempts to achieve through this shadowy signification. For, neither is the term wisdom sufficient to reveal to me that Being, through which all things were created from nothing and are preserved from nothingness; nor is the term essence capable of expressing to me that Being which, through its unique elevation, is far above all things, and through its peculiar natural character greatly transcends all things. In this way, then, is that Nature ineffable, because it is incapable of description in words or by any other means; and, at the same time, an inference regarding it, which can be reached by the instruction of reason or in some other way, as it were in a riddle, is not therefore necessarily false.

CHAPTER LXVI.

Through the rational mind is the nearest approach to the supreme Being.

Since it is clear, then, that nothing can be ascertained concerning this Nature in terms of its own peculiar character, but only in terms of something else, it is certain that a nearer approach toward knowledge of it is made through that which approaches it more nearly through likeness. For the more like to it anything among created beings is proved to be, the more excellent must that created being be by nature. Hence, this being, through its greater likeness, assists the investigating mind in the approach to supreme Truth; and through its more excellent created essence, teaches the more correctly what opinion the mind itself ought to form regarding the Creator. So, undoubtedly, a greater knowledge of the creative Being is attained, the more nearly the creature through which the investigation is made approaches that Being. For that every being, in so far as it exists, is like the supreme Being, reasons already considered do not permit us to doubt. It is evident, then, that as the rational mind alone, among all created beings, is capable of rising to the investigation of this Being, so it is not the less this same rational mind alone, through which the mind itself can most successfully achieve the discovery of this same Being. For it has already been acknowledged that this approaches it most nearly, through likeness of natural essence. What is more obvious, then, than that the more
earnestly the rational mind devotes itself to learning its own nature, the more effectively does it rise to the knowledge of that Being; and the more carelessly it contemplates itself, the farther does it descend from the contemplation of that Being?

CHAPTER LXVII.
The mind itself is the mirror and image of that Being.

THEREFORE, the mind may most fitly be said to be its own mirror wherein it contemplates, so to speak, the image of what it cannot see face to face. For, if the mind itself alone among all created beings is capable of remembering and conceiving of and loving itself, I do not see why it should be denied that it is the true image of that being which, through its memory and intelligence and love, is united in an ineffable Trinity. Or, at any rate, it proves itself to be the more truly the image of that Being by its power of remembering, conceiving of, and loving, that Being. For, the greater and the more like that Being it is, the more truly it is recognised to be its image.

But, it is utterly inconceivable that any rational creature can have been naturally endowed with any power so excellent and so like the supreme Wisdom as this power of remembering, and conceiving of, and loving, the best and greatest of all beings. Hence, no faculty has been bestowed on any creature that is so truly the image of the Creator.

CHAPTER LXVIII.
The rational creature was created in order that it might love this Being.

IT seems to follow, then, that the rational creature ought to devote itself to nothing so earnestly as to the expression, through voluntary performance, of this image which is impressed on it through a natural potency. For, not only does it owe its very existence to its creator; but the fact that it is known to have no power so important as that of remembering, and conceiving of, and loving, the supreme good, proves that it ought to wish nothing else so especially.

For who can deny that whatever within the scope one’s power is better, ought to prevail with the will? For, to the rational nature rationality is the same with the ability to distinguish the just from the not-just, the true from the not-true, the good from the not-good, the greater good from the lesser; but this power is altogether useless to it, and superfluous, unless what it distinguishes it loves or condemns, in accordance with the judgment of true discernment.

From this, then, it seems clear enough that every rational being exists for this purpose, that according as, on the grounds of discernment, it judges a thing to be more or less good, or not good, so it may love that thing in greater or less degree, or reject it.

It is, therefore, most obvious that the rational creature was created for this purpose, that it might love the supreme Being above all other goods, as this Being is itself the supreme good; nay, that it might love nothing except it, unless because of it; since that Being is good through itself, and nothing else is good except through it. But the rational being cannot love this Being, unless it has devoted itself to remembering and conceiving of it. It is clear, then, that the rational creature ought to devote its whole ability and will to remembering, and conceiving of, and loving, the supreme good, for which end it recognises that it has its very existence.
CHAPTER LXIX.
The soul that ever loves this Essence lives at some time in true blessedness.
BUT there is no doubt that the human soul is a rational creature. Hence, it must have been created for this end, that it might love the supreme Being. It must, therefore, have been created either for this end, that it might love that Being eternally; or for this, that at some time it might either voluntarily, or by violence, lose this love.
But it is impious to suppose that the supreme Wisdom created it for this end, that at some time, either it should despise so great a good, or, though wishing to keep it, should lose it by some violence. We infer, then, that it was created for this end, that it might love the supreme Being eternally. But this it cannot do unless it lives forever. It was so created, then, that it lives forever, if it forever wills to do that for which it was created.
Hence, it is most incompatible with the nature of the supremely good, supremely wise, and omnipotent Creator, that what he has made to exist that it might love him, he should make not to exist, so long as it truly loves him; and that what he voluntarily gave to a non-loving being that it might ever love, he should take away, or permit to be taken away, from the loving being, so that necessarily it should not love; especially since it should by no means be doubted that he himself loves every nature that loves him. Hence, it is manifest that the human soul is never deprived of its life, if it forever devotes itself to loving the supreme life.
How, then, shall it live? For is long life so important a matter, if it is not secure from the invasion of troubles? For whoever, while he lives, is either through fear or through actual suffering subject to troubles, or is deceived by a false security, does he not live in misery? But, if any one lives in freedom from these troubles, he lives in blessedness. But it is most absurd to suppose that any nature that forever loves him, who is supremely good and omnipotent, forever lives in misery. So, it is plain, that the human soul is of such a character that, if it diligently observes that end for which it exists, it at some time lives in blessedness, truly secure from death itself and from every other trouble.

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
CHAPTER LXX.
This Being gives itself in return to the creature that loves it, that that creature may be eternally blessed.
THEREFORE it cannot be made to appear true that he who is most just and most powerful makes no return to the being that loves him perseveringly, to which although it neither existed nor loved him, he gave existence that it might be able to be a loving being.
For, if he makes no return to the loving soul, the most just does not distinguish between the soul that loves, and the soul that despises what ought to be supremely loved, nor does he love the soul that loves him; or else it does not avail to be loved by him; all of which suppositions are inconsistent with his nature; hence he does make a return to every soul that perseveres in loving him.
But what is this return? For, if he gave to what was nothing, a rational being, that it might be a loving soul, what shall he give to the loving soul, if it does not cease to love?
If what waits upon love is so great, how great is the recompense given to love? And if the sustainer of love is such as we declare, of what character is the profit? For, if the rational creature, which is useless to itself without this love, is with it preeminent among all creatures, assuredly nothing can be the reward of love except what is preeminent among all natures.
For this same good, which demands such love toward itself, also requires that it
be desired by the loving soul. For, who can love justice, truth, blessedness, incorruptibility, in such a way as not to wish to enjoy them? What return, then, shall the supreme Goodness make to the being that loves and desires it, except itself? For, whatever else it grants, it does not give in return, since all such bestowals neither compensate the love, nor console the loving being, nor satisfy the soul that desires this supreme Being.

Or, if it wishes to be loved and desired, so as to make some other return than its love, it wishes to be loved and desired, not for its own sake, but for the sake of another; and does not wish to be loved itself, but wishes another to be loved; which it is impious to suppose.

So, it is most true that every rational soul, if, as it should, it earnestly devotes itself through love to longing for supreme blessedness, shall at some time receive that blessedness to enjoy, that what it now sees as through a glass and in a riddle, it may then see face to face. But it is most foolish to doubt whether it enjoys that blessedness eternally; since, in the enjoyment of that blessedness, it will be impossible to turn the soul aside by any fear, or to deceive it by false security; nor, having once experienced the need of that blessedness, will it be able not to love it; nor will that blessedness desert the soul that loves it; nor shall there be anything powerful enough to separate them against their will. Hence, the soul that has once begun to enjoy supreme Blessedness will be eternally blessed.

CHAPTER LXXI.

Prologium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

The soul that despises this being will be eternally miserable.

FROM this it may be inferred, as a certain consequence, that the soul which despises the love of the supreme good will incur eternal misery. It might be said that it would be justly punished for such contempt if it lost existence or life, since it does not employ itself to the end for which it was created. But reason in no wise admits such a belief, namely, that after such great guilt it is condemned to be what it was before all its guilt. For, before it existed, it could neither be guilty nor feel a penalty. If, then, the soul despising that end for which it was created, dies so as to feel nothing, or so as to be nothing at all, its condition will be the same when in the greatest guilt and when without all guilt; and the supremely wise Justice will not distinguish between what is capable of no good and wills no evil, and what is capable of the greatest good and wills the greatest evil. But it is plain enough that this is a contradiction. Therefore, nothing can be more logical, and nothing ought to be believed more confidently than that the soul of man is so constituted that, if it scorns loving the supreme Being, it suffers eternal misery; that just as the loving soul shall rejoice in an eternal reward, so the soul despising that Being shall suffer eternal punishment; and as the former shall feel an immutable sufficiency, so the latter shall feel an inconsolable need.

CHAPTER LXXII.

Every human soul is immortal. And it is either forever miserable, or at some time truly blessed.

BUT if the soul is mortal, of course the loving soul is not eternally blessed, nor the soul that scorns this Being eternally miserable. Whether, therefore, it loves or scorns that for the love of which it was created, it must be immortal. But if there are some rational souls which are to be judged as neither loving nor scorning, such as the souls of infants seem to be, what opinion shall be held regarding these? Are they mortal or immortal? But undoubtedly all human souls are of the same nature. Hence, since it is established that some are immortal, every human soul must be immortal. But since every living being is
either never, or at some time, truly secure from all trouble; necessarily, also, every human
soul is either ever miserable, or at some time truly blessed.
CHAPTER LXXIII.
No soul is unjustly deprived of the supreme good, and every effort must be
directed toward that good.
95
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
BUT, which souls are unhesitatingly to be judged as so loving that for the love of which
they were created, that they deserve to enjoy it at some time, and which as so scorning it,
that they deserve ever to stand in need of it; or how and on what ground those which it
seems impossible to call either loving or scorning are assigned to either eternal blessedness
or misery, -- of all this I think it certainly most difficult or even impossible for any mortal
to reach an understanding through discussion. But that no being is unjustly deprived by
the supremely great and supremely good Creator of that good for which it was created,
we ought most assuredly to believe. And toward this good every man ought to strive, by
loving and desiring it with all his heart, and all his soul, and all his mind.
CHAPTER LXXIV.
The supreme Being is to be hoped for.
BUT the human soul will by no means be able to train itself in this purpose, if it despairs
of being able to reach what it aims at. Hence, devotion to effort is not more profitable to
it than hope of attainment is necessary.
CHAPTER LXXV.
We must believe in this Being, that is, by believing we must reach out for it.
BUT what does not believe cannot love or hope. It is, therefore, profitable to this human
soul to believe the supreme Being and those things without which that Being cannot be
loved, that, by believing, the soul may reach out for it. And this truth can be more briefly
and fitly indicated, I think, if instead of saying, “strive for” the supreme Being, we say,
“believe in” the supreme Being.
138
For, if one says that he believes in it, he apparently shows clearly enough both that,
through the faith which he professes, he strives for the supreme Being, and that he believes
those things which are proper to this aim. For it seems that either he who does not believe
what is proper to striving for that Being, or he who does not strive for that Being, through
what he believes, does not believe in it. And, perhaps, it is indifferent whether we say,
“believe in it,” or “direct belief to it,” just as by believing to strive for it and toward it are
the same, except that whoever shall have come to it by striving for (tendendo in) it, will
not remain without, but within it. And this is indicated more distinctly and familiarly if
we say, “striving for“ (in) it, than if we say, ”toward“ (ad) it.
On this ground, therefore, I think it may more fitly be said that we should believe
in it, than that we should direct belief to it.
96
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
CHAPTER LXXVI.
We should believe in Father and Son and in their Spirit equally, and in each
separately, and in the three at once.
WE should believe, then, equally in the Father and in the Son and in their Spirit, and
in each separately, and in the three at once, since the Father separately, and the Son
separately, and their Spirit separately is the supreme Being, and at once Father and Son
with their Spirit are one and the same supreme Being, in which alone every man ought to believe; because it is the sole end which in every thought and act he ought to strive for.

Hence, it is manifest that as none is able to strive for that Being, except he believe in it; so to believe it avails none, except he strive for it.

CHAPTER LXXVII.
What is living, and what dead faith.

HENCE, with however great confidence so important a truth is believed, the faith will be useless and, as it were, dead, unless it is strong and living through love. For, that the faith which is accompanied by sufficient love is by no means idle, if an opportunity of operation offers, but rather exercises itself in an abundance of works, as it could not do without love, may be proved from this fact alone, that, since it loves the supreme Justice, it can scorn nothing that is just, it can approve nothing that is unjust. Therefore, seeing that the fact of its operation shows that life, without which it could not operate, is inherent in it; it is not absurd to say that operative faith is alive, because it has the life of love without which it could not operate; and that idle faith is not living, because it lacks that life of love, with which it would not be idle.

Hence, if not only he who has lost his sight is called blind, but also he who ought to have sight and has it not, why cannot, in like manner, faith without love be called dead; not because it has lost its life, that is, love; but because it has not the life which it ought always to have? As that faith, then, which operates through love is recognised as living, so that which is idle, through contempt, is proved to be dead. It may, therefore, be said with sufficient fitness that living faith believes in that in which we ought to believe; while dead faith merely believes that which ought to be believed.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.
The supreme Being may in some sort be called Three.

AND so it is evidently expedient for every man to believe in a certain ineffable trinal unity, and in one Trinity; one and a unity because of its one essence, but trinal and a trinity because of its three --what? For, although I can speak of a Trinity because of Father and Son and the Spirit of both, who are three; yet I cannot, in one word, show why they are three; as if I should call this Being a Trinity because of its three persons, just as I would call it a unity because of its one substance.

For three persons are not to be supposed, because all persons which are more than one so subsist separately from one another, that there must be as many substances as there are persons, a fact that is recognised in the case of more men than one, when there are as many persons as there are individual substances. Hence, in the supreme Being, just as there are not more substances than one, so there are not more persons than one. So, if one wishes to express to any why they are three, he will say that they are Father and Son and the Spirit of both, unless perchance, compelled by the lack of a precisely appropriate term, he shall choose some one of those terms which cannot be applied in a plural sense to the supreme Being, in order to indicate what cannot be expressed in any fitting language; as if he should say, for instance, that this wonderful Trinity is one essence or nature, and three persons or substances.

For these two terms are more appropriately chosen to describe plurality in the supreme Being, because the word person is applied only to an individual, rational nature; and the word substance is ordinarily applied to individual beings, which especially subsist
in plurality. For individual beings are especially exposed to, that is, are subject to, accidents, and for this reason they more properly receive the name sub-stance. Now, it is already manifest that the supreme Being, which is subject to no accidents, cannot properly be called a substance, except as the word substance is used in the same sense with the word Essence. Hence, on this ground, namely, of necessity, that supreme and one Trinity or trinal unity may justly be called one Essence and three Persons or three Substances.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

This Essence itself is God, who alone is lord and ruler of all.

It appears, then -- nay, it is unhesitatingly declared that what is called God is not nothing; and that to this supreme Essence the name God is properly given. For every one who says that a God exists, whether one or more than one, conceives of him only as of some substance which he believes to be above every nature that is not God, and that he is to be worshipped of men because of his preeminent majesty, and to be appeased for man’s own sake because of some imminent necessity.

But what should be so worshipped in accordance with its majesty, and what should be so appeased in behalf of any object, as the supremely good and supremely powerful Spirit, who is Lord of all and who rules all? For, as it is established that through the supreme Good and its supremely wise omnipotence all things were created and live, it is most inconsistent to suppose that the Spirit himself does not rule the beings created by him, or

APPENDIX.

IN BEHALF OF THE FOOL.

AN ANSWER TO THE ARGUMENT OF ANSELM IN THE PROSLOGIUM.

BY GAUNILON, A MONK OF MARMOUTIER.

1. If one doubts or denies the existence of a being of such a nature that nothing greater than it can be conceived, he receives this answer:

The existence of this being is proved, in the first place, by the fact that he himself, in his doubt or denial regarding this being, already has it in his understanding; for in hearing it spoken of he understands what is spoken of. It is proved, therefore, by the fact that what he understands must exist not only in his understanding, but in reality also.

And the proof of this is as follows. -- It is a greater thing to exist both in the understanding and in reality than to be in the understanding alone. And if this being is in the understanding alone, whatever has even in the past existed in reality will be greater than this being. And so that which was greater than all beings will be less than some being,
and will not be greater than all: which is a manifest contradiction.
And hence, that which is greater than all, already proved to be in the understanding,
must exist not only in the understanding, but also in reality: for otherwise it will not be
greater than all other beings.

144
2. The fool might make this reply:
This being is said to be in my understanding already, only because I understand
what is said. Now could it not with equal justice be said that I have in my understanding
all manner of unreal objects, having absolutely no existence in themselves, because I
understand these things if one speaks of them, whatever they may be?
Unless indeed it is shown that this being is of such a character that it cannot be held
in concept like all unreal objects, or objects whose existence is uncertain: and hence I am
not able to conceive of it when I hear of it, or to hold it in concept; but I must understand
it and have it in my understanding; because, it seems, I cannot conceive of it in any other
way than by understanding it, that is, by comprehending in my knowledge its existence
in reality.
But if this is the case, in the first place there will be no distinction between what
has precedence in time — namely, the having of an object in the understanding — and what
is subsequent in time — namely, the understanding that an object exists; as in the example
of the picture, which exists first in the mind of the painter, and afterwards in his work.
Moreover, the following assertion can hardly be accepted: that this being, when it
is spoken of and heard of, cannot be conceived not to exist in the way in which even God
can be conceived not to exist. For if this is impossible, what was the object of this argument
against one who doubts or denies the existence of such a being?
Finally, that this being so exists that it cannot be perceived by an understanding
145
convinced of its own indubitable existence, unless this being is afterwards conceived of
— this should be proved to me by an indisputable argument, but not by that which you
have advanced: namely, that what I understand, when I hear it, already is in my
understanding. For thus in my understanding, as I still think, could be all sorts of things
whose existence is uncertain, or which do not exist at all, if some one whose words I should
understand mentioned them. And so much the more if I should be deceived, as often
100
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
happens, and believe in them: though I do not yet believe in the being whose existence
you would prove.
3. Hence, your example of the painter who already has in his understanding what
he is to paint cannot agree with this argument. For the picture, before it is made, is
contained in the artificer’s art itself; and any such thing, existing in the art of an artificer,
is nothing but a part of his understanding itself. A joiner, St. Augustine says, when he is
about to make a box in fact, first has it in his art. The box which is made in fact is not life;
but the box which exists in his art is life. For the artificer’s soul lives, in which all these
things are, before they are produced. Why, then, are these things life in the living soul of
the artificer, unless because they are nothing else than the knowledge or understanding
of the soul itself?
With the exception, however, of those facts which are known to pertain to the
mental nature, whatever, on being heard and thought out by the understanding, is
perceived to be real, undoubtedly that real object is one thing, and the understanding
itself, by which the object is grasped, is another. Hence, even if it were true that there is a
146
being than which a greater is inconceivable: yet to this being, when heard of and understood, the not yet created picture in the mind of the painter is not analogous.

4. Let us notice also the point touched on above, with regard to this being which is greater than all which can be conceived, and which, it is said, can be none other than God himself. I, so far as actual knowledge of the object, either from its specific or general character, is concerned, am as little able to conceive of this being when I hear of it, or to have it in my understanding, as I am to conceive of or understand God himself: whom, indeed, for this very reason I can conceive not to exist. For I do not know that reality itself which God is, nor can I form a conjecture of that reality from some other like reality. For you yourself assert that that reality is such that there can be nothing else like it.

For, suppose that I should hear something said of a man absolutely unknown to me, of whose very existence I was unaware. Through that special or general knowledge by which I know what man is, or what men are, I could conceive of him also, according to the reality itself, which man is. And yet it would be possible, if the person who told me of him deceived me, that the man himself, of whom I conceived, did not exist; since that reality according to which I conceived of him, though a no less indisputable fact, was not that man, but any man.

Hence, I am not able, in the way in which I should have this unreal being in concept or in understanding, to have that being of which you speak in concept or in understanding, when I hear the word God or the words, a being greater than all other beings. For I can conceive of the man according to a fact that is real and familiar to me: but of God, or a being greater than all others, I could not conceive at all, except merely according to the word. And an object can hardly or never be conceived according to the word alone. For when it is so conceived, it is not so much the word itself (which is, indeed, a real thing -- that is, the sound of the letters and syllables) as the signification of the word, when heard, that is conceived. But it is not conceived as by one who knows what is generally signified by the word; by whom, that is, it is conceived according to a reality and in true conception alone. It is conceived as by a man who does not know the object, and conceives of it only in accordance with the movement of his mind produced by hearing the word, the mind attempting to image for itself the signification of the word that is heard. And it would be surprising if in the reality of fact it could ever attain to this.

Thus, it appears, and in no other way, this being is also in my understanding, when I hear and understand a person who says that there is a being greater than all conceivable beings. So much for the assertion that this supreme nature already is in my understanding.

5. But that this being must exist, not only in the understanding but also in reality, is thus proved to me:

If it did not so exist, whatever exists in reality would be greater than it. And so the being which has been already proved to exist in my understanding, will not be greater than all other beings.

I still answer: if it should be said that a being which cannot be even conceived in terms of any fact, is in the understanding, I do not deny that this being is, accordingly, in my understanding. But since through this fact it can in no wise attain to real existence also, I do not yet concede to it that existence at all, until some certain proof of it shall be given.

For he who says that this being exists, because otherwise the being which is greater than all will not be greater than all, does not attend strictly enough to what he is saying.
For I do not yet say, no, I even deny or doubt that this being is greater than any real object. Nor do I concede to it any other existence than this (if it should be called existence) which it has when the mind, according to a word merely heard, tries to form the image of an object absolutely unknown to it.

How, then, is the veritable existence of that being proved to me from the assumption, by hypothesis, that it is greater than all other beings? For I should still deny this, or doubt your demonstration of it, to this extent, that I should not admit that this being is in my understanding and concept even in the way in which many objects whose real existence is uncertain and doubtful, are in my understanding and concept. For it should be proved first that this being itself really exists somewhere; and then, from the fact that it is greater than all, we shall not hesitate to infer that it also subsists in itself.

6. For example: it is said that somewhere in the ocean is an island, which, because of the difficulty, or rather the impossibility, of discovering what does not exist, is called the lost island. And they say that this island has an inestimable wealth of all manner of riches and delicacies in greater abundance than is told of the Islands of the Blest; and that having no owner or inhabitant, it is more excellent than all other countries, which are inhabited by mankind, in the abundance with which it is stored. Now if some one should tell me that there is such an island, I should easily understand his words, in which there is no difficulty. But suppose that he went on to say, as if by a logical inference: “You can no longer doubt that this island which is more excellent than all lands exists somewhere, since you have no doubt that it is in your understanding. And since it is more excellent not to be in the understanding alone, but to exist both in the understanding and in reality, for this reason it must exist. For if it does not exist, any land which really exists will be more excellent than it; and so the island already understood by you to be more excellent will not be more excellent.” If a man should try to prove to me by such reasoning that this island truly exists, and that its existence should no longer be doubted, either I should believe that he was jesting, or I know not which I ought to regard as the greater fool: myself, supposing that I should allow this proof; or him, if he should suppose that he had established with any certainty the existence of this island. For he ought to show first that the hypothetical excellence of this island exists as a real and indubitable fact, and in no wise as any unreal object, or one whose existence is uncertain, in my understanding.

7. This, in the mean time, is the answer the fool could make to the arguments urged against him. When he is assured in the first place that this being is so great that its non-existence is not even conceivable, and that in this turn is proved on no other ground than the fact that otherwise it will not be greater than all things, the fool may make the same answer, and say:

When did I say that any such being exists in reality, that is, a being greater than all others? -- that on this ground it should be proved to me that it also exists in reality to such a degree that it cannot even be conceived not to exist? Whereas in the first place it should be in some way proved that a nature which is higher, that is, greater and better, than all other natures, exists; in order that from this we may then be able to prove all attributes which necessarily the being that is greater and better than all possesses. Moreover, it is said that the non-existence of this being is inconceivable. It might better be said, perhaps, that its non-existence, or the possibility of its non-existence, is unintelligible. For according to the true meaning of the word, unreal objects are
unintelligible. Yet their existence is conceivable in the way in which the fool conceived of the non-existence of God. I am most certainly aware of my own existence; but I know, nevertheless, that my non-existence is possible. As to that supreme being, moreover, which God is, I understand without any doubt both his existence, and the impossibility of his non-existence. Whether, however, so long as I am most positively aware of my existence, I can conceive of my non-existence, I am not sure. But if I can, why can I not conceive of the non-existence of whatever else I know with the same certainty? If, however, I cannot, God will not be the only being of which it can be said, it is impossible to conceive of his non-existence.

8. The other parts of this book are argued with such truth, such brilliancy, such grandeur; and are so replete with usefulness, so fragrant with a certain perfume of devout and holy feeling, that though there are matters in the beginning which, however rightly sensed, are weakly presented, the rest of the work should not be rejected on this account. The rather ought these earlier matters to be reasoned more cogently, and the whole to be received with great respect and honor.

ANSELM’S APOLOGETIC.

IN REPLY TO GAUNILON’S ANSWER IN BEHALF OF THE FOOL.

IT was a fool against whom the argument of my Proslogium was directed. Seeing, however, that the author of these objections is by no means a fool, and is a Catholic, speaking in behalf of the fool, I think it sufficient that I answer the Catholic.

CHAPTER I.

103

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

A general refutation of Gaunilon’s argument. It is shown that a being than which a greater cannot be conceived exists in reality.

YOU say -- whosoever you may be, who say that a fool is capable of making these statements -- that a being than which a greater cannot be conceived is not in the understanding in any other sense than that in which a being that is altogether inconceivable in terms of reality, is in the understanding. You say that the inference that this being exists in reality, from the fact that it is in the understanding, is no more just than the inference that a lost island most certainly exists, from the fact that when it is described the hearer does not doubt that it is in his understanding.

152

But I say: if a being than which a greater is inconceivable is not understood or conceived, and is not in the understanding or in concept, certainly either God is not a being than which a greater is inconceivable, or else he is not understood or conceived, and is not in the understanding or in concept. But I call on your faith and conscience to attest that this is most false. Hence, that than which a greater cannot be conceived is truly understood and conceived, and is in the understanding and in concept. Therefore either the grounds on which you try to controvert me are not true, or else the inference which you think to base logically on those grounds is not justified.

But you hold, moreover, that supposing that a being than which a greater cannot be conceived is understood, it does not follow that this being is in the understanding; nor, if it is in the understanding, does it therefore exist in reality.

In answer to this, I maintain positively: if that being can be even conceived to be, it must exist in reality. For that than which a greater is inconceivable cannot be conceived except as without beginning. But whatever can be conceived to exist, and does not exist, can be conceived to exist through a beginning. Hence what can be conceived to exist, but does not exist, is not the being than which a greater cannot be conceived. Therefore, if
such a being can be conceived to exist, necessarily it does exist.  
Furthermore: if it can be conceived at all, it must exist. For no one who denies or 
doubts the existence of a being than which a greater is inconceivable, denies or doubts 
that if it did exist, its non-existence, either in reality or in the understanding, would be 
impossible. For otherwise it would not be a being than which a greater cannot be conceived. 
But as to whatever can be conceived, but does not exist -- if there were such a being, its 
non-existence, either in reality or in the understanding, would be possible. Therefore if a 
being than which a greater is inconceivable can be even conceived, it cannot be nonexistent. 
But let us suppose that it does not exist, even if it can be conceived. Whatever can 
be conceived, but does not exist, if it existed, would not be a being than which a greater 
is inconceivable. If, then, there were a being a greater than which is inconceivable, it would 
not be a being than which a greater is inconceivable: which is most absurd. Hence, it is 
false to deny that a being than which a greater cannot be conceived exists, if it can be even 
conceived; much the more, therefore, if it can be understood or can be in the understanding.  
Moreover, I will venture to make this assertion: without doubt, whatever at any 
place or at any time does not exist -- even if it does exist at some place or at some time -- 
can be conceived to exist nowhere and never, as at some place and at some time it does 
not exist. For what did not exist yesterday, and exists to-day, as it is understood not to 

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm 
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo 
have existed yesterday, so it can be apprehended by the intelligence that it never exists. 
And what is not here, and is elsewhere, can be conceived to be nowhere, just as it is not 
here. So with regard to an object of which the individual parts do not exist at the same 
places or times: all its parts and therefore its very whole can be conceived to exist nowhere 
or never. 
For, although time is said to exist always, and the world everywhere, yet time does 

not as a whole exist always, nor the world as a whole everywhere. And as individual parts 
of time do not exist when others exist, so they can be conceived never to exist. And so it 
can be apprehended by the intelligence that individual parts of the world exist nowhere, 
as they do not exist where other parts exist. Moreover, what is composed of parts can be 
dissolved in concept, and be non-existent. Therefore, whatever at any place or at any time 
does not exist as a whole, even if it is existent, can be conceived not to exist. 
But that than which a greater cannot be conceived, if it exists, cannot be conceived 
not to exist. Otherwise, it is not a being than which a greater cannot be conceived: which 
is inconsistent. By no means, then, does it at any place or at any time fail to exist as a whole; 
but it exists as a whole everywhere and always. 
Do you believe that this being can in some way be conceived or understood, or that 
the being with regard to which these things are understood can be in concept or in the 
understanding? For if it cannot, these things cannot be understood with reference to it. 
But if you say that it is not understood and that it is not in the understanding, because it 
is not thoroughly understood; you should say that a man who cannot face the direct rays 
of the sun does not see the light of day, which is none other than the sunlight. Assuredly 
a being than which a greater cannot be conceived exists, and is in the understanding, at 
least to this extent -- that these statements regarding it are understood. 

CHAPTER II. 
The argument is continued. It is shown that a being than which a greater is 
inconceivable can be conceived, and also, in so far, exists.
I HAVE said, then, in the argument which you dispute, that when the fool hears mentioned a being than which a greater is inconceivable, he understands what he hears. Certainly a man who does not understand when a familiar language is spoken, has no understanding at all, or a very dull one. Moreover, I have said that if this being is understood, it is in the understanding. Is that in no understanding which has been proved necessarily to exist in the reality of fact?

But you will say that although it is in the understanding, it does not follow that it is understood. But observe that the fact of its being understood does necessitate its being in the understanding. For as what is conceived, is conceived by conception, and what is conceived by conception, as it is conceived, so is in conception; so what is understood, is understood by understanding, and what is understood by understanding, as it is understood, so is in the understanding. What can be more clear than this?

105
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

After this, I have said that if it is even in the understanding alone, it can be conceived also to exist in reality, which is greater. If, then, it is in the understanding alone, obviously the very being than which greater cannot be conceived is one than which a greater can be conceived. What is more logical? For if it exists even in the understanding alone, can it not be conceived also to exist in reality? And if it can be so conceived, does not he who conceives of this conceive of a thing greater than that being, if it exists in the understanding alone? What more consistent inference, then, can be made than this: that if a being than which a greater cannot be conceived is in the understanding alone, it is not that than which a greater cannot be conceived?

But, assuredly, in no understanding is a being than which a greater is conceivable a being than which a greater is inconceivable. Does it not follow, then, that if a being than which a greater cannot be conceived is in any understanding, it does not exist in the understanding alone? For if it is in the understanding alone, it is a being than which a greater can be conceived, which is inconsistent with the hypothesis.

CHAPTER III.
A criticism of Gaunilon’s example, in which he tries to show that in this way the real existence of a lost island might be inferred from the fact of its being conceived.

BUT, you say, it is as if one should suppose an island in the ocean, which surpasses all lands in its fertility, and which, because of the difficulty, or the impossibility, of discovering what does not exist, is called a lost island; and should say that there can no doubt that this island truly exists in reality, for this reason, that one who hears it described easily understands what he hears.

Now I promise confidently that if any man shall devise anything existing either in reality or in concept alone (except that than which a greater be conceived) to which he can adapt the sequence of my reasoning, I will discover that thing, and will give him his lost island, not to be lost again.

But it now appears that this being than which a greater is inconceivable cannot be conceived not to be, because it exists on so assured a ground of truth; for otherwise it would not exist at all.

Hence, if any one says that he conceives this being not to exist, I say that at the time when he conceives of this either he conceives of a being than which a greater is inconceivable, or he does not conceive at all. If he does not conceive, he does not conceive of the non-existence of that of which he does not conceive. But if he does conceive, he
certainly conceives of a being which cannot be even conceived not to exist. For if it could
be conceived not to exist, it could be conceived to have a beginning and an end. But this
is impossible.
He, then, who conceives of this being conceives of a being which cannot be even
conceived not to exist; but he who conceives of this being does not conceive that it does
not exist; else he conceives what is inconceivable. The non-existence, then, of that than
which a greater cannot be conceived is inconceivable.
CHAPTER IV.
The difference between the possibility of conceiving of non-existence, and
understanding non-existence.
YOU say, moreover, that whereas I assert that this supreme being cannot be conceived
not to exist, it might better be said that its non-existence, or even the possibility of its
non-existence, cannot be understood.
But it was more proper to say, it cannot be conceived. For if I had said that the
object itself cannot be understood not to exist, possibly you yourself, who say that in
accordance with the true meaning of the term what is unreal cannot be understood, would
offer the objection that nothing which is can be understood not to be, for the non-existence
of what exists is unreal: hence God would not be the only being of which it could be said,
it is impossible to understand its non-existence. For thus one of those beings which most
certainly exist can be understood not to exist in the same way in which certain other real
objects can be understood not to exist.
But this objection, assuredly, cannot be urged against the term conception, if one
considers the matter well. For although no objects which exist can be understood not to
exist, yet all objects, except that which exists in the highest degree, can be conceived not
to exist. For all those objects, and those alone, can be conceived not to exist, which have a
beginning or end or composition of parts: also, as I have already said, whatever at any
place or at any time does not exist as a whole.
That being alone, on the other hand, cannot be conceived not to exist, in which any
conception discovers neither beginning nor end nor composition of parts, and which any
conception finds always and everywhere as a whole.
Be assured, then, that you can conceive of your own non-existence, although you
are most certain that you exist. I am surprised that you should have admitted that you are
ignorant of this. For we conceive of the non-existence of many objects which we know to
exist, and of the existence of many which we know not to exist; not by forming the opinion
that they so exist, but by imagining that they exist as we conceive of them.
And indeed, we can conceive of the non-existence of an object, although we know
it to exist, because at the same time we can conceive of the former and know the latter.
And we cannot conceive of the nonexistence of an object, so long as we know it to exist,
because we cannot conceive at the same time of existence and non-existence.
If, then, one will thus distinguish these two senses of this statement, he will
understand that nothing, so long as it is known to exist, can be conceived not to exist; and
that whatever exists, except that being than which a greater cannot be conceived, can be
conceived not to exist, even when it is known to exist.
So, then, of God alone it can be said that it is impossible to conceive of his non-existence; and yet many objects, so long as they exist, in one sense cannot be conceived not to exist. But in what sense God is to be conceived not to exist, I think has been shown clearly enough in my book.

CHAPTER V.

A particular discussion of certain statements of Gaunilon’s. In the first place, he misquoted the argument which he undertook to refute.

THE nature of the other objections which you, in behalf of the fool, urge against me it is easy, even for a man of small wisdom, to detect; and I had therefore thought it unnecessary to show this. But since I hear that some readers of these objections think they have some weight against me, I will discuss them briefly.

In the first place, you often repeat that I assert that what is greater than all other beings is in the understanding; and if it is in the understanding, it exists also in reality, for otherwise the being which is greater than all would not be greater than all.

Nowhere in all my writings is such a demonstration found. For the real existence of a being which is said to be greater than all other beings cannot be demonstrated in the same way with the real existence of one that is said to be a being than which a greater cannot be conceived.

If it should be said that a being than which a greater cannot be conceived has no real existence, or that it is possible that it does not exist, or even that it can be conceived not to exist, such an assertion can be easily refuted. For the non-existence of what does not exist is possible, and that whose non-existence is possible can be conceived not to exist. But whatever can be conceived not to exist, if it exists, is not a being than which a greater cannot be conceived; but if it does not exist, it would not, even if it existed, be a being than which a greater cannot be conceived. But it cannot be said that a being than which a greater is inconceivable, if it exists, is not a being than which a greater is inconceivable; or that if it existed, it would not be a being than which a greater is inconceivable.

It is evident, then, that neither is it non-existent, nor is it possible that it does not exist, nor can it be conceived not to exist. For otherwise, if it exists, it is not that which it is said to be in the hypothesis; and if it existed, it would not be what it is said to be in the hypothesis.

But this, it appears, cannot be so easily proved of a being which is said to be greater than all other beings. For it is not so evident that what can be conceived not to exist is not greater than all existing beings, as it is evident that it is not a being than which a greater cannot be conceived. Nor is it so indubitable that if a being greater than all other beings exists, it is no other than the being than which a greater cannot be conceived; or that if it were such a being, some other might not be this being in like manner; as it is certain with regard to a being which is hypothetically posited as one than which a greater cannot be conceived.

For consider: if one should say that there is a being greater than all other beings, and that this being can nevertheless be conceived not to exist; and that a being greater than this, although it does not exist, can be conceived to exist: can it be so clearly inferred in this case that this being is therefore not a being greater than all other existing beings, as it would be most positively affirmed in the other case, that the being under discussion is not, therefore, a being than which a greater cannot be conceived?

For the former conclusion requires another premise than the predication, greater
than all other beings. In my argument, on the other hand, there is no need of any other than this very predication, a being than which a greater cannot be conceived.

If the same proof cannot be applied when the being in question is predicated to be greater than all others, which can be applied when it is predicated to be a being than which a greater cannot be conceived, you have unjustly censured me for saying what I did not say; since such a predication differs so greatly from that which I actually made. If, on the other hand, the other argument is valid, you ought not to blame me so for having said what can be proved.

Whether this can be proved, however, he will easily decide who recognises that this being than which a greater cannot be conceived is demonstrable. For by no means can this being than which a greater cannot be conceived be understood as any other than that which alone is greater than all. Hence, just as that than which a greater cannot be conceived is understood, and is in the understanding, and for that reason is asserted to exist in the reality of fact: so what is said to be greater than all other beings is understood and is in the understanding, and therefore it is necessarily inferred that it exists in reality.

You see, then, with how much justice you have compared me with your fool, who, on the sole ground that he understands what is described to him, would affirm that a lost island exists.

CHAPTER VI.

A discussion of Gaunilon’s argument in his second chapter: that any unreal beings can be understood in the same way, and would, to that extent, exist.

ANOTHER of your objections is that any unreal beings can be understood in the same way, and would, to that extent, exist.

How, moreover, can these two statements of yours be reconciled: (1) the assertion that if a man should speak of any unreal objects, whatever they might be, you would understand, and (2) the assertion that on hearing of that being which does exist, and not in that way in which even unreal objects are held in concept, you would not say that you conceive of it or have it in concept; since, as you say, you cannot conceive of it in any other way than by understanding it, that is, by comprehending in your knowledge its real existence?

How, I ask, can these two things be reconciled: that unreal objects are understood, and that understanding an object is comprehending in knowledge its real existence? The contradiction does not concern me: do you see to it. But if unreal objects are also in some sort understood, and your definition is applicable, not to every understanding, but to a certain sort of understanding, I ought not to be blamed for saying that a being than which a greater cannot be conceived is understood and is in the understanding, even before I
reached the certain conclusion that this being exists in reality.

CHAPTER VII.
In answer to another objection: that the supremely great being may be
conceived not to exist, just as by the fool God is conceived not to exist.
AGAIN, you say that it can probably never be believed that this being, when it is
spoken of and heard of, cannot be conceived not to exist in the same way in which even
God may be conceived not to exist.
Such an objection could be answered by those who have attained but little skill in
164
disputation and argument. For is it compatible with reason for a man to deny the existence
of what he understands, because it is said to be that being whose existence he denies
because he does not understand it? Or, if at some times its existence is denied, because
only to a certain extent is it understood, and that which is not at all understood is the same
to him: is not what is still undetermined more easily proved of a being which exists in
some understanding than of one which exists is no understanding?
Hence it cannot be credible that any man denies the existence of a being than which
a greater cannot be conceived, which, when he hears of it, he understands in a certain
degree: it is incredible, I say, that any man denies the existence of this being because he
denies the existence of God, the sensory perception of whom he in no wise conceives of.
Or if the existence of another object, because it is not at all understood, is denied,
yet is not the existence of what is understood in some degree more easily proved than the
existence of an object which is in no wise understood?
Not irrationally, then, has the hypothesis of a being a greater than which cannot
be conceived been employed in controverting the fool, for the proof of the existence of
110
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
God: since in some degree he would understand such a being, but in no wise could he
understand God.
CHAPTER VIII.
The example of the picture, treated in Gaunilon’s third chapter, is examined.
-- From what source a notion may be formed of the supremely great
being, of which Gaunilon inquired in his fourth chapter.
MOREOVER, your so careful demonstration that the being than which a greater cannot
165
be conceived is not analogous to the not yet executed picture in the understanding of the
painter, is quite unnecessary. It was not for this purpose that I suggested the preconceived
picture. I had no thought of asserting that the being which I was discussing is of such a
nature; but I wished to show that what is not understood to exist can be in the
understanding.
Again, you say that when you hear of a being than which a greater is inconceivable,
you cannot conceive of it in terms of any real object known to you either specifically or
generally, nor have it in your understanding. For, you say, you neither know such a being
in itself, nor can you form an idea of it from anything like it.
But obviously this is not true. For everything that is less good, in so far as it is good,
is like the greater good. It is therefore evident to any rational mind, that by ascending
from the lesser good to the greater, we can form a considerable notion of a being than
which a greater is inconceivable.
For instance, who (even if he does not believe that what he conceives of exists in
reality) supposing that there is some good which has a beginning and an end, does not
conceive that a good is much better, which, if it begins, does not cease to be? And that as
the second good is better than the first, so that good which has neither beginning nor end, though it is ever passing from the past through the present to the future, is better than the second? And that far better than this is a being -- whether any being of such a nature exists or not -- which in no wise requires change or motion, nor is compelled to undergo change or motion?

Is this inconceivable, or is some being greater than this conceivable? Or is not this to form a notion from objects than which a greater is conceivable, of the being than which a greater cannot be conceived? There is, then, a means of forming a notion of a being than which a greater is inconceivable.

So easily, then, can the fool who does not accept sacred authority be refuted, if he denies that a notion may be formed from other objects of a being than which a greater is inconceivable. But if any Catholic would deny this, let him remember that the invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead. (Romans i. 20.)

The possibility of understanding and conceiving of the supremely great being. The argument advanced against the fool is confirmed.

BUT even if it were true that a being than which a greater is inconceivable cannot be conceived or understood; yet it would not be untrue that a being than which a greater cannot be conceived is conceivable and intelligible. There is nothing to prevent one’s saying ineffable, although what is said to be ineffable cannot be spoken of. Inconceivable is conceivable, although that to which the word inconceivable can be applied is not conceivable. So, when one says, that than which nothing greater is conceivable, undoubtedly what is heard is conceivable and intelligible, although that being itself, than which a greater is inconceivable, cannot be conceived or understood.

Or, though there is a man so foolish as to say that there is no being than which a greater is inconceivable, he will not be so shameless as to say that he cannot understand or conceive of what he says. Or, if such a man is found, not only ought his words to be rejected, but he himself should be contemned.

Whoever, then, denies the existence of a being than which a greater cannot be conceived, at least understands and conceives of the denial which he makes. But this denial he cannot understand or conceive of without its component terms; and a term of this statement is a being than which a greater cannot be conceived. Whoever, then, makes this denial, understands and conceives of that than which a greater is inconceivable.

Moreover, it is evident that in the same way it is possible to conceive of and understand a being whose non-existence is impossible; but he who conceives of this conceives of a greater being than one whose nonexistence is possible. Hence, when a being than which a greater is inconceivable is conceived, if it is a being whose non-existence is possible that is conceived, it is not a being than which a greater cannot be conceived. But an object cannot be at once conceived and not conceived. Hence he who conceives of a being than which a greater is inconceivable, does not conceive of that whose non-existence is possible, but of that whose non-existence is impossible. Therefore, what he conceives of must exist; for anything whose non-existence is possible, is not that of which he conceives.

The certainty of the foregoing argument. -- The conclusion of the book.
I BELIEVE that I have shown by an argument which is not weak, but sufficiently cogent, 168
that in my former book I proved the real existence of a being than which a greater cannot be conceived; and I believe that this argument cannot be invalidated by the validity of any objection. For so great force does the signification of this reasoning contain in itself, that this being which is the subject of discussion, is of necessity, from the very fact that it is 112
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
understood or conceived, proved also to exist in reality, and to be whatever we should believe of the divine substance.
For we attribute to the divine substance anything of which it can be conceived that it is better to be than not to be that thing. For example: it is better to be eternal than not eternal; good, than not good; nay, goodness itself, than not goodness itself. But it cannot be that anything of this nature is not a property of the being than which a greater is inconceivable. Hence, the being than which a greater is inconceivable must be whatever should be attributed to the divine essence.
I thank you for your kindness both in your blame and in your praise for my book. For since you have commended so generously those parts of it which seem to you worthy of acceptence, it is quite evident that you have criticised in no unkind spirit those parts of it which seemed to you weak.

ANSELM'S CUR DEUS HOMO.
PREFACE.
The first part of this book was copied without my knowledge, before the work had been completed and revised. I have therefore been obliged to finish it as best I could, more hurriedly, and so more briefly, than I wished. For had an undisturbed and adequate period been allowed me for publishing it, I should have introduced and subjoined many things about which I have been silent. For it was while suffering under great anguish of heart, the origin and reason of which are known to God, that, at the entreaty of others, I began the book in England, and finished it when an exile in Capra. From the theme on which it was published I have called it Cur Deus Homo, and have divided it into two short books. The first contains the objections of infidels, who despise the Christian faith because they deem it contrary to reason; and also the reply of believers; and, in fine, leaving Christ out of view (as if nothing had ever been known of him), it proves, by absolute reasons, the impossibility that any man should be saved without him. Again, in the second book, likewise, as if nothing were known of Christ, it is moreover shown by plain reasoning and fact that human nature was ordained for this purpose, viz., that every man should enjoy a happy immortality, both in body and in soul; and that it was necessary that this design for which man was made should be fulfilled; but that it could not be fulfilled unless God became man, and unless all things were to take place which we hold with regard to Christ. I request all who may wish to copy this book to prefix this brief preface, with the heads of the whole work, at its commencement; so that, into whosesoever hands it may fall, as he looks on the face of it, there may be nothing in the whole body of the work which shall escape his notice.

BOOK FIRST.
CHAPTER I.
The question on which the whole work rests.
I HAVE been often and most earnestly requested by many, both personally and by letter, that I would hand down in writing the proofs of a certain doctrine of our faith,
which I am accustomed to give to inquirers; for they say that these proofs gratify them, and are considered sufficient. This they ask, not for the sake of attaining to faith by means of reason, but that they may be gladdened by understanding and meditating on those things which they believe; and that, as far as possible, they may be always ready to convince any one who demands of them a reason of that hope which is in us. And this question, both infidels are accustomed to bring up against us, ridiculing Christian simplicity as absurd; and many believers ponder it in their hearts; for what cause or necessity, in sooth, God became man, and by his own death, as we believe and affirm, restored life to the world; when he might have done this, by means of some other being, angelic or human, or merely by his will. Not only the learned, but also many unlearned persons interest themselves in this inquiry and seek for its solution. Therefore, since many desire to consider this subject, and, though it seem very difficult in the investigation, it is yet plain to all in the solution, and attractive for the value and beauty of the reasoning; although what ought to be sufficient has been said by the holy fathers and their successors, yet I will take pains to disclose to inquirers what God has seen fit to lay open to me. And since investigations, which are carried on by question and answer, are thus made more plain to many, and especially to less quick minds, and on that account are more gratifying, I will take to argue with me one of those persons who agitate this subject; one, who among the rest impels me more earnestly to it, so that in this way Boso may question and Anselm reply.

CHAPTER II.
How those things which are to be said should be received.

Boso. As the right order requires us to believe the deep things of Christian faith before we undertake to discuss them by reason; so to my mind it appears a neglect if, after we are established in the faith, we do not seek to understand what we believe. Therefore, since I thus consider myself to hold the faith of our redemption, by the prevenient grace of God, so that, even were I unable in any way to understand what I believe, still nothing could shake my constancy; I desire that you should discover to me, what, as you know, many besides myself ask, for what necessity and cause God, who is omnipotent, should have assumed the littleness and weakness of human nature for the sake of its renewal?

Anselm. You ask of me a thing which is above me, and therefore I tremble to take in hand subjects too lofty for me, lest, when some one may have thought or even seen that I do not satisfy him, he will rather believe that I am in error with regard to the substance of the truth, than that my intellect is not able to grasp it.

Boso. You ought not so much to fear this, because you should call to mind, on the other hand, that it often happens in the discussion of some question that God opens what before lay concealed; and that you should hope for the grace of God, because if you liberally impart those things which you have freely received, you will be worthy to receive higher things to which you have not yet attained.

Anselm. There is also another thing on account of which I think this subject can hardly, or not at all, be discussed between us comprehensively; since, for this purpose, there is required a knowledge of Power and Necessity and Will and certain other subjects which are so related to one another that none of them can be fully examined without the rest; and so the discussion of these topics requires a separate labor, which, though not the...
very easy, in my opinion, is by no means useless; for ignorance of these subjects makes
certain things difficult, which by acquaintance with them become easy.
Boso. You can speak so briefly with regard to these things, each in its place, that
we may both have all that is requisite for the present object, and what remains to be said
we can put off to another time.
179
Anselm. This also much disinclines me from your request, not only that the subject
is important, but as it is of a form fair above the sons of men, so is it of a wisdom fair above
the intellect of men. On this account, I fear, lest, as I am wont to be incensed against sorry
artists, when I see our Lord himself painted in an unseemly figure; so also it may fall out
with me if I should undertake to exhibit so rich a theme in rough and vulgar diction.
Boso. Even this ought not to deter you, because, as you allow any one to talk better
if he can, so you preclude none from writing more elegantly if your language does not
please him. But, to cut you off from all excuses, you are not to fulfil this request of mine
for the learned but for me, and those asking the same thing with me.
Anselm. Since I observe your earnestness and that of those who desire this thing
with you, out of love and pious zeal, I will try to the best of my ability with the assistance
of God and your prayers, which, when making this request, you have often promised me,
not so much to make plain what you inquire about, as to inquire with you. But I wish all
that I say to be received with this understanding, that, if I shall have said anything which
higher authority does not corroborate, though I appear to demonstrate it by argument,
yet it is not to be received with any further confidence, than as so appearing to me for the
time, until God in some way make a clearer revelation to me. But if I am in any measure
able to set your inquiry at rest, it should be concluded that a wiser than I will be able to
180
do this more fully; nay, we must understand that for all that a man can say or know still
deeper grounds of so great a truth lie concealed.
Boso. Suffer me, therefore, to make use of the words of infidels; for it is proper for
us when we seek to investigate the reasonableness of our faith to propose the objections
of those who are wholly unwilling to submit to the same faith, without the support of
reason. For although they appeal to reason because they do not believe, but we, on the
other hand, because we do believe; nevertheless, the thing sought is one and the same.
And if you bring up anything in reply which sacred authority seems to oppose, let it be
mine to urge this inconsistency until you disprove it.
Anselm. Speak on according to your pleasure.
CHAPTER III.
Objections of infidels and replies of believers.
Boso. Infidels ridiculing our simplicity charge upon us that we do injustice and
dishonor to God when we affirm that he descended into the womb of a virgin, that he was
born of woman, that he grew on the nourishment of milk and the food of men; and, passing
118
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
over many other things which seem incompatible with Deity, that he endured fatigue,
hunger, thirst, stripes and crucifixion among thieves.
Anselm. We do no injustice or dishonor to God, but give him thanks with all the
heart, praising and proclaiming the ineffable height of his compassion. For the more
astonishing a thing it is and beyond expectation, that he has restored us from so great and
deserved ills in which we were, to so great and unmerited blessings which we had forfeited;
181
by so much the more has he shown his more exceeding love and tenderness towards us.
For did they but carefully consider bow fitly in this way human redemption is secured, they would not ridicule our simplicity, but would rather join with us in praising the wise beneficence of God. For, as death came upon the human race by the disobedience of man, it was fitting that by man’s obedience life should be restored. And, as sin, the cause of our condemnation, had its origin from a woman, so ought the author of our righteousness and salvation to be born of a woman. And so also was it proper that the devil, who, being man’s tempter, had conquered him in eating of the tree, should be vanquished by man in the suffering of the tree which man bore. Many other things also, if we carefully examine them, give a certain indescribable beauty to our redemption as thus procured.

CHAPTER IV.
How these things appear not decisive to infidels, and merely like so many pictures.
Boso. These things must be admitted to be beautiful, and like so many pictures; but, if they have no solid foundation, they do not appear sufficient to infidels, as reasons why we ought to believe that God wished to suffer the things which we speak of. For when one wishes to make a picture, he selects something substantial to paint it upon, so that his picture may remain. For no one paints in water or in air, because no traces of the picture remain in them. Wherefore, when we hold up to infidels these harmonious proportions which you speak of as so many pictures of the real thing, since they do not think this belief of ours a reality, but only a fiction, they consider us, as it were, to be painting upon a cloud. Therefore the rational existence of the truth first be shown, I mean, the necessity, which proves that God ought to or could have condescended to those things which we affirm. Afterwards, to make the body of the truth, so to speak, shine forth more clearly, these harmonious proportions, like pictures of the body, must be described.

Anselm. Does not the reason why God ought to do the things we speak of seem absolute enough when we consider that the human race, that work of his so very precious, was wholly ruined, and that it was not seemly that the purpose which God had made concerning man should fall to the ground; and, moreover, that this purpose could not be carried into effect unless the human race were delivered by their Creator himself?

CHAPTER V.
How the redemption of man could not be effected by any other being but God.
Boso. If this deliverance were said to be effected somehow by any other being than God (whether it were an angelic or a human being), the mind of man would receive it far more patiently. For God could have made some man without sin, not of a sinful substance, and not a descendant of any man, but just as he made Adam, and by this man it should seem that the work we speak of could have been done.

Anselm. Do you not perceive that, if any other being should rescue man from eternal death, man would rightly be adjudged as the servant of that being? Now if this be so, he would in no wise be restored to that dignity which would have been his had he never sinned. For he, who was to be through eternity only the servant of God and an equal with the holy angels, would now be the servant of a being who was not God, and whom the angels did not serve.

CHAPTER VI.
How infidels find fault with us for saying that God has redeemed us by his death, and thus has shown his love towards us, and that he came to
overcome the devil for us.

Boso. This they greatly wonder at, because we call this redemption a release. For, say they, in what custody or imprisonment, or under whose power were you held, that God could not free you from it, without purchasing your redemption by so many sufferings, and finally by his own blood? And when we tell them that he freed us from our sins, and from his own wrath, and from hell, and from the power of the devil, whom he came to vanquish for us, because we were unable to do it, and that he purchased for us the kingdom of heaven; and that, by doing all these things, he manifested the greatness of his love towards us; they answer: If you say that God, who, as you believe, created the universe by a word, could not do all these things by a simple command, you contradict yourselves, for you make him powerless. Or, if you grant that he could have done these things in some other way, but did not wish to, how can you vindicate his wisdom, when you assert that he desired, without any reason, to suffer things so unbecoming? For these things which you bring up are all regulated by his will; for the wrath of God is nothing but his desire to punish. If, then, he does not desire to punish the sins of men, man is free from his sins, and from the wrath of God, and from hell, and from the power of the devil, all which things are the sufferings of sin; and, what he had lost by reason of these sins, he now regains. For, in whose power is hell, or the devil? Or, whose is the kingdom of heaven, if it be not his who created all things? Whatever things, therefore, you dread or hope for, all lie subject to his will, whom nothing can oppose. If, then, God were unwilling to save the human race in any other way than that you mention, when he could have done it by his simple will, observe, to say the least, how you disparage his wisdom. For, if a man without motive should do, by severe toil, a thing which he could have done in some easy way, no one would consider him a wise man. As to your statement that God has shown in this way how much he loved you, there is no argument to support this, unless it be proved that he could not otherwise have saved man. For, if he could not have done it otherwise, then it was, indeed, necessary for him to manifest his love in this way. But now, when he could have saved man differently, why is it that, for the sake of displaying his love, he does and suffers the things which you enumerate? For does he not show good angels how much he loves them, though he suffer no such things as these for them? As to what you say of his coming to vanquish the devil for you, with what meaning dare you allege this? Is not the omnipotence of God everywhere enthroned? How is it, then, that God must needs come down from heaven to vanquish the devil? These are the objections with which infidels think they can withstand us.

CHAPTER VII.

How the devil had no justice on his side against man; and why it was, that he seemed to have had it, and why God could have freed man in this way.

MOREOVER, I do not see the force of that argument, which we are wont to make use of, that God, in order to save men, was bound, as it were, to try a contest with the devil in justice, before he did in strength, so that, when the devil should put to death that being in whom there was nothing worthy of death, and who was God, he should justly lose his power over sinners; and that, if it were not so, God would have used undue force against the devil, since the devil had a rightful ownership of man, for the devil had not seized man with violence, but man had freely surrendered to him. It is true that this might well enough be said, if the devil or man belonged to any other being than God, or were in the
power of any but God. But since neither the devil nor man belong to any but God, and neither can exist without the exertion of Divine power, what cause ought God to try with his own creature (de suo, in suo), or what should he do but punish his servant, who had seduced his fellow-servant to desert their common Lord and come over to himself; who, a traitor, had taken to himself a fugitive; a thief, had taken to himself a fellow-thief, with what he had stolen from his Lord. For when one was stolen from his Lord by the persuasions of the other, both were thieves. For what could be more just than for God to do this? Or, should God, the judge of all, snatch man, thus held, out of the power of him who holds him so unrighteously, either for the purpose of punishing him in some other way than by means of the devil, or of sparing him, what injustice would there be in this? For, though man deserved to be tormented by the devil, yet the devil tormented him unjustly. For man merited punishment, and there was no more suitable way for him to be punished than by that being to whom he had given his consent to sin. But the infliction of punishment was nothing meritorious in the devil; on the other hand, he was even more unrighteous in this, because he was not led to it by a love of justice, but urged on by a malicious impulse. For he did not do this at the command of God, but God’s inconceivable wisdom, which happily controls even wickedness, permitted it. And, in my opinion, those who think that the devil has any right in holding man, are brought to this belief by seeing that man is justly exposed to the tormenting of the devil, and that God in justice permits this; and therefore they suppose that the devil rightly inflicts it. For the very same thing, from opposite points of view, is sometimes both just unjust, and hence, by those who do not carefully inspect the matter, is deemed wholly just or wholly unjust. Suppose, for example, that one strikes an innocent person unjustly, and hence justly deserves to be beaten himself; if, however, the one who was beaten, though he ought not to avenge himself, yet does strike the person who beat him, then he does it unjustly. And hence this violence on the part of the man who returns the blow is unjust, because he ought not to avenge himself; but as far as he who received the blow is concerned, it is just, for since he gave a blow unjustly, he justly deserves to receive one in return. Therefore, from opposite views, the same action is both just and unjust, for it may chance that one person shall consider it only just, and another only unjust. So also the devil is said to torment men justly, because God in justice permits this, and man in justice suffers it. But when man is said to suffer justly, it is not meant that his just suffering is inflicted by the hand of justice itself, but that he is punished by the just judgment of God. But if that written decree is brought up, which the Apostle says was made against us, and cancelled by the death of Christ; and if any one thinks that it was intended by this decree that the devil, as if under the writing of a sort of compact, should justly demand sin and the punishment of sin, of man, before Christ suffered, as a debt for the first sin to which he tempted man, so that in this way he seems to prove his right over man, I do not by any means think that it is to be so understood. For that writing is not of the devil, because it is called the writing of a decree of the devil, but of God. For by the just judgment of God it was decreed, and, as it were, confirmed by writing, that, since man had sinned, he should not henceforth of himself have the power to avoid sin or the punishment of sin; for the spirit is out-going and not returning (est enim spiritus vadens et non rediviens); and he who sins ought not to escape with impunity, unless pity spare the sinner, and deliver and restore him. Therefore we ought not to believe that, on account of this writing, there can be found any justice on the part of the devil in his tormenting man. In fine, as there is never any injustice in a good angel, so in...
an evil angel there can be no justice at all. There was no reason, therefore, as respects the devil, why God should not make use of as own power against him for the liberation of man.

CHAPTER VIII.

How, although the acts of Christ’s condescension which we speak of do not belong to his divinity, it yet seems improper to infidels that these

122

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

things should be said of him even as a man; and why it appears to them that this man did not suffer death of his own will.

Anselm. The will of God ought to be a sufficient reason for us, when he does anything, though we cannot see why he does it. For the will of God is never irrational.

Boso. That is very true, if it be granted that God does wish the thing in question; but many will never allow that God does wish anything if it be inconsistent with reason.

Anselm. What do you find inconsistent with reason, in our confessing that God desired those things which make up our belief with regard to his incarnation?

Boso. This in brief: that the Most High should stoop to things so lowly, that the Almighty should do a thing with such toil.

Anselm. They who speak thus do not understand our belief. For we affirm that the Divine nature is beyond doubt impassible, and that God cannot at all be brought down from his exaltation, nor toil in anything which he wishes to effect. But we say that the Lord Jesus Christ is very God and very man, one person in two natures, and two natures in one person. When, therefore, we speak of God as enduring any humiliation or infirmity, we do not refer to the majesty of that nature, which cannot suffer; but to the feebleness of the human constitution which he assumed. And so there remains no ground of objection against our faith. For in this way we intend no debasement of the Divine nature, but we teach that one person is both Divine and human. In the incarnation of God there is no lowering of the Deity; but the nature of man we believe to be exalted.

Boso. Be it so; let nothing be referred to the Divine nature, which is spoken of Christ after the manner of human weakness; but how will it ever be made out a just or reasonable thing that God should treat or suffer to be treated in such a manner, that man whom the Father called his beloved Son in whom he was well pleased, and whom the Son made himself? For what justice is there in his suffering death for the sinner, who was the most just of all men? What man, if he condemned the innocent to free the guilty, would not himself be judged worthy of condemnation? And so the matter seems to return to the same incongruity which is mentioned above. For if he could not save sinners in any other way than by condemning the just, where is his omnipotence? If, however, he could, but did not wish to, how shall we sustain his wisdom and justice?

Anselm. God the Father did not treat that man as you seem to suppose, nor put to death the innocent for the guilty. For the Father did not compel him to suffer death, or even allow him to be slain, against his will, but of his own accord he endured death for the salvation of men.

Boso. Though it were not against his will, since he agreed to the will of the Father; yet the Father seems to have bound him, as it were, by his injunction. For it is said that

189

Christ “humbled himself, being made obedient to the Father even unto death, and that the death of the cross. For which cause God also hath highly exalted him;” and that “he learned obedience from the things which he suffered;” and that God spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all.” And likewise the Son says: “I came not to do my own
will, but the will of him that sent me.” And when about to suffer, he says: “As the Father hath given me commandment, so I do.” Again: “The cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?” And, at another time: “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.” And again: “Father, if this cup may not pass from me except I drink it, thy will be done.” In all these passages it would rather appear that Christ endured death by the constraint of obedience, than by the inclination of his own free will.

CHAPTER IX.

How it was of his own accord that he died, and what this means: “he was made obedient even unto death;” and: “for which cause God hath highly exalted him;” and: “I came not to do my own will;” and: “he spared not his own Son;” and: “not as I will, but as thou wilt.”

Anselm. It seems to me that you do not rightly understand the difference between what he did at the demand of obedience, and what he suffered, not demanded by obedience, but inflicted on him, because he kept his obedience perfect.

Boso. I need to have you explain it more clearly.

Anselm. Why did the Jews persecute him even unto death?

Boso. For nothing else, but that, in word and in life, he invariably maintained truth and justice.

190

Anselm. I believe that God demands this of every rational being, and every being owes this in obedience to God.

Boso. We ought to acknowledge this.

Anselm. That man, therefore, owed this obedience to God the Father, humanity to Deity; and the Father claimed it from him.

Boso. There is no doubt of this.

Anselm. Now you see what he did, under the demand of obedience.

Boso. Very true, and I see also what infliction he endured, because he stood firm in obedience. For death was inflicted on him for his perseverance in obedience and he endured it; but I do not understand how it is that obedience did not demand this.

Anselm. Ought man to suffer death, if he had never sinned, or should God demand this of him?

Boso. It is plain that, if man had not sinned, God ought not to compel him to die.

Anselm. God did not, therefore, compel Christ to die; but he suffered death of his own will, not yielding up his life as an act of obedience, but on account of his obedience.
in maintaining holiness; for he held out so firmly in this obedience that he met death on account of it. It may, indeed be said, that the Father commanded him to die, when he enjoined that upon him on account of which he met death. It was in this sense, then, that “as the Father gave him the commandment, so he did, and the cup which He gave to him, he drank; and he was made obedient to the Father, even unto death;” and thus “he learned obedience from the things which he suffered,” that is, how far obedience should be maintained. Now the word “didicit,” which is used, can be understood in two ways. For either “didicit” is written for this: he caused others to learn; or it is used, because he did learn by experience what he had an understanding of before. Again, when the Apostle had said: “he humbled himself, being made obedient even unto death, and that the death of the cross,” he added: “wherefore God also hath exalted him and given him a name, which is above every name.” And this is similar to what David said: “he drank of the brook in the way, therefore did he lift up the head.” For it is not meant that he could not have attained his exaltation in any other way but by obedience unto death; nor is it meant that his exaltation was conferred on him, only as a reward of his obedience (for he himself said before he suffered, that all things had been committed to him by the Father, and that all things belonging to the Father were his); but the expression is used because he had agreed with the Father and the Holy Spirit, that there was no other way to reveal to the world the height of his omnipotence, than by his death. For if a thing do not take place, except on condition of something else, it is not improperly said to occur by reason of that thing. For if we intend to do a thing, but mean to do something else first by means of which it may be done; when the first thing which we wish to do is done, if the result is such as we intended, it is properly said to be on account of the other; since that is now done which caused the delay; for it had been determined that the first thing should not be done without the other. If, for instance, I propose to cross a river only in a boat, though I can cross it in a boat or on horseback, and suppose that I delay crossing because the boat is gone; but if afterwards I cross, when the boat has returned, it may be properly said of me: the boat was ready, and therefore he crossed. And we not only use this form of expression, when it is by means of a thing which we desire should take place first, but also when we intend to do something else, not by means of that thing, but only after it. For if one delays taking food because he has not to-day attended the celebration of mass; when that has been done which he wished to do first, it is not improper to say to him: now take food, for you have now done that for which you delayed taking food. Far less, therefore, is the language strange, when Christ is said to be exalted on this account, because he endured death; for it was through this, and after this, that he determined to accomplish his exaltation. This may be understood also in the same way as that passage in which it is said that our Lord increased in wisdom, and in favor with God; not that this was really the case, but that he deported himself as if it were so. For he was exalted after his death, as if it were really on account of that. Moreover, that saying of his: “I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me,” is precisely like that other saying: “My doctrine is not mine ;” for what one does not have of himself, but of God, he ought not to call his own, but God’s. Now no one has the truth which he teaches, or a holy will, of himself, but of God. Christ, therefore, came not to do his own will, but that of the Father; for his holy will was not derived from his humanity, but from his divinity. For that sentence: “God spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all,” means nothing more than that he did not rescue him. For there are found in the Bible many things like this. Again, when he
says: “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt;” and “If this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done;” he signifies by his own will the natural desire of safety, in accordance with which human nature shrank from the anguish of death. But he speaks of the will of the Father, not because the Father preferred the death of the Son to his life; but because the Father was not willing to rescue the human race, unless man were to do even as great a thing as was signified in the death of Christ. Since reason did not demand of another what he could not do, therefore, the Son says that he desires his own death. For he preferred to suffer, rather than that the human race should be lost; as if he were to say to the Father: “Since thou dost not desire the reconciliation of the world to take place in any other way, in this respect, I see that thou desirest my death; let thy will, therefore, be done, that is, let my death take place, so that the world may be reconciled to thee.” For we often say that one desires a thing, because he does not choose something else, the choice of which would preclude the existence of that which he is said to desire; for instance, when we say that he who does not choose to close the window through which the draft is admitted which puts out the light, wishes the light to be extinguished. So the Father desired the death of the Son, because he was not willing that the world should be saved in any other way, except by man’s doing so great a thing as that which I have mentioned. And this, since none other could accomplish it, availed as much with the Son, who so earnestly desired the salvation of man, as if the Father had commanded him to die; and, therefore, “as the Father gave him commandment, so he did, and the cup which the Father gave to him he drank, being obedient even unto death.”

CHAPTER X

Likewise on the same topics; and how otherwise they can be correctly explained.

IT is also a fair interpretation that it was by that same holy will by which the son wished to die for the salvation of the world, that the Father gave him commandment (yet not by compulsion), and the cup of suffering, and spared him not, but gave him up for us and desired his death; and that the Son himself was obedient even unto death, and learned obedience from the things which he suffered. For as with regard to that will which led him to a holy life, he did not have it as a human being of himself, but of the Father; so also that will by which he desired to die for the accomplishment of so great good, he could not have had but from the Father of lights, from whom is every good and perfect gift. And as the Father is said to draw by imparting an inclination, so there is nothing improper in asserting that he moves man. For as the Son says of the Father: “No man cometh to me except the Father draw him,” he might as well have said, except he move him. In like manner, also, could he have declared: “No man layeth down his life for my sake, except the Father move or draw him.” For since a man is drawn or moved by his will to that which he invariably chooses, it is not improper to say that God draws or moves him when he gives him this will. And in this drawing or impelling it is not to be understood that there is any constraint, but a free and grateful clinging to the holy will which has been given. If then it cannot be denied that the Father drew or moved the Son to death by giving him that will; who does not see that, in the same manner, he gave him commandment to endure death of his own accord and to take the cup, which he freely drank. And if it is right to say that the Son spared not himself, but gave himself for us of his own will, who will deny that it is right to say that the Father, of whom he had this will, did not spare him
but gave him up for us, and desired his death? In this way, also, by following the will received from the Father invariably, and of his own accord, the Son became obedient to Him, even unto death; and learned obedience from the things which he suffered; that is, he learned how great was the work to be accomplished by obedience. For this is real and sincere obedience when a rational being, not of compulsion, but freely, follows the will received from God. In other ways, also, we can properly explain the Father's desire that the Son should die, though these would appear sufficient. For as we say that he desires a thing who causes another to desire it; so, also, we say that he desires a thing who approves of the desire of another, though he does not cause that desire. Thus when we see a man who desires to endure pain with fortitude for the accomplishment of some good design; though we acknowledge that we wish to have him endure that pain, yet we do not choose, nor take pleasure in, his suffering, but in his choice. We are, also, accustomed to say that he who can prevent a thing but does not, desires the thing which he does not prevent. Since, therefore, the will of the Son pleased the Father, and he did not prevent him from choosing, or from fulfilling his choice, it is proper to say that he wished the Son to endure death so piously and for so great an object, though he was not pleased with his suffering. Moreover, he said that the cup must not pass from him, except he drank it, not because he could not have escaped death had he chosen to; but because, as has been said, the world could not otherwise be saved; and it was his fixed choice to suffer death, rather than that the world should not be saved. It was for this reason, also, that he used those words, viz., to teach the human race that there was no other salvation for them but by his death; and not to show that he had no power at all to avoid death. For whatsoever things are said of him, similar to these which have been mentioned, they are all to be explained in accordance with the belief that he died, not by compulsion, but of free choice. For he was omnipotent, and it is said of him, when he was offered up, that he desired it. And he says himself: “I lay down my life that I may take it again; no man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.” A man cannot, therefore, be properly said to have been driven to a thing which he does of his own power and will.

Boso. But this simple fact, that God allows him to be so treated, even if he were willing, does not seem becoming for such a Father in respect to such a Son.

127
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

Anselm. Yes, it is of all things most proper that such a Father should acquiesce with such a Son in his desire, if it be praiseworthy as relates to the honor of God, and useful for man’s salvation, which would not otherwise be effected.

Boso. The question which still troubles us is, how the death of the Son can be proved reasonable and necessary. For otherwise, it does not seem that the Son ought to desire it, or the Father compel or permit it. For the question is, why God could not save man in some other way, and if so, why he wished to do it in this way? For it both seems unbecoming for God to have saved man in this way; and it is not clear how the death of the Son avails for the salvation of man. For it is a strange thing if God so delights in, or requires, the blood of the innocent, that he neither chooses, nor is able, to spare the guilty without the sacrifice of the innocent.

Anselm. Since, in this inquiry, you take the place of those who are unwilling to believe anything not previously proved by reason, I wish to have it understood between us that we do not admit anything in the least unbecoming to be ascribed to the Deity, and that we do not reject the smallest reason if it be not opposed by a greater. For as it is
impossible to attribute anything in the least unbecoming to God; so any reason, however small, if not overbalanced by a greater, has the force of necessity.

Boso. In this matter, I accept nothing more willingly than that this agreement should be preserved between us in common.

Anselm. The question concerns only the incarnation of God, and those things which we believe with regard to his taking human nature.

Boso. It is so.

Anselm. Let us suppose, then, that the incarnation of God, and the things that we affirm of him as man, had never taken place; and be it agreed between us that man was made for happiness, which cannot be attained in this life, and that no being can ever arrive at happiness, save by freedom from sin, and that no man passes this life without sin. Let us take for granted, also, the other things, the belief of which is necessary for eternal salvation.

Boso. I grant it; for in these there is nothing which seems unbecoming or impossible for God.

Anselm. Therefore, in order that man may attain happiness, remission of sin is necessary.

Boso. We all hold this.

CHAPTER XI.

What it is to sin, and to make satisfaction for sin.

Anselm. We must needs inquire, therefore, in what manner God puts away men’s sins; and, in order to do this more plainly, let us first consider what it is to sin, and what it is to make satisfaction for sin.

Boso. It is yours to explain and mine to listen.

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

Anselm. If man or angel always rendered to God his due, he would never sin.

Boso. I cannot deny that.

Anselm. Therefore to sin is nothing else than not to render to God his due.

Boso. What is the debt which we owe to God?

Anselm. Every wish of a rational creature should be subject to the will of God.

Boso. Nothing is more true.

Anselm. This is the debt which man and angel owe to God, and no one who pays this debt commits sin; but every one who does not pay it sins. This is justice, or uprightness of will, which makes a being just or upright in heart, that is, in will; and this is the sole and complete debt of honor which we owe to God, and which God requires of us. For it is such a will only, when it can be exercised, that does works pleasing to God; and when this will cannot be exercised, it is pleasing of itself alone, since without it no work is acceptable. He who does not render this honor which is due to God, robs God of his own and dishonors him; and this is sin. Moreover, so long as he does not restore what he has taken away, he remains in fault; and it will not suffice merely to restore what has been taken away, but, considering the contempt offered, he ought to restore more than he took away. For as one who imperils another’s safety does not enough by merely restoring his safety, without making some compensation for the anguish incurred; so he who violates another's honor does not enough by merely rendering honor again, but must, according to the extent of the injury done, make restoration in some way satisfactory to the person whom he has dishonored. We must also observe that when any one pays what he has
unjustly taken away, he ought to give something which could not have been demanded of him, had he not stolen what belonged to another. So then, every one who sins ought to pay back the honor of which he has robbed God; and this is the satisfaction which every sinner owes to God.

Boso. Since we have determined to follow reason in all these things, I am unable to bring any objection against them, although you somewhat startle me.

CHAPTER XII.

Whether it were proper for God to put away sins by compassion alone, without any payment of debt.

Anselm. Let us return and consider whether it were proper for God to put away sins by compassion alone, without any payment of the honor taken from him.

Boso. I do not see why it is not proper.

Anselm. To remit sin in this manner is nothing else than not to punish; and since it is not right to cancel sin without compensation or punishment; if it be not punished, then is it passed by undischarged.

Boso. What you say is reasonable.

Anselm. It is, therefore, not proper for God thus to pass over sin unpunished.

Boso. Thus it follows.

Anselm. There is also another thing which follows if sin be passed by unpunished, viz., that with God there will be no difference between the guilty and the not guilty; and this is unbecoming to God.

Boso. I cannot deny it.

Anselm. Observe this also. Every one knows that justice to man is regulated by law, so that, according to the requirements of law, the measure of award is bestowed by God.

Boso. This is our belief.

Anselm. But if sin is neither paid for nor punished, it is subject to no law.

Boso. I cannot conceive it to be otherwise.

Anselm. Injustice, therefore, if it is cancelled by compassion alone, is more free than justice, which seems very inconsistent. And to these is also added a further incongruity, viz., that it makes injustice like God. For as God is subject to no law, so neither is injustice.

Boso. I cannot withstand your reasoning. But when God commands us in every case to forgive those who trespass against us, it seems inconsistent to enjoin a thing upon us which it is not proper for him to do himself.

Anselm. There is no inconsistency in God’s commanding us not to take upon ourselves what belongs to Him alone. For to execute vengeance belongs to none but Him who is Lord of all; for when the powers of the world rightly accomplish this end, God himself does it who appointed them for the purpose.

Boso. You have obviated the difficulty which I thought to exist; but there is another to which I would like to have your answer. For since God is so free as to be subject to no law, and to the judgment of no one, and is so merciful as that nothing more merciful can be conceived; and nothing is right or fit save as he wills; it seems a strange thing for us to say that he is wholly unwilling or unable to put away an injury done to himself, when we are wont to apply to him for indulgence with regard to those offences which we commit
against others.

Anselm. What you say of God’s liberty and choice and compassion is true; but we ought so to interpret these things as that they may not seem to interfere with His dignity. For there is no liberty except as regards what is best or fitting; nor should that be called mercy which does anything improper for the Divine character. Moreover, when it is said that what God wishes is just, and that what He does not wish is unjust, we must not understand that if God wished anything improper it would be just, simply because he wished it. For if God wishes to lie, we must not conclude that it is right to lie, but rather that he is not God. For no will can ever wish to lie, unless truth in it is impaired, nay, unless the will itself be impaired by forsaking truth. When, then, it is said: “If God wishes to lie,” the meaning is simply this: “If the nature of God is such as that he wishes to lie;” and, therefore, it does not follow that falsehood is right, except it be understood in the same manner as when we speak of two impossible things: “If this be true, then that follows; because neither this nor that is true;” as if a man should say: “Supposing water to be dry, and fire to be moist;” for neither is the case. Therefore, with regard to these things, to speak the whole truth: If God desires a thing, it is right that he should desire that which involves no unfitness. For if God chooses that it should rain, it is right that it should rain; and if he desires that any man should die, then it is right that he should die. Wherefore, if it be not fitting for God to do anything unjustly, or out of course, it does not belong to his liberty or compassion or will to let the sinner go unpunished who makes no return to God of what the sinner has defrauded him.

Boso. You remove from me every possible objection which I had thought of bringing against you.

Anselm. Yet observe why it is not fitting for God to do this.

Boso. I listen readily to whatever you say.

CHAPTER XIII.

How nothing less was to be endured, in the order of things, than that the creature should take away the honor due the Creator and not restore what he takes away.

Anselm. In the order of things, there is nothing less to be endured than that the creature should take away the honor due the Creator, and not restore what he has taken away.

Boso. Nothing is more plain than this.

Anselm. But there is no greater injustice suffered than that by which so great an evil must be endured.

Boso. This, also, is plain.

Anselm. I think, therefore, that you will not say that God ought to endure a thing than which no greater injustice is suffered, viz., that the creature should not restore to God what he has taken away.

Boso. No; I think it should be wholly denied.

Anselm. Again, if there is nothing greater or better than God, there is nothing more just than supreme justice, which maintains God’s honor in the arrangement of things, and which is nothing else but God himself.

Boso. There is nothing clearer than this.

Anselm. Therefore God maintains nothing with more justice than the honor of his own dignity.
Boso. I must agree with you.
Anselm. Does it seem to you that he wholly preserves it, if he allows himself to be so defrauded of it as that he should neither receive satisfaction nor punish the one defrauding him.
Boso. I dare not say so.
Anselm. Therefore the honor taken away must be repaid, or punishment must follow; otherwise, either God will not be just to himself, or he will be weak in respect to both parties; and this it is impious even to think of.
Boso. I think that nothing more reasonable can be said.

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

CHAPTER XIV.

How the honor of God exists in the punishment of the wicked.

Boso. But I wish to hear from you whether the punishment of the sinner is an honor to God, or how it is an honor. For if the punishment of the sinner is not for God’s honor when the sinner does not pay what he took away, but is punished, God loses his honor so that he cannot recover it. And this seems in contradiction to the things which have been said.

Anselm. It is impossible for God to lose his honor; for either the sinner pays his debt of his own accord, or, if he refuse, God takes it from him. For either man renders due submission to God of his own will, by avoiding sin or making payment, or else God subjects him to himself by torments, even against man’s will, and thus shows that he is the Lord of man, though man refuses to acknowledge it of his own accord. And here we must observe that as man in sinning takes away what belongs to God, so God in punishing gets in return what pertains to man. For not only does that belong to a man which he has in present possession, but also that which it is in his power to have. Therefore, since man was so made as to be able to attain happiness by avoiding sin; if, on account of his sin, he is deprived of happiness and every good, he repays from his own inheritance what he has stolen, though he repay it against his will. For although God does not apply what he takes away to any object of his own, as man transfers the money which he has taken from another to his own use; yet what he takes away serves the purpose of his own honor, for this very reason, that it is taken away. For by this act he shows that the sinner and all that pertains to him are under his subjection.

CHAPTER XV.

Whether God suffers his honor to be violated even in the least degree.

Boso. What you say satisfies me. But there is still another point which I should like to have you answer. For if, as you make out, God ought to sustain his own honor, why does he allow it to be violated even in the least degree? For what is in any way made liable to injury is not entirely and perfectly preserved.

Anselm. Nothing can be added to or taken from the honor of God. For this honor which belongs to him is in no way subject to injury or change. But as the individual creature preserves, naturally or by reason, the condition belonging, and, as it were, allotted to him, he is said to obey and honor God; and to this, rational nature, which possesses intelligence, is especially bound. And when the being chooses what he ought, he honors God; not by bestowing anything upon him, but because he brings himself freely under God’s will and disposal, and maintains his own condition in the universe, and the beauty of the universe itself, as far as in him lies. But when he does not choose what he ought, he dishonors God, as far as the being himself is concerned, because he does not submit himself freely to God’s
disposal. And he disturbs the order and beauty of the universe, as relates to himself, although he cannot injure nor tarnish the power and majesty of God. For if those things which are held together in the circuit of the heavens desire to be elsewhere than under the heavens, or to be further removed from the heavens, there is no place where they can be but under the heavens, nor can they fly from the heavens without also approaching them. For both whence and whither and in what way they go, they are still under the heavens; and if they are at a greater distance from one part of them, they are only so much nearer to the opposite part. And so, though man or evil angel refuse to submit to the Divine will and appointment, yet he cannot escape it; for if he wishes to fly from a will that commands, he falls into the power of a will that punishes. And if you ask whither he goes, it is only under the permission of that will; and even this wayward choice or action of his becomes subservient, under infinite wisdom, to the order and beauty of the universe before spoken of. For when it is understood that God brings good out of many forms of evil, then the satisfaction for sin freely given, or if this be not given, the exaction of punishment, hold their own place and orderly beauty in the same universe. For if Divine wisdom were not to insist upon things, when wickedness tries to disturb the right appointment, there would be, in the very universe which God ought to control, an unseemliness springing from the violation of the beauty of arrangement, and God would appear to be deficient in his management. And these two things are not only unfitting, but consequently impossible; so that satisfaction or punishment must needs follow every sin.

Boso. You have relieved my objection.

Anselm. It is then plain that no one can honor or dishonor God, as he is in himself; but the creature, as far as he is concerned, appears to do this when he submits or opposes his will to the will of God.

Boso. I know of nothing which can be said against this.

Anselm. Let me add something to it.

Boso. Go on, until I am weary of listening.

CHAPTER XVI.
The reason why the number of angels who fell must be made up from men.

Anselm. It was proper that God should design to make up for the number of angels that fell, from human nature which he created without sin.

Boso. This is a part of our belief, but still I should like to have some reason for it.

Anselm. You mistake me, for we intended to discuss only the incarnation of the Deity, and here you are bringing in other questions.

Boso. Be not angry with me; “for the Lord loveth a cheerful giver;” and no one shows better how cheerfully he gives what he promises, than he who gives more than he promises; therefore, tell me freely what I ask.

Anselm. There is no question that intelligent nature, which finds its happiness, both now and forever, in the contemplation of God, was foreseen by him in a certain reasonable and complete number, so that there would be an unfitness in its being either less or greater. For either God did not know in what number it was best to create rational beings, which is false; or, if he did know, then he appointed such a number as he perceived was most fitting. Wherefore, either the angels who fell were made so as to be within that number;
or, since they were out of that number, they could not continue to exist, and so fell of necessity. But this last is an absurd idea.

Boso. The truth which you set forth is plain.

Anselm. Therefore, since they ought to be of that number, either their number should of necessity be made up, or else rational nature, which was foreseen as perfect in number, will remain incomplete. But this cannot be.

Boso. Doubtless, then, the number must be restored.

Anselm. But this restoration can only be made from human beings, since there is no other source.

CHAPTER XVII.

How other angels cannot take the place of those who fell.

Boso. Why could not they themselves be restored, or other angels substituted for them?

Anselm. When you shall see the difficulty of our restoration, you will understand the impossibility of theirs. But other angels cannot be substituted for them on this account (to pass over its apparent inconsistency with the completeness of the first creation), because they ought to be such as the former angels would have been, had they never sinned. But the first angels in that case would have persevered without ever witnessing the punishment of sin; which, in respect to the others who were substituted for them after their fall, was impossible. For two beings who stand firm in truth are not equally deserving of praise, if one has never seen the punishment of sin, and the other forever witnesses its eternal reward. For it must not for a moment be supposed that good angels are upheld by the fall of evil angels, but by their own virtue. For, as they would have been condemned together, had the good sinned with the bad, so, had the unholy stood firm with the holy, they would have been likewise upheld. For, if, without the fall of a part, the rest could not be upheld, it would follow, either that none could ever be upheld, or else that it was necessary for some one to fall, in order by his punishment to uphold the rest; but either of these suppositions is absurd. Therefore, had all stood, all would have been upheld in the same manner as those who stood; and this manner I explained, as well as I could, when treating of the reason why God did not bestow perseverance upon the devil.

Boso. You have proved that the evil angels must be restored from the human race; and from this reasoning it appears that the number of men chosen will not be less than that of fallen angels. But show, if you can, whether it will be greater.

134

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

CHAPTER XVIII.

Whether there will be more holy men than evil angels.

Anselm. If the angels, before any of them fell, existed in that perfect number of which we have spoken, then men were only made to supply the place of the lost angels; and it is plain that their number will not be greater. But if that number were not found in all the angels together, then both the loss and the original deficiency must be made up from men, and more men will be chosen than there were fallen angels. And so we shall say that men were made not only to restore the diminished number, but also to complete the imperfect number.

Boso. Which is the better theory, that angels were originally made perfect in number or that they were not?

Anselm. I will state my views.

Boso. I cannot ask more of you.
Anselm. If man was created after the fall of evil angels, as some understand the
account in Genesis, I do not think that I can prove from this either of these suppositions
positively. For it is possible, I think, that the angels should have been created perfect in
number, and that afterwards man was created to complete their number when it had been
lessened; and it is also possible that they were not perfect in number, because God deferred
completing the number, as he does even now, determining in his own time to create man.
Wherefore, either God would only complete that which was not yet perfect, or, if it were
also diminished, He would restore it. But if the whole creation took place at once, and
those days in which Moses appears to describe a successive creation are not to be
understood like such days as ours, I cannot see how angels could have been created perfect
in number. Since, if it were so, it seems to me that some, either men or angels, would fall
immediately, else in heaven’s empire there would be more than the complete number
required. If, therefore, all things were created at one and the same time, it should seem
that angels, and the first two human beings, formed an incomplete number, so that, if no
angel fell, the deficiency alone should be made up, but if any fell, the lost part should be
restored; and that human nature, which had stood firm, though weaker than that of angels,
might, as it were, justify God, and put the devil to silence, if he were to attribute his fall
to weakness. And in case human nature fell, much more would it justify God against the
devil, and even against itself, because, though made far weaker and of a mortal race, yet,
in the elect, it would rise from its weakness to an estate exalted above that from which the
devil was fallen, as far as good angels, to whom it should be equal, were advanced after
the overthrow of the evil, because they persevered. From these reasons, I am rather inclined
to the belief that there was not, originally, that complete number of angels necessary to
perfect the celestial state; since, supposing that man and angels were not created at the
same time, this is possible; and it would follow of necessity, if they were created at the
same time, which is the opinion of the majority, because we read: “He, who liveth forever,
created all things at once.” But if the perfection of the created universe is to be understood
as consisting, not so much in the number of beings, as in the number of natures; it follows
that human nature was either made to consummate this perfection, or that it was
superfluous, which we should not dare affirm of the nature of the smallest reptile.
Wherefore, then, it was made for itself, and not merely to restore the number of beings
possessing another nature. From which it is plain that, even had no angel fallen, men
would yet have had their place in the celestial kingdom. And hence it follows that there
was not a perfect number of angels, even before a part fell; otherwise, of necessity some
men or angels must fall, because it would be impossible that any should continue beyond
the perfect number.
Boso. You have not labored in vain.
Anselm. There is, also, as I think, another reason which supports, in no small degree,
the opinion that angels were not created perfect in number.
Boso. Let us hear it.
Anselm. Had a perfect number of angels been created, and had man been made
only to fill the place of the lost angels, it is plain that, had not some angels fallen from their
happiness, man would never have, been exalted to it.
Boso. We are agreed.
Anselm. But if any one shall ask: “Since the elect rejoice as much over the fall of
angels as over their own exaltation, because the one can never take place without the other;
how can they be justified in this unholy joy, or how shall we say that angels are restored by the substitution of men, if they (the angels) would have remained free from this fault, had they not fallen, viz., from rejoicing over the fall of others?" We reply: Cannot men be made free from this fault? nay, how ought they to be happy with this fault? With what temerity, then, do we say that God neither wishes nor is able to make this substitution without this fault!

Boso. Is not the case similar to that of the Gentiles who were called unto faith, because the Jews rejected it?

213

Anselm. No; for had the Jews all believed, yet the Gentiles would have been called; for “in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him.” But since the Jews despised the apostles, this was the immediate occasion of their turning to the Gentiles.

Boso. I see no way of opposing you.

Anselm. Whence does that joy which one has over another’s fall seem to arise?

Boso. Whence, to be sure, but from the fact that each individual will be certain that, had not another fallen, he would never have attained the place where he now is?

Anselm. If, then, no one had this certainty, there would be no cause for one to rejoice over the doom of another.

Boso. So it appears.

Anselm. Think you that any one of them can have this certainty, if their number shall far exceed that of those who fell?

Boso. I certainly cannot think that any one would or ought to have it. For how can any one know whether he were created to restore the part diminished, or to make up that which was not yet complete in the number necessary to constitute the state? But all are sure that they were made with a view to the perfection of that kingdom.

136

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

Anselm. If, then, there shall be a larger number than that of the fallen angels, no one can or ought to know that he would not have attained this height but for another’s fall.

Boso. That is true.

Anselm. No one, therefore, will have cause to rejoice over the perdition of another.

Boso. So it appears.

214

Anselm. Since, then, we see that if there are more men elected than the number of fallen angels, the incongruity will not follow which must follow if there are not more men elected; and since it is impossible that there should be anything incongruous in that celestial state, it becomes a necessary fact that angels were not made perfect in number, and that there will be more happy men than doomed angels.

Boso. I see not how this can be denied.

Anselm. I think that another reason can be brought to support this opinion.

Boso. You ought then to present it.

Anselm. We believe that the material substance of the world must be renewed, and that this will not take place until the number of the elect is accomplished, and that happy kingdom made perfect, and that after its completion there will be no change. Whence it may be reasoned that God planned to perfect both at the same time, in order that the inferior nature, which knew not God, might not be perfected before the superior nature which ought to enjoy God; and that the inferior, being renewed at the same time with the superior, might, as it were, rejoice in its own way; yes, that every creature having so
glorious and excellent a consummation, might delight in its Creator and in itself, in turn, rejoicing always after its own manner, so that what the will effects in the rational nature of its own accord, this also the irrational creature naturally shows by the arrangement of God. For we are wont to rejoice in the fame of our ancestors, as when on the birthdays of the saints we delight with festive triumph, rejoicing in their honor. And this opinion derives support from the fact that, had not Adam sinned, God might yet put off the completion of that state until the number of men which he designed should be made out, and men themselves be transferred, so to speak, to an immortal state of bodily existence. For they had in paradise a kind of immortality, that is, a power not to die, but since it was possible for them to die, this power was not immortal, as if, indeed, they had not been capable of death. But if God determined to bring to perfection, at one and the same time, that intelligent and happy state and this earthly and irrational nature; it follows that either that state was not complete in the number of angels before the destruction of the wicked, but God was waiting to complete it by men, when he should renovate the material nature of the world; or that, if that kingdom were perfect in number, it was not in confirmation, and its confirmation must be deferred, even had no one sinned, until that renewal of the world to which we look forward; or that, if that confirmation could not be deferred so long, the renewal of the world must be hastened that both events might take place at the same time. But that God should determine to renew the world immediately after it was made, and to destroy in the very beginning those things which after this renewal would not exist, before any reason appeared for their creation, is simply absurd. It therefore follows that, since angels were not complete in number, their confirmation will not be long deferred on this account, because the renewal of a world just created ought soon to take place, for this is not fitting. But that God should wish to put off their confirmation to the future renewing of the world seems improper, since he so quickly accomplished it in some, and since we know that in regard to our first parents, if they had not sinned as they did, he would have confirmed them, as well as the angels who persevered. For, although not yet advanced to that equality with angels to which men were to attain, when the number taken from among them was complete; yet, had they preserved their original holiness, so as not to have sinned though tempted, they would have been confirmed, with all their offspring, so as never more to sin; just as when they were conquered by sin, they were so weakened as to be unable, in themselves, to live afterwards without sinning. For who dares affirm that wickedness is more powerful to bind a man in servitude, after he has yielded to it at the first persuasion, than holiness to confirm him in liberty when he has adhered to it in the original trial? For as human nature, being included in the person of our first parents, was in them wholly won over to sin (with the single exception of that man whom God being able to create from a virgin was equally able to save from the sin of Adam), so had they not sinned, human nature would have wholly conquered. It therefore remains that the celestial state was not complete in its original number, but must be completed from among men.

Boso. What you say seems very reasonable to me. But what shall we think of that which is said respecting God: “He hath appointed the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel;” which some, because for the expression “children of Israel” is found sometimes “angels of God,” explain in this way, that the number of elect men taken should be understood as equal to that of good angels? Anselm. This is not discordant with the previous opinion, if it be not certain that
the number of angels who fell is the same as that of those who stood. For if there be more elect than evil angels, and elect men must needs be substituted for the evil angels, and it is possible for them to equal the number of the good angels, in that case there will be more holy men than evil angels. But remember with what condition I undertook to answer your inquiry, viz., that if I say anything not upheld by greater authority, though I appear to demonstrate it, yet it should be received with no further certainty than as my opinion for the present, until God makes some clearer revelation to me. For I am sure that, if I say anything which plainly opposes the Holy Scriptures, it is false; and if I am aware of it, I will no longer hold it. But if, with regard to subjects in which opposite opinions may be held without hazard, as that, for instance, which we now discuss; for if we know not whether there are to be more men elected than the number of the lost angels, and incline to either of these opinions rather than the other, I think the soul is not in danger; if, I say, in questions like this, we explain the Divine words so as to make them favor different sides, and there is nowhere found anything to decide, beyond doubt, the opinion that should be held, I think there is no censure to be given. As to the passage which you spoke of: “He hath determined the bounds of the people (or tribes) according to the number of the angels of God;” or as another translation has it: “according to the number of the children of Israel;” since both translations either mean the same thing, or are different, without contradicting each other, we may understand that good angels only are intended by both expressions, “angels of God,” and “children of Israel,” or that elect men only are meant, or that both angels and elect men are included, even the whole celestial kingdom. Or by angels of God may be understood holy angels only, and by children of Israel, holy men only; or, by children of Israel, angels only, and by angels of God, holy men. If good angels are intended in both expressions, it is the same as if only “angels of God” had been used; but if the whole heavenly kingdom were included, the meaning is, that a people, that is, the throng of elect men, is to be taken, or that there will be a people in this stage of existence, until the appointed number of that kingdom, not yet completed, shall be made up from among men. But I do not now see why angels only, or even angels and holy men together, are meant by the expression “children of Israel”; for it is not improper to call holy men “children of Israel,” as they are called “sons of Abraham.” And they can also properly be called “angels of God,” because they imitate the life of angels, and they are promised in heaven a likeness to and equality with angels, and all who live holy lives are angels of God. Therefore the confessors or martyrs are so called; for he who declares and bears witness to the truth, he is a messenger of God, that is, his angel. And if a wicked man is called a devil, as our Lord says of Judas, because they are alike in malice; why should not a good man be called an angel, because he follows holiness? Wherefore I think we may say that God hath appointed the bounds of the people according to the number of elect men, because men will exist and there will be a natural increase among them, until the number of elect men is accomplished; and when that occurs, the birth of men, which takes place in this life, will cease. But if by “angels of God” we only understand holy angels, and by “children of Israel ” only holy men; it may be explained in two ways: that “God hath appointed the bounds of the people according to the number of the angels of God,” viz., either that so great a people, that is, so many men, will be taken as there are holy angels of God, or that a people will continue to exist upon earth, until the number of angels is completed from among men. And I think there is no other possible method of
explanation: “he hath appointed the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel,” that is, that there will continue to be a people in this stage of existence, as I said above, until the number of holy men is completed. And we infer from either translation that as many men will be taken as there were angels who remained steadfast. Yet, although lost angels must have their ranks filled by men, it does not follow that the number of lost angels was equal to that of those who persevered. But if any one affirms this, he will have to find means of invalidating the reasons given above, which prove, I think, that there was not among angels, before the fall, that perfect number before mentioned, and that there are more men to be saved than the number of evil angels. Boso. I by no means regret that I urged you to these remarks about the angels, for it has not been for nought. Now let us return from our digression.

CHAPTER XIX.

How man cannot be saved without satisfaction for sin.

139

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

Anselm. It was fitting for God to fill the places of the fallen angels from among men.

Boso. That is certain.

220

Anselm. Therefore there ought to be in the heavenly empire as many men taken as substitutes for the angels as would correspond with the number whose place they shall take, that is, as many as there are good angels now; otherwise they who fell will not be restored, and it will follow that God either could not accomplish the good which he begun, or he will repent of having undertaken it; either of which is absurd.

Boso. Truly it is fitting that men should be equal with good angels.

Anselm. Have good angels ever sinned?

Boso. No.

Anselm. Can you think that man, who has sinned, and never made satisfaction to God for his sin, but only been suffered to go unpunished, may become the equal of an angel who has never sinned?

Boso. These words I can both think of and utter, but can no more perceive their meaning than I can make truth out of falsehood.

Anselm. Therefore it is not fitting that God should take sinful man without an atonement, in substitution for lost angels; for truth will not suffer man thus to be raised to an equality with holy beings.

Boso. Reason shows this.

Anselm. Consider, also, leaving out the question of equality with the angels, whether God ought, under such circumstances, to raise man to the same or a similar kind of happiness as that which he had before he sinned.

Boso. Tell your opinion, and I will attend to it as well as I can.

Anselm. Suppose a rich man possessed a choice pearl which had never been defiled, and which could not be taken from his hands without his permission; and that he determined to commit it to the treasury of his dearest and most valuable possessions.

Boso. I accept your supposition.

Anselm. What if he should allow it to be struck from his hand and cast in the mire, though he might have prevented it; and afterwards taking it all soiled by the mire and unwashed, should commit it again to his beautiful and loved casket; will you consider him a wise man?

Boso. How can I? for would it not be far better to keep and preserve his pearl pure,
than to have it polluted?
Anselm. Would not God be acting like this, who held man in paradise, as it were in his own hand, without sin, and destined to the society of angels, and allowed the devil, inflamed with envy, to cast him into the mire of sin, though truly with man's consent? For, had God chosen to restrain the devil, the devil could not have tempted man. Now I say, would not God be acting like this, should he restore man, stained with the defilement of sin, unwashed, that is, without any satisfaction, and always to remain so; should He restore him at once to paradise, from which he had been thrust out?
Boso. I dare not deny the aptness of your comparison, were God to do this, and therefore do not admit that he can do this. For it should seem either that he could not

Prologium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
accomplish what he designed, or else that he repented of his good intent, neither of which things is possible with God.
Anselm. Therefore, consider it settled that, without satisfaction, that is, without voluntary payment of the debt, God can neither pass by the sin unpunished, nor can the

sinner attain that happiness, or happiness like that, which he had before he sinned; for man cannot in this way be restored, or become such as he was before he sinned.
Boso. I am wholly unable to refute your reasoning. But what say you to this: that we pray God, “put away our sins from us,” and every nation prays the God of its faith to put away its sins. For, if we pay our debt, why do we pray God to put it away? Is not God unjust to demand what has already been paid? But if we do not make payment, why do we supplicate in vain that he will do what he cannot do, because it is unbecoming?
Anselm. He who does not pay says in vain: “Pardon”; but he who pays makes supplication, because prayer is properly connected with the payment; for God owes no man anything, but every creature owes God; and, therefore, it does not become man to treat with God as with an equal. But of this it is not now needful for me to answer you. For when you think why Christ died, I think you will see yourself the answer to your question.
Boso. Your reply with regard to this matter suffices me for the present. And, moreover, you have so clearly shown that no man can attain happiness in sin, or be freed from sin without satisfaction for the trespass, that, even were I so disposed, I could not doubt it.

CHAPTER XX.
That satisfaction ought to be proportionate to guilt; and that man is of himself unable to accomplish this.
Anselm. Neither, I think, will you doubt this, that satisfaction should be proportionate to guilt.

Boso. Otherwise sin would remain in a manner exempt from control (inordinatum), which cannot be, for God leaves nothing uncontrolled in his kingdom. But this is determined, that even the smallest unfitness is impossible with God.
Anselm. Tell me, then, what payment you make God for your sin?
Boso. Repentance, a broken and contrite heart, self-denial, various bodily sufferings, pity in giving and forgiving, and obedience.
Anselm. What do you give to God in all these?
Boso. Do I not honor God, when, for his love and fear, in heartfelt contrition I give up worldly joy, and despise, amid abstinence and toils, the delights and ease of this life, and submit obediently to him, freely bestowing my possessions in giving to and releasing
others?

Anselm. When you render anything to God which you owe him, irrespective of
your past sin, you should not reckon this as the debt which you owe for sin. But you owe
141
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

God every one of those things which you have mentioned. For, in this mortal state, there
should be such love and such desire of attaining the true end of your being, which is the
meaning of prayer, and such grief that you have not yet reached this object, and such fear
lest you fail of it, that you should find joy in nothing which does not help you or give
encouragement of your success. For you do not deserve to have a thing which you do not
love and desire for its own sake, and the want of which at present, together with the great
danger of never getting it, causes you no grief. This also requires one to avoid ease and
worldly pleasures such as seduce the mind from real rest and pleasure, except so far as
224
you think suffices for the accomplishment of that object. But you ought to view the gifts
which you bestow as a part of your debt, since you know that what you give comes not
from yourself, but from him whose servant both you are and he also to whom you give.
And nature herself teaches you to do to your fellow servant, man to man, as you would
be done by; and that he who will not bestow what he has ought not to receive what he
has not. Of forgiveness, indeed, I speak briefly, for, as we said above, vengeance in no
sense belongs to you, since you are not your own, nor is he who injures you yours or his,
but you are both the servants of one Lord, made by him out of nothing. And if you avenge
yourself upon your fellow servant, you proudly assume judgment over him when it is the
peculiar right of God, the judge of all. But what do you give to God by your obedience,
which is not owed him already, since he demands from you all that you are and have and
can become?

Boso. Truly I dare not say that in all these things I pay any portion of my debt to
God.

Anselm. How then do you pay God for your transgression?

Boso. If in justice I owe God myself and all my powers, even when I do not sin, I
have nothing left to render to him for my sin.

Anselm. What will become of you then? How will you be saved?

Boso. Merely looking at your arguments, I see no way of escape. But, turning to
my belief, I hope through Christian faith, “which works by love,” that I may be saved,
and the more, since we read that if the sinner turns from his iniquity and does what is
right, all his transgressions shall be forgotten.

225

Anselm. This is only said of those who either looked for Christ before his coming,
or who believe in him since he has appeared. But we set aside Christ and his religion as
if they did not exist, when we proposed to inquire whether his coming were necessary to
man’s salvation.

Boso. We did so.

Anselm. Let us then proceed by reason simply.

Boso. Though you bring me into straits, yet I very much wish you to proceed as
you have begun.

CHAPTER XXI.

142

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

How great a burden sin is.
Anselm. Suppose that you did not owe any of those things which you have brought up as possible payment for your sin, let us inquire whether they can satisfy for a sin so small as one look contrary to the will of God.

Boso. Did I not hear you question the thing, I should suppose that a single repentant feeling on my part would blot out this sin.

Anselm. You have not as yet estimated the great burden of sin.

Boso. Show it me then.

Anselm. If you should find yourself in the sight of God, and one said to you: “Look thither;” and God, on the other hand, should say: “It is not my will that you should look;” ask your own heart what there is in all existing things which would make it right for you to give that look contrary to the will of God.

Boso. I can find no motive which would make it right; unless, indeed I am so situated as to make it necessary for me either to do this, or some greater sin.

226

Anselm. Put away all such necessity, and ask with regard to this sin only whether you can do it even for your own salvation.

Boso. I see plainly that I cannot.

Anselm. Not to detain you too long; what if it were necessary either that the whole universe, except God himself, should perish and fall back into nothing, or else that you should do so small a thing against the will of God?

Boso. When I consider the action itself, it appears very slight; but when I view it as contrary to the will of God, I know of nothing so grievous, and of no loss that will compare with it; but sometimes we oppose another’s will without blame in order to preserve his property, so that afterwards he is glad that we opposed him.

Anselm. This is in the case of man, who often does not know what is useful for him, or cannot make up his loss; but God is in want of nothing, and, should all things perish, can restore them as easily as he created them.

Boso. I must confess that I ought not to oppose the will of God even to preserve the whole creation.

Anselm. What if there were more worlds as full of beings as this?

Boso. Were they increased to an infinite extent, and held before me in like manner, my reply would be the same.

Anselm. You cannot answer more correctly, but consider, also, should it happen that you gave the look contrary to God’s will, what payment you can make for this sin?

Boso. I can only repeat what I said before.

Anselm. So heinous is our sin whenever we knowingly oppose the will of God even 227 in the slightest thing; since we are always in his sight, and he always enjoins it upon us not to sin.

Boso. I cannot deny it.

Anselm. Therefore you make no satisfaction unless you restore something greater than the amount of that obligation, which should restrain you from committing the sin.

Boso. Reason seems to demand this, and to make the contrary wholly impossible.

143

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

Anselm. Even God cannot raise to happiness any being bound at all by the debt of sin, because He ought not to.

Boso. This decision is most weighty.

Anselm. Listen to an additional reason which makes it no less difficult for man to be reconciled to God.
Anselm. But listen.

Boso. Say on.

CHAPTER XXII.

What contempt man brought upon God, when he allowed himself to be conquered by the devil; for which he can make no satisfaction.

Anselm. Man being made holy was placed in paradise, as it were in the place of God, between God and the devil, to conquer the devil by not yielding to his temptation, and so to vindicate the honor of God and put the devil to shame, because that man, though weaker and dwelling upon earth, should not sin though tempted by the devil, while the devil, though stronger and in heaven, sinned without any to tempt him. And when man could have easily effected this, he, without compulsion and of his own accord, allowed himself to be brought over to the will of the devil, contrary to the will and honor of God.

Boso. To what would you bring me?

Anselm. Decide for yourself if it be not contrary to the honor of God for man to be reconciled to Him, with this calumnious reproach still heaped upon God; unless man first shall have honored God by overcoming the devil, as he dishonored him in yielding to the devil. Now the victory ought to be of this kind, that, as in strength and immortal vigor, he freely yielded to the devil to sin, and on this account justly incurred the penalty of death; so, in his weakness and mortality, which he had brought upon himself, he should conquer the devil by the pain of death, while wholly avoiding sin. But this cannot be done, so long as from the deadly effect of the first transgression, man is conceived and born in sin.

Boso. Again I say that the thing is impossible, and reason approves what you say.

Anselm. Let me mention one thing more, without which man's reconciliation cannot be justly effected, and the impossibility is the same.

Boso. You have already presented so many obligations which we ought to fulfil, that nothing which you can add will alarm me more.

Anselm. Yet listen.

Boso. I will.

144

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

CHAPTER XXIII.

What man took from God by his sin, which he has no power to repay.

Anselm. What did man take from God, when he allowed himself to be overcome by the devil?

Boso. Go on to mention, as you have begun, the evil things which can be added to those already shown for I am ignorant of them.

Anselm. Did not man take from God whatever He had purposed to do for human nature?

Boso. There is no denying that.

Anselm. Listen to the voice of strict justice; and judge according to that whether man makes to God a real satisfaction for his sin, unless, by overcoming the devil, man restore to God what he took from God in allowing himself to be conquered by the devil; so that, as by this conquest over man the devil took what belonged to God, and God was the loser, so in man's victory the devil may be despoiled, and God recover his right.

Boso. Surely nothing can be more exactly or justly conceived.

Anselm. Think you that supreme justice can violate this justice?
Boso. I dare not think it.
Anselm. Therefore man cannot and ought not by any means to receive from God what God designed to give him, unless he return to God everything which he took from him; so that, as by man God suffered loss, by man, also, He might recover His loss. But this cannot be effected except in this way: that, as in the fall of man all human nature was corrupted, and, as it were, tainted with sin, and God will not choose one of such a race to fill up the number in his heavenly kingdom; so, by man’s victory, as many men may be justified from sin as are needed to complete the number which man was made to fill. But a sinful man can by no means do this, for a sinner cannot justify a sinner.

CHAPTER XXIV.
How, as long as man does not restore what he owes God, he cannot be happy, nor is he excused by want of power.
Anselm. If a man is called unjust who does not pay his fellow-man a debt, much more is he unjust who does not restore what he owes God.
Boso. If he can pay and yet does not, he is certainly unjust. But if he be not able, wherein is he unjust?

Prologism; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
Anselm. Indeed, if the origin of his inability were not in himself, there might be some excuse for him. But if in this very impotence lies the fault, as it does not lessen the sin, neither does it excuse him from paying what is due. Suppose one should assign his slave a certain piece of work, and should command him not to throw himself into a ditch, which he points out to him and from which he could not extricate himself; and suppose that the slave, despising his master’s command and warning, throws himself into the ditch before pointed out, so as to be utterly unable to accomplish the work assigned; think you that his inability will at all excuse him for not doing his appointed work?
Boso. By no means, but will rather increase his crime, since he brought his inability upon himself. For doubly hath he sinned, in not doing what he was commanded to do and in doing what he was forewarned not to do.
Anselm. Just so inexcusable is man, who has voluntarily brought upon himself a debt which he cannot pay, and by his own fault disabled himself, so that he can neither escape his previous obligation not to sin, nor pay the debt which he has incurred by sin. For his very inability is guilt, because he ought not to have it; nay, he ought to be free from it; for as it is a crime to have what he ought, it is also a crime to have what he ought not. Therefore, as it is a crime in man not to have that power which he received to avoid sin, it is also a crime to have that inability by which he can neither do right and avoid sin, nor restore the debt which he owes on account of his sin. For it is by his own free action that he loses that power, and falls into this inability. For not to have the power which one ought to have, is the same thing as to have the inability which one ought not to have. Therefore man’s inability to restore what he owes to God, an inability brought upon himself for that very purpose, does not excuse man from paying; for the result of sin cannot excuse the sin itself.
Boso. This argument is exceedingly weighty, and must be true.
Anselm. Man, then, is unjust in not paying what he owes to God.
Boso. This is very true; for he is unjust, both in not paying, and in not being able
to pay.
Anselm. But no unjust person shall be admitted to happiness; for as that happiness
is complete in which there is nothing wanting, so it can belong to no one who is not so
pure as to have no injustice found in him.

Boso. I dare not think otherwise.
Anselm. He, then, who does not pay God what he owes can never be happy.
Boso. I cannot deny that this is so.
Anselm. But if you choose to say that a merciful God remits to the suppliant his
debt, because he cannot pay; God must be said to dispense with one of two things, viz.,
either this which man ought voluntarily to render but cannot, that is, an equivalent for
his sin, a thing which ought not to be given up even to save the whole universe besides
God; or else this, which, as I have before said, God was about to take away from man by
punishment, even against man’s will, viz., happiness. But if God gives up what man ought
freely to render, for the reason that man cannot repay it, what is this but saying that God
gives up what he is unable to obtain? But it is mockery to ascribe such compassion to God.
But if God gives up what he was about to take from unwilling man, because man is unable
to restore what he ought to restore freely, He abates the punishment and makes man

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
happy on account of his sin, because he has what he ought not to have. For he ought not
to have this inability, and therefore as long as he has it without atonement it is his sin.
And truly such compassion on the part of God is wholly contrary to the Divine justice,
which allows nothing but punishment as the recompense of sin. Therefore, as God cannot
be inconsistent with himself, his compassion cannot be of this nature.
Boso. I think, then, we must look for another mercy than this.

Anselm. But suppose it were true that God pardons the man who does not pay his
debt because he cannot.
Boso. I could wish it were so.
Anselm. But while man does not make payment, he either wishes to restore, or else
he does not wish to. Now, if he wishes to do what he cannot, he will be needy, and if he
does not wish to, he will be unjust.
Boso. Nothing can be plainer.
Anselm. But whether needy or unjust, he will not be happy.
Boso. This also is plain.
Anselm. So long, then, as he does not restore, he will not be happy.
Boso. If God follows the method of justice, there is no escape for the miserable
wretch, and God’s compassion seems to fail.
Anselm. You have demanded an explanation; now hear it. I do not deny that God
is merciful, who preserveth man and beast, according to the multitude of his mercies. But
we are speaking of that exceeding pity by which he makes man happy after this life. And
I think that I have amply proved, by the reasons given above, that happiness ought not
to be bestowed upon any one whose sins have not been wholly put away; and that this
remission ought not to take place, save by the payment of the debt incurred by sin,
according to the extent of sin. And if you think that any objections can be brought against
these proofs, you ought to mention them.
Boso. I see not how your reasons can be at all invalidated.
Anselm. Nor do I, if rightly understood. But even if one of the whole number be
confirmed by impregnable truth, that should be sufficient. For truth is equally secured
against all doubt, if it be demonstrably proved by one argument as by many.
Boso. Surely this is so. But how, then, shall man be saved, if he neither pays what
he owes, and ought not to be saved without paying? Or, with what face shall we declare
that God, who is rich in mercy above human conception, cannot exercise this compassion?
Anselm. This is the question which you ought to ask of those in whose behalf you
are speaking, who have no faith in the need of Christ for man’s salvation, and you should
also request them to tell how man can be saved without Christ. But, if they are utterly
unable to do it, let them cease from mocking us, and let them hasten to unite themselves
with us, who do not doubt that man can be saved through Christ; else let them despair of
being saved at all. And if this terrifies them, let them believe in Christ as we do, that they
may be saved.
Boso. Let me ask you, as I have begun, to show me how a man is saved by Christ.
147
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
CHAPTER XXV.
How man’s salvation by Christ is necessarily possible.
Anselm. Is it not sufficiently proved that man can be saved by Christ, when even
infidels do not deny that man can be happy somehow, and it has been sufficiently shown
that, leaving Christ out of view, no salvation can be found for man? For, either by Christ
or by some one else can man be saved, or else not at all. If, then, it is false that man cannot
be saved all, or that he can be saved in any other way, his salvation must necessarily be
by Christ.
235
Boso. But what reply will you make to a person who perceives that man cannot be
saved in any other way, and yet, not understanding how he can be saved by Christ, sees
fit to declare that there cannot be any salvation either by Christ or in any other way?
Anselm. What reply ought to be made to one who ascribes impossibility to a
necessary truth, because he does not understand how it can be?
Boso. That he is a fool.
Anselm. Then what he says must be despised.
Boso. Very true; but we ought to show him in what way the thing is true which he
holds to be impossible.
Anselm. Do you not perceive, from what we have said above, that it is necessary
for some men to attain to felicity? For, if it is unfitting for God to elevate man with any
stain upon him, to that for which he made him free from all stain, lest it should seem that
God had repented of his good intent, or was unable to accomplish his designs; far more
is it impossible, on account of the same unfitness, that no man should be exalted to that
state for which he was made. Therefore, a satisfaction such as we have above proved
necessary for sin, must be found apart from the Christian faith, which no reason can show;
or else we must accept the Christian doctrine. For what is clearly made out by absolute
reasoning ought by no means to be questioned, even though the method of it be not
understood.
Boso. What you say is true.
Anselm. Why, then, do you question further?
Boso. I come not for this purpose, to have you remove doubts from my faith, but
236
to have you show me the reason for my confidence. Therefore, as you have brought me
thus far by your reasoning, so that I perceive that man as a sinner owes God for his sin what he is unable to pay, and cannot be saved without paying; I wish you would go further with me, and enable me to understand, by force of reasoning, the fitness of all those things which the Catholic faith enjoins upon us with regard to Christ, if we hope to be saved; and how they avail for the salvation of man, and how God saves man by compassion; when he never remits his sin, unless man shall have rendered what was due on account of his sin. And, to make your reasoning the clearer, begin at the beginning, so as to rest it upon a strong foundation.

Anselm. Now God help me, for you do not spare me in the least, nor consider the weakness of my skill, when you enjoin so great a work upon me. Yet I will attempt it, as

BOOK SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

How man was made holy by God, so as to be happy in the enjoyment of God.

Anselm. It ought not to be disputed that rational nature was made holy by God, in order to be happy in enjoying Him. For to this end is it rational, in order to discern justice and injustice, good and evil, and between the greater and the lesser good. Otherwise it was made rational in vain. But God made it not rational in vain. Wherefore, doubtless, it was made rational for this end. In like manner is it proved that the intelligent creature received the power of discernment for this purpose, that he might hate and shun evil, and love and choose good, and especially the greater good. For else in vain would God have given him that power of discernment, since man's discretion would be useless unless he loved and avoided according to it. But it does not befit God to give such power in vain. It is, therefore, established that rational nature was created for this end, viz., to love and choose the highest good supremely, for its own sake and nothing else; for if the highest good were chosen for any other reason, then something else and not itself would be the thing loved. But intelligent nature cannot fulfil this purpose without being holy. Therefore that it might not in vain be made rational, it was made, in order to fulfil this purpose, both rational and holy. Now, if it was made holy in order to choose and love the highest good, then it was made such in order to follow sometimes what it loved and chose, or else it was not. But if it were not made holy for this end, that it might follow what it loves and chooses, then in vain was it made to love and choose holiness; and there can be no reason why it should be ever bound to follow holiness. Therefore, as long as it will be holy in loving and choosing the supreme good, for which it was made, it will be miserable; because it will be impotent despite of its will, inasmuch as it does not have what it desires. But this is utterly absurd. Wherefore rational nature was made holy, in order to be happy in enjoying the supreme good, which is God. Therefore man, whose nature is rational, was made holy for this end, that he might be happy in enjoying God.

CHAPTER II.
How man would never have died, unless he had sinned.  
Anselm. Moreover, it is easily proved that man was so made as not to be necessarily subject to death; for, as we have already said, it is inconsistent with God’s wisdom and justice to compel man to suffer death without fault, when he made him holy to enjoy eternal blessedness. It therefore follows that had man never sinned he never would have died.

CHAPTER III.
How man will rise with the same body which he has in this world.  
Anselm. From this the future resurrection of the dead is clearly proved. For if man is to be perfectly restored, the restoration should make him such as he would have been had he never sinned.  
Boso. It must be so.  
Anselm. Therefore, as man, had he not sinned, was to have been transferred with the same body to an immortal state, so when he shall be restored, it must properly be with his own body as he lived in this world.  
Boso. But what shall we say to one who tells us that this is right enough with regard to those in whom humanity shall be perfectly restored, but is not necessary as respects the reprobate?  
Anselm. We know of nothing more just or proper than this, that as man, had he continued in holiness, would have been perfectly happy for eternity, both in body and in soul; so, if he persevere in wickedness, he shall be likewise completely miserable forever.  
Boso. You have promptly satisfied me in these matters.

CHAPTER IV.
How God will complete, in respect to human nature, what he has begun.  
Anselm. From these things, we can easily see that God will either complete what he has begun with regard to human nature, or else he has made to no end so lofty a nature, capable of so great good. Now if it be understood that God has made nothing more valuable than rational existence capable of enjoying him; it is altogether foreign from his character to suppose that he will suffer that rational existence utterly to perish.  
Boso. No reasonable being can think otherwise.  
Anselm. Therefore is it necessary for him to perfect in human nature what he has begun. But this, as we have already said, cannot be accomplished save by a complete expiation of sin, which no sinner can effect for himself.  
Boso. I now understand it to be necessary for God to complete what he has begun, lest there be an unseemly falling off from his design.

CHAPTER V.
How, although the thing may be necessary, God may not do it by a compulsory necessity; and what is the nature of that necessity which removes or lessens gratitude, and what necessity increases it.  
Boso. But if it be so, then God seems as it were compelled, for the sake of avoiding what is unbecoming, to secure the salvation of man. How, then, can it be denied that he does it more on his own account than on ours? But if it be so, what thanks do we owe him for what he does for himself? How shall we attribute our salvation to his grace, if he saves us from necessity?  
Anselm. There is a necessity which takes away or lessens our gratitude to a benefactor, and there is also a necessity by which the favor deserves still greater thanks.
For when one does a benefit from a necessity to which he is unwillingly subjected, less thanks are due him, or none at all. But when he freely places himself under the necessity of benefiting another, and sustains that necessity without reluctance, then he certainly deserves greater thanks for the favor. For this should not be called necessity but grace, inasmuch as he undertook or maintains it, not with any constraint, but freely. For if that which to-day you promise of your own accord you will give to-morrow, you do give to-morrow with the same willingness; though it be necessary for you, if possible, to redeem your promise, or make yourself a liar; notwithstanding, the recipient of your favor is as much indebted for your precious gift as if you had not promised it, for you were not obliged to make yourself his debtor before the time of giving it: just so is it when one undertakes, by a vow, a design of holy living. For though after his vow he ought necessarily to perform, lest he suffer the judgment of an apostate, and, although he may be compelled to keep it even unwillingly, yet, if he keep his vow cheerfully, he is not less but more pleasing to God than if he had not vowed. For he has not only given up the life of the world, but also his personal liberty, for the sake of God; and he cannot be said to live a holy life of necessity, but with the same freedom with which he took the vow. Much more, therefore, do we owe all thanks to God for completing his intended favor to man; though, indeed, it would not be proper for him to fail in his good design, because wanting nothing in himself he begun it for our sake and not his own. For what man was about to do was not hidden from God at his creation; and yet by freely creating man, God as it were bound himself to complete the good which he had begun. In fine, God does nothing by necessity, since he is not compelled or restrained in anything. And when we say that God does anything to avoid dishonor, which he certainly does not fear, we must mean that God does this from the necessity of maintaining his honor; which necessity is after all no more than this, viz., the immutability of his honor, which belongs to him in himself, and is not derived from another; and therefore it is not properly called necessity. Yet we may say, 151

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

although the whole work which God does for man is of grace, that it is necessary for God, on account of his unchangeable goodness, to complete the work which he has begun.

Boso. I grant it.

CHAPTER VI.

How no being, except the God-man, can make the atonement by which man is saved.

Anselm. But this cannot be effected, except the price paid to God for the sin of man be something greater than all the universe besides God.

Boso. So it appears.

Anselm. Moreover, it is necessary that he who can give God anything of his own which is more valuable than all things in the possession of God, must be greater than all else but God himself.

Boso. I cannot deny it.

Anselm. Therefore none but God can make this satisfaction.

Boso. So it appears.

Anselm. But none but a man ought to do this, other wise man does not make the satisfaction.

Boso. Nothing seems more just.

Anselm. If it be necessary, therefore, as it appears, that the heavenly kingdom be made up of men, and this cannot be effected unless the aforesaid satisfaction be made,
which none but God can make and none but man ought to make, it is necessary for the God-man to make it.

Boso. Now blessed be God! we have made a great discovery with regard to our question. Go on, therefore, as you have begun. For I hope that God will assist you. Anselm. Now must we inquire how God can become man.

CHAPTER VII.
How necessary it is for the same being to be perfect God and perfect man.

Anselm. The Divine and human natures cannot alternate, so that the Divine should become human or the human Divine; nor can they be so commingled as that a third should be produced from the two which is neither wholly Divine nor wholly human. For, granting that it were possible for either to be changed into the other, it would in that case be only God and not man, or man only and not God. Or, if they were so commingled that a third nature sprung from the combination of the two (as from two animals, a male and a female of different species, a third is produced, which does not preserve entire the species of either parent, but has a mixed nature derived from both), it would neither be God nor man. Therefore the God-man, whom we require to be of a nature both human and Divine, cannot be produced by a change from one into the other, nor by an imperfect commingling of both in a third; since these things cannot be, or, if they could be, would avail nothing to our purpose. Moreover, if these two complete natures are said to be joined somehow, in such a way that one may be Divine while the other is human, and yet that which is God not be the same with that which is man, it is impossible for both to do the work necessary to be accomplished. For God will not do it, because he has no debt to pay; and man will not do it, because he cannot. Therefore, in order that the God-man may perform this, it is necessary that the same being should perfect God and perfect man, in order to make this atonement. For he cannot and ought not to do it, unless he be very God and very man. Since, then, it is necessary that the God-man preserve the completeness of each nature, it is no less necessary that these two natures be united entire in one person, just as a body and a reasonable soul exist together in every human being; for otherwise it is impossible that the same being should be very God and very man.

Boso. All that you say is satisfactory to me.

CHAPTER VIII.
How it behoved God to take a man of the race of Adam, and born of a woman.

Anselm. It now remains to inquire whence and how God shall assume human nature. For he will either take it from Adam, or else he will make a new man, as he made Adam originally. But, if he makes a new man, not of Adam’s race, then this man will not belong to the human family, which descended from Adam, and therefore ought not to make atonement for it, because he never belonged to it. For, as it is right for man to make atonement for the sin of man, it is also necessary that he who makes the atonement should be the very being who has sinned, or else one of the same race. Otherwise, neither Adam nor his race would make satisfaction for themselves. Therefore, as through Adam and Eve sin was propagated among all men, so none but themselves, or one born of them, ought to make atonement for the sin of men. And, since they cannot, one born of them must fulfill this work. Moreover, as Adam and his whole race, had he not sinned, would have stood firm without the support of any other being, so, after the fall, the same race must rise and be exalted by means of itself. For, whoever restores the race to its place, it will
certainly stand by that being who has made this restoration. Also, when God created human nature in Adam alone, and would only make woman out of man, that by the union of both sexes there might be increase, in this he showed plainly that he wished to produce all that he intended with regard to human nature from man alone. Wherefore, if the race of Adam be reinstated by any being not of the same race, it will not be restored to that dignity which it would have had, had not Adam sinned, and so will not be completely restored; and, besides, God will seem to have failed of his purpose, both which suppositions 153 Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo are incongruous: It is, therefore, necessary that the man by whom Adam’s race shall be restored be taken from Adam.

Boso. If we follow reason, as we proposed to do, this is the necessary result.

Anselm. Let us now examine the question, whether the human nature taken by God must be produced from a father and mother, as other men are, or from man alone, or from woman alone. For, in whichever of these three modes it be, it will be produced from Adam and Eve, for from these two is every person of either sex descended. And of these three modes, no one is easier for God than another, that it should be selected on this account.

Boso. So far, it is well.

Anselm. It is no great toil to show that that man will be brought into existence in a nobler and purer manner, if produced from man alone, or woman alone, than if springing from the union of both, as do all other men.

Boso. I agree with you.

Anselm. Therefore must he be taken either from man alone, or woman alone.

Boso. There is no other source.

Anselm. In four ways can God create man, viz., either of man and woman, in the common way; or neither of man nor woman, as he created Adam; or of man without woman, as he made Eve; or of woman without man, which thus far he has never done. Wherefore, in order to show that this last mode also under his power, and was reserved for this very purpose, what more fitting than that he should take that man whose origin we are seeking from a woman without a man? Now whether it be more worthy that he be born of a virgin, or one not a virgin, we need not discuss, but must affirm, beyond all doubt, that the God-man should be born of a virgin.

Boso. Your speech gratifies my heart.

Anselm. Does what we have said appear sound, or is it unsubstantial as a cloud, as you have said infidels declare?

Boso. Nothing can be more sound.

Anselm. Paint not, therefore, upon baseless emptiness, but upon solid truth, and tell how clearly fitting it is that, as man’s sin and the cause of our condemnation sprung from a woman, so the cure of sin and the source of our salvation should also be found in a woman. And that women may not despair of attaining the inheritance of the blessed, because that so dire an evil arose from woman, it is proper that from woman also so great a blessing should arise, that their hopes may be revived. Take also this view. If it was a virgin which brought all evil upon the race, it is much more appropriate that a virgin should be the occasion of all good. And this also. If woman, whom God made from man alone, was made of a virgin (de virgine), it is peculiarly fitting for that man also, who shall spring from a woman, to be born of a woman without man. Of the pictures which can be superadded to this, showing that the God-man ought to be born of a virgin, we will say
nothing. These are sufficient.
Boso. They are certainly very beautiful and reasonable.

154
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
CHAPTER IX.
How of necessity the Word only can unite in one person with man.
Anselm. Now must we inquire further, in what person God, who exists in three
persons, shall take upon himself the nature of man. For a plurality of persons cannot take
one and the same man into a unity of person. Wherefore in one person only can this be
done. But, as respects this personal unity of God and man, and in which of the Divine
persons this ought to be effected, I have expressed myself, as far as I think needful for the
present inquiry, in a letter on the Incarnation of the Word, addressed to my lord, the Pope
Urban.

Boso. Yet briefly glance at this matter, why the person of the Son should be
incarnated rather than that of the Father or the Holy Spirit.
Anselm. If one of the other persons be incarnated, there will be two sons in the
Trinity, viz., the Son of God, who is the Son before the incarnation, and he also who, by
the incarnation, will be the son of the virgin; and among the persons which ought always
to be equal there will be an inequality as respects the dignity of birth. For the one born of
God will have a nobler birth than he who is born of the virgin. Likewise, if the Father
become incarnate, there will be two grandsons in the Trinity; for the Father, by assuming
humanity, will be the grandson of the parents of the virgin, and the Word, though having
nothing to do with man, will yet be the grandson of the virgin, since he will be the son of
her son. But all these things are incongruous and do not pertain to the incarnation of the
Word. And there is yet another reason which renders it more fitting for the Son to become
incarnate than the other persons. It is, that for the Son to pray to the Father is more proper
than for any other person of the Trinity to supplicate his fellow. Moreover, man, for whom
he was to pray, and the devil, whom he was to vanquish, have both put on a false likeness
to God by their own will. Wherefore they have sinned, as it were, especially against the
person of the Son, who is believed to be the very image of God. Wherefore the punishment
or pardon of guilt is with peculiar propriety ascribed to him upon whom chiefly the injury
was inflicted. Since, therefore, infallible reason has brought us to this necessary conclusion,
that the Divine and human natures must unite in one person, and that this is evidently
more fitting in respect to the person of the Word than the other persons, we determine
that God the Word must unite with man in one person.

Boso. The way by which you lead me is so guarded by reason that I cannot deviate
from it to the right or left.

Anselm. It is not I who lead you, but he of whom we are speaking, without whose
guidance we have no power to keep the way of truth.

CHAPTER X.

How this man dies not of debt; and in what sense he can or cannot sin; and
how neither he nor an angel deserves praise for their holiness, if it is
impossible for them to sin.
Anselm. We ought not to question whether this man was about to die as a debt, as

248
all other men do. For, if Adam would not have died had he not committed sin, much less
should this man suffer death, in whom there can be no sin, for he is God.

Boso. Let me delay you a little on this point. For in either case it is no slight question with me whether it be said that he can sin or that he cannot. For if it be said that he cannot sin, it should seem hard to be believed. For to say a word concerning him, not as of one who never existed in the manner we have spoken hitherto, but as of one whom we know and whose deeds we know; who, I say, will deny that he could have done many things which we call sinful? For, to say nothing of other things, how shall we say that it was not possible for him to commit the sin of lying? For, when he says to the Jews, of his Father: “If I say that I know him not, I shall be a liar, like unto you,” and, in this sentence, makes use of the words: “I know him not,” who says that he could not have uttered these same four words, or expressing the same thing differently, have declared, “I know him not?” Now had he done so, he would have been a liar, as he himself says, and therefore a sinner. Therefore, since he could do this, he could sin.

Anselm. It is true that he could say this, and also that he could not sin.

Boso. How is that?

Anselm. All power follows the will. For, when I say that I can speak or walk, it is understood, if I choose. For, if the will be not implied as acting, there is no power, but only necessity. For, when I say that I can be dragged or bound unwillingly, this is not my power, but necessity and the power of another; since I am able to be dragged or bound in no other sense than this, that another can drag or bind me. So we can say of Christ, that he could lie, so long as we understand, if he chose to do so. And, since he could not lie unwillingly and could not wish to lie, none the less can it be said that he could not lie. So in this way it is both true that he could and could not lie.

Boso. Now let us return to our original inquiry with regard to that man, as if nothing were known of him. I say, then, if he were unable to sin, because, according to you, he could not wish to sin, he maintains holiness of necessity, and therefore he will not be holy from free will. What thanks, then, will he deserve for his holiness? For we are accustomed to say that God made man and angel capable of sinning on this account, that, when of their own free will they maintained holiness, though they might have abandoned it, they might deserve commendation and reward, which they would not have done had they been necessarily holy.

Anselm. Are not the angels worthy of praise, though unable to commit sin?

Boso. Doubtless they are, because they deserved this present inability to sin from the fact that when they could sin they refused to do so.

Anselm. What say you with respect to God, who cannot sin, and yet has not deserved this, by refusing to sin when he had the power? Must not he be praised for his holiness?

Boso. I should like to have you answer that question for me; for if I say that he deserves no praise, I know that I speak falsely. If, on the other hand, I say that he does deserve praise, I am afraid of invalidating my reasoning with respect to the angels.

Anselm. The angels are not to be praised for their holiness because they could sin, but because it is owing to themselves, in a certain sense, that now they cannot sin. And in this respect are they in a measure like God, who has, from himself, whatever he possesses. For a person is said to give a thing, who does not take it away when he can; and to do a thing is but the same as not to prevent it, when that is in one’s power. When, therefore, the angel could depart from holiness and yet did not, and could make himself unholy yet did not, we say with propriety that he conferred virtue upon himself and made himself
holy. In this sense, therefore, has he holiness of himself (for the creature cannot have it of himself in any other way), and, therefore, should be praised for his holiness, because he is not holy of necessity but freely; for that is improperly called necessity which involves neither compulsion nor restraint. Wherefore, since whatever God has he has perfectly of himself, he is most of all to be praised for the good things which he possesses and maintains not by any necessity, but, as before said, by his own infinite unchangeableness. Therefore, likewise, that man who will be also God since every good thing which he possesses comes from himself, will be holy not of necessity but voluntarily, and, therefore, will deserve praise. For, though human nature will have what it has from the Divine nature, yet it will likewise have it from itself, since the two natures will be united in one person.

Boso. You have satisfied me on this point; and I see clearly that it is both true that he could not sin, and yet that he deserves praise for his holiness. But now I think the question arises, since God could make such a man, why he did not create angels and our first parents so as to be incapable of sin, and yet praiseworthy for their holiness?

Anselm. Do you know what you are saying?

Boso. I think I understand, and it is therefore I ask why he did not make them so.

Anselm. Because it was neither possible nor right for any one of them to be the same with God, as we say that man was. And if you ask why he did not bring the three persons, or at least the Word, into unity with men at that time, I answer: Because reason did not at all demand any such thing then, but wholly forbade it, for God does nothing without reason.

Boso. I blush to have asked the question. Go on with what you have to say.

Anselm. We must conclude, then, that he should not be subject to death, inasmuch as he will not be a sinner.

Boso. I must agree with you.

CHAPTER XI.
How Christ dies of his own power, and how mortality does not inhere in the essential nature of man.

157

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

Anselm. Now, also, it remains to inquire whether, as man’s nature is, it is possible for that man to die?

Boso. We need hardly dispute with regard to this, since he will be really man, and every man is by nature mortal.

Anselm. I do not think mortality inheres in the essential nature of man, but only as corrupted. Since, had man never sinned, and had his immortality been unchangeably confirmed, he would have been as really man; and, when the dying rise again, incorruptible, they will no less be really men. For, if mortality was an essential attribute of human nature, then he who was immortal could not be man. Wherefore, neither corruption nor incorruption belong essentially to human nature, for neither makes nor destroys a man; but happiness accrues to him from the one, and misery from the other. But since all men die, mortality is included in the definition of man, as given by philosophers, for they have never even believed in the possibility of man’s being immortal in all respects. And so it is not enough to prove that that man ought to be subject to death, for us to say that he will be in all respects a man.

Boso. Seek then for some other reason, since I know of none, if you do not, by which we may prove that he can die.

Anselm. We may not doubt that, as he will be God, he will possess omnipotence.
Boso. Certainly.
Anselm. He can, then, if he chooses, lay down his life and take it again.
Boso. If not, he would scarcely seem to be omnipotent.
Anselm. Therefore is he able to avoid death if he chooses, and also to die and rise again. Moreover, whether he lays down his life by the intervention of no other person, or another causes this, so that he lays it down by permitting it to be taken, it makes no difference as far as regards his power.
Boso. There is no doubt about it.
Anselm. If, then, he chooses to allow it, he could be slain; and if he were unwilling to allow it, he could not be slain.

253

Boso. To this we are unavoidably brought by reason.
Anselm. Reason has also taught us that the gift which he presents to God, not of debt but freely, ought to be something greater than anything in the possession of God.
Boso. Yes.
Anselm. Now this can neither be found beneath him nor above him.
Boso. Very true.
Anselm. In himself, therefore, must it be found.
Boso. So it appears.
Anselm. Therefore will he give himself, or something pertaining to himself.
Boso. I cannot see how it should be otherwise.
Anselm. Now must we inquire what sort of a gift this should be? For he may not give himself to God, or anything of his, as if God did not have what was his own. For every creature belongs to God.
Boso. This is so.
Anselm. Therefore must this gift be understood in this way, that he somehow gives up himself, or something of his, to the honor of God, which he did not owe as a debtor.

158

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
Boso. So it seems from what has been already said.
Anselm. If we say that he will give himself to God by obedience, so as, by steadily maintaining holiness, to render himself subject to his will, this will not be giving a thing not demanded of him by God as his due. For every reasonable being owes his obedience to God.
Boso. This cannot be denied.

254

Anselm. Therefore must it be in some other way that he gives himself, or something belonging to him, to God.
Boso. Reason urges us to this conclusion.
Anselm. Let us see whether, perchance, this may be to give up his life or to lay down his life, or to deliver himself up to death for God’s honor. For God will not demand this of him as a debt; for, as no sin will be found, he ought not to die, as we have already said.
Boso. Else I cannot understand it.
Anselm. But let us further observe whether this is according to reason.
Boso. Speak you, and I will listen with pleasure.
Anselm. If man sinned with ease, is it not fitting for him to atone with difficulty? And if he was overcome by the devil in the easiest manner possible, so as to dishonor God by sinning against him, is it not right that man, in making satisfaction for his sin, should honor God by conquering the devil with the greatest possible difficulty? Is it not proper
that, since man has departed from God as far as possible in his sin, he should make to 
God the greatest possible satisfaction?
Boso. Surely, there is nothing more reasonable.
Anselm. Now, nothing can be more severe or difficult for man to do for God’s 
honor, than to suffer death voluntarily when not bound by obligation; and man cannot 
give himself to God in any way more truly than by surrendering himself to death for God’s 
honor.
Boso. All these things are true.
Anselm. Therefore, he who wishes to make atonement for man’s sin should be one 
who can die if he chooses.

Boso. I think it is plain that the man whom we seek for should not only be one who 
is not necessarily subject to death on account of his omnipotence, and one who does not 
deserve death on account of his sin, but also one who can die of his own free will, for this 
will be necessary.
Anselm. There are also many other reasons why it is peculiarly fitting for that man 
to enter into the common intercourse of men, and maintain a likeness to them, only without 
sin. And these things are more easily and clearly manifest in his life and actions than they 
can possibly be shown to be by mere reason without experience. For who can say how 
necessary and wise a thing it was for him who was to redeem mankind, and lead them 
back by his teaching from the way of death and destruction into the path of life and eternal 
happiness, when he conversed with men, and when he taught them by personal intercourse, 
to set them an example himself of the way in which they ought to live? But how could he 
have given this example to weak and dying men, that they should not deviate from holiness 
159
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm 
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
because of injuries, or scorn, or tortures, or even death, had they not been able to recognise 
all these virtues in himself?
CHAPTER XII.
How, though he share in our weakness, he is not therefore miserable.
Boso. All these things plainly show that he ought to be mortal and to partake of 
our weaknesses. But all these things are our miseries. Will he then be miserable?
Anselm. No, indeed! For as no advantage which one has apart from his choice 
256 
constitutes happiness, so there is no misery in choosing to bear a loss, when the choice is 
a wise one and made without compulsion.
Boso. Certainly, this must be allowed.
CHAPTER XIII.
How, along with our other weaknesses, he does not partake of our ignorance.
Boso. But tell me whether, in this likeness to men which he ought to have, he will 
inherit also our ignorance, as he does our other infirmities?
Anselm. Do you doubt the omnipotence of God?
Boso. No! but, although this man be immortal in respect to his Divine nature, yet 
will he be mortal in his human nature. For why will he not be like them in their ignorance, 
as he is in their mortality?
Anselm. That union of humanity with the Divine person will not be effected except 
in accordance with the highest wisdom; and, therefore, God will not take anything 
belonging to man which is only useless, but even a hindrance to the work which that man 
must accomplish. For ignorance is in no respect useful, but very prejudicial. How can he 
perform works, so many and so great, without the highest wisdom? Or, how will men
believe him if they find him ignorant? And if he be ignorant, what will it avail him? If nothing is loved except as it is known, and there be no good thing which he does not love, then there can be no good thing of which be is ignorant. But no one perfectly understands good, save he who can distinguish it from evil; and no one can make this distinction who does not know what evil is. Therefore, as he of whom we are speaking perfectly comprehends what is good, so there can be no evil with which he is unacquainted. Therefore must he have all knowledge, though he do not openly show it in his intercourse with men. Boso. In his more mature years, this should seem to he as you say; but, in infancy, as it will not be a fit time to discover wisdom, so there will be no need, and therefore no propriety, in his having it.

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

Anselm. Did not I say that the incarnation will be made in wisdom? But God will in wisdom assume that mortality, which he makes use of so widely, because for so great an object. But he could not wisely assume ignorance, for this is never useful, but always injurious, except when an evil will is deterred from acting, on account of it. But, in him an evil desire never existed. For if ignorance did no harm in any other respect, yet does it in this, that it takes away the good of knowing. And to answer your question in a word: that man, from the essential nature of his being, will be always full of God; and, therefore, will never want the power, the firmness or the wisdom of God.

Boso. Though wholly unable to doubt the truth of this with respect to Christ, yet, on this very account, have I asked for the reason of it. For we are often certain about a thing, and yet cannot prove it by reason.

CHAPTER XIV.
How his death outweighs the number and greatness of our sins.

Boso. Now I ask you to tell me how his death can outweigh the number and magnitude of our sins, when the least sin we can think of you have shown to be so monstrous that, were there an infinite number of worlds as full of created existence as this, they could not stand, but would fall back into nothing, sooner than one look should be made contrary to the just will of God.

Anselm. Were that man here before you, and you knew who he was, and it were told you that, if you did not kill him, the whole universe, except God, would perish, would you do it to preserve the rest of creation?

Boso. No! not even were an infinite number of worlds displayed before me.

Anselm. But suppose you were told: “If you do not kill him, all the sins of the world will be heaped upon you.”

Boso. I should answer, that I would far rather bear all other sins, not only those of this world, past and future, but also all others that can be conceived of, than this alone. And I think I ought to say this, not only with regard to killing him, but even as to the slightest injury which could be inflicted on him.

Anselm. You judge correctly; but tell me why it is that your heart recoils from one injury inflicted upon him as more heinous than all other sins that can be thought of, inasmuch as all sins whatsoever are committed against him?

Boso. A sin committed upon his person exceeds beyond comparison all the sins which can be thought of, that do not affect his person.

Anselm. What say you to this, that one often suffers freely certain evils in his person, in order not to suffer greater ones in his property?

Boso. God has no need of such patience, for all things lie in subjection to his power,
as you answered a certain question of mine above.

259

161

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

Anselm. You say well; and hence we see that no enormity or multitude of sins,
apart from the Divine person, can for a moment be compared with a bodily injury inflicted
upon that man.

Boso. This is most plain.

Anselm. How great does this good seem to you, if the destruction of it is such an
evil?

Boso. If its existence is as great a good as its destruction is an evil, then is it far more
a good than those sins are evils which its destruction so far surpasses.

Anselm. Very true. Consider, also, that sins are as hateful as they are evil, and that
life is only amiable in proportion as it is good. And, therefore, it follows that that life is
more lovely than sins are odious.

Boso. I cannot help seeing this.

Anselm. And do you not think that so great a good in itself so lovely, can avail to
pay what is due for the sins of the whole world?

Boso. Yes! it has even infinite value.

Anselm. Do you see, then, how this life conquers all sins, if it be given for them?
Boso. Plainly.

Anselm. If, then, to lay down life is the same as to suffer death, as the gift of his life
surpasses all the sins of men, so will also the suffering of death.

CHAPTER XV.
How this death removes even the sins of his murderers.

Boso. This is properly so with regard to all sins not affecting the person of the Deity.
But let me ask you one thing more. If it be as great an evil to slay him as his life is a good,

260

how can his death overcome and destroy the sins of those who slew him? Or, if it destroys
the sin of any one of them, how can it not also destroy any sin committed by other men?
For we believe that many men will be saved, and a vast many will not be saved.

Anselm. The Apostle answers the question when he says: “Had they known it, they
would never have crucified the Lord of glory.” For a sin knowingly committed and a sin
done ignorantly are so different that an evil which they could never do, were its full extent
known, may be pardonable when done in ignorance. For no man could ever, knowingly
at least, slay the Lord; and, therefore, those who did it in ignorance did not rush into that
transcendental crime with which none others can be compared. For this crime, the
magnitude of which we have been considering as equal to the worth of his life, we have
not looked at as having been ignorantly done, but knowingly; a thing which no man ever
did or could do.

Boso. You have reasonably shown that the murderers of Christ can obtain pardon
for their sin.

Anselm. What more do you ask? For now you, see how reason of necessity shows
that the celestial state must be made up from men, and that this can only be by the

162

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

forgiveness of sins, which man can never have but by man, who must be at the same time
Divine, and reconcile sinners to God by his own death. Therefore have we clearly found
that Christ, whom we confess to be both God and man, died for us; and, when this is
known beyond all doubt, all things which he says of himself must be acknowledged as true, for God cannot lie, and all he does must be received as wisely done, though we do not understand the reason of it.

261
Boso. What you say is true; and I do not for a moment doubt that his words are true, and all that he does reasonable. But I ask this in order that you may disclose to me, in their true rationality, those things in Christian faith which seem to infidels improper or impossible; and this, not to strengthen me in the faith, but to gratify one already confirmed by the knowledge of the truth itself.

CHAPTER XVI.
How God took that man from a sinful substance, and yet without sin; and of the salvation of Adam and Eve.
Boso. As, therefore, you have disclosed the reason of those things mentioned above, I beg you will also explain what I am now about to ask. First, then, how does God, from a sinful substance, that is, of human species, which was wholly tainted by sin, take, a man without sin, as an unleavened lump from that which is leavened? For, though the conception of this man be pure, and free from the sin of fleshly gratification, yet the virgin herself, from whom he sprang, was conceived in iniquity, and in sin did her mother bear her, since she herself sinned in Adam, in whom all men sinned.
Anselm. Since it is fitting for that man to be God, and also the restorer of sinners, we doubt not that he is wholly without sin; yet will this avail nothing, unless he be taken without sin and yet of a sinful substance. But if we cannot comprehend in what manner the wisdom of God effects this, we should be surprised, but with reverence should allow of a thing of so great magnitude to remain hidden from us. For the restoring of human nature by God is more wonderful than its creation; for either was equally easy for God; but before man was made he had not sinned so that he ought not to be denied existence. But after man was made he deserved, by his sin, to lose his existence together with its design; though he never has wholly lost this, viz., that he should be one capable of being punished, or of receiving God’s compassion. For neither of these things could take effect if he were annihilated. Therefore God’s restoring man is more wonderful than his creating man, inasmuch as it is done for the sinner contrary to his deserts; while the act of creation was not for the sinner, and was not in opposition to man’s deserts. How great a thing it is, also, for God and man to unite in one person, that, while the perfection of each nature is preserved, the same being may be both God and man! Who, then, will dare to think that the human mind can discover how wisely, how wonderfully, so incomprehensible a work has been accomplished?
163
Proslologium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
Boso. I allow that no man can wholly discover so great a mystery in this life, and I do not desire you to do what no man can do, but only to explain it according to your ability. For you will sooner convince me that deeper reasons lie concealed in this matter, by showing some one that you know of, than if, by saying nothing, you make it appear that you do not understand any reason.
Anselm. I see that I cannot escape your importunity; but if I have any power to explain what you wish, let us thank God for it. But if not, let the things above said suffice. For, since it is agreed that God ought to become man, no doubt He will not lack the wisdom or the power to effect this without sin.
Boso. This I readily allow.
263
Anselm. It was certainly proper that that atonement which Christ made should benefit not only those who lived at that time but also others. For, suppose there were a king against whom all the people of his provinces had rebelled, with but a single exception of those belonging to their race, and that all the rest were irretrievably under condemnation. And suppose that he who alone is blameless had so great favor with the king, and so deep love for us, as to be both able and willing to save all those who trusted in his guidance; and this because of a certain very pleasing service which he was about to do for the king, according to his desire; and, inasmuch as those who are to be pardoned cannot all assemble upon that day, the king grants, on account of the greatness of the service performed, that whoever, either before or after the day appointed, acknowledged that he wished to obtain pardon by the work that day accomplished, and to subscribe to the condition there laid down, should be freed from all past guilt; and, if they sinned after this pardon, and yet wished to render atonement and to be set right again by the efficacy of this plan, they should again be pardoned, only provided that no one enter his mansion until this thing be accomplished by which his sins are removed. In like manner, since all who are to be saved cannot be present at the sacrifice of Christ, yet such virtue is there in his death that its power is extended even to those far remote in place or time. But that it ought to benefit not merely those present is plainly evident, because there could not be so many living at the time of his death as are necessary to complete the heavenly state, even if all who were upon the earth at that time were admitted to the benefits of redemption. For the number of evil angels which must be made up from men is greater than the number of men at that time living. Nor may we believe that, since man was created, there was ever a time when the world, with the creatures made for the use of man, was so unprofitable as to contain no human being who had gained the object for which he was made. For it seems unfitting that God should even for a moment allow the human race, made to complete the heavenly state, and those creatures which he made for their use, to exist in vain.

Boso. You show by correct reasoning, such as nothing can oppose, that there never was a time since man was created when there has not been some one who was gaining that reconciliation without which every man was made in vain. So that we rest upon this as not only proper but also necessary. For if this is more fit and reasonable than that at any time there should be no one found fulfilling the design for which God made man, and there is no further objection that can be made to this view, then it is necessary that there always be some person partaking of this promised pardon. And, therefore, we must not doubt that Adam and Eve obtained part in that forgiveness, though Divine authority makes no mention of this.

Anselm. It is also incredible that God created them, and unchangeably determined to make all men from them, as many as were needed for the celestial state, and yet should exclude these two from this design.

Boso. Nay, undoubtedly we ought to believe that God made them for this purpose, viz., to belong to the number of those for whose sake they were created.

Anselm. You understand it well. But no soul, before the death of Christ, could enter the heavenly kingdom, as I said above, with regard to the palace of the king.

Boso. So we believe.

Anselm. Moreover, the virgin, from whom that man was taken of whom we are speaking, was of the number of those who were cleansed from their sins before his birth, and he was born of her in her purity.
Boso. What you say would satisfy me, were it not that he ought to be pure of himself, whereas he appears to have his purity from his mother and not from himself.

Anselm. Not so. But as the mother’s purity, which he partakes, was only derived from him, he also was pure by and of himself.

CHAPTER XVII.

How he did not die of necessity, though he could not be born, except as destined to suffer death.

Boso. Thus far it is well. But there is yet another matter that needs to be looked into. For we have said before that his death was not to be a matter of necessity; yet now we see that his mother was purified by the power of his death, when without this he could not have been born of her. How, then, was not his death necessary, when he could not have been, except in view of future death? For if he were not to die, the virgin of whom he was born could not be pure, since this could only be effected by true faith in his death, and, if she were not pure, he could not be born of her. If, therefore, his death be not a necessary consequence of his being born of the virgin, he never could have been born of her at all; but this is an absurdity.

266

Anselm. If you had carefully noted the remarks made above, you would easily have discovered in them, I think, the answer to your question.

Boso. I see not how.

Anselm. Did we not find, when considering the question whether he would lie, that there were two senses of the word power in regard to it, the one referring to his disposition, the other to the act itself; and that, though having the power to lie, he was so constituted by nature as not to wish to lie, and, therefore, deserved praise for his holiness in maintaining the truth?

Boso. It is so.

165

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

Anselm. In like manner, with regard to the preservation of his life, there is the power of preserving and the power of wishing to preserve it. And when the question is asked whether the same God-man could preserve his life, so as never to die, we must not doubt that he always had the power to preserve his life, though he could not wish to do so for the purpose of escaping death. And since this disposition, which forever prevents him from wishing this, arises from himself, he lays down his life not of necessity, but of free authority.

Boso. But those powers were not in all respects similar, the power to lie and the power to preserve his life. For, if he wished to lie, he would of course be able to; but, if he wished to avoid the other, he could no more do it than he could avoid being what he is. For he became man for this purpose, and it was on the faith of his coming death that he could receive birth from a virgin, as you said above.

Anselm. As you think that he could not lie, or that his death was necessary, because he could not avoid being what he was, so you can assert that he could not wish to avoid death, or that he wished to die of necessity, because he could not change the constitution of his being; for he did not become man in order that he should die, any more than for this purpose, that he should wish to die. Wherefore, as you ought not to say that he could not help wishing to die, or that it was of necessity that he wished to die, it is equally improper to say that he could not avoid death, or that he died of necessity.

Boso. Yes, since dying and wishing to die are included in the same mode of reasoning, both would seem to fall under a like necessity.
Anselm. Who freely wished to become man, that by the same unchanging desire he should suffer death, and that the virgin from whom that man should be born might be pure, through confidence in the certainty of this?

Boso. God, the Son of God.

Anselm. Was it not above shown, that no desire of God is at all constrained; but that it freely maintains itself in his own unchangeableness, as often as it is said that he does anything necessarily?

Boso. It has been clearly shown. But we see, on the other hand, that what God unchangeably wishes cannot avoid being so, but takes place of necessity. Wherefore, if God wished that man to die, he could but die.

Anselm. Because the Son of God took the nature of man with this desire, viz., that he should suffer death, you prove it necessary that this man should not be able to avoid death.

Boso. So I perceive.

268

Anselm. Has it not in like manner appeared from the things which we have spoken that the Son of God and the man whose person he took were so united that the same being should be both God and man, the Son of God and the son of the virgin?

Boso. It is so.

Anselm. Therefore the same man could possibly both die and avoid death.

Boso. I cannot deny it.

Anselm. Since, then, the will of God does nothing by any necessity, but of his own power, and the will of that man was the same as the will of God, he died not necessarily, but only of his own power.

166

Prologium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

Boso. To your arguments I cannot object; for neither your propositions nor your inferences can I invalidate in the least. But yet this thing which I have mentioned always recurs to my mind: that, if he wished to avoid death, he could no more do it than he could escape existence. For it must have been fixed that he was to die, for had it not been true that he was about to die, faith in his coming death would not have existed, by which the virgin who gave him birth and many others also were cleansed from their sin. Wherefore, if he could avoid death, he could make untrue what was true.

Anselm. Why was it true, before he died, that he was certainly to die?

Boso. Because this was his free and unchangeable desire.

Anselm. If, then, as you say, he could not avoid death because he was certainly to die, and was on this account certainly to die because it was his free and unchangeable desire, it is clear that his inability to avoid death is nothing else but his fixed choice to die.

269

Boso. This is so; but whatever be the reason, it still remains certain that he could not avoid death, but that it was a necessary thing for him to die.

Anselm. You make a great ado about nothing, or, as the saying is, you stumble at a straw.

Boso. Are you not forgetting my reply to the excuses you made at the beginning of our discussion, viz., that you should explain the subject, not as to learned men, but to me and my fellow inquirers? Suffer me, then, to question you as my slowness and dullness require, so that, as you have begun thus far, you may go on to settle all our childish doubts.

CHAPTER XVIII (a).11

How, with God there is neither necessity nor impossibility, and what is a coercive necessity, and what one that is not so.
Anselm. We have already said that it is improper to affirm of God that he does anything, or that he cannot do it, of necessity. For all necessity and impossibility is under his control. But his choice is subject to no necessity nor impossibility. For nothing is necessary or impossible save as He wishes it. Nay, the very choosing or refusing anything as a necessity or an impossibility is contrary to truth. Since, then, he does what he chooses and nothing else, as no necessity or impossibility exists before his choice or refusal, so neither do they interfere with his acting or not acting, though it be true that his choice and action are immutable. And as, when God does a thing, since it has been done it cannot be undone, but must remain an actual fact; still, we are not correct in saying that it is impossible for God to prevent a past action from being what it is. For there is no necessity or impossibility in the case whatever but the simple will of God, which chooses that truth should be eternally the same, for he himself is truth. Also, if he has a fixed determination to do anything, though his design must be destined to an accomplishment before it comes to pass, yet there is no coercion as far as he is concerned, either to do it or not to do it, for his will is the sole agent in the case. For when we say that God cannot do a thing, we do not deny his power; on the contrary, we imply that he has invincible authority and strength. For we mean simply this, that nothing can compel God to do the thing which is said to be impossible for him. We often use an expression of this kind, that a thing can be when the power is not in itself, but in something else; and that it cannot be when the weakness does not pertain to the thing itself, but to something else. Thus we say “Such a man can be bound,” instead of saying, “Somebody can bind him,” and, “He cannot be bound,” instead of, “Nobody can bind him.” For to be able to be overcome is not power but weakness, and not to be able to be overcome is not weakness but power. Nor do we say that God does anything by necessity, because there is any such thing pertaining to him, but because it exists in something else, precisely as I said with regard to the affirmation that he cannot do anything. For necessity is always either compulsion or restraint; and these two kinds of necessity operate variously by turn, so that the same thing is both necessary and impossible. For whatever is obliged to exist is also prevented from non-existence; and that which is compelled not to exist is prevented from existence. So that whatever exists from necessity cannot avoid existence, and it is impossible for a thing to exist which is under a necessity of nonexistence, and vice versa. But when we say with regard to God, that anything is necessary or not necessary, we do not mean that, as far as he is concerned, there is any necessity either coercive or prohibitory, but we mean that there is a necessity in everything else, restraining or driving them in a particular way. Whereas we say the very opposite of God. For, when we affirm that it is necessary for God to utter truth, and never to lie, we only mean that such is his unwavering disposition to maintain the truth that of necessity nothing can avail to make him deviate from the truth, or utter a lie. When, then, we say that that man (who, by the union of persons, is also God, the Son of God) could not avoid death, or the choice of death, after he was born of the virgin, we do not imply that there was in him any weakness with regard to preserving or choosing to preserve his life, but we refer to the unchangeableness of his purpose, by which he freely became man for this design, viz., that by persevering in his wish he should suffer death. And this desire nothing could shake. For it would be rather weakness than power if he could wish to lie, or deceive, or change his disposition, when before he had chosen that it should
remain unchanged. And, as I said before, when one has freely determined to do some
good action, and afterwards goes on to complete it, though, if unwilling to pay his vow,
he could be compelled to do so, yet we must not say that he does it of necessity, but with
the same freedom with which he made the resolution. For we ought not to say that anything
is done, or not done, by necessity or weakness, when free choice is the only agent in the
272

case. And, if this is so with regard to man, much less can we speak of necessity or weakness
in reference to God; for he does nothing except according to his choice, and his will no
force can drive or restrain. For this end was accomplished by the united natures of Christ,
viz., that the Divine nature should perform that part of the work needful for man’s
restoration which the human nature could not do; and that in the human should be
manifested what was inappropriate to the Divine. Finally, the virgin herself, who was
made pure by faith in him, so that he might be born of her, even she, I say, never believed
that he was to die, save of his own choice. For she knew the words of the prophet, who
said of him: “He was offered of his own will.” Therefore, since her faith was well founded,
168
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

it must necessarily turn out as she believed. And, if it perplexes you to have me say that
it is necessary, remember that the reality of the virgin’s faith was not the cause of his dying
by his own free will; but, because this was destined to take place, therefore her faith was
real. If, then, it be said that it was necessary for him to die of his single choice, because the
antecedent faith and prophecy were true, this is no more than saying that it must be because
it was to be. But such a necessity as this does not compel a thing to be, but only implies a
necessity of its existence. There is an antecedent necessity which is the cause of a thing,
and there is also a subsequent necessity arising from the thing itself. Thus, when the
heavens are said to revolve, it is an antecedent and efficient necessity, for they must revolve.
But when I say that you speak of necessity, because you are speaking, this is nothing but
273

a subsequent and inoperative necessity. For I only mean that it is impossible for you to
speak and not to speak at the same time, and not that some one compels you to speak. For
the force of its own nature makes the heaven revolve; but no necessity obliges you to
speak. But wherever there is an antecedent necessity, there is also a subsequent one; but
not vice versa. For we can say that the heaven revolves of necessity, because it revolves;
but it is not likewise true that, because you speak, you do it of necessity. This subsequent
necessity pertains to everything, so that we say: Whatever has been, necessarily has been.
Whatever is, must be. Whatever is to be, of necessity will be. This is that necessity which
Aristotle treats of (“de propositionibus singularibus et futuris”), and which seems to
destroy any alternative and to ascribe a necessity to all things. By this subsequent and
imperative necessity, was it necessary (since the belief and prophecy concerning Christ
were true, that he would die of his own free will), that it should be so. For this he became
man; for this he did and suffered all things undertaken by him; for this he chose as he did.
For therefore were they necessary, because they were to be, and they were to be because
they were, and they were because they were; and, if you wish to know the real necessity
of all things which he did and suffered, know that they were of necessity, because he
wished them to be. But no necessity preceded his will. Wherefore if they were not save
by his will, then, had he not willed they would not have existed. So then, no one took his
life from him, but he laid it down of himself and took it again; for he had power to lay it
down and to take it again, as he himself said.
Boso. You have satisfied me that it cannot be proved that he was subjected to death
274
by any necessity; and I cannot regret my importunity in urging you to make this explanation.

Anselm. I think we have shown with sufficient clearness how it was that God took a man without sin from a sinful substance; but I would on no account deny that there is no other explanation than this which we have given, for God can certainly do what human reason cannot grasp. But since this appears adequate, and since in search of other arguments we should involve ourselves in such questions as that of original sin, and how it was transmitted by our first parents to all mankind, except this man of whom we are speaking; and since, also, we should be drawn into various other questions, each demanding its own separate consideration; let us be satisfied with this account of the matter, and go on to complete our intended work.

169

Prologium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

Boso. As you choose; but with this condition that, by the help of God, you will sometime give this other explanation, which you owe me, as it were, but which now you avoid discussing.

Anselm. Inasmuch as I entertain this desire myself, I will not refuse you; but because of the uncertainty of future events, I dare not promise you, but commend it to the will of God. But say now, what remains to be unravelled with regard to the question which you proposed in the first place, and which involves many others with it?

Boso. The substance of the inquiry was this, why God became man, for the purpose of saving men by his death, when he could have done it in some other way. And you, by numerous and positive reasons, have shown that the restoring of mankind ought not to take place, and could not, without man paid the debt which he owed God for his sin. And this debt was so great that, while none but man must solve the debt, none but God was able to do it; so that he who does it must be both God and man. And hence arises a necessity that God should take man into unity with his own person; so that he who in his own nature was bound to pay the debt, but could not, might be able to do it in the person of God. In fine, you have shown that that man, who was also God, must be formed from the virgin, and from the person of the Son of God, and that he could be taken without sin, though from a sinful substance. Moreover, you have clearly shown the life of this man to have been so excellent and so glorious as to make ample satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, and even infinitely more. It now, therefore, remains to be shown how that payment is made to God for the sins of men.

CHAPTER XVIII (b.)

How Christ’s life is paid to God for the sins of men, and in what sense Christ ought, and in what sense he ought not, or was not bound, to suffer.

Anselm. If he allowed himself to be slain for the sake of justice, he did not give his life for the honor of God?

Boso. It should seem so, but I cannot understand, although I do not doubt it, how he could do this reasonably. If I saw how he could be perfectly holy, and yet forever preserve his life, I would acknowledge that he freely gave, for the honor of God, such a gift as surpasses all things else but God himself, and is able to atone for all the sins of men.

276

Anselm. Do you not perceive that when he bore with gentle patience the insults put upon him, violence and even crucifixion among thieves that he might maintain strict holiness; by this he set men an example that they should never turn aside from the holiness due to God on account of personal sacrifice? But how could he have done this, had he, as he might have done, avoided the death brought upon him for such a reason?
Boso. But surely there was no need of this, for many persons before his coming, and John the Baptist after his coming but before his death, had sufficiently enforced this example by nobly dying for the sake of the truth.

Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo

Anselm. No man except this one ever gave to God what he was not obliged to lose, or paid a debt he did not owe. But he freely offered to the Father what there was no need of his ever losing, and paid for sinners what he owed not for himself. Therefore he set a much nobler example, that each one should not hesitate to give to God, for himself, what he must at any rate lose before long, since it was the voice of reason; for he, when not in want of anything for himself and not compelled by others, who deserved nothing of him but punishment, gave so precious a life, even the life of so illustrious a personage, with such willingness.

Boso. You very nearly meet my wishes; but suffer me to make one inquiry, which you may think foolish, but which, nevertheless, I find no easy thing to answer. You say that when he died he gave what he did not owe. But no one will deny that it was better for him, or that so doing he pleased God more than if he had not done it. Nor will any one say that he was not bound to do what was best to be done, and what he knew would be more pleasing to God. How then can we affirm that he did not owe God the thing which he did, that is, the thing which he knew to be best and most pleasing to God, and especially since every creature owes God all that he is and all that he knows and all that he is capable of?

Anselm. Though the creature has nothing of himself, yet when God grants him the liberty of doing or not doing a thing, he leaves the alternative with him, so that, though one is better than the other, yet neither is positively demanded. And, whichever he does, it may be said that he ought to do it; and if he takes the better choice, he deserves a reward; because he renders freely what is his own. For, though celibacy be better than marriage, yet neither is absolutely enjoined upon man; so that both he who chooses marriage and he who prefers celibacy, may be said to do as they ought. For no one says that either celibacy or marriage ought not to be chosen; but we say that what a man esteems best before taking action upon any of these things, this he ought to do. And if a man preserves his celibacy as a free gift offered to God, he looks for a reward. When you say that the creature owes God what he knows to be the better choice, and what he is able to do, if you mean that he owes it as a debt, without implying any command on the part of God, it is not always true. Thus, as I have already said, a man is not bound to celibacy as a debt, but ought to marry if he prefers it. And if you are unable to understand the use of this word “debere,” when no debt is implied, let me inform you that we use the word “debere“ precisely as we sometimes do the words “posse, ” and “non posse, ” and also “necessitas,” when the ability, etc., is not in the things themselves, but in something else. When, for instance, we say that the poor ought to receive alms from the rich, we mean that the rich ought to bestow alms upon the poor. For this is a debt not owed by the poor but by the rich. We also say that God ought to be exalted over all, not because there is any obligation resting upon him, but because all things ought to be subject to him. And he wishes that all creatures should be what they ought; for what God wishes to be ought to be. And, in like manner, when any creature wishes to do a thing that is left entirely at his own disposal, we say that he ought to do it, for what he wishes to be ought to be. So our Lord Jesus, when he wished, as we have said, to suffer death, ought to have done precisely what he did; because he ought to be what he wished, and was not bound to do anything as a debt.
As he is both God and man, in connection with his human nature, which made him a man,
he must also have received from the Divine nature that control over himself which freed
him from all obligation, except to do as he chose. In like manner, as one person of the
Trinity, he must have had whatever he possessed of his own right, so as to be complete
in himself, and could not have been under obligations to another, nor have need of giving
anything in order to be repaid himself.

Boso. Now I see clearly that he did not give himself up to die for the honor of God,
as a debt; for this my own reason proves, and yet he ought to have done what he did.

Anselm. That honor certainly belongs to the whole Trinity; and, since he is very
God, the Son of God, he offered himself for his own honor, as well as for that of the Father
and the Holy Spirit; that is, he gave his humanity to his divinity, which is one person of
the Triune God. But, though we express our idea more definitely by clinging to the precise
truth, yet we may say, according to our custom, that the Son freely gave himself to the
Father. For thus we plainly affirm that in speaking of one person we understand the whole
Deity, to whom as man he offered himself. And, by the names of Father and Son, a
wondrous depth of devotion is excited in the hearts of the hearers, when it is said that the
Son supplicates the Father on our behalf.

Boso. This I readily acknowledge.

CHAPTER XIX.
How human salvation follows upon his death.

Anselm. Let us now observe, if we can, how the salvation of men rests on this.

Boso. This is the very wish of my heart. For, although I think I understand you, yet
I wish to get from you the close chain of argument.

Anselm. There is no need of explaining how precious was the gift which the Son
freely gave.

Boso. That is clear enough already.

Anselm. But you surely will not think that he deserves no reward, who freely gave
so great a gift to God.

Boso. I see that it is necessary for the Father to reward the Son; else he is either
unjust in not wishing to do it, or weak in not being able to do it; but neither of these things
can be attributed to God.

Anselm. He who rewards another either gives him something which he does not
have, or else remits some rightful claim upon him. But anterior to the great offering of the
Son, all things belonging to the Father were his, nor did he ever owe anything which could
be forgiven him. How then can a reward be bestowed on one who needs nothing, and to
whom no gift or release can be made?

Boso. I see on the one hand a necessity for a reward, and on the other it appears
impossible; for God must necessarily render payment for what he owes, and yet there is
no one to receive it.

Anselm. The reward then must be bestowed upon some one else, for it cannot be
upon him.  
Boso. This is necessarily so.  
Anselm. Had the Son wished to give some one else what was due to him, could the Father rightfully prevent it, or refuse to give it to the other person?  
Boso. No! but I think it would be both just and necessary that the gift should be given by the Father to whomsoever the Son wished; because the Son should be allowed to give away what is his own, and the Father cannot bestow it at all except upon some other person.  
Anselm. Upon whom would he more properly bestow the reward accruing from his death, than upon those for whose salvation, as right reason teaches, he became man; and for whose sake, as we have already said, he left an example of suffering death to preserve holiness? For surely in vain will men imitate him, if they be not also partakers of his reward. Or whom could he more justly make heirs of the inheritance, which he does not need, and of the superfluity of his possessions, than his parents and brethren? What more proper than that, when he beholds so many of them weighed down by so heavy a debt, and wasting through poverty, in the depth of their miseries, he should remit the debt incurred by their sins, and give them what their transgressions had forfeited?  
Boso. The universe can hear of nothing more reasonable, more sweet, more desirable. And I receive such confidence from this that I cannot describe the joy with which my heart exults. For it seems to me that God can reject none who come to him in his name.  
Anselm. Certainly not, if he come aright. And the Scriptures, which rest on solid truth as on a firm foundation, and which, by the help of God, we have somewhat examined, -- the Scriptures, I say, show us how to approach in order to share such favor, and how we ought to live under it.  
Boso. And whatever is built on this foundation is founded on an immovable rock.  
Anselm. I think I have nearly enough answered your inquiry, though I might do it still more fully, and there are doubtless many reasons which are beyond me and which mortal ken does not reach. It is also plain that God had no need of doing the thing spoken of, but eternal truth demanded it. For though God is said to have done what that man did, on account of the personal union made; yet God was in no need of descending from heaven to conquer the devil, nor of contending against him in holiness to free mankind. But God demanded that man should conquer the devil, so that he who had offended by sin should atone by holiness. As God owed nothing to the devil but punishment, so man must only make amends by conquering the devil as man had already been conquered by him. But whatever was demanded of man, he owed to God and not to the devil.  

CHAPTER XX.  
173  
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo  
How great and how just is God’s compassion.  
NOW we have found the compassion of God which appeared lost to you when we were considering God’s holiness and man’s sin; we have found it, I say, so great and so consistent with his holiness, as to be incomparably above anything that can be conceived. For what compassion can excel these words of the Father, addressed to the sinner doomed to eternal torments and having no way of escape: “Take my only begotten Son and make him an offering for yourself;” or these words of the Son: “Take me, and ransom your souls.” For these are the voices they utter, when inviting and leading us to faith in the Gospel. Or can anything be more just than for him to remit all debt since he has earned a reward greater than all debt, if given with the love which he deserves.
CHAPTER XXI.
How it is impossible for the devil to be reconciled.
IF you carefully consider the scheme of human salvation, you will perceive the
reconciliation of the devil, of which you made inquiry, to be impossible. For, as man could
not be reconciled but by the death of the God-man, by whose holiness the loss occasioned
by man’s sin should be made up; so fallen angels cannot be saved but by the death of a
283
God-angel who by his holiness may repair the evil occasioned by the sins of his companions.
And as man must not be restored by a man of a different race, though of the same nature,
so no angel ought to be saved by any other angel, though all were of the same nature, for
they are not like men, all of the same race. For all angels were not sprung from one, as all
men were. And there is another objection to their restoration, viz., that, as they fell with
none to plot their fall, so they must rise with none to aid them; but this is impossible. But
otherwise they cannot be restored to their original dignity. For, had they not sinned, they
would have been confirmed in virtue without any foreign aid, simply by the power given
to them from the first. And, therefore, if any one thinks that the redemption of our Lord
ought to be extended even to the fallen angels, he is convinced by reason, for by reason
he has been deceived. And I do not say this as if to deny that the virtue of his death far
exceeds all the sins of men and angels, but because infallible reason rejects the reconciliation
of the fallen angels.
CHAPTER XXII.
How the truth of the Old and New Testament is shown in the things which
have been said.
174
Proslogium; Monologium; An Appendix in Behalf of the Fool St. Anselm
by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo
Boso. All things which you have said seem to me reasonable and incontrovertible.
And by the solution of the single question proposed do I see the truth of all that is contained
in the Old and New Testament. For, in proving that God became man by necessity, leaving
out what was taken from the Bible, viz., the remarks on the persons of the Trinity, and on
Adam, you convince both Jews and Pagans by the mere force of reason. And the God-man
284
himself originates the New Testament and approves the Old. And, as we must acknowledge
him to be true, so no one can dissent from anything contained in these books.
Anselm. If we have said anything that needs correction, I am willing to make the
correction if it be a reasonable one. But, if the conclusions which we have arrived at by
reason seem confirmed by the testimony of the truth, then ought we to attribute it, not to
ourselves, but to God, who is blessed forever. --
Amen.

Index of Scripture References
Psalms
Isaiah
64:4 64:4
Matthew
13:43
Luke
12:42
John
16:24
On the highest and supreme perfection of man, in so far as it is possible in this life De ultima et summa perfectione hominis, quantum in hac vita possibile est.
I have had the idea of writing something for myself on and about the state of complete and full abstraction from everything and of cleaving freely, confidently, nakedly and firmly to God alone, so as to describe it fully (in so far as it is possible in this abode of exile and pilgrimage), especially since the goal of Christian perfection is the love by which we cleave to God. In fact everyone is obligated, to this loving cleaving to God as necessary for salvation, in the form of observing the commandments and conforming to the divine will, and the observation of the commandments
excludes everything that is contrary to the nature and habit of love, including mortal sin. Members of religious orders have committed themselves in addition to evangelical perfection, and to the things that constitute a voluntary and counselled perfection by means of which one may arrive more quickly to the supreme goal which is God. The observation of these additional commitments excludes as well the things that hinder the working and fervour of love, and without which one can come to God, and these include the renunciation of all things, of both body and mind, exactly as one’s vow of profession entails. Since indeed the Lord God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth, in other words, by knowledge and love, that is, understanding and desire, stripped of all images. This is what is referred to in Matthew 6.6, ‘When you pray, enter into your inner chamber,’ that is, your inner heart, ‘and having closed the door,’ that is of your senses, and there with a pure heart and a clear conscience, and with faith unfeigned, ‘pray to your Father,’ in spirit and in truth, ‘in secret.’ This can be done best when a man is disengaged and removed from everything else, and completely recollected within himself. There, in the presence of Jesus Christ, with everything, in general and individually, excluded and wiped out, the mind alone turns in security confidently to the Lord its God with its desire. In this way it pours itself forth into him in full sincerity with its whole heart and the yearning of its love, in the most inward part of all its faculties, and is plunged, enlarged, set on fire and dissolved into him. Cogitavi mihi aliquid ultimate (in quantum possibile est in hujus exsilii et peregrinationis immoratione) depingere, scriptando de et super ab omnibus plena et possibili abstraction per hoc toto cordis et amoris affectu se in eum intimissimis medullis omnium virium suarum sincerissime ac plenissime diffundit, et immersit, dilatat et inflammat, et resolvit in se. How one can cling to and seek Christ alone, disdaining everything else Qualiter quis, omnibus aliis spretis, soli Christo inhaereat et intendat? Certainly, anyone who desires and aims to arrive at and remain in such a state must needs above all have eyes and senses closed and not be inwardly involved or worried about
anything, nor concerned
or occupied with anything, but should completely reject all such things as
irrelevant, harmful and
dangerous. Then he should withdraw himself totally within himself and not
pay any attention to any
object entering the mind except Jesus Christ, the wounded one, alone, and so
he should turn his
attention with care and determination through him into him - that is, though
the man into God,
through the wounds of his humanity into the inmost reality of his divinity.
Here he can commit
himself and all that he has, individually and as a whole, promptly, securely
and without discussion, to
God’s unwearying providence, in accordance with the words of Peter, cast all
your care upon him (1
Peter 5.7), who can do everything. And again, In nothing be anxious
(Philippians 4.6), or what is
more, Cast your burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain you. (Psalm 55.22)
Or again, It is good for
me to hold fast to God, (Ps. 73.28) and I have always set up God before me.
(Psalm 16.8) The bride
too in the Song of Songs says, I have found him whom my soul loves, (Canticle
3.4) and again, All good
things came to me along with her. (Wisdom 7.11) This, after all, is the hidden
heavenly treasure, none
other than the pearl of great price, which must be sought with resolution,
esteeeming it in humble
faithfulness, eager diligence, and calm silence before all things, and preferring
it even above physical
comfort, or honour and renown. For what good does it do a religious if he
gains the whole world but
suffers the loss of his soul? Or what is the benefit of his state of life, the
holiness of his profession, the
virtue of his habit and tonsure, or the outer circumstances of his way of life if
he is without a life of
spiritual humility and truth in which Christ abides through a faith created by
love. This is what Luke
means by, the Kingdom of God (that is, Jesus Christ) is within you. (Luke
17.21)
Verumtamen quicumque talem statum aggredi et ingredi desiderat et satagit,
opus est omnino, ut
velut clausis oculis et sensibus, de nulla re se penitus implicet aut perturbet,
sollicitus sit aut curet:
sed cuncta tamquam impertinentia et noxia ac perniciosa funditus excutiat:
deinde se totum intra se
recipiat, nec aliud umquam objectum inibi mente attendat, quam solum Jesum
Christum vulneratum:
sicque per eum in eum, id est, per hominem in Deum, per vulnera humanitatis
ad intima divinitatis
suae, sedulo et obnixe intendat: ibique se suaque singula ac cuncta, indiscusse,
suae infatigabili
providentiae committat expedite et secure, juxta illud Petri: Omnem
sollicitudinem vestram
projicientes in eum, qui potest omnia. Et iterum: Nihil solliciti sitis. Et rursus:
Jacta super Dominum
curam tuam, et ipse te enutriet. Et iterum: Mihi adhaerere Deo bonum est. Et:
Providebam Dominum
in conspectu meo semper. Et sponsa in Canticis: Inveni quem diligit anima
mea: quippe venerunt
mihi omnia bona pariter cum illa. Nempe hic est thesaurus ille coelestis
absconditus, nec non
margarita pretiosa, quae prae omnibus comparata fiducia humili, conatu
instantissimo, taciturnitate
tranquilla, etiam usque ad corporalis commodi, laudis vel honoris jacturam, in
fortitudine spiritus
quaeritur. Alioquin quid proficit religiosus, si totum mundum lucretur, et
animae suae detrimentum
patiatur? Aut quid relevat status, professionis sanctitas, perfectionis habitus,
tonsura, et exterioris
dispositio conversationis, sine vita in spiritu humiliatis et veritatis, ubi
Christus habitat per fidem
charitate formatam? Hinc est illud Lucae xvii.21: Regnum Dei intra vos est,
quod est Christus Jesus.
What the perfection of man consist of in this life
Quae sit conformitas perfectionis hominis in hac vita?
Now the more the mind is concerned about thinking and dealing with what is
merely lower and
human, the more it is separated from the experience in the intimacy of
devotion of what is higher and
heavenly, while the more fervently the memory, desire and intellect is
withdrawn from what is below
to what is above, the more perfect will be our prayer, and the purer our
contemplation, since the two
directions of our interest cannot both be perfect at the same time, being as
different as light and
darkness. He who cleaves to God is indeed translated into the light, while he
who clings to the world
is in the dark. So the supreme perfection of man in this life is to be so united
to God that all his soul
with all its faculties and powers are so gathered into the Lord God that he
becomes one spirit with
him, and remembers nothing except God, is aware of and recognises nothing
but God, but with all his
desires unified by the joy of love, he rests contentedly in the enjoyment of his
Maker alone.
Now the image of God as found in the soul consists of these three faculties, namely reason, memory and will, and so long as they are not completely stamped with God, the soul is not yet deiform in accordance with the initial creation of the soul. For the true pattern of the soul is God, with whom it must be imprinted, like wax with a seal, and carry the mark of his impress. But this can never be complete until the intellect is perfectly illuminated, according to its capacity, with the knowledge of God, who is perfect truth, until the will is perfectly focused on the love of the perfect good, and until the memory is fully absorbed in turning to and enjoying eternal happiness, and in gladly and contentedly resting in it. And since the glory of the beatitude which is achieved in our heavenly homeland consists in the complete fulfilment of these three faculties, it follows that perfect initiation of them is perfection in this life.

Porro quanto plus mens sollicita est ad ista inferiora et humana cogitanda et tractanda, tanto plus a superioribus et coelestibus per devotionis intima elongatur: et quanto ferventius ab inferiorum memoria, affectu et intellectu ad superiora sensus colligitur, tanto perfectior erit oratio, et purior contemplatio: quia simul perfecte non potest esse utrisque intenta, quae sicut lux et tenebrae sunt divisa. Quippe qui Deo adhaeret, versatur in lumine: qui vero mundo adhaeret, in tenebris est. Qua ex re, est hominis in hac vita sublimior perfectio, ita Deo uniri ut tota anima cum omnibus potentiiis suis et viribus in Dominum Deum suum sit collecta, ut unus fiat spiritus cum eo, et nihil meminerit nisi Deum, nihil sentiat vel intelligat nisi Deum, et omnes affectiones in amoris gaudio unitae, in sola Conditoris fruitione suaviter quiescant.

Imago enim Dei in his tribus potentiiis in anima expressa consistit, videlicet, ratione, memoria, et voluntate. Et quamdiu illae ex toto, Deo impressae non sunt, non est anima deiformis juxta primiam animae creationem. Forma nempe animae Deus est, cui debet imprimi, sicut cera sigillo, et signatum signo signatur. Hoc autem numquam plene fit, nisi cum ratio perfecte juxta capacitatem suam illuminatur ad cognitionem Dei, qui est summam veritas, et voluntas perfecte afficitur ad amandam.
summam bonitatem, et memoria plene absorbetur ad intuendum et fruendum aeterna felicitate, et ad suaviter et delectabiliter in ea quiescendum. Et quia in horum consummata adeptione consistit gloria beatudinis, quae perficietur in patria, liquet quod istorum perfecta inchoatio est perfectio in hac vita. How man's activity should be purely in the intellect and not in the senses Qualiter operatio humana debeat esse in solo intellectu, et non in sensibus? Happy therefore is the person who by continual removal of fantasies and images, by turning within, and raising the mind to God, finally manages to dispense with the products of the imagination, and by so doing works within, nakedly and simply, and with a pure understanding and will, on the the simplest of all objects, God. So eliminate from your mind all fantasies, objects, images and shapes of all things other than God, so that, with just naked understanding, intent and will, your practice will be concerned with God himself within you. For this is the end of all spiritual exercises - to turn the mind to the Lord God and rest in him with a completely pure understanding and a completely devoted will, without the entanglements and fantasies of the imagination. This sort of exercise is not practised by fleshly organs nor by the exterior senses, but by that by which one is indeed a man. For a man is precisely understanding and will. For that reason, in so far as a man is still playing with the products of the imagination and the senses, and holds to them, it is obvious that he has not yet emerged from the motivation and limitations of his animal nature, that is of that which he shares in common with the animals. For these know and feel objects by means of recognised shapes and sense impressions and no more, since they do not possess the higher powers of the soul. But it is different with man, who is created in the image and likeness of God with understanding, will, and free choice, through which he should be directly, purely and nakedly impressed and united with God, and firmly adhere to him. For this reason the Devil tries eagerly and with all his power to hinder this practice so far as he can, being envious of this in man, since it is a sort of prelude and initiation of eternal life. So he is always trying to draw man's mind away from the Lord God, now by temptations or passions, now by
superfluous worries and pointless cares, now by restlessness and distracting conversation and senseless curiosity, now by the study of subtle books, irrelevant discussion, gossip and news, now by hardships, now by opposition, etc. Such matters may seem trivial enough and hardly sinful, but they are a great hindrance to this holy exercise and practice. Therefore, even if they may appear useful and necessary, they should be rejected, whether great or small, as harmful and dangerous, and put out of our minds. Above all therefore it is necessary that things heard, seen, done and said, and other such things, must be received without adding things from the imagination, without mental associations and without emotional involvement, and one should not let past or future associations, implications or constructs of the imagination form and grow. For when constructs of the imagination are not allowed to enter the memory and mind, a man is not hindered, whether he be engaged in prayer, meditation, or reciting psalms, or in any other practice or spiritual exercise, nor will they recur again. So commit yourself confidently and without hesitation, all that you are, and everything else, individually and in general, to the unfailing and totally reliable providence of God, in silence and in peace, and he will fight for you. He will liberate you and comfort you more fully, more effectively and more satisfactorily than if you were to dream about it all the time, day and night, and were to cast around frantically all over the place with the futile and confused thoughts of your mind in bondage, nor will you wear out your mind and body, wasting your time, and stupidly and pointlessly exhausting your strength. So accept everything, separately and in general, wherever it comes from and whatever its origin, in silence and peace, and with an equal mind, as coming to you from a father’s hand and his divine providence. So render your imagination bare of the images of all physical things as is appropriate to your state and profession, so that you can cling to him with a bare and undivided mind, as you have so often and so completely vowed to do, without anything whatever being able to come between your soul and him, so that you can pass purely and unwaveringly from the wounds of his humanity into
the light of his divinity.

Felix ergo qui per abstersionem continuam phantasmatum et imaginum, ac per introversionem et inibis per sursum ductionem mentis in Deum, tandem aliquando obliviscitur phantasmatum quodammodo, ac per hoc consequentia operatur interius nudo ac simplici ac puro intellectu et affectu circa objectum simplicissimum Deum. Omnia igitur phantasmata, species, imagines, ac formas rerum omnium citra Deum a mente rejicias, ut in solo nudo intellectu et affectu ac voluntate tuum pendeat exercitium circa Deum intra te.

Nempe finis omnium exercitiorum hic est, scilicet intendere et quiescere in Domino Deo intra te per purissimum intellectum, et devotissimum affectum sine phantasmatis et implicationibus.

Hujusmodi autem exercitium non fit in organis carneis, et sensibus exterioribus, sed per quod quis homo est: homo vero quis est intellectu et affectu. Et idcirco quamdiu homo cum phantasmatis et sensibus ludit, et eis insistit, videtur nondum exisse motus et limites bestialitatis suae, hoc est, illius quod cum bestiis habet commune. Quia illae per phantasmata et per tales sensitivas seu sensibles species cognoscunt et afficiuntur, et non aliter, eo quod altiorem vim animae non habeant. Secus est de homine, secundum intellectum et affectum et liberum arbitrium, ad Dei imaginem et similitudinem creato, quibus debet Deo immediate, pure et nude imprimi, et uniri, firmiterque inhaerere.

Quamobrem diabolus diligentissime et maxime conatur impedire illud exercitium, quantum potest, ex quo est quodammodo praebulum et initium vitae aeternae, invidens super hoc homini. Idcirco nititur semper mentem hominis alienare a Domino Deo, nunc per istas, nunc per illas tentationes seu passiones, nunc sollicitudine superflua et cura indiscreta, nunc turbatione, et conversatione dissoluta, curiositateque irrationabili: nunc per studia librorum subtilium, colloquia aliena, rumores et novitatem: nunc per aspera, nunc per contraria, etc. Quae tamen etsi nonnumquam levia et tamquam nulla videantur peccata, tamen magna sunt impedimenta hujus sancti exercitii et operis. Et ideo, etiamsi utilia et necessaria visa fuerint, sive magna sive parva, ut noxia et perniciosa illico sunt.
rejicienda penitus, et a sensibus propellenda.
Summopere igitur necessarium est, ut audita, visa, facta, et dicta, et caetera similia sine phantasmatibus, imaginibus et occupationibus recipientur, nec etiam ex consequenti vel antea vel tunc super hoc phantasmata et implicationes formentur et nutriantur. Et ita quando phantasmata non venit ad memoriam et mentem, tunc non impedit hominem, sive in oratione, meditatione, et psalmodia, sive in alia quacumque operatione et exercitatione spirituali, nec rursum iterato occurret ei.
Et sic expedite secureque te totum, etiam plene omnia et singula committe infallibili et certissimae divinae providentiae cum silentio et quiete, et ipse pugnabit pro te: et melius, honestius ac dulcius liberabit te et consolabitur, quam si tu semper die noctuque de hoc continue phantasiareris, et vana vagaque ac captiva mente fatue sic et sic, hinc et inde discurreres errabundus, necnon mente et corpore deficiens tempus perderes, et vires stulte ac irrationabiliter consumeres. Cuncta ergo et singula, undecumque et qualitercumque occurrentia ortum habeat, sic accipe cum taciturnitate et tranquillitate aequanimiter, quemadmodum de manu paternae divinaeque providentiae tibi venirent. Nuda igitur te a phantasmatibus omnibus rerum corporearum, juxta tui status et professionis exigentiam, ut nuda mente et sincere inhaereas ei cui te multipliciter et totaliter devovisti, ut nihil quodammodo possibile sit medii inter animam tuam et ipsum, ut pure fixeque fluere possis a vulneribus humanitatis in lumen suae divinitatis. On purity of heart which is to be sought above all things De corde puritate, quae est prae omnibus sectanta. If your desire and aim is to reach the destination of the path and home of true happiness, of grace and glory, by a straight and safe way then earnestly apply your mind to seek constant purity of heart, clarity of mind and calm of the senses. Gather up your heart’s desire and fix it continually on the Lord God above. To do so you must withdraw yourself so far as you can from friends and from everyone else, and from the activities that hinder you from such a purpose. Grasp every opportunity when you can find the place, time and means to devote yourself to silence and contemplation, and gathering the
To which end, if you have begun to strip and purify yourself of images and imaginations and to simplify and still your heart and mind in the Lord God so that you can draw and taste the well of divine grace in everything within yourself, and so that you are united to God in your mind by a good will, then this itself is enough for you in place of all study and reading of holy scripture, and as demonstration of love of God and neighbour, as devotion itself testifies. So simplify your heart with all care, diligence and effort so that still and at peace from the products of the imagination you can turn round and remain always in the Lord within yourself, as if your mind were already in the now of eternity, that is of the godhead. In this way you will be able to renounce yourself through love of Jesus Christ, with a pure heart, clean conscience and unfeigned faith, and commit yourself completely and fully to God in all difficulties and eventualities, and be willing to submit yourself patiently to his will and good pleasure at all times.
For this to come about you must repeatedly retreat into your heart and remain there, keeping yourself free from everything, so far as is possible. You must always keep the eye of your mind clear and still. You must guard your understanding from daydreams and thoughts of earthly things. You must completely free the inclination of your will from worldly cares and cling with all your being to the supreme true good with fervent love. You must keep your memory always lifted up and firmly anchored in that same true supreme good and only uncreated reality. In just this way your whole mind gathered up with all its powers and faculties in God, may become one spirit with him, in whom the supreme perfection of life is known to consist. This is the true union of spirit and love by which a man is made compliant to all the impulses of the supreme and eternal will, so that he becomes by grace what God is by nature. At the same time it should be noted that in the very moment in which one is able, by God’s help, to overcome one’s own will, that is to cast away from oneself inordinate love or strong feeling, in other words so as to dare simply to trust God completely in all one’s needs, by this very fact one becomes so pleasing to God that his grace is imparted to one, and through that very grace one experiences that true love and devotion which drives out all uncertainty and fear and has full confidence in God. What is more, there can be no greater happiness than to place one’s all in him who lacks nothing. So why do you still remain in yourself where you cannot stay. Cast yourself, all of yourself, with confidence into God and he will sustain you, heal you and make you safe. If you dwell on these things faithfully within, they will do more to confer a happy life on you than all riches, pleasures and honours, and above all the wisdom and knowledge of this present deceitful world and its life, even if you were to excel in them all that ever lived.
quantum in te est, et negotiis hujusmodi propositum tuum impedientibus, semper captans
opportunitatem, ubi et quando possis locum, tempus, et modum reperire quietis ac contemplationis,
carpens silentii secretae, praesentisque saeculi vitare naufragia, necnon perstrepentis mundi fugere
perturbationes.
Qua de re omni tempore puritati, munditiae, ac quieti cordis principaliter stude: ut videlicet continue,
velut clausis carnalibus sensibus, in temetipsum convertaris, et cordis ostia a formis et
phantasmatisbus sensibilium, et imaginationibus terrenorum, quantum possibile est, habeas
diligenter serata.
Nempe cordis puritas, inter omnia exercitia spiritualia quodammodo (tamquam finalis intentio, ac
laborum omnium retribution, quam in hac vita spiritualis quisque et vere religiosus recipere
consuevit) sibi vindicat principatum.
Idcirco cor tuum, sensus, et affectum, cum omni diligentia, solertia et conatu, absolvas ab his omnibus
quae libertatem ipsius possent impedire, insuper ab omni re mundi possibilitatem habente alligandi
et vincendi te. Sicque cunctas dispersiones cordis, et affectiones mentis, in unum verum, simplex, et
principalissimum bonum recolligere, et intra te tamquam in uno loco recollectas habere agoniza, ac
per hoc rebus divinis Deoque mente semper inhaerere, atque derelicta fragilitate terrena, cor ad
superna in intimis tuis in Jesu Christo jugiter transformare conare.
Quapropter si incipis te nudare et purificare a phantasmatibus et imaginibus, et simplificare et
tranquillare fiducialiter in Domino Deo cor tuum et mentem tuam, ut haurias et sentias fontem divini
beneplaciti in omnibus interioribus tuis, et per bonam voluntatem sis Deo unitus in intellectu, sufficit
tibi hoc pro omni studio et lectione sacrae Scripturae, et ad dilectionem Dei et proximi, ut unctio
docet.
Omni igitur studio, conatu, et labore simplifica cor tuum, ut a phantasmatibus immobilis et
tranquillus convertaris, et stes in Domino semper intra te, tamquam si anima tua sit in illo nunc
aeternitatis, id est, divinitatis, taliter scilicet, ut amore Jesu Christi, de corde puro, conscientia bona,
et fide non ficta teipsum deseras, et totum te Deo in omni tribulatione et eventu totaliter plene
committas, ejusque voluntati et beneplacito parere semper et patienter affectes.
Quod ut fiat, necesse est ut frequenter ad cor redeas, et in eo persistas, et ab omnibus, quantum possibile est, teipsum absolvas: mentis oculum semper in puritate et tranquillitate custodias:
intellectum a phantasmatibus et formis rerum infirmarum praeserves:
volutatii affectum a curis
terrenorum penitus absolvas, et summo vero bono amore fervido radicitus inhaereas: memoriam quoque jugiter habeas sursum elevatum, et in ipso eodem vero summo bono ac solo essentiiali et increato firmiter stabilitam: ita dumtaxat, ut tota anima cum omnibus potentiis et viribus suis in Deum recollecta, unus fiat spiritus cum eo, in quo summa perfectio viae consistere cognoscitur.
Haec vero unitas spiritus et amoris est, quo homo omnibus votis supernae et aeternae voluntatii conformis efficitur, ut sit per gratiam, quod Deus est per naturam.
Interea animadvertendum, quod in eo ipso momento, quo quis suam Dei auxilio potest vincere voluntatem, id est, inordinatum amorem aut zelum a seipso abjicere, sic scilicet, ut Domino Deo de omni sua necessitate audeat plane totaliter confidere, hoc ipso facto in tantum Deo complacet, ut suam ei gratiam largiatur, et per ipsam gratiam veram sentiat charitatem et dilectionem, omnem ambiguitatem et timorem expellentem, in Deoque confiderent sperantem.
Itaque nihil beatius esse potest, quam omnia in illo ponere, in quo nullus est defectus.
Proinde quamdiu stas in te, et non stas, projice te totum in Deum secure, et suscipiet te, sanabit et salvabit te. Haec si continue intra te veraciter revolveris, plus tibi ad beatam vitam conferatur, quam omnes divitiae, deliciae, honores, insuper et omnis sapientia et scientia hujus saeculi fallacis, et corruptibilis mundi et vitae, etiamsi in his excelleres omnes qui umquam fuerunt.
That the devout man should cleave to God with naked understanding and will adhaerere debet homo devotus Deo, nudato intellectu et affectu.
The more you strip yourself of the products of the imagination and involvement in external, worldly things and the objects of the senses, the more your soul will recover its strength and its inner senses so that it can appreciate the things which are above. So learn to withdraw from imaginations and the images of physical things, since what pleases God above everything is a mind
bare of those sorts of forms and objects, for it is his delight to be with the sons of men, that is those who, at peace from such activities, distractions and passions, seek him with a pure and simple mind, empty themselves for him, and cleave to him. Otherwise, if your memory, imagination and thought is often involved with such things, you must needs be filled with the thought of new things or memories of old ones, or identified with other changing objects. As a result, the Holy Spirit withholds itself from thoughts bereft of understanding. So the true lover of Jesus Christ should be so united through good will in his understanding with the divine will and goodness, and be so bare of all imaginations and passions that he does not even notice whether he is being mocked or loved, or something is being done to him. For a good will turns everything to good and is above everything. So if the will is good and is obedient and united to God with pure understanding, he is not hurt even if the flesh and the senses and the outer man is moved to evil, and is slow to good, or even if the inner man is slow to feel devotion, but should simply cleave to God with faith and good will in naked understanding. He is doing this if he is conscious of all his own imperfection and nothingness, recognises his good to consist in his Creator alone, abandons himself with all his faculties and powers, and all creatures, and immerses himself wholly and completely in the Creator, so that he directs all his actions purely and entirely in his Lord God, and seeks nothing apart from him, in whom he recognises all good and all joy of perfection to be found. And he is so transformed in a certain sense into God that he cannot think, understand, love or remember anything but God himself and the things of God. Other creatures however and even himself he does not see, except in God, nor does he love anything except God alone, nor remember anything about them or himself except in God. This knowledge of the truth always makes the soul humble, ready to judge itself and not others, while on the contrary worldly wisdom makes the soul proud, futile, inflated and puffed up with wind. So let this be the fundamental spiritual doctrine leading to the knowledge of God, his service and
familiarity with him, that if you want to truly possess God, you must strip
your heart of all love of
things of the senses, not just of certain creatures, so that you can turn to the
Lord your God with a
simple and whole heart and with all your power, freely and without any
double-mindedness, care or
anxiety, but with full confidence in his providence alone about everything.

Et quia quanto magis te nudaveris a phantasmatibus et implicationibus
exterioribus mundanis et
sensibilibus, tanto magis anima tua recuperabit vires et interiores sensus
suos, ut sapiant ei quae
sursum sunt. Disce ergo abstinere a phantasmatibus et imaginibus rerum
orporalium, quia super
omnia placet Deo mens nuda ab hujusmodi formis et speciebus, cujus etiam
deliciae sunt esse cum
filiis hominum, videlicet qui a talibus occupationibus et distractionibus et
passionibus tranquilla,
pura et simplici mente sibi intendunt, vacant et adhaerent. Alioquin si in
talibus memoria, imaginatio
et cogitatio tua saepe vacat, necesse est, vel rebus novis, vel reliquiis
antiquorum deliniri, vel
secundum alia objecta varie qualificari. Unde Spiritus sanctus aufert se a
cognitionibus qua sunt
sine intellectu.
Verus itaque Jesu Christi amator sic debet esse unitus intellectu per bonam
voluntatem divinae
voluntati et bonitati, et nudus ab omnibus phantasmatibus et passionibus, ut
non advertat si
derideatur, diligatur, vel quidquid sibi inferatur. Voluntas namque bona
omnia complet, super omnia
est. Unde si voluntas adsit bona, et Deo in intellectu pure conformis et unita
fuerit, non nocet si caro
et sensualitas et exterior homo moveatur ad malum, et torpeat ad bonum, aut
etiam si interior homo
torpet devotionem affectare, sed tantum fide et bona voluntate adhaerere
debet Deo in intellectu
nude. Et hoc facit, si omnem imperfectionem et nihiliteatem suam
animadvertat, et cognoscat bonum
suum in solo Creatore consistere, et cum suis potentiis et viribus se ac cunctas
creaturas relinquit,
atque ex toto et totum se in Creatorem suum immergit, ita quod omnes
operationes suas dirigat pure
ex toto in Dominum Deum suum, nec extra eum quidquam quaerit, in quo
percipit invenisse omne
bonum, et omnem felicitatem perfectionis. Et sic transformatur quodammodo
in Deum, quod nec
cogitare, nec intelligere, nec amare, nec memorare potest, nisi Deum pariter et
de Deo: creaturas
autem alias et seipsum non videt, nisi tantum in Deo, nec diligit nisi solum
Deum, nec memoratur de
eis vel de se, nisi in Deo.
Haec vero cognitio veritatis semper facit animam humilem, seipsam, non
alium judicantem: sed
econtra mundana sapientia facit animam superbam, vanam, turgidam, et vento
inflatam. Sit itaque
haec spiritualis et fundamentalis doctrina, quod accedens ad Dei notitiam,
servitium et
familiaritatem, et si vis Deum veraciter possidere, necesse est quod cor tuum
denudes omni amore
sensibili, non tantum cujuscumque creaturae, ut simplici ac toto corde,
secundum omne tuum posse,
tendas in Dominum Deum tuum creatorem, libere, absque omni duplicitate,
cura et sollicitudine,
plena fiducia in sola ejus providentia de omnibus.
How the heart should be gathered within itself
Qualiter cor sit recolligendum intra se?
What is more, as is said in the book On the Spirit and the Soul (of St.
Augustine), to ascend to God
means to enter into oneself. He who entering within and penetrating his
inmost nature, goes beyond
himselves, he is truly ascending to God. So let us withdraw our hearts from the
distractions of this
world, and recall them to the inner joys, so that we can establish them to some
degree in the light of
divine contemplation. For this is the life and peace of our hearts - to be
established by intent in the
love of God, and to be sweetly remade by his comforting.
But the reason why we are in so many ways hindered in the practical
enjoyment of this matter and
are unable to get into it is clearly because the human mind is so distracted by
worries that it cannot
bring its memory to turn within, is so clouded by its imaginations that it
cannot return to itself with
its understanding, and is so drawn away by its desires that it is quite unable
to come back to itself by
desire for inner sweetness and spiritual joy. Thus it is so prostrate among the
sense objects
presented to it that it cannot enter into itself as the image of God.
It is therefore right and necessary for the mind to raise itself above itself and
everything created by
the abandonment of everything, with humble reverence and great trust, and to
say within itself, He
whom I seek, love, thirst for and desire from everything and more than
anything is not a thing of the
senses or the imagination, but is above everything that can be experienced by
the senses and the
intellect. He cannot be experienced by any of the senses, but is completely
desirable to my will. He is
moreover not discernable, but is perfectly desirable to my inner affections. He
cannot be
comprehended, but can be loved in his fullness with a pure heart, for he is
above all lovable and
desirable, and of infinite goodness and perfection. And then a darkness comes
over the mind and it is
raised up into itself and penetrates even deeper.
And the more inward-looking the desire for it, the more powerful this means
of ascent to the
mysterious contemplation of the holy Trinity in Unity and Unity in Trinity in
Jesus Christ is, and the
more interior the yearning, the more productive it is. Certainly in matters
spiritual the more inward
they are the greater they are as spiritual experiences.
For this reason, never give up, never stop until you have tasted some pledge,
as I might say, or
foretaste of the future full experience, and until you have obtained the
satisfaction of however small a
first fruits of the divine joy. And do not give up pursuing it and following its
scent until you have seen
the God of gods in Sion. Do not stop or turn back in your spiritual journey and
your union and
adherence to God within you until you have achieved what you have been
seeking.
Take as a pattern of this the example of those climbing an ordinary mountain.
If our mind is involved
by its desires in the things which are going on below, it is immediately carried
away by endless
distractions and side tracks, and being to some extent divided against itself, is
weakened and as it
were scattered amongst the things which it seeks with its desires. The result is
ceaseless movement,
travel without an arrival, and labour without rest. If on the other hand our
heart and mind can
withdraw itself by its desire and love from the infinite distraction below of the
things beneath it, can
learn to be with itself, abandoning these lower things and gathering itself
within itself into the one
unchanging and satisfying good, and can hold to it inseparably with its will, it
is correspondingly
more and more gathered together in one and strengthened, as it is raised up by
knowledge and
desire. In this way it will become accustomed to the true supreme good within
itself until it will be
made completely immovable and arrive securely at that true life which is the
Lord God himself, so
that it can now rest in him within and in peace without any changeability or
vicissitude of time,
perfectly gathered within itself in the secret divine abode in Christ Jesus who
is the way for those
who come to him, the truth and life.
Praeterea, sicut dicitur in libro de Spiritu et anima, ascendere ad Deum, hoc
est intrare in seipsum.
Qui enim interius intrans, et intrinsecus penetrans seipsum transcendit, ille
veraciter ad Deum
ascendit. Ab hujus ergo mundi distractionibus cor nostrum colligamus, et ad
interiora gaudia
revocemus, ut aliquando in divinae contemplationis lumine hoc figere
valeamus. Nam haec est vita et
requies cordis nostri, cum in Dei amore per desiderium figitur, et ejus
consolatione suaviter reficitur.
Sed quod in hujus rei experimentalis degustatione multipliciter impedimur, et
nequaquam ad ipsum
pertingere sufficiamus, ratio in promptu est, quia mens humana
solicitudinibus destructa, non intrat
se per memoriam, phantasmatis obumbrata, non redit ad se per intellectum,
concupiscentiis
illecta, ad seipsum nequaquam revertitur per desiderium suavitatis internae et
laetitiae spiritualis:
ita totaliter in his sensibilibus et praesentibus jacens, non potest ad se
tamquam ad imaginem Dei
intrare.
Oportet ergo et necesse est, ut cum humilitatis reverentia ac fiducia nimia
mens elevet se supra se et
omne creatum per abnegationem omnium, et ut dicat intra se: Quem ex
omnibus, et prae omnibus, et
super omnia quaero, diligio, appeto, et desidero, non est sensibilis neque
imaginabilis, sed super
omne sensibile et intelligibile: nullo umquam sensu est perceptibilis, sed
pleno desiderio totus
desiderabilis: non insuper est figurabilis, sed intimo affectu perfectissime
appetibilis: non est
aestimabilis, sed mundo corde totus affectibilis, quia super omnia amabilis et
dectabilis,
infinitaeque bonitatis et perfectionis. Et tunc fertur in mentis caliginem, et
altius intra se elevatur, et
profundius ingreditur.
Et hic modus ascendendi usque ad aenimaticum contitum sanctissimae
Trinitatis in unitate,
unitatis in Trinitate, in Jesu Christo, tanto est ardentior, quanto vis ascendens
illi est intimior: et tanto
fructuosior, quanto affectu proximior. Quippe in spiritualibus illa sunt
superiora quae intimiora,
quoad experientias spirituales.
Quapropter numquam desistas, numquam quiescas, donec futurae illius
plenitudinis aliquas (ut ita
dicam) arrhas seu experientias degustes, et donec divinae suavitatis
dulcedinem per
quantulascumque primitias obtineas, et in odorem ipsius post eam currere non
desinas, donec videas
Deum deorum in Sion. In spirituali enim profectu, et cum Dei intra te unione et
adhæsionae, non
quiescas, nec retrocedas, donec assecutus fueris quod intendis.
Exemplum hujus accipe in simili ab ascendentibus montem naturalem. Si enim
spiritus noster, in his
quae deorsum transseunt, se per cupidinem immerserit, statim per infinitas
distractiones et itinera
obliqua rapitur, et a se quodammodo divisus dissipatur, et quasi in tot
spargitur, quot ea sunt quae
per desideria concupiscit. Hinc motus sine stabilitate, cursus sine perventione,
labor sine requie. Si
vero cor et spiritus noster ab hac infimorum infinita distractione, quae
deorsum est, per desiderium
et amorem se traxerit, et haec infima deferens paulatim se intra se in unum
immutabile sufficiens
bonum colligens, secum esse didicerit, et ei inseperabiliter quodam affectu
inhaeserit, tanto amplius
in unum colligitur et fortificatur, quanto magis agnitione et desiderio sursum
elevatur, et in ipso vero
summo bono intra se habituatur, donec tandem omnino immutabilis fiat, et ad
illum veram vitam,
quae ipse Dominus Deus est, immutabiliter perveniat: ut perpetuo, sine omni
mutabilitatis et
temporis vicissitudine, requiescat jam in illo intrinseco, et quieto, ac secreto
divinitatis manerio,
perfecte collocatus intra se in Christo Jesu, qui est via ad se venientibus,
veritas, et vita.
How a religious man should commit himself to God in all circumstances
whatsoever
Quomodo in quolibet eventu homo devotus se debeat Deo committere?
I am now completely convinced that you will recognise from these arguments
that the more you strip
yourself of the products of your imagination and all worldly and created
things, and are united to God
with your intellect by a good will, the closer you will approach the state of
innocence and perfection.
What could be better? And what could be more happy and joyful? Above all it is
important for you to keep your mind bare - without imaginations and images and free of any sort of entanglement, so that you are not concerned about either the world, friends, prosperity or adversity, or anything present, past or future, whether in yourself or in others - not even your own sins. But consider yourself with a certain pure simplicity to be alone with God outside the world, and as if your mind were already in eternity and separated from the body so that it will certainly not bother about worldly things or be concerned about the state of the world, about peace or war, about good weather or rain, or about anything at all in this world, but with complete docility will turn to God alone, be empty for him and cleave to him. So now in this way ignore your body and all created things, present or future, and direct the high point of your mind and spirit directly, as best you can, naked and unencumbered on the uncreated light. And let your spirit be cleansed in this way from all imaginations, coverings and things obscuring its vision, like an angel (not) tied to a body, who is not hindered by the works of the flesh nor tangled in vain and wandering thoughts. Let your spirit therefore arm itself against all temptations, vexations, and injuries so that it can persevere steadily in God when attacked by either face of fortune. So that when some inner disturbance or boredom or mental confusion come you will not be indignant or dejected because of it, nor run back to vocal prayers or other forms of consolation, but only to lift yourself up in your intellect by a good will to hold on to God with your mind whether the natural inclination of the body wills it or not. The religious-minded soul should be so united to God and should have or render its will so conformed to the divine will that it is not occupied with any created thing or cling to it any more than before it was created, and as if nothing existed except God and the soul itself. And in this way it should accept everything confidently and equally, in general and in particular, from the hand of divine providence, agreeing in everything with the Lord in patience, peace and silence. The thing is that the most important thing of all for a spiritual life is to strip the mind of all imaginations so that one can be united in one’s intellect to God by a good will,
and conformed to him. Besides, nothing will then be intermediary between you and God. This obvious, since nothing external will stand between you when by the vow of voluntary poverty you will have removed the possession of anything whatsoever, and by the vow of chastity you will have abandoned your body, and by obedience you will have given up your will and your soul itself. And in this way nothing will be left to stand between you and God. That you are a religious person is indicated by your profession, your state, and now your habit and tonsure and such like, but whether you are only a religious in appearance or a real one, you will find out. Bear in mind therefore how greatly you have fallen away and sin against the Lord your God and all his justice if you behave otherwise and cling with your will and love to what is created rather than to the Creator himself, putting the created before the Creator. Credo jam et arbitror, quod ex huiusque deductis cognoscas, quod quanto magis magisque te nudaveris a phantasmatibus, et omnibus rebus mundialibus et creatis, ac per bonam voluntatem intellectu Deo unitus fueris, tanto magis ad statum innocentiae et perfectionis appropinquas. Quo quid melius? quidve felicius ac jucundius? Super omnia ergo valet, ut teneas mentem nudam sine phantasmatibus et imaginibus, et a quibuscumque implicationibus, ut nec de mundo, nec de amicis, nec de prosperis, nec de adversis, praesentibus, praeteritis, vel futuris, in te nec in aliis, nec etiam nimis de propriis peccatis solliciteris: sed cum quadam puritatis simplicitate te esse cum Deo extra mundum nude cogita, ac si anima tua jam esset in aeternitate extra corpus separata, utique non tractaret saecularia, nec curaret de statu mundi, nec de pace, nec de guerra nec de sereno, nec de pluvia, et plane nec de aliquo hujus saeculi: sed soli Deo conformiter totaliter intenderet, vacaret, et inhaereret. Sic suo modo vel nunc relinque corpus tuum, et omnia praesentia et futura creata, et defige aciem mentis ac spiritus tui fixe, secundum omne tuum posse, nude et expedite, in illud increatum lumen. Et sic ab omnibus phantasmatibus et involutionibus ac obnubilationibus depuratus sit spiritus tuus, tamquam Angelus corpori alligatus, qui per operationem carnis non impeditur, nec
cogitationibus vanis ac vagis implicatur. Fortificet ergo se spiritus contra quascumque tentationes, vexationes, injurias, ut aequanimiter inconcussse in utraque fortuna perseveret in Deo. Et cum adest turbatio, aut acedia, vel mentis confusio, non propterea insolescas, aut pusillanimis sis, nec propter hoc curras ad orationes vocales, aut alias consolationes: sed hoc solum ut resuscites te per voluntatem bonam in intellectu, ut adhaerreas Deo mente, velit nolit sensualitas corporis. Devota namque anima sic debet esse cum Deo unita, et suam voluntatem divinae voluntati tam conformem habere et facere, quod se cum nulla creatura occupet, seu adhaeret, sicut dum non erat creatas: ac si nihil sit praeter solum Deum, et ipsam animam. Et sic universa et singula aequanimiter de manu divinae providentiae secure et infaillibiliter accipiat, sustinens uniformiter in omnibus Dominum in patientia, tranquillitate, et silentio. Qua de re nudare mentem ab omnibus phantasmatibus super omnia valet ad vitam spiritualem, ut sis per bonam voluntatem unitus Deo in intellectu et conformis. Praeterea, nihil erit medium inter te et Deum: quod sic patet, quia nec res aliqua ab extra erit medium, cum per votum voluntariae paupertatis ablata sit omnis rei possessio usque ad ultimum, et per castitatis votum corpus, et per obedientiam voluntas et ipsa anima: et sic quodammodo nihil relinquitur, quod mediat inter te et Deum. Quod autem religiosus sis, probat professio ipsa, status tuus, et nunc habitus tuus, et tonsura, et similia hujusmodi: sed an fictus, an verus religiosus sis, tu videris. Animadverte ergo, quam graviter degeneres et pecces in Dominum Deum tuum, et in omnem ejus justitiam, si secur egeris, et creaturae potius quam Creatori ipsi voluntate et amore inhaeseris, creaturam praeponens Creatori. How much the contemplation of God is to be preferred to all other exercises Contemplatio in Deo, quatenus omnibus aliis exercitiis est praeponenda. Now since all things other than God are the effect and work of the Creator himself, their having ability and being is a limited power and existence, and being as they are created out of nothing, they are circumscribed by the effects of their nothingness, while their tendency of themselves towards nothingness means that we receive our existence, preservation and activity
moment by moment from
the Creator himself, along with whatever other qualities created things may
have, just as we receive
their insufficiency to any action of themselves, both with regard to themselves
and to others, in
relation to him whose operation they are, they remain as a nothing before
something which exists,
and as something finite before what is infinite. For this reason let all our
actual contemplation, life
and activity take place in him alone, about him, for him and towards him who
is able and capable to
produce with a single nod of his will things infinitely more perfect than any
that exist now.
No contemplation and fruition of love, whether intellectual or affective, is
more useful, more perfect
and more satisfying than that which is of God himself, the Creator, our
supreme and true Good, from
whom, through whom and to whom are all things. He is infinitely satisfying
both to himself and to all
others, who contains within himself in absolute simplicity and from all
eternity the perfection of all
things, in whom there is nothing which is not himself, before whom and
through whom remain the
causes of all things impermanent, and in whom dwell the unchanging origins
of all changing things,
while even the eternal reasons of all temporal things, rational and irrational,
abide in him. He brings
everything to completion, and fills all things, in general and in particular,
completely and essentially
with himself. He is more intimately and more really present to everything by
his being than each
thing is to itself, for in him all things are united together, and live in him
eternally.
What is more, if someone, out of weakness or from lack of intellectual
practice, is detained longer in
the contemplation of created things, this supreme, true and fruitful
contemplation may still be seen
as possible for mortal man, so that there may take place an upward leap in all
his contemplations and
meditations, whether about created things or the Creator, and the appreciation
of God the Creator
himself, the One and Three, may surge up within so that he come to burn with
the fire of divine love
and the true life in himself and in others, in such a way as to make him
deserving of the joy of eternal
life. Even in this one should bear in mind the difference between the
contemplation of faithful
Catholics and that of pagan philosophers, for the contemplation of the philosophers is for the perfection of the contemplator himself, and consequently it is confined to the intellect and their aim in it is intellectual knowledge. But the contemplation of the Saints, and of Catholics, is for the love of him, that is of the God they are contemplating. As a result it is not confined in the final analysis to the intellect in knowledge, but crosses over into the will through love. That is why the Saints in their contemplation have the love of God as their principal aim, since it is more satisfying to know and possess even the Lord Jesus Christ spiritually through grace than physically or even really but without grace.

Furthermore, while the soul is withdrawn from everything and is turned within, the eye of contemplation is opened and sets itself up a ladder by which it can pass to the contemplation of God. By this contemplation the soul is set on fire for eternal things by the heavenly and divine good things it experiences, and views all the things of time from a distance and as if they were nothing. Hence when we approach God by the way of negation, we first deny him everything that can be experienced by the body, the senses and the imagination, secondly even things experienceable by the intellect, and finally even being itself in so far as it is found in created things. This, so far as the nature of the way is concerned, is the best means of union with God, according to Dionysius. And this is the cloud in which God is said to dwell, which Moses entered, and through this came to the inaccessible light.

Certainly, it is not the spiritual which comes first, but the natural, (1 Corinthians 15.46) so one must proceed by the usual order of things, from active work to the quiet of contemplation, and from moral virtues to spiritual and contemplative realities. Finally, my soul, why are you uselessly preoccupied with so many things, and always busy with them? Seek out and love the one supreme good, in which is all that is worth seeking, and that will be enough for you. Unhappy therefore is he who knows and possesses everything other than this, and does not know this. While if he knows everything as well as this, it is not from knowing them that he is better off but because of This. That is why John says, This
is eternal life, to know Thee, etc. (John 17.3) and the prophet says, I will be satisfied when your glory becomes manifest. (Psalm 17.15)
Et quia omnia citra Deum sunt effectus et opus ipsius Creatoris, habentia posse et esse, et quidquid sunt et possunt, limitatum, et ut ex nihilo producta nihilitatibus circumdata, et ex se ad nihilum tendentia, necessario momentis singularis suum existere, conservari, operari, et si quid in eis est, et sic per omnia ab ipso summo opifice Deo recipimus, tamquam vere ex seipsis sibi et aliis insufficiencia, ad cujus operationem sunt, sicut nihil ad aliquid, finitum ad infinitum. Quapropter in solo eo, et circa eum, et propter eum, et in eum sit omnis recta nostra contemplatio, vita et operatio: qui etiam uno voluntatis nutu posset et sciret in infinitum omnibus modo creatis perfectiora producere.
Nulla ergo, sive secundum intellectum, sive secundum affectum, contemplatio et amoris fruitio utilior, perfectior, et felicior, quam in ipso Deo creatore summo et vero bono, a quo, in quo, per quem, et ad quem omnia: sibi et omnibus sufficiens est in infinitum, qui omnium in se continet perfectiones simplicissime ab aeterno, in quo nihil quod non sit ipse: apud quem, et per quem, omnium instabilium stant causae: in quo omnium mutabilium immutabiles manent origines, necnon omnium rationabilium, irrationabiliumque, atque temporalium in eo sempiternae vivunt rationes: qui omnia complet, universa singulaque se toto essentialiter implet: cuique rei intimior est et praeessentialior per essentiam, quam res sibiipsi: in quo omnia simul sunt unita, et in eo sempiterne vivunt.
Praeterea, si ex infirmitate, aut inusitatione intellectus, quis magis tenetur in creaturis contemplari, tunc haec optima, vera, et fructuosa contemplatio videtur homini mortali possibilis, ut saltem in cunctis suis contemplationibus et meditationibus, sive circa creaturas, sive circa Creatorem fiunt, consurgat delectatio in ipso Creator Deo uno et trino intra se, ut inardescat ignis divini amoris, et verae vitae in se, et in aliis, ut meritum felicitatis aeternae vitae. Animadvertenda est etiam in hoc differentia inter contemplationem Catholicorum fidelium, et Philosophorum gentilium: quia contemplatio Philosophorum est propter perfectionem
contemplantis, et ideo sistit in intellectu, et ita finis eorum in hoc est cognitio intellectus. Sed contemplatio Sanctorum, quae est Catholicorum, est propter amorem ipsius, scilicet contemplati Dei: idcirco non sistit in fine ultimo in intellectu per cognitionem, sed transit ad affectum per amorem. Unde Sancti in contemplatione sua habent amorem Dei tamquam principaliter intentum, quia felicius est etiam Dominum Jesum Christum cognoscere, et habere spiritualiter per gratiam, quam sine gratia corporaliter, vel etiam essentialiter. Porro dum anima ab omnibus abstrahitur, et in seipsam reflectitur, contemplationis oculus dilatatur, et se scalam erigit, per quam transeat ad contemplandum Deum. Ex qua contemplatione anima inardescit ab bona coelestia et divina, et ad aeterna, et omnia temporalia a longe prospicit tamquam nihil sint. Unde quando in Deum procedimus per viam remotionis, primo negamus ab eo omnia corporalia et sensibilia et imaginabilia, secundo etiam intelligibilia, ad ultimum, hoc ipsum esse secundum quod in creaturis remanet. Sic quantum ad statum viae pertinet, optime Deo conjungimur, secundum Dionysium. Et haec caligo est, quam Deus inhabitare dicitur, quam Moyses intravit, ac per hanc ad lucem inaccessibilem. Verum non prius quod spiritale est, sed quod animale: ideo consueto ordine procedendum est a labore actionis ad quietum contemplationis, a virtutibus moralibus ad theoricas et speculativas. Denique, o anima mea, quid occuparis circa plurima supervacue, et semper in his eges? Intende et ama hoc unum optimum bonum, in quo omne bonum, et sufficit. Infelix ergo qui omnia scit praeter ipsum et habet, ipsum autem nescit. Et si haec omnia et ipsum sciat, non propter hoc, sed propter ipsum beatior. Unde, Joannis, xvii,3: Haec est vita aeterna: ut cognoscant te, etc. Et Propheta: Satiabor cum apparuerit gloria tua. That one should not be concerned about feeling tangible devotion so much as about cleaving to God with one’s will Actualis devotio et sensibilis non tantum curanda est, sicut voluntate Deo adhaerere. Furthermore you should not be much concerned about tangible devotion, the experience of sweetness or tears, but rather that you should be mentally united with God
within yourself by a good will in your intellect. For what pleases God above everything is a mind free from imaginations, that is images, ideas and the representations of created things. It befits a monk to be indifferent to everything created so that he can turn easily and barely to God alone within himself, be empty for him and cleave to him. For this reason deny yourself so that you can follow Christ, the Lord your God, in nakedness, who was himself poor, obedient, chaste, humble and suffering, and in whose life and death many were scandalised, as is clear from the Gospel accounts. After all, a soul which is separated from the body pays no attention to what is done to its abandoned body - whether it is burned, hanged, or reviled, and is in no way saddened by the afflictions imposed on the body, but thinks only of the Now of eternity and the One Thing which the Lord calls necessary in the Gospel. So you too should treat your body as if you were no longer in the body, but think always of the eternity of your soul in God, and direct your thoughts carefully to that One Thing of which Christ said, For one thing is necessary. (Luke 10.42) You will experience because of it great grace, helping you towards the acquisition of nakedness of mind and simplicity of heart. Indeed this One Thing is very much present with you if you have made yourself bare of imaginations and all other entanglements, and you will soon experience that this is so - namely when you can be empty and cleave to God with a naked and resolute mind. In this way you will remain unconquered in whatever may be inflicted on you, like the holy martyrs, fathers, the elect, and indeed all the saints who despised everything and only thought of their souls’ security and eternity in God. Armed in this way within, and united to God through a good will, they spurned everything of the world as if their souls were already separated from their bodies. Consider from this how much a good will united with God is capable of, when by means of its pressing towards God the soul is effectively separated the body in spirit and looks on its outward man as it were from a distance, and as not belonging to it. In this way it despises everything that is inflicted on itself or on its flesh as if they were happening to someone else, or
not to a human being at all. For He that is united with the Lord is one Spirit, (1 Corinthians 6.17) that is with him. So you should never dare to think or imagine anything before the Lord your God that you would blush to be heard or seen in before men, since your respect for God should be even greater than for them.

It is a matter of justice in fact that all your thoughts and thinking should be raised to God alone, and the highest point of your mind should only be directed to him as if nothing existed but him, and holding to him may enjoy the perfect beginning of the life to come.

Praeterea, non multum cures actualem devotionem, aut sensibilem dulcedinem, vel lacrymas, sed tantum per bonam voluntatem in intellectu sis mente cum Deo intra te unitus. Quippe super omnia placet Deo mens nuda a phantasmatibus, id est, imaginibus, speciebus, ac similitudinibus rerum creatarum. Decet namque monachum esse alienum ab omni creatura, ut soli Deo intra se nude et expedite intendat, vacet, et adhaereat. Quamobrem abneges temetipsum, ut nude sequaris Christum Dominum Deum tuum, qui vere pauper, obedientis, castus, humiliatus est, et passus: in cujus etiam vita et morte multi scandalizati fuerunt, ut liquet ex decursu Evangelii. Praeterea, anima separata a corpore non advertit quomodo aut quid agatur de suo corpore derelicto, sive comburatur, sive suspendatur, sive maledicatur, et nihil propter has injurias corpori illatas contristatur, sed solum cogitat illud nunc aeternitatis, et illud unum quod dicit Dominus in Evangelio necessarium. Sic et tu te habeas ad corpus tuum, quasi jam non sis in corpore, et cogita semper de aeternitate animae tuae in Deo, et dirige sedulo cogitatum tuum in illud unum de quo Christus dixit: Porro unum est necessarium: et senties ex hoc magnam gratiam, ad mentis nuditatem et cordis simplificationem acquirendam.

Verumtamen istud unum est tibi praesentissimum, si te nudaveris a phantasmatibus, et quibuscumque aliis implicationibus, moxque senties sic esse, videlicet te nuda et expedita mente vacare et adhaerere Deo: et sic eris invictus etiam in omnibus qualitercumque inferri possunt, sicut et sancti Martyres, Patres et electi, beatique omnes: qui, despectis omnibus, solum cogitabant animae
securitatem et aeternitatem in Deo: et ita armati intus, et per bonam
voluntatem Deo uniti, omnia
mundi spreverunt, ac si omnino anima jam divisa esset a corpore.
Ex his ergo perpende, quantum potest bona voluntas cum Deo unita, imo per
illam animae
impressionem in Deo, ut per ejus a carne virtualem et spiritualem divisionem,
anima quodammodo
respiciat a longe hominem exteriorem suum tamquam non suum; et sic
vilipendit omnia quae
inferuntur sibi vel carni suae, ac si fierent alteri, vel non homini. Qui enim
adhaeret Domino, unus
spiritus est, scilicet cum eo. Numquam ergo audeas omnino coram Domino Deo
tuo intra te aliquid
cogitare, vel imaginari, quod coram hominibus erubesceres vel audiri, vel
videri, propert Dei
reverentiam principalem.
Est etiam hoc justum, omnem tuum cogitatum et cogitationem ad solum Deum
erigere: eumque,
tamquam nihil aliud praeter ipsum sit, sola mentis acie intueri, sicque
inhaerendo frui, quod est
perfecta inchoatio vitae futurae.
How one should resist temptations and bear trials
Qualiter tentationibus sit resistendum, et tribulationes qualiter sustinendae?
Now there is no one who approaches God with a true and upright heart who is
not tested by
hardships and temptations.
So in all these temptations see to it that even if you feel them, you do not
consent to them, but bear
them patiently and calmly with humility and long suffering. Even if they are
blasphemies and sordid,
hold firmly on to this fact in everything, that you can do nothing better or
more effective against them
than to consider all this sort of fantasy as a nothing. Even if they are the most
vile, sordid and horrible
blasphemies, simply take no notice of them, count them as nothing and despise
them. Don't look on
them as yours or allow yourself to make them a matter of conscience. The
enemy will certainly take
flight if you treat him and his company with contempt in this way. He is very
proud and cannot bear
to be despised and spurned. So the best remedy is to completely ignore all such
temptations, like flies
flying around in front of your eyes against your will.
The servant of Jesus Christ must see to it that he is not so easily forced to
withdraw from the face of
the Lord and to be annoyed, murmur and complain over the nuisance of a
single fly, that is, a trivial
temptation, suspicion, sadness, distraction, need or any such adversity, when they can all be put to flight with no more than the hand of a good will directed up to God. After all, through a good will a man has God as his defender, and the holy angels as his guardians and protectors. What is more, any temptation can be overcome by a good will too, like a fly driven away from a bald head by one’s hand. So peace is for men of good will. Indeed we can offer God nothing more valuable than a good will, since a good will in the soul is the source of all good things, and the mother of all virtues. If any one is beginning to possess that good will, he undoubtedly has what is necessary for leading a good life. For if you want what is good, but cannot do it, God will make good the deed. For it is in accordance with this eternal law that God has established with irrevocable firmness that deserts should be a matter of the will, whether in bliss or torment, reward or punishment. Love itself is a great will to serve God, a sweet desire to please God, and a fervent wish to experience God. What is more, to be tempted is not a sin, but the opportunity for exercising virtue, so that temptation can be greatly to a man’s benefit, since it is held that the whole of a man’s life on earth is a testing. (Job 7.1)

Proinde nemo accedens ad Deum vero et integro corde est, quin vexationibus et tentationibus probetur. Idcirco in omnibus tentationibus vel hoc observetur, ut si sentiatur, non consentiatur, et patienter ac aequanimiter cum humilitate et longanimitate portetur. Si vero blasphemiae sint et turpissimae, hoc omnino firmiter teneas, quod nihil melius aut verius contra easdem facere potes, quam omnino hujusmodi phantasias pro nihilo reputare: quamquam blasphemiae nequissimae et foedissimae et horribiles sint, solum non cura eas, sed pro nihilo reputa et contemne, et tibi non imputa, nec velis tibi super hujusmodi conscientiam formare. Fugiet procul dubio inimicus, si eum sic et suas factiones contemptseris. Superbus enim est valde, non patitur se contemni et sperni. Omnino ergo talia penitus non curare, summum est remedium, sicut de muscis volantibus coram oculis contra voluntatem. Provideat ergo servus Jesu Christi, tam facile non importune fugere a facie Domini, et hinc inde
indignari, murmurare, et querulari super unius muscae vexatione, videlicet levis tentationis, suspicionis, tristitiae, et detractionis, insufficienciae, et cujuscumque adversitatis, cum sola manu bonae voluntatis in Deum erectae possunt omnia haec fugari. Nempe per bonam voluntatem habet homo Deum in defensorem, sanctos Angelos custodes et protectores. Insuper et per bonam voluntatem omnis tentatio superatur, sicut musca manu de calvitie capitis fugatur. Pax ergo hominibus bonae voluntatis. Proinde ergo nec aliquid ditius offertur Deo bona voluntate. Quippe bona voluntas in anima, est origo omnium bonorum, et omnium mater virtutum: quam qui habere incipit, secure habet quidquid ei ad bene vivendum opus est. Si ergo volueris bonum, et non potes, factum Deus compensat. Igitur secundum hoc aeterna lex incommutalibili stabilitate firmavit, ut in voluntate meritum sit: in beatitudine aut in miseria, praemium atque supplicium. Dilectio enim est magna voluntas Deo serviendo, dulcis affectus Deo placendi, ferventissimum desiderium Deo fruendi. Demum, tentari non est peccatum, sed materia exercendae virtutis, ut homo ad multa bona proficiat tentatione, cum tota vita hominis super terram tentatio censeatur.

How powerful the love of God is De amore Dei, quam efficax sit. All that is said above and whatever is necessary for salvation cannot be better, more immediately and more securely achieved than by love, through which whatever is lacking of what is necessary for salvation can be made good. In love we possess the fullness of all good and the realisation of our highest longing is not denied us. After all it is love alone by which we turn back to God, are changed into God, cleave to God, and are united to God in such a way that we become one spirit with him, and are by him and through him made blessed here by grace and hereafter in glory. Now love is such that it cannot rest except in the beloved, but it does when it wins the beloved in full and peaceful possession. For love, which itself is charity, is the way of God to men and the way of man to God. God cannot house where there is no love. So if we have love, we have God, for God is love. Furthermore nothing is sharper than love, nothing is more subtle, nothing more
penetrating. It will not rest until it has by its very nature penetrated the whole power, the depth and the totality of the loved one. It wants to make itself one with the beloved, and itself, if it were possible, to be what the beloved is too. Thus it cannot bear that anything should stand between itself and the beloved object, which is God, but presses eagerly towards him. As a result it never rests until it has left everything else behind and come to him alone.

For the nature of love is of a unitive and transforming power which transforms the lover into what he loves, or alternatively, makes the lover one with the other, and vice versa, in so far as is possible. This is manifest in the first place with regard to the mental powers, depending on how much the beloved is in the lover, in other words depending on how sweetly and delightfully the beloved is recalled in the mind of the lover, and in direct proportion, that is, with how much the lover strives to grasp all the things that relate to the beloved not just superficially but intimately, and to enter, as it were, into his innermost secrets. It is also manifest with regard to the emotional and affective powers when the beloved is said to be in the lover, in other words when the desire to please the beloved is found in the will and established within by the happy enjoyment of him. Alternatively, the lover is in the beloved when he is united with him by all his desire and compliance in agreement with the beloved’s willing and not willing, and finds his own pleasure and pain in that of the beloved. For love draws the lover out of himself (since love is strong as death), and establishes him in the beloved, causing him to cleave closely to him. For the soul is more where it loves than where it lives, since it is in what it loves in accordance with its very nature, understanding and will, while it is in where it lives only with regard to form, which is even true for animals as well. There is nothing therefore which draws us away from the exterior senses to within ourselves, and from there to Jesus Christ and things divine, more than the love of Christ and the desire for the sweetness of Christ, for the experience, awareness and enjoyment of the presence of Christ’s divinity. For there is nothing but the power of love which can lead the soul from the things of earth to the lofty
summit of heaven. Nor can anyone attain the supreme beatitude unless summoned to it by love and yearning. Love after all is the life of the soul, the wedding garment and the soul’s perfection, containing all the law and the prophets and our Lord’s teaching. That is why Paul says to the Romans, Love is the fulfilling of the law, (Rom. 13.8) and in the first letter to Timothy, The end of the commandment is love. (1 Timothy 1.5)

Enimvero omnia supradicta, et quaecumque saluti necessaria, non melius, nec propinquis, nec salubrius perfici possunt, nisi per amorem: per quem suppleri potest omnis necessarii ad salutem indigentia, et in eo habetur omnis boni abundantia, nec deest summi desiderii praesentia. Quidque solus amor est, quo convertimur ad Deum, transformamur in Deum, adhaeremus Deo, unimur Deo, ut simus unus spiritus cum eo, et beatificemur hic in gratia, et ibi in gloria, ab eo, et per eum. Amor enim ipse non quiescit, nisi in amato, quod fit cum obtinet ipsum possessione plenaria atque pacifica. Nempe amor ipse, qui et charitas, est via Dei ad homines, et via hominis ad Deum: et mansionem Deus habere non potest, ubi charitas non est. Si igitur charitatem habemus, Deus habemus, quia Deus charitas est. Proinde nihil amore acutius, nihil subtilius aut penetrabilia: nec quiescit, donec naturaliter totam amabilis penetraverit virtutem et profunditatem ac totalitatem, et unum se vult facere cum amato, et si fieri potest, ut hoc idem ipse sit quod amatum. Et ita nullum patitur mediam inter se et objectum dilectum quod amat, quod est Deus, sed vehementer tendit in eum: et ideo numquam quiescit, donec omnia transeant, et ad ipsum in ipsum veniat. Est enim amor ipse virtutis unitivae et transformativae, transformans amantem in amatum, et e contra, ut sit unum amatorum in altero, et e converso, in quantum intimius potest. Quod liquet primo quantum ad vires apprehensivas, qualiter amatum sit in amante: videlicet in quantum dulciter et delectabiliter revocatur in apprehensione amantis: et e regione, prout scilicet amans nititur singula quae ad amatum pertinent, non superficialiter, sed intrinsecus discernere, et quasi ad interiora ejus ingredi. Sed quantum ad vires appetitivas et affectivas, amatum dicitur in amante, prout videlicet est in affectuosa ejus complacentia, et in jucunda ejus delectatione interius
radicata: e converso, amans
est in amato, toto desiderio et conformitate secundum idem velle et nolle, et in
eodem gaudere et
tristari, tamquam idem ipse. Trahit enim amor (quia fortis est ut mors
dilectio) amantem extra se, et
collocat eum in amato, faciens ei intimissime inhaerere. Plus enim est anima
ubi amat, quam ubi
animat: quia sic est in amato secundum propriam naturam, rationem, et
voluntatem: sed in eo quod
animat, tantum est secundum quod est forma: quod etiam brutis convenit.
Non est ergo aliud quod nos ab exterioribus sensibilibus intra nos, et exinde in
Jesu Christi intima et
divina trahit, quam amor Christi, quam desiderium dulcedinis Christi, ad
sentiendum, percipiendum,
et degustandum praesentiam divinitatis Christi. Non itaque aliud est quam
amoris vis, quae etiam
animam de terris ad fastigia coeli celsa perducit. Nec ad summam
beatitudinem quis pervenire
potest, nisi amore et desiderio provocante. Ipse etiam amor est vita animae,
vestis nuptialis, et
perfectio ipsius, in quo omnis lex et Prophetae, et Domini edictum pendet.
Under Apostolus ad
Romanos: Plenitudo legis est dilectio. Et prima ad Timotheum: Finis praecepti
est charitas.
The nature and value of prayer, and how the heart should be recollected within
itself
Orationis qualitas et utilitas: quomodo cor sit recolligendum intra se?
Besides this, since we are incapable of ourselves for this and for any other
good action whatsoever,
and since we can of ourselves offer nothing to the Lord God (from whom all
good things come) which
is not his already, with this one exception, as he has deigned to show us both
by his own blessed
mouth as well as by his example, that we should turn to him in all
circumstances and occasions as
guilty, wretched, poor, beggarly, weak, helpless, subject servants and sons.
And that we should
beseech him and lay before him with complete confidence the dangers that are
besetting us on all
sides, completely grief-stricken in ourselves, in humble prostration of mind, in
fear and love, and
with recollected, composed, mature, true and naked, shamefaced affection,
with great yearning and
determination, and in groaning of heart and sincerity of mind. Thus we
commit and offer ourselves
up to him freely, securely and nakedly, fully and in everything that is ours,
holding nothing back to
ourselves, in such a complete and final way, that the same is fulfilled in us as in our blessed father Isaac, who speaks of this very type of prayer, saying, Then we shall be one in God, and the Lord God will be all in all and alone in us when his own perfect love, with which he first loved us, will have become the disposition of our own hearts too. This will come about when all our love, all our desire, all our concern, all our efforts, in fact everything we think, everything we see, speak and even hope will be God, and that unity which now is of the Father with the Son, and of the Son with the Father, will be poured into our own heart and mind as well, in such a way that just as he loves us with sincere and indissoluble love we too will be joined to him with eternal and inseparable affection. In other words we shall be united with him in such a way that whatever we hope, and whatever we say or pray will be God. This therefore should be the aim, this the concern and goal of a spiritual man - to be worthy to possess the image of future bliss in this corruptible body, and in a certain measure experience in advance how the foretaste of that heavenly bliss, eternal life and glory begins in this world. This, as I say, is the goal of all perfection, that his purified mind should be daily raised up from all bodily objects to spiritual things until all his mental activity and all his heart’s desire become one unbroken prayer. So the mind must abandon the dregs of earth and press on towards to God, on whom alone should be fixed the desire of a spiritual man, for whom the least separation from that summum bonum is to be considered a living death and dreadful loss. Then, when the requisite peace has been established in his mind, when it is free from attachment to any carnal passion, and clings firmly in intention to that one supreme good, the Apostle’s sayings are fulfilled, Pray without ceasing, (1 Thessalonians 5.17) and, Pray in every place lifting up pure hands without anger or dispute. (1 Timothy 2.8) For when the power of the mind is absorbed in this purity, so to speak, and is transformed from an earthly nature into the spiritual or angelic likeness, whatever it receives into itself, whatever it is occupied with, whatever it is doing, it will be pure and sincere prayer.
In this way, if you continue all the time in the way we have described from the beginning, it will become as easy and clear for you to remain in contemplation in your inward and recollected state, as to live in the natural state.

Praeterea, cum ad haec et ad quaecumque alia bona omnino simus ex nobis insufficientes, nec aliquid de nobis ipsi Domino Deo (a quo solo omne bonum) exhibere possimus, quod non sit prius suum, solo uno excepto, quod superest, quemadmodum ipse per se benedicto suo ore etiam et exemplo nos instruere dignatus est, ut videlicet in omni casu et eventu ad ipsam orationem recurramus, sicut rei, miseri, pauperes, mendici, infirmi, inopes, subditi, servi, et filii, ac totaliter in nobis ipsis desolati, humiliata mentis prostratione, in timore et amore, recollecte et composite, maturo, vero, nudoque affectu erubescentiae cum magnitudine desiderii et ardore, necnon in gemitu cordis, et simplicitate et sinceritate mentis, supplicemus et exponamus ipsi plena cum fiducia undique nobis imminentia pericula; ita dumptaxat, ut expedite, secure, et nude nos ei totaliter usque ad ultimum videlicet committamus, et offereamus, tamquam vere et per omnia sui, nihil nobisipsis reservantes, ut impleatur in nobis illud beati patris Isaac, qui loquitur de hac ipsa oratione, dicens: 'Tunc erimus unum in Deo, et Dominus Deus erit in nobis omnia in omnibus et solus, quando illa sua perfecta dilectio, qua prior ille nos dilexit, in nostri quoque cordis transierit affectum.' Quod ita fiet, cum nobis omnis amor, omne desiderium, omne studium, omnis conatus, denique omnis cogitatio nostra, omneque quod videmus, loquimur, quodque speramus, Deus erit, illaque unitas quae nunc est Patris cum Filio, et Filii cum Patre, in nostrum fuerit sensum mentemque transfusa: ut quemadmodum ille nos sincera et pura atque indissolubili charitate diligit, nos quoque ei perpetua et inseparabili dilectione jungamur: ita scilicet eidem copulati, ut quidquid speramus, quidquid intelligimus, quidquid loquimur et oramus, Deus sit. Haec ergo intentio, hic conatus, et finis spiritualis hominis esse debet, ut imaginem futurae beatitudinis in hoc corruptibili corpore possidere mereatur, et quodammodo arrham illius coelestis beatitudinis et conversationis et gloriae incipiat in hoc saeculo praegustare.
Hic, inquam, finis totius perfectionis est, ut eo usque extenuata mens ab omni situ carnali, ad spiritualia quotidie sublimetur, donec omnis conversatio, omnisque voluntas cordis, una et jugis efficiatur oratio. Cumque ita mens, deposita faece terrena, ad Deum, in quo solo semper defixa debet esse intentio spiritualis hominis, respiraverit (qui ab illo summo bono vel parva separatio, mors praesens ac perniciosissimus interitus est credendus) praemissaque fuerit tranquillitate fundata, vel ab omnium carnalium passionum nexibus absoluta, et illi uni summoque bono tenacissima adhaesit intentione, Apostolicum illud implebit: Sine intermissione orate. Et: Orate in omni loco, levantes puras manus, sine ira et disceptatione. Haec enim puritate (si dici potest) sensu mentis absorpto, ac de terreno situ ad spiritualem sive angelicam similitudinem transformato, quidquid in se receperit, quidquid tractaverit, quidquid egerit, purissima atque sincerissima oratio erit. Haec proinde si continuaveris indisrupte, quemadmodum usque ab initio disseruimus, erit tibi in tua introversione et recollectione jam facile ac promptum contemplari ac frui, sicut vivere in natura. That we should seek the verdict of our conscience in every decision Conscientiae attestatio in omni judicio requirenda est. While we should strive for spiritual perfection of mind, purity and peace in God, it will be found to be not a little beneficial to this that we should return quietly into the inner secret place of the mind in the face of everything said, thought or done to us. There, withdrawn from everything else and completely recollected within ourselves, we can place ourselves in the knowledge of the truth before us and undoubtedly discover and understand that it does us absolutely no good, and rather the contrary, when we are praised or honoured by others while we recognise by the knowledge of the truth about ourselves within that we are blameworthy and guilty. And just as nothing is any help if externally people praise someone if his conscience internally accuses him, in the same way on the contrary it does a man no harm to be despised, maligned and persecuted when he remains internally just as innocent, blameless and without fault. On the contrary he has all the more good reason to rejoice in the Lord with patience, in peace and silence. After all no adversity
can do any harm where evil is not in control, and just as no evil goes unpunished, so no good goes unrewarded. Nor should we wish a reward with hypocrites or expect and receive profit from men, but from the Lord God alone, not in the present, but in the future, and not in fleeting time, but in eternity. It is clear therefore that nothing is greater, and nothing better than to enter into the inner secret place of the mind always and in every tribulation and occurrence, and there to call upon the Lord Jesus Christ himself, our helper in temptations and tribulations, and to humble ourselves there by confession of sin, and praise God and Father himself, the giver of correction and the giver of consolation. Above all one should accept everything, in general and individually, in oneself or in others, agreeable or disagreeable, with a prompt and confident spirit, as coming from the hand of his infallible Providence or the order he has arranged. This attitude will lead to the forgiveness of our sins, the deliverance from bitterness, the enjoyment of joy and security, the outpouring of grace and mercy, introduction and establishment into a close relationship with God, abundant enjoyment of his presence, and firm cleaving and union with him.

But let us not copy those who from hypocrisy and Pharisaism want to appear better and different from what they are, and to make a better impression and appearance before men of being something special, than they know in truth inside to be so. For it is absolute madness to seek, hunger for and aspire to human praise or renown, from oneself or others, when one is in spite of it all inwardly full of cravings and serious faults. And certainly the good things we have talked about above will flee him who chases such vanities, and he will merely bring disgrace on himself. So always keep your faults and your own incapacity before your eyes, and know yourself, so that you can be humbled and not try to avoid being held as the lowest, vilest and most abject scum by everyone when you are aware of the grave sins and serious faults in yourself. For which reason consider yourself compared to others as dross to gold, weeds to the wheat, chaff to the grain, a wolf to the sheep, Satan to the children of God. And do not seek to be respected by others and given
precedence before others, but rather flee with all your heart and soul the poison of this disease, the venom of praise, the concern for boasting and vanity, lest, as the prophet says, The wicked is praised in his own heart's desires, (Psalm 10.4) and Isaiah, They who speak good of you, deceive you and destroy the way of your feet, (Isaiah 3.12) and the Lord in Luke, Woe to you when men speak well of you! (Luke 6.26).

Demum ad spiritualem mentis perfectionem, puritatem, et tranquillitatem in Deo consequendam, non mediocriter ad hoc proficere videtur, ut in omni quod de nobis dicitur, sentitur, et agitur, semper tacite ad interiora mentis arcana recurramus, et inibi ab omnibus alio abstracti, et intra nos totaliter recollecti, statuamus nos in cognitionem veritatis ante nos, et utique inveniemus atque videbimus penitus nihil proficere nobis, sed plurimum obesse, si laudati vel honorati ab extra fuerimus, et ab intra in veritatis cognitione de nobis culpabiles et rei existimus. Et sicut tunc nihil prodest, si quempiam ab extra homines laudant, et conscientia ab intra accusat: ita e regione nihil obest, si ab extra quis contemptus, vituperatus, et persecutus fuerit, ab intra tantum innocens, irreprehensibilis, et innoxius existat: imo quam plurimum super haec cum patientia, et silentio, et quiete, non immerito in Domino gratulari habet: siquidem nulla nocebit adversitas, ubi non dominatur iniquitas. Et sicut nullum malum impunitum, ita nullum bonum irremuneratum. Neque cum hypocritis velimus mercedem et praemium exspectare, vel recipere ab hominibus: sed solum a Domino Deo, non in praesenti, sed in futuro, non transitorio in tempore, sed in aeternitate. Liqueat ergo, quod nec majus aliquid, nec melius, quam semper in omni tribulatione et eventu ire ad interiora mentis secreta, et ibi invocare ipsum Dominum Jesum Christum, adjutorem in tentationibus et tribulationibus, ac inibi humiliari in confessione peccati, laudare ipsum Deum et Patrem, corripientem et consolantem: insuper et omnia et singula, in se vel in aliis, prospera sive adversa, aequanimitet accepere, expedite et secure, de manu suae infallibilis providentiae aut dispositionis ordinate.

Ex quibus sequitur etiam peccatorum remissio, amaritudinis expressio, collatio dulcedinis et
securitatis, unfusio gratiae et misericordiae, attractio et corroboratio familiaritatis, atque abundans
in ipso consolatio, firmaque adhaesio et unio. Sed nec velimus imitari eos, qui per hypocrisim, et
more Pharisaico, seipsos carius et aliter videri, haberi et apparere ab extra coram hominibus
satagunt, quam ab intra in veritate de se didicerunt: quod quidem extremae dementiae est, sic
videlicet quaeerere, appetere aut expetere laudem humanam vel gloriam a se vel ab aliis, cum
nihilominus interius repletus sit illecebris et peccatis gravissimis. Et certe qui post hujusmodi
vanissima currit, fugient ab eo praedicta bona, et dedecus incurret.
Semper ergo prae oculis tuis habeas mala tua, et inidoneitatem tuam, et
cognosce te, ut humilieris, et
tamquam peripsema indignissimum, vilissimum, abjectissimumque ab omnibus haberi non refugias
propter gravissima peccata et maxima mala tua. Qua de re reputa te inter alios, ut scoriam inter
aurum, zizaniam inter triticum, paleam inter grana, lupum inter oves, satan
inter filios Dei. Sed nec
velis Reveri ab aliis, aliisque praeferi: imo potius toto corde et spiritu fuge
virus hujus pestilentiae,
venenum laudis, reputationem jactantiae et ostentationis, ne videlicet, juxta
Prophetam, laudetur
peccator in desideriis animae suae. Et, Isaiae, iii.12: Qui beatum te dicunt, ipsi
te decipiunt, et viam
gressuum tuorum dissipant. Et Dominus, Lucae, vii.26: Vae cum benedixerint
vobis homines.
How contempt of himself can be produced in a man, and how useful it is
Contemptus sui, qualiter causetur in homine, et quam utilis sit?
Furthermore the more a man recognises his own insignificance, the more he
fully and the more
clearly he becomes aware to the divine majesty, and the more a man is low in
his own eyes for the
sake of God, the truth and justice, the more precious he is in the eyes of God.
For this reason let us strive with the whole strength of our desire to consider
ourselves the lowest of
all and to consider ourselves unworthy of any favour. We should strive to be
displeasing to ourselves
and pleasing only to God, while regarded as low and unworthy of
consideration by others. Above all
not to be moved by difficulties, afflictions and insults, and not to be upset by
those who inflict such
things on us, or entertain evil thoughts against them or be indignant, but to
believe steadfastly and
with equanimity in all insults, slights, blows and dereliction that it is only
appropriate. For in truth he who is really penitent and grieving before God hates to be honoured and loved by all, and does not try to manipulate things so as to avoid being to some degree hated, neglected and despised right to the end, so that he can be truly humbled and sincerely cleave to God alone with a pure heart. Indeed, for loving God alone and hating oneself more than anything, and desiring to be despised by others we do not require external work or physical strength, but rather physical solitude, the labour of the heart, and peace of mind so that, as it were, by labour of the heart and the disposition of the inmost mind, one may rise up, casting off from oneself lower and physical things, and so soar up, ascending to things heavenly and divine. For indeed in so doing we changed into God, and this will especially take place when without judgement, condemnation or contempt of our neighbour, we choose rather to be considered as scum and a disgrace by everyone and to be despised as unclean filth by everyone than to experience all sorts of different delicacies or to be honoured and exalted by men, or enjoy all sorts of transitory physical forms of well-being and comfort. We should not desire any pleasure of this present, mortal and physical life but rather to mourn, bewail and lament our offences, faults and sins without ceasing, and to perfectly despise and annihilate ourselves, and from day to day to be considered more and more abject by others, while in all our insignificance we become worthless even in our own eyes, so that we can be pleasing to God alone, love him alone, and cleave to him alone. We should not wish to be concerned about anything except the Lord Jesus Christ himself who alone should reside in our affections, and we should not be concerned or anxious about anything except him on whose dominion and providence everything in general and individually depends. So from now on it should not be your aim to seek enjoyment but to truly mourn with all your heart. For that reason, if you do not mourn, mourn for that, while if you do mourn, mourn especially that you have brought the cause of your pain on yourself by your own great offences and infinite sins. For just as a condemned man on receiving his sentence does not concern himself about the seating of the
spectators, so he who laments and is genuinely mourning is not interested in pleasures, resentment, fame or wrongs or things of that sort. And just as townsfolk and contemned criminals have different accommodation, the state and position of those who are mourning and have committed offences deserving punishment ought to be completely different from those who are innocent and under no obligation. Otherwise there would be no difference between the guilty and the innocent in matters of punishment and reward. The result would be great dereliction of duty, and evil behaviour would have more freedom than goodness.
So everything must be renounced, everything despised, everything rejected and avoided, so that we can lay a firm foundation of penitent grieving. Then, loving Jesus Christ in reality, yearning for him, and holding him in one's heart, in reality experiencing pain for one's sins and faults, in reality seeking to know the coming Kingdom, while with true faith bearing in mind the reality of the torments and eternal judgement, and firmly and fully taking up the recollection and fear of one's own death, we should be aware of nothing else, and not care or be worried about anything else. For that reason, he who hurries towards the blessed state of impassibility and towards God should reckon himself to have experienced great loss every day that he is not insulted and despised. Impassibility after all is freedom from vices and passions and purity of heart and the adornment of all virtues. So consider yourself as already dead since there is no doubt that you have got to die. And as a final thought let this be the test for you of whether any thought, word or action of yours is of God, whether you are made more humble because of it, more inward and more recollected and established in God. If you find it is otherwise in yourself, you should be suspicious about it, whether it be not according to God, unacceptable to you and not to your benefit.
Proinde, quanto quis vilitatis suae cognitor est, tanto plus et limpidius divinae majestatis est inspector: et quanto aliquis propter Deum, veritatem et justitiam, sibiipsi in oculis suis est vilior, tanto in oculis Dei est pretiosior. Quapropter studeamus toto desiderii conatu nos vilissimos reputare, et credere indignos omni
beneficio, nobis displicere, soli Deo placere, ab aliis indignissimi et vilissimi reputari: insuper super tribulationibus, afflictionibus, et injuriis non moveri, nec super hujusmodi inferentes conturbari, nec cogitationibus contra eos involvi, vel indignari, sed aequo animo credere velis, te cunctis injuriis, vilipensionibus, flagellis, et derelictionibus esse dignum. Nam re vera, qui vere secundum Deum poenitet et luget, ille ab omnibus honorari ac diligi abhorret, nec subterfugit nec renuit se quodammodo odiri, conculcari, despici, usque in finem, ut vere humilietur, et puro corde soli Domino Deo sincere adhaeret. Verumtamen ad Dominum Deum solum diligendum, et seipsum super omnia abhorrendum, et ab aliis appetere vilipendi, non requiritur labor extrinsecus, nec corporis valetudo, sed potius solitudo corporis, labor cordis, et quies mentis, ut scilicet labore cordis, et affectione mentis intimae surgat, et corporaliter se ab illis infimis evellat, et sic ad coelestia et divina surgat et ascendat. Nempe hoc facientes, mutamus nos in Deum: et praecipue tunc fit, quando ex corde eligimus, sine judicio, damnatione et contemptu proximi, nos ut peripsema et opprobrium ab omnibus aestimari, imo ab omnibus tamquam lutum foedum abhorri, quam quibuscumque deliciis abundare, vel ab hominibus honorari aut elevari, seu qualicumque corporali et transitoria sospitate vel commodo perfriui, nec aliam praesentis hujus mortalitatis et corporalis vitae consolationem desiderare, quam nostras offensiones, culpas, et peccata sine intermissione lugere, deplangere, et plorare, perfecte nos vilipendere et annihilare, et de die in diem ab aliis magis magisque viliores haberi, et in omni vilitate indigni in nostris oculis quotidie fieri, ut soli Deo placeamus, eumque solum diligamus, sicque ei adhaeramus: nec circa aliquid velimus affici, nisi solum circa ipsum Dominum Jesum Christum, qui solus jaceat in nostro affection: nec de ullo solicitari et curare, nisi de ipso in cujus ditione et providentia universa et singula currunt et subsistunt. Non ergo tuum erit amodo deliciari, sed vere toto corde lugere. Quamobrem, si non luges, propter hoc luge: si vero luges, propter hoc magis lamentare, quia doloris causam tibi superinduxisti, propter tuas offensiones maximas et peccata infinita. Sicut ergo non sollicitudinem gerit super speculatorum
dispositionem, qui sententiam suscipit condemnatus, sic qui lamentatur, et efficaciter luget, neque deliciis, neque irae, aut gloriae, vel indignationi, vel hujusmodi aliquando attendat. Et sicut alia civium, alia sunt damnatorum habitacula, ita lugentium, et habentium ad poenam obligantia delicta, statio et institutio ab innoxiiis et non obligatis aliena penitus debet esse et remota. Alioquin non esset differentia rei obnoxii et innocentis, in compensatione et satisfactionis poena, quae tamen magna erat in praevaporationis culpa, et liberior esset injustitia, quam innocentia. Omnia ergo abneganda, omnia contemnenda et vitanda, ut plena fide bonum luctui poenitentiae jaciatur fundamentum. Igitur in veritate Jesum Christum diligens, et post eum lugens, et eum in corde et in corpore portans, in veritate dolorem de suis peccatis et offensionibus habens, in veritate futurum regnum percipere inquirens, necnon in vera fide memoriam tormentorum et judicij aeterni possidens, et sui exitus timorem et memoriam firmiter perfecteque reassumens, non ulterius conabitur, nec curabit, nec sollicitus erit de aliquo alio. Propter quod qui ad beatam impassibilatem et ad Deum currere festinat, omni die in qua non maledicitur, et contemnitur, se multum damnum arbitretur sustinuisse. Impassibilitas autem est, a vitiis et passionibus libertas, cordis munditia, et virtutum ornatus. Aestima igitur te jam mortuum, quem non ambigis de necessitate moriturum. Et postremum argumentum omnium cogitationum, locutionum, operum tuorum, an secundum Deum sint, sit tibi indicium hoc, videlicet si his magis humilis, et intra te, et in Deo plus recollectus et confortatus fueris. Si autem aliter in te repereris, suspicat tibi sit, ne non sit secundum Deum, nec sibi acceptum, nec tibi proficuum.

How God's Providence includes everything Providentia Dei, qualiter ad omnia se extendat? Certainly if we are to come directly, safely and nakedly to our Lord God without hindrance, freely and peacefully, as explained above, and be securely joined to him with even mind in prosperity or adversity, whether in life or in death, then our job is to commit everything unhesitatingly and resolutely, in general and individually, to his unquestionable and infallible providence. This is hardly surprising since it is he alone who gives to all things their
being, their capacity and
their action - that is, their strength, operation, nature, manner and order in
number, weight and
measure. Especially since just as a work of art presupposes a prior operation
of nature, in the same
way the operation of nature presupposes the work of God, creating,
sustaining, ordering and
administering it, for to him alone belong infinite power, wisdom, goodness
and inherent mercy,
justice, truth, love, and unchanging timelessness and omnipresence.
So nothing can exist or act by its own power unless it acts in the power of God
himself, who is the
prime mover and the first principle, who is the cause of every action, and the
actor in every agent. For
so far as the nature of the order of things is concerned, God provides for
everything without
intermediary right down to the last detail. So nothing, from the greatest to the
smallest things, can
escape God's eternal providence, or fall away from it, whether in matters of
the will, of causal events,
or even of accidental circumstances outside of one's control. But God cannot do
anything which does
not fall under the order of his own providence, just as he cannot do anything
which is not subject to
its operation. Divine providence therefore extends to everything, in general
and in particular, even
including a man's thoughts. On which subject Scripture has this to say, Cast all
your worries upon him,
for he takes care of you. (1 Peter 5.7) And again the prophet says, Cast your
care upon the Lord, and he
will feed you. (Psalm 55.22) And, Look at the nations of men, my son, and see
that no one ever put his
trust in the Lord, and was disappointed. For who has been faithful to his
commandments and been
abandoned? (Sirach 2.22) And our Lord himself said, Do not be anxious,
saying, What shall we eat?
(Matthew 6.25) So whatever and however much we can hope from God, we
shall undoubtedly
receive, as Deuteronomy says, Every place where you feet tread shall be yours.
(Deuteronomy 11.24)
For a man shall receive all that he is able to desire, and so far as he can reach
with his foot of faith,
even so much shall he possess. That is why Bernard says, "God, the maker of
everything is so
abounding in mercy that whatever size grace cup of faith we are able to hold
out to him, we shall
undoubtedly have it filled." And so Mark has it, All that you ask in prayer
believing that you will receive it, will be given you. (Mark 11.24)
So the stronger and the more vehement our faith in God is, and the more reverently and persistently it is offered up to God, the more surely, the more abundantly and the quicker what we hoped for will be accomplished and obtained. Indeed if in doing this our faith in God is weak and slow to rise to God on account of the multitude and magnitude of our sins, we should remember this, that everything is possible with God, and that what he wishes is bound to take place, while what he does not wish cannot possibly happen, and that it is as easy for him to forgive and cancel countless sins, however enormous, as to do it with a single sin. While a sinner cannot, of himself, rise from innumerable sins, and free and absolve himself from them, and not even from just one sin. For we are unable not only to do, but even to think anything good, of ourselves, but this is from God. Nonetheless it is much more dangerous, other things being equal, to be ensnared in many sins than in a single one, since no sin is left unpunished, and every mortal sin deserves infinite punishment, and this by the rigour of justice since any such sin is against God who is indeed worthy of infinite reverence, dignity and honour.
What is more, according to the Apostle Paul, God knows his own (2 Timothy 2.19), and it is impossible for any of them to perish by the whirlwinds and floods of any error, scandal, schism, persecution, heresy, tribulation, adversity or temptation, for he has foreseen from eternity and unchangeably the number of his elect and the extent of their merits in such a way that everything good and bad, what is theirs and not theirs, prosperity and adversity, all work together for them for good, except indeed that they appear even more glorious and commendable in adversity.
So let us commit everything with full assurance, in general and in particular, confidently and unhesitatingly to divine providence, by which God permits however much and whatever sort of evil to happen to us. For it is good and will lead to good, since he permits it to exist, and it would not exist unless he permitted it to exist. Nor could it exist otherwise or more than he permits it to, because he
knows how to, has the power to, and wills to change and convert it into something better. For just as it is by operation of providence that all good things exist, so it is by its permission that all bad things are changed into good. In this way in fact God’s power, wisdom and mercy are shown forth through Christ our redeemer - his mercy and his justice, the power of grace and the weakness of nature, the beauty of everything in the association of opposites, the approval of the good, and the malice and punishment of the wicked. Similarly the contrition of the converted sinner, his confession, and penitence, the kindness of God, piety, charity and his praise and goodness (all show forth God’s power and wisdom). Yet it does not always lead to good in those who do ill, but, as is usually the case, to great danger and extreme evil, in the loss, that is, of grace and their place in glory, and in the incurring of guilt and punishment, sometimes even eternal punishment, from which may Jesus Christ defend us. Amen.

Verumtamen, ut juxta praefata, sine impedimento, expedite, secure et nude in Dominum Deum nostrum libere et tranquille feramur, conjungamur et uniamur, eique firmiter adhaereamus, aequanimiter in prosperis et adversis, in vita sive in morte, opus est ut cuncta et singula indiscussae suae infallibili providentiae indubie committamus et certissime. Nec mirum, cum ipse solus sit qui omnibus dat esse, posse, et operari, id est, substantiam, virtutem, et operationem, speciem, modum, et ordinem in numero, pondere, et mensura. Praesertim cum sicut opus artis praesupponit opus naturae, ita opus naturae praesupponit opus Dei creantis, conservantis, ordinantis, et administrantis: eo quod ipsius solius sit infinita potentia, sapientia, bonitas, et essentialis misericordia, justitia, et veritas, charitasque, immutabilis aeternitas et immensitas. Nulla ergo res potest propria virtute subsistere, nec agere, nisi agat in virtute ipsius Dei, scilicet primi moventis, primi principii, qui est causa omnis actionis, et operatur in omni agente. Quippe quantum ad rationem ordinis pertinet, Deus immediate omnibus providet, et usque ad ultima singularia. Nihil igitur a maximo usque ad minimum sempiternam Dei providentiam effugit, nec declinat etiam, sive in voluntariis, sive in causalibus, sive in fortuitis nec de se intentis. Sed nec
solo: quia nullum malum impunitum, et cuique peccato mortali debetur infinita poena, et hoc de rigore justitiae, eo quod quodlibet tale peccatum sit contra Deum, qui est actu infinitae reverentiae, dignitatis, et honorificantiae.
Praeterea, secundum Apostolum, cognovit Dominus qui sunt ejus: et impossibile est aliquem illorum perire, inter quoscumque anfractus et fluctus errorum, scandalorum, schismatum, persecutionum, haeresum, tribulationum, adversitatum, atque tentationum qualicumque, eo quod numeros electorum suorum, et terminus meritorum sit aeternaliter et immutabiliter ab eo praevisus, in tantum, ut etiam omnia bona et mala, propria et aliena, prospera et adversa eis cooperentur in bonum, nisi forte in hoc quod gloriosiores et probatiores appareant in adversis.
Secure ergo et expedite cuncta et singula committamus plena cum fiducia divinae providentiae, quae idcirco permittit mala qualiamque qualtercumque fieri: et bonum est, et bene fit, ut sinat ea fieri: nec fieren nisi permetteret ea fieri: nec aliter nec plus fieri possunt, nisi in quantum permittit, quia scit, potest, et vult ea in melius convertere et disponere. Sicut enim ejus operatione omnia bona fiunt, sic ejus permissione omnia mala bona fiunt: ut certe ex hoc appareat ejus potentia, sapientia, clementia per reparatorem Christum, misericordia et justitia, virtus gratiae, et defectus naturae, pulchritudo universi, comparatione oppositorum, laus bonorum, reproborum malitiae atque poena.
Citations:
Listed below are the abbreviations used for works of Thomas Aquinas quoted or cited in the text. Unless otherwise indicated within the text, quotations are taken from the translations cited here.

CT
Compendium theologiae. Translated by Cyril Vollert as Light of Faith: The Compendium of Theology (Sophia Institute Press, 1993). References are by part and section number.

DEE

DPN

In I Cor Super Epistolam Primam Pauli Apostoli ad Corinthios. Commentary on St. Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians, excerpt translated by Timothy McDermott in Timothy McDermott, ed., Thomas Aquinas, Selected Philosophical Writings (Oxford University Press, 1993).
In DA
Sententia super De anima. Translated by Kenelm Foste
lecture number, and paragraph number. In DC
Sententia de caelo et mundo. Translated by Fabian R. Larcher and Pierre H.
Conway as
Exposition of Aristotle's Treatise On the Heavens, in two volumes (College of St. Mary of
the Springs, 1964). References are by book and lecture number. In DH
Expositio in librum Boethii De hebdomadibus. Translated by Ralph McInerny
as “How are
Things Good? Exposition of On the Hebdomads of Boethius,” in Ralph
McInerny, ed.,
Sententia super Metaphysicam. Translated by John P. Rowan as Commentary on
Aristotle’s Metaphysics (Dumb Ox Books, 1995). References are by book, lesson
number,
and paragraph number. In NE
Sententia libri Ethicorum. Translated by C. J. Litzinger as Commentary on
Aristotle’s
Nicomachean Ethics (Dumb Ox Books, 1993). References are by book, lecture
number, and
paragraph number. In PA
Sententia super Posteriora Analytica. Translated by Richard Berquist as
Commentary on
Aristotle’s Posterior Analytics (Dumb Ox Books, 2007). References are by book and
section number. In Phys
Sententia super Physicam. Translated by Richard J. Blackwell, Richard J.
Spath, and W.
Edmund Thirlkel as Commentary on Aristotle’s Physics (Dumb Ox Books,
1999).
References are by book, lecture number, and section number. QDA
Quaestiones disputatae de anima. Translated by John Patrick Rowan as The
Soul (B.
Herder, 1949). References are by article number. QDM
Quaestiones disputatae de malo. Translated by Richard Regan as On Evil, ed. Brian
Davies (Oxford University Press, 2003). References are by question number
and article
number. QDP
Quaestiones disputatae de potentia Dei. Translated by Lawrence Shapcote as
On the
References are
by question number and article number. QDV
Quaestiones disputatae de veritate. Translated by Robert W. Mulligan, James
If we want to study Aquinas we should pay him the compliment of treating as important what he thought of as important. To study Aquinas as Aquinas is a poor piece of flattery, since Aquinas cared very little for Aquinas, while he did care for God and for science.

J. Martin, Thomas Aquinas: God and Explanations, p. 203. One approach to the study of the history of philosophy is to situate the great thinkers of the past within the historical contexts in which they worked and determine what social, political, cultural, and philosophical circumstances influenced their ideas. This approach certainly has its value, especially insofar as it can help us correctly to understand what a philosopher meant in saying this or that. If pursued too single-mindedly, however, it can distract us from what the thinkers themselves considered important. The philosophers of the past did not write in order to reflect their times or to provide future
historians with something to do. Their work was intended to point beyond itself to something else – to the truth about things – and what matters ultimately is whether they succeeded. As Aquinas himself once wrote, “the study of philosophy is not about knowing what individuals thought, but about the way things are” (In DC I.22). This is the point of the remark by Christopher Martin quoted above. The main value of studying what Aquinas or any other thinker said about God, science, or some other topic is to find out whether what he said is true, or at least likely to lead us closer to the truth. As Martin goes on to add, studying a thinker of the past, specifically, has value insofar as it can help us determine whether what we take for granted in the present is itself true: If we want to know about the existence of God, or about the nature of science, we should read Aquinas, not merely the writers of this century ... The great benefit to be derived from reading pre-modern authors is to come to realise that after all we [moderns] might have been mistaken. That Aquinas’s work should be read as a challenge to us today – and a challenge, as we shall see, not merely to our conclusions, but to many of our premises too – is a central theme of this book. Whether one thinks that challenge ultimately succeeds or not, it is important to treat Aquinas as in this sense a living author rather than a museum piece.

Martin’s reference to “science” might strike some readers as odd. Wasn’t Aquinas a philosopher and a theologian, rather than a scientist? And given his concern with God and other matters of religion, weren’t his opinions matters of faith rather than reason, scientific or otherwise? Yet the assumptions behind such questions are precisely the sort that Aquinas’s philosophy challenges. For Aquinas, a science is an organized body of knowledge of both the facts about some area of study and of their causes or explanations (In PA I.4); and while this includes the fields typically regarded today as paradigmatically scientific (physics, biology, and so forth), it also includes metaphysics, ethics,
and even theology. Furthermore, these latter sciences are as rational as the ones we are familiar with today. To be sure, a part of theology (what is generally called “revealed theology”) is based on what Aquinas regards as truths that have been revealed to us by God. To that extent theology is based on faith. But “faith,” for Aquinas, does not mean an irrational will to believe something for which there is no evidence. It is rather a matter of believing something on the basis of divine authority (ST II-II.4.1), where the fact that it really has been revealed by God can be confirmed by the miracles performed by the one through whom God revealed it (ST II-II.2.9). In any case, there is another part of theology (known as “natural theology”) that does not depend on faith, but rather concerns truths about God that can be known via reason alone. It is these purely philosophical arguments of natural theology with which we shall be concerned in this book, along with Aquinas’s views in metaphysics, ethics, and psychology (which includes the study of the human Aquinas’s life and works Thomas was born circa 1225 at Roccasecca, near the town of Aquino in southern Italy, from which his aristocratic family derived its name (hence the sobriquet “Aquinas”). At five years old he was sent by his parents to be educated at the Benedictine Abbey at Monte Cassino, in the hope of setting him on the path to attaining, eventually, the prestigious position of Abbot. But while studying at Naples as a teenager, Aquinas came under the influence of the new Order of Friars Preachers, also known as the Dominicans after their founder St. Dominic. Attracted by its devotion to study and teaching, he joined the order at nineteen, much to the chagrin of his family, whose worldly ambitions for Thomas did not square with the Dominican life of poverty and simplicity. In the hope of getting him to change his mind, his brothers abducted him and put him under house arrest at the family castle at Roccasecca for about a year, though he spent the time committing to
memory the entire Bible and the four books of the Sentences of Peter Lombard (a theological textbook then widely in use). Notoriously, they even went to the extent of sending a prostitute into his room on one occasion, but he chased her away with a flaming stick pulled from the fireplace, which he used afterward to make the sign of the cross on the wall. As the story has it, he then kneeled before the cross and prayed for the gift of perpetual chastity, which he received at the hands of two angels who girded his loins with a miraculous cord. Eventually his brothers relented and he was allowed to return to the Dominicans.

While a student at what would become the order’s study center in Cologne, Aquinas acquired the unflattering nickname “the Dumb Ox” due to his taciturn character coupled with his considerable girth. The former trait owed largely to a humble unwillingness to call attention to himself, and despite his portliness it is said of Aquinas that he ate only once a day in order to devote himself more fully to his work. In any case, his genius became evident before long, leading his mentor Albert the Great (c. 1200–1280) famously to predict that the Ox’s “bellowing” would someday be heard throughout the world.

The works of Aristotle (384–322 B.C.) had during the preceding century become once again available to scholars in the Latin West, which led to a renewed interest in his philosophy, and Albert was at the time the foremost thinker of this Aristotelian revival. Aquinas would go on to become an even more influential proponent of Aristotle, and was recommended by Albert in 1252 for a position as a lecturer at the University of Paris, where Aquinas was a great success. It was apparently during this time that he composed the short treatises On the Principles of Nature and On Being and Essence, which set out his core metaphysical ideas. This period also gave rise to the much longer treatment of disputed questions On Truth.

After 1259 Aquinas returned to Italy and produced the massive Summa contra
Gentiles, a treatise devoted to defending the claims of orthodox Christianity against a wide variety of objections presented by Jews, Muslims, pagans, and heretics. Following this he began work on the even more massive (and never completed) Summa Theologiae, a systematic treatment of all the main issues of theology organized around the theme of how things ultimately derive from, and are destined to return to, God, their first cause and last end. Along the way it deals with a wide variety of topics in metaphysics, ethics, psychology, and other subjects. These two Summae are generally regarded as Aquinas's masterpieces. In the course of working on the second, he would also produce many other works, apparently intended in part as preliminary treatments of certain topics to be dealt with in the Summa Theologiae. These include treatises on disputed questions On the Power of God and On the Soul and a series of commentaries on the works of Aristotle. This latter, commentarial project had another purpose as well, one to which Aquinas's eventual return to Paris may be related. The use of Aristotle's philosophy in expounding and defending Christian doctrine was highly controversial in Aquinas's day. Aristotle had taken several positions (such as the view that the universe had no beginning) that seemed incompatible with the claims of Christianity. So too had the followers of Averroes (1126–1198), the Muslim philosopher whose interpretation of Aristotle was regarded by many as authoritative. The Averroists had held, for example, that the human race shares a single intellect, which appears incompatible with the notion that each human being has an individual immortal soul. More traditional theologians thus regarded Aristotelianism as theologically dangerous, and preferred the Neoplatonic tradition in general, and Augustinianism in particular, as more suited to the needs of Christian theology. The controversy between defenders and critics of Aristotelianism was particularly fierce at the University of Paris, and Aquinas was determined to show that, when rightly understood, Aristotle's philosophy was not only compatible with Christianity,
but the best means of expounding and defending it. In effect, he took a middle position between Averroism and Augustinianism, seeking to avoid the extremes of the former while showing that the key elements of the latter tradition could be incorporated into a broadly Aristotelian worldview. The result was a unique synthesis that has since come to be known as Thomism (after “Thomas,” the name by which Aquinas was known during his lifetime).

In 1272 Aquinas returned once again to Italy. While saying Mass in Naples one day in 1273 he went into a trance, and appears to have had a mystical experience, after which he was unable to resume work on the Summa Theologiae. Famously, he explained that after what he had seen, everything he had written now seemed to him “like straw.” Called to attend the Second Council of Lyons, he apparently hit his head against a low-lying tree branch while on the journey, and sustained a serious injury. He was taken to the Cistercian abbey at Fossanova, where he was nursed by the monks, but died on March 7, 1274.

In addition to his profound humility, the character traits for which Aquinas was most notable included a deep piety and an astounding capacity for sustained abstract thought. It is said of him that he was so single-minded in his devotion to God that he would leave the room when discussion turned away to some unrelated subject. He could become so absorbed in prayer or in a chain of philosophical or theological reasoning that he would sometimes forget where he was, fail to perceive the people around him, and even (as one account has it) fail to notice the flame from a candle he was holding as it burned.

Metaphysics

Even among contemporary philosophers who are otherwise unfamiliar with his work, it is fairly well known that Aquinas held that the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, and the content and binding force of the natural moral law could be established through purely philosophical arguments (as opposed to an appeal to divine revelation). But those arguments themselves are in general very badly misunderstood by those...
who are not experts on Aquinas. The reason is that most contemporary philosophers have little or no awareness of just how radically different the fundamental metaphysical assumptions of ancient and medieval philosophers are, in general, from the assumptions typically made by the early modern philosophers and their successors. A distinctive conception of causation, essence, form, matter, substance, attribute, and other basic metaphysical notions underlies all of Aquinas’s arguments in philosophy of religion, philosophy of mind, and ethics; and it is a conception very much at odds with the sorts of views one finds in Descartes, Locke, Hume, Kant, and the other founders of modern philosophy. While most contemporary philosophers would probably not identify themselves as Cartesians, Lockians, Humeans, Kantians, or the like, their thinking about the metaphysical concepts just noted nevertheless tends, however unconsciously, to be confined within the narrow boundaries set by these early modern thinkers. Hence when they come across a philosopher like Aquinas, they unthinkingly read into his arguments modern philosophical presuppositions he would have rejected. The result is that the arguments are not only misinterpreted, but come across as far less interesting, plausible, and defensible than they really are. In rejecting them, as contemporary philosophers tend to do, they do not realize that what they are rejecting is a mere distortion or caricature of Aquinas’s position rather than the real McCoy. An overview of Aquinas’s general metaphysics is therefore a necessary preamble to a consideration of his views in these other areas of philosophy. Such an overview would be of value in any case, for Aquinas’s metaphysical ideas are important and interesting in their own right. We shall also see that they are as defensible today as they ever were, and (ironically enough) that some work by contemporary philosophers, quite outside the camp of Thomists and otherwise unsympathetic to Aquinas’s overall project, tends to support this judgment.
Act and potency

The Greek philosopher Parmenides (c. 515–450 B.C.) notoriously held that change is impossible. For a being could change only if caused to do so by something other than it. But the only thing other than being is non-being, and non-being, since it is just nothing, cannot cause anything. Hence, though the senses and common sense tell us that change occurs all the time, the intellect, in Parmenides’ view, reveals to us that they are flatly mistaken.

The tendency of philosophers like Parmenides to pit the intellect against the senses and common sense is one that was firmly resisted by Aristotle. At the same time, Aristotle was loath simply to dismiss a theory like Parmenides’ on the grounds that it was odd or counterintuitive; it was important to understand exactly why such a theory was mistaken.

Aquinas, who (as we have seen) esteemed Aristotle above all other philosophers, followed him in these attitudes, and also in his specific reply to Parmenides, which appealed to the distinction between act and potency.

Parmenides assumed that the only possible candidate for a source of change in a being is non-being or nothing, which (of course) is no source at all. Aristotle’s reply was that this assumption is simply false. Take any object of our experience: a red rubber ball, for example. Among its features are the ways it actually is: solid, round, red, and bouncy. These are different aspects of its “being.” There are also the ways it is not; for example, it is not a dog, or a car, or a computer. The ball’s “dogginess” and so on, since they don’t exist, are different kinds of “non-being.” But in addition to these features, we can distinguish the various ways the ball potentially is: blue (if you paint it), soft and gooey (if you melt it), and so forth. So, being and non-being are not the only relevant factors here; there are also a thing’s potentialities. Or, to use the traditional Scholastic jargon, in addition to the different ways in which a thing may be “in act” or actual, there are the various ways in which it may
be “in potency” or potential. Here lies the key to understanding how change is possible. If the ball is to become soft and gooey, it can’t be the actual gooeyness itself that causes this, since it doesn’t yet exist. But that the gooeyness is non-existent is not (as Parmenides assumed) the end of the story, for a potential or potency for gooeyness does exist in the ball, and this, together with some external influence (such as heat) that actualizes that potential – or, as the Scholastics would put it, which reduces the potency to act – suffices to show how the change can occur. Change just is the realization of some potentiality; or as Aquinas puts it, “motion is the actuality of a being in potency” (In Meta IX.1.1770), where “motion” is to be understood here in the broad Aristotelian sense as including change in general and not just movement from one place to another. So far this may sound fairly straightforward, but there is more to the distinction between act and potency than meets the eye. First of all, some contemporary analytic philosophers might object that a thing is “potentially” almost anything, so that Aristotle’s distinction is uninteresting. For example, it might be said by such philosophers that we can “conceive” of a “possible world” where rubber balls can bounce from here to the moon, or where they move by themselves and follow people around menacingly. But the potentialities Aristotle and Aquinas have in mind are ones rooted in a thing’s nature as it actually exists, and do not include just anything it might “possibly” do in some expanded sense involving our powers of conception. Hence, while a rubber ball has the potential to be melted, it does not, in the Aristotelian sense, have the potential to bounce to the moon or to follow someone around all by itself. Second, and as indicated already, though a thing’s potencies are the key to understanding how it is possible for it to change, they are merely a necessary and not a sufficient condition for the actual occurrence of change. An additional, external factor is also required. Potential gooeyness (for example), precisely because it is merely potential, cannot actualize itself; only something else that is already actual (like heat)
could do the job. Consider also that if a mere potency could make itself actual, there would be no way to explain why it does so at one time rather than another. The ball melts and becomes gooey when you heat it. Why did this potential gooeyness become actual at precisely that point? The obvious answer is that the heat was needed to actualize it. If the potency for gooeyness could have actualized itself, it would have happened already, since the potential was there already. So, as Aquinas says, “potency does not raise itself to act; it must be raised to act by something that is in act” (SCG I.16.3). This is the foundation of the famous Aristotelian–Thomistic principle that “whatever is moved is moved by another” (In Phys VII.2.891). (The principle is true, incidentally, even of animals, which seem at first glance to move or change themselves; for what this always amounts to is really just one part of the animal being changed by another part. A dog “moves itself” across a room, but only insofar as the potential for motion in the dog’s legs is actualized by the flexing of the leg muscles, and their potential for being flexed is actualized by the firing of the motor neurons, and the potential for the motor neurons to fire is actualized by other neurons; and so on.)

Third, while act and potency are made intelligible to us in relation to each other, there is an asymmetry between them such that “absolutely speaking act is prior to potency” (SCG I.16.3). A potential is always a potential for a certain kind of actuality; for example, potential gooeyness is just the potential to be actually gooey. Furthermore, potency cannot exist on its own, but only in combination with act; hence there is no such thing as potential gooeyness existing all by itself, but only in something like an actual rubber ball. It is incoherent to speak of something as both existing and being purely potential, with no actuality whatsoever. But it is not incoherent to speak of something as being purely actual, with no potentiality at all. (Indeed, as we shall see, for Aquinas this is precisely what God is: Actus Purus or “Pure Act.”) So, while for us to understand act and potency
we need to contrast them with one another, in the real world outside the mind actuality can exist on its own while potentiality cannot. As will become evident from the remainder of this chapter, the distinction between act and potency forms the basis of Aquinas’s entire metaphysical system; and as will become equally evident by the end of this book, the repercussions of this fundamental distinction extend well beyond general metaphysics. It is not for nothing that the first of the famous Twenty Four Thomistic Theses has it that: “Potency and Act divide being in such a way that whatever is, is either pure act, or of necessity it is composed of potency and act as primary and intrinsic principles.” (This echoes Aquinas’s own assertion that “potency and act divide being and every kind of being” [ST I.77.1, as translated by Pegis in Basic Writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas].)

Hylemorphism

Given what has been said so far, Aquinas, following Aristotle, concludes that “in everything which is moved, there is some kind of composition to be found” (ST I.9.1), in particular a composition of act and potency. Perhaps slightly better known to modern readers is a related Aristotelian doctrine to the effect that the ordinary objects of our experience are composites of form and matter – a doctrine known as hylemorphism (sometimes spelled “hylomorphism”) after the Greek words hyle (“matter”) and morphe (“form”). For instance, the rubber ball of our example is composed of a certain kind of matter (namely rubber) and a certain kind of form (namely the form of a red, round, bouncy object). The matter by itself isn’t the ball, for the rubber could take on the form of a doorstop, an eraser, or any number of other things. The form by itself isn’t the ball either, for you can’t bounce redness, roundness, or even bounciness down the hallway, these being mere abstractions. It is only the form and matter together that constitute the ball. The difference between the act/potency distinction and the form/matter
distinction is one of
generality. Anything compounded of form and matter is also compounded of
act and
potency, but there are compounds of act and potency that have no matter
(namely angels, as
we shall see later on). Being compounds of form and matter is the specific way
in which the
things of our everyday experience are capable of undergoing change.
Sometimes this change concerns some non-essential feature, as when a red
ball is
painted blue but remains a ball nonetheless. Sometimes it involves something
essential, as
when the ball is melted into a puddle of goo and thus no longer counts as a ball
at all.
Aquinas refers to the former sort of change as a change in accidents, and to the
latter as a
change in substance, and corresponding to each is a distinct kind of form:
“What makes
something exist substantially is called substantial form, and what makes
something exist
accidentally is called accidental form” (DPN 1.3). For a ball merely to change
its color is
for its matter to lose one accidental form and take on another, while retaining
the
substantial form of a ball and thus remaining the same substance, namely a
ball. For a ball
to be melted into goo is for its matter to lose one substantial form and take on
another, thus
becoming a different kind of substance altogether, namely a puddle of goo.
Now the goo
itself might be broken down into more basic chemical components. But what
that would
involve is the matter underlying the goo taking on yet different substantial
forms. To be
sure, Aquinas tells us that “what is in potency to exist substantially is called
prime matter”
(DPN 1.2), or in other words that we can distinguish between matter having no
form
whatsoever (“prime matter”) and the various substantial forms that it has the
potential to
take on. But this distinction is for him a purely conceptual one. In reality,
however matter
may be transformed, it will always have some substantial form or other, and
thus count as a
substance of some kind or other; strictly speaking, “since all cognition and
every definition
are through form, it follows that prime matter can be known or defined, not of
itself, but through the composite” (DPN 2.14). The notion of prime matter is just the notion of something in pure potentiality with respect to having any kind of form, and thus with respect to being any kind of thing at all. And as noted above, what is purely potential has no actuality at all, and thus does not exist at all. As this indicates, hylemorphism is anything but a “reduction-istic” metaphysical position (that is, one claiming that some seemingly diverse or complex phenomena in reality consist of “nothing but” some more uniform or simpler set of elements). Certainly it is at odds with contemporary materialism; the suggestion that “matter is all that exists” becomes simply incoherent on a hylemorphic conception of matter, since matter by itself without anything else (including any form) would just be non-existent. Furthermore, while the hylemorphist holds that the substances of our ordinary experience are composites of form and matter, form and matter themselves in turn cannot be understood except in relation to the whole substances of which they are components. Hence the hylemorphic account is holistic and in no sense a “reduction” of substances even to their form and matter together. This also indicates that Aristotle’s and Aquinas’s conception of “form” is not the same as Plato’s. On the hylemorphic analysis, considered apart from the substances that have them, form and matter are mere abstractions; there is no form of the ball apart from the matter that has that form, and no matter of the ball apart from the form that makes it a ball specifically. In particular, the form of a ball does not exist in a “Platonic heaven” of abstract objects outside time and space. All the same, Aristotle and Aquinas are, like Plato, realists about universals: when we grasp “humanity,” “triangularity,” and the like, what we grasp are not mere inventions of the human mind, but are grounded in the natures of real human beings, triangles, or what have you. (More on this later.) Moreover, while (contra
Plato) no form exists apart from some particular individual substance that instantiates it, not every form exists in a material substance. There can be forms without matter, and thus immaterial substances – namely, for Aquinas, angels and postmortem human souls. (Again, more on this later.) This recapitulates an asymmetry noted earlier: just as act can exist without potency even though potency cannot exist without act, so too form can exist without matter even though matter cannot exist without form (DEE 4). In any event, where form and matter are concerned, while they are implicated in the explanation of how things come to be and pass away, they are not themselves the sorts of things that come to be and pass away. As Aquinas argues, we should note that prime matter, and even form, are neither generated nor corrupted, inasmuch as every generation is from something to something. That from which generation arises is matter; that to which it proceeds is form. If, therefore, matter and form were generated, there would have to be a matter of matter and a form of form ad infinitum. Hence, properly speaking, only composites are generated. (DPN 2.15) However, as we will see in the next chapter, this does not entail that the existence of form and matter does not stand in need of explanation. The four causes Speaking of explanation naturally leads us to that most famous of Aristotelian metaphysical doctrines, that of the four causes – material, formal, efficient, and final – a doctrine to which Aquinas is fully committed (DPN 3.20). Return yet again to the rubber ball of our example. The material cause or underlying stuff the ball is made out of is rubber; its formal cause, or the form, pattern, or structure it exhibits, comprises such features as its sphericity, solidity, and bounciness. In other words, the material and formal causes of a thing are just its matter and form, considered as two aspects of a complete explanation of it. Next we have the efficient cause, that which actualizes a potency and thereby brings something into being. In this case that would be the actions of the workers
and/or machines in the factory in which the ball was made, as they molded the rubber into the ball. Lastly we have the final cause or the end, goal, or purpose of a thing, which in the case of the ball might be to provide amusement to a child. In combination, these causes provide a complete explanation of a thing. That doesn’t mean that in the case of the ball, for example, you would not have many more questions about it, such as where the rubber came from or who made the factory. But the answers to such questions will all be just further instances of material, formal, efficient, and final causes.

The four causes are completely general, applying throughout the natural world and not just to human artifacts. Biological organs provide the most obvious examples. For instance, to understand what a heart is, you need to know its material cause, namely that it is made out of muscle tissue of a certain sort. But there are many muscles in the body that aren’t hearts, so you also need to know its formal cause, and thus such things as that the muscle tissue is organized into ventricles, atria, and the like. Then there is the efficient cause, which in this case would be the biological processes that determined that certain embryonic cells would form into a heart rather than, say, a kidney or a brain. Finally there is the heart’s final cause, namely that it serves the function of pumping blood. But biological organs and processes are by no means the only sorts of natural phenomena that exhibit final causality, and it is a mistake to assume (as is often done) that to speak of final causes is simply another way of speaking about functions. All functions are instances of final causality, but not all final causality involves the having of a function, if by “function” we mean the sort of role a bodily organ plays in the life of an animal or the role a mechanical part plays in the operation of a machine. For the Aristotelian, final causality or teleology (to use a more modern expression) is evident wherever some natural object or process has a tendency to produce some particular effect or range of effects. A match, for example, reliably generates flame and heat when struck, and never (say) frost
and cold, or the smell of lilacs, or thunder. It inherently “points to” or is “directed towards” this range of effects specifically, and in that way manifests just the sort of end- or goal-directedness characteristic of final causality, even though the match does not (unlike a heart or a carburetor) function as an organic part of a larger system. The same directedness towards a certain specific effect or range of effects is evident in all causes operative in the natural world. When Aristotelians say that final causality pervades the natural order, then, they are not making the implausible claim that everything has a function of the sort biological organs have, including piles of dirt, iron filings, and balls of lint. Rather, they are saying that goal-directedness exists wherever regular cause and effect patterns do. Hence Aquinas says that “every agent acts for an end: otherwise one thing would not follow more than another from the action of the agent, unless it were by chance” (ST I.44.4). By “agent” he means not just thinking beings like us, but anything that brings about an effect. His point is that unless a cause were inherently directed towards a certain effect or range of effects – that is to say, unless that effect or range of effects were the cause’s own final cause – there would be no reason why it should bring about just that effect or effects. In other words, we cannot make sense of efficient causality without final causality. They go hand in hand, just as a thing’s material and formal causes go hand in hand in the sense that matter cannot exist without form and form, in the ordinary case anyway, does not exist without matter. At the same time, just as form is ultimately prior to matter (and, more generally, act prior to potency), final causes are prior to or more fundamental than efficient causes, insofar as they make efficient causes intelligible (DPN 4.25). Indeed, for Aquinas the final cause is “the cause of causes” (In Phys II.5.186), that which determines all of the other causes. For something to be directed towards a certain end entails that it has a form
appropriate to the realization of that end, and thus a material composition suitable for instantiating that form; a knife, for example, if it is to fulfill its function of cutting, must have a certain degree of sharpness and solidity, and thus be made of some material capable of maintaining that degree of sharpness and solidity. Thus the existence of final causes entails the existence of formal and material causes too. More generally, for something to have some feature potentially entails a kind of directedness to the actualization of that potential; as Aquinas puts it, “an ordering or tendency to an act belongs to a thing existing with a potency to that act” (In Phys III.2.285, as translated by Renard at p. 23 of his Philosophy of Being). Hence the existence of final causes also entails the act/potency distinction. Implicit within the notion of final causality, then, is the entire Aristotelian metaphysical apparatus.

It is important to understand (again, contrary to a common misconception) that most final causality is thought by Aristotelians to be totally unconscious. As Aquinas writes, “although every agent, be it natural or voluntary, intends an end, we should realize nevertheless that it does not follow that every agent knows or deliberates about the end” (DPN 3.19). The match is “directed towards” the production of fire and heat, the moon is “directed towards” movement around the earth, and so forth. But neither the match nor the moon is aware of these “goals.” The match isn’t thinking “I must generate heat,” and the moon isn’t thinking “I must go around the earth,” for of course neither one is thinking anything at all. For Aristotelians, our conscious thought processes are only a special case of the more general phenomenon of goal-directedness or final causality, which exists in the natural world in a way that is mostly divorced from any conscious mind or intelligence. To “intend an end” in the sense Aquinas has in mind in the passage just quoted is not necessarily to make a conscious decision to pursue some goal, but rather just “to have a
natural inclination toward something” (DPN 3.19). We intend an end like going to the supermarket after conscious deliberation, but the match “intends” the end of generating heat, the heart “intends” the end of circulating the blood, and the moon “intends” the end of moving around the earth, all in a totally unconscious and non-deliberative way.

As with final causes, the Aristotelian notion of efficient causality is very commonly misunderstood by contemporary readers. Of the four causes, it is sometimes said to be the one that most closely corresponds to modern philosophical notions of causation, but this is misleading at best. As has already been noted, for the Aristotelian, efficient causes cannot be understood apart from final causes, and yet modern philosophers (for reasons we will examine presently) tend to deny the very existence of final causes. This seems to be the reason why modern philosophers have, at least since David Hume (1711–1776), tended to think it “conceivable” that any cause might produce any effect or none. For example, when a brick is thrown towards a window, we naturally expect that the window will shatter, but (so it is said) it is at least in theory possible that the brick might instead turn into a bouquet of flowers, or disappear altogether. Causes and effects are, in Hume's words, “loose and separate,” with no “necessary connection” holding between them. Hence (the Humean argument continues) it may be that it is only the “constant conjunction” of thrown bricks and shattered windows in our experience that leads us to expect the latter in the presence of the former. The necessity with which we think the one brings about the other may be merely a projection of this expectation, thus deriving from our subjective psychological tendencies rather than any objective feature of the causes and effects themselves. Aristotle and Aquinas would have found all of this unintelligible, in part because for them, nothing counts as an efficient cause in the first place unless it is inherently ordered towards the generation of a certain kind of effect or range of effects as its final cause.
Humean analyses of causation, along with the philosophical puzzles they notoriously give rise to, are only possible if one rejects the Aristotelian notion of final causality, and thus the Aristotelian notion of efficient causality along with it. Aristotle and Aquinas would also be baffled by the modern tendency to think of causation as essentially a relation between temporally ordered events, a tendency underlying the Humean assumption that it is at least “conceivable” that the thrown brick might result in something other than the broken window. The brick is thrown; that’s one event. The window shatters; that’s another event. Obviously the second event follows the first in time, and is therefore distinct from it. Hence it seems equally obvious that the one could in principle exist without the other, and thus (the modern philosopher concludes) that an effect might conceivably fail to follow upon its usual cause. But from the Aristotelian point of view, this is simply a wrongheaded way of characterizing the causal situation. For Aristotle and Aquinas, it is things that are causes, not events; and the immediate efficient cause of an effect is simultaneous with it, not temporally prior to it. “It should be understood in speaking of actual causes that what causes and what is caused must exist simultaneously, such that if the one exists, the other does also” (DPN 5.34). In the case of the broken window, the key point in the causal series would be something like the pushing of the brick into the glass and the glass's giving way. These events are simultaneous; indeed, the brick's pushing into the glass and the glass's giving way are really just the same event considered under different descriptions. Or (to take an example often used to illustrate the Aristotelian conception of efficient causation) we might think of a potter making a pot, where the potter’s positioning his hand in just such-and-such a way and the pot’s taking on such-and-such a shape are simultaneous, and, again, the same event described in two different ways. In examples like these, it is simply not
plausible to suggest that the causes and effects are “loose and separate” or lack any “necessary connection.” It is difficult to see how it is even “conceivable” that the brick’s passing through the glass might not be accompanied by the glass’s giving way, or that the hand’s shaping the clay might occur without the clay’s being shaped. The causes and effects themselves are distinct – the brick and its action are not the same as the glass and its reaction, and the position of the potter's hand is not the same as the pot's shape – but since they exist in one and the same event, there is no way to appeal to a distinction between events to motivate the claim that cause and effect might come apart. And when we consider the specific details of the immediate causal situation – speaking precisely, for example, of the brick’s pushing through the glass and the glass’s giving way, and not (more loosely) of thrown bricks being followed by broken windows – it is hard to see what it could mean to suggest that such a cause might not be followed by such an effect. Famously, Hume also claims that something could in principle come into being without any efficient cause whatsoever. Aquinas would deny this, arguing, as we have seen he does, that “potency does not raise itself to act” and hence that “whatever is moved is moved by another,” a thing’s coming into existence just being an instance of motion or the actualization of a potency. More generally, “everything whose act of existing is other than its nature [must] have its act of existing from another” (DEE 4). In other words, whatever is contingent, not having its existence by virtue of its own nature, must be caused to exist by something else. A corollary of this is that “effects must needs be proportionate to their causes and principles” (ST I-II.63.3) such that “whatever perfection exists in an effect must be found in the effective cause” (ST I.4.2). For a thing cannot give what it does not have. Sometimes what is in the effect exists in the cause in just the same way it exists in the effect; that is to
say, “the form of the thing generated pre-exists in the generator according to
the same mode
of being and in a similar matter, as when fire generates fire or man begets
man” (In Meta
VII.8.1444). Sometimes it exists in the cause “neither according to the same
mode of being,
nor in a substance of the same kind” as when “the form of a house pre-exists
... in the mind
of the builder” (In Meta VII.8.1445). Sometimes it is in the cause “more
excellently, as,
heat is in the sun more excellently than it is in fire” (ST I.6.2). And sometimes
it is in the
cause “virtually but not actually” as “when heat is caused by motion, heat is
present in a
sense in the motion itself as in an active power” or when “the form of
numbness is in the
eel which makes the hand numb” (In Meta VII.8.1448–9). Thus, to use the
standard
Scholastic jargon, even if the effect is not always contained in the cause
“formally,” it will
yet be contained in it “eminently” or “virtually.”
This last principle came to be known within the Scholastic tradition as the
principle
of proportionate causality. That whatever comes into existence, and more
generally that
any contingent thing, must have a cause, came to be known as the principle of
causality.
Aquinas’s dictum that “every agent acts for an end” is known as the principle
of finality.
These three principles are central to Aquinas’s general metaphysics, and, as
we shall see in
the next chapter, to his arguments concerning the existence and nature of God
in particular.
As our discussion thus far has implied, the principle of finality is in a sense
the most
fundamental of them, given that the final cause is “the cause of causes”: for,
again, in
Aquinas's view an efficient cause can bring an effect into being only if it is
“directed
towards” that effect; and it is ultimately in that sense that the effect is
“contained in” the
efficient cause. Yet as I have said, modern philosophers tend to reject, and
indeed even
dismiss, the very notion of final causality; and (unsurprisingly, given this
circumstance)
they also tend to reject, or are at least suspicious of, the other two principles
as well.
However, it is by no means clear that there really are any good reasons for these attitudes, and the three principles are in any case eminently defensible. Before we see why, however, let us complete our survey of Aquinas’s metaphysical framework by examining some of its components that most clearly constitute developments of Aristotelian ideas beyond the point at which Aristotle himself left them.

Essence and existence

We have seen that Aquinas, unlike Plato, does not regard the forms of things as existing independently of the individual substances they are the forms of, but also that he is nevertheless a realist about universals and that he thinks it possible for some forms to exist without matter. To understand these doctrines, we need now to look at Aquinas’s famous theory of essence and its relationship to existence.

The essence of a thing is just that which makes it the sort of thing it is, “that through which something is a certain kind of being” (DEE 1). It is also that through which a thing is intelligible or capable of being grasped intellectually. Hence to grasp humanity is to grasp the essence of human beings – that which makes them human – and thus to understand what a human being is; to grasp triangularity is to grasp the essence of triangles – that which makes them triangles – and thus to understand what a triangle is; and so forth. A thing’s essence is also sometimes called its “nature,” “quiddity,” or “form” (though as we shall see, “form” sometimes has a narrower sense in which it refers to only a part of a thing’s essence). The doctrine that (at least some) things have real (as opposed to merely conventional) essences is called essentialism.

It is part of the essence of a triangle that it have three straight sides, but not part of the essence that it be drawn with blue, red, or any other particular color of ink. That is why a triangle remains a triangle whatever color it is, but cannot continue to exist if it loses one of its sides. This sort of consideration has led some contemporary analytic philosophers to think of the essence of a thing as definable in terms of whatever features it
would exhibit in every possible world, where a “possible world” is a complete and logically consistent description of how things might have been. Triangles would have three sides in every possible world in which they exist at all, but would not be blue in every possible world in which they exist; and this (the theory in question says) is what it amounts to say that three-sidedness is part of the essence of triangles and blueness is not.

It is important to emphasize that this contemporary form of essentialism, associated with philosophers like Saul Kripke and Hilary Putnam, is (as contemporary Thomists like David Oderberg and Gyula Klima have pointed out) very different from the Aristotelian form of essentialism adopted and developed by Aquinas. From an Aristotelian-Thomistic point of view, the possible worlds analysis of essence has things backwards: we need to know what the essence of a thing is first, before we can know what it would be like in various possible worlds; talk of possible worlds, if legitimate at all, must get explained in terms of essence, not essence in terms of possible worlds. Furthermore, the possible worlds analysis obliterates an important distinction much emphasized in Aristotelian essentialism.

Consider Socrates' rationality and his ability to learn languages (to borrow an example from Christopher Shields). Socrates has these in every possible world in which he exists at all, and thus, the contemporary essentialist concludes, both features are essential to him. But from the Aristotelian point of view, Socrates' ability to learn languages, though one of his necessary features – for him to lose it would entail that he ceases to exist – is nevertheless not as basic to him as his rationality is. The reason is that his ability to learn languages derives from his rationality; its necessity, though real, is therefore a derived necessity. It is only those features of a thing that are not derived in this way that can, from the Aristotelian point of view, count as part of the essence of a thing. Those features deriving from the essence, such as Socrates' ability to learn languages, are
instead referred
to as “properties,” since they are proper or necessary to a thing in a way that its purely
contingent features (like Socrates’ being in Athens or having been a soldier) are not.
(“Property” thus has a different connotation in Aristotelian metaphysics than it does among
most contemporary philosophers, who use it as more or less synonymous with what
Aquinas would instead call an “accident,” viz. that which exists only as an attribute of a
substance, as e.g. redness exists only in red things.)
To say that humanity is that which makes all of us human beings implies that this
essence is something shared by all human beings, that we all have the same essence; and in
general, the essence of a thing is something it shares with others in the same kind. In this
sense humanity constitutes a natural kind or species, namely the one traditionally defined as
falling under the genus animal and as differentiated from other species in that genus by
virtue of its members being rational. (More simply: human beings are by nature rational
animals.) Thus considered, however, humanity exists, not in the world outside the mind,
but as a concept. “The character species is included among the accidents which follow upon
[an essence or nature] according as it exists in the intellect. The characters genus and
difference also belong to nature so considered” (DEE 3). But Aquinas is by no means a
conceptualist of the Lockean sort; he does not (as Locke later would) regard species as
simply conventional or “made by men.” Though humanity and the like qua
universals exist
only in the intellect, “such conceptions have an immediate basis in reality” (I
SENT 2.1.3).
To be sure, what is universal to human beings does not exist outside the mind apart from
particular human beings themselves; Socrates’ humanity, for example, does not exist in him
apart from those of his features which he does not share with, and which distinguish him
from, other human beings. But that doesn’t entail that humanity does not exist at all in
Socrates, George Bush, and other human beings, only that it does not exist in
them in the abstract way in which it exists in the intellect, that is, divorced from all individualizing features. Aquinas is thus a realist, albeit of the Aristotelian or “moderate” sort (as opposed to the “extreme” realism represented by Plato’s Theory of Forms). “The nature is said to be in the thing inasmuch as there is something in the thing outside the soul that corresponds to the conception of the soul” (I SENT 2.1.3, as translated by Pasnau and Shields at p. 78 of their Philosophy of Aquinas).

So, what is outside the mind is just human nature as it exists concretely in individual human beings: the humanity of Socrates, the humanity of George Bush, and so forth. What exists within the mind is humanity considered abstractly, as a universal that might be applied to many individuals. But humanity as such is neither particular nor universal, neither one nor many, and could not be either, for “each is extrinsic to the notion of humanity, and either can happen to it” (DEE 3). If universality or “manyness” was part of humanity as such, then humanity could never exist in a particular thing, as it obviously does in (for example) Socrates. If particularity or “oneness” was part of humanity as such, then humanity could never be shared by multiple distinct individuals, as it obviously is shared by (for example) Socrates and George Bush. Hence, “universals as such exist only in the soul; but the natures themselves, which are conceivable universally, exist in things” (In DA II.12.380).

With respect to material things, “the term ‘essence’ signifies the composite of matter and form” (DEE 2), and not just the form alone; “otherwise,” Aquinas says, “there would be no difference between definitions in physics and in mathematics” (DEE 2). What he means is that when we understand what a material thing is, what we understand is different from the sort of thing we understand when studying geometry and the like, in that it is not a pure abstraction but something concrete. You can ignore the material structure of a particular circle, square, or triangle when learning a geometrical theorem, but you cannot
ignore the material structure of particular rocks, trees, or animals when
studying geology or
biology. Hence matter is part of the essence of objects of the latter sort. At the
same time,
matter is for Aquinas the “principle of individuation” between members of a
species of
material things, that which makes them distinct things of the same type (DEE
2). So how
can matter be part of the essence of trees (for example) – and thus common to
all trees –
and at the same time be that which distinguishes one tree from another? The
answer is that
we must make a distinction between matter in general, and this or that
particular parcel of
matter. It is the former, or “common matter,” that is part of the essence of
trees, and the
latter, or “designated matter,” that individuates one tree from another. All
trees are material,
but what makes this tree different from that one despite the fact that they
have the same
essence is that this one is composed of this particular hunk of matter, and that
one is
composed of that distinct particular hunk of matter.
With what Aquinas calls “separated substances” – that is to say, immaterial
realities
like the soul, angels, and God – things are not so straightforward. The soul, as
we will see
in chapter 4, must on Aquinas’s view be conjoined to matter at some point in
its existence,
even if it can exist beyond the death of the body. There is accordingly no
difficulty in
principle in explaining how one soul can be individuated from another, even if
this requires
a qualification to the thesis that matter is the principle of individuation. God,
as shall see
below, is necessarily unique in any case, so that the question of individuation
cannot arise.
But what about angels, which are supposed to be both distinct from one
another and yet
completely immaterial? An angel, says Aquinas, is a form without matter, and
thus its
essence corresponds to its form alone (DEE 4). But precisely because there is
no matter to
distinguish one angel in a species from another, “among these substances
there cannot be
many individuals of the same species. Rather, there are as many species as
there are
individuals” (DEE 4).
Does this mean that an angel, as a pure form, is also pure actuality, devoid of potency? By no means. Even an angel has to be created, and thus pass from potency to act. But since angels are immaterial, this cannot involve matter taking on a certain form. What it does involve is the form or essence being conjoined to what Aquinas calls an actus essendi or “act of existing.” Matter is “in potency” or only potential relative to form, which is what actualizes matter. But relative to the act of existing, both pure form (as in an angel) and a composite of form and matter (as in a material object) are themselves in potency or only potential. Hence even angels, like material things, are composites of act and potency insofar as they are composites of an essence with an act of existing (DEE 4).
Here we come at last to Aquinas’s famous doctrine of the distinction between essence and existence. To return again to our example of humanity, “it is ... evident that the nature of man considered absolutely abstracts from every act of existing, but in such a way, however, that no act of existing is excluded by way of precision” (DEE 3). That is to say, there is nothing in our grasp of the essence humanity as such that could tell us whether or not any human beings actually exist, if we didn’t already know they did. In general, “every essence or quiddity can be understood without its act of existing being understood. I can understand what a man or phoenix is, and yet not know whether or not it exists in the nature of things” (DEE 4). The phoenix example is perhaps more instructive than the humanity one: someone unaware that the phoenix is entirely mythical might know that its “essence” is to be a bird that burns itself into ashes out of which a new phoenix arises, without knowing whether there really is such a creature. But in that case, “it is evident that the act of existing is other than essence or quiddity” for “whatever is extraneous to the concept of an essence or quiddity is adventitious, and forms a composition with the essence” (DEE 4). Or in other words, if it is possible to understand the essence of a thing without knowing whether it exists, its act of existing (if it has one) must be distinct from its essence, as a
metaphysically separate component of the thing.
The significance of the distinction between essence and existence is indicated by another argument Aquinas gives for it. If essence and existence were not distinct, they would be identical; and they could be identical only in “something whose quiddity is its very act of existing ... such that it would be subsistent existence itself” (DEE 4). That is to say, something whose essence is its existence would depend on nothing else (e.g. matter) for its existence, since it would just be existence or being. But there could only possibly be one such thing, for there would be no way in principle to distinguish more than one. We could not coherently appeal to some unique form one such thing has to distinguish it from others of its kind, “because then it would not be simply an act of existing, but an act of existing plus this certain form”; nor could we associate it with some particular parcel of matter, “because then it would not be subsistent existence, but material existence,” that is, dependent on matter for its being (DEE 4). In fact there is, in Aquinas’s view, a being in whom essence and existence are identical, namely God; and the identity of his essence and his existence entails (among other things) that God is a necessary being, one that cannot possibly not exist. But all of this shows that in everything other than God, essence and existence must be distinct. For in the case of material objects (for example) there is more than one member of each kind, and none of them exists in a necessary way but only contingently; and this would not be so if essence and existence were in these things identical.
We will have more to say about the theological implications of Aquinas’s teaching on essence and existence in chapter 3. For now we can note that his conception of God as that in which essence and existence are identical dovetails nicely with the older Aristotelian notion of God as pure act. Indeed, the notion of angels as composites of form and an act of existence fits in naturally with the Aristotelian (though also neo-Platonic) idea
of a hierarchy of being, extending from pure act at the top to prime matter at the bottom, with greater degrees of potency characterizing each step down the ladder. Prime matter cannot exist on its own precisely because it is pure potency. Material substances can exist on their own because in addition to matter they have form, and thus some degree of act. Human beings have a higher degree of act and thus a lesser degree of potency, because (for reasons we’ll examine in chapter 4) their souls are subsistent, capable of existing apart from the body. Angels, being devoid of matter altogether, have a yet higher degree of act, though even they fall short of the summit of reality, God, since unlike him they are (as we saw earlier) still composites of potency and act. Distinctions between the angels, even given that they are of different species, are possible at all in Aquinas’s view only insofar as they too differ in degree of potency or act, in particular with respect to an immaterial power like intelligence. Hence, “a superior intelligence which is nearer to the first being would have more act and less potency; and so on with the others. This terminates in the human soul, which holds the lowest grade among intellectual substances” (DEE 4).

The transcendentals
Aquinas, following Aristotle, regards metaphysics as the “science which studies being as being,” rather than (as other sciences do) studying some one particular kind of being among others (In Meta IV.1.529). (For this reason, metaphysicians in the Thomistic tradition have often preferred the label “ontology” – from the Greek ontos or “being” – as an apt name for their discipline.) Act and potency, form and matter, essence and existence, substance and accident, and the like are all merely aspects of being, and their study gives us a greater understanding of it. Still, strictly speaking, we cannot define being the way we can define a species like humanity, by citing a genus it falls under and a specific difference that marks it off from other species in the genus. Being is the most comprehensive concept we
have, applying as it does to everything that exists, so that there is no way to subsume it under something more general. Moreover, being cannot even properly be regarded as a genus under which everything else falls, for any genus can be “added to” in a way being cannot. For example, under the genus animal we can distinguish the species vertebrate and invertebrate. (Here we are using “genus” and “species” in the logical sense, not the modern biological sense.) But precisely since animal includes both vertebrates and invertebrates, it is not itself either vertebrate or invertebrate; for it cannot itself be both (on pain of contradiction), and if it was one rather than the other, it would not be able to include the other as a species. Hence to get the concept of either vertebrate or invertebrate, we need to add something to the concept animal. By contrast, says Aquinas, “nothing can be added to not in reference, referring to the same thing under different names just as “Superman” and “Clark Kent” do.) This may be clearest in the cases of thing and something, since a “thing” is just a being of some kind or other, and “something” connotes either a being among other beings, or being as opposed to non-being or nothing. One (to oversimplify a bit) is meant in more or less the former of these senses of “something,” as connoting one being distinct from others. The idea of convertibility is, for modern readers anyway, hardest to understand in the cases of true and good, since truth is usually understood by contemporary philosophers as an attribute confined to beliefs and propositions, and goodness is regarded by many to be a matter of “value” rather than “fact.” With respect to truth, it is useful, in understanding what Aquinas is saying, to think of “true” in the sense of “real” or “genuine.” A thing is true to the extent that it conforms to the ideal defined by the essence of the kind it belongs to. Hence a triangle drawn sloppily on the cracked plastic seat of a moving school bus is not as true a triangle as one drawn slowly and carefully on paper with a Rapidograph pen and a ruler, for since its sides will be
less straight it will less perfectly instantiate the essence of triangularity; a squirrel which
due to injury or genetic defect has lost its tail or its desire to gather nuts for the winter is not
as true a squirrel as one who still has its tail, its normal desires, and whatever other features
flow from the essence of squirrels; and so forth. Now as we have seen, for Aquinas such
essences, when considered as universals, exist only in the intellect; and following St.
Augustine, Aquinas regards these universals as existing first and foremost in the divine
intellect, as the archetypes according to which God creates the world (ST I.15.1). Thus, in a
sense, “the word ‘true’ ... expresses the conformity of a being to intellect” (QDV 1.1),
whether a human intellect which grasps a universal, or (ultimately) the divine intellect in
which the universal exists eternally. Hence something has being as the kind of thing it is
precisely to the extent that it is a true instance of that kind, as defined by the universal
essence existing in the intellect; and in that sense being is convertible with truth.
This also gives a clue as to how good is convertible with being. Philosophers in the
classical (as opposed to modern) tradition, such as Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, and Aquinas,
tend to think of goodness in terms of conformity to the ideal represented by a thing’s nature
or essence. To take the triangle example again, it is natural to describe the well-drawn
triangle as not merely a true triangle, but also as a good triangle, and the poorly drawn
triangle as a bad one. “Good” or “bad” are to be understood here in the sense in which we
describe something as a good or bad specimen or example of a type of thing; and as this
makes evident, the terms are therefore being used in a sense that is broader than (though as
we shall see, it also encompasses) the moral sense of “good” and “bad.” As with true, then,
something is good to the extent that it exists as, or has being as, an instance of its kind. As
Aquinas says, “everything is perfect so far as it is actual. Therefore it is clear
that a thing is perfect so far as it exists; for it is existence that makes all things actual” (ST
I.5.1). Now it is also true that “the essence of goodness consists in this, that it is in some way desirable”; but “a thing is desirable only in so far as it is perfect,” and thus to the extent that it is actual or exists (ST I.5.1). “Hence it is clear that goodness and being are the same really. But goodness presents the aspect of desirableness, which being does not present” (ST I.5.1). This last part of the argument is liable to be badly misunderstood if it is not kept in mind that by “desirable” Aquinas does not mean that which conforms to some desire we happen contingently to have, nor even, necessarily, anything desired in a conscious way. Here as elsewhere, it is the notion of the final cause – the end or goal towards which a thing is directed by nature – that is key (ST I.5.4). As we have seen, a thing’s final cause, and thus that which it “desires” (in the relevant sense), might be something of which it is totally unconscious, as in the case of inanimate natural objects and processes; in creatures with intellects, such as ourselves, it might even be something we consciously (if irrationally) try to avoid realizing. But since the realization of a thing’s good is what it is by its nature directed towards as its final cause, we see that Aquinas’s dictum (borrowed from Aristotle) that “goodness is that which all things desire” (ST I.5.4) is, when properly understood, not a dubious piece of armchair psychology, but rather (given his basic ontological commitments) a necessary truth of metaphysics. The claim that being is convertible with goodness might nevertheless seem to be falsified by the existence of evil. For if evil exists, then (so it might be thought) it must have being; and since evil is the opposite of good, it would seem to follow that there is something having being that is nevertheless not good. But Aquinas would deny the first premise of this argument. He writes that “it cannot be that evil signifies being, or any form or nature. Therefore it must be that by the name of evil is signified the absence of good. And this is what is meant by saying that evil is neither a being nor a good. For since being,
as such, is good, the absence of one implies the absence of the other” (ST I.48.1). Precisely because good is convertible with being, evil, which is the opposite of good, cannot itself be a kind of being but rather the absence of being. In particular, it is what the Scholastic philosophers called a privation, the absence of some perfection which should be present in a thing given its nature. Hence blindness (for example) is not a kind of being or positive reality, but rather simply the absence of sight in some creature which by its nature should have it. Its existence, and that of other evils, thus does not conflict with the claim that being is convertible with good. Final causality

To many modern readers, several aspects of Aquinas’s metaphysics might seem quaint, of historical interest perhaps but irrelevant to contemporary philosophical debates. In particular, the principle of finality, on which (as we have seen) virtually the whole of his metaphysics depends, might be thought to have been decisively refuted by modern science, which more or less officially banished the appeal to final causes from scientific method several centuries ago. It must be said, however, that those who make this assumption – and it is a very common assumption indeed – generally do not seem to understand either the notion of final causality, nor the nature of the intellectual revolution represented by the rise of modern science, nor the extent to which appeals to final causality, in substance if not by name, still permeate contemporary mainstream philosophy and science. There is in fact a strong case to be made that final causality is unavoidable if we are to make sense, not only of human thought and action, but also of what we know about the natural world in general from modern physical science itself. I have already noted how some common assumptions about final causality – such as the idea that it involves attributing quasi-biological functions or conscious awareness to everything, including inanimate objects – are simply false. To the extent that contemporary
Philosophers find the principle of finality implausible, then, their misgivings are at least in part based on misunderstandings. Also problematic are the arguments early modern thinkers tended to give to justify their rejection of appeals to final causality. Descartes claimed that the appeal to final causes arrogantly but falsely assumes that we can know the intentions of God, the author of the final causes of things. But there are two problems with this. First, even if we could not know the final causes of things, it would not follow (as Descartes himself seems to have granted) that final causality does not exist; and the mere existence of final causality would suffice to justify many of the metaphysical conclusions Aquinas and other Scholastic thinkers based upon it. For example, even if we could not know specifically what the final cause of this or that natural phenomenon is, as long as it actually had one we would have the basis for an argument for God’s existence of the sort represented by Aquinas’s Fifth Way, as we shall see in the next chapter. Second, even if there are many phenomena whose final causes we do not and perhaps cannot know – and Aquinas and the other Scholastics never denied this – it seems obvious that there are also many phenomena whose final causes we can know. For example, if the eye has a final cause at all, it is surely obvious that it has to do with seeing; if the heart has a final cause at all, it is obvious that it has to do with pumping blood; and so forth. Perhaps the most famous criticism of Scholastic metaphysics on the part of the early modern thinkers is the one represented by Molière’s joke about the doctor who claimed to explain why opium causes sleep by saying that it has a “dormitive power.” The reason this is supposed to be funny is that “dormitive power” means “a power to cause sleep,” so that the doctor’s explanation amounts to saying “Opium causes sleep because it has a power to cause sleep.” The reason this is supposed to be a criticism of the metaphysics defended by Aquinas and other Scholastics – which, as we have seen, held that efficient causes are
directed towards certain effects as their final causes, so that they can be said to have inherent “powers” to bring about those effects – is that it shows (so it is said) that the explanations provided by Scholastic metaphysics are vacuous tautologies. But though the explanation in question in this case is not very informative, it is not in fact a tautology; it does have substantial content, however minimal. To say “Opium causes sleep because it causes sleep” would be a tautology, but the statement in question says more than that. It says that opium has a power to cause sleep; that is to say, it tells us that the fact that sleep tends to follow the taking of opium is not an accidental feature of this or that sample of opium, but belongs to the nature of opium as such. That this is not a tautology is evidenced by the fact that early modern thinkers tended to regard it as false, rather than (as they should have done were it really a tautology) trivially true. They didn’t say: “Yes, opium has the power to cause sleep, but that’s too obvious to be worth mentioning”; they said: “No, opium has no such power, because ‘powers,’ ‘final causes,’ and the like don’t exist.” So, the critique of Scholasticism implied in Molière’s joke is muddled. Moreover, while it is true to say that the appeal to opium’s inherent powers doesn’t give us the sort of satisfying detailed empirical account of opium’s nature that modern chemistry would, it is important to understand that it is not intended to do so. Its point is rather to state a basic metaphysical truth that underlies the empirical details about opium’s chemical structure, whatever they turn out to be.

It is also sometimes thought that the findings of modern science, which have refuted various assumptions of Aristotelian science, thereby refute Aristotelian metaphysics. But that is a non sequitur. Aristotelian physics is one thing, and Aristotelian metaphysics another, and they do not stand or fall together. Even if some of the scientific examples in terms of which Aristotelians sometimes explained their metaphysical notions have turned
out to be false – such as the idea that the earth sits motionless at the center of the universe – there is no essential connection between the metaphysical notions and the scientific examples, and the former can easily be restated in terms of better examples. Nor was the possibility of empirical scientific advance denied by the Scholastic thinkers, as if they thought the science of their time infallible. As Aquinas himself says with respect to the Ptolemaic astronomy accepted in his day, “the suppositions that these astronomers have invented need not necessarily be true; for perhaps the phenomena of the stars are explicable on some other plan not yet discovered by men” (In DC II.17, as translated by Rickaby at p. 67 of his Scholasticism; cf. ST I.32.1).

Of course, the founders of modern science – Galileo, Descartes, Boyle, Newton, et al. – did indeed differ from the Aristotelians over metaphysics too, and not just on empirical details. In particular, they differed over what metaphysical assumptions ought to guide empirical scientific inquiry, holding that final causes and the like ought to be eschewed in favor of “mechanical” (i.e. non-teleological) explanations, and that a mathematical description of nature was preferable to the Aristotelians’ appeal to such unquantifiable notions as inherent powers and substantial forms. And of course, this new conception of scientific method has had tremendous success. It is fallacious, however, to infer (as is often done) from the success of the modern mechanistic-cum-quantificational scientific method to the falsity of the Aristotelian scheme it replaced, for the “success” in question has nothing necessarily to do with an attempt to get at the deep ontological structure of reality (a project about which modern thinkers have if anything tended to be rather skeptical). In fact, the moderns’ preference for the new method seems to have been motivated less by any purported metaphysical superiority it had over Aristotelianism – again, the philosophical arguments made in its favor were in general surprisingly feeble –
than by a practical interest in reorienting philosophy and science to improving the material conditions of human life in this world. The ancients and the medievals had tended to regard intellectual inquiry as a search for wisdom, understood as knowledge of the ultimate causes and meaning of things, in light of which one might improve one’s soul and prepare for a life beyond this one. By contrast, the early modern thinkers tended to see it rather as a means of increasing “human utility and power” through the “mechanical arts” or technology (in the words of Francis Bacon) and of making us “masters and possessors of nature” (as Descartes put it). Such technological advancement would be facilitated by a quantificational approach to the study of nature; hence the attractiveness of this approach to the moderns. The early modern thinkers were also wary of the tendency of Aristotelian Scholasticism to shore up the existing political and religious order, as it was bound to do given its talk of the fixed essences and final causes of things, including human beings and human societies. This order was, after all, highly conservative and decidedly “otherworldly” in its orientation, and thus out of sync with the project of improving life in the here and now. Any replacement of the Aristotelian scheme, such as the new mechanistic-cum-mathematical conception of nature afforded, thus had definite political as well as practical advantages.

If the new science of the moderns has “succeeded,” then, it might be argued that this is in large part because they stacked the deck in their own favor. Having redefined “success” as the achievement of dramatic technological progress and in general the manipulation of nature to achieve human ends, they essentially won a game the Scholastics were not trying to play in the first place. That is not to say that the Aristotelians entirely eschewed the quantificational approach to science or the technological advances it makes possible; in fact some late Scholastic thinkers did put greater emphasis on quantificational methods, and Galileo and other early modern scientists built on their work. But their
emphasis was on formal and final causes and the like, because they took these to be more fundamental to our understanding of the nature of things and to yield knowledge that had greater moral and theological significance. And they would also have emphasized that to focus obsessively on one aspect of reality, though this will undoubtedly increase one’s knowledge of that aspect, does nothing to show that there are no other aspects worth studying – aspects that might be even more important, and apart from which our understanding of the first aspect might become distorted. In particular, if you insist on looking only for those features of nature that can be described in the language of mathematics, then of course that is all you are going to find; and if you refuse to look for or even to acknowledge the existence of final causes, then it is hardly surprising if you do not discover any. Obviously, though, it doesn’t follow that there are no final causes or non-quantifiable aspects of nature, any more than a refusal to remove one’s red spectacles would “prove” that everything is red. To pretend that this does follow is simply to let one’s method dictate what counts as reality, rather than letting reality determine one’s method.

The mechanistic denial of final causes, inherent powers, and the like did not follow from the science, then, but was read into the science from the beginning. What is often regarded as a “discovery” arrived at via empirical scientific inquiry was in fact a stipulation concerning the nature of scientific method, a limitation, more or less by fiat, of what would be allowed to count as “scientific.” As historian and philosopher of science E. A. Burtt concluded in his classic The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science, the founders of the mechanistic-cum-mathematical conception of nature were driven by “wishful thinking” and “uncritical confidence” of just the sort of which they accused the Aristotelian Scholastic tradition they sought to overthrow; final causes and the like were regarded by them as “sources of distraction [which] simply had to be denied or
removed” (pp. 305–6).

If there is much less to the moderns’ case against Aristotelianism than meets the eye, it might yet be suggested that the point is moot, insofar as the modern mechanistic, quantificational picture of the natural world has proven itself capable of accounting for all of reality in any event. There is, on this view, simply no need to appeal to final causes, substantial forms, inherent powers and the like. But any such suggestion would be – not to put too fine a point on it – question-begging, naïve, and historically ill informed. The fact is that a myriad of philosophical problems – indeed, many problems that have misleadingly come to be regarded as “perennial” or “traditional” problems of philosophy – arose only after and because of the early modern philosophers’ abandonment of key Aristotelian and Scholastic notions. As Alasdair MacIntyre has argued, the plethora of competing moral theories within modern philosophy – not to mention the radical disagreement that has come to exist within Western society at large over the grounds and content of morality, and widespread skepticism about whether this disagreement is susceptible of any rational, objective adjudication – is a consequence of the abandonment of a teleological conception of human life in particular and the natural world in general. (We will have reason to return to this theme in chapter 5.) As we shall see in chapter 4, the “mind–body problem” as it has been understood since the time of Descartes and the “problem of personal identity” as it has been debated since the time of Locke are largely byproducts of the early modern philosophers’ abandonment of the notion of formal causation. Even the problems of free will and skepticism, though they have been discussed in one form or another for millennia, owe (as I have argued at length elsewhere) their modern, seemingly intractable character to the abandonment of certain key Aristotelian metaphysical assumptions. If the exclusively mechanistic and quantitative conception of nature that the moderns replaced
Scholasticism with has led to such philosophical puzzlement, it is hardly plausible to suggest that there are no grounds for a reconsideration of their decision. This should perhaps be most evident from what modern philosophers have made of causation, that metaphysical notion which is most fundamental to the natural science modern philosophy claims to champion. As we have seen, for Aristotle and Aquinas, we cannot make sense of efficient causation – which is, of Aristotle’s four causes, the one modern philosophers find most familiar – apart from final causation. As we have also seen (and as is well known in any case) efficient causation has indeed become something modern philosophers have found it very difficult to make sense of in light of the puzzles raised by Hume – puzzles that seem to arise only if we deny that causes are inherently “directed towards” their effects as towards a final cause. In particular, it has been notoriously difficult for modern philosophy to account for the necessary connection that common sense supposes to hold between causes and effects. This difficulty has in turn led to the “problem of induction,” on which, since there is no necessary connection between causes and effects, there seems also to be no rational ground for inferences to the unobserved from the observed or to the future based on what has happened in the past. Yet if science is in the business of discovering objective causal relationships between things, of describing the world in general (the unobserved portions as well as the observed ones), and of making predictions on the basis of that description, then it seems that science is impossible, or at least rationally unfounded. The “mechanistic” or non-teleological picture of the natural world that purportedly made modern natural science possible in fact seems to make it unintelligible. The conceptual incoherence within ethics which MacIntyre has argued followed upon the moderns’ abandonment of teleology thus has, arguably, a parallel within modern
metaphysics. Efficient causality becomes unintelligible without final causality; substance, and particularly that substance we call the human person, becomes unintelligible without the hylemorphic distinction between form and matter; free will becomes unintelligible when we insist on reducing human action to bodily movements governed by chains of efficient causation, and ignore those descriptions in terms of formal and final causation apart from which it cannot be understood as action in the first place; and so on. These are, of course, large issues; again, I have addressed them at greater length elsewhere (in works cited in the Further Reading section), and we will return to several of them in the course of this book. Suffice it for now to note that there is much about modern philosophy to indicate that the recent revival of interest in Aristotle’s moral theory ought to be met by a serious reconsideration of Aristotelian metaphysics as well.

There is much in modern science to indicate the same thing. Consider first the findings of modern biology. Darwinian evolutionary theory was, officially at least, supposed at long last to exorcise final causality from that part of the natural world where its existence seems most obvious. And yet, as the Thomist philosopher Etienne Gilson documented at length in his From Aristotle to Darwin and Back Again, teleological concepts have permeated Darwinian theory from the beginning. One problem here is that even after Darwin, it is as impossible as it ever was to give an adequate description of an animal’s organs, behavioral patterns, and the like except in terms of what they are for, and thus in teleological language. Contemporary philosophers of biology have tried to show how such language can be “cashed out” or analyzed in non-teleological terms, but no such proposal has been without serious problems. For example, on the currently most popular theory, to say that the kidneys in such-and-such an organism serve the function of purifying the blood is just shorthand for saying something like this: those ancestors of this organism who first developed kidneys (as a result of a random genetic mutation) tended
to survive in
greater numbers than those without kidneys, because their blood happened
thereby to get
purified; and this caused the gene for kidneys to get passed on to the organism
in question
and others like it. But as John Searle has pointed out, strictly speaking, such
Darwinian
accounts of the origins of biological traits don’t provide an “analysis” or
“explanation” of
the teleological functions of those traits at all, but rather simply eliminate the
notion of
teleology altogether, treating it as at best a kind of useful fiction. To use
Aristotelian
terminology, they are attempts to discard final causality and explain biological
phenomena
entirely in terms of efficient causality, not attempts to reduce final causality
to efficient
causality (a project which seems incoherent in any event). Moreover, even if
we took such
accounts seriously as analyses of teleological function, they would face serious
difficulties.
As Jerry Fodor has noted, they seem to have the absurd implications that we
cannot know
the function of a thing unless we know how it evolved, and that nothing could
in principle
even have a biological function unless it evolved. But in fact we knew the
functions of all
sorts of organs and behaviors long before the idea of natural selection ever
occurred to
anyone, and it is at least theoretically possible that such organs and behaviors
could have
functions even if they did not evolve.
A deeper problem, though, is that what may be the greatest discovery of
modern
biology – DNA and the genetic code it embodies (which have been incorporated
into the
Darwinian story about the evolution of life) – seems teleological through and
through.
Descriptions of this famous molecule make constant reference to the
“information,” “data,”
“instructions,” “blueprint,” “software,” “programming,” and so on contained
within it; and
for good reason, since there is simply no way accurately to convey what DNA
does without
the use of such concepts. But every single one of them entails that DNA is
“directed
towards” something beyond itself as a kind of “end” or “goal” – the
development of this organ in the growing organism, the manifestation of such and such a behavioral tendency, or what have you – and thus manifests precisely the sort of final causality that modern biology is claimed to have swept away. It is important to note that this has nothing whatsoever to do with the “irreducible complexity” that “Intelligent Design” theorists claim certain biological phenomena exhibit; the Aristotelian need not take sides in the debate between Darwinian biologists and “Intelligent Design” theorists (who generally accept the mechanistic view of nature endorsed by their materialist opponents). Final causality is evident in DNA not because of how complex it is, but because of what it does, and would be equally evident however simple in physical structure DNA might have been. As the physicist Paul Davies notes in his book The Fifth Miracle, “concepts like information and software ... [involve] notions that are quite alien to the physicist’s description of the world” – a description which is (again, at least officially) supposed to be entirely mechanistic – and the use of such concepts in biology “treat[s] semantic information as if it were a natural quantity like energy.” “Unfortunately,” continues Davies, “meaning” sounds perilously close to purpose, an utterly taboo subject in biology. So we are left with the contradiction that we need to apply concepts derived from purposeful human activities (communication, meaning, context, semantics) to biological processes that certainly appear purposeful, but are in fact not (or are not supposed to be). Concludes Davies, at the end of the day, human beings are products of nature, and if humans have purposes, then at some level purposefulness must arise from nature and therefore be inherent in nature ... Might purpose be a genuine property of nature right down to the cellular or even the subcellular level? (p. 121–2) Davies seems close to a position expressed decades earlier by the biophysicist and Nobel laureate Max Delbrück, who once wrote that if the
Nobel Prize could be awarded posthumously, “I think they should consider Aristotle for the discovery of the principle implied in DNA,” and that “the reason for the lack of appreciation, among scientists, of Aristotle’s scheme lies in our having been blinded for 300 years by the Newtonian view of the world.”

Part of the reason the Aristotelian regards efficient causality as unintelligible without final causality is that without the notion of an end or goal towards which an efficient cause naturally points, there is no way to make sense of why certain causal chains are significant in a way others are not. For example, in characterizing the DNA of bears, we take it to be relevant to note that it causes them to be furry and to grow to a large size, but not that it also thereby causes them to be good mascots for football teams. The genetic information in bear DNA inherently “points to” or is “directed at” the first outcome, but not the second. But this sort of consideration applies to causal chains generally, including inorganic ones. As the philosopher David Oderberg has noted, it is particularly evident in natural cycles like the water cycle and the rock cycle. In the former case, condensation leads to precipitation, which leads to collection, which leads to evaporation, which leads to condensation, and the cycle begins again. In the latter case, igneous rock forms into sedimentary rock, which forms into metamorphic rock, which melts into magma, which hardens into igneous rock, and the cycle begins again. Scientists who study these processes identify each of their stages as playing a certain specific role relative to the others. For example, the role of condensation in the water cycle is to bring about precipitation; the role of pressure in the rock cycle is, in conjunction with heat, to contribute to generating magma, and in the absence of heat to contribute to generating sedimentary rock; and so forth. Each stage has the production of some particular outcome or range of outcomes as an “end” or “goal” towards which it points. Nor will it do to suggest that either cycle could be
adequately described by speaking of each stage as being the efficient cause of certain others, with no reference to its playing a “role” of generating some effect as an “end” or “goal.” For each stage has many other effects that are not part of the cycle. As Oderberg points out, sedimentation might (for example) happen to block the water flow to a certain region, the formation of magma might cause some local birds to migrate, or condensation in some area might for all we know cause someone to have arthritic pain in his big toe. But blocking water flow and causing birds to migrate are no part of the rock cycle, and causing arthritic pain is no part of the water cycle. Some causal chains are relevant to the cycles and some are not. Nor is it correct to say that the student of the rock or water cycles just happens to be interested in the way some rock generates other kinds and how water in one form brings about water in another form, and is not interested in bird migration patterns or arthritis, so that he pays attention to some elements in the overall causal situation rather than others. For the patterns described by scientists studying these cycles are objective patterns in nature, not mere projections of human interests. But the only way to account for this is to recognize that each stage in the process, while it might have various sorts of effects, has only the generation of certain specific effects among them as its “end” or “goal” and that this is what determines its role in the cycle. In short, it is to recognize such cycles as teleological.

Finally, let us consider basic causal laws of the sort studied by physicists. The founders of modern philosophy, keen to eliminate substantial forms, natures, essences, powers, final causes, and the like from science, sought to replace them with the idea of events related by “laws of nature.” Hence, when a brick is thrown at a window and the window shatters, it’s not (on this view) that the brick, by virtue of its nature or essence, has an inherent power to break glass, or that it is inherently directed towards this sort of outcome as a final cause. It is rather that events like the throwing of bricks
just happen to be regularly followed, in a lawlike way, by events like the shattering of windows. As philosopher of science Nancy Cartwright has argued, a serious problem with the idea that science is merely in the business of establishing regularities on the basis of observation is that the sorts of regularities that the hard sciences tend to uncover are rarely observed, and in fact are in ordinary circumstances impossible to observe. Beginning students of physics quickly become acquainted with idealizations like the notion of a frictionless surface, and with the fact that laws like Newton’s law of gravitation strictly speaking describe the behavior of bodies only in the circumstance where no interfering forces are acting on them, a circumstance which never actually holds. Moreover, physicists do not in fact embrace a regularity as a law of nature only after many trials, after the fashion of popular presentations of inductive reasoning. Rather, they draw their conclusions from a few highly specialized experiments conducted under artificial conditions. None of this is consistent with the idea that science is concerned with cataloguing observed regularities. But it is consistent with the Aristotelian picture of science as in the business of uncovering the hidden natures or powers of things. Actual experimental practice indicates that what physicists are really looking for are the inherent powers a thing will naturally manifest when interfering conditions are removed, and the fact that a few experiments, or even a single controlled experiment, are taken to establish the results in question indicates that these powers are taken to reflect a nature that is universal to things of that type. Cartwright’s views are by no means idiosyncratic. They reflect a growing trend within the philosophy of science towards a neo-Aristotelian “new essentialism,” as Brian Ellis, one of its proponents, has labeled it. Nor is it just Aristotle’s doctrine of natures, forms, or essences that finds an echo in the new essentialism. As many of these theorists
have recognized, to affirm the existence in physical phenomena of inherent powers or capacities is to acknowledge phenomena that are directed at or point to states of affairs beyond themselves. For example, to be fragile is to point to or be directed at breaking, and a fragile thing of its nature points to or is directed at this particular state even if it is never in fact realized; to be soluble is to point to or be directed at dissolving, and a soluble thing of its nature points to or is directed at this particular state even if it is never in fact realized; and so forth. The late “new essentialist” philosopher George Molnar concluded that the powers inherent in physical objects exhibit a kind of “physical intentionality” insofar as, like thoughts and other mental states, they point to something beyond themselves, even though they are unlike thoughts in being unconscious. But the notion of something which points beyond itself to a certain goal or end-state even though it is totally unconscious is, of course, nothing other than the Aristotelian notion of final causality. As Cartwright has said, “the empiricists of the scientific revolution wanted to oust Aristotle entirely from the new learning,” but “they did no such thing.”

The reference to intentionality – the mind’s capacity to represent, refer, or point beyond itself – should bring to mind the most obvious examples of natural phenomena difficult to account for in mechanistic terms, namely human thought and action. When you think about the Eiffel Tower, say, your thought is “directed towards” something beyond itself in a way analogous to the manner in which a match is, on the Aristotelian analysis, “directed towards” the generation of flame and heat as its final cause. Similarly, when you reason through an argument, your thought process is “directed towards” the conclusion as the end towards which the premises point. But precisely because the physical world is, on a mechanistic account, devoid of any endor goal-directedness, the existence of our thoughts and thought processes would seem impossible to explain in purely physical terms. (Indeed,
this is no doubt part of the reason Descartes was a dualist: given his mechanistic conception of the material world, there was nowhere else for human thought to exist except in something immaterial.) Similarly, human actions seem just obviously teleological in nature, directed towards certain ends for the sake of which they are carried out; at least, and as philosophers like G. F. Schueler and Scott Sehon have argued at length, no attempt to analyze human action in non-teleological terms has succeeded. From human thought and action to the world of biological phenomena in general to inorganic natural cycles to the basic laws of physics, final causality or teleology thus seems as real and objective a feature of the natural world as Aristotle and Aquinas took it to be. At the very least, their conception of final causality is surely defensible and worthy of the serious consideration of contemporary philosophers.

Efficient causality

If the principle of finality can be defended, then, what of the other two Aristotelian principles I have said are crucial to Aquinas’s metaphysics in general and his arguments for God’s existence in particular – namely, the principle of causality and the principle of proportionate causality (which concern efficient rather than final causality)? To take the latter first, it is worth noting that it is certainly supported by common sense. If you come across a puddle of red liquid near a faucet, you will not suppose that the water in the faucet caused the puddle all by itself. The reason is that water, on its own, does not have within it what is required to generate the effect in question. A leaky faucet by itself might produce a puddle, but not a red one. Hence, you will conclude either that the puddle was caused by something else – a spilled can of soda pop, maybe, or someone bleeding – or that it was caused by the water from the faucet in conjunction with something else, such as a “fizzy” tablet dropped in a water puddle or even heavy rust in the water line. In reasoning in this fashion you would be evincing a tacit commitment to the principle of proportionate causality, viz. that a cause cannot give to its effect what it does
It is nevertheless sometimes suggested that this principle is disproved by evolution, since if simpler life forms give rise to more complex ones then (it is claimed) they must surely be producing in their effects something they did not have to give. But this does not follow. Every species is essentially just a variation on the same basic genetic material that has existed for billions of years from the moment life began. On the Darwinian story, a new variation arises when there is a mutation in the existing genetic structure which produces a trait that happens to be advantageous given circumstances in a creature’s environment. The mutation in turn might be caused by a copying error made during the DNA replication process or by some external factor like radiation or chemical damage. Just as water in conjunction with something else might be sufficient to produce a red puddle even if the water by itself wouldn’t be, so too do the existing genetic material, the mutation, and environmental circumstances together generate a new biological variation even though none of these factors by itself would be sufficient to do so. Thus, evolution no more poses a challenge to the principle of proportionate causality than the puddle example does. Indeed, as Paul Davies points out in The Fifth Miracle (cited earlier), to deny that the information contained in a new kind of life form derives from some combination of preexisting factors – specifically, in part from the organism’s environment if not from its genetic inheritance alone – would contradict the second law of thermodynamics, which tells us that order (and thus information content) tends inevitably to decrease, not increase, within a closed system.

The principle of causality was famously challenged by Hume, who claimed, as we noted earlier, that we can easily conceive of a thing coming into being without any cause at all. What he has in mind is something like imagining the surface of a table which at first has nothing on it, but on which a bowling ball suddenly appears, “out of
nowhere” as it were. But there are several problems with the suggestion that this exercise in imagination entails conceiving of something coming into being uncaused. First, it falsely assumes that to imagine something – that is, to form a mental image of it – is the same as to conceive it, in the sense of forming a coherent intellectual idea of it. But imagining something and conceiving it in the intellect are not the same thing. You can form no clear mental image of a chiliagon – a 1,000-sided figure – certainly not one that’s at all distinct from your mental image of a 997-sided figure or a 1,002-sided figure. Still, your intellect can easily grasp the concept of a chiliagon. You can form no mental image of a triangle that is not equilateral, isosceles, or scalene. But the concept of triangularity that exists in your intellect, which abstracts away from these features of concrete triangles, applies equally to all of them. And so forth. Like many empiricists, Hume conflates the intellect and the imagination, and his argument sounds plausible only if one follows him in committing this error. Second, as Elizabeth Anscombe pointed out, to imagine something appearing suddenly isn’t even to imagine it (let alone conceive it) coming into existence without a cause. Suppose the situation described really happened to you: a bowling ball suddenly appears on your table. Your spontaneous reaction would surely not be to conclude that it came into existence without a cause; rather, you’d ask “Where did that come from?” … a question which presupposes that there is a source, a cause, from which the bowling ball sprang. You would also no doubt consider all sorts of bizarre explanations – a magician’s trick, a mad scientist testing a teleportation device, an astronomically improbable quantum fluctuation in the table – before it would even occur to you that there might be no cause. Indeed, this may never occur to you; should even the most bizarre explanation be ruled out, you would probably think “I guess I’ll never know what caused it” – what caused it, not whether it was caused. In any event, there’s nothing about the kind of situation Hume
describes that amounts to imagining something coming into existence with no
cause, as
opposed to coming into existence with an unknown or unusual cause.
But Hume’s argument is more problematic still. Anscombe asks us to consider
how
we’d go about determining whether the sort of scenario we’ve been describing
really is a
case of something coming into existence in the first place, as opposed, say, to
merely
reappearing from somewhere else where it had already existed. And the
answer is that the
only way we could do so is by making reference to some cause of the thing’s
suddenly
being here as being a creating cause, specifically, rather than a transporting
one. So, the
only way we can ultimately make sense of something coming into being is by
reference to a
cause. Thus, what Hume says we can easily conceive not only hasn't been
conceived by
him, it seems likely impossible to conceive.
It is also sometimes suggested that quantum mechanics undermines the
principle of
causality insofar as it implies that the world is not deterministic. But the
Aristotelian does
not regard the world as deterministic in any case (determinism being a view
associated with
the mechanical conception of nature Aristotelians reject), and thus does not
hold that every
cause must be a deterministic cause. As the analytical Thomist John Haldane
has noted, if
we can appeal to objective, nondeterministic natural propensities in quantum
systems to
account for the phenomena they exhibit, this will suffice to provide us with the
sort of
explanation the Aristotelian claims every contingent thing in the world must
have.
So the principle of causality seems secure. And it is worth emphasizing that it
is a
principle that is in any event presupposed in empirical scientific inquiry –
which is in the
business of searching for the causes of things – and thus in the very activity
held up as the
paradigm of rationality by those most inclined to challenge the principle of
causality,
namely atheists seeking to block “First Cause” arguments for God’s existence
of the sort
we’ll be examining in the next chapter.
Within recent analytic philosophy, the aspect of Aquinas's thought that has perhaps gotten the most negative attention is his distinction between essence and existence. In particular, Anthony Kenny has alleged that on this subject Aquinas was “thoroughly confused,” and that his doctrine of being amounts to little more than “sophistry and illusion.”

To understand Kenny's criticisms, it is necessary first briefly to summarize a notion of existence introduced into modern logic by Gottlob Frege (1848–1925). Take a sentence like “Cats exist.” At first glance this seems to predicate existence of a certain kind of object, namely cats. But Frege argued that this appearance is misleading. Existence, he claimed, is not a predicate of objects (that is to say, a first-level predicate), but rather a predicate of concepts (that is to say, a second-level predicate). In this case, it is being predicated of the concept being a cat. Hence, to reveal the logical structure of the sentence in question, we’d have to rewrite it as saying something like “There is at least one x such that x is a cat.” This does not tell us that a certain object has a property or attribute of existence; rather it tells us that there is at least one thing falling under a certain concept. Thus the sentence in question does not tell us something about individual cats, but rather something about the concept of being a cat.

A standard argument for the view that this Fregean notion of existence is the only legitimate notion is that if existence were a first-level predicate of objects, then (it is claimed) negative existential statements like “Martians do not exist” would be self-contradictory, which they obviously are not. For if we think of this statement as saying that Martians do not have the property or attribute of existence, this would seem to entail that there are (i.e. there exist) certain creatures, namely Martians, who lack existence. Since that is absurd, the statement “Martians do not exist” cannot be interpreted as denying a property or attribute of existence to some object or objects. It should rather be
interpreted in light of Frege's doctrine of existence as saying something like “It is not the case that there is at least one x such that x is a Martian.” That is to say, it says of the concept being a Martian that there is nothing to which it applies.

Kenny’s central objection to Aquinas (which he borrows from Peter Geach, and develops at length in his book Aquinas on Being) is that the doctrine that God’s essence is identical to his existence can be seen to be incoherent when read in light of Frege’s doctrine of existence. It amounts, he claims, to thinking that the correct answer to the question “What is God?” is “There is one,” which would, of course, be an absurd reply. But since “What is God?” is a question about God’s essence, and “There is an x such that x is God” is (he holds) what is meant by talking about God’s existence, this absurd reply is, Kenny maintains, what Aquinas is in effect putting forward when he claims that God’s essence is identical to his existence.

Defenders of Aquinas have replied to Kenny in various ways. Brian Davies, for example, while more or less conceding Kenny’s Fregean analysis of existence, argues that Kenny has misconstrued Aquinas’s claim that God’s essence and existence are identical. This claim is not (so Davies suggests) an attempt to tell us what God is, but rather a statement about what God is not. It is a piece of “negative theology,” rather than a positive characterization of God’s nature. In particular, it is telling us that whatever God is, he is not the sort of thing that can intelligibly be said to be capable of non-existence, the way material objects and other contingent things can be. And there is nothing in this that entails the absurd answer to the question “What is God?” that Kenny puts into Aquinas’s mouth.

But other Thomists would object that such a reply needlessly waters down Aquinas’s doctrine of being and concedes too much to Kenny’s criticism. For one thing, it is tendentious to assume that Aquinas is or ought to be operating with a Fregean notion of existence. As Gyula Klima has said, “it is ludicrous to claim victory by yelling ‘Checkmate!’ in a game of poker. But this is precisely what Kenny seems to be doing
whenever he is yelling ‘You are not a good enough Fregean!’ at Aquinas.”
Certainly other
conceptions of existence are possible. Indeed, Kenny himself (again following
Geach)
distinguishes between “specific existence,” which is the Fregean sort captured
in statements
of the form “There is an x such that ...” and “individual existence,” which he
concedes is
genuinely predicated of an object, as it is in (to borrow Kenny’s example) a
sentence like
“The Great Pyramid still exists, but the Library of Alexandria does not.”
“Individual
existence,” that is to say, is just that which the Library of Alexandria lost
when it was
destroyed, but which the Great Pyramid still has. Now Kenny allows that the
doctrine that
God’s essence and existence are identical might be interpreted as saying that
God has
“individual existence” in an everlasting way. But he does not think that even
this notion of
existence can save Aquinas’s position, at least not if that position is to remain
interesting.
For, he argues, the most that it could sensibly mean to say that God’s essence
is identical to
his “individual existence” in this sense is that as long as God is God he has
“individual
existence.” And this, Kenny says, is true of everything; for example, as long as
some dog
Fido is Fido he will have “individual existence” too. So “individual existence,”
Kenny
concludes, is useless in spelling out a notion of existence on which God’s
essence is
identical to his existence while in everything else essence and existence are
distinct. Yet as
Klima complains, this argument of Kenny’s (like his earlier one) simply
refuses even to try
to understand Aquinas’s notion of existence in logical terms Aquinas himself
would have
accepted, instead of in post-Fregean terms. In particular, it fails to consider
the possibility
of reading “exists” as having analogous rather than univocal senses (a
distinction explained
above in the section on the transcendentals) in “Fido exists” and “God exists,”
where such a
reading would obviously at least open up the possibility that to say that as
long as God is
God, he exists, is to make a stronger claim than to say that as long as Fido is
Fido, he exists. (We might add, with Barry Miller, that since Aquinas’s doctrine of divine simplicity holds that God’s being is his power which is his knowledge which is his goodness, and so forth, there is clearly more content to Aquinas’s conception of God’s being than Kenny lets on. We will examine the notion of divine simplicity in the next chapter.) There is, in any event, ample reason to doubt that the Fregean notion of existence captures everything that needs to be captured by an analysis of existence. Consider that when we are told that “Cats exist” means “There is at least one x such that x is a cat” or that something falls under the concept being a cat, there is still the question of what makes this the case, of what it is exactly in virtue of which there is something falling under this concept. And the answer to this further question is (as David Braine and John Knasas have pointed out) what Aquinas is getting at in his talk of an “act of existing” which is distinct from the essence of a thing (in this case, a cat) but which must be joined to it if the thing is to be real.

In reply to what I referred to above as the standard argument for the exclusive legitimacy of the Fregean analysis of existence, Knasas denies that regarding existence as a first-level predicate has the absurd implication that “Martians do not exist” is self-contradictory. For this would follow only if, when we grasp the concept Martians, we necessarily already grasp it as applying to something existing in reality, so that “Martians do not exist” amounts to “The existing Martians do not exist,” which of course is self-contradictory. But statements attributing existence or non-existence to a thing, Knasas says, do not function logically in the same way other attributive statements do. In particular, their subjects are grasped in an existence-neutral way. In the case at hand, our mere grasp of the concept Martians does not by itself entail either a judgment that they exist or a judgment that they do not, but leaves the question open. “Martians do not exist” thus says, not “The existing Martians do not exist,” but rather something like
“Martians, which are of themselves existentially neutral, do not in fact exist.” In general, for Knasas as for Aquinas, when the mind grasps the essence of a thing it grasps it as something distinct from its act of existing (or lack thereof), even if that of which the act of existing is ultimately predicated is the thing itself and not a mere concept. Of course, modern post-Fregean philosophers might disagree with this, but the mere fact of this disagreement doesn’t prove that Aquinas is wrong. Here, as with the issue of final causality, contemporary philosophers need to keep in mind that the fact that Aquinas’s basic philosophical assumptions are very different from their own does not by itself have any tendency to show that Aquinas’s assumptions are the mistaken ones or that they should not be taken seriously as live options today.

The “essence” as well as the “existence” side of Aquinas’s doctrine of being has also come in for criticism from Kenny. In particular, he objects to Aquinas’s account of angels as pure forms or essences. He argues that, unlike Plato’s humanity, which is predicated of Plato in “Plato is human,” “a pure form would be something that corresponded to a predicate in a sentence that had no subject; but this seems close to an absurdity” (p. 30). Likewise, he implies in the same passage that Aquinas’s conception of angels is that of “forms inhering in no substances.” But this misrepresents Aquinas’s position. Aquinas does, after all, refer to angels as “separated substances,” so it is odd that Kenny should attribute to him the view he does. And what they are separated from is not a subject or a substance, but matter. This separation from matter is also what is meant by calling an angel a “pure form.” Aquinas does not mean by this expression that an angel is a form full stop, as if there were nothing more to be said; as we have seen, he regards an angel as a form or essence conjoined to an act of existing. Hence the particular subject or substance that a certain angel (Gabriel, say) is identifiable with should be obvious: it is Gabriel’s form conjoined with his individual act of existing. This also gives us
the answer to a rhetorical question Kenny raises: “What, we wonder, is the difference between the angelic pure forms that Aquinas accepts and the Platonic Ideas or Forms that he rejects?” (p. 30). The difference is that an angelic pure form is a concrete (though immaterial) particular, with its own individual act of existing, while a Platonic Form is a universal.

Aquinas’s realism about essences, then, is consistently moderate or Aristotelian rather than Platonic. We might note that, like his commitment to final causality, this moderate realism is an aspect of his metaphysics that finds significant support in the “new essentialist” philosophy of science described earlier, which regards physical science as in the business of discovering the essences of things (with “essence” given a decidedly Aristotelian accent by these philosophers). But then, essentialism has been making something of a comeback in contemporary philosophy more generally, as evidenced by the work of Kripke and Putnam mentioned above. And even if the Kripke–Putnam form of essentialism must (for the reasons cited earlier) be judged wanting from an Aristotelian point of view, it has at least restored to the philosophical mainstream an awareness of themes that philosophers such as the new essentialists, and, more especially, contemporary analytically oriented Thomists like Klima and Oderberg, have been able to develop in a more sound direction. As the “new essentialist” Crawford Elder has noted, the denial that essences are in some sense objectively real leads to paradox in any case. For if we say that essences are merely the products of human convention, then that would have to include our essence, the essence of human beings, as well. But that is incoherent. In order to form conventions in the first place, we have to exist as a species, sharing an essence that constitutes us as such; and if our essence thus makes us what we are, we cannot in turn be that which makes our essence what it is.

All told, Aquinas’s doctrine of being and essence, like his understanding of
causality in its various forms, is very much alive and something contemporary philosophers have every reason to take seriously – not least because of the roles these doctrines play in Aquinas's arguments in the philosophy of religion, the philosophy of mind, and ethics, as we shall see in the remaining chapters of this book.

3 Natural Theology
Aquinas famously tells us in his Summa Theologiae that “the existence of God can be proved in five ways” (ST I.2.3). They are (in the order in which he there presents them) the proof from motion, the proof from causality, the proof from the contingency of the world, the proof from the grades of perfection, and the proof from finality. The short passage in which he states these proofs has appeared in countless anthologies aimed at undergraduates and general readers, and it may be the most famous set of arguments for God's existence ever written. No doubt many readers take the Five Ways to be Aquinas’s complete case for the existence of God, indeed, the complete case for the existence of God, full stop (apart perhaps from St. Anselm’s famous ontological argument). Hence, those who read them and remain unconvinc ed may conclude from that fact alone that the case for God’s existence simply hasn’t been made, by Aquinas or likely anyone else. This is unfortunate, and certainly unfair. To be sure, Aquinas is probably the greatest philosopher of religion in the Western tradition, and though many other thinkers have presented interesting and influential arguments for God's existence, it is not unreasonable to regard Aquinas's work as representative. Moreover, he did think that the best arguments that could be given for God's existence are summarized in the Five Ways. (He rejected Anselm’s ontological argument, for reasons we will see later.) But it is crucial to understand that they are summaries. Aquinas never intended for them to stand alone, and would probably have reacted with horror if told that future generations of students would be studying them in isolation, removed from their original immediate context in
the Summa Theologiae and the larger context of his work as a whole. The Summa, it must be remembered, was meant as a textbook for beginners in theology who were already Christian believers, not an advanced work in apologetics intended to convince skeptics. The Five Ways themselves are merely short statements of arguments that would already have been well known to the readers of Aquinas's day, and presented at greater length and with greater precision elsewhere. For example, he gives two much more detailed versions of the proof from motion, along with versions of the proofs from causality, the grades of perfection, and finality, in the Summa contra Gentiles. The proof from motion, having originated with Aristotle, is also naturally discussed at length in Aquinas's commentaries on Aristotle's Physics and Metaphysics. The Commentary on the Sentences, On Being and Essence, On Truth, and the Compendium of Theology each contain further statements of some of the arguments. Some of them were also familiar from the works of Christian thinkers like St. Augustine, St. John Damascene, and Albert the Great, Muslim thinkers like Avicenna and Averroes, and the Jewish philosopher Moses Maimonides. That the being whose existence Aquinas takes the Five Ways to have proved must have all the divine attributes is something he devotes much of the rest of Part I of the Summa Theologiae (as well as hundreds of pages of his other works) to proving. And of course the metaphysical ideas apart from which the Five Ways cannot properly be understood (and which were surveyed in the previous chapter) are developed throughout Aquinas's works. Torn from this rich context, as they so frequently are, it is no surprise that the Five Ways have been regarded by some readers as anticlimactic or worse. For instance, in his atheistic polemic The God Delusion, Richard Dawkins asserts boldly that the arguments “don't prove anything, and are easily – though I hesitate to say so, given [Aquinas's] eminence – exposed as vacuous.” But Dawkins' confidence is misplaced, for the
objections he makes are based on egregious misunderstandings of the Five Ways of the sort that are bound to arise when one reads only a short anthologized selection from the Summa and ignores the metaphysical concepts which underlie the arguments. Dawkins claims, for example, that Aquinas holds that since “there must have been a time when no physical things existed,” something must have brought them into being. But in fact Aquinas famously thought that it cannot be proven philosophically that the world had a beginning in time, and while he nevertheless believed it did, he held that this was something that could be known only through divine revelation (ST I.46.2). Consequently, his arguments are not intended to show that God caused the world to begin at some point in the past (at the Big Bang, say). Rather, he argues that even if the world had always existed, God would still have to exist here and now, otherwise certain features that it exhibits here and now would be inexplicable. Dawkins also alleges that Aquinas gives “absolutely no reason” to think that the cause of the world must be omnipotent, omniscient, good, and so on. In fact, and as noted already, Aquinas devotes a great many pages to showing this, as anyone who takes the trouble to read the Summa Theologiae beyond the passage containing the Five Ways will soon discover. Dawkins thinks that Aquinas’s Fifth Way is more or less the same as William Paley’s famous “argument from design,” when in fact they are radically different, since Aquinas’s argument appeals to Aristotelian teleology while Paley’s assumes instead a non-teleological mechanistic conception of the natural world. And so forth. Other common objections to the Five Ways are based on similar misunderstandings. For example, the Second Way is often thought to say that since everything has a cause, the universe too must have a cause, which is what we call God. It is then objected that the argument undermines itself, since if “everything has a cause,” then this would have to include God too, in which case he cannot be the first cause. But that is not
what the proof
says at all. Aquinas does not hold that “everything has a cause.” He holds
instead only that
that which comes into being, and more generally that which is contingent,
must have a
cause. (This, you will recall from chapter 2, is the Thomistic “principle of
causality.”)
Obviously there is nothing in this that entails that God would have to have a
cause, since
God is supposed to have always existed as a necessary being. Whether one
thinks the
Second Way ultimately works or not, it does not commit the simple and
obvious fallacy of
which popular accounts of the argument sometimes accuse it.
It has also sometimes been claimed (for example by Anthony Kenny) that
Aquinas’s
proofs rest on outdated Aristotelian scientific theory, and thus are irrelevant
in the present
day. But as noted in chapter 2, Aristotle’s metaphysics stands or falls
independently of his
physics, and as we shall see, while the Five Ways definitely presuppose certain
Aristotelian
metaphysical claims, there is never a point in any of the arguments where
appeal need be
made to now falsified theories in physics or any of the other sciences. Indeed,
we will see
that the Five Ways remain as interesting and worthy of consideration today as
any other
philosophical argument.
The First Way
As presented in the Summa Theologiae, the proof from motion goes as follows.
We
know from experience that “some things are in motion” ("motion" in the
Aristotelian sense
just being change, as we saw in our discussion of Aristotle’s reply to
Parmenides). Now
motion or change is just the reduction of something from potentiality to
actuality. But
“nothing can be reduced from potentiality to actuality except by something in
a state of
actuality” (ST I.2.3); for instance, fire, which is actually hot, makes wood,
which is
otherwise only potentially hot, become actually hot. Moreover, nothing can be both
potential and actual in the same respect at the same time; what is actually hot,
for example,
is not at the same time potentially hot, but potentially cold. In that case,
though, it is impossible for anything to be at the same time and in the same respect both that which is moved or changed and that which does the moving or changing. Hence, “whatever is in motion must be put in motion by another” (ST I.2.3). By the same token, if that which puts something else in motion is itself moving, there must be yet something further moving it, and so on. But if such a series went on to infinity, then there would be no first mover; and if there were no first mover, there would be no other movers, for “subsequent movers move only inasmuch as they are put in motion by the first mover; as the staff moves only because it is put in motion by the hand” (ST I.2.3). It follows that “it is necessary to arrive at a first mover, put in motion by no other; and this everyone understands to be God” (ST I.2.3).

To begin at the end, someone might immediately object to this argument that whatever else Aquinas has shown, he hasn’t really shown that such a “first mover” would be God, if by God we mean a being that can be said to be all powerful, all knowing, all good, and the like. There are two things to be said in reply. First, what Aquinas is getting at in the last line of the proof is that whatever else God is supposed to be, he is supposed to be the ultimate explanation of why things happen in the world; hence, if it can be proved that there is a being who explains this, it follows that at least to that extent it will have been proved that there is something in reality corresponding to our idea of God. And he is surely right about that much. Second, while we do of course also want to know why we should regard such a being as all-powerful, all-knowing, all-good, and so forth, as I have said before, Aquinas does in fact answer that question in great detail later on in the Summa (and elsewhere). We will see how he does so after first looking at each of the Five Ways.

The question for now, then, is this: does this argument really establish the existence of a first Unmoved Mover? Note first of all that the argument cannot be criticized by appealing to a variation on the standard “If everything has a cause, then what
cause God?”

objection. Aquinas does not say that everything is in motion, but only that
“some things”
are in motion; nor does he say that everything is moved by something else, but
only that
“whatever is in motion” is moved by something else. Hence it will not do to
ask “Doesn’t
that mean that God must be in motion?” or “What moves God, then?” For there
is nothing
in Aquinas’s premises that implies that God would have to be changing like
everything else
is, or that he must be moved by something else.

What, then, of this key premise of the argument, that is, that “whatever is in
motion
must be put in motion by another”? The bulk of the proof is devoted to
supporting it. Yet it
has often been suggested that Aquinas’s argument for it fails. One common
objection is that
the activity of animals shows that the premise is simply false. For isn’t it just
obvious that
animals move themselves? But as we noted in chapter 2, Aquinas does not deny
that there
is a loose sense in which animals move themselves. Strictly speaking, though,
when an
animal moves this only occurs because one part of the animal moves another
part, as when
the legs of a dog move because of the flexing of its muscles, the muscles flex
only because
of the firing of certain motor neurons, and so forth. When considered in detail,
then, the
example of animal movement does not constitute a counterexample to the
principle that
“whatever is moved is moved by another.”

It is also sometimes alleged that Aquinas is committed to the principle that
whatever
causes something actually to be F must itself actually be F, and that this
principle is clearly
false. For he gives the example of wood being made to catch fire by something
which is
already on fire; but as Kenny points out, fire could also be generated instead
by taking two
sticks that are not already on fire, and rubbing them together. But there are
two problems
with this objection. First, it ignores the possibility that Aquinas is here
appealing to what
we called in chapter 2 the “principle of proportionate causality,” according to
which
whatever is in an effect must somehow be in its cause, but where this allows that the cause might have the relevant feature “virtually” or “eminently” rather than “formally.” In other words, Aquinas is not making the obviously false claim that only what is already on fire can cause fire; he is rather making the claim (perfectly defensible, as we saw in the previous chapter) that whatever causes fire must have an inherent power to cause it.

Second, as many commentators have pointed out, Aquinas is probably not relying in this argument on any version of the principle in question in the first place. That is, he is not saying that “whatever causes something actually to be F must itself be F in some way,” but rather that “whatever causes something must itself be actual,” that nothing merely potential can cause anything. As Rudi te Velde has suggested, some critics place too much significance on the physical details of the examples Aquinas gives in the course of the proof, failing to see that their point is merely to illustrate certain basic metaphysical principles rather than to support broad empirical or quasi-scientific generalizations. Thus understood, what Aquinas is saying here is essentially just what we have already noted him saying in developing the distinction between act and potency, namely that no potency or potential can actualize itself, precisely because it is merely potential and not actual. Hence only what is itself already actual can actualize a given potency, and therefore (given that motion is just the actualization of a potency) “whatever is moved is moved by another.” This is not some dubious conjecture based on the observation of how wood catches fire and the like; it is rather supposed to be a metaphysical certainty the denial of which would be conceptually incoherent. Indeed, the principle in question is but a variation on what we referred to in chapter 2 as the “principle of causality,” which we have seen to be eminently defensible.

So far, so good, then. But what about the claim that a series of movers could not go on to infinity? Isn’t Aquinas just begging the question (arguing in a circle)
when he asserts that if there were no first mover then there would be no movers at all? For why could there not be an infinite series of movers, so that no matter how far back you go in the series, you could always go back to yet another mover? In that case it seems there would be an explanation for the motion of any member of the series you care to take, without having to appeal to a first mover.

But in fact Aquinas is not begging the question at all, and has good reason for claiming that such a series could not go on to infinity. Keep in mind first of all that the proof from motion, like all the Five Ways, is not an attempt to show that the universe had a beginning at some point in the past and that God must have caused that beginning. Aquinas is not saying that if you trace the series of movers back in time you must eventually get to some temporally first mover. As we saw in chapter 2, for Aquinas as for Aristotle, the immediate cause of an effect is simultaneous with that effect: “It is clear that when a thing moves because it is moved, the mover and the mobile object are moved simultaneously” (In Phys VII.2.892). So the series of movers he has in mind is one all of whose members exist together here and now (and at any moment we might be considering the argument), and by saying that there must be a first mover, he doesn’t mean first in order of time, but rather first in the sense of being most fundamental in the order of what exists. This brings us to an important distinction Aquinas and other medieval thinkers made between two kinds of series of efficient causes. On the one hand there are causal series ordered per accidens or “accidentally,” in the sense that the causal activity of any particular member of the series is not essentially dependent on that of any prior member of the series. Take, for example, the series consisting of Abraham begetting Isaac, Isaac begetting Jacob, and Jacob begetting Joseph. Once he has himself been begotten by Abraham (and then grows to maturity, of course), Isaac is fully capable of begetting Jacob on his own, even if Abraham dies in the meantime. It is true that he would not
have existed
had Abraham not begotten him, but the point is that once Isaac exists he has
the power to
beget a son all by himself, and Abraham’s continued existence or non-existence is
irrelevant to his exercise of that power. The same is true of Jacob with respect
to both
Abraham and Isaac, and of Joseph with respect to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
Given that
we are considering them as a series of begetters specifically, each member is independent
of the others as far as its causal powers are concerned. Contrast this with a causal series
ordered per se or “essentially.” Aquinas’s example from the First Way of the
staff which is
moved by the hand is a standard illustration, and we can add to the example by supposing
that the staff is being used to move a stone, which is itself moving a fallen leaf. Here the
motion of the leaf depends essentially on the motion of the stone, which in turn depends
essentially on the motion of the staff, which itself depends essentially in turn on the motion
of the hand. For if any member higher up in the series ceases its causal activity, the activity
of the lower members will necessarily cease as well. For instance, if the staff was to slip
away from the stone, the stone, and thus the leaf too, will stop moving; and of course, if the
hand stops moving, the whole series, staff included, will automatically stop. In this case the
causal power of the lower members derives entirely from that of the first member, the hand.
In fact, strictly speaking it is not the stone which is moving the leaf and the staff which is
moving the stone, but rather the hand which is moving everything else, with the stone being
used by it as an instrument to move the leaf and the staff being used as an instrument to
move both stone and leaf.
Causal series ordered per accidens are linear in character and extend through time,
as in the begetting example, in which Abraham’s begetting Isaac occurs well before Isaac’s
begetting Jacob, and Isaac’s begetting Jacob occurs well before Jacob’s begetting Joseph.
Causal series ordered per se are paradigmatically hierarchical with their
members acting simultaneously, as in the staff example where the movement of the leaf occurs precisely when the movement of the stone occurs, which is precisely when the movement of the staff occurs, which is precisely when the movement of the hand occurs. Now it is in Aquinas’s view at least theoretically possible for a causal series ordered per accidens to regress to infinity, and thus have no beginning point (ST I.46.2). (This is why Aquinas thinks it is not possible to prove via purely philosophical arguments that the world must have had a beginning in time.) For since each member of such a series has its causal power independently of the earlier members, there is no need to trace any particular member’s action back to the activity of a first member; for instance, when Jacob begets Joseph, it is precisely Jacob who begets him, and not Abraham who begets him by using Isaac and Jacob as instruments. By contrast, “in efficient causes it is impossible to proceed to infinity per se – thus, there cannot be an infinite number of causes that are per se required for a certain effect; for instance, that a stone be moved by a stick, the stick by the hand, and so on to infinity” (ST I.46.2). For “that which moves as an instrumental cause cannot move unless there be a principal moving cause” (SCG I.13.15). That is to say, since the lower members of a causal series ordered per se have no causal power on their own but derive it entirely from a first cause, which (as it were) uses them as instruments, there is no sense to be made of such a series having no first member. If a first member who is the source of the causal power of the others did not exist, the series as a whole simply would not exist, as the movement of the leaf, stone, and staff cannot occur in the absence of the hand. What Aquinas is saying, then, is that it is in the very nature of causal series ordered per se to have a first member, precisely because everything else in the series only counts as a member in the first place relative to the actions of a first cause. To suggest that such a series might regress infinitely, without a first member, is therefore simply
The leaf is “moved” by the stone only in a loose sense; strictly speaking, the leaf, stone, and staff are all really being moved by the hand. Thus to suggest that this series of purely instrumental causes might regress to infinity is incoherent, for they would not in that case be the instruments of anything at all (CT I.3). As A. D. Sertillanges put it, you might as well say “that a brush can paint by itself, provided it has a very long handle” (quoted by Garrigou-Lagrange in God: His Existence and His Nature).

Given their essentially instrumental character, all causes in such a series other than the first cause are referred to by Aquinas as “second causes” ("second" not in the sense of coming after the first but before the third member of the series, but rather in the sense having their causal power only in a secondary or derivative way). It is worth emphasizing that it is precisely this instrumental nature of second causes, the dependence of whatever causal power they have on the causal activity of the first cause, that is the key to the notion of a causal series per se. That the members of such a series exist simultaneously, and that the series does not regress to infinity, are of secondary importance. As Patterson Brown and John Wippel point out, even if a series of causes ordered per se could somehow be said to regress to infinity, it would remain the case, given that they are merely instrumental causes, that there must then be something outside the entire infinite series that imparts to them their causal power.

Whether or not the series of causes per accidens regresses infinitely into the past, then – and again, while Aquinas believed that it did not, he didn’t think this could be proven through philosophical arguments – a causal series per se existing here and now, and at any moment we are considering the matter, must necessarily trace back to a first member. But strictly speaking, even the hand in Aquinas’s example doesn’t count as a first mover – the example is intended merely as a first approximation to the notion of a first
mover – because it is itself being moved insofar as its activity depends on the motion of the arm, the flexing of certain muscles, and so forth. To understand the way in which such a series regresses and how it does and must terminate, it is crucial to remember that for Aquinas, motion or change is just the reduction of potency to act. So when we talk about one thing being moved by another, which is moved by another, and so on, in a causal series ordered per se, this is shorthand for saying that a certain potency is reduced to act by something whose potency is itself reduced to act by something whose potency is itself reduced to act by ... and so forth. (Or, to soften the technical terminology slightly, a certain potentiality is actualized by something whose potentiality is itself actualized by something whose potentiality is itself actualized by ... and so on.) As should be evident, such a series can only possibly terminate in something which is not reduced to act or actualized by anything else, but which just is in act or actual, and thus “unmoving.” The potential of the hand for movement is actualized here and now by the flexing of the muscles of the hand, the potential of the muscles to flex is actualized here and now by the firing of certain motor neurons, the potential of the motor neurons to fire is actualized here and now by the firing of certain other neurons, and so forth. Eventually this regress must terminate in something which here and now actualizes potentialities without itself being actualized, an unmoved mover.

Now Kenny objects that the notion of an unmoved mover merely gives us something at rest, like a stationary billiard ball, and thus seems hardly relevant to proving the existence of God. But as Garrigou-Lagrange points out, and as should be clear from our discussion thus far, an unmoved mover of the sort we’ve been describing is not and cannot be “unmoved” in the sense of being in repose, precisely because it is that which actualizes the potencies of second causes. It is active, not “at rest.” There is still a further question, however. Even if it is granted that the First Way takes us to an unmoved
mover, why should we hold (as Aquinas does) that this mover is also unmoving? As Scott MacDonald suggests, it may be that a first mover of the sort whose existence is established by Aquinas's argument is one that is capable of motion even if, qua first mover, it does not in fact move. In other words, for all Aquinas has shown, a first mover may well have certain potencies which are not in fact being actualized, at least not insofar as it is functioning as the first mover in some series of efficient causes ordered per se. Perhaps its potencies are actualized at some other time, when it is not so functioning; or perhaps they never are. But as long as it has them, it will not be something that can be characterized as "pure act," and thus, given Aquinas's own commitments, it will not be identifiable with God. To get to a first mover of pure act, and thus one which is truly unmoving, would require in MacDonald's view some further argument, in which case the argument from motion could succeed as an argument for God's existence only by being "parasitic" on such a further argument. Yet MacDonald is, I think, mistaken. Consider how the series we have been describing would have to continue beyond the point at which we left it, with the hand's potentiality for motion actualized by the arm, the arm's potentiality for motion actualized by the flexing of certain muscles, the muscles' potentiality for flexing actualized by the firing of certain motor neurons, and so on and so forth, all simultaneously. All of this depends in turn on the overall state of the nervous system, which depends on its molecular structure, which depends on the atomic basis of that molecular structure, which depends on electromagnetism, gravitation, the weak and strong forces, and so on and so forth, all simultaneously, all here and now. That the molecules composing the nervous system constitute a nervous system specifically amounts to their having a certain potency which is here and now actualized, that the atoms composing the molecules constitute just those
molecules amounts to their having a certain potency which is simultaneously actualized, and so on. To account for the reduction of potency to act in the case of the operations or activities of the hand, the muscles, and so on, we are led ultimately to appeal to the reduction of potency to act vis-à-vis the existence or being of ever deeper and more general features of reality; for “it is evident that anything whatever operates so far as it is a being” (QDA 19). But the only way to stop this regress and arrive at a first member of the series is with something whose very existence, and not merely its operations or activities, need not be actualized by anything else. This would just be something which, since it simply exists without being made to exist by anything, or is actual without being actualized, is pure act, with no admixture of potentiality whatsoever. For suppose it had some potency relevant to its existence (its existence being what is relevant to its status as the end of the regress as we have continued it). Then either some other thing actualizes that potency, in which case we haven’t really stopped the regress after all, contrary to hypothesis; or some already actual part of it actualizes the potency, in which case that already actual part would itself be both pure act and, properly speaking, the true first mover. Now, having no potency to actualize, such a being could not possibly change or move. Thus we have reached a first mover that is not only unmoved, but unmovable. MacDonald might object to this that the move from accounting for the activities or operations of things to accounting for their existence or being in effect involves an appeal to something other than motion, and thus to an argument other than the argument from motion; and though (as MacDonald would acknowledge) this would not by itself show that there is anything wrong with the argument, it would leave untouched his claim that the First Way by itself is incomplete and “parasitic” for any effectiveness it has vis-à-vis proving God’s existence on some other argument. But as commentators like Norman Kretzmann
and D. Q. McInerny have noted, if the point of an argument from motion is to explain motion, and to explain motion requires explaining the existence of the things doing the moving and the way in which factors outside them contribute to their ability to move, then an explanation of the existence of moving things is quite naturally going to be a part of any argument from motion. More to the point, if motion is just the reduction of potency to act, then since the existence of a thing no less than its activity involves (in everything other than that which is pure act) the reduction of potency to act, any explanation of motion must account for the existence of things and not just their activities. Far from making an argument from motion “parasitic” on some other kind of argument, the move to the explanation of the existence of moving things is a necessary part of any such argument.

Notice that at no point in our exposition of the argument from motion have we had to appeal to any claims from Aristotelian physics, “outmoded” or otherwise. The argument proceeds entirely in terms of such metaphysical notions as the act/potency distinction, the principle of causality, and so forth. Still, it is sometimes suggested that Newton’s principle of inertia undermines the proof from motion, for if (as that principle tells us) it is just a law of physics that a body in motion tends to stay in motion unless acted upon from outside, then (so it is claimed) Aquinas’s view that whatever is moving must here and now be moved by something else is thereby shown to be false. But there are several problems with this objection. First and most obviously, Newton’s principle concerns only “local motion” or movement from one place to another, while motion in the Aristotelian sense includes (as we have seen) not just local motion, but also changes in quality (like water becoming solid when it freezes), changes in quantity (as when a pool of water gets larger or smaller), and changes in substance (as when hydrogen and oxygen are combined to make water) (In Phys III.2.286). (There is a strict sense of “motion” within the Aristotelian tradition
on which changes in substance are not counted as motions, but they are motions or changes in a loose sense; and as several commentators have noted, they do in any case count as reductions of potency to act of the sort the argument from motion seeks to account for.) At the very least, then, the defender of the First Way can say that whether or not local motion needs an explanation of the sort the argument provides, these other kinds of change do need such an explanation. But in fact there is no good reason to exclude local motion from the range of that which needs explanation in terms of a first unmoved mover. After all, it is no good just to say “Well, it’s simply a law of physics that things in motion tend to stay in motion unless acted upon from outside.” For one thing, there is still the question of what puts something in motion in the first place, and in general of a thing’s acquisition or loss of momentum, and explaining these events will require just the sort of explanation the First Way tells us other instances of change do. More fundamentally, we also still need to know what it is exactly for something to be a law of physics, and why such a law holds. Regarding the first question, some defenders of the First Way have suggested that Newton’s principle is nothing more than a mathematical model which is of utility in making predictions but which strictly speaking does not describe the objective nature of physical objects. One reason for adopting such an instrumentalist (as opposed to realist) interpretation of the principle of inertia is that to interpret the principle realistically would commit us (so it is argued) to the metaphysically absurd consequence that a finite cause can have an infinite effect. It is then sometimes further suggested that to explain local motion, especially of a projectile sort, we need therefore to postulate that the initial cause of a thing’s movement (the arm which throws a spear, say) imparts to it a force, “impulse,” or “impetus” which keeps it in motion, and thus passing from potency to act, as long as it does
move, and where this impetus serves as an instrumental cause whose efficacy must ultimately be traced to the simultaneous activity of a first mover. Other defenders of the argument reject this “impetus” theory and would grant that Newton’s principle does tell us something about the real nature of physical objects. But they would then insist that this simply leaves us with the question of what actualizes the potential existence of things having natures of the sort described by the principle of inertia, and that to answer this question we have (for reasons already seen) to appeal to something which is pure act. In short, Newton’s principle can hardly undermine the First Way if the existence of a first unmovable mover is needed in order to explain why the principle holds in the first place.

But it may be that even these general points concede too much force to the objection, for things are much less conceptually clear cut here than it might at first appear. For example, if, as is standardly done, we think of Newtonian inertial motion as a “state” rather than a process, then we need to get clear on exactly how such “motion” could be motion in the Aristotelian sense (i.e. a genuine change), in which case it also needs to be made clear exactly how Newton’s principle is supposed to conflict with the Aristotelian principle that what is in motion (that is, changing) requires a mover. Or if inertial motion is change of some sort, then we need to get clear on the sense in which such motion can be said to be a “state.” It should also be kept in mind that in the physical universe as it actually exists, no object undergoing local motion is ever unaffected by outside forces, given for example the constant gravitational attraction every body exerts on every other. Hence at every moment at which an object is moving through space, and not merely at its initial acquisition of momentum, its motion is being affected in a way that requires explanation in terms of something outside it. But in that case, even with respect to the explanation of local motion, the principle of inertia seems practically moot. The conceptual waters here are
deep, and reflect difficulties for interpreting modern physics that arise whatever its relationship to Aristotelian metaphysics. The point is that those who assert a conflict between Aquinas and Newton simply have not made their case until they have worked out these crucial details. It will not do lazily to assert, without addressing these issues, that modern physics has somehow “explained” local motion in such a way that reference to a first mover is unnecessary.

Another objection sometimes raised against the First Way is that anything moving something else, including a first mover, would have to be undergoing motion itself, as for example the hand of our example moves even as it is moving the staff. Therefore (the objection continues) the very notion of an unmoved mover is incoherent. But this objection begs the question. The argument from motion claims to prove that no motion, including the motion of moved movers, would be possible at all unless there is a first mover which is pure act and thus unmovable. So, given that the premises of this argument are true and that the conclusion follows logically from them, it follows that the conclusion is true and therefore coherent. Accordingly, it won’t do simply to insist that the conclusion must be false; one has to show specifically either that one of the premises is false or that the conclusion does not follow. Otherwise, one ought to admit that the argument shows precisely that an unmoved mover really is possible (since actual) after all. Besides, it is hardly as if the notion of an unmoved mover were anything like as problematic as that of (say) an “immortal mortal.” An “immortal mortal” would be something that both dies and does not die, which is self-contradictory. But an unmoved mover is something that makes other things move without itself undergoing motion, and there is no obvious self-contradiction in that. Furthermore, as G. H. Joyce argues, the reason that the movers of our experience are themselves moving even as they move other things is precisely because they are limited in the various ways entailed by
being composites of act and potency. (For example, because an arm is actually at one point in space and only potentially at another, its potential to be at some other point in space has to be actualized by something else if it is to get the staff to that other point in space.) But something which is pure act, devoid of all potency, would have no such limitations, and thus not need to be moved itself as it is moving other things. Moreover, it would (as we shall see later) be outside of time, and indeed that which creates time, so that to the extent that the objection in question implicitly assumes that the first mover goes from not acting at one moment in time to acting at another moment in time, the objection simply misconceives the nature of the first mover's activity (In Phys VIII.2.989). Finally, as Garrigou-Lagrange points out, given that (as we will see a little later on) our knowledge of the first mover is necessarily largely negative, it should not be surprising if it is harder for us to get our minds around it than it is for us to understand the more mundane movers of our experience.

We have devoted a good deal of space to the First Way, partly because of its intrinsic importance and partly because Aquinas himself put so much emphasis on it. (He famously regarded it as the “more manifest way” [ST I.2.3] and presented versions of the argument from motion again and again in his writings, as the citations given above indicate.) Moreover, many of the issues that arise in the discussion of the First Way, such as the impossibility of an infinite regress of causes ordered per se, also arise in discussion of the other ways. Hence our fairly detailed discussion of the First Way helps to set the stage for our treatment of the others. Most importantly, it has also (hopefully) shown that the objections commonly raised against the argument are hardly as conclusive as they are sometimes assumed to be, and that it is, accordingly, as worthy of consideration today as it was in Aquinas's day.

The Second Way
The proof from causality begins by noting that the senses reveal to us an
order of efficient causes. But nothing can be the cause of itself, for if it were then “it would be prior to itself, which is impossible” (ST I.2.3). Now in a series of efficient causes, the first cause is the cause of the intermediate cause or causes, which are in turn the cause of the ultimate cause. So if there were no first cause, then there would be no intermediate or ultimate causes at all (and thus no causes of the sort we started out acknowledging that we know through the senses). But if the series of efficient causes regressed to infinity, then there would be no first cause. Hence the series cannot go on to infinity, and “therefore it is necessary to admit a first efficient cause, to which everyone gives the name of God” (ST I.2.3).

Let us note first (and yet again) that Aquinas does not say, here or elsewhere, that “everything has a cause”; rather, he begins the argument by saying that there are efficient causes and that nothing can cause itself. The implication is that if something is caused, then it is something outside the thing being caused that is doing the causing; and as we have seen in chapter 2, Aquinas is committed in particular to the principle of causality, according to which that which comes into being, or more generally that which is contingent, must have a cause. Needless to say, this is not the same thing as to claim that everything without exception has a cause. So the argument is in no way vulnerable to the stock objection aimed at the stock caricature of cosmological arguments (i.e. “If everything has a cause, then what caused God?”). We have also already seen in chapter 2 how the principle of causality might be defended against the sorts of objections raised by Hume. There is another sort of objection to the principle of causality, however, or at least to the application made of it by arguments like the Second Way. According to Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), the principle of causality applies only to the world of sensory experience and cannot take us beyond it to a transcendent first cause. As usually presented,
however, this objection seems little more than a dogmatic refusal even to consider the possibility of a proof for a first cause; certainly no one who does not accept Kant’s highly controversial conception of the nature and limits of human knowledge has any reason to take it seriously. More to the point, as Maurice Holloway argues, from the fact that our knowledge of the principle of causality derives from our experience of sensible things (i.e. things which can be sensed), it simply doesn’t follow that it cannot be applied beyond the realm of sensory experience. For the principle applies to sensible things themselves not insofar as they are sensible, but rather insofar as they exist. In particular, a stone, tree, or human being stands in need of a cause not by virtue of being a sensible object, but rather by virtue of being something to whose essence an act of existing must be conjoined if it is to be real. Yet, as even most non-Thomists would acknowledge, the notion of existence is broader than the notion of the sensible; certainly there is no difficulty making sense of the idea of non-sensible existing things given Aquinas's doctrine of analogy, the transcendentals, and so on. Hence there is no reason to doubt that the principle of causality applies beyond the realm of sensible things. At any rate, simply to insist, on the basis of some non-Thomistic epistemology (e.g. a Kantian epistemology) that it cannot apply to non-sensible things, merely begs the question against Aquinas.

It should be obvious that the reason Aquinas rules out the possibility of an infinite regress of causes in the Second Way is the same as the reason he rules out the possibility of an infinite regress of movers in the First Way. What he has in mind, here as there, is a causal series ordered per se, not a causal series ordered per accidens; and his point, accordingly, is not that the universe must have had a beginning in time, but rather that whether or not it has always existed, it must here and now be sustained by a first uncaused cause. Hence, the points made in exposition of the First Way vis-à-vis infinite causal regresses apply here as well.
Indeed, it might seem that the two arguments differ little except verbally, the one making reference to motion, the other to efficient causes, but in substance more or less saying the same thing (especially given that moving or changing something just is an instance of efficient causation). But of course, the fact that Aquinas bothers to present them as distinct arguments at all is a clue that there must be more than a verbal difference between them (otherwise he could have stopped with four ways rather than five). Some commentators have suggested that the substantive difference between them is that the First Way seeks to explain how the things of our experience are capable of being passive recipients of change, while the Second Way seeks to explain how they can be active agents of change. But this seems questionable given that the First Way speaks not only of how some things undergo change, but also of how other things can cause change (even if only by being instruments of the first cause), and that the Second Way speaks not only of how things can cause change, but also of how they are being caused. A more plausible and interesting account of the difference between the arguments is provided by Etienne Gilson, who suggests that whereas the First Way is concerned to explain why things undergo change, the Second Way is intended to explain why they exist at all, where (as in the First Way) the causal influence of the first cause is not something that occurred merely at some point in the past, but which exists here and now. That is to say, just as the First Way is meant to show that no motion or change would occur here and now unless there were a first unmoved mover operating here and now, the Second Way is meant to show that nothing would even exist here and now unless there were a first uncaused cause sustaining things in being here and now. One way to understand this interpretation is in terms of an argument for God’s existence that Aquinas presents in chapter 4 of On Being and Essence, and which is
sometimes called “the existential proof” or “the existence argument.” Recall that for Aquinas, in everything other than God, essence is distinct from existence. (This isn’t to assume from the outset that God exists, an assumption which would of course make the argument that follows a circular one; the point is just that if there is a God – which at this stage of the argument is yet to be determined – in him alone essence and existence would be identical.) So, how does a thing come into existence? That is to say, how is its essence conjoined with an act of existence so that it is made real? “It is impossible,” Aquinas says, “that the act of existing itself be caused by the form or quiddity – and by ‘caused’ I mean as by an efficient cause – for then something would be the cause of itself and produce itself in existence, which is impossible” (DEE 4). In other words, a thing’s essence, form, or quiddity cannot be what brings the thing into existence, for considered by itself an essence is merely potential, and thus cannot cause anything. For an essence to be able to cause something it would first have to be actualized by being conjoined to an act of existing, and that would entail that the thing itself (since it just is a composite of an essence with an act of existing) would already exist. Hence the essence of a thing could cause its existence only if the thing already existed, in which case the thing would in effect be bringing itself into existence, which is incoherent. “It is therefore necessary that everything whose act of existing is other than its nature have its act of existing from another” (DEE 4). But a series of things deriving their acts of existing from something else cannot go on to infinity. Hence “everything which exists through another is reduced to that which exists through itself, as to a first cause” and “there must be something which causes all things to exist, inasmuch as it is subsistent existence alone” (DEE 4). That is, there must be something whose essence and existence are identical, and this we call God. Keep in mind that a thing’s essence and act of existing are distinct not just before it
exists, but always, even after they are conjoined so as to make the thing real.
(To put a
handle on to a brush so as to make a broom doesn't make the handle identical
to the brush;
neither does conjoining an essence and an act of existence make them
identical.) Hence it is
not enough for a thing to be real that its essence and act of existing be
conjoined merely at
some point in the past; the essence and act of existing must be kept together at
every point
at which the thing exists. Accordingly, a thing must be caused to exist not once
for all, but
continuously, here and now as well as at the time it first came into being; to
use the
traditional theological language, it must be conserved in existence from
moment to
moment. But if what conserves it in existence were something which itself was
a composite
of essence and existence, then that conserving cause would need to be
conserved as well.
Insofar as the existence of a thing in whom essence and existence are distinct
might involve
a series of causes, then, we are once again talking about a causal series
ordered per se, and
thus (as Aquinas says) a causal series which necessarily depends on a first
member which is
not conserved by anything, but simply exists. In the nature of the case, this
could only be
something whose essence and existence are not distinct (and thus in need of
being
conjoined) but identical.

There are obvious affinities between this “existential proof” and the Second
Way.
Both are concerned with accounting for the existence of things here and now, both reject
the notion that a thing could cause itself, and both argue that a series of
efficient causes
must terminate in a first cause. It is natural to suppose that Aquinas intended
in the Second
Way to summarize the argument from On Being and Essence. But William Lane
Craig
argues that reasoning of the sort represented by the “existential proof” cannot be smoothly
assimilated to the Second Way, for two reasons. First, the Second Way is
supposed to take
as its starting point causal chains that are evident to the senses, but the
conjoining of an
essence to an act of existence is not something we can observe. Second, in Aquinas's view only God can possibly conjoin an essence and an act of existing, so that the question of a series of causes, whether infinite or finite, cannot even arise for an “existential proof” style of argument; for God’s causal activity in this case would have to be direct rather than instrumental (ST I.45.5). Accordingly, for Craig the Second Way must be interpreted as concerned with more mundane respects in which one thing causes, here and now, the existence of another, such as the way in which your existence is here and now dependent in part on the temperature of the earth’s atmosphere, which is in turn dependent on the earth’s distance from the sun, and so on.

Yet Craig’s suggestion is not altogether convincing. For one thing, it would be very odd, especially given the centrality of Aquinas’s doctrine of essence and existence to his metaphysical system in general and to his conception of God in particular, if he left the argument of On Being and Essence off his list of the Five Ways in which he says God’s existence can be proved; and the Second Way is the closest of the Five Ways to the argument of On Being and Essence. (The Third Way, as we shall see, does deal with the distinction between contingent and necessary beings, but for Aquinas this doesn’t correspond to the distinction between beings in which essence and existence are distinct and beings in which they are identical.) Moreover, though Craig correctly notes that Aquinas believes that only God can conjoin essence and existence, this did not stop Aquinas himself from raising the issue of a series of causes in the course of giving the “existential proof” in On Being and Essence; in particular, he says that a first cause of the being of things is necessary, for “otherwise we would proceed to infinity in causes” (DEE 4), which, again, parallels the argument of the Second Way. Perhaps he did so purely “for the sake of argument”; that is to say, Aquinas may have meant to say only that even if there
were a series of causes involved in the conjoining of the essence and existence of a thing (which he did not in fact think there is), such a series would still have to have a first member. But if the notion of a series of causes was indeed being raised in the "existential proof" in this purely "for the sake of argument" manner, perhaps that is also the spirit in which Aquinas meant to raise it in the Second Way. Finally, while the Second Way does indeed explicitly begin with what is evident to the senses, so too does the First Way, in its appeal to the fact of motion; and yet the First Way also almost immediately makes a transition into metaphysics insofar as it analyzes motion in terms of act and potency. It does not seem unreasonable to suppose that in the Second Way too, though Aquinas begins with something evident to the senses, namely the fact that things are caused to exist, the rest of the argument is to be read in terms of the metaphysical analysis of a thing's existence as something that needs to be conjoined with its essence if the thing is to be real. This would certainly make it easier to understand why a first cause would have to be itself uncaused: it could not fail to be if its essence and existence are identical, and thus in no need of being conjoined by a yet further cause. It seems plausible, then, to read the Second Way in light of the "existential proof" of On Being and Essence, an argument which Thomists have in any event always considered extremely important to a proper understanding of Aquinas's conception of God, his relationship to the world, and the grounds of our knowledge of his existence. And whether they are more or less the same argument or not, they both certainly bring into focus Aquinas's view that the way in which philosophy can reveal to us the existence of a divine creator is not by proving that God must have caused the world to exist at some point in the past (which of course would raise the question of whether he still exists), but rather by proving that God must be sustaining the world in being here and now, and at any moment
in which we are considering the question of his existence. As Peter Geach puts it, for
Aquinas the claim that God made the world “is more like ‘the minstrel made
music’ than
‘the blacksmith made a shoe’”; that is to say, creation is an ongoing activity
rather than a
once-and-for-all event. While the shoe might continue to exist even if the
blacksmith dies,
the music necessarily stops when the minstrel stops playing, and the world
would
necessarily go out of existence if God stopped creating it.
These considerations should make it clear why an objection to “first cause”
arguments famously raised by Hume (and distinct from his criticism of the
principle of
causality) has no force against Aquinas’s argument. If we have explained each
member of a
causal series by appealing to an earlier member, what need, Hume asks, do we
have for a
first cause? For even if we trace the series of causes back infinitely, we will
never have a
case where any individual thing is left unexplained. As we have seen, if causal
series
ordered per accidens are in question, Aquinas would agree with Hume that no
first cause is
necessary. But it is causal series ordered per se that the Second Way, like the
First Way, is
concerned with, and here the need for a first cause follows from the fact that
in such a
series all causes other than the first cause are purely instrumental, having no
causal power
of their own at all. Extending the series back to infinity would not change this
in the least;
as noted in our discussion of the First Way, even if a causal series ordered per
se were
infinitely long, as long as each member of this infinitely long series was
purely
instrumental, and thus causally inert of itself, there would have to be a cause
outside the
series which imparted causal power to all of the series’ members, a cause
which would then
be “first” not in the sense of coming at the head of the series, but rather in the
sense of
being that on which every member of the series depends for its causal power.
The
irrelevance of Hume’s objection is even more obvious when we consider the
role played in
Aquinas’s argument by the distinction between essence and existence. For
even if each member in a causal series extending backwards in time was caused by some earlier member, with the series going back infinitely, as long as the existence of each member is distinct from its essence, it will have to be conserved in existence at each moment by a first cause in whom existence and essence are identical. What matters is what causes each member to exist here and now; causes existing at previous moments of time, even if they are infinite in number, are totally irrelevant.

Another, related objection to “first cause” arguments is that they allegedly commit the “fallacy of composition.” If each brick in a certain wall weighs a pound, it doesn’t follow that the wall as a whole weighs a pound; similarly (the objection continues) if each thing in the universe requires a cause, it doesn’t follow that the universe as a whole must have a cause. But there are two problems with this objection, at least considered as a criticism of Aquinas. First, as is well known to logicians, part-to-whole reasoning of the sort under consideration is not in fact always fallacious. For example, if every brick in a wall built out of a child’s Lego blocks is red, then it follows that the wall as a whole is red. Similarly, given that the distinction between essence and existence suffices to show that any particular material thing requires a cause, it is surely correct to say that the universe as a whole, which is comprised of these material things and which itself has an essence distinct from its existence, must also have a cause. Second, Aquinas’s argument does not in fact require reasoning in this part-to-whole fashion in any case. To get the proof from causality going (especially if it is understood in light of the “existential proof”) one need not consider the universe as a whole, but just any individual thing whose essence is distinct from its existence – a book, a car, a dog, a tree, whatever. For to explain even that single thing will (if Aquinas’s argument is otherwise unobjectionable) require appeal to something whose essence and existence are identical, and thus appeal to an uncaused
first cause.

The Third Way

The proof from the contingency of the world starts from the fact that there are things for which it is possible either to exist or not exist, as is evident from the fact that they are generated and corrupted, coming into being and passing away. But “that which is possible not to be at some time is not” (ST I.2.3); that is to say, if it is possible for something not to exist, then at some time it will not exist. “Therefore, if everything is possible not to be, then at one time there could have been nothing in existence” (ST I.2.3).

Now if there ever were a time when nothing existed, then nothing would exist now, because “that which does not exist only begins to exist by something already existing” (ST I.2.3), so that if there was nothing in existence at some point in the past there would have been no way for anything new to be brought into existence. But since it would be absurd to hold that nothing exists now, it follows (given that the assumption that everything that exists is merely possible leads to this absurdity) that not everything that exists is merely possible, that is, capable of either existing or not existing; and therefore “there must exist something the existence of which is necessary” (ST I.2.3). Now “every necessary thing either has its necessity caused by another, or not” (ST I.2.3). But it is impossible to go on to infinity in a series of necessary things which get their necessity from another, for the reasons already discussed when considering series of efficient causes. Therefore there must be something “having of itself its own necessity, and not receiving it from another, but rather causing in others their necessity” (ST I.2.3), and this is what we call God.

In short, the Third Way holds that the world of contingent things could not exist at all unless there were a necessary being. It would be a serious mistake, however, to understand “contingent” and “necessary” here in the senses most familiar to contemporary philosophers, many of whom think (for example) of what is necessary as that which exists...
in every possible world and of what is contingent as that which exists only in some possible worlds, or who assume that the notion of a necessary being must be that of a being the denial of the existence of which would entail a self-contradiction (thus reading “necessary” as “logically necessary”). As we saw in chapter 2, Aquinas (like other Aristotelian essentialists) would not accept such modern accounts of necessity and contingency.

One common objection to the Third Way which may reflect this misunderstanding is the suggestion that Aquinas commits an obvious fallacy when he claims that “that which is possible not to be at some time is not,” for even if it is possible for something to go out of existence, it simply doesn’t follow that it will actually do so. This objection would clearly be correct if by “possible not to be” Aquinas meant “non-existent in some possible world” or “the non-existence of which is logically possible,” for it is obvious that neither the fact that there is a possible world in which something doesn’t exist nor the fact that there is no self-contradiction involved in denying its existence entails anything about its longevity in the actual world. Similarly, it is sometimes claimed against cosmological arguments that only propositions can be necessary, and not things. This too might be a good objection to Aquinas if by “necessary” he meant “logically necessary.” But again, Aquinas does not in fact mean “possible” or “necessary” in any of these modern senses, so these objections are irrelevant.

What Aquinas does mean is indicated by the reason he gives for saying that some things are possibly either existent or nonexistent, namely that we observe them to be generated and corrupted. Now as we saw in chapter 2, for Aquinas generation and corruption, coming into being and passing away, characterize the things of our experience because they are composites of form and matter. Their coming to be is just the acquisition by a certain parcel of matter of a certain form, and their passing away is just the loss by a
certain parcel of matter of a certain form. Hence it is ultimately this composite, hylemorphic nature that makes it the case that they are “possible to be and not to be” (ST I.2.3); it has nothing to do with possible worlds, with there being no self-contradiction involved in denying their existence, or any other such thing. The “possibility” in question is not some abstract logical possibility but rather something “inherent,” a tendency “to be corrupted” rooted “in the nature of those things ... whose matter is subject to contrariety of forms” (QDP 5.3). In other words, given that the matter out of which the things of our experience is composed is always inherently capable of taking on forms different from the ones it happens currently to instantiate, these things have a kind of inherent metaphysical instability that guarantees that they will at some point fail to exist. They have no potency or potential for changeless, indefinite existence; hence they cannot exist indefinitely. By “possible not to be,” then, what Aquinas means is something like “having a tendency to stop existing,” “inherently transitory,” or “impermanent”; and by “necessary” he just means something that is not like this, something that is everlasting, permanent, or non-transitory. Thus there is no fallacy in his inference from “such-and-such is possible not to be” to “such-and-such at some time is not,” for this would follow given an Aristotelian understanding of the nature of material substances. Given enough time, such a substance would, if left to itself, have to go out of existence eventually. There is no sense to be made of the idea that it might be “possible” for it not to exist and yet that it never in fact goes out of existence no matter how much time passes and even if nothing acts to frustrate its tendency towards corruption, for in that case the claim that it has an inherent tendency towards corruption would be unintelligible. Something that always exists would by that very fact show that it is something whose nature does not include any inherent tendency towards corruption, and thus that it is necessary (In DC I.29). However, this still leaves untouched an apparently more serious difficulty
with the
Third Way. Even if it is granted that Aquinas is justified in holding that
whatever is
“possible not to be” will at some time go out of existence, it is widely held that
his further
inference to the effect that if everything were “possible not to be” or
contingent, then at one
time nothing would have existed, is clearly fallacious. Specifically, it is
claimed that he is
guilty here of a “quantifier shift” fallacy, of inferring from “Everything has
some time at
which it does not exist” to “There is some time at which everything does not
exist.” This is
called a “quantifier shift” fallacy because the quantifying expression
“everything” shifts
position from the first statement to the second. That it is a fallacy can be seen
by comparing
the argument above with parallel arguments that are clearly fallacious. If
every student in
the room owns a pencil, it does not follow that there is a certain pencil that
every student in
the room owns; if every human being has someone as a mother, it does not
follow that there
is someone who is the mother of every human being; and so forth. Similarly,
even if every
contingent thing goes out of existence at some time, it does not follow that
there is some
time when they all go out of existence together. An alternative possibility is
that even
though every contingent thing goes out of existence at some point, there is
always at least
one other contingent thing that continues to exist in the meantime, and this
overlapping
series of contingent things could continue on infinitely. (Certainly Aquinas
could not rule
such an infinite regress out, since it would involve a causal series ordered per
accidents
extending backward in time, and as we have seen, Aquinas concedes for the
sake of
argument that such a series might not have a first member.) In this case,
though, Aquinas’s
conclusion to the effect that if everything were contingent then nothing would
exist now
would be blocked, and the Third Way would fail.
   But common though this objection is, it is not in fact fatal to Aquinas’s
argument,
for he need not be interpreted as arguing in the fallacious manner described.
As several commentators have suggested, what Aquinas really seems to be getting at is the idea that given an infinite stretch of time, and given also the Aristotelian conception of necessity and possibility described above, then if it is even possible for every contingent thing to go out of existence together (which even Aquinas’s critic must concede), this possibility must actually come about. For (again, at least given an Aristotelian conception of possibility) it would be absurd to suggest both that it is possible for every contingent thing to go out of existence together, and yet that over even an infinite amount of time this will never in fact occur. “Possibility” here entails an inherent tendency, which must manifest itself given sufficient time, and an infinite amount of time is obviously more than sufficient. Hence if everything really were contingent, there would have been some time in the past at which nothing existed, in which case nothing would exist now, which is absurd, and so on, and Aquinas's argument would (up to this stage in the proof at least) be vindicated. (Note that it would not help the critic to suggest that the series of contingent things had a beginning in time after all rather than being infinite, for in that case Aquinas could simply say that given the principle of causality this beginning must then have had a cause and that this cause would have to be something non-contingent, i.e. necessary, which is of course what he has been trying to prove the existence of all along.) At this point the critic of the Third Way might think to challenge the premise that “that which does not exist only begins to exist by something already existing,” so as to undermine the claim that if there was ever a time when nothing existed, then nothing would exist now. But this premise is just a variation on the principle of causality, and we have already seen how that principle might be defended. A more promising strategy for the critic might seem to be to suggest (as J. L. Mackie does) that even if individual contingent things all go out of existence, there might still be some underlying stuff out of which
they are made (a "permanent stock of matter," in Mackie’s words) which persists throughout every generation and corruption. Now if this were so, then what would follow, given the Aristotelian conception of necessity we’ve been describing, is that this stock of material stuff would itself count as a necessary being. But (so the suggestion continues) the critic could happily accept this (as Mackie does) given that such a “necessary being” would, in view of its material nature, clearly not be divine.

The trouble with this reply, though, is that it falsely purports to be asserting something that Aquinas would deny. In fact, surprising as it might seem, Aquinas would be quite happy, at least for the sake of argument, to concede that the material world as a whole might be a kind of necessary being, in the relevant sense of being everlasting or non-transitory. After all, as we have repeated many times, Aquinas does not think that proving the existence of God requires showing that the material world had a beginning. Moreover, as we noted in our discussion of hylemorphism in chapter 2, Aquinas himself insists that while individual material things are generated and corrupted, matter and form themselves are (apart from special divine creation, to which he would not appeal for the purposes of the argument at hand lest he argue in a circle) not susceptible of generation and corruption. Far from regarding the notion of the material world as necessary as a blow to the project of the Third Way, Aquinas would in fact regard it as a vindication of his claim that there must be a necessary being. Indeed, he recognizes the existence of other non-divine necessary beings as well, such as angels and even heavenly bodies (which, given the astronomical knowledge then available, the medievals mistakenly regarded as not undergoing corruption).

That this should not be surprising, and in particular that it should not be regarded as damaging to the aim of proving the existence of God specifically, should be evident when we remember that proving the existence of a necessary being is only one
component of the
overall argumentative strategy of the Third Way. For recall that at this stage of the
argument Aquinas immediately goes on to say that “every necessary thing
either has its
necessity caused by another, or not” and then argues that a series of necessary beings
cannot go on to infinity. This might seem very odd to those contemporary philosophers
who think of necessity in terms of possible worlds or who regard all necessity as logical
necessity. “How could a necessary being get its necessity from another?” such a
philosopher might ask. “It either exists in all possible worlds or it does not, or the assertion
of its non-existence either involves a self-contradiction or it does not. End of story.
Certainly there can be no question of anything causing it to exist in all possible worlds or
causing it to be logically necessary!” But when we keep in mind that Aquinas does not
mean “necessary” in the sense in which such contemporary philosophers understand it, but
rather in the sense of “everlasting” or “permanent,” we can see that it makes perfect sense
to consider whether a thing’s necessity is derived or not. In particular, we can see that it is
not enough to show that the material universe as a whole (or an angel, a heavenly body, or
whatever) is a necessary being in the relevant sense. One also needs to know whether it is
the sort of thing that could possibly have its necessity in itself, or whether instead it must
derive its necessity from something else, from something which keeps it in existence
everlastingly.
It is immediately obvious, however, that matter qua matter cannot possibly have its
necessity of itself, at least on an Aristotelian conception. For matter considered apart from
anything else, and in particular apart from form, is just “prime matter” or pure potentiality;
and pure potentiality, since by definition it has no actuality, has no reality either, necessary
or otherwise. Matter exists only insofar as it is combined with substantial form to comprise
a substance. Nor would it help the critic of the Third Way to suggest that it is
matter and form together that constitute a necessary being having of itself its own necessity. For one thing, and as we have already noted, individual material things are constantly going out of existence and thus losing their forms, and it is in their nature to do so. Hence it cannot be any particular material substance, but only prime matter, which can be said to be everlasting (and prime matter, for the reasons just given, cannot have its everlastingness of itself). Second, even if there could be some composite of form and matter which exists everlastingly, since in purely material substances form depends on matter just as matter depends on form, we would have (as Martin has pointed out) an explanatory vicious circle unless we appealed to something outside the form/matter composite on which it depends for its existence. Third, since (given Aquinas’s doctrine of essence and existence) the existence of any material thing is distinct from its essence, we would need in any case to appeal to something outside it in order to explain how its essence and existence come together so as to make it real. (Note that this particular point would apply to material things even if, contrary to Aristotle and Aquinas, we did not regard them as composites of form and matter.) There is no way, then, plausibly to hold that matter might have its necessity of itself. Even a “necessarily existing” or everlasting material world would have to depend on something outside it for its existence. And this something could not itself be a composite either of form and matter or essence and existence, on pain of infinite regress. The essence/existence distinction also implies that other sorts of non-divine necessary beings, such as angels (which on Aquinas’s view are composites of a pure form together with an act of existing), would have to derive their necessity from something else. The only thing that could stop an explanatory regress of necessary beings would therefore be something whose essence and existence are identical, and who is a necessarily existing being precisely because it just is subsistent being or existence. Here we need only refer
back to the “existential proof” considered when discussing the Second Way in order to fill in the details; and the upshot is that the Second Way and Third Way appear to converge on exactly the same being, albeit they do so from very different starting points (and thus remain distinct arguments).

One serious weakness of Mackie’s otherwise reasonably fair-minded discussion of the Third Way (in the context of what is possibly the best book in philosophy of religion written from an atheistic point of view, The Miracle of Theism) is that he never considers the relevance of Aquinas’s hylemorphic conception of matter or distinction between essence and existence. Hence he mistakenly concludes that the only way Aquinas could show that the material world itself is not the ultimate necessary being is to transform the Third Way into something like Leibniz’s cosmological argument and define a necessary being as one which exists in all possible worlds, or one the non-existence of which would involve a logical self-contradiction, or one whose essence “involves” or “includes” existence. But (to repeat yet again) Aquinas does not mean “necessary” in either the “possible worlds” sense or the logical sense. Nor does he think that a necessary being having its necessity of itself is one whose essence “includes” existence, as if its existence were simply one attribute it had alongside others. Rather, he thinks of it as something which just is subsistent existence, Being Itself rather than “a being” among other beings, and (as we shall see later on in this chapter) something absolutely simple or non-composite in which no distinctions can be drawn between its various attributes.

In general, it is remarkable how many critics of the Five Ways almost completely ignore Aquinas’s own metaphysical views, and instead read into the arguments all sorts of assumptions that Aquinas himself never made and often would have rejected. It is no wonder, then, that (as we have seen) the objections these critics raise are often wide of the mark. If this is so in the case of the first three Ways, it is perhaps even more
so of the last
two, to which we turn next.
The Fourth Way
The proof from the grades of perfection begins by noting that “among beings there
are some more and some less good, true, noble, and the like” (ST I.2.3). But things are said
to be “more” or “less” a certain way to the extent that they “resemble” some maximum, “as
a thing is said to be hotter according as it more nearly resembles that which is hottest” (ST
I.2.3). But in that case, it follows that “there is something which is truest, something best,
something noblest, and, consequently, something which is uttermost being; for those things
that are greatest in truth are greatest in being” (ST I.2.3). Now the maximum within any
genus is the cause of everything in that genus, “as fire, which is the maximum of heat, is
the cause of all hot things” (ST I.2.3). So there must be something which is the cause of the
“being, goodness, and every other perfection” of all beings, and this is what we call God
(ST I.2.3).
Of all of the Five Ways, the fourth is generally regarded as the most difficult for
modern readers to accept, or even to understand. Even Christopher Martin, whose reading
of the other four Ways is very sympathetic, does not claim to understand it, and judges it
“strange” or even “bizarre.” It seems to me, though, that the mysteriousness of the Fourth
Way has been greatly exaggerated, and that while it may well be more out of sync with
contemporary philosophers’ metaphysical predilections than Aquinas’s other proofs, it is
perfectly comprehensible and even defensible when properly understood in light of his
general metaphysical commitments.
The argument is often said to be among the most Platonic elements of
Aquinas’s thought, and while it does not in fact presuppose the truth of Platonism,
reading it in light
of Plato’s Theory of Forms does provide at least a useful first approximation to what
Aquinas is getting at. For Plato, the ordinary objects of our experience can only be
understood in terms of their “resemblance” to or “participation” in ideal archetypes of which they are but imperfect copies. To take a simple example, consider several triangles, some drawn in chalk on a board, some drawn in sand, some drawn on paper in pencil and others in various colors of ink. Now the essence or nature of a triangle is to be a closed plane figure with three straight sides, and it is by reference to this essence that we judge the particular triangles of our example to be triangles in the first place. But notice that each of these particular triangles is going to have certain features that have nothing to do with this essence; for example, some of them will be red and some green, some large and some small, some made out of chalk dust and some out of sand, and so forth, even though there is nothing about triangularity per se that entails any of these features. Notice too that they are all also going to lack, to some extent, some of the features that are part of the essence of a triangle. For instance, some of them will be drawn with partially broken lines or corners that are not perfectly closed, and none will be drawn with lines that are perfectly straight. Moreover, there are certain geometrical truths about triangles, such as that their angles add up to 180 degrees, that are necessary truths in the sense that they would remain true even if every individual material triangle went out of existence. Yet if any material triangle is going to have features that are not part of triangularity and will lack features that are part of it, and if there are truths about triangles that would remain true regardless of whether any material triangles actually exist, then triangularity per se – the essence or archetype by reference to which we judge something to be a more perfect or less perfect instance of a triangle, and indeed to count as a triangle at all – cannot be something material. Neither, in Plato’s view, can it be something mental. For the necessary truths that we know about triangles (such as that their angles add up to 180 degrees, the Pythagorean theorem, etc.) are objective truths, something we discover rather than invent.
We could not change them if we wanted to, and this shows that they do not depend for their existence on our minds. If triangularity as such is neither material nor mental, however, then it has a unique kind of existence of its own, that of an abstract object existing in a "third realm."

And what is true of triangles is also true in Plato's view of more or less everything else: of circles, squares, and other geometrical figures; of human beings, dogs, cats, and other living things; of tables, chairs, rocks, trees, and other physical objects; of justice, goodness, beauty, piety, and the like; and so on. When we grasp the essence of any of these things, we grasp something that is universal rather than particular (since it is that in virtue of which various individual things count as instances of the same one type), perfect rather than imperfect (since it is the pattern or archetype by reference to which we judge something to be more or less perfect), and eternal or unchanging (since the truths we know about these essences are necessary truths). For these reasons we also thereby know something that is more real than individual particular things, since the latter only have their reality to the extent that they resemble or participate in the former. In short, what we know is what Plato calls a Form.

Now it is easy to see why the Fourth Way would seem to many readers to be Platonic in spirit. Aquinas argues that "more' and 'less' are predicated of different things, according as they resemble in their different ways something which is the maximum" (ST I.2.3), and this "principle of exemplarity" (as Henri Renard has labeled it), with its talk of things "resembling" some maximum more or less perfectly, is certainly reminiscent of Plato. As is well known to scholars of his thought, Aquinas also frequently makes use of the concept of "participation," including in cases where he restates the principle of exemplarity (e.g. QDP 3.5, ST I.44.1, and ST I.79.4), and this concept is clearly Platonic in origin. And unlike the rest of the Five Ways, the Fourth Way seems (at least in its first
stage) to be concerned with explaining the world in terms of formal rather than efficient causality (a distinction explained in chapter 2), another apparent departure from Aquinas's usual Aristotelian orientation towards a more Platonic one. The thrust of the argument might therefore seem to be that we can only make sense of the more or less good, true, and noble things of our experience by reference to something like a divine Platonic archetype of goodness, truth, and nobility.

A Platonic reading of the Fourth Way also has the advantage of forestalling an objection commonly heard in these more relativistic times, to the effect that standards of goodness, truth, nobility, and so on are all subjective. For if Platonism is true, then such relativism and subjectivism are no more plausible in the case of goodness and the like than in the case of mathematics. Furthermore, the apparent emphasis on formal rather than efficient causality might seem to explain why Aquinas thinks that the maximum in any genus is the “cause” of everything in that genus. This claim is odd and implausible (so it is said) if Aquinas has efficient causality in mind, but understandable and defensible if he is speaking instead of formal causality.

On the other hand, there is one glaring problem with a Platonic interpretation of the Fourth Way, which is that Aquinas was not a Platonist, but rather an Aristotelian or moderate realist. That is to say, he did not believe in a realm of Forms or abstract objects existing altogether outside the world of concrete objects; as we saw in chapter 2, he took the forms of things to exist instead in the things themselves, and to exist in a universal and abstract way only in the intellect. And as it happens, this moderate realism is (as we shall see in chapter 5) perfectly sufficient to allay any concerns about the purported subjectivity or relativity of standards of goodness and the like; no appeal to Platonism is necessary. Moreover, even if an appeal to formal rather than efficient causality would solve one problem, it would raise another. For being abstract rather than concrete objects, Platon
Forms are causally inert (where efficient causality is concerned); hence if the Fourth Way were really suggesting that we think of God as a kind of Platonic Form, it would be hard to see how the most true, good, and noble being of the Fourth Way could be identical to the First Mover and First Cause of the first two ways.

Then there are certain other objections sometimes raised against the Fourth Way which would seem to be if anything only exacerbated by a Platonic reading. For example, why assume that the most true being, the most good being, and the most noble being are the same being? (After all, in Plato’s thought each thing’s Form is distinct from other Forms.) And given the reasoning of the Fourth Way, wouldn’t we have to say that God is not only the most good, true, and noble thing, but also (to quote Dawkins again) the “perfect maximum of conceivable smelliness,” and indeed that he possesses to the maximum degree any attribute we can think of? (After all, on Plato’s theory, everything has a Form, including not only goodness, truth, and the like, but less elevated and abstract things too, like sweetness, filthiness, illness, and the like.) But this would be absurd, and certainly incompatible with Aquinas’s conception of God.

In fact these objections, like others we've examined, rest on egregious misunderstandings of Aquinas’s basic metaphysical commitments; and while there are indeed Platonic aspects to the Fourth Way, they are all greatly transformed by Aquinas in light of some of the concepts we surveyed in chapter 2, in a direction more consistent with his general Aristotelianism.

Let us note first that Aquinas is not in fact trying to argue in the Fourth Way that everything that we observe to exist in degrees (including heat, smelliness, sweetness, etc.) must be traceable to some single maximum standard of perfection. Here (as elsewhere in the Five Ways) his archaic scientific examples have led modern readers to misread him. Given the (false, we now know) medieval theory that fire is the source of all heat, he naturally appeals to fire and heat merely to illustrate the general principle
that things that come in degrees point to a maximum. But heat itself is not among the things he is trying here to explain. (This should be obvious when you think about it, since Aquinas would clearly not regard heat or fire as divine attributes!) Rather, he intends to use the principle in question to explain truth, goodness, nobility, being and the like specifically. As the reader may have noticed, this list is very similar to the list of “transcendentals” we discussed in chapter 2, which are (unlike heat, smelliness, etc.) above every genus and common to every being, unrestricted to any particular category or individual. And as commentators on the Fourth Way generally recognize, Aquinas is mainly concerned in this argument to show that to the extent that these transcendental features of the world come in degrees, they must be traceable to a maximum. (It is true that “nobility” was not on the list of transcendents we examined in chapter 2, but as Wippel points out, Aquinas’s linking of nobilitas with being and perfection in SCG I.28 indicates that he does not think of it as a transcendental distinct from the others.) Since Aquinas is not in this argument concerned with heat, cold, sweetness, sourness, fragrance, smelliness, and other mundane features of reality, Dawkins’ objection simply misses the point. Moreover, it should now be clear why Aquinas takes the most true, most good, and most noble being to be one and the same being; for as we saw in chapter 2, Aquinas argues that the transcendental features are “convertible” with one another. That is to say, they are one and the same thing considered under different descriptions. This is also why he draws a related inference that might otherwise seem ungrounded to many modern readers, to the effect that that which is most true, good, and noble is “consequently, something which is uttermost being; for those things that are greatest in truth are greatest in being.” For this follows automatically from the doctrine of the transcendental. We also saw in chapter 2 that Aquinas takes different aspects of reality all to have
being in an analogical rather than univocal sense. Accidents and substances both have being, but a substance has independent existence in a way accidents do not; material things and angels both have being, but angels (since they lack matter and are composed of pure form together with an act of existence) are metaphysically simpler than material things and lack the tendency towards corruption that material things possess; created things and God both have being, but in created things essence and existence are distinct and in God they are not. Again, the way in which each has being is analogous to the way the others do, but not identical. In particular, it should be evident that substances have a higher degree of being than accidents do, angels a higher degree of being than material things do, and God a higher degree of being than any created thing; for substances lack the dependence on (other) substances that accidents have for their being, angels lack the dependence on matter that material things have for their being, and God depends on nothing at all for his existence but is rather that on which everything else depends. We see here a hierarchy in the order of being that dovetails with the hierarchy from prime matter through purely material things, human beings, and angels, up to God as Pure Act that we also had reason to discuss in chapter 2.

Given the convertibility of the transcendentals, it should not be surprising that, just as being does, goodness, truth, and the like come in degrees and are predicated of things analogically. For instance, the goodness or perfection of a triangle drawn carefully on paper with a pen and ruler is greater than that of a triangle drawn hastily in crayon on the cracked plastic seat of a moving bus, for it more perfectly instantiates the form or pattern definitive of triangularity. The goodness or perfection of someone who always tells the truth is greater than that of a habitual liar, for the former sort of person more perfectly fulfills the natural end or final cause of our intellectual and communicative faculties, which is to grasp and
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than that of a habitual liar, for the former sort of person more perfectly fulfills the natural end or final cause of our intellectual and communicative faculties, which is to grasp and convey truth. A triangle and a person are both “good” in an analogical rather than a univocal sense, however, since there is a moral component to human goodness that is absent in the case of triangles and other non-rational entities. Moreover, human beings and triangles, along with other inanimate material things, plants, and non-human animals, manifest different degrees of goodness. Inanimate material things have certain perfections, such as (again) the straightness with which the sides of a triangle might be drawn. Plants, the simplest living things, have these sorts of perfections too given that they are material things, but in addition they have perfections that inanimate things do not have, namely the capacity to take in nutrients, grow, and reproduce themselves. Animals incorporate both the perfections of inanimate material things and plants, but in addition have the capacity for locomotion and sensation, which plants do not have. Human beings possess the perfections that inanimate material things, plants, and other animals have, but in addition have the capacity for intellect and will. Each of these levels of material being represents a higher level of goodness or perfection than the preceding one because it incorporates the perfections of the lower levels while adding perfections of its own. When we get to the purely immaterial levels of the hierarchy of being, we have entities which, though they lack the perfections of material things “formally,” they nevertheless possess them “eminently” insofar as (unlike purely material things on Aquinas’s view) they can grasp them intellectually (and grasp them intellectually in a way that is superior to our way of grasping them, since though the human intellect is immaterial, it is limited because of its dependence on sense organs). We will have reason to explore some of these matters in more detail in our next
chapter, but the point for now is to indicate the way in which Aquinas takes the degrees of goodness, being, and the like to point to a single maximum. The idea is that if we start by considering the natures of each of the lower levels of reality and then proceed to follow them upward, we find ourselves inexorably led to a highest level. In particular, degrees of goodness, truth, nobility, and so forth each point beyond themselves to a highest degree of each; since these are all convertible with one another, it is the same one maximum to which they all point; and since they are all in turn convertible with being, this single maximum is also that which is most fully real. What Aquinas is up to in the Fourth Way can therefore be understood when we read the argument in light of his doctrines of the transcendentals, analogy, and the hierarchy of being.

In what sense is this highest level of reality the “cause” of the lower levels? And in what sense do the latter “participate” in the former if it is not in a Platonic sense? The answers to these questions are related. Something “participates” in a certain perfection when it has that perfection only in a partial or limited way (In DH 2); and for Aquinas, “whatever is found in anything by participation, must be caused in it by that to which it belongs essentially” (ST I.44.1). Unlike Plato, whose emphasis is exclusively on what later thinkers would call formal causality, Aquinas takes there to be an essential link between participating in something and being efficiently caused by it. How so? Consider first the specific case of existence or being, where we have already seen that for Aquinas, “from the fact that a thing has being by participation, it follows that it is caused” (ST I.44.1). The reason for this was that if a thing’s essence and existence are distinct (so that it only “participates” in being or existence rather than being identical with pure being or existence), only something outside the thing could give it existence or being; for to say that its existence derives from its essence (which is the only other alternative) would entail the
absurdity that it causes itself. (Keep in mind that deriving or flowing from an
essence is not
the same as being identical with an essence; for example, the essence of a
human being is to
be a rational animal, and having the capacity for language flows or derives
from this
essence, but having the capacity for language is nevertheless not identical
with being a
rational animal.) We have also seen that, for Aquinas, the cause in question
must ultimately
be something in which its essence and existence are identical, and which
accordingly just is
being itself, or (we might now say) unparticipated being.
That, of course, is the heart of the “existential proof” and thus (I have
suggested) the
Second Way, which we have already examined. But given that being is
convertible with
goodness, truth, and the like, we would expect that what is true of things
which have being
or existence only by participation will also be true of things having goodness,
truth, and so
on only by participation, thus opening the way to a distinct argument for God’s
existence
(namely the Fourth Way). And that is precisely what Aquinas thinks. In
particular, he holds
that in general (and not just with respect to being or existence) things that
have some
perfection only to various limited degrees must not have that perfection as
part of their
essence, “for if each one were of itself competent to have it, there would be no
reason why
one should have it more than another” (QDP 3.5). That is to say, if it were part
of a thing’s
very essence to have the perfection, then there would be no reason for it not to
possess it in
an unlimited way. (Hence any human being is fully human, which follows from
humanity
being part of his or her essence, but does not have being to the fullest extent –
which would
be possible only for something whose essence just is being – or goodness to the
fullest
extent – which would be possible only for something in some sense having
within it every
perfection – and so forth.) So, for a limited thing to have some perfection, it
must derive it
from something outside it. And as Wippel notes, we would be led into a vicious
infinite
regress of the sort Aquinas has already criticized unless this something either is or is traceable to a cause which has the perfection to an unlimited degree. But if the ultimate cause is unlimited in goodness, truth, nobility, or whatever other transcendental we are starting with, then (as we have already said) given the convertibility of the transcendentals it will also have to be unlimited in being and therefore just be pure being or existence itself. We are led therefore to the existence of the same being arrived at at the end of each of the first three ways – pure act, a being whose essence just is existence and which is the efficient cause of the being or actuality of everything other than itself – via yet another route, a consideration of the degrees of perfection found in the things of our experience. The Fifth Way The proof from finality starts with the observation that “things which lack intelligence, such as natural bodies, act for an end, and this is evident from their acting always, or nearly always, in the same way, so as to obtain the best result” (ST I.2.3). From this it is plain that they act “not fortuitously, but designedly” (ST I.2.3). But whatever lacks intelligence can only act for an end if it is directed by something which has intelligence, “as the arrow is shot to its mark by the archer” (ST I.2.3). “Therefore some intelligent being exists by whom all natural things are directed to their end; and this being we call God” (ST I.2.3). Aquinas’s first three Ways are all variations on what is known as the “cosmological argument” for the existence of God (from the Greek kosmos meaning “order”). The Fourth Way is sometimes called the “henological argument” (from the Greek hen or “one”). The Fifth Way, in turn, is commonly taken to be a version of the “teleological argument” (from the Greek telos meaning “end” or “goal”). Etymologically speaking, this is an apt name for the proof, but it is also potentially misleading given that when most contemporary philosophers hear the expression “teleological argument” they naturally think of the famous
“design argument,” associated historically with William Paley (1743–1805), and defended today by “Intelligent Design” theorists critical of Darwin’s theory of evolution by natural selection. Indeed, many writers (such as Richard Dawkins) assume that the Fifth Way is just a variation on the “design argument.” But in fact Aquinas’s argument is radically different from Paley’s, and the standard objections directed against the latter have no force against the former.

Paley’s argument was roughly this. Like some human artifacts, the universe is extremely complex and orderly; and while it is theoretically possible that this complexity and order was the result of impersonal natural processes, it is far more likely that it is the work of an intelligent designer. Paley’s favorite examples of complexity and order are living things and their various organs. His successors in the “Intelligent Design” movement, though they attempt to formulate their position with greater mathematical rigor than Paley did, have followed him in this emphasis, focusing as they do on the purported “irreducible complexity” of various biological structures. Critics of the design argument respond that this is “God of the gaps” reasoning of the sort that is constantly vulnerable to being overthrown by the latest scientific research, which may well reveal (as it has in the past) that what seems at first glance to be irredicibly complex can be accounted for in terms of more simple, and impersonal, natural processes.

Whatever side one takes in this debate, it is irrelevant to the evaluation of Aquinas’s Fifth Way, which differs from the design argument of Paley and the “Intelligent Design” movement in several crucial respects. Paley’s argument would justify, at most, belief in a deistic god who gave order to the world at some point in the past but who need not be appealed to in order to explain its current operation, which can be accounted for entirely in terms of impersonal laws of nature. “Intelligent Design” theorists even acknowledge that their arguments do not necessarily imply a deity at all, but merely a superhuman
intelligence of some sort or other. Aquinas, by contrast, takes the Fifth Way to entail the existence of nothing less than the God of classical theism, who sustains the order of the world here and now and at any moment at which it exists. Moreover, while Paley and his contemporary successors claim only that the existence of a designer is probable, Aquinas takes the Fifth Way conclusively to establish the truth of its conclusion. Related to this, whereas the design argument is typically presented as a kind of quasi-scientific empirical hypothesis, Aquinas’s argument is intended as a metaphysical demonstration. His claim is not that the existence of God is one possible explanation among others (albeit the best) of the order that exists in the universe (which is how “God of the gaps” arguments proceed) but rather that it can be seen on analysis to be the only possible explanation even in principle. While Paley and his successors focus on complex biological structures, Aquinas is not especially interested either in biology or complexity per se; even extremely simple inorganic phenomena suffice in his view to show that a Supreme Intelligence exists. Hence, while Darwin’s theory of evolution by natural selection is notoriously problematic for the design argument, it is totally irrelevant to the Fifth Way. (That is not to say that Aquinas would agree that every aspect of the biological realm can be explained in the materialistic terms favored by Darwinians; as we will see in the next chapter, he would definitely not agree with this. The point is just that the debate over evolution is not relevant to the Fifth Way specifically.) And all of these dissimilarities derive ultimately from one key difference between the design argument and the Fifth Way, which is that whereas the former takes for granted a “mechanical” conception of the natural world of the sort early modern philosophers and scientists sought to put in place of Aristotelian teleology, Aquinas’s argument crucially presupposes that final causes are as real and objective a feature of the natural world as gravity or electromagnetism.
We saw in chapter 2 how the reality of final causes might be defended today. We also saw that the sense in which teleology pervades the natural world on Aquinas’s view is that efficient causes would not be intelligible without final causes. This is what he means when he says in the Fifth Way that “things which lack intelligence, such as natural bodies, act for an end, and this is evident from their acting always, or nearly always, in the same way, so as to obtain the best result.” He is not especially interested here in the fact that hearts typically pump blood, that eyes enable us to see, and other such biological facts (though these would naturally be included as instances of the more general phenomenon he is interested in). It is the existence of any causal regularities at all that he takes to require explanation (where the emphasis here, unlike in the Second Way, is on the “regularities” part of this phrase rather than the “causal” part). For Aquinas, the fact that A regularly brings about B, as B’s efficient cause, entails that bringing about B is in turn the final cause of A. For if we did not suppose that A inherently “points to” or is “directed towards” the generation of B as its natural end, then we would have no way to account for the fact that A typically does generate B specifically, rather than C, or D, or E, or indeed rather than no effect at all. Of course, some interfering factor might prevent A from bringing about its typical effect, or from bringing it about fully or perfectly; this is why Aquinas speaks of a cause bringing about the “best” or perfect result at least “nearly always.” But these unusual cases can only be understood against the background of the typical case, and in particular in light of the fact that a cause inherently points to the best or most perfect realization of its effect, even if it might sometimes be prevented by circumstances from bringing it about. When Aquinas says that natural bodies do not bring about their effects “fortuitously,” then, he is not arguing (as advocates of the design argument might) that it is improbable that complex structures could arise by chance, which would invite the response...
that natural selection shows how such structures might nevertheless arise by non-fortuitous but impersonal processes. For, to repeat, he is not interested here in complexity per se in the first place; as Garrigou-Lagrange points out, even a simple physical phenomenon like the attraction between two particles would suffice for his purposes. What he is saying is rather that it is impossible that every apparent causal regularity can be attributed to chance, for chance itself presupposes causal regularity. To take a stock example, for Aquinas, a paradigmatically fortuitous event would be a farmer’s discovery of treasure under the ground he is plowing. Such a discovery was not in any sense intended – neither by the farmer nor by the person who buried the treasure, and not by nature either insofar as there is no causal law entailing that treasure will tend to be uncovered when one plows the ground. All the same, the farmer did intend to plow the ground, someone did intend to bury the treasure, and there are all sorts of causal laws operative when the farmer happens fortuitously to uncover treasure. Hence chance presupposes a background of causal factors which themselves neither have anything to do with chance nor can plausibly be accounted for without reference to final causality, so that it would be incoherent to suppose that an appeal to chance might somehow eliminate the need to appeal to final causality. Given what Aquinas says about chance (and as Garrigou-Lagrange has also pointed out), it is a mistake to think that the “principle of finality” on which Aquinas’s argument rests says that “everything has a final cause” (just as, as we have seen, it is a mistake to assume that the principle of causality says that “everything has an efficient cause”). For not “everything” does have a final cause, given the existence of chance events. What Aquinas actually says, as we have seen, is that every agent has a final cause; that is to say, that everything that serves as an efficient cause “points to” or is “directed at” some specific effect or range of effects as its natural end. This is why it is silly to ask (as is
sometimes done) “What is the purpose of a mountain range?” or “What is the purpose of an asteroid?” as if such questions must be an embarrassment to any Aristotelian. Aquinas would be happy to allow that such things might turn out to serve no “purpose,” in the sense of being accidental byproducts of convergent natural processes (plate tectonics or volcanism in the former case, say, and collisions between larger celestial bodies in the latter). He would insist, however, and quite plausibly, that such natural processes embody patterns of efficient causation that are themselves intelligible only in terms of final causation. And precisely for that reason, to the extent that biological processes like evolution manifest causal regularities, they if anything only support the Fifth Way rather than undermine it. For as with mountains, asteroids, and the like, even if it should turn out that animal species are the accidental byproducts of various convergent impersonal causal processes, the existence of those evolutionary processes themselves would require explanation in terms of final causes. As these considerations together with those examined in chapter 2 indicate, then, the reality of final causes, in both the inorganic and organic realms, is as defensible today as it ever was. But if there really are final causes, then the first part of Aquinas’s Fifth Way is vindicated. But what of the second stage of the argument, which claims that unintelligent natural processes can only act for an end if directed by some intelligence? The first thing to say is that this is not, as it might at first seem, a mere variation on the sort of reasoning represented by Paley’s design argument. Paley, taking for granted as he does a modern mechanistic view of nature, denies that purpose or teleology is immanent or inherent to the natural order. That is why his argument is a merely probabilistic one. The design argument allows that there might in fact be no purpose at all in the natural world, but only the misleading appearance of purpose; its claim is simply that, at least where
complex mechanistic processes are concerned, this supposition is unlikely. And even if there is purpose, it is imposed from outside, in just the way a human watchmaker imposes a certain order on metal parts that have no inherent tendency to function as a timepiece. The natural world remains as devoid of immanent teleology after the designer’s action as before. Moreover, as with a watch, once Paley’s designer has done his “watchmaking,” there is no need for him to remain on the scene, for once built the mechanism can function without him.

There is nothing like this kind of reasoning going on in Aquinas’s Fifth Way. Like Aristotle, Aquinas takes the teleology or final causality that exists in nature to be immanent to it, to such an extent that one could for practical purposes (and as Aristotle himself did) ignore the idea of a designer altogether when searching out the final causes of things in the course of doing physical and biological science. (Note how different this is from the approach of contemporary “Intelligent Design” theorists.) A struck match generates fire and heat rather than frost and cold; an acorn always grows into an oak rather than a rosebush or a dog; the moon goes around the earth in a smooth elliptical orbit rather than zigzagging erratically; the heart pumps blood continuously and doesn’t stop and start several times a day; condensation results in precipitation which results in collection which results in evaporation which in turn results in condensation; and so forth. In each of these cases and in countless others we have regularities that point to ends or goals, usually totally unconscious, which are just built into nature and can be known through observation to be there whether or not it ever occurs to anyone to ask how they got there. In particular, one can know that there are these ends, goals, or purposes in nature whether or not it ever occurs to anyone to consider the purposes, or even the existence, of a designer of nature. Still, even if (as Aristotle and Aquinas would hold) the existence of such final
causes is obvious and unavoidable, it is very odd that there should be such things, and their existence requires explanation even though that explanation, whatever it is, is not something we need worry about for the purposes of everyday scientific research. One of the common objections to the very idea of final causation is that it seems to entail that a thing can produce an effect even before that thing exists. Hence to say that an oak tree is the final cause of an acorn seems to entail that the oak tree – which doesn’t exist yet – in some sense causes the acorn to pass through every stage it must reach on the way to becoming an oak, since the oak is the “goal” or natural end of the acorn. But how can this be? Consider those cases where goal-directedness is associated with consciousness, as it is in us. A builder builds a house, and he is able to do so because the effect, the house, exists as an idea in his intellect before it exists in reality. That is the way in which the house serves as the final cause of the actions of the builder even as those actions are the efficient cause of the house. Indeed, that is the only way the house can do so. For a cause, to have any efficacy, must in some sense exist; and if it doesn’t exist in reality, then the only place left for it to exist (certainly for Aquinas, who as an Aristotelian does not accept Plato’s notion of a “third realm” beyond the natural world and the mind) is in the intellect.

What then of the vast system of causes that constitutes the physical universe? Every one of them is directed towards a certain end or final cause. Yet almost none of them is associated with any thought, consciousness, or intellect at all; and even animals and human beings, which are conscious, are comprised in whole or in part of unconscious and unintelligent material components which themselves manifest final causality. But given what was said above, it is impossible for anything to be directed towards an end unless that end exists in an intellect which directs the thing in question towards it. It follows that the system of ends or final causes that make up the physical universe can only exist at all if
there is a Supreme Intelligence or intellect outside the universe which directs things towards their ends. Moreover, this intellect must exist here and now, and not merely at some beginning point in the past, because causes are here and now, and at any point at which they exist at all, directed towards certain ends (otherwise, for reasons examined already, they wouldn’t on Aquinas’s analysis be true efficient causes at all). As with Aquinas’s other arguments, he is not concerned here with whether and how the universe might have begun, but rather with what keeps it as it is at any given moment, a question which must arise even if the universe had no beginning. Hence the Supreme Intelligence of the Fifth Way is not the deistic god that seems to be the most Paley can argue for. Moreover, given his metaphysical assumptions, Aquinas's conclusion follows necessarily and not merely with probability. In these respects (and not only in these respects, as we shall see) the Fifth Way reaches a much stronger conclusion than the design argument, and does so precisely because unlike the design argument it starts from the recognition of the existence of immanent teleology.

Now we saw in chapter 2 that Aquinas regards the final cause as the “cause of causes” insofar as it determines the other causes. In particular, for a thing to have a certain final cause entails that it also has a certain formal and material cause and thus a certain nature or essence; otherwise its final cause would not be inherent in it, nor would it be capable of realizing it. For “upon the form follows an inclination to the end ... for everything, in so far as it is in act, acts and tends towards that which is in accordance with its form” (ST I.5.5; cf. QDV 25.1). But we have also seen that on Aquinas’s view, for a contingent thing to be real, its essence must be conjoined to an act of existence, that this can only be accomplished by something outside it, and that the ultimate cause of its existence must be something in which essence and existence are identical. It follows that whatever orders things to their ends must also be the cause of those things
and thus (given what was said earlier) Pure Act or Being Itself. Furthermore, as Garrigou-Lagrange points out, if the Supreme Intelligence were not Pure Act or Being Itself, then its essence would be distinct from its existence, and thus it would have a potency or potential (for existence) which, like all potencies, is of its nature directed towards an end. But in that case there would have to be a higher intelligence directing that potency to its end, and we would be off on exactly the sort of regress that, for reasons we have already seen, must in Aquinas’s view terminate in a first member. To explain the reality of final causes, then, we are, once again, unavoidably led to a Supreme Intelligence which is also Pure Act or Being Itself. Obviously all of this goes beyond what Aquinas says in the text of the Fifth Way itself, which, like the other ways, is intended only as a summary. The point is that, when fully worked out in light of Aquinas’s more general metaphysical commitments, the Fifth Way can be seen to lead to precisely the same sort of being whose existence is argued for in the other four ways, by yet another route. And since this being would (if Aquinas’s more general metaphysical assumptions are correct) have to be Pure Act or Being Itself, we can see yet again that, if it succeeds, the Fifth Way establishes far more than the finite sort of being reached via the arguments of Paley and his successors in the “Intelligent Design” movement. Though its approach is very different from Paley’s, it might still seem as if the Fifth Way conflicts with Aristotle’s view that final causality can exist even in the absence of consciousness. But that there is no conflict here can perhaps be seen by considering the analogy of language. If we consider the words and sentences we speak and write, it is obvious that they get their meaning from the community of language users that produces them, and ultimately from the ideas expressed by those language users in using them. Apart from these users, these linguistic items would be nothing more than
meaningless noises or
splotches of ink. Still, once produced, they take on a kind of life of their own. Words,
sentences, and the like printed in books or recorded on tape retain their
meaning even when
no one is thinking about them; indeed, even if the books or tapes in question
sit in a dusty
corner of a library or archive somewhere, ignored for decades and completely
forgotten,
they still retain their meaning for all that. Moreover, language has a structure
that most
language users are unaware of, but which can be studied by linguists. And so
forth. Still, if
the community of language users were to disappear entirely – every single one
of them
killed in a worldwide plague, say – then the recorded words that were left
behind would in
that case revert to meaningless sounds or marks. While the community of
language users
exists, its general background presence is all that is required for meaning to
persist in the
physical sounds and markings, even if some of those sounds and markings are
not the
subject of anyone’s attention at a particular moment. But if the community
goes away
altogether, the meaning goes with it. By analogy (and it is only an analogy,
and admittedly
not an exact one) we might think of the relationship of the Supreme
Intelligence of the Fifth
Way to the system of final causes in the world as somewhat like the
relationship of
language users to language. The Supreme Intelligence directs things to their
ends, but the
system thereby created has a kind of independence insofar as it can be studied
without
reference to the Supreme Intelligence himself, just as linguists can study the
structure of
language without paying attention to the intentions of this or that language
user. The ends
are in a sense just “there” in unconscious causes like the meaning is just
“there” in words
once they have been written. At the same time, if the Supreme Intelligence
were to cease
directing things towards their ends, final causes would immediately
disappear, just as the
meaning of words would disappear if all language users disappeared.
The divine attributes
As we have said, at least when the proofs are read in light of Aquinas’s general metaphysical commitments, each of the Five Ways can be seen, if successful, to demonstrate the existence of a being who is Pure Act or Being Itself. Does this mean that they all converge on one and the same being, or might the existence of five distinct “gods” be proved via Aquinas’s arguments? Aquinas’s answer should be clear from what was said in chapter 2 about his doctrine of essence and existence. For the reasons we examined then, on Aquinas’s view there can in principle be only one being whose essence and existence are identical, and thus which is Pure Being. Hence it is necessarily one and the same being on which all five proofs converge. This would obviously entail, for the same reason, that there is and can be only one God. For there to be more than one God, there would have to be some essence that the distinct “Gods” all share, each with his own individual act of existence. But since God is that being in whom essence and existence are identical, who just is existence or being itself, there is no sense to be made of the idea that he shares an essence with anything else, or has one act of existing alongside others (ST I.11.3). Aquinas also gives two other reasons for holding that the being whose existence is argued for in the Five Ways is necessarily unique. For there to be more than one such being, there would have to be some way to distinguish one from another, and this could only be in terms of some perfection or privation that one has but the other lacks. But as Pure Act, such a being would be devoid of all imperfections and privations, since imperfections and privations are just different ways in which something could fail to be in act or actual. Hence there can be no way even in principle to distinguish one such being from another, and thus there could not possibly be more than one (ST I.11.3). Furthermore, the order that characterizes the world gives it a unity that is explicable only if there is also unity in its cause (ST I.11.3). The unity or oneness of God is only one of many divine attributes that
Aquinas thinks can be established via pure reason without recourse to divine revelation. We have space here only to provide a brief survey, but Aquinas himself pursues the matter at great length and by deploying a wealth of arguments both in the Summa Theologiae and elsewhere, thus exposing as a kind of urban legend the commonly made allegation that even if one were to accept the existence of a first cause, unmoved mover, and so on, Aquinas does nothing to show that such a being would have the other characteristics traditionally ascribed to God. The Five Ways are meant by themselves only to establish the existence of a being having certain key attributes, such as being an unmoved mover, Pure Act, Being Itself, and so forth. Aquinas's next move is to argue that anything having these key features can be seen on analysis necessarily to possess also the other attributes commonly ascribed to God. He follows Pseudo-Dionysius in taking a threefold approach to knowledge of God’s attributes (ST I.13.8): the way of causality (via causalitatis), whereby we move from knowledge of the world to knowledge of God as cause of the world; the way of negation (via negativa), whereby we deny of God any characteristic incompatible with his being the first cause and thus Pure Act; and the way of eminence (via eminentia), whereby we conclude, by applying the principle of proportionate causality described in chapter 2, that God can be said to possess in an eminent way certain features we attribute to things in the world. As this indicates, while it is sometimes claimed that Aquinas agreed with thinkers like Moses Maimonides that our knowledge of God is purely negative, knowledge of what God is not rather than what he is, this was not in fact his view; indeed, he explicitly repudiates it (ST I.13.2). The via negativa obviously gives us only negative knowledge of God, but the via causalitatis and the via eminentia give us some positive knowledge too. Several attributes seem to follow immediately and obviously from God’s being
Pure Act. Since to change is to be reduced from potency to act, that which is Pure Act, devoid of all potency, must be immutable or incapable of change (ST I.9.1). Since material things are of their nature compounds of act and potency, that which is Pure Act must be immaterial and thus incorporeal or without any sort of body (ST I.3.1–2). Since such a being is immutable and time (as Aquinas argues) cannot exist apart from change, that which is Pure Act must also be eternal, outside time altogether, without beginning or end (ST I.10.1–2).

As the cause of the world, God obviously has power, for “all operation proceeds from power” (QDP 1.1; cf. ST I.25.1). Moreover, “the more actual a thing is the more it abounds in active power,” so that as Pure Act, God must be infinite in power (QDP 1.2; cf. ST I.25.2). In line with the mainstream classical theistic tradition, Aquinas holds that since there is no sense to be made of doing what is intrinsically impossible (e.g. making a round square or something else involving a self-contradiction), to say that God is omnipotent does not entail that he can do such things, but only that he can do whatever is intrinsically possible (ST I.25.3).

The Fifth Way, if successful, establishes by itself that God has intellect. Furthermore, intelligent beings are distinguished from non-intelligent ones in that the latter, but not the former, possess only their own forms. For an “intelligent being is naturally adapted to have also the form of some other thing; for the idea of the thing known is in the knower” (ST I.14.1). That is to say, to understand some thing is for that thing’s essence to exist in some sense in one’s own intellect. Now the reason non-intelligent things lack this ability to have the form of another thing is that they are wholly material, and material things can only possess one form at a time, as it were. Hence immaterial beings can possess the forms of other things precisely because they are immaterial; and the further a thing is from materiality, the more powerful its intellect is bound to be. Thus human beings, which,
though they have immaterial intellects are also embodied, are less intelligent than angels, which are incorporeal. “Since therefore God is in the highest degree of immateriality ... it follows that He occupies the highest place in knowledge” (ST I.14.1). This argument presupposes a number of theses in the philosophy of mind and cannot be evaluated, or even properly understood, unless those theses are first understood. We will explore these theses in chapter 4.

We can also conclude, in Aquinas's view, that “there is will in God, as there is intellect: since will follows upon intellect” (ST I.19.1). Why do will and intellect necessarily go together? For Aquinas, things naturally are inclined or tend towards their natural forms, and will not of themselves rest, as it were, until that form is perfectly realized; hence the acorn, for example, has a built-in tendency towards realizing the form of an oak, and will naturally realize that form unless somehow prevented by something outside it. What we are describing in this example is of course the goal-directedness of the acorn as something having a final cause. But other sorts of thing have final causes too. In sentient beings, namely animals, this inclination towards the perfection of their forms is what we call appetite. And in beings with intellect it is what we call will. Thus anything having an intellect must have will. (We will return to this topic in the next chapter.) Of course, since God does not have the limitations we have, he does not have any ends he needs to fulfill, any more than he needs to acquire any knowledge. Thus, as with our attribution of power, intellect, and other attributes to God, our attribution of will to him is intended in an analogous rather than a univocal sense. Since something is perfect to the degree it is in act or actual, God as Pure Act must be perfect (ST I.4.1). Given the convertibility of being and goodness, God as Pure Act and Being Itself must also be good, indeed the highest good (ST I.6). At this point, it might be objected that the problem of evil casts doubt on this claim; for if God is good, why hasn't
he eliminated the evil that obviously exists in the world? But there are several problems with this objection. First of all, it could only undermine Aquinas’s argument for God’s goodness if we assumed that a good being could not possibly have a reason to allow evil. But it is notoriously difficult to show that such a being could not possibly have such a reason, and even most contemporary atheist philosophers would not make such a strong claim. In the absence of such an assumption, though, Aquinas could simply insist that since his arguments have proven that God exists and is good, it follows that whatever evil exists must be consistent with his goodness. Second, as Aquinas himself argues in reply to the problem of evil, “this is part of the infinite goodness of God, that He should allow evil to exist, and out of it produce good” (ST I.2.3). That is to say, the reason God allows evil is precisely because he intends to bring good out of it, whether that good is that we come to learn from the mistakes we make, that we come to have certain virtues that could not be acquired without struggling against evil, that we come to appreciate what is good by contrast with what is evil, or whatever. And given that God is omnipotent and that (as we shall see in the next chapter) Aquinas holds that we have immortal souls, so that our time on earth is merely a brief prelude to an everlasting existence in the hereafter, it is hardly implausible to suggest that God is capable of rewarding us with a good in the next life that is so tremendous that even the most horrendous evils in this life will come to seem trivial in comparison, and worth having suffered through. Of course, in the face of the worst real-world evils, the idea of such a good in the hereafter can seem cold, abstract, and remote. But that is an emotional problem rather than an intellectual one; it has no tendency to show that there is or could be no such good, but only that it is hard for us to keep our minds fixed on it in the face of suffering. Nor could an atheist dismiss such a response out of hand without begging the question. To
say “There is no God, because of all the unredeemable evil that exists; and the evil that exists must be unredeemable, because there is no God who could redeem it,” would be to argue in a circle.

Third, as Brian Davies has emphasized, much discussion of the problem of evil seems to presuppose that God is a kind of moral agent who has certain duties which (so it is alleged) he has failed to live up to. But this way of thinking simply makes no sense given Aquinas’s conception of God. For only creatures with the sorts of limitations we have can coherently be described as having moral duties. For example, given that we depend on other people for our well-being and they depend on us, we have certain obligations towards each other; given that we have certain potentials the realization of which is good for us, potentials which require a certain amount of effort to realize, we have a duty to make that effort; and so forth. But as Pure Act and Being Itself, God has none of these dependencies, potentials, or limitations, and thus there is no sense to be made of the suggestion that he either has or lacks this or that moral virtue or has lived up to or failed to live up to this or that moral obligation. Though his possession of intellect and will (or, more precisely, of something analogous to what we call intellect and will in us) entails that he is in some sense “personal” (rather than the sort of impersonal deity familiar from certain Eastern religions), God is nevertheless not “a person” in the sense that we are, with all the limitations that expression implies.

That God is very remote indeed from the things of our experience is nowhere clearer than in Aquinas’s account of divine simplicity, which is perhaps the most controversial aspect of his teaching on the divine attributes. For Aquinas, God is “simple” in the sense of being in no way composed of parts (ST I.3). As has been said, he is incorporeal and immaterial, and thus cannot have any bodily parts nor be composed of form and matter. But neither does he have even any metaphysical parts. For as we have also seen, on Aquinas’s account there is no distinction between essence and
existence in God.
Unlike everything else that exists, he just is his own existence, and just is his own essence,
for these are identical. For this reason, there can also be no distinction between genus and
difference in God, since being, the only candidate genus for something whose essence and
existence are identical is (as we saw in chapter 2) no genus at all, and since for
there to be a
member of a genus, it must have an act of existence which differs from the essence it shares
(at least potentially) with other members of the genus, and, again, there is no distinction
between essence and existence in God. Hence, again, “it is clear that God is nowise
composite, but is altogether simple” (ST I.3.7).
One famous implication of this doctrine is that though we distinguish in thought
between God’s eternity, power, goodness, intellect, will, and so forth, in God himself there
is no distinction between any of the divine attributes. God’s eternity is his power, which is
his goodness, which is his intellect, which is his will, and so on. Indeed, God himself just is
his power, his goodness, and so on, just as he just is his existence, and just is his essence.
Talking or conceiving of God, God’s essence, God’s existence, God’s power, God’s
goodness, and so forth are really all just different ways of talking or conceiving of one and
the very same thing. Though we distinguish between them in thought, there is no
distinction at all between them in reality. For, again, if there were such a
distinction, then
we could distinguish parts in God, and being absolutely simple, God has no parts.
Though the idea of divine simplicity might seem odd or eccentric to some contemporary readers, it is historically speaking the mainstream view of God’s nature
within the classical theistic tradition, being defended not only by Aquinas, but by thinkers
as diverse as St. Athanasius, St. Augustine, St. Anselm, Maimonides, Avicenna, and
Averroes, to name just a few. It is affirmed in such councils of the Roman Catholic Church
as the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) and Vatican I (1869–1870). Nevertheless, it has been
criticized by a number of contemporary philosophers and theologians. Some of this criticism derives from objections to Aquinas’s doctrine of the identity of essence and existence in God, which were discussed in chapter 2. Some of it derives from worries over whether it makes sense to say that God’s power is identical to his goodness, which is identical to his intellect, and so on; for wouldn’t this entail that power is the same thing as goodness, goodness the same thing as intellect, and so forth, which is obviously false? But this does not in fact follow. For one thing, just as (to use Frege’s famous example) we can acknowledge that the expressions “the morning star” and “the evening star” differ in sense while consistently affirming that they refer to one and the same thing (the planet Venus), so too can we acknowledge the obvious fact that “power,” “goodness,” “intellect,” and so on differ in sense while insisting that when applied to God they refer to one and the same thing. For another thing, we must keep in mind Aquinas’s doctrine of analogy, according to which, while the terms we apply to created things do not apply to God in either equivocal or univocal senses, they do apply in analogical senses. So, while it would of course be absurd to say that power, goodness, intellect, and so forth are all identical in God if we were using these terms in exactly the same sense in which we apply them to ourselves, it is not absurd to say that there is in God something that is analogous to power, something analogous to goodness, something analogous to intellect, and so on, and that these “somethings” all turn out to be one and the same thing. As Eleonore Stump has noted, there are also in any case certain advantages of the doctrine of divine simplicity that ought to recommend it at least to philosophers otherwise sympathetic with Aquinas’s attempt to prove the existence of God via cosmological arguments and/or with the idea that there is an important link between the existence of God and the foundations of morality. To take the latter issue first, there is a distinction
commonly drawn between the view that something counts as good or bad because of God’s will and the view that God wills for us to do or to avoid doing something because it is either good or bad by reference to some standard external to him, and neither of these views is theologically satisfactory. The first seems to make morality entirely arbitrary, insofar as it appears to entail for example that torturing infants for fun would have been good if God had willed this. The second seems to entail that morality is ultimately independent of God, which seems incompatible with the idea that everything that exists other than God ultimately derives from him. This is the basis for the “Euthyphro dilemma” (named after a dialogue of Plato’s in which it was famously put forward), which is an attempt to refute the thesis that morality depends on God by arguing that there are only these two ways of understanding this thesis and that neither of them can be acceptable to the theist. But as Stump points out, the doctrine of divine simplicity shows that there is a third option here, so that the dilemma in question is a false one. For if God just is perfect goodness which just is the divine will which just is immutable and necessary being, then there can be no question either of God willing in accordance with some standard of goodness independent of him or of his will being arbitrary. What is objectively good and what God wills for us as morally obligatory are just the same thing considered under different descriptions, and neither could have been other than they are. (We will return to this issue when we examine Aquinas’s moral theory in chapter 5.) Stump notes also that the doctrine of divine simplicity affords certain advantages to versions of the cosmological argument informed by it. For example, as we noted earlier, some modern versions of the cosmological argument hold that only God can serve as the ultimate explanation of why the universe exists because he is a being whose essence “includes” existence, as if existence were one “property” of God alongside and distinct
from other ones, a property which is also distinct from the essence which “includes” it and from the divine being who “possesses” it. The trouble with this is that it seems perfectly possible to detach “existence” so conceived from God’s other “properties”; certainly the assertion that existence must necessarily go together with them seems arbitrary and itself in need of explanation. But if God just is his existence which just is his power, which just is his will, and so on, then this problem disappears.

Much more could be said about Aquinas’s account of the divine attributes, but this much suffices to show that there is no basis whatsoever for the widespread assumption that Aquinas never justifies the claim that the being whose existence he argues for in the Five Ways is the God of traditional theism. It also gives a sense of how much Aquinas thinks we can know about God through purely philosophical reasoning. But there is also a sense in which Aquinas thinks that we ultimately cannot know the essence of God, at least not as it is in itself. For in the strict sense knowledge of the essence of a thing requires the ability to define it in terms of its genus and difference, and as we have seen, there is for Aquinas no distinction in God between genus and difference, and thus no way to define him (CT 26). It is in this sense that Aquinas holds that “we cannot know what God is, but rather what He is not” (ST I.3). And this is why the famous ontological argument associated with St. Anselm is not considered by Aquinas to be one of the ways in which we might prove the existence of God. For Anselm, God is by definition the greatest conceivable being, and it is (Anselm holds) greater to exist than not to exist. Hence if God did not exist it would follow, absurdly, that there could be something conceivably greater than the greatest being. Anselm’s argument thus begins with a definition of God’s essence and attempts to show that given knowledge of that essence, we can know also that there must be something in reality corresponding to it, and thus that God exists. Since Aquinas holds that God’s
essence and existence are identical, he agrees that if we could have knowledge of God's essence we could see that he must exist. But since in fact we cannot, in his view, have knowledge of that essence, we cannot know the starting point of the ontological argument (ST I.2.1). Our knowledge of God must therefore be a posteriori, based on observation of his effects. But that, as we have seen, affords us in Aquinas’s view with ample grounds indeed for affirming God’s existence and predicating of him the traditional divine attributes.

4 Psychology
As I have emphasized throughout this book, understanding Aquinas requires “thinking outside the box” of the basic metaphysical assumptions (concerning cause, effect, substance, essence, etc.) that contemporary philosophers tend to take for granted. This is nowhere more true than where Aquinas’s philosophy of mind is concerned. Indeed, to speak of Aquinas’s “philosophy of mind” is already misleading. For Aquinas does not approach the issues dealt with in this modern philosophical sub-discipline in terms of their relevance to solving the so-called “mind–body problem.” No such problem existed in Aquinas's day, and for him the important distinction was in any case not between mind and body, but rather between soul and body. Even that is potentially misleading, however, for Aquinas does not mean by “soul” what contemporary philosophers tend to mean by it, that is, an immaterial substance of the sort affirmed by Descartes. Furthermore, while contemporary philosophers of mind tend to obsess over the questions of whether and how science can explain consciousness and the “qualia” that define it, Aquinas instead takes what is now called “intentionality” to be the distinctive feature of the mind, and the one that it is in principle impossible to explain in materialistic terms. At the same time, he does not think of intentionality in quite the way contemporary philosophers do. Moreover, while he is not a materialist, he is not a Cartesian dualist either, his view being in some
respects a middle position between these options. But neither is this middle position the standard one discussed by contemporary philosophers under the label “property dualism.” And so forth.

To the modern philosophical reader, all this might make Aquinas sound very odd indeed, confusing and perhaps confused. (Readers unacquainted with contemporary philosophy of mind might find some of the terminology just used itself confusing; all will be explained presently.) Yet had Aquinas been familiar with the ideas of contemporary philosophers of mind, he would have regarded them as the confused ones, and in particular as having gotten the basic conceptual lay of the land totally wrong. For the “mind–body problem” is essentially an artifact of the early modern philosophers’ decision to abandon a hylemorphic conception of the world for a mechanistic one, and its notorious intractability is, in the view of Thomists, one of the starkest indications of how deeply mistaken that decision was.

The soul
But we will come back to all that. Let us begin at the beginning, with Aquinas's conception of human nature in general. Here as elsewhere, Aquinas’s position is built on an Aristotelian foundation. Recall that for Aristotle, the objects of our experience are composites of form and matter. Neither the form alone is the substance nor the matter alone, but both together, the form constituting the “act” or actuality of the substance and the matter its “potencies” or potentials. This is the doctrine of hylemorphism, and it applies to living things as well as to inanimate objects. Indeed, the distinction between soul and body is just a special case of the distinction between form and matter, which is itself a special case of the distinction between act and potency. That is to say, “the soul is the form of the body” (In DA II.1.234), the specific kind of form which makes the body a living thing as opposed to an inanimate object, which makes it actual in just the unique ways living things
are. Since the soul is just that which makes the difference between living and non-living things, it can also be defined as “the first principle of life in those things which live” (ST I.75.1). “Soul” translates the Latin anima, which is why living things are sometimes said to be “animated.” It also translates the Greek psuche, which is where the term “psychology” comes from. Psychology, for Aristotle and Aquinas, is not merely the study of the mind, but the study of that which makes the organism as a whole a living thing, and of the mind only insofar as it is an aspect of the whole organism. Now it is crucial, if one is to avoid misunderstanding Aquinas’s position here, that one put out of one’s mind the popular conception of the soul, and even the standard modern philosophical conception. Viewers of the movie Ghost might think that what Aquinas has in mind is the sort of thing that floated out of the Patrick Swayze character’s body after his death, an intangible but occasionally visible something which has the same size, shape, and general appearance as the living person. Readers of Descartes might assume that what he has in mind is the idea of an immaterial substance, a complete object existing in its own right which simply happens not to be a physical object. It might then be concluded that when Aristotle and Aquinas say that a soul is what makes something a living thing, what they mean is that a thing is alive only when it is being possessed by a ghost, or only when an immaterial substance is interacting with it. And it might then in turn be concluded that they are indulging in the rankest superstition, or at best appealing to a now scientifically discredited doctrine of “vitalism” (a term of abuse that is flung around more frequently than it is actually defined, but which in the minds of those who do the flinging seems to connote something like the belief in a kind of non-physical or quasi-physical stuff which when added to matter gives rise to life). In fact the position of Aristotle and Aquinas has nothing to do with any of this. For them the soul is neither a ghost, nor an immaterial substance, nor some
spooky kind of “stuff,” non-physical, quasi-physical or otherwise. Nor are they presenting a pseudo-scientific empirical hypothesis on which the existence of the soul is “postulated” as the best way of “explaining” how matter can have the form of a living thing. Again, by “soul” they just mean the form of a living thing, so that anything with such a form has a soul by definition. Attributing souls to living things is thus no more mysterious than saying that rubber balls and rocks each have forms that set them apart from other kinds of thing. Neither is it any more informative than that, and it is not meant to be. “Soul” simply names one kind of form among others. At least given the general framework of hylemorphism, then, it is not the existence of the soul that is particularly problematic, but rather its nature. What is it exactly to have the form of a living thing? Or in other words, what sets living things apart from non-living ones? From the Aristotelian point of view, the answer is that “life is essentially that by which anything has power to move itself” (In DA II.1.219). Of course, we saw in earlier chapters that in Aquinas’s view nothing can move or change itself in the strict sense; even the self-movement of an animal ultimately involves one part being moved by another. So talk of that which can “move itself” is meant here only in a loose sense. In particular, what Aquinas has in mind is evident from his statement elsewhere in the same passage to the effect that “we call those things inanimate which are moved only from outside.” Similarly, he says that “the word life is used of all things which have in them the principle of their own activity” (QDV 4.8) and that “all things are said to be alive that determine themselves to movement or operation of any kind” (ST I.18.1). A living thing is just the sort of thing whose activities spring from within. When a dog races down a hill chasing a cat, its movement is of a different sort than that of a rock which rolls down a hill as a result of an earthquake; there is something internal to the dog that causes its movement in a way there
is nothing internal to the rock that causes its movement. This is so even though the dog’s motion involves one internal part moving another, and even though it is ultimately God, as the first unmoved mover, who is responsible for the motion of both the rock and the dog.

To use some traditional Scholastic jargon, the key to the difference between living and non-living things lies in the distinction between immanent and transeunt (or “transient”) causation. Immanent causation begins and remains within the agent or cause (though it may also and at the same time have some external effects); and typically it in some way involves the fulfillment or perfection of the cause. Transeunt causation, by contrast, is directed entirely outwardly, from the cause to an external effect. An animal’s digestion of a meal would be an example of immanent causation, since the process begins and remains within the animal and serves to fulfill or perfect it by allowing it to stay alive and grow. One rock knocking another one off the side of a cliff would be an example of transeunt causation. Living things can serve as transeunt causes, but what is characteristic of them is that they are also capable of immanent causation in a way that non-living things are not. A living thing can undertake activity that is perfective of it, that fulfills it or furthers its own good, while non-living things cannot do this. In this way it aims at a unique kind of end or goal, though it is only its having this specific kind of end or goal, and not the having of an end or goal as such, that makes it a living thing. For as we saw in earlier chapters, even non-biological phenomena can be teleological or governed by the principle of finality. It is immanent teleology or finality that is definitive of life.

From the Aristotelian point of view, there are certain features of life which we simply cannot adequately describe or understand unless we think in terms of immanent causality. To borrow an example from Pasnau and Shields, when a snake eats and digests a gerbil, we naturally say that part of the gerbil has now become part of the snake (with the rest defecated away) and not that the snake has become part of the gerbil or
that snake and gerbil have become a hybrid. The reason is that it is obvious that the process in question involves the nourishing and benefiting of the snake specifically, not of the gerbil and not of some new snake–gerbil hybrid. After all, the snake still exists while the gerbil is gone, and this is true even if before it digests the gerbil the snake vomits it up and never incorporates it into itself at all (lest someone seriously wants to entertain the “hybrid” idea). It will not do to try to describe the situation entirely in terms of bits of matter pushing or pulling one another in more or less complex patterns, after the fashion of transeunt causation. The digestive causal processes taking place within the snake are immanent and simply not reducible to the sort of causal relationship holding between the snake and the soil it displaces as it slithers along the ground, say, or even between raindrops, grains of sand, or crystals as they form hurricanes, sandstorms, and lattices respectively. Hence from the Aristotelian point of view they are not susceptible of purely mechanistic explanation – a conclusion reinforced by the various considerations considered in the previous two chapters in favor of the continuing relevance to biology of the notion of final causality.

Now machines, or at least complex machines, might seem to exhibit immanent causation of the sort definitive of life. We say, for example, that a coffee machine can turn itself on in the morning, that computers can run self-diagnostic routines, and so forth. So, could machines count as living things on Aquinas’s view, and thus as having souls? They could not. For a living thing is a kind of substance, but machines are artifacts. And though an artifact can be described in a loose sense as if it were a kind of substance (as we did in chapter 2 when using examples like the rubber ball), in the strict sense an artifact is not a genuine substance at all, in Aquinas’s view, but rather a composite of substances, or of parts of substances (In DA II.1.218; SCG IV.35.7). This is evident from the fact that the parts of an artifact have no inherent tendency to come together and function as a coffee
machine, or computer, or whatever, but have to be arranged by us to do so. Their inherent tendencies are rather to behave as the kinds of things they naturally are, or as the parts of the natural things they were once parts of. To take an example from Aristotle, if a wooden bed could be planted (while the wood was still fresh from the original tree, say) what would grow from it, if anything, would be a tree and not a bed (Aristotle, Physics Book II, Chapter 1; cf. In Phys II.2.149). The wood’s arrangement as a bed is accidental, not essential or substantial. But the same is true of the parts of a machine, in which case no machine, or any human artifact generally, could possibly have the immanent causal processes definitive of life, but at most only a man-made simulacrum of such processes. If machines cannot have souls, it should be obvious from what has been said already that plants and non-human animals can and do have them, for they are living things and a soul is just the form of a living thing. But that does not mean that when your favorite rose bush or cat dies its soul goes to heaven. Like the forms of rocks and water droplets, the souls of plants and animals are mere abstractions considered by themselves, apart from the matter they inform, so that when the plant or animal goes, its soul goes with it. (Things are different with the soul of a human being, as we will see later on.) The soul of a plant is the kind Aristotelians traditionally call a vegetative or nutritive soul, which is just that kind of form which gives the thing that has it the powers of taking in nutrients, growing, and reproducing itself (In DA II.7–9). The soul of a non-human animal is called a sensory or animal soul, and it is that which gives the thing that has it not only the powers of the vegetative soul, but in addition to those the powers of sensation, of locomotion, and of having the sorts of appetites associated with sensation and locomotion (In DA II.10ff.). That is to say, an animal can sense the world around it (by seeing, hearing, etc.), can move itself about independently (by walking, flying, or swimming, say), and can desire or be repulsed by the things it senses so as to move towards or away
from them. The soul of a human being is called the intellective or rational soul, and it includes the powers of the vegetative and sensory souls, and adds to them the distinctively human powers of intellect and will: that is to say, the power to grasp abstract concepts and to reason on the basis of what the intellect knows (In DA III.7ff.). The relationship between these three kinds of soul illustrates Aquinas’s hierarchical conception of the structure of reality, which we described in chapter 2. The sensory soul incorporates but adds to the powers of the vegetative soul, and the intellective soul incorporates and adds to the powers of both the vegetative and the sensory souls, so that there is a natural hierarchical relationship between them. Moreover, the powers of each kind of soul higher up in the hierarchy are irreducible to those of the lower kinds of soul. This is particularly evident in the case of the intellective soul, as we will see presently.

Before doing so, however, let us briefly consider the questions of when the soul is first conjoined with the body and when it leaves, focusing on the case of most interest to human beings, namely human beings themselves. These questions appear deeply problematic given a Cartesian understanding of the soul as a kind of immaterial substance. For since, on that understanding, the soul is not only distinct from but utterly independent of the body, there is no special reason for it to become conjoined with the body at any particular moment. Hence it seems entirely possible for it to be absent during much or even all of the time of the body’s gestation within the womb. Indeed, given Descartes’ emphasis on thinking as of the essence of the soul, the earliest time it would seem to be necessary for the soul to be present would be whenever a human being can be judged to have actual thoughts with conceptual content, or at least to be capable of them – something that doesn’t occur until well after birth. Even then, the question of why the soul gets
conjoined to the
body at that point (or at some earlier point – and which exactly?) seems
difficult to answer.
Given the radical independence of soul and body, there is nothing about the
state of the
body at least at its earliest stages that demands the presence of the soul.
Similarly, the latest
the soul would seem to be necessarily conjoined with the body would be
whatever the latest
point is at which a human being can be said to be thinking, or at least to be
capable of doing
so. And that might in principle be well before biological death occurs, such as
when a
person lapses into what is sometimes called a “persistent vegetative state.”
Obviously, this
would seem to open the way in principle to the moral legitimacy of euthanasia
and abortion
(even infanticide!) in at least certain cases (though Descartes himself, it
should be noted,
did not draw these conclusions).
On an Aristotelian view, however, on which the soul is the form of the body –
that
is to say, that which makes the matter composing the body into a living body
in the first
place – there appears to be no special difficulty in saying when the soul is
present in the
body. It is present, and necessarily so, whenever the body itself is present.
Hence, if (as
current biological knowledge indicates) the human organism comes into being
at
conception, then from an Aristotelian point of view it would seem to follow
that that is
necessarily when the soul is first present, otherwise it just wouldn’t be a
human organism,
for the matter that makes it up wouldn’t have the requisite form. Similarly, as
long as the
human body is alive, the soul must continue to be present, otherwise it just
wouldn’t be a
living human body in the first place. (It would not be present after death, for
even though
the “body” is still present, it is not a living body, and the soul is the principle
of life. Indeed,
for Aristotelians what exists after death is, strictly speaking, not someone’s
body, but only
the remains of what used to be a body.) But if the soul, and thus the human
being, is present
from conception until death, then given that at least innocent human beings
cannot justly be killed (an assumption Aquinas would certainly endorse), euthanasia, and abortion at any stage of pregnancy, would be ruled out as immoral. It is true, of course, that fetuses and persons with severe brain damage do not exercise the powers distinctive of the rational soul, namely intellect and will. But for Aquinas, that would not suffice to show that they do not have those powers, or in general that they do not have rational souls. Recall from chapter 2 that from an Aristotelian point of view, what is essential to a thing remains essential to it even if it is somehow prevented from manifesting itself. Triangles essentially have three straight sides and angles adding up to 180 degrees even though some poorly drawn triangles do not perfectly instantiate these features. Dogs are essentially four-legged even though injury or genetic defect might leave some particular dog with only three. And human beings are essentially rational animals even though human beings who are not yet fully formed and those who have been damaged might be prevented from manifesting their rationality. But a badly drawn triangle still has the form of a triangle, however imperfectly, and a defective dog still has the form of a dog; otherwise they would not be triangles or dogs in the first place. Similarly, an immature or damaged human being still has the form of a human being, and thus a soul, otherwise he or she wouldn't be human in the first place. Now while Aquinas himself did regard the killing of an “animated foetus” as homicide (ST II-II.64.8), he did not in fact hold that the soul is present from the moment of conception (which is why he refers to an “animated foetus,” i.e. one in which the soul is present). Rather, he held that the composite of semen and menstrual blood which (as he saw it, given the biological knowledge then available) is the immediate product of conception had to pass through several stages before a body could be formed capable of being informed by an intellective soul (SCG II.89). Though he nevertheless regarded abortion as immoral at any stage from conception onward, he would have allowed that at the earliest
stage it would not amount to homicide, but only to the lesser sin of contraception. (We will see why Aquinas regarded contraception as immoral in the next chapter.)

Robert Pasnau has suggested that this shows that Aquinas’s understanding of the soul tends to imply, all by itself, that ensoulment can occur only much later than conception. But as John Haldane and Patrick Lee have argued in response (and in line with what I suggested above), when combined with what we know from modern biology, Aquinas’s view of the soul actually seems to entail that the soul is present from conception onward, and that it is only Aquinas’s ignorance of the relevant biological facts that led him to a different conclusion. Pasnau’s position assumes that on a Thomistic view, the intellective soul could be present only once bodily organs have developed to a point sufficient to allow for the immediate possibility of conceptual thought, and that to suggest otherwise implies the implausible and certainly un-Thomistic view that the intellective soul could in principle be present in any material body whatever. But as Haldane and Lee point out, a third alternative is that the intellective soul is present once what they call the “epigenetic primordia” of the organs in question are present, which they are from the beginning insofar as within the first two days after conception cells begin to differentiate in the direction of the development of the nervous system, eyes, and so on. Moreover, since what is present from conception (and certainly long before the brain and other organs are well developed) is the beginnings of a specifically human body, and since development from conception onward is governed by genetic factors internal to the organism itself, it is not only possible but necessary on a Thomistic analysis that a human (and thus intellective) soul is present. Finally, Pasnau’s view would also have the bizarre (and definitely un-Thomistic) consequence that a six-week-old infant cannot count as a human organism, since it is not yet capable of conceptual thought.

Intellect and will
We noted that Aquinas regards the human soul as sitting atop a hierarchy of kinds of soul. Part of its superiority lies in the fact that each higher kind of soul incorporates and adds to the powers of the lower ones; a higher soul can do everything a lower one can, and more. But there is more to its superiority than the quantity of its functions. Like other natural objects and processes, organisms and their activities are ordered to certain ends as their final causes, and these ends too have a hierarchical structure. A plant is ordered by nature towards the taking in of nutrients, growth, and reproduction. An animal has these natural ends too, along with the ends entailed by its distinctive powers of sensation, locomotion, and appetite. But notice that some of these ends are subordinated to the others. The point of taking in nutrients, for example, is to enable a plant or animal to carry out its other functions, such as growing and reproducing (In DA II.9.347).

Now a human being has all these ends too, but in addition has intellect and will, each with their own distinctive natural ends. The natural end or final cause of the intellect, with its capacity to grasp abstract concepts and to reason on the basis of them, is to attain truth (In Meta I.1.2–3). The natural end of the will is to choose those courses of action which best accord with the truth as it is discovered by the intellect, and in particular in accordance with the truth about human nature. (This, as we will see in the next chapter, is precisely what morality is in Aquinas’s view: the habitual choice of actions which further the hierarchically ordered natural ends inherent in human nature.) But the intellect’s capacity to know the truth is more fully realized the deeper is its understanding of the nature of the world and the causes underlying it; and in Aquinas’s view the deepest truth about the world is, as we saw in chapter 3, that it is caused and sustained in being by God. Hence the highest fulfillment of the human intellect is to know God (ST I-II.1.8); and since the will’s natural end is to choose in a way that facilitates the realization of our natural ends.
as human beings, the highest fulfillment of free choice is to live in a way that facilitates the knowing of God. All the vegetative and sensory powers of the soul are subordinated to these distinctive and overarching ends of the intellect and will (ST I.91.3). Though on the first level of analysis the human soul is just the form of the human body, it thus turns out on deeper analysis to have a divine purpose which raises it far above plant and animal souls in dignity.

Intellect and will are, then, the keys to the human soul’s superiority; it is by virtue of these distinctive powers that human beings are, unlike other animals, made in the image of God (ST I.3.1; ST I.93.6). Their natural ends or final causes are, as I have just indicated, part of the reason, and we will return to that subject in the next chapter. But another reason has to do with their irreducibility to the lower functions of the soul. For Aquinas, intellect differs from sensation not just in degree, but in kind; and the difference between the will and merely animal appetite is similarly absolute.

Let us begin with the nature of the intellect. That it is irreducible to sensation is evident from the fact that “sense is cognizant only of singulars” while “the intellect is cognizant of universals, as experience proves” (SCG II.66.3; cf. ST I.12.4). Through seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, and smelling, we can only perceive individual, particular things: this triangle, that cat, and so forth. But the intellect can grasp triangularity in general, “catness” in general, and other universals, as essences which apply to indefinitely many individuals. Moreover, “sense-cognition is limited to corporeal things,” while “the intellect knows incorporeal things, such as wisdom, truth, and the relations of things” (SCG II.66.4). That is to say, abstractions like the ones Aquinas mentions are not physical objects, but the intellect is nevertheless capable of entertaining them, while the senses can only ever perceive physical things.

Now sensation gives rise to imagination: the visual, auditory, gustatory, tactile, and
olfactory perceptions we have are recalled in mental images or “phantasms” (as Aquinas calls them). Early modern empiricist philosophers like Berkeley and Hume held that intellect could be reduced to imagination. But for Aquinas, this is as impossible as reducing intellect to sensation, for like the senses, “imagination has to do with bodily and singular things only,” while “the intellect ... grasps objects universal and incorporeal” (SCG II.67.3). And it is notoriously difficult to defend the empiricists against this objection. Any mental image is always going to be particular and individual in some respect, in a way that the concepts grasped by the intellect are not. For example, the mental image you form of a triangle is necessarily going to be of an equilateral, isosceles, or scalene triangle specifically; but the concept of a triangle that your intellect grasps is one that applies to all of these, precisely because it abstracts away from these properties. Hence your concept of a triangle cannot be identified with a mental image. Mental images are also often vague and indistinct in a way that concepts are not. To repeat an earlier example, you can form no clear mental image of a chiliagon – a 1,000-sided figure – certainly not one that is distinct from your mental image of a 997-sided figure, or for that matter from your mental image of a circle. Still, the intellect can easily distinguish the concept of a chiliagon from the concept of a 997-sided figure and the concept of a circle. There are certain things we can form no mental images of – abstractions like law, love, and economics, the absence of a thing, and so forth – but the intellect can easily form concepts of them. And so on. Thus, as Aquinas argues, the intellect is as irreducible to the imagination as it is to sensation. At the same time, “the operation of the intellect has its origin in the senses” (ST I.78.4), and “in the present state of life in which the soul is united to a possible body, it is impossible for our intellect to understand anything actually, except by turning to the phantasms” (ST I.84.7). That is to say, though the intellect is distinct from sensation and
imagination, it depends upon them for its raw materials. In explaining what this involves, Aquinas, following Aristotle, draws a distinction between agent intellect (or “active intellect”) and possible intellect (or “passive intellect”). Sensation involves perceptions of individual things, which give rise to the images or phantasms of the imagination and memory. The visual perception you have of a cat, for example, is later recalled in the mental image you have of what the cat looked like, and your imagination is also able to produce images of cats you have never seen by rearranging the elements of your mental images of things you have seen. But all such images or phantasms are, as we have said, particular or individual, just as the original perceptions and the things perceived were; and as such they are not “intelligible,” that is to say, they are not the sort of thing the intellect can grasp. But “the active intellect ... causes the phantasms received from the senses to be actually intelligible, by a process of abstraction” (ST I.84.6). In other words, it strips away all particularizing or individualizing features of a phantasm so as to produce a truly universal concept or “intelligible species,” leaving you (for instance) with the idea not just of this or that particular cat, but of “catness” in general, of that which is common to all cats. The abstract concept is then stored in the possible intellect (ST I.85.1). This account of the origin of our concepts is intended by Aristotle and Aquinas to serve as a middle position between two erroneous extremes: the materialism of ancient thinkers like Democritus, which in its overemphasis on the sensory origin of our concepts tended to identify intellect with sensation; and the hyper-intellectualism of Plato, who, though he correctly distinguished the intellect from the senses, tended too radically to divorce the former from the latter, and to cut off the intellect from the material world altogether (ST I.84.6).

Aquinas’s talk of “phantasms,” “intelligible species,” and the like may give the impression that he is committed to some form of indirect realism, the view
that all we ever
directly perceive are subjective mental representations, and know of external
material
objects only by inference from these representations. But nothing could be
further from the
truth, and Aquinas is very much a direct realist, holding that in perception it is
the objects
themselves that the mind grasps and not merely representations of them. The
role the
mental items in question do play is summarized by Aquinas as follows:
The intelligible species is to the intellect what the sensible image is to the
sense. But the
sensible image is not what is perceived, but rather that by which sense
perceives. Therefore
the intelligible species is not what is actually understood, but that by which the
intellect
understands. (ST I.85.2, emphasis added) When you see a cat, it is true that
you have a
perceptual representation or “sensible image” of the cat in your mind. But what
you
perceive really is the cat itself, and not the representation, which is merely
that “by which”
you perceive the cat in the sense of being the medium through which
perception takes
place. To use an imperfect analogy, if you need glasses in order to see the cat,
you might
say that the glasses are also something “by which” you see it; but it is still the
cat you see,
and not the glasses, which are only a means of helping you to see it. Similarly,
when you
think about cats in general, you do so by having the concept cat in your
intellect. But what
you are thinking about are cats themselves, not your concept of them.
Especially in the case of concepts, it would from the Aristotelian–Thomistic
point
of view be very misleading to think of them as “representations” in the first
place, as
contemporary philosophers of mind tend to do. The conception of the mind
modern
philosophy inherited from Descartes and Locke portrays thoughts, sensations,
and other
mental items as objects analogous to the words, pictures, and other
representations familiar
from everyday experience, but having a subjective rather than objective mode
of existence.
That is to say, unlike literal, physical words and pictures, which can be known
through the
five senses by any observer, these mental objects are taken to be directly knowable only by the thinkers in whose minds they exist. This gives rise to the idea that what we are directly aware of are just the subjective mental representations themselves, which notoriously opens the door to the problem of explaining how, if this is so, we can ever have knowledge of a real physical world beyond our representations. It also generates the problem of “intentionality.” This is the feature of our mental states by virtue of which they represent or “point to” something beyond themselves (as your thought about cats represents or “points beyond itself” to cats). We know that literal, physical words and pictures can represent things (and thus have a kind of intentionality) despite being in themselves otherwise meaningless squiggles of ink or patterns of color, because we impart meaning to them by using them to convey our thoughts and ideas. But where does the intentionality that characterizes our own minds come from? If the representations outside the mind get their meanings from the representations inside the mind, where do the latter get their meaning? From an Aristotelian–Thomistic point of view, this whole way of characterizing the mind’s relationship to the external world is wrongheaded from the start. For the intellect to have a concept is not for it to have something analogous to a little picture or word in the mind, a kind of internal subjective entity which “represents” another, external, objective entity. Rather, when the intellect understands something, it grasps its form. And that means that one and the same thing, namely the form of the thing understood, exists both in the intellect and in the thing itself. For example, when you understand what a triangle is, the form of triangularity which exists in actual triangles now exists also in your intellect; when you understand what cats are, the form of “catness” which exists in actual cats now exists also in your intellect; and so forth. There are not two things, a subjective representation (of a triangle, cat, or whatever) and an external object (the actual cat or triangle),
which would raise the question of how the one gets in contact with or represents the other. There is just one thing, a form, which (again to make use of Scholastic terminology) exists in two ways, an “entitative” way (in this case, as instantiated in matter so as to comprise with it a material object) and an “intentional” way (that is, in the intellect). For this reason, Aquinas, following Aristotle, holds that “the soul is in a way all things” (In DA III.13.787), a startling claim that John Haldane has labeled the “mind-world identity theory.” But the qualifier “in a way” is obviously important. Aquinas is not claiming that the intellect is or is identical with the things it thinks about, without qualification; obviously your mind is not the same thing as a triangle or a cat, for example. His point is rather that it is of the essence of the intellect that one and the very same thing, a form, exists both in it and in the real world when the former knows the latter: Intelligent beings are distinguished from non-intelligent beings in that the latter possess only their own form; whereas the intelligent being is naturally adapted to have also the form of some other thing; for the idea of the thing known is in the knower. (ST I.14.1)

Had he been familiar with the modern philosophical problem of bridging the (epistemological and representational) gap between mind and reality, Aquinas would no doubt have said that no such gap can arise when the nature of the intellect is rightly understood. Let us turn now to the will. The first thing to note about it is that “in every intellectual being there is will, just as in every sensible being there is animal appetite,” for “will follows upon intellect” (ST I.19.1). On the Aristotelian doctrine of final causes, the inclination or tendency towards an end pervades the natural order. In animals this inclination or tendency can take the form of sensory appetites, insofar as animals can be moved towards that which they apprehend through the senses (ST I.81.1). And it can take the form of what we call will in the case of beings with intellects, in that they can be moved towards that which they rationally apprehend. That is just what will is on
Aquinas’s account: a power to be drawn towards (or away from) that which is apprehended by the intellect (SCG IV.19). (More precisely, it is the power to be drawn towards or away from that which is apprehended to be good or bad, respectively, but we will wait until chapter 5 to explain this qualification.) It follows automatically that that which lacks intellect (as lower animals do) cannot have will, free or otherwise. Now a question suggested by our discussion of the argument from motion in chapter 3 is whether our wills can in fact be free. For if God is the first mover underlying all the motion or change that takes place in the world, that would have to include the motion or change that results from our voluntary actions, in which case God must be the ultimate cause of those actions. But in that case, how can they be free actions? Aquinas considers this question himself (QDM 6; cf. ST I.83.1). His answer is that though God does move the will, “since he moves every kind of thing according to the nature of the moveable thing ... he also moves the will according to its condition, as indeterminately disposed to many things, not in a necessary way” (QDM 6). That is to say, the nature of the will is to be open to various possible intellectually apprehended ends, while something unfree, like an impersonal physical object or process, is naturally determined to its ends in an unthinking, necessary way. When you choose to have coffee rather than tea, you could have done otherwise, whereas when the coffee maker heated your coffee, it could not have done otherwise. This is so because your will was the cause of your having coffee, while something outside the coffee machine – your having keyed certain instructions into it the night before, say, together with the electrical current passing into it from the wall socket, the laws of physics, and so forth – was the cause of its behavior. But God causes both events in a manner consistent with all of this, insofar as in causing your free choice he causes something that operates independently of what happens in the world
around you,
while in causing the coffee machine to heat the coffee he causes something
that operates
only in virtue of what is happening in the world around it (the electricity, laws
of physics,
etc.). In this way God causes each thing to act in accordance with its nature.
Aquinas
summarizes his position as follows:
Free-will is the cause of its own movement, because by his free-will man
moves himself to
act. But it does not of necessity belong to liberty that what is free should be
the first cause
of itself, as neither for one thing to be cause of another need it be the first
cause. God,
therefore, is the first cause, Who moves causes both natural and voluntary.
And just as by
moving natural causes He does not prevent their acts being natural, so by
moving voluntary
causes he does not deprive their actions of being voluntary: but rather is He
the cause of
this very thing in them; for He operates in each thing according to its own
nature. (ST
I.83.1) As this passage indicates, for Aquinas what matters to freedom is
whether the cause
of one's behavior is something in the external natural world (as it is for
natural objects
themselves) or rather one's own will. That God is the ultimate cause of both
the will and
the natural causal order does not undermine freedom; indeed, it makes it
possible in the
sense that just as with natural causes, if free choices were not caused by God,
they couldn't
exist at all.
Immateriality and immortality
The operations of the vegetative and sensory souls depend entirely on matter
for
their operation. For example, a plant cannot carry out photosynthesis without
leaves, and an
animal cannot digest its meal without a stomach. This is why the souls of
plants and
animals cannot survive the destruction of their bodies (ST I.75.3). Naturally,
the vegetative
and sensory functions of the human soul also depend on matter. Even
phantasms or mental
images, which might seem to post-Cartesian philosophers of mind to be
paradigmatically
ghostly and immaterial, are in Aquinas's view dependent on the existence of
bodily organs (ST I.85.1). However, the intellect, and the will insofar as it follows on the intellect, are different. These are in Aquinas’s view essentially immaterial, not requiring any bodily organ for their operation. This not only adds to the dignity of the human soul of which they are the distinctive powers, but entails that that soul alone has a kind of natural immortality. Aquinas gives a number of arguments for the intellect’s independence from matter. (SCG II.49–51 summarizes quite a few of them.) But two arguments in particular seem to have gotten the most attention from commentators, and they do appear to have been regarded as especially important by Aquinas himself. Both arguments suggest that it is the nature of the intellect’s distinctive objects – the forms of things, understood as abstracted universals or “intelligible species” – that most clearly reveals its immateriality. The first is as follows: By means of the intellect man can have knowledge of all corporeal things. Now whatever knows certain things cannot have any of them in its own nature; because that which is in it naturally would impede the knowledge of anything else. Thus we observe that a sick man’s tongue being vitiated by a feverish and bitter humor, is insensible to anything sweet, and everything seems bitter to it. Therefore, if the intellectual principle contained the nature of a body it would be unable to know all bodies. (ST I.75.2; cf. In DA III.7.680 and QDA 14) Aquinas describes this as the “main reason” why the intellect is immaterial (QDA 14). But especially for modern readers, it may not be obvious at first glance what the argument is. One possible reading would focus on the claim that the intellect can know “all corporeal things.” The example of the “sick man’s tongue,” as well as another illustration Aquinas gives later in the same passage to the effect that the presence of a certain color in the eye might make a liquid one is looking at seem to be of that color, would then seem to indicate that what Aquinas is getting at is this: when a sensory organ is
“biased” in its perceptions in a certain direction, there are certain things it is incapable of perceiving. To a tongue coated with a bitter substance everything will taste somewhat bitter, so that at least some sweet substances will be undetectable to it. To eyes wearing green contact lenses, everything will seem to take on at least a faint green hue, so that certain shades of color will be invisible to them. But if the intellect depended on some material organ for its operation, then it would be “biased” in the direction of that kind of matter in just the way the tongue and eyes in question are biased in the direction of bitterness and greenness. And in that case there would be certain material things whose natures it could not grasp, just as there are certain tastes and colors that the tongue and eyes of our examples cannot perceive. But the intellect is not limited in the sorts of material natures it can grasp. Therefore it must not depend on the operation of any material organ.

Certainly this argument is clear. But it is also obvious that it might be challenged on several fronts. How do we know, for example, that the intellect can grasp the natures of all material things? Maybe there are some that it cannot grasp, and if so, this might be precisely because it depends on a certain kind of material organ itself. And is the analogy between the intellect and the senses close enough in the first place to justify the inference that a material intellect would be biased in a way that prevented the grasp of certain material natures?

It seems to me, however, that this interpretation of Aquinas’s argument doesn’t get to the heart of it. In particular, and as parallel texts seem to imply, the argument does not in fact crucially depend on the claim that the intellect can understand every kind of material thing, and the “bias” that matter would impose on the intellect does not crucially depend on the analogy with sense organs. The force of the argument depends instead on the way in which, as we have seen, the intellect takes on the form of the thing it understands in the
very act of understanding it. This capacity shows that the intellect has “potencies” which material things do not have (In DA III.7.680), and in particular that the intellect can, unlike material things, take on the form of other things (whether all of them or only some is irrelevant) without losing its own form (SCG II.49.3).

When understood in light of his general account of what intellectual activity involves, what Aquinas is saying in the specific argument in question seems, then, to be something like this: when the intellect grasps the form of a thing, it is necessarily one and the same form that exists both in the thing itself and in the intellect. The form of triangularity that exists in our intellects when we think about triangles is one and the same form that exists in actual triangles themselves; the form of “catness” that exists in our intellects when we think about cats is one and the same form that exists in actual cats; and so forth. If this weren’t the case, then we wouldn’t really be thinking of triangles, cats, and so on in the first place, since to think about these things requires grasping what they are, and what they are is determined by their forms. Now suppose that the intellect were a material thing (some kind of brain activity, say). Then for the forms of our example to exist in the intellect would be for them to exist in a certain material thing. But for a form to exist in a material thing is just for that material thing to be the kind of thing the form is a form of. For example, for the form of triangularity to exist in a certain parcel of matter is just for that parcel of matter to be a triangle; for the form of “catness” to exist in a certain parcel of matter is just for that parcel of matter to be a cat; and so on. Thus, if your intellect were really a material thing, it would follow that that material thing – that part of your brain, say – would become a triangle whenever you thought about triangles, or a cat whenever you thought about cats. But of course, that’s absurd. Hence, since the assumption that the intellect is material leads to such absurdity, we must conclude that the intellect is not material.
Indeed, if the intellect were material and thus became a cat when thinking about cats, it could never think about anything else ever again (whether triangles or whatever) since it would in that case not exist anymore – the parcel of matter composing it, having now become a cat, would no longer be an intellect at all (which seems to be Aquinas's point in the passage cited from SCG II.49.3). Similarly, if the intellect were material it could never think about cats and triangles at the same time, for in taking on their forms (as it does in grasping them) it would then become both a cat and a triangle at the same time, which of course nothing can be. This, I would suggest, is what Aquinas means by saying that if the intellect were material, its knowing one thing “would impede the knowledge of anything else,” The point is not so much that the intellect can know all material things, but rather that it can know enough of them to justify us in inferring that it cannot be material. Indeed, just knowing that it can grasp both triangles and cats suffices to justify this inference. Insofar as it can take on the forms of multiple things, both over time and at a particular moment, the intellect has a potency that nothing material has or can have. The second of Aquinas's main arguments for the immateriality of the intellect is as follows: from the fact that the human soul knows the universal natures of things, philosophers have perceived that the species by which we understand is immaterial. Otherwise, it would be individuated and so would not lead to knowledge of the universal. From the immateriality of the species by which we understand, philosophers have understood that the intellect is a thing independent of matter. (QDV X.8; cf. ST I.75.5 and DEE 4) Precisely by virtue of being universal, the objects of the intellect are not material, for all material things are particular rather than universal. This or that individual triangle is a material thing, but the universal triangularity is not; this or that individual cat is a material thing, but the universal catness is not; and so on. If triangularity, say, were a material
thing, then our knowledge of it would be knowledge of just one particular material thing among others and thus not knowledge of a universal at all. That much is relatively uncontroversial. But how does it follow that the intellect which grasps these immaterial universal natures is itself immaterial?

One basis for this inference that we might suggest on Aquinas’s behalf would be that if the intellect were material, then its operation would presumably involve some purely material process, such as the manipulation of formal symbols a la modern “computational” accounts of the mind. In that case a thought about triangularity, for example, would consist of some physical representation of triangularity in the brain somewhere (in the form of a neuronal firing pattern or whatever). But no such physical representation could possibly count as the universal triangularity, because like any other physical representation of a triangle, this one too would be just one particular material thing among others, and not universal at all. Thus the operations of the intellect cannot consist of purely material processes.

Another basis for the inference from the immateriality of the objects of the intellect to the immateriality of the intellect itself is one suggested by James Ross. When you think about triangularity, as you might when proving a geometrical theorem, it is necessarily perfect triangularity that you are contemplating, not some approximation of it. Triangularity as your intellect grasps it is entirely determinate or exact. (Of course, your mental image of a triangle might not be exact, but rather indeterminate and fuzzy; but as we’ve seen, to grasp something with the intellect is not the same as to form a mental image of it.) Now the thought you are having must be as determinate or exact as triangularity itself, otherwise it just wouldn’t be a thought about triangularity in the first place, but only a thought about some approximation of triangularity. Yet material things are never
determinate or exact in this way. Any material triangle, for example, is always only ever an approximation of perfect triangularity (since it is bound to have sides that are less than perfectly straight, etc., even if this is undetectable to the naked eye). And in general, material symbols and representations are inherently always to some extent vague, ambiguous, or otherwise inexact, susceptible of various alternative interpretations. It follows, then, that any thought you might have about triangularity is not something material; in particular, it is not some process occurring in the brain. And what goes for triangularity goes for any thought that involves the grasp of a universal, since universals in general (or at least very many of them, in case someone should wish to dispute this) are determinate and exact in a way material objects and processes cannot be. Whatever one thinks of arguments like this, it is important to understand that they are not the sort that might be undermined by the findings of neuroscience, or any other empirical science for that matter. They are not “soul of the gaps” arguments any more than Aquinas’s arguments for God’s existence are “God of the gaps” arguments. That is to say, Aquinas is not presenting a quasi-scientific explanation of some psychological phenomenon that we simply haven’t got enough empirical data to explain in a materialistic way. As with the Five Ways, he is attempting to provide a metaphysical demonstration. He is claiming that it is in principle impossible, conceptually impossible for the intellect to be accounted for in a materialistic way. If his arguments work at all, they establish conclusively that the intellect could no more be identified with processes in the brain than two and two could make five. If they are mistaken, they would be mistaken in the way one might make a mistake in attempting to carry out a geometrical proof, and not by virtue of having failed to take account of this or that finding of brain research. The immateriality of the intellect has several consequences for Aquinas’s overall system of thought. For the reasons just stated, material things cannot possess
more than one form precisely because they are material, and intellects can do so precisely because they are not. But that is what the intellect’s having knowledge of things amounts to: its possession of a thing’s form without itself being that thing. Aquinas infers from this that the farther a thing is from materiality – the further it is up the hierarchy of reality that extends from prime matter at the bottom to pure act at the top – the more it is capable of having knowledge. And that is ultimately why God, as pure act, must be all knowing (ST I.14.1).

In showing that the human intellect is immaterial, Aquinas takes himself to have shown also that the human soul is, unlike the souls of plants and animals, a “subsistent” form (ST I.75.2). That is to say, it has its being, and (in part) its operation, in itself, independent of anything else, including the body. For even when it is conjoined to the body, its intellectual and volitional acts, being independent of any material organ, are undertaken independently of the body. And what can operate independently must exist independently, since “a thing operates according as it is; for which reason we do not say that heat imparts heat, but that what is hot gives heat” (ST I.75.2). In other words, heat all by itself cannot heat anything because it is a mere accident rather than a substance, and therefore cannot even exist on its own; but a coal that is hot, since it is a substance, can heat something else. Similarly, intellectual activity cannot exist all by itself but requires a subject, and since that subject operates apart from matter it must be an immaterial subject.

Of course, given Aquinas’s account of the origin of our concepts, the intellect requires sensation and the phantasms it gives rise to in order to abstract from them the “intelligible species” or abstract universals that it grasps; and these in turn require bodily organs (eyes, ears, the brain, etc.). But once this abstraction has occurred, the soul’s intellectual operations can carry on independently of matter. Because it is subsistent, the human soul is capable, unlike plant and animal
souls
and indeed unlike the forms of all other material things, of existing apart from
the matter it
informs. In particular, it is capable of surviving the death of the body. Here
Aquinas goes
beyond Aristotle, who, though he was clear that the intellect is at least
partially immaterial,
was not clear about whether the individual intellect persisted beyond death.
Still, Aquinas’s
arguments are Aristotelian in spirit. Material things perish precisely because
they lose their
forms; for example, a tree tossed into the wood chipper goes out of existence
precisely
because the matter that once comprised it has lost the form of a tree and taken
on the form
of wood chips. But a form itself is obviously not capable of losing its form,
since it is a
form. It is not the sort of thing it makes sense to speak of going out of
existence; as we saw
in chapter 2, for Aquinas it is composites of form and matter, rather than form
and matter
themselves, that are generated and corrupted. Of course, this does not entail
that the forms
of things which depend entirely on matter for their operation somehow carry
on as
individual substances beyond the deaths of the things they are the forms of,
because apart
from those things the forms are mere abstractions. But a subsistent form, one
which already
operates as a particular, concrete thing apart from matter even when it is
conjoined with the
thing it is the form of, is a different story. In its case, the fact that “it is
impossible for a
form to be separated from itself” (which it would have to do in order to
perish) entails that
“it is impossible for a subsistent form to cease to exist,” so that it must carry
on as a
particular thing even beyond the death of the body it informs (ST I.75.6).
This is not meant by Aquinas to imply that it is impossible in an absolute
sense for
the human soul to go out of existence. For like everything else that exists other
than God,
even an immaterial substance is a composite of essence and existence, and
thus can only
continue to exist so long as God keeps it in being. At the same time, only God
could cause
the soul to perish. Given its nature, there is nothing in the natural order that
could do so,
and in that sense it has a kind of natural immortality, which material things,
capable as they
are of being destroyed by other material things, do not have.
Now it is sometimes suggested that Aquinas’s position conflicts with his
rejection
of Platonic realism. Plato’s view was that forms exist in a realm of their own,
independently of the material world. Aristotle’s moderate version of realism
denies this,
holding that forms exist only in the things they are the forms of. Aquinas is
supposed to be
an Aristotelian. So how can he consistently hold that the human soul, which is
a kind of
form, can subsist apart from the matter it informs? As we saw in chapter 2,
Anthony Kenny
raises precisely this objection to Aquinas’s account of angels as pure forms.
But as we also
saw there, the objection fails insofar as it falsely assumes that Aquinas is
affirming that
forms can exist apart from matter in the same sense in which Plato thought
they did. A
Platonic Form is supposed to be abstract and universal on the one hand, and at
the same
time a kind of individual substance alongside other individual substances on
the other. This
is what makes the notion objectionable. But for Aquinas a human soul, like an
angel, is a
concrete (though immaterial) particular with its own individual act of
existing, not a
universal. Furthermore, there is for Aristotle an asymmetry between act and
potency insofar
as act can exist without potency even though potency cannot exist without act.
It should
hardly be surprising, then, that form (which is a kind of act) might exist
without matter
even though matter (a kind of potency) cannot exist without form. (This is not
the normal
case, of course, but then act usually doesn’t exist without potency either.)
Indeed, Aristotle
himself allowed at least the possibility of the rational soul continuing to exist
beyond the
death of the body; he did not dismiss the idea as inherently absurd
(Metaphysics Book XII,
Chapter 3; cf. In Meta XII.3.2451). At the end of the day, then, the charge that
Aquinas is a
kind of Platonizing backslider, less than consistent in his Aristotelianism,
seems not to hold
Moreover, though Aquinas regards the human soul as subsistent, he does not think of it as a substance in an unqualified way, but rather as a kind of incomplete substance (ST I.75.2; QDA 1). It is comparable in this respect to a hand or a foot, which, though they might subsist on their own for a time after being severed from the body (as is evident from the fact that they can sometimes be reattached), are nevertheless only parts of a substance (the human being as a whole) rather than complete substances in their own right. And like a hand or foot, the soul by itself is not a person; “soul is not the whole human being, only part of one: my soul is not me” (In I Cor 15). Aquinas’s conception of the soul is thus very different from that of Plato or Descartes, for whom soul and body are each complete substances in their own right, with the soul being the true self, only contingently related to its body. For Aquinas, it is only the soul and body together which make up a complete substance, and a person. So close is their relationship that “there is no more reason to ask whether soul and body together make one thing than to ask the same about wax and the impression sealed on it, or about any other matter and its form” (In DA II.1.234).

Given that it is only soul and body together that constitute a person, the persistence of the soul after death does not amount to the survival of the person; when John dies, his soul carries on, but he does not, at least not strictly speaking. What the soul’s survival does do, however, is make it possible for the person to live again. This would require the soul’s being rejoined with the matter it once informed, and thus the resurrection of its body – something which cannot be accomplished naturally but only through divine intervention (CT I.154). But without the persistence of at least the soul after death, even divine intervention couldn’t bring a person back. What makes a resurrection of a person’s body a resurrection of that person, and not just the creation of a duplicate of the original person, is
that there is continuity of the soul between death and resurrection. Now since your soul is the form of your body specifically, it is precisely the same matter that made up your body to which it must be rejoined (CT I.153). It follows that on Aquinas's conception of the soul (unlike, presumably, Plato’s or Descartes’) neither the reincarnation of a human being’s soul in a non-human animal's body, nor the entrance of one person’s soul into the body of another (as in movies like Freaky Friday), would be possible even in principle. This also opens up Aquinas’s position to the famous “cannibal problem”: suppose a cannibal eats the body of another man and then, after his victim's flesh has been assimilated to his own body, the cannibal himself dies. Whose soul in question at the resurrection? Aquinas's answer begins by noting that the matter comprising our bodies is always somewhat in flux in any case, as we take in new matter by eating and lose old matter through elimination and the like. Hence our resurrection does not require that every single bit of matter ever associated with our bodies be rejoined to our soul; indeed, if it did, then “the size of risen man would exceed all bounds” (CT I.159)! What is needed is “only so much as will be enough to constitute the species of the parts in integrity” (CT I.159); and even then, “the material elements existing in man’s body are found to pertain to true human nature in various degrees” so that some bits of matter are bound to be more crucial to preserving identity than others (CT I.161). To take an obvious example (mine, not Aquinas’s), not all of the body fat that exists in a certain person need be put back into his body in order to resurrect it. Hence in the case of the cannibal and his victim, the matter that is restored to the former need not be exactly that which he derived from the latter, but could instead be matter from things he ate previously; in a case where what he ate previously has primarily been other people, only such matter as goes into the more central elements of human nature need be restored to the cannibal and his victim in
the first place; and where there is still a lack of matter despite the restoration of these bits, then just as in the normal course of things this is supplied from outside via eating and the like, so too can God supply it through his power (CT I.161; SCG IV.81.13).

Hylemorphic dualism

In their zeal to emphasize the differences between Aquinas's position and that of Plato and Descartes, some of his defenders have tended to insist that he was not only not a materialist, but not a dualist either. But this “pox on both houses” approach, motivated in part perhaps by a fear that contemporary philosophers might be too quick to dismiss Aquinas if he is labeled with the “D word,” is not very plausible. As we have seen, Aquinas held both that the intellect is immaterial and that the soul survives the death of the body. Surely that counts as dualism by most people’s reckoning, and certainly by the reckoning of most contemporary philosophers. To be sure, it is neither Cartesian dualism nor property dualism, the versions best known to contemporary philosophers. But it is dualism all the same: “Thomistic dualism,” as some have called it, or “hylemorphic dualism,” to borrow David Oderberg’s apt coinage. Better, then, just frankly to acknowledge the fact, and to defend Aquinas’s position on its merits rather than pretend it is something it is not.

Its merits, I would suggest, are in any event considerable. It is, after all, hardly as if dualism has no respectable defenders. The arguments that philosophers past and present have offered in its defense are many and powerful. (For those readers who are interested, I provide a detailed survey of them in my book Philosophy of Mind: A Beginner’s Guide.)

And while the particular versions of dualism mentioned above are open to several well-known objections, an advantage of Aquinas’s hylemorphic dualism is that it is immune to them. Arguably, it affords us the benefits of dualism without the usual drawbacks. Cartesian substance dualism holds, as has been said, that the mind or soul on the
one hand and the body on the other constitute two complete substances rather than (as Aquinas’s view does) two components of one complete substance. The body is defined in terms of the mechanistic conception of matter bequeathed to us by the early modern philosophers (and discussed in chapter 2), as inherently devoid of formal or final causes and operating entirely in terms of a stripped-down notion of efficient cause. The mind, apart from its being a thinking thing, is characterized in negative terms, by denying of it any of the properties typical of matter as mechanistically defined. In particular it has no length, width, depth, or position in space. Nevertheless, the mind is taken somehow to interact causally with the body. How a substance that has no length, width, depth, or position in space could get in any sort of cause and effect relationship with a material world defined in entirely quantificational terms is notoriously mysterious, however, and this “interaction problem” has always been the central objection to Cartesian dualism.

Property dualism denies that the mind is a non-physical substance of this sort. It accepts the materialist view that material substances (again, mechanistically defined) are the only substances there are. But it disagrees with materialism and agrees with Cartesian dualism in holding that mental properties, or at least some of them, are non-physical properties, and it takes these properties to inhere somehow in the physical substance of the brain. Some property dualists would include intentionality among these non-physical mental properties. The mental properties most property dualists focus on, however, are “qualia”: those features of a conscious experience that are directly knowable only to the person having the experience and which are thus inherently subjective, such as the way colors look (which is different for someone with normal vision than it is for someone who is color blind), the way things taste (which is different for someone whose tongue is burnt than it is for someone whose tongue is in good working order), and so forth.
The early modern philosophers and scientists who put forward a “mechanistic” conception of matter tended towards the view that colors, tastes, odors, sounds, and the like as we subjectively experience them, since they are qualitative rather than quantitative and vary from observer to observer, cannot be real features of material objects. For scientific purposes, then, color, and so on as objective physical properties were redefined in entirely quantifiable terms, and the residual elements of these properties that could not be captured in a quantifiable way were characterized as existing only in the mind, “sensory qualities” that we tend to project on to the physical world but which do not really exist there at all. The notion of “qualia” is the contemporary descendant of this early modern idea. Property dualism also faces a version of the interaction problem, insofar as the idea that non-physical properties could have any causal influence on the physical world is as mysterious as the idea that a non-physical substance could.

Now Aquinas would regard both these ways of looking at the relationship between mind and matter as deeply mistaken. The trouble, however, is not merely with their conception of the mind (as contemporary materialists assume it is) but also, and especially, with their conception of matter (a conception that materialists themselves are implicitly committed to). From an Aristotelian point of view, the mechanistic worldview is fundamentally wrongheaded, and its adoption is what created the so-called “mind–body problem” in the first place. For if matter is simply defined in such a way that formal and final causes are not allowed to count as physical, and only that which can be described in purely quantifiable terms is allowed to count as physical, then mental properties are both inevitably going to count as non-physical and seem impossible to relate causally to the physical world.

In particular, if it is held that material things are inherently devoid of anything like
final causality or “directedness towards” an end, then of course intentionality (which involves the mind’s being “directed towards” something beyond itself) is going to have to count as non-physical. And if that which cannot be captured entirely in mathematically quantifiable terms is not allowed to count as physical, then of course sensory qualities (and thus “qualia”) must be regarded as non-physical. In the debate between contemporary materialists on the one hand and Cartesian and property dualists on the other, the Thomist is bound to regard the dualists as having the better of the argument. For contrary to what materialists tend complacently to suppose, dualism follows, not from ignorance of modern neuroscience or an unscientific attitude towards the world, but rather from the very conception of matter they share in common with modern dualists. At the same time, this conception of matter also makes it difficult or even impossible for modern dualists to explain how the mental world can have any causal influence on the physical world. The main reason is not the dualist’s conception of the mind as immaterial (again, contrary to what materialists suppose), but rather in the impoverished mechanistic understanding of the notions of substance and causation. In particular, it lies in the false assumption that the relationship between soul and body is to be conceived of as an instance of efficient causation between two complete substances. From the Thomistic point of view, the right way to think about this relationship is rather in hylemorphic terms, as an instance of formal causation relating two components of one complete substance. The body is not a complete substance, for matter can never exist all by itself. Matter only ever exists with some form or other, and the human body therefore exists only insofar as it has its form, that is to say, the rational soul. As the form of the body, the soul is not a complete substance either. It is only form and matter or soul and body together which constitute a complete substance, and they are related, not as one ghostly object somehow banging into another one, but rather in the way that the form of a table is related to the
wood that makes it up, or the form of a dog is related to its flesh. Hence if those relationships are not particularly mysterious, neither is the relationship between soul and body. One advantage of hylemorphic dualism, then, is that its notion of formal causation opens the way to acknowledging the immateriality of the soul while avoiding the interaction problem. A second, related advantage is that it arguably better accords with what we know from modern neuroscience about the close relationship between our mental lives and processes in the brain. To be sure, the Thomist would agree with the modern dualist that the case for the intellect’s immateriality is not in the least affected by modern neuroscientific findings. We have already looked at the reasons for this. They have to do with the nature of intentionality, which is in principle impossible to account for in materialistic terms on either a hylemorphic conception of matter or a mechanistic one. In the former case, this is because nothing material can either possess the multiplicity of forms the intellect does or manifest the abstract universality and determinateness that at least many of our thoughts do. In the latter case, it is because nothing devoid of final causality can possess the directedness characteristic of intentionality. Still, if intentionality exists in a realm totally divorced from matter (as Cartesian dualism claims), it is hard to see why there should be such a tight connection between specific mental processes and specific neurological ones. But this is not at all mysterious on a hylemorphic conception of the soul. For on such a conception, soul is related to body in a manner that is just as intimate as the relationship between the form of a table and the wood that makes it up. That is to say, just as there is no sense to be made of the wood of the table being just as it is (round, solid, etc.) without it having the form of a table, so too there is no sense to be made of the body, including its neurological states, being just as they are without their having a soul. The connection is a necessary one. Hence, to take a simple
bodily action as an example, the intellect and will constitute the formal-cum-final cause of the action, of which the firing of the neurons, flexing of the muscles, and so on are the material-cum-efficient causes. That it is a bodily action is due to its matter and the way the bodily parts interact; that it is a bodily action with a certain specific end in view (rather than an involuntary reflex or an unconscious robotic movement) is due to its form and final cause. There are not (as there are for the Cartesian dualist) two substances with events going on in each that are somehow mysteriously correlated. There is one substance and one set of events having both formal and material, and final- and efficient-causal components. This also gives the hylemorphic dualist an advantage over materialism, which has well-known problems of its own in explaining “mental causation.” To avoid the interaction problem, the materialist identifies mental states with neurological ones. Hence your belief that it is raining can cause you to get your umbrella because the belief is just a certain neural process. So far so good. But the materialist also typically wants to say that it is only the physical properties of this process, and not the distinctively mental ones, that actually cause your body to move. That is to say, it is only the fact that the process has certain electrochemical properties, say, and not the fact that it represents rain or has any meaning at all, that is responsible for it causing your legs to move you over to the closet, and so forth. As with Cartesian dualism, it thus becomes mysterious even on a materialist view how the mind has any causal influence on the body. From the point of view of the Thomist, this is yet another bad consequence of the abandonment of the hylemorphic understanding of matter. But if we regard the neurological processes as the material- and efficient-causal side of a set of events of which the mental aspects are the formal- and final-causal side, the mystery disappears. Then there is the issue of “qualia” or sensory qualities, which, I have suggested,
inevitably count as non-material when the material world is defined in a mechanistic way, but which also seem in that case incapable of any causal interaction with the material world. On a hylemorphic understanding of matter, the mistake lies in the stipulation that only that which can be reduced to the mathematically quantifiable properties favored by modern physics can count as “material.” For Aristotle and Aquinas, what modern philosophers call “sensory qualities” – whether that expression refers to qualities of external physical objects or to qualities of our experiences of them (there is a notorious ambiguity here) – are, though having a qualitative nature which cannot be cashed out in quantitative terms, just one set of material features of the world alongside others. It is no surprise at all, then, that there should be a close correlation between them and various physical properties. No doubt sensory qualities are unlike other features of the material world (size, shape, mass, electric charge, etc.), but from the Aristotelian–Thomistic point of view there is simply no good reason to think that all truly material attributes should be reducible to one, quantifiable, type in the first place. That assumption is (as Aristotelians and Thomists see it) just a bit of dogmatism on the part of modern philosophers who insist on making the world fit their method, rather than letting their method fit the world. The modern focus on sensory qualities (whether on the part of dualists or materialists) also radically distorts our understanding of the mind, falsely making it seem as if the sentience we share with non-human animals is the crucial and philosophically interesting phenomenon (as modern philosophers tend to assume), when in fact it is our intellects, which we do not share with them, that sets the mind (and thus us) apart from the rest of the material world (cf. ST I.75.3). From the Thomistic point of view, contemporary philosophers’ obsession with the “qualia problem” is a red herring. A third advantage of hylemorphic dualism is the light it arguably sheds on the philosophical problem of personal identity. Cartesian dualism entails that the real you is
your soul, with your body being merely a non-essential vehicle that you walk around in, as it were. As complete substances, the soul can exist entirely apart from the body and (more to the present point) the body can exist entirely apart from the soul. This raises the puzzle of how you could know, even in principle, that in dealing with another person you are dealing with the same person over time. For all you ever observe is the person’s body; you never observe, and never could observe, the person’s soul, which is the thing that really is the person. So how do you know that the same soul, and thus the same person, is present in the body you’re talking to now as was present in it last week or last year? Even if the personality traits and the like seem the same, that might just be because another soul is occupying the same body and pretending to be the original one. You could never know for sure – again, not even in principle, it seems. This “re-identification problem” is as stark a problem for Cartesian dualism as the interaction problem. But if we return to the hylemorphic conception of the soul as the form of the body, the problem disappears. For since matter is not, on that view, a complete substance in its own right, there simply cannot be matter without form, and thus cannot be a body without a soul. In particular, since your soul is the form of your body specifically, it follows that if your body is present, your soul is too, and thus you are present. The re-identification problem cannot arise.

A fourth and related advantage of Aquinas’s hylemorphic dualism is that it provides a solution to the philosophical “problem of other minds.” Given that all you ever observe is someone’s body and behavior, and never observe nor could observe his or her thoughts and experiences, how do you know the latter even exist in the first place? How do you know the person isn’t what philosophers call a “zombie” – a creature which is physically and behaviorally like a normal person down to the last detail, but which is totally devoid of consciousness? This is yet another problem that arises precisely because of the “mechanistic” conception of matter as inherently devoid of any sensory
qualities or formal or final causes, which makes it seem possible that a living human body could exist without “qualia” and/or intentionality. But it is another problem which disappears if we look at things from a hylemorphic point of view. Again, a human body just couldn’t be a human body in the first place unless it had the form of a human body, and thus a rational soul, and thus sensation, intellect, and all the rest. So, “zombies” are metaphysically impossible, and you know that other people have minds precisely because they are physically and behaviorally identical to normal human beings.

There are further advantages to a hylemorphic approach to the philosophy of mind, some of which are discussed in my book Philosophy of Mind, cited above. But what has been said already suffices to show that Aquinas’s view has, in addition to its intrinsic plausibility as a consequence of a general Aristotelian metaphysics (which, as I argued in chapter 2, is as defensible today as it ever was), a great deal of explanatory power with respect to problems of interest to contemporary philosophers of mind. Ironically enough, even some materialists have seen value in Aristotelian hylemorphism, though only because they have misinterpreted it as a variant of “functionalism.” So that the Aristotelian–Thomistic position is not misunderstood, let us end this chapter by briefly noting some of the differences between the views in question.

Functionalism is a version of materialism according to which a mental state (such as a belief that it is raining outside, a sensation of pain, or whatever) should be analyzed in terms of its causal relations to stimulation of the sense organs, other mental states, and bodily behavior. So, for example, a sensation of pain is on this view to be analyzed as whatever internal state (of the brain, say) tends to be caused by damage to the body, tends also to produce such behaviors as screaming and crying, and does so in conjunction with other mental states which (by virtue of their own distinctive causal relations) can be identified as distress, annoyance, and the like. The idea is that what makes a
mental state
the kind of thing it is is the causal role it plays, not the kind of physical stuff
the creature
who has it is made out of. Hence, according to functionalism, if a robot were
put together in
such a way that the computer chips and wiring (or whatever) that made up its
artificial
“brain” functioned in a manner that paralleled the way neurons do, for
example by sending
signals between themselves in response to damage to the robot’s body in such
a way as to
cause it to scream and cry, and so on, then the robot would literally experience
pain just as
we do, and indeed would in general have thoughts and experiences of just the
sort we have.
Now since functionalism holds that it is the way in which material
components are
“organized” that gives rise to mental states, some have suggested that it is
comparable to
the Aristotelian hylemorphism idea that what makes certain parcels of matter
living things
capable of sensory and intellectual activity is the form that that matter has
taken on. But the
comparison is superficial. The crucial difference is that, like other forms of
materialism,
functionalism is implicitly committed to a “mechanistic” conception of the
material world
on which it is devoid of Aristotelian formal and final causes. For materialists,
including
functionalists, matter is not (as it is for Aristotelians and Thomists)
essentially correlative
with form, as that which has the potency to take on form, the “material cause”
as opposed
to the “formal cause” of a thing. Nor for them do material things have any
inherent
inclination to an end. Nor is quantity merely one category among others in
terms of which
we can describe the material world. Rather, matter is essentially and
(depending on the
extent of a given materialist’s reductionism) even exhaustively describable in the
mathematically quantifiable terms of modern physics, and material objects are
causally
related to one another only by way of (a thinly conceived version of) efficient
cause.
Thus, by “functional organization,” what the functionalist has in mind is the
contingent arrangement of metaphysically independent material components
according to
certain regular patterns of efficient causation. A material thing is “nothing but” a collection
of parts related in such a way. The difference from the Aristotelian notion of form could not
be starker. For the hylemorphicist, material things, including animals and people, are
irreducible to their component parts; again, though a material thing can be analyzed as a
composite of matter and form and an animal as a composite of soul and body, matter, form,
soul, and body can themselves only be understood in terms of the wholes of which they are
parts. The whole is also ordered to a certain natural end or final cause, and the various parts
are themselves ordered to various ends that are subordinate to this overarching final cause.
Accordingly, the parts are related by final causality as much as by efficient causality; and
the unity between the parts is therefore organic and necessary, not “mechanical” and
contingent. As we have seen, for the Aristotelian, a machine could not possibly count as a
living thing, precisely because it is an artificial construct whose parts are
naturally ordered
to various other ends, rather than to the flourishing of the system into which they have been
configured for human (and thus external) purposes. For the same reason, and contrary to
the central thrust of functionalism, the Aristotelian–Thomistic hylemorphicist would hold
that it is metaphysically impossible for a robot, a computer, or any other artifact to be
conscious or intelligent. For consciousness and intelligence as they exist in the material
world are attributes of certain kinds of animals, animals are a certain kind of natural
substance, and (to repeat) by definition an artifact, however complex, is not a natural
substance, and thus of necessity cannot be living, or an animal, or conscious, or intelligent.
Finally, Aquinas thinks of the form of the human body as subsistent and thus immaterial; and the immateriality of the intellect (if not necessarily its subsistence) was
something that Aristotle also affirmed. For this reason alone, their conception of “form” is
quite obviously very different from anything the functionalist could accept. If
their views are properly understood, Aristotle, Aquinas, and other hylemorphists would never be invited into the functionalist club. Nor would they want to join it.

5 Ethics
Throughout this book, I have emphasized how crucial a grasp of Aquinas's general metaphysics is to a proper understanding of his views in specific philosophical sub-disciplines such as the philosophy of religion and the philosophy of mind. It is no less crucial to understanding his views in that field which to contemporary philosophers might seem the furthest removed from metaphysics, namely ethics. Many philosophers today would heartily endorse Hilary Putnam's recent advocacy of what he calls “ethics without ontology.” John Rawls famously defended a conception of justice he described as “political not metaphysical.” It is widely assumed that the analysis and justification of fundamental moral claims can be conducted without reference to at least the more contentious issues of metaphysics. Nothing could be further from the spirit of Aquinas, for whom natural law (as his conception of morality is famously known) is “natural” precisely because it derives from human nature, conceived of in Aristotelian essentialist terms. To be sure, recent decades have seen a tendency to try to reinterpret Aquinas's ethics in a way that divorces it from his now highly controversial essentialism. The most influential version of this approach is the “new natural law theory” of Germain Grisez and John Finnis. For Aquinas himself, however, and for Thomism historically, such a flight from Aristotelian metaphysics is neither necessary nor desirable. The truth about human beings can only be seen in light of the truth about the world in general. Aristotelian essentialism is not merely an abstract metaphysics but (as Henry Veatch has described it) an “ontology of morals.”

The good
Now philosophers like Kai Nielsen and D. J. O'Connor have objected that Aquinas's metaphysical approach to ethics is a non-starter, on the grounds
that it ignores the “fact/value distinction.” For as Hume famously argued, conclusions about what ought to be done (which are statements about “value”) cannot be inferred from premises concerning what is the case (statements of “fact”). To assume otherwise, it is claimed, is to commit the “naturalistic fallacy.” The hope of side-stepping this objection to Aquinas is part of the reason why Grisez and Finnis have sought to develop a “new” natural law theory which, unlike the traditional version, does not seek to ground morality in factual premises concerning the metaphysics of human nature.

From the traditional Thomistic point of view, however, there simply is no “fact/value distinction” in the first place. More precisely, there is no such thing as a purely “factual” description of reality utterly divorced from “value,” for “value” is built into the structure of the “facts” from the get-go. A gap between “fact” and “value” could exist only given a mechanistic-cum-nominalistic understanding of nature of the sort commonly taken for granted by modern philosophers, on which the world is devoid of any objective essences or natural ends. No such gap, and thus no “fallacy” of inferring normative conclusions from “purely factual” premises, can exist given an Aristotelian-Thomistic essentialist and teleological conception of the world. “Value” is a highly misleading term in any case, and subtly begs the question against critics of the “fact/value distinction” by insinuating that morality is purely subjective, insofar as “value” seems to presuppose someone doing the valuing. Aristotelians and Thomists (and other classical philosophers such as Platonists) tend to speak, not of “value,” but of “the good,” which on their account is entirely objective.

We have already seen how this is so, in our discussion of the convertibility of the transcendentals being and good in chapter 2. To return to a simple example from that discussion, it is of the essence of a triangle to be a closed plane figure with three straight sides, and anything with this essence must have a number of properties, such
as having angles adding up to 180 degrees. These are straightforward objective facts, and remain so even though there are triangles which fail perfectly to match this description. A triangle drawn hastily on the cracked plastic seat of a moving bus might fail to have sides that are perfectly straight, and thus its angles will add up to something other than 180 degrees. Even a triangle drawn slowly and carefully on art paper with a straight edge and a Rapidograph pen will contain subtle flaws. Still, the latter will more perfectly approximate the essence of triangularity than the former will. It will be a better triangle than the former one. Indeed, we would naturally call the former a bad triangle and the latter a good one. This judgment would be completely objective; it would be silly to suggest that it reflects nothing more than a subjective preference for triangles with angles adding up to 180 degrees. It would be equally silly to suggest that we have somehow committed a fallacy in making a “value” judgment about the badness of the triangle drawn on the bus seat on the basis of the “facts” about the essence of triangularity. Given that essence, the “value judgment” in question obviously follows necessarily. This example illustrates how an entity can count as an instance of a certain kind of thing even if it fails perfectly to instantiate the essence of that kind of thing; a badly drawn triangle is not a non-triangle but a defective triangle. It also illustrates how there can be a perfectly objective, factual standard of goodness and badness, better and worse. To be sure, the standard in question in the current example is not a standard of moral goodness. But from an Aristotelian–Thomistic point of view, it illustrates a general notion of goodness of which moral goodness is a special case. Livings things provide examples that bring us closer to a distinctively moral conception of goodness, as has been noted by several contemporary philosophers who, though not Thomists, have defended a kind of neo-Aristotelian position in ethics. For instance, Philippa Foot, following Michael Thompson, has noted how living things can
only adequately be described in terms of what Thompson calls “Aristotelian
categoricals”
of a form such as S's are F, where S refers to a species and F to something
predicated of
the species. “Rabbits are herbivores,” “Cats are four legged,” and “Human
beings have
thirty-two teeth” would be instances of this general form. Note that such
propositions
cannot be adequately represented as either existential or universal
propositions, as these are
typically understood by modern logicians. “Cats are four legged,” for instance,
is not saying
“There is at least one cat that is four legged”; it is obviously meant instead as
a statement
about cats in general. But neither is it saying “For everything that is a cat, it is
four legged,”
since the occasional cat may be missing a leg due to injury or genetic defect.
Aristotelian
categoricals convey a norm, much like the description given above of what
counts as a
triangle. Any particular living thing can only be described as an instance of a
species, and a
species itself can only be described in terms of Aristotelian categoricals
stating at least its
general characteristics. If a particular S happens not to be F – if for example a
certain cat is
missing a leg – that does not show that S’s are not F after all, but rather that
this particular S
is a defective instance of an S.
In living things the sort of norm in question is, as Foot also notes,
inextricably tied
to the notion of teleology; as Aquinas puts it, “all who rightly define good put
in its notion
something about its status as an end” (QDV 21.1). There are certain ends that
any organism
must realize in order to flourish as the kind of organism it is, ends concerning
activities like
self-maintenance, development, reproduction, the rearing of young, and so
forth; and these
ends entail a standard of goodness. Hence an oak that develops long and deep
roots is to
that extent a good oak and one that develops weak roots is to that extent bad
and defective;
a lioness which nurtures her young is to that extent a good lioness and one
that fails to do
so is to that extent bad and defective; and so on. As with the triangle example,
it would be
silly to pretend that these judgments of goodness and badness are in any way subjective or reflective of mere human preferences, or that the inferences leading to them commit a "naturalistic fallacy." For they simply follow from the objective facts about what counts as a flourishing or sickly instance of the biological kind or nature in question, and in particular from an organism’s realization or failure to realize the ends set for it by its nature. The facts in question are, as it were, inherently laden with “value” from the start. Or, to use Foot’s more traditional (and less misleading) language, the goodness a flourishing instance of a natural kind exhibits is “natural goodness” – the goodness is there in the nature of things, and not in our subjective “value” judgments about them.

What is true of animals in general is true of human beings. Like the other, non-rational animals, we have various ends inherent in our nature, and these determine what is good for us. In particular, Aquinas tells us, “all those things to which man has a natural inclination, are naturally apprehended by reason as being good, and consequently as objects of pursuit, and their contraries as evil, and objects of avoidance” (ST I-II.94.2, emphasis added). It is important not to misunderstand the force of Aquinas’s expression “natural inclination” here. By “inclination” he does not necessarily mean something consciously desired, and by “natural” he doesn't mean something psychologically deep-seated, or even, necessarily, something genetically determined. What he has in mind are rather the final causes or natural teleology of our various capacities. For this reason, Anthony Lisska has suggested translating Aquinas’s inclinatio as “disposition.” While this has its advantages, even it fails to make it clear that Aquinas is not interested in just any dispositions we might contingently happen to have, but rather in those that reflect nature’s purposes for us. Of course, there is often a close correlation between what nature intends and what we desire. Nature wants us to eat so that we'll stay alive, and sure enough we tend to want to eat. Given that we are social animals, nature intends for us to avoid
harming others, and for the most part we do want to avoid this. Given that we need to reproduce ourselves, nature intends for us to have sexual relations, and obviously most people are quite happy to do so. At the same time, there are people (such as anorexics and bulimics) who form very strong desires not to eat what they need to eat in order to survive and thrive; and at the other extreme there are people whose desire for food is excessive. Some people are not only occasionally prone to harm others, but are positively misanthropic or sociopathic. And where sex is concerned, people often strongly desire to indulge in behaviors (masturbation, contraception, homosexual acts, and so forth) that are in Aquinas’s view contrary to nature’s purposes insofar as they do not have a natural tendency to result in procreation. Desires are nature’s way of prodding us to do what is good for us, but like everything else in the natural order, they are subject to various imperfections and distortions. Hence, though in general and for the most part our desires match up with nature’s purposes, this is not true in every single case. Habituated vice, peer pressure, irrationality, mental illness, and the like can often deform our subjective desires so that they turn us away from what nature intends, and thus from what is good for us. Genetic defect might do the same; just as it causes deformities like clubfoot and polydactyly, so too might it generate psychological and behavioral deformities as well. Here as elsewhere, it is crucial in understanding Aquinas’s views that one keeps his general metaphysical positions always in mind. “Natural” for Aquinas does not mean merely “statistically common,” “in accordance with the laws of physics,” “having a genetic basis,” or any other of the readings that a mechanistic view of nature might suggest. It has instead to do with the final causes inherent in a thing by virtue of its essence, and which it possesses whether or not it ever realizes them or consciously wants to realize them. What is genuinely good for someone, accordingly, may in principle be something he or
she does not
want, like children who refuse to eat their vegetables, or an addict convinced
that it would
be bad to stop taking drugs. For Aquinas, knowing what is truly good for us
requires taking
an external, objective, “third-person” point of view on ourselves rather than a
subjective
“first-person” view; it is a matter of determining what fulfills our nature, not
our contingent
desires. The good in question has moral significance for us because, unlike
other animals,
we are capable of intellectually grasping what is good and freely choosing
whether or not to
pursue it.
Aquinas identifies three general categories of goods inherent in our nature.
First are
those we share in common with all living things, such as the preservation of
our existence.
Second are those common to animals specifically, such as sexual intercourse
and the
child-rearing activities that naturally follow upon it. Third are those peculiar
to us as
rational animals, such as “to know the truth about God, and to live in society,”
“to shun
ignorance,” and “to avoid offending those among whom one has to live” (ST I-
II.94.2).
These goods are ordered in a hierarchy corresponding to the hierarchy of
living things (i.e.
those with vegetative, sensory, and rational souls respectively). The higher
goods
presuppose the lower ones; for example, one cannot pursue truth if one is not
able to
conserve oneself in existence. But the lower goods are subordinate to the
higher ones in the
sense that they exist for the sake of the higher ones. The point of fulfilling the
vegetative
and sensory aspects of our nature is, ultimately, to allow us to fulfill the
defining rational
aspect of our nature.
What specifically will fulfill that nature? Or in other words, in what does the
good
for us, and thus our well-being or happiness, ultimately consist? It cannot be
wealth,
because wealth exists only for the sake of something else which we might
acquire with it
(ST I-II.2.1). It cannot be honor, because honor accrues to someone only as a
consequence
of realizing some good, and thus cannot itself be an ultimate good (ST I-II.2.2). For similar reasons, it cannot be fame or glory either, which are in any case often achieved for things that are not really good in the first place (ST I-II.2.3). Nor can it be power, for power is a means rather than an end and might be used to bring about evil rather than genuine good (ST I-II.2.4). It cannot be pleasure, because pleasure is also a consequence of realizing a good rather than the realization of a good itself; even less likely is it to be bodily pleasure specifically, since the body exists for the sake of the soul, which is immaterial (ST I-II.2.6). For the same reason, it cannot consist of any bodily good of any other sort (ST I-II.2.5). But neither can even it be a good of the soul, since the soul, as a created thing, exists for the sake of something else (i.e. that which creates it) (ST I-II.2.7). Obviously, then, it cannot be found in any created thing whatsoever; our ultimate end could only possibly be something “which lulls the appetite altogether,” beyond which nothing more could be desired, and thus something absolutely perfect (ST I-II.2.8). And “this is to be found,” Aquinas concludes, “not in any creature, but in God alone ... Wherefore God alone can satisfy the will of man ... God alone constitutes man’s happiness” (ST I-II.2.8). That is not to deny that wealth, honor, fame, power, pleasure, and the goods of body and soul have their place; they cannot fail to do so given that we are the kinds of creatures that we are. Aquinas’s point is that it is impossible for them to be the highest or ultimate good for us, that to which every other good is subordinated. God alone can be that. In Aquinas’s view, what is good for us is, as I have said, something that remains good for us even if for some reason we do not recognize it as good. What is good for us is necessarily good for us because it follows from our nature. As such, even God couldn’t change it, any more than he could make two and two equal to five. Here we see one important consequence of Aquinas’s view that the intellect is metaphysically prior to the
will, in the sense that (as we saw in the last chapter) will derives from intellect rather than vice versa. The divine intellect knows the natures of things and the divine will creates in accordance with this knowledge. To be sure, the natures in question exist at first only as ideas in the divine mind itself; in this sense they are, like everything else, dependent on God. Still, in creating the things that are to have these natures, the divine will only ever creates in light of the divine ideas and never in a way that conflicts with what is possible given the content of those ideas. Aquinas’s position is thus very far from the sort of “divine command ethics” according to which what is good is good merely because God wills it, so that absolutely anything (including torturing babies for fun, say) could have been good for us had he willed us to do it. This sort of view was famously taken by William of Ockham (c. 1287–1347), according to whom God could even have willed for us to hate him, in which case that is what would have been good for us. Such a position naturally follows from the “voluntarism” or emphasis on will over intellect associated with Ockham and John Duns Scotus (c. 1266–1308), which is one of the key features distinguishing their brands of Scholasticism from Thomism. This difference between Aquinas and the voluntarists is related to the reasons for which Aquinas's position is, as we saw in chapter 3, immune to the famous “Euthyphro objection” to religiously based systems of ethics. The objection, it will be recalled, is in the form of a dilemma: either God wills something because it is good or it is good because he wills it; but if the former is true, then, contrary to theism, there will be something that exists independently of God (namely the standard of goodness he abides by in willing us to do something), and if the latter is true, then if God had willed us to torture babies for fun (say) then that would have been good, which seems obviously absurd. Ockham essentially takes the second horn of the dilemma, but for Aquinas the dilemma is a false one. What is good
for us is good because of our nature and not because of some arbitrary divine command,
and God only ever wills for us to do what is consistent with our nature. But that doesn’t
make the standard according to which he wills something existing independently of him,
because what determines that standard are the ideas existing in the divine mind. Thus there
is a third option between the two set out by the Euthyphro dilemma, and it is one that is
neither inconsistent with our basic moral intuitions nor incompatible with the claims of
theism.
Natural law
It is but a few short steps from “natural goodness” (as Foot calls it) to Aquinas’s
conception of natural law. The first principle of natural law, as Aquinas famously held, is
that “good is to be done and pursued, and evil is to be avoided. All other precepts of the
natural law are based upon this,” where the content of those precepts is determined by the
goods falling under the three main categories mentioned above (ST I-II.94.2). That “good is
to be done” and so on might seem at first glance to be a difficult claim to justify, and
certainly not a very promising candidate for a first principle. For isn’t the question “Why
should we be good?” precisely (part of) what any moral theory ought to answer? And isn’t
this question notoriously hard to answer to the satisfaction of moral skeptics?
Properly understood, however, Aquinas’s principle is not only not difficult to justify, but even seems obviously correct. He is not saying that it is just self-evident that we
ought to be morally good. Rather, he is saying that it is self-evident that whenever we act,
we pursue something that we take to be good in some way and/or avoid what we take in
some way to be evil or bad. And that seems clearly right. Even someone who does
something he believes to be morally bad does so only because he is seeking something he
regards as good in the sense of worth pursuing. Hence the mugger who admits that robbery
is evil nevertheless takes his victim’s wallet because he thinks it would be good to have
money to pay for his drugs; hence the drug addict who regards his habit as
wrong and degrading nevertheless thinks it would be good to satisfy his craving and bad to suffer the unpleasantness of not satisfying it. Of course, these claims are true only on a very thin sense of “good,” but that is exactly the sense Aquinas intends. Acceptance of Aquinas’s general metaphysics is not necessary in order to see that this first principle is correct; it is supposed to be self-evident. But that metaphysics is meant to help us understand why it is correct. Like every other natural phenomenon, practical reason has a natural end or goal towards which it is ordered, and that end or goal is just whatever the intellect perceives to be good or worth pursuing. This claim too seems obvious, at least if one accepts Aquinas’s Aristotelian metaphysics. And it brings us to the threshold of a further conclusion that does have real moral significance. Given what was said earlier, human beings, like everything else in the world, have various capacities and ends the fulfillment of which is good for them and the frustrating of which is bad, as a matter of objective fact. A rational intellect apprised of the facts will therefore perceive that it is good to realize these ends and bad to frustrate them. It follows, then, that a rational person will pursue the realization of these ends and avoid their frustration. In short, Aquinas’s position is essentially this: practical reason is directed by nature towards the pursuit of what the intellect perceives as good; what is in fact good is the realization or fulfillment of the various ends inherent in human nature; and thus a rational person will perceive this and, accordingly, direct his or her actions towards the realization or fulfillment of those ends. In this sense, good action is just that which is “in accord with reason” (ST III.21.1; cf. ST I-II.90.1), and the moral skeptic’s question “Why should I do what is good?” has an obvious answer: because to be rational just is (in part) to do what is good, to fulfill the ends set for us by nature. Natural law ethics as a body of substantive moral theory is the formulation of general moral principles on the basis of an
analysis of these various human capacities and ends and the systematic working out of their implications. So, to take just one example, when we consider that human beings have intellects and that the natural end or function of the intellect is to grasp the truth about things, it follows that it is good for us – it fulfills our nature – to pursue truth and avoid error. Consequently, a rational person apprised of the facts about human nature will see that this is what is good for us and thus strive to attain truth and to avoid error. And so on for other natural human capacities.

Now things are bound to get more complicated than that summary perhaps lets on. Various qualifications and complications would need to be spelled out as the natural human capacities and ends are examined in detail, and not every principle of morality that follows from this analysis will necessarily be as simple and straightforward as “Pursue truth and avoid error.” Particularly controversial among contemporary readers will be Aquinas’s application of his method to questions of sexual morality (SCG III.122–126; ST II-II.151–154). Famously, he holds that the only sexual acts that can be morally justified are those having an inherent tendency towards procreation, and only when performed within marriage. The reason is that the natural end of sex is procreation, and because this includes not merely the generation of new human beings but also their upbringing, moral training and the like, which is a long-term project involving (in the normal case, for Aquinas) many children, a stable family unit is required in order for this end to be realized. Any other sexual behavior involves turning our natural capacities away from the end set for them by nature, and thus in Aquinas’s view cannot possibly be good for us or rational. This rules out, among other things, masturbation, contraception, fornication, adultery, and homosexual acts.

This is a large topic which cannot be treated adequately here. (I discuss Aquinas’s approach to sexual morality in detail in my book The Last Superstition.) But
this much is
enough to provide at least a general idea of how his natural law approach to
ethics
determines the specific content of our moral obligations. The method should be
clear
enough, whether or not one agrees with Aquinas’s application of that method
in any
particular case. What has been said also suffices to give us a sense of the
grounds of moral
obligation, that which makes it the case that moral imperatives have
categorical rather than
merely hypothetical force (to use the distinction made famous by Kant). The
hypothetical
imperative (1) If I want what is good for me then I ought to pursue what
realizes my natural
ends and avoid what frustrates them is something whose truth Aquinas takes
to follow from
the metaphysical analysis of goodness sketched above. By itself, it does not
give us a
categorical imperative because the consequent will have force only for
someone who
accepts the antecedent. But that (2) I do want what is good for me is true of all
of us by
virtue of our nature as human beings, and is in Aquinas’s view self-evident in
any case,
being just a variation on his fundamental principle of natural law. These
premises yield the
conclusion (3) I ought to pursue what realizes my natural ends and avoid what
frustrates
them. It does have categorical force because (2) has categorical force, and (2)
has
categorical force because it cannot be otherwise given our nature. Not only the
content of
our moral obligations but their obligatory character are thus determined, on
Aquinas’s
analysis, by the metaphysics of final causality or natural teleology. As the neo-
Scholastic
natural law theorist Michael Cronin has summed up the Thomistic view, “In
the fullest
sense of the word, then, moral duty is natural. For not only are certain objects
natural
means to man’s final end, but our desire of that end is natural also, and
therefore, the
necessity [or obligatory force] of the means is natural” (Science of Ethics,
Volume 1, p.
222).
Clearly, the “naturalness” of natural law can, as I have emphasized, only be
understood in terms of the Aristotelian metaphysics to which Aquinas is committed. But it is also illuminating to compare the natural law to the three other kinds of law distinguished by Aquinas. Most fundamental is what he calls the “eternal law,” which is essentially the order of archetypes or ideas in the divine mind according to which God creates and providentially governs the world (ST I-II.91.1). Once the world, including human beings, is created in accordance with this law, the result is a natural order that human beings as rational animals can come to know and freely choose to act in line with, and “this participation of the eternal law in the rational creature is called the natural law” (ST I-II.91.2). The “natural law,” then, can also be understood in terms of its contrast with eternal law, as the manifestation of the latter within the natural order. Now the natural law provides us with general principles by which individuals and societies ought to be governed, but there are many contingent and concrete details of human life that the natural law does not directly address. To take a standard example, the institution of private property is something we seem suited to given our nature, but there are many forms that institution might take consistent with natural law (cf. ST II-II.66.2). This brings us to “human law,” which is the set of conventional or man-made principles that govern actual human societies, and which gives a “more particular determination” to the general requirements of the natural law as it is applied to concrete cultural and historical circumstances (ST I-II.91.3). Human law, then, is unlike both eternal law and natural law in that it is “devised by human reason” and contingent rather than necessary and unchanging. Finally there is “divine law,” which is law given directly by God, such as the Ten Commandments (ST I-II.91.4–5). This differs from the natural law in being knowable, not through an investigation of the natural order, but only via a divine revelation. It is like human law in being sometimes suited to contingent historical circumstances
and thus temporary (as, in Aquinas’s view, the Old Law given through Moses was superseded by the New Law given through Christ) but unlike human law in being infallible and absolutely binding.

Religion and morality

This naturally brings us to the question of the extent to which morality depends, in Aquinas’s view, on religion in general and on an appeal to God’s will in particular. Some of what has been said thus far might seem to imply that there is no such dependence, insofar as the content and binding force of the natural law have been said to derive from human nature rather than arbitrary divine commands. On the other hand, the idea that natural law derives from eternal law might seem to indicate that morality ultimately depends on God after all, as does the notion that only God (rather than wealth, pleasure, power, etc.) could be the ultimate good for us. So what is Aquinas’s position?

Fulvio Di Blasi has usefully distinguished three approaches commentators have taken to the question of whether natural law, as understood in Thomistic terms, requires something like an Aristotelian metaphysical conception of the natural order and/or an appeal to theological premises concerning the existence and will of God. The first approach, associated with Grisez and Finnis, holds that natural law requires neither the metaphysics nor the theology. A second approach, represented by writers like Henry Veatch and Anthony Lisska, holds that the metaphysics is necessary but not the theology. The third approach holds that both elements are necessary, and is defended by commentators like Ralph McInerny and Di Blasi himself. As has been suggested already, the Grisez–Finnis approach to natural law seems clearly mistaken, at least if intended as an interpretation of Aquinas’s own position. (Its value as a completely independent moral theory is something we cannot address here.) What of the other two approaches? It seems to me there is truth in both of them.

From an Aristotelian point of view, the essences and final causes of things are
knowable simply by studying the things themselves, without any appeal to the existence or intentions of a creator. (Indeed, though Aristotle himself thought that the existence of a divine unmoved mover could be proved, he did not, as Aquinas later would in his Fifth Way, try to argue that the final causes of things, specifically, required an explanation in theological terms. Aristotle’s own arguments for God were variants of what Aquinas called the First Way.) But at least the core of the theory of natural law follows directly from these metaphysical notions. Hence it seems clear that at least a substantial part of morality can, on a Thomistic account, be known in principle without appealing to God. If we know that the will is naturally ordered to pursuing what the intellect perceives as good, and know that what is in fact good is what realizes our natural ends, then we can know that if we are rational we ought to pursue those ends. Moreover, since those ends can themselves be known through reason, we can arrive at some knowledge of what it is specifically that the natural law requires of us even if we have no knowledge of God. To be sure, if Aquinas is right that God alone can be our ultimate end, then without knowledge of this fact, our understanding of morality will be deficient, to say the least. Still, we would nevertheless have some substantial understanding of it. And while if there is a God he will, of course, be the ultimate explanation of the natural law (since he will be the ultimate explanation of everything), lack of knowledge of God wouldn’t prevent us from knowing something about the natural law, any more than it would prevent us from discovering various scientific truths.

So there is some truth to the view defended by Veatch and Lisska. On the other hand, it seems highly implausible to suggest that the existence of God, as Aquinas understands him, could possibly be irrelevant to a Thomistic understanding of natural law. For if God exists, then he cannot fail to be our ultimate end, in which case everything else in our moral lives would necessarily have to be subordinated to our religious
obligations; and even the most conservative form of secular life cannot fail to be altered radically when redirected towards a religious end. Hence if God exists an adequate account of the content of morality will necessarily have to reflect this fact. Our understanding of the grounds of moral obligation is also bound to be affected by theological considerations. Indeed, Aquinas takes the view that in the strict sense, “law ... is nothing else than an ordinance of reason for the common good, made by him who has care of the community, and promulgated” (ST III.90.4). Like every other form of law, then, the natural law, if it is truly to count as law (rather than a mere counsel of prudence) must be backed by a lawgiver. Since it is a law governing the natural order, the lawgiver in question would just be the source of the natural order, namely God, who promulgates the natural law “by the very fact that God instilled it into man’s mind so as to be known by him naturally” (ST I-II.90.4). Aquinas’s view seems to be that since things are fully intelligible only when traced back to the creative will of God – who, as pure act, cause of all things, the one absolutely necessary being, perfect goodness, and the supreme intellect, can alone serve as an ultimate explanation of anything – the necessity or obligatory nature of our moral obligations too can also only be fully intelligible when traced back to him. For a rational agent will act only in accordance with what reason and nature command, and precisely because reason and nature command it. But reason and nature only command what they do because God has ordered them that way. Hence a rational agent cognizant of the ultimate source of things will act only in accordance with what the divine will commands, and precisely because the divine will commands it: In this way God Himself is the measure of all beings ... Hence His intellect is the measure of all knowledge; His goodness, of all goodness; and, to speak more to the point, His good will, of every good will. Every good will is therefore good by reason of its
being conformed
to the divine good will. Accordingly, since everyone is obliged to have a good will, he is
likewise obliged to have a will conformed to the divine will. (QDV 23.7) Thus there is,
from the Thomistic point of view, some truth after all in the “divine command” theory of
ethics, even if it is far from the whole story and even though the commands in question are
emphatically not arbitrary ones.
More to the present point, there is much truth in Di Blasi’s view that Aquinas’s
theory of natural law is ultimately as theological as it is metaphysical. But the “ultimately”
is important. As Michael Cronin notes, and as we have seen when discussing the Five
Ways, the eternal law of God does not move the world directly and immediately, but mediately,
i.e., through the operation of secondary causes or causes residing in nature itself; and
therefore it is not to be expected that in the moral world the eternal law will be operative
without some such intermediate natural principle. (Science of Ethics, vol. 1, p. 213)
Hence while what Cronin calls the “ultimate ground” of moral obligation is “eternal
law of the Supreme Lawgiver,” there is also “a proximate ground of duty residing in nature
itself,” namely the fact that the will is unalterably fixed by nature on the pursuit of the good
as its natural end or final cause. And this proximate ground can be studied independently of
the ultimate ground, just as the secondary causes of things can be studied without reference
to the First Cause. While the Grisez–Finnis reading of Aquinas seems simply mistaken,
then, the Veatch–Lisska reading is not mistaken so much as incomplete. A natural law
theory with Aristotelian metaphysics but without God is not false, even if it isn’t the whole
truth either. It is, we might say, a study of the “proximate grounds” of morality, just as
natural science is the study of the proximate or secondary causes of observed phenomena.
Still, in morality as in science, a complete account must necessarily be a theological one.
In both its metaphysical and its theological commitments, Aquinas’s system of ethics is, like the rest of his philosophy, obviously radically at odds with the assumptions typically made by contemporary moral philosophers. But the main difference may lie in something other than a disagreement over this or that particular ontological thesis or argument for God’s existence, in basic ethos rather than intellectual orientation. The spirit of modern moral philosophy is perhaps summed up best in Kant’s famous characterization of human beings as “ends in themselves” and “self-legislators.” This sort of talk would sound blasphemous and even mad to Aquinas, for whom God alone, as the “first cause and last end of all things,” could possibly be said to be the source of moral law and an end in himself (ST I-II.62.1, as translated by Pegis in Basic Writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas).

For Aquinas, we are not here for ourselves, but for the glory of God, and precisely because this is the end set for us by nature, it is in him alone that we can find our true happiness.

And it must be emphasized that, as with the other themes we’ve explored in this book, he takes this conclusion to be a matter, not of faith, but of reason itself. Therein lies the sting of Aquinas’s challenge to modernity.

THE CATECHISM OF SAINT CYRIL OF JERUSALEM ABRIDGED AND SIMPLIFIED

FOREWORD
Saint Cyril of Jerusalem was born around 313 AD during the reign of Constantine. He was ordained bishop of Jerusalem around 350 AD. He
ran into problems with Acacius bishop of Caesarea, who was Arian. Acacius was also envious of the rising fortunes of Jerusalem. Following the discovery of the Cross by Queen Helen, many churches were built on the holy sites like Golgotha and the Upper Room. Soon Christian pilgrims came flocking to Jerusalem to visit the “Holy Land.” In 325, the Council of Nicaea elevated Jerusalem to the status of a Patriarchal See, like Alexandria and Rome. The fortunes of Saint Cyril fluctuated with the mood of the emperor and whether he was pro Arian or otherwise. Accordingly and through the intrigues of Acacius, Saint Cyril was deposed and reinstated four times. He reposed March 18, 386 AD. Pagans aspiring to become Christians had to be sponsored by their Christian friends or neighbours, who had to testify to their moral life. Their names were inscribed in the register and they became catechumens (candidates for baptism). They were instructed in the basic Christian morals and in prayer. They were also allowed to attend the first part of the Liturgy, which was called the “Liturgy of the Catechumens”. They listened to the lections and the sermons but were dismissed before the offerings. The policy of the ancient Church was to hold back from outsiders the details of Christian believe, and only display the Christian way of life and moral principles. This way, those who were moved by mere curiosity were discouraged but those who showed genuine desire to become Christians, had to be enrolled as catechumens. Those among the catechumens who proved themselves eager and ready for baptism were then brought into the Church at the beginning of the eight weeks of Lent, where they received instruction in the baptismal Creed, which they had to memorize and recite. They were also subjected to repeated exorcisms. At the end of Lent they were baptized so that they can join the faithful on Easter Eve. The Catechetical Lectures attributed to Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, were delivered in the church built on Golgotha, during Lent of 347 or 348, in the Church of Golgotha. The Lectures are available in the Post Nicene Fathers Series II, Volume VII, in old English. This booklet is a simplified edition using modern English. It is also abridged, removing the long lectures that dealt with ancient heresies that were prevalent in the fourth century but are of little interest to modern readers. I hope that this booklet will be helpful, not only to those aspiring to join the Orthodox Church, but also as a teaching tool to our youth in the basics of the Nicene faith. Father Athanasius Iskander Phamenoth (Baramhat) 22, 1726 AM March 31, 2010 AD
Feast day of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem
PROLOGUE TO THE CATECHETICAL LECTURES OF OUR
HOLY FATHER, CYRIL, ARCHBISHOP OF JERUSALEM.

1. ALREADY there is an odour of blessedness upon you, who are
soon to be enlightened: already you are gathering the spiritual
flowers,
to weave heavenly crowns: already the fragrance of the Holy Spirit has
breathed upon you: already you have gathered round the vestibule of
the King's palace; may you be led in also by the King! For blossoms
now
have appeared upon the trees; may the fruit also be found perfect!
Thus
far there has been an inscription of your names, and a call to
service,
the lamps have been kindled for the bridal procession, there is
longing
for heavenly citizenship. There is good intention, with hope to back it
up. For he does not lie who said, that “to them that love God all
things
work together for good.” (Rom 8:28) God is lavish in beneficence, yet
He waits for each man's genuine will: therefore the Apostle added and
said, “to them that are called according to his purpose”. The honesty of
purpose makes you called: for if your body be here but not your mind,
it profits you nothing.

2. Even Simon Magus once came to the Font: he was baptized, but
was not enlightened; and though he dipped his body in water, he
enlightened not his heart with the Spirit: his body went down and came
up, but his soul was not buried with Christ, nor raised with Him. Now
I mention the statements of (men's) falls, that you may not fall: for
these things happened to them by way of example, and they are written
for the admonition of those who to this day draw near. Let none of you
be found tempting His grace, lest any root of bitterness spring up and
trouble you. Let none of you enter saying, Let us see what the faithful
are doing: let me go in and see, that I may learn what is being done.
Do
you expect to see, and not expect to be seen? And do you think that
while you are searching out what is going on, God is not searching
your
heart?

3. A certain man in the Gospels once pried into the marriage feasts,
and took an unbecoming garment, and came in, sat down, and ate: for
the bridegroom permitted it. (Matt 22: 11-13) But when he saw them
all clad in white, he ought to have assumed a garment of the same
fashion and in purpose. The bridegroom, however, though bountiful,
was not undiscerning: and in going round to each of the guests and
observing them (for his care was not for their eating, but for their
seemly behaviour), he saw a stranger not having on a wedding garment,
and said to him, Friend, how did you come in here? In what a colour! With what a conscience! You came in, and saw the glittering fashions of the guests: ought you not have been taught even by what was before your eyes? Should you not have retired in good season, that you may come back suitably dressed? But now you have come in unseasonably, to be unseasonably cast out. So he commands the servants, Bind his feet, which daringly intruded: bind his hands, which knew not how to put a bright garment around him: and cast him into the outer darkness; for he is unworthy of the wedding lights. You see what happened to that man: make your own condition safe.

4. For we, the ministers of Christ, have admitted every one, and occupying, as it were, the place of door-keepers, we left the door open: and possibly you entered with your soul covered with sins, and with a defiled will. You were allowed to enter: your name was inscribed. Tell me, do you behold this venerable constitution of the Church? Do you view her order and discipline? the reading of Scriptures, the presence of the ordained, the course of instruction? Be in awe at the place, and be taught by what you see. Go out now, and come back prepared tomorrow.

If the manner of your soul is avarice, put on another manner and come in. Put off your former manner, cover it not up. Put off, fornication and uncleanness, and put on the brightest robe of chastity.
This advice I give you, before Jesus the Bridegroom of souls comes in and see your filthy clothes. A long period of grace is allowed you; you have forty days for repentance: you have full opportunity both to put off, and wash, and to put on and enter. But if you persist in an evil intent, I will be blameless, but you will not receive the grace: for if the water will receive you, yet the Holy Spirit will not accept you. If any one is conscious of his wound, let him take the salve; if any has fallen, let him arise. Let there be no Simon among you, no hypocrisy, no idle curiosity about the matter.

5. Possibly you have another reason for coming. It is possible that a man is wishing to court a Christian woman, and came here on that account. Or it could be the other way around. A slave also perhaps wishes to please his master, and a friend his friend. I accept this bait for the hook, and welcome you, though you came with an evil purpose, yet as one to be saved by a good hope. Perhaps you do not know where you are coming, or in what kind of net you are taken. You have come within the Church's nets: be taken alive, flee not; for Jesus is angling for you,
not in order to kill you, but by killing to make you alive: for you must
die and rise again. For you have heard the Apostle say, Dead indeed
unto sin, but living unto righteousness. (Rom 6:11, I Peter 2:24) Die
to your sins, and live to righteousness, live from this very day.

6. Look, I ask you, and see with how great a dignity Jesus favours you.
You were called a Catechumen, while the word echoed round you from
without; hearing of hope, and knowing it not; hearing mysteries, and
not understanding them; hearing Scriptures, and not knowing their
depth. The echo is no longer around you, but within you; for the
indwelling Spirit henceforth makes your mind a house of God. When
you hear what is written concerning the mysteries, then you will
understand things which you knew not. And think not that you are receiving a small thing: Being a miserable man, you will receive one of
God's titles. Hear St. Paul saying, God is faithful. Hear another Scripture saying, God is faithful and just. Foreseeing this, the Psalmist,
because men are to receive a title of God, spoke thus in the person of God: “I said, You are Gods, and are all sons of the Most High.” (Ps 82:6) But beware lest you have the title of "faithful," but the will of the faithless. You have entered into a contest, toil on through the race: you
may not have another such opportunity. If it was your wedding-day before you, would you not have disregarded all else, and set about the preparation for the banquet? And so, on the eve of consecrating your soul to the heavenly Bridegroom, will you not cease from carnal things,
that you may win spiritual?

7. We may not receive Baptism twice or thrice; so you cannot say, If I have failed once, I shall correct it a second time: But in this matter, if you do not succeed this once, there is no correcting it. For there is “one Lord, and one faith, and one baptism” (Eph 4:5) For only the heretics are re-baptized, because the former was no baptism.

8. For God seeks nothing else from us, except a good intention. Say not, How are my sins blotted out? I tell you, By willing, by believing.
What can be simpler than this? But if, while your lips declare you willing, your heart is silent, He who judges you knows your heart. Cease from this day from every evil deed. Let not your tongue speak unseemly words, let your eye abstain from sin, and from roving after things unprofitable.

9. Let your feet hasten to the catechisings; receive with eagerness the
exorcisms: whether you be breathed upon or exorcised, the purpose is your salvation. Suppose you have crude gold, mixed with various substances, copper, and tin, and iron, and lead: we want the gold alone; can gold be purified from the foreign substances without fire? Even so without exorcisms the soul cannot be purified, and these exorcisms are divine, having been collected out of the divine Scriptures. Your face has been veiled, so that your mind may be free, lest the eye by wandering make the heart distracted also. But when your eyes are veiled, your ears are not hindered from receiving the means of salvation. For in like manner as those who are skilled in the goldsmith's craft concentrate a blast upon the fire by the use of blowpipes, and by blowing up the gold which is hidden in the crucible they stir the flame which surrounds it, and so they find what they are seeking; even so when the exorcists inspire terror by the Spirit of God, and set the soul, as it were, on fire in the crucible of the body, the hostile demons flee away, and there abide salvation and the hope of eternal life, and the soul henceforth is cleansed from its sins and hath salvation. Let us then, brethren, abide in hope, and surrender ourselves, and hope, in order that the God of all may see our intention, and cleanse us from our sins, and impart to us good hopes of what lies ahead of us, and grant us repentance that brings salvation. God hath called, and His call is to you.

10. Pay close attention to the catechizing, and if we prolong our discourse, let not your mind be wearied out. For you are receiving armour against the adverse powers, armour against heresies, against Jews, and Samaritans, and Pagans. You have many enemies; take to you many darts, for you have many to hurl them at: and you have need to learn how to shoot down the pagan, how to fight against heretic, against Jew and Samaritan. And the armour is ready, and most ready is the sword of the Spirit: but you also must stretch forth your right hand with good resolution, that you may fight the Lord's warfare, and overcome adverse powers, and become invincible against every heretical attempt.

11. Let me give you this charge also: study our teachings and keep them for ever. Think not that they are the ordinary sermons; for though these are good and trustworthy, yet if we neglect them to-day we can study them to-morrow. But if the teaching concerning the Baptism of regeneration delivered in a consecutive course be neglected to-day, when shall it be made right? Suppose it is the season for planting
trees: if we do not dig, and dig deep, when else can that be planted rightly which has once been planted wrongly? Suppose, that the Catechising is a kind of building: if we do not mortar the stones together by cement, some gaps will be found, and the building becomes unsound, even our former labour is of no use. But stone must follow stone by course, and corner match with corner, and by our smoothing off rough places the building must thus rise evenly. In like manner we are bringing to you stones, as it were, of knowledge. You must hear concerning the living God, you must hear of Judgment, must hear of Christ, and of the Resurrection. And many things there are to be discussed in succession, which though now dropped one by one are afterwards to be presented in harmonious connection. But unless you fit them together in the one whole, and remember what is first, and what is second, the builder may build, but you will find the building unsound.

12. When, therefore, the Lecture is delivered, if a Catechumen ask you what the teachers have said, tell nothing to him that is outsidel. For we deliver to you a mystery, and a hope of the life to come. Guard the mystery for Him who gives the reward. Let none ever say to you, What harm to you, if I also know it? So too the sick ask for wine; but if it be given at a wrong time it causes delirium, and two evils arise; the sick man dies, and the physician is blamed. Thus it is also with the Catechumen, if he hears anything from the believer: both the

1 People being prepared for Baptism are considered “Candidates” and are a notch higher than “Catechumens” who are still under probation.

5 Catechumen becomes delirious (for he understands not what he has heard, and finds fault with the thing, and scoffs at what is said), and the believer is condemned as a traitor. But you are now standing on the border: make sure that you tell nothing to outsiders; not that the things spoken are not worthy to be told, but because his ear is unworthy to receive. You were once yourself a Catechumen, and I described not what lay before you. When by experience you have learned how high are the matters of our teaching, then you will know that the Catechumens are not worthy to hear them.

13. You who have been enrolled are become sons and daughters of one Mother. When you have come in before the hour of the exorcisms, let each one of you speak things tending to godliness: and if anyone of you is not present, seek for him. If you were called to a banquet, would you not wait for your fellow guest? If you had a brother, would you not
seek your brother's good?

Afterwards busy not yourself about unprofitable matters: neither, what the city has done, nor the village, nor the King, nor the Bishop, nor the Priest. Look upward; that is what your present hour needs. “Be still, and know that I am God.” (Ps 46:10) If you see the believers assisting in the service at ease, they know what they have received, they

are in possession of grace. But you stand just now in the turn of the scale, to be received or not: copy not those who have freedom from anxiety, but cherish fear.

14. And when the Exorcism has been done, until the others who are being exorcised have come, let men be with men, and women with women. For now I need the example of Noah's ark: in which were Noah and his sons, and his wife and his sons' wives. For though the ark was one, and the door was shut, yet had things been suitably arranged. If the Church is shut, and you are all inside, yet let there be a separation, men with men, and women with women: lest the pretext of salvation become an occasion of destruction. Even if there be a fair pretext for sitting near each other, let passions be put away. Further, let the men when sitting have a useful book; and let one read, and another listen. And if there be no book, let one pray, and another speak something useful. And again let the party of young women sit together in like manner, either singing or reading quietly, so that their lips speak, but others' ears

6 catch not the sound: for “I suffer not a woman to speak in the Church.”

(I Cor 14:34) And let the married woman also follow the same example, and pray; and let her lips move, but her voice be unheard, that a Samuel may come, ( I Sam 1:12-17) and your barren soul give birth to the salvation of “God who hath heard your prayer;” (I Sam 1:20) for this is the interpretation of the name “Samuel”.

15. I shall observe each man's eagerness, each woman's reverence. Let your mind be refined as by fire unto reverence; let your soul be forged as metal. Let the stubbornness of unbelief be hammered out: let the superfluous scales of the iron drop off, and what is pure remain. Let the rust of the iron be rubbed off, and the true metal remain. May God sometime show you that night, the darkness which shines like the day,

concerning which it is said, The darkness shall not be hidden from you.

and the night shall shine as the day. (Ps 139:12) Then may the gate of Paradise be opened to every man and every woman among you. Then
may you enjoy the Christ-bearing waters in their fragrance. Then may you receive the name of Christ, and the power of things divine. Even now, I beseech you, lift up the eye of the mind. Even now, imagine the choirs of Angels, and God the Lord of all there sitting, and His Only-begotten Son sitting with Him on His right hand, and the Spirit present with them; and Thrones and Dominions doing service, and every man of you and every woman receiving salvation. Even now let your ears ring, as it were, with that glorious sound, when over your salvation the angels shall chant, “Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered” (Ps 32:1): when like stars of the Church you shall enter in, bright in the body and radiant in the soul.

16. Great is the Baptism that lies before you: a ransom to captives; a remission of offences; a death of sin; a new-birth of the soul; a garment of light; a holy indissoluble seal; a chariot to heaven; the delight of Paradise; a welcome into the kingdom; the gift of adoption! But there is a serpent by the wayside watching those who pass by: beware lest he bite you with unbelief. He sees so many receiving salvation, and is seeking whom he may devour. You are coming in unto the Father of Spirits, but you are going past that serpent. How then can you pass him? Have your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace (Eph 6:15); that even if he bite, he may not hurt you. Have faith in-dwelling, steadfast hope, a strong sandal, that you may pass the enemy, and enter the presence of your Lord. Prepare your own heart for reception of doctrine, for fellowship in holy mysteries. Pray more frequently, that God may make you worthy of the heavenly and immortal mysteries. Cease not day or night: but when sleep is banished from your eyes, then let your mind be free for prayer. And if you find any shameful thought rise up in your mind, turn to meditation upon Judgment to remind you of Salvation. Give your mind wholly to study, that it may forget base things. If you find any one saying to you, Are you then going in, to descend into the water? Has the city just now no baths? take notice that it is the dragon of the sea who is laying these plots against you. Attend not to the lips of the talker, but to God who works in you. Guard your own soul, that you be not ensnared, so that, abiding in hope you may become an heir of everlasting salvation.

17. We for our part as men, charge and teach you thus: but as for you,
make not our building hay and stubble and chaff, lest we suffer loss, from our work being burnt up: but make our work gold, and silver, and precious stones! For it lies in me to speak, but in you to set your mind upon it, and in God to make perfect. Let us concentrate our minds, and brace up our souls, and prepare our hearts. The race is for our soul: our hope is of things eternal: and God, who knows your hearts, and observes who is sincere, and who is a hypocrite, is able both to guard the sincere, and to give faith to the hypocrite. For even to the unbeliever, if only he gives his heart, God is able to give faith. So may He blot out the handwriting that is against you, (Col 2:14) and grant you forgiveness of your former trespasses. May He plant you into His Church, and enlist you in His own service, and put on you the armour of righteousness: may He fill you with the heavenly things of the New Covenant, and give you the seal of the Holy Spirit indelible throughout all ages, in Christ Jesus Our Lord: to whom be the glory for ever and ever! Amen.

8
FIRST CATECHETICAL LECTURE
OF OUR HOLY FATHER CYRIL,
ARCHBISHOP OF JERUSALEM
WITH A READING FROM ISAIAH 1:16-20
Wash you, make you clean; put away your iniquities from your souls, from before mine eyes, and the rest.

1. DISCIPLES of the New Testament and partakers of the mysteries of Christ, as yet by calling only, but before long by grace also, “make you a new heart and a new spirit” (Ezek 18:31), that there may be gladness among the inhabitants of heaven. For “if over one sinner that repents there is joy”, according to the Gospel (Luke 15:7), how much more shall the salvation of so many souls move the inhabitants of heaven to gladness. As you have entered upon a good and most glorious path, run with reverence the race of godliness. For the Only-begotten Son of God is present here most ready to redeem you, saying, “Come unto Me all that labour and are heavy, laden, and I will give you rest.” (Mat 11:28) You that are clothed with the rough garment of your offences, who are held with the bonds of your own sins, hear the voice of the Prophet saying, “Wash you, make you clean, put away your iniquities from before My eyes”: that the choir of Angels may chant over you, “Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.” (Ps 32:1) You who have just lighted the torches of faith (Mat 25:1-13), guard them carefully in your hands unquenched; that He, who once on this all-holy Golgotha opened Paradise to the robber on account of his faith, may grant to you to sing the bridal song.

2. If anyone here is a slave of sin, let him promptly prepare himself
through faith for the new birth into freedom and adoption; and having put off the miserable bondage of his sins, and taken on him the most blessed bondage of the Lord, so may he be counted worthy to inherit the kingdom of heaven. “Put off the old man, which is corrupt after the lusts of deceit” (Eph 4:22), by making your confession, that you may “put on the new man, which is renewed according to knowledge of Him that created him” ((Eph 4:24, Col 3:10). Receive “the earnest of the Holy Spirit” (II Cor 1:22) through faith, that you may be able to be received “into the everlasting habitations” Luke 16:9). Come for the mystical Seal, that you may be easily recognised by the Master; be numbered among the holy and spiritual flock of Christ, to be set apart on His right hand (Mat 25:33), and inherit the life prepared for you. For they to whom the rough garment of their sins still clings are found on the left hand, because they came not to the grace of God which is given through Christ at the new birth of Baptism: new birth I mean not of bodies, but the spiritual new birth of the soul. For our bodies are begotten by parents who are seen, but our souls are begotten anew through faith: for “the Spirit blows where it wishes” (John 3:8): and then, if you be found worthy, you may hear, “Well done, good and faithful servant” (Mat 25:21), when you are found to have no defilement of hypocrisy in your conscience.

3. For if any of those who are present here thinks that he can tempt God's grace, he deceives himself, and knows not its power. Keep your soul free from hypocrisy, O man, because of Him “who searches hearts and reins” (Ps 7:8, Rev 2:23). For as those who are going to make preparation for war examine the ages and the bodies of those who are taking service, so also the Lord in enlisting souls examines their intention: and if any has a secret hypocrisy, He rejects the man as unfit for His true service; but if He finds him worthy, He will surely give him His grace. He “gives not holy things to the dogs” (Mat 7:6); but where He discerns the good conscience, there He gives the Seal of salvation, that wondrous Seal, which devils tremble at, and Angels recognise; that the devils may be driven to flight, and the angels may watch around it as kindred to themselves. Those therefore who receive this spiritual and saving Seal, must have the appropriate disposition. For just as a pen or a dart has need of one to use it, so grace also has need of believing minds.

Candidates were expected to confess their sins.

4. You are receiving not a perishable but a spiritual shield. Now you
are planted in the rational Paradise, wherein you will receive a new name, which you had not before. Until now you were a Catechumen, but now you will be called a Believer. You are now being transplanted among the spiritual olive-trees, being grafted from the wild into the good olive-tree (Rom 11:17-24), from sins into righteousness, from pollution into purity. You are becoming a partaker of the Holy Vine. Well then, if you abide in the Vine (John 15:1-8), you will grow as a fruitful branch; but if you abide not, you will be consumed by the fire.

Let us therefore bear fruit worthily. God forbid that in us should be done what befell that barren fig-tree, so that Jesus may not come now and curse us for our barrenness (Mark 11:13, 14:20-21). But may all be able to use that other saying, “But I am like a fruitful olive-free in the house of God: I have trusted in the mercy of God for ever” (Ps 52:8), an olive-tree not to be perceived by sense, but by the mind, and full of light. As then it is His part to plant and to water, so it is your part to bear fruit: it is God's to grant grace, but yours to receive and guard it. Despise not the grace because it is freely given, but receive and treasure it devoutly.

5. The present is the season of confession: confess what you have done in word or in deed, by night or by day; confess in an acceptable time, and in the day of salvation receive the heavenly treasure. Devote your time to the Exorcisms: be studious at the Catechizing, and remember the things that shall be spoken, for they are spoken not for your ears only, but that by faith you may seal them up in the memory. Blot out from your mind all earthly care: for you are running for your soul. You are utterly forsaking the things of the world: little are the things which you are forsaking, great what the Lord is giving. Forsake things present, and put your trust in things to come. ... And Christ Himself the great High Priest, having accepted your resolve, may present you all to the Father, saying, “Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me” (Heb 2:13). May He keep you all well-pleasing in His sight! To whom be the glory, and the power unto the endless ages of eternity. Amen.

4 Lent is considered a season for confession.

11 LECTURE II
ON REPENTANCE AND REMISSION OF SINS, AND CONCERNING THE ADVERSARY.
EZEKIEL xviii. 20--23.
The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. But if the wicked will turn from all his sins, ...

1. A FEARFUL thing is sin, and the sorest disease of the soul is transgression, secretly cutting its sinews of the soul, and becoming also the cause of eternal fire. Sin is an evil of man's own choosing, an offspring of free will. That we sin of our own free will, the Prophet says plainly in a certain place: “Yet I planted you a fruitful vine, wholly true: how are you turned to bitterness, (and become) the strange vine?” (Jer 2:21) The planting was good, the fruit coming from the will is evil; and therefore the planter is blameless, but the vine shall be burnt with fire since it was planted for good, and bore fruit unto evil of its own will.

For God, according to the Preacher, “made man upright, and they have themselves sought out many inventions.” (Eccles 7:29) For we are “His workmanship,” says the Apostle, “created unto good works, which God afore prepared, that we should walk in them.” (Eph 2:1) So then the Creator, being good, created for good works; but the creature turned of its own free will to wickedness. Sin then is, as we have said, a fearful evil, but not incurable; fearful for him who clings to it, but easy of cure for him who by repentance puts it from him. For suppose that a man is holding fire in his hand; as long as he holds fast the live coal he is sure to be burned, but should he put away the coal, he would have cast away the flame also with it. If however any one thinks that he is not being burned when sinning, to him the Scripture says, “Shall a man wrap up fire in his bosom, and not burn his clothes?” (Prov 6:27) For sin burns the sinews of the soul, and breaks the spiritual bones of the mind, and darkens the light of the heart.

2. But some one will say, What can sin be? Is it a living thing? Is it an angel? Is it a demon? What is this which works within us? It is not an enemy, O man, that assails you from without, but an evil shoot growing up out of yourself. Look the right way with your eyes, and there is no lust. Keep your own, and seize not the things of others, and robbery has ceased. Remember the Judgment, and neither fornication, nor adultery, nor murder, nor any transgression of the law shall prevail over you. But
whenever you forget God, immediately you begin to devise wickedness and to commit iniquity.

3. Yet you are not the sole author of the evil, but there is also another most wicked prompter, the devil. He indeed suggests, but does not get the mastery by force over those who do not consent. Therefore the Preacher says, “If the spirit of him that has power rise up against you, quit not your place.” (Eccles 10:4) Shut your door, and put him far from you, and he shall not hurt you. But if you indifferently admit the thought of lust, it strikes root in you by its suggestions, and takes your mind captive, and drags you down into a pit of evils.

But perhaps you say, I am a believer, and lust cannot overcome me, even if I think upon it frequently. Do you not know that a root breaks even a rock by long persistence? Admit not the seed of evil, since it will break up your faith. Tear out the evil by the root before it blossoms, lest from being careless at the beginning you have afterwards to look for axes and fire. When your eyes begin to be diseased, get them cured in good time, lest you become blind, and then have to seek the physician.

4. The devil then is the first author of sin, and the father of the wicked: and this is the Lord’s saying, not mine, that “the devil sins from the beginning” (1 John 3:8); none sinned before him. But he sinned, not as having received necessarily from nature the tendency to sin, since then the cause of sin is traced back again to Him that made him so; but having been created good, he has of his own free will become a devil, and received that name from his action. For being an Archangel he was afterwards called a devil from his slandering; from being a good servant of God he has become rightly named Satan; for “Satan” is interpreted “the adversary”. And this is not my teaching, but that of the inspired prophet Ezekiel: for he takes up a lamentation over him and says, “You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God.” (Ezek 28:12-13) : and soon after, “You were perfect in your ways from the day that you were created, till iniquity was found in you.” (Ezek 28:15) Very rightly has he said, “was found in you”; for they were not brought in from without, but you did yourself beget the evil. The cause also he mentions in the following: “Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty: for the multitude of your sins you were wounded, and I cast you to the ground.” (Ezek 28:17) In agreement with this the Lord says again in the Gospels: “I
beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.” (Luke 10:18) You see the harmony of the Old Testament with the New. Satan, when he was cast out drew many away with him. It is he that puts lusts into those that listen to him: from him comes adultery, fornication, and every kind of evil. Through him our forefather Adam was cast out for disobedience, and exchanged a Paradise bringing forth wondrous fruits of its own accord for the ground which brings forth thorns.

5. What then? some one will say. “We have been beguiled and are lost. Is there then no salvation left? We have fallen: Is it not possible to rise again? We have been blinded: May we not recover our sight? We have become crippled: Can we never walk upright? In a word, we are dead: May we not rise again?” He that woke Lazarus who was four days dead and already stank, shall He not, O man, much more easily raise you who are alive? He who shed His precious blood for us, shall Himself deliver us from sin. Let us not despair of ourselves, brethren, let us not abandon ourselves to a hopeless condition. For it is a fearful thing not to believe in a hope of repentance. For he that looks not for salvation spares not to add evil to evil: but to him that hopes for cure, it is henceforth easy to be careful over himself. ...Thorny ground also, if cultivated well, is turned into fruitful; and is salvation to us irrecoverable? Nay rather, our nature admits of salvation, all that is required is the will to be saved.

10. Do you want proof for God’s love for man? Even though the whole people sin as one man, this will not overturn the loving-kindness of God. The people made a calf, yet God ceased not from His loving-kindness. Men denied God, but God denied not Himself. These are your gods, O Israel (Ex 32:4), they said: yet again, as always, the God of Israel became their Saviour. And not only the people sinned, but also Aaron the High Priest. For it is Moses that says: “And the anger of the Lord came upon Aaron: and I prayed for him, and God 14 forgave him.” (Deut 9:20) What then, did Moses praying for a High Priest that sinned prevail with God, and shall not Jesus, His Only-begotten, prevail with God when He prays for us? And if He did not hinder Aaron, because of his offence, from entering upon the High Priesthood, will He hinder you, who are come out from the Gentiles, from entering into salvation? Only, repent also in like manner, and grace is not forbidden you. Render your way of life henceforth unblameable; for God is truly loving unto man, nor can all one’s life be sufficient to tell of His loving kindness. Nay, not if all the tongues of men unite together will they be able even so to declare any
considerable part of His loving-kindness. For we tell some part of what is written concerning His loving-kindness to men, but how much He forgave the Angels we know not: for them also He forgives, since One alone is without sin, even Jesus who purges our sins. And of them (angels) we have said enough.

11. But if concerning us men you want to have other examples set before you, come on to the blessed David, and take him for an example of repentance. Great as he was, he fell: after his sleep, walking in the evening on the housetop, he cast a careless look, and felt a human passion. His sin was completed, but there died not with it his candour concerning the confession of his fault. Nathan the Prophet came, a swift accuser, and a healer of the wound. “The Lord is wroth”, he says, “and you have sinned” (II Sam 12:7-12). But David the king was not indignant, ... He was not puffed up ... and he trembled ... and to the messenger, or rather by him in answer to God who sent him, he said, “I have sinned against the Lord” (II Sam 12:13). Do you see the humility of the king? Do you see his confession? He had not been convicted by any one, neither were there nay witnesses to the matter. The deed was quickly done, and straightway the Prophet appeared as accuser, and the offender confesses the fault. And because he candidly confessed, he received a most speedy cure. For Nathan the Prophet who had uttered the threat, said immediately, “The Lord also has put away your sin”. You see the swift relenting of a merciful God. He says, however, You have greatly provoked the enemies of the Lord. Though you had many enemies because of your righteousness, your self-control protected you; but now that you have surrendered your strongest armour, your enemies are risen up, and stand ready against you.

12. Thus then did the Prophet comfort him, but the blessed David, for all he heard it said, “The LORD has put away your sin”, did not cease from repentance, king though he was, but put on sackcloth instead of purple, and instead of a golden throne, he sat, a king, in ashes on the ground. Nay, not only sat in ashes, but also had ashes for his food, even as he says himself, “I have eaten ashes as it were bread” (Ps 102:9). His lustful eye he wasted away with tears saying, “Every night will I wash my couch, and water my bed with my tears” (Ps 6:6). When his officers besought him to eat bread he would not listen. He prolonged his fast unto seven whole days. If a king thus made confession ought you not, a private person, to confess after this manner? Again, after Absalom's insurrection, though there were many roads for him to escape, he chose to flee by the Mount of Olives, in thought, as it were, invoking the Redeemer who was to go up thence into the heavens. And when Shimei cursed him bitterly, he said, Let him
alone, (II Sam 15:30-16:10) for he knew that "to him that forgives it shall be forgiven." What do you think of Nebuchadnezzar? Have you not heard out of the Scriptures that he was bloodthirsty, fierce, lion-like in disposition?

19. What then? When Nebuchadnezzar, after having done such deeds, had made confession, God gave him both pardon and his kingdom. And when you repent shall He not give you the remission of sins, and the kingdom of heaven, if you live a worthy life? The LORD is loving unto man, and swift to pardon, but slow to punish. Let no man therefore despair of his own salvation. Peter, the highest and foremost of the Apostles, denied the Lord thrice before a little maid: but he repented himself, and wept bitterly. Now weeping shows the repentance of the heart: and therefore he not only received forgiveness for his denial, but was also allowed to retain his Apostolic dignity.

20. Having therefore, brethren, many examples of those who have sinned and repented and been saved, do you also heartily make confession unto the Lord, that you may both receive the forgiveness of your former sins, and be counted worthy of the heavenly gift, and inherit the heavenly kingdom with all the saints in Christ Jesus; to Whom is the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

16

LECTURE III.
ON BAPTISM
Romans vi. 3, 4.

Or know you not that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? were buried therefore with Him by our baptism into death, &c.

1. Rejoice, you heavens, and let the earth be glad, because of those who are to be sprinkled with hyssop, and cleansed with the spiritual hyssop (Ps 51:7), and the power of Him to whom at His Passion drank from hyssop and a reed. And while the Heavenly Powers rejoice, let the souls that are about to be wed to the spiritual Bridegroom make themselves ready. For the voice is heard of one crying in the wilderness,

Prepare the way of the Lord. For this wedding is no light matter, no ordinary and indiscriminate union according to the flesh, but the All-searching Spirit's election according to faith. For the marriages and contracts of the world are not made altogether with judgment: but wherever there is wealth or beauty, there the bridegroom speedily approves. But here it is not beauty of person, but the soul's clear conscience; not the condemned Mammon, but the wealth of the soul in godliness, that the Bridegroom desires.

3. This is in truth a serious matter, brethren, and you must approach it with great attention. Each one of you is about to be presented to God before tens of thousands of the Angelic Hosts: the Holy Spirit is
about
to seal your souls: you are to be enrolled in the army of the Great
King.
Therefore get ready, be prepared, by putting on I mean, not bright
apparel, but piety of soul with a good conscience. Do not think of the
font as filled with simple water, but rather think of the spiritual
grace
that is given with the water. For just as the offerings brought to the
heathen altars, though simple in their nature, become defiled by the
invocation of the idols, so in the opposite sense the simple water in the
font having received the invocation of the Holy Spirit, and of Christ,
and of the Father, acquires a new sanctifying power.
17
4. For since man is of twofold nature. soul and body, the
purification
also is twofold, the one incorporeal for the incorporeal part, and the
other bodily for the body. The water cleanses the body, and the Spirit
seals the soul; that we may draw near unto God. having our heart
sprinkled by the Spirit, and our body washed with pure water. When
going down, therefore, into the water, think not of the bare element,
but look for salvation by the power of the Holy Spirit: for without
both
you can not possibly be made perfect. It is not I that say this, but the
Lord Jesus Christ, who has the power in this matter: for He says,
"Except a man be born anew (and He adds the words) of water and of
the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3:3)
Neither doth he that is baptized with water, but not found worthy of the
Spirit, receive the grace in perfection; nor if a man be virtuous in his
deeds, but receive not the seal by water, shall he enter into the
kingdom
of heaven. A bold saying, but not mine, for it is Jesus who has declared
it: and here is the proof of the statement from Holy Scripture.
Cornelius was a just man, who was honoured with a vision of Angels,
and had set up his prayers and alms-deeds as a good memorial before
God in heaven. Peter came, and the Spirit was poured out upon them
that believed, and they spoke with other tongues, and prophesied: and
after the grace of the Spirit the Scripture says that Peter commanded
them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ; in order that, the
soul
having been born again by faith, the body also might by the water
partake of the grace.
5. But if any one wishes to know why the grace is given by water and
not by a different element, let him take up the Divine Scriptures and he
shall learn. For water is a grand thing, and the noblest of the four
visible elements of the world. Heaven is the dwelling-place of Angels, but the heavens are from the waters. The earth is the place of men, but the earth is from the waters: and before the whole six days’ formation of the things that were made, the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the water. The water was the beginning of the world, and Jordan the beginning of the Gospel tidings: for Israel’s deliverance from Pharaoh was through the sea, and the world was delivered from sins by “the washing of water with the word of God” (Eph 5:26).

Where a covenant is made between parties, there is water also. After the flood, a covenant was made with Noah: a covenant was made with Israel from Mount Sinai, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop. (Heb 9:19) Elias is taken up, but not apart from water: for first he crosses the Jordan, then in a chariot mounts the heaven. The high-priest is first washed, then offers incense; for Aaron first washed, then was made high-priest: for how could one who had not yet been purified by water pray for the rest? Also as a symbol of Baptism there was a basin set apart within the Tabernacle.

6. Baptism is the end of the Old Testament, and beginning of the New. For its author was John, than whom was none greater among them that are born of women (Mat 11:11). The end he was of the Prophets: for all the Prophets and the law were until John: but of the Gospel history he was the first-fruit. For it is said, “The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, &c.” Mark 1:1-4): John came baptising in the wilderness. You may mention Elias the Tishbite who was taken up into heaven, yet he is not greater than John: Enoch was translated, but he is not greater than John: Moses was a very great lawgiver, and all the Prophets were admirable, but not greater than John. It is not I that dare to compare Prophets with Prophets: but their Master and ours, the Lord Jesus, declared it: “Among them that are born of women there has not risen a greater than John.” He says not “among them that are born of virgins,” but of women. The comparison is between the great servant and his fellow-servants, but the pre-eminence and the grace of the Son is beyond comparison with servants. Do you see how great a man God chose as the first minister of this grace? a man possessing nothing, and a lover of the desert, yet no hater of mankind: who ate locusts, and winged his soul for heaven, feeding upon honey, and speaking things both sweeter and more salutary than honey: clothed with a garment of camel's hair, and showing in himself the pattern of the ascetic life; who also was sanctified by the Holy Spirit while yet he was carried in his mother's womb. Jeremiah was sanctified, but did not prophesy, in the womb: John alone while carried in the womb leaped for joy, and though he saw not with the eyes of flesh, knew his Master
by the Spirit: for since the grace of Baptism was great, it required
greatness in its founder also.

7. This man was baptizing in Jordan, and there went out unto him all
Jerusalem, to enjoy the first-fruits of baptisms: for to Jerusalem is the
pre-eminence of all good things. But learn, O inhabitants of
Jerusalem,
how they that came out were baptized by him: confessing their sins, it
is said. First they showed their wounds, then he applied the remedies,
and to them that believed gave redemption from eternal fire. And if
you
want to be convinced of this very point, that the baptism of John is a
redemption from the threat of the fire, hear how he says, O generation
of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? But
since you have fled, cease from being a viper, but as you have been
formerly a viper’s brood, put off, the slough of your former sinful
life.
For every serpent creeps into a hole and casts its old slough, and
having
rubbed off the old skin, grows young again in body. In like manner
enter also through the strait and narrow gate: rub off your former self
by fasting, and drive out that which is destroying you. Put off the
old
man with his doings, and quote that saying in the Canticles, I have
put
off my coat, how shall I put it on? (Song 5:3)
But there is perhaps among you some hypocrite, a man-pleaser, and
one who makes a pretence of piety, but believes not from the heart;
having the hypocrisy of Simon Magus; one who has come hither not in
order to receive of the grace, but to spy out what is given: let him
also
learn from John: “And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the
trees, Every tree therefore that brings not forth good fruit is hewn
down, and cast into the fire” (Mat 3:10). The Judge is so serious; so
put
away your hypocrisy.

10. If any man does not receive Baptism, he has not salvation; except
only Martyrs, who even without the water receive the kingdom. For
when the Saviour, in redeeming the world by His Cross, was pierced in
the side, He shed forth blood and water; that men, living in times of
peace, might be baptized in water, and, in times of persecution, in
their
own blood. For the Saviour spoke of martyrdom also as baptism, saying,
“Can you drink from the cup which I drink, and be baptized with the
baptism that I am baptized with?” (Mark 10:38) And the Martyrs
profess their faith, by being made “a spectacle unto the world, and to
Angels, and to men”(I Cor 4:9); and you will soon profess your faith;
but it is not yet the time for you to hear of this.
11. Jesus sanctified Baptism by being Himself baptized. If the Son of God was baptized, what godly man is he that despises Baptism? But He was baptized not that He might receive remission of sins, for He was sinless; but being sinless, He was baptized, that He might give to them that are baptized a divine and excellent grace. “For since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise partook of the same”, (Heb 2:14) so that we having been made partakers of His presence in the flesh we might be made partakers also of His Divine grace: thus Jesus was baptized, that thereby we again by our participation might receive both salvation and honour. According to Job, there was in the waters the dragon that draws up Jordan into his mouth. (Job 40:23) Since, therefore, it was necessary to break the heads of the dragon in pieces (Ps 74:14) He went down and bound the strong one in the waters, that we might receive power to tread upon serpents and scorpions. The beast was great and terrible. No fishing-vessel was able to carry one scale of his tail: (Job 40:26 Septuagint) destruction ran before him, ravaging all that met him. The Life encountered him, that the mouth of Death might henceforth be stopped, and all we that are saved might say, “O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?” (I Cor 15:55) The sting of death is destroyed by Baptism.

13. Moreover, when you have been deemed worthy of the grace, He then giveth you strength to wrestle against the adverse powers. For as after His Baptism He was tempted forty days (not that He was unable to gain the victory before, but because He wished to do all things in due order and succession), so you likewise, though not daring before your baptism to wrestle with the adversaries, yet after you have received the grace and have received the courage, must then fight with the armour of righteousness, and, if you will, preach the Gospel.

14. Jesus Christ was the Son of God, yet He preached not the Gospel before His Baptism. If the Master Himself followed the right time in due order, ought we, His servants, to venture out of order? From that time Jesus began to preach, when the Holy Spirit had descended upon Him in a bodily shape, like a dove; not that Jesus might see Him first, for He knew Him even before He came in a bodily shape, but that John, who was baptizing Him, might behold Him. “For I, knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, He said unto me, Upon whomsoever you shall see the Spirit descending and abiding on Him, that is He.” (John 1:33) If you too have sincere piety, the Holy Spirit will come down on you also, and the Father's voice will sound over you.
from on high, not to say, “This is My Son,” but, “This has now been made My son;” for the “is” belongs to Him alone, because In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. To Him belongs the “is,” since He is always the Son of God: but to you “has now been made:” since you have not the sonship by nature, but receive it by adoption. He eternally “is;” but you receive the grace by adoption. Make ready then the vessel of your soul, that you may become a son of God, and an heir of God, and joint-heir with Christ. (Rom 8:17)

16. Be of good courage, O Jerusalem; the Lord will take away all your iniquities. The Lord will wash away the filth of His sons and of His daughters by the Spirit of judgment, and by the Spirit of burning. He will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be cleansed from all your sin. (Zeph 3: 14-15, Isa 4:4, Ezek 36:25) Angels shall dance around you, and say, Who is this that comes up in white array, leaning upon her beloved? (Song 8:5) For the soul that was formerly a slave has now adopted her Master Himself as her kinsman: and He accepting the sincere intention will answer: “Behold, you are fair, my love; behold, you are fair: your teeth are like flocks of sheep new shorn, (because of the confession of a good conscience: and further) which have all of them twins; (Song 4:1-2) because of the twofold grace, I mean that which is perfected of water and of the Spirit, or that which is announced by the Old and by the New Testament. And God grant that all of you when you have finished the course of the fast5, may remember what I say, and bringing forth fruit in good works, may stand blameless beside the Spiritual Bridegroom, and obtain the remission of your sins from God; to whom with the Son and Holy Spirit be the glory for ever. Amen.

5 The reference is to Lent.

22 LECTURE IV ON THE TEN POINTS OF DOCTRINE
COLOSSIANS ii. 8
Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, &c.

1. VICE mimics virtue, and tares strive to be look like wheat, growing like the wheat in appearance. Discerning judges however, can tell the difference from the taste. The devil also “transforms himself into an angel of light” (II Cor 11:14); not that he may ascend again to where he
was, for having made his heart hard as an anvil, he has not a will that
can repent; but in order that he may envelope those who are living an
Angellic life in a mist of blindness, and a pestilent condition of unbelief.
Many wolves are going about in sheep’s clothing (Mat 7:15), their
clothing being that of sheep, not so their claws and teeth: but clad in
their soft skin, and deceiving the innocent by their appearance, they
shed upon them from their fangs the destructive poison of ungodliness.
We have need therefore of divine grace, and of a sober mind, and of
eyes that see, lest from eating tares as wheat we suffer harm from
ignorance, and lest from taking the wolf to be a sheep we become his
prey, and from supposing the destroying Devil to be a beneficent Angel
we be devoured: for, as the Scripture says, “he goes about as a roaring
lion, seeking whom he may devour” (I Pet 5:8). This is why the Church
admonishes. This is why we hold these classes. This is the reason for the
these readings of the scriptures.
2. For the way of godliness consists of these two things, pious
dogmas, and good works. Neither are the dogmas acceptable to God
apart from good works, nor does God accept the works which are not
perfected with pious dogmas. For what profit is it, to know well the
doctrines concerning God, and yet to be a vile fornicator? And again,
what profit is it, to exercise the greatest self control, and in the same
time utter impious blasphemies? A most precious possession therefore
is the knowledge of dogmas: but there is also a need for a wakeful
soul, since there are many that “would spoil us through philosophy and vain
deceit” (Col 2:8). The Greeks on the one hand deceive you by their
smooth tongue, for “honey drips from a harlot's lips” (Prov 5:3); while
those of the Circumcision deceive you by means of the Divine
Scriptures, which they miserably misinterpret. They study Scripture
from childhood to old age, only to grow old in ignorance. The heretics,
by “their good words and smooth tongue deceive the hearts of the
innocent” (Col 2:8), covering with the name of Christ as it were with
honey the poison pills of their impious doctrines. Now concerning all of
these together the Lord warns us, “Take heed lest any man mislead you” (Mat24:4). This is the reason for the teaching of the Creed and for
expositions upon it.
3. But before delivering you over to the Creed, I think it is well to
make use at present of a short summary of necessary doctrines; that the
multitude of things to be spoken, and the long interval of the days of all
this holy Lent, may not cause forgetfulness in the mind of the more
simple among you; but that, having implanted some seeds now in a
summary way, we may not forget the same when afterwards we discuss
them in more detail. But let those here present whose habit of mind is
mature, and who have their senses already exercised to discern good
and evil, endure patiently to listen to things fitted rather for
children,
and to an introductory course, as it were, of milk: that at the same
time
both those who have need of the instruction may be benefited, and
those who have the knowledge may rekindle the remembrance of things
which they already know.

OF GOD:

4. First then let there be laid as a foundation in your soul the
doctrine
concerning God, that God is One, alone, unbegotten, without
beginning, change, or variation; neither begotten of another, nor
having
another to succeed Him in His life; who neither began to live in time,
nor ends ever: and that He is both good and just; that if ever you
hear
a heretic say, that there is one God who is just, and another who is
good, then immediately remember, and discern the poisoned arrow of
heresy. For some have impiously dared to divide the One God in their
teaching: and some have said that one is the Creator and Lord of the
soul, and another of the body; a doctrine at once absurd and impious.
For how can a man become the one servant of two masters, when our
24
Lord says in the Gospels, No man can serve two masters? There is then
One Only God, the Maker both of souls and bodies: One the Creator
of heaven and earth, the Maker of Angels and Archangels: the Father
before all ages, of One only, His Only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus
Christ, by Whom He made all things visible and invisible.

5. This Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is not circumscribed in any
place, nor is He less than the heaven; but the heavens are the works of
His fingers, and the whole earth is held in His grasp: He is in all
things
and around all. Think not that the sun is brighter than He, or equal
to
Him: for He who at first formed the sun must be incomparably greater
and brighter. He foreknows the things that shall be, and is mightier
than
all, knowing all things and doing as He wills; not being subject to
any
necessary sequence of events, nor to nativity, nor chance, nor fate;
in all
things perfect, and equally possessing every absolute form of virtue,
neither diminishing nor increasing, but in mode and conditions ever the
same; who has prepared punishment for sinners, and a crown for the
righteous.

6. Seeing then that many have gone astray in divers ways from the
One God, some having deified the sun, that when the sun sets they may
abide in the night season without God; others the moon, to have no
God by day; others the other parts of the world; others the arts;
others
their various kinds of food; others their pleasures; while some, mad
after women, have set up on high an image of a naked woman, and
called it Aphrodite, and worshipped their own lust in a visible form;
and
others dazzled by the brightness of gold have deified it and the other
kinds of matter;--whereas if one lay as a first foundation in his
heart the
doctrine of the unity of God, and trust to Him, he roots out at once the
whole crop of the evils of idolatry, and of the error of the heretics.
Lay
in you, therefore, this first doctrine of religion as a foundation in your
soul by faith.
OF CHRIST:

7. Believe also in the Son of God, One and Only, our Lord Jesus
Christ, Who was begotten God of God, begotten Life of Life, begotten
Light of Light, Who is in all things equal to Him that begat Him, Who
received not His being in time, but was before all ages eternally and
incomprehensibly begotten of the Father: The Wisdom and the Power
of God, and His Righteousness personally subsisting6:
: Who sits on the
right hand of the Father before all ages.
For the throne at God's right hand He received not, as some have
thought, because of His patient endurance, being crowned as it were by
God after His Passion; but throughout His being,—a being by eternal
generation,—He holds His royal dignity, and shares the Father's seat,
being God and Wisdom and Power, as has been said; reigning together
with the Father, and creating all things for the Father, yet lacking
nothing in the dignity of Godhead, and knowing Him that begat Him,
even as He is known of Him that has begotten; and to speak briefly,
remember what is written in the Gospels, that "none knows the Son but
the Father, neither knows any the Father save the Son."(Mat 11:27)

8. Nor must you separate the Son from the Father, nor by making a
confusion believe in a Son-Fatherhood; but believe that of One God
there is One Only-begotten Son, who is before all ages God the Word;
not the uttered word diffused into the air, nor to be likened to
impersonal words; but the Word the Son, Maker of all who partake of
reason, the Word who hears the Father, and Himself speaks. And on
these points, should God permit, we will speak more at large in due
season; for we do not forget our present purpose to give a summary introduction to the Faith.

CONCERNING HIS BIRTH OF THE VIRGIN:

9. Believe then that this Only-begotten Son of God for our sins came down from heaven upon earth, and took upon Him this human nature of like passions with us, and was begotten of the Holy Virgin and of the Holy Spirit, and was made Man, not in seeming and mere show, but in truth; nor yet by passing through the Virgin as through a channel; but was of her made truly flesh, [and truly nourished with milk], and did truly eat as we do, and truly drink as we do. For if the Incarnation was a phantom, salvation is a phantom also. Christ was of two natures, Man

6

Or existing hypostatically

26

in what was seen, but God in what was not seen; as Man truly eating like us, for He had the like feeling of the flesh with us; but as God feeding the five thousand from five loaves; as Man truly dying, but as God raising him that had been dead four days; truly sleeping in the ship as Man, and walking upon the waters as God.

OF THE CROSS:

10. He was truly crucified for our sins. For if you would deny it, the place refutes you visibly, this blessed Golgotha, in which we are now assembled for the sake of Him who was here crucified; and the whole world has since been filled with pieces of the wood of the Cross. But He was crucified not for sins of His own, but that we might be delivered from our sins. And though as Man He was at that time despised of men, and was buffeted, yet He was acknowledged by the Creation as God. For when the sun saw his Lord dishonoured, he grew dim and trembled, not enduring the sight.

OF HIS BURIAL:

11. He was truly laid as Man in a tomb of rock; but rocks were rent asunder by terror because of Him. He went down into the regions beneath the earth, that thence also He might redeem the righteous. For, tell me, do you wish the living only to enjoy His grace, and that, though most of them are unholy; and not wish those who from Adam had for a long while been imprisoned to have now gained their liberty? Esaias the Prophet proclaimed with loud voice so many things concerning Him; would you not wish that the King should go down and redeem His herald? David was there, and Samuel, and all the Prophets, John himself also, who by his messengers said, “Are you He that should 7
It can be assumed that the lectures were given in the church erected on the Golgotha by Constantine.

8 After the discovery of the Cross by Queen Helen, pieces of the Cross were sent to all the churches in the world.

9 The descent into Hades.

27 come, or look we for another?” Would you not wish that He should descend and redeem such as these?

OF THE RESURRECTION:

12. But He who descended into the regions beneath the earth came up again; and Jesus, who was buried, truly rose again the third day. And if the Jews ever contradict you, meet them at once by asking thus: Did Jonah come forth from the whale on the third day, how then do you deny that Christ has risen from the earth on the third day? Is a dead man raised to life on touching the bones of Elisha, and is it not much easier for the Maker of mankind to be raised by the power of the Father? Well then, He truly rose, and after He had risen was seen again of the disciples: and twelve disciples were witnesses of His Resurrection, who bare witness not in pleasing words, but contended even unto torture and death for the truth of the Resurrection. What then, shall every word be established at the mouth of two of three witnesses, according to the Scripture, and, though twelve bear witness to the Resurrection of Christ, are you still incredulous in regard to His Resurrection?

CONCERNING THE ASCENSION:

13. But when Jesus had finished His course of patient endurance, and had redeemed mankind from their sins, He ascended again into the heavens, a cloud receiving Him up. And as He went up Angels were beside Him, and Apostles were beholding. But if any man disbelieves the words which I speak, let him believe from observing the things that he sees today. All kings when they die have their power extinguished with their life: but Christ no sooner He is crucified than He begins to be worshipped by the whole world. We proclaim The Crucified, and the devils tremble now. Many have been crucified at various times; but of what other who was crucified did the invocation ever drive the devils away?

14. Let us, therefore, not be ashamed of the Cross of Christ; but though others keep it secretly, openly sign it upon your forehead, that the devils may behold the royal sign and flee trembling far away. Make then this sign at eating and drinking, at sitting, at lying down, at rising
up, at speaking, at walking: in a word, at every act. For He who was here crucified is in heaven above. If after being crucified and buried He had remained in the tomb, we should have had cause to be ashamed; but, in fact, He who was crucified on Golgotha here, has ascended into heaven from the Mount of Olives on the East. For after having gone down hence into Hades, and come up again to us, He ascended again from us into heaven, His Father addressing Him, and saying, “Sit on My right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool.” (Ps 46:1)

OF JUDGMENT TO COME:

15. This Jesus Christ who is gone up shall come again, not from earth but from heaven: and I say, “not from earth,” because there are many Antichrists to come at this time from earth. For already, as you have seen, many have begun to say, I am the Christ: and the abomination of desolation is yet to come, assuming to himself the false title of Christ. But look for the true Christ, the Only-begotten Son of God, coming henceforth no more from earth, but from heaven, appearing to all more bright than any lightning and brilliancy of light, with angel guards attended, that He may judge both living and dead, and reign in a heavenly, eternal kingdom, which shall have no end. For on this point also, I bid you, make your faith sure, since there are many who say that Christ's Kingdom has an end.

OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:

16. Believe also in the Holy Spirit, and hold the same opinion concerning Him, which you have received to hold concerning the Father and the Son, and follow not those who teach blasphemous things of Him. But learn that this Holy Spirit is One, indivisible, of manifold power; having many operations, yet not Himself divided; Who knows the mysteries, “Who searches all things, even the deep things of God” (I Cor 2:10): Who descended upon the Lord Jesus Christ in form of a dove; Who wrought in the Law and in the Prophets; Who now also at the season of Baptism seals your soul; of Whose sanctification also every intellectual nature has need: against Whom if any dare to blaspheme, he has no forgiveness, “neither in this world, nor in that which is to come” (Mat 12:32): "Who with the Father and the Son together" is honoured with the glory of the Godhead: of Whom also thrones, and dominions, principalities, and powers have need. For there is One God, the Father of Christ; and One Lord Jesus Christ, the Only-begotten Son of the Only God; and One Holy Spirit, Who sanctifies all and makes divine, Who spoke in the Law and in the Prophets, in the Old and in the New Testament.

17. Always keep the thought of this sealing in your mind, about which I have given you a summary in my discourse, but shall be stated, should the Lord permit, to the best of my power with the proof from the
Scriptures. For concerning the divine and holy mysteries of the Faith, not even a casual statement must be delivered without the Holy Scriptures; nor must we be drawn aside by mere plausibility and arguments of speech. Even to me, who tell you these things, give not absolute credence, unless you receive the proof of the things which I announce from the Divine Scriptures. For this salvation which we believe depends not on ingenious reasoning, but on demonstration of the Holy Scriptures.

OF THE SOUL:

18. Next to the knowledge of this venerable and glorious and all-holy Faith, learn further what you are: that as man you are of a two-fold nature, consisting of soul and body; and that, as was said a short time ago, the same God is the Creator both of soul and body. Know also that you have a soul self-governed, the noblest work of God, made after the image of its Creator: immortal because of God that gives it immortality;
a living being, rational, imperishable, because of Him that bestowed these gifts: having free power to do what it wills. For you do not sin because you were born that way, nor is it by the power of chance that you commit fornication, nor, as some say, do the conjunctions of the stars compel you to live immorally. Why do you shrink from confessing your own evil deeds, and ascribe the blame to the innocent stars? Give no more heed to astrologers; for of these the divine Scripture says, 30
“Let the stargazers of the heaven stand up and save you”, and later on:
“Behold, they all shall be consumed as stubble on the fire, and shall not deliver their soul from the flame.” (Isa 47:13-14)

19. And learn this also, that the soul, before it came into this world, had committed no sin, but that we come into this world sinless, and being here, we sin of our free-will. Listen not to any one perversely interpreting the words, “But if I do that which I would not” (Rom 7:16):
but remember Him who said, “If you be willing, and hearken unto Me, you shall eat the good things of the land: but if you be not willing, neither hearken unto Me, the sword shall devour you, (Isa 1: 19-20): and again, “As you presented your members as servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity, even so now present your members as servants to righteousness unto sanctification.” (Rom 6:19) Remember also the Scripture, which says, “even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge” (Rom 1:28): and, “That which may be known of God is manifest in them” (Rom 1:19); and again, “their eyes they have closed” (Mat 13:15). Also remember how God again accuses them, and says, “Yet I planted you a fruitful vine, wholly true: how are you turned
to bitterness, a strange vine?” (Jer 2:21)

20. The soul is immortal, and all souls are alike both of men and women; for only the members of the body are distinguished. There is not a class of souls sinning by nature, and a class of souls practising righteousness by nature: but both act from choice, the substance of their souls being of one kind only, and alike in all. I know, however, that I am talking much, and that the time is already long; but what is more precious than salvation? Are you not willing to take trouble in getting provisions for the way against the heretics? And will you not learn the twists of the road, lest from ignorance you fall into a ditch? If your teachers think it no small gain for you to learn these things, surely you the learner should gladly welcome the multitude of things told you!

21. The soul has a free will: and though the devil can suggest, he has no power to compel you against your will. He pictures to you the thought of fornication: if you will, you accept it; but if you will, you can reject it. For if you were a fornicator by necessity, then for what cause did God prepare hell? If you were a doer of righteousness by nature and not by will, why did God prepare crowns of ineffable glory? A sheep is meek, but no sheep has ever been crowned for its meekness: since its meek quality belongs to it not from choice but by nature.

OF THE BODY:

22. You have learned, beloved, the nature of the soul, as far as there is time at present now do your best to receive the doctrine of the body also. Do not believe those who say that this body is not the work of God: for they who believe that the body is independent of God, and that the soul dwells in it as in a strange vessel, readily abuse it to fornication. And yet what fault have they found in this wonderful body? For what is lacking in comeliness? And what in its structure is not full of skill? Ought they not to have observed the luminous construction of the eyes? And how the ears being set obliquely receive the sound unhindered? And how the smell is able to distinguish scents, and to perceive exhalations? And how the tongue ministers to two purposes, the sense of taste, and the power of speech? How the lungs placed out of sight are unceasing in their respiration of the air? Who imparted the incessant pulsation of the heart? Who made the distribution into so
many veins and arteries? Who skilfully knitted together the bones with the sinews? Who assigned a part of the food to our substance, and separated a part for decent secretion, and hid away the unseemly members in more seemly places? Who when the human race would have died out, corrected this by allowing intercourse?

23. Tell me not that the body is a cause of sin. For if the body is a cause of sin, why does not a dead body sin? Put a sword in the right hand of one just dead, and no murder takes place. Let beauties of every kind pass before a youth just dead, and no impure desire arises. Why? Because the body sins not of itself, but the soul through the body. The body is an instrument, and, as it were, a garment and robe of the soul.

12That is sweat.

32
And if by this latter it be given over to fornication, it becomes defiled: but if it dwell with a holy soul, it becomes a temple of the Holy Spirit.
It is not I that say this, but the Apostle Paul has said, “Know you not, that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you?” (I Cor 6:19) Take care, therefore, of your body as being a temple of the Holy Spirit. Pollute not your flesh in fornication: defile not what is your fairest robe: and if ever you have defiled it, now cleanse it by repentance: get yourself washed, while time permits.

24. And to the doctrine of chastity let the first to give heed be the order of Solitaries and of Virgins, who maintain the angelic life in the world; and let the rest of the Church's people follow them. For you, brethren, a great crown is laid up: barter not away a great dignity for a petty pleasure: listen to the Apostle speaking: “Lest there be any fornicator or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his own birthright.” (Heb 2:16) You have now been enrolled in the Angelic books for your practice of chastity, see that you are not blotted out again for your practice of fornication.

25. Nor again, on the other hand, in maintaining your chastity be you puffed up against those who walk in the humbler path of matrimony. For as the Apostle says, “Let marriage be had in honour among all, and let the bed be undefiled.” (Heb 13:4) You too who are keeping your virginity, were you not begotten of those who had married? Because you have a possession of gold, do not on that account despise the silver.
But let those also be of good cheer, who being married use marriage lawfully; who make a marriage according to God's ordinance, and not
of wantonness for the sake of unbounded license; who recognise
“seasons of abstinence, that they may give themselves unto prayer” (I
Cor 7:5); who in our assemblies bring clean bodies as well as clean
garments into the Church; who have entered upon matrimony for the
procreation of children, but not for indulgence.

26. Let those also who marry once not despise those who have
consented to a second marriages: for though continence is a noble and
13Meaning monks and nuns.

admirable thing, yet it is also permissible to enter upon a second
marriage, that the weak may not fall into fornication. For it is good for
them, says the Apostle, “if they abide even as I. But if they have not
continency, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.”
(I
Cor 7:8-9) But let all the other practices be banished afar, fornication,
adultery, and every kind of licentiousness: and let the body be kept
pure for the Lord, that the Lord also may have respect unto the body. And
let the body be nourished with food, that it may live, and serve without
hindrance; not, however, that it may be given up to luxuries.

CONCERNING FOODS:

27. And concerning food let these be your rules, since in regard to
meats also many stumble. For some unknowingly eat things offered to
idols, while others discipline themselves, but condemn those that eat:
and in different ways men's souls are defiled in the matter of meats,
from ignorance of the useful reasons for eating and not eating. For we
fast by abstaining from wine and meat, not because we abhor them as
abominations, but because we look for our reward; that having scorned
things sensible, we may enjoy a spiritual and intellectual feast; and that
“having now sawn in tears we may reap in joy” (Ps 126:5) in the world
to come. Despise not therefore them that eat, and because of the
weakness of their bodies partake of food: nor yet blame these who use
“a little wine for their stomach’s sake and their often infirmities”
(I Tim
5:23): and neither condemn the men as sinners, nor abhor the flesh as
strange food; for the Apostle knows some of this sort, when he says:
“forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which
God created to be received with thanksgiving by them that believe.” (I
Tim 4:3) In abstaining then from these things, abstain not as from
things abominable, else you have no reward: but as being good things
disregard them for the sake of the better spiritual things set before
you.

28. Guard your soul safely, lest at any time you eat of things
offered
to idols: for concerning meats of this kind, not only I at this time, but
the Apostles also, and James the bishop of this Church, have had earnest care: and the Apostles and Elders write a Catholic epistle to all the Gentiles, that they should abstain first from things offered to idols, and then from blood also and from things strangled. For many men being of savage nature, and living like dogs, both lap up blood, in imitation of the manner of the fiercest beasts, and greedily devour things strangled. But do you, the servant of Christ, in eating observe to eat with reverence. And so enough concerning meats.

OF CLOTHES:
29. But let your CLOTHES be plain, not for adornment, but for necessary covering: and not for vanity, but to keep you warm in winter, and to hide the unseemliness of the body, lest under pretence of hiding the unseemliness, you fall into another kind of unseemliness by your extravagant dress.

OF THE RESURRECTION:
30. Be careful, I beseech you, of this body, and understand that you will be raised from the dead, to be judged with this body. But if there comes into your mind any thought of unbelief, as though the thing were impossible, judge of the things unseen by what happens to yourself. Tell me, for example; a hundred years ago or more, where do you think you were? and from what a most minute and mean substance have you become of so great a stature, and so much dignity of beauty? What then? Cannot He who brought the non-existent into being, raise up again that which already exists and has decayed? He who raises the corn, which is sown for our sakes, as year by year it dies,—will He find difficulty in raising us up, for whose sakes that corn also has been raised? Do you see how the trees stand now for many months without either fruit or leaves: but when the winter is past they spring up whole into life again as if from the dead: shall not we much rather and more easily return to life? The rod of Moses was transformed by the will of God into the unfamiliar nature of a serpent: and cannot a man, who has fallen into death, be restored to himself again?
31. Do not listen to those who say that this body is not raised up again; for it is raised: and Esaias is witness, when he says: “The dead shall arise, and they that are in the tombs shall awake” (Isa 26:19): and according to Daniel, “Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall arise, some to everlasting life, and some to everlasting shame.”
But though to rise again is common to all men, yet the resurrection is not alike to all: for the bodies received by us all are eternal, but these bodies are not alike to all: for the just receive them, that through eternity they may join the Choirs of Angels; but the sinners, that they may endure for ever the torment of their sins.

OF THE FONT:

32. For this cause the Lord, according to His loving-kindness, has granted repentance at Baptism, in order that we may cast off the multitude, rather the whole burden of our sins, and having received the seal by the Holy Spirit, may be made heirs of eternal life. But as we have spoken sufficiently concerning the Font the day before yesterday, let us now return to the remaining subjects of our introductory teaching.

OF THE DIVINE SCRIPTURES:

33. Now these are the things we learn from the divinely-inspired Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testament. For the God of the two Testaments is One, Who in the Old Testament foretold Christ Who appeared in the New; Who by the Law and the Prophets as a schoolmaster, led us to Christ. For before faith came, we were kept under the law, and, the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. And if ever you hear any of the heretics speaking evil of the Law or the Prophets, answer in the sound of the Saviour's voice, saying, “Jesus came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it” Mat 5:17). Learn also diligently, and from the Church, what are the books of the Old Testament, and what are those of the New. And, read none of the apocryphal writings: for why do you, who does not know those which are acknowledged among all, trouble yourself in vain about those which are disputed? Read the Divine Scriptures, the twenty-two books of the Old Testament, these that have been translated by the Seventy-two Interpreters.

34. For after the death of Alexander, the king of the Macedonians, and the division of his kingdom into four principalities, into Babylonia, and Macedonia, and Asia, and Egypt, one of those who reigned over Egypt, Ptolemy Philadelphus, being a king very fond of learning, while collecting the books that were in every place, heard from Demetrius Phalereus, the curator of his library, of the Divine Scriptures of the Law and the Prophets, and judged it much nobler, not to get the books from the possessors by force against their will, but rather to appease them by gifts and friendship; and knowing that what is extorted is often adulterated, being given unwillingly, while that which is willingly supplied is freely given with all sincerity, he sent to Eleazar, who was
then High Priest, a great many gifts for the Temple here at Jerusalem, and caused him to send him six interpreters from each of the twelve tribes of Israel for the translation. Then, further, to make experiment whether the books were Divine or not, he took precaution that those who had been sent should not communicate among themselves, by assigning to each of the interpreters who had come his separate chamber in the island called Pharos, which lies over against Alexandria, and committed to each the whole Scriptures to translate. And when they had fulfilled the task in seventy-two days, he brought together all their translations, which they had made in different chambers without sending them one to another, and found that they agreed not only in the sense but even in words. For the process was no word-craft, nor contrivance of human devices: but the translation of the Divine Scriptures, spoken by the Holy Spirit, was of the Holy Spirit accomplished.

35. Of these read the two and twenty books, but have nothing to do with the apocryphal writings. Study earnestly these only which we read openly in the Church. Far wiser and more pious than you were the Apostles, and the bishops of old time, the presidents of the Church who handed down these books. Being therefore a child of the Church, you must not modify the canons. And of the Old Testament, as we have said, study the two and twenty books, which, if you are desirous of learning, strive to remember by name, as I recite them. For of the Law the books of Moses are the first five, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. And next, Joshua the son of Nun, and the book of Judges, including Ruth, counted as seventh. And of the other historical books, the first and second books of the Kings are among the Hebrews one book; also the third and fourth one book. And in like manner, the first and second of Chronicles are with them one book; and the first and second of Esdras are counted one. Esther is the twelfth book; and these are the Historical writings. But those which are written in verses are five, Job, and the book of Psalms, and Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs, which is the seventeenth book. And after these come the five Prophetic books: of the Twelve Prophets one book, of Isaiah one, of Jeremiah one, including Baruch and Lamentations and the Epistle; then Ezekiel, and the Book of Daniel, the twenty-second of the Old Testament.

36. Then of the New Testament there are the four Gospels only, for the rest have false titles and are mischievous. The Manichaeans also wrote a Gospel according to Thomas, which being tinctured with the fragrance of the evangelic title corrupts the souls of the simple sort.
Receive also the Acts of the Twelve Apostles; and in addition to these the seven Catholic Epistles of James, Peter, John, and Jude; and as a seal upon them all, and the last work of the disciples, the fourteen Epistles of Paul. But let all the rest be put aside in a secondary rank.

And whatever books are not read in Churches, these read not even by thyself, as you have heard me say. Thus much of these subjects.

37. But shun every diabolical operation, and believe not the apostate Serpent, whose transformation from a good nature was of his own free choice: who can persuade the willing, but can compel no one. Also have nothing to do with astrology nor auguries, nor omens, nor to the fabulous divinations of the Greeks. Witchcraft, and enchantment, and the wicked practices of necromancy. From every kind of intemperance stand aloof, giving yourself neither to gluttony nor licentiousness, rising superior to all covetousness and usury. Take no part in heathen assemblies for public spectacles, nor ever use amulets in sicknesses; shun also all the vulgarity of tavern-haunting. .... But especially abhor all the assemblies of wicked heretics; and in every way make your own soul safe, by fastings, prayers, almsgivings, and reading the oracles of God; that having lived the rest of your life in the flesh in soberness and godly doctrine, you may enjoy the one salvation which flows from Baptism; and thus enrolled in the armies of heaven by God and the Father, may you also be deemed worthy of the heavenly crowns, in Christ Jesus our Lord, to Whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

38

LECTURE V
OF FAITH
HEBREWS xi. 1, 2.

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report.

1. How great a dignity the Lord bestows on you in transferring you from the order of Catechumens to that of the Faithful, the Apostle Paul shows, when he affirms, God is faithful, by Whom ye were called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ (I Cor 1:9). For since God is called Faithful, you also in receiving this title receive a great dignity.

For as God is called Good, and Just, and Almighty, and Maker of the Universe, so is He also called Faithful. Consider therefore to what a dignity you are rising, seeing you are going to become partaker of a title of God.

2. Here then it is further required, that each of you be found faithful in his conscience. “For a faithful man it is hard to find” (Prov 20:6) Not
that you should show your sincerity to me, for you are not to be
“judged
of man’s judgment” (I Cor 4:3); but that you show the sincerity of your
faith to God, “who tries the reins and hearts” (Ps 7:9), and “knows the
thoughts of men” (Ps 94:11). A great thing is a faithful man, being
richest of all rich men. For to the faithful man belongs the whole
world
of wealth (Prov 17:6 Septuagint), in that he disdains and tramples on it.
For they who in appearance are rich, and have many possessions, are
poor in soul: since the more they gather, the more they ache with
coveting what they do not have. But the faithful man, paradoxically, in
poverty is rich. For knowing that “we need only to have food and
raiment, and being therewith content” (I Tim 6:8), he has trodden riches under foot.

4. The lesson also which was read to-day invites you to the true
faith,
by setting before you the way in which you also must please God: for it
affirms that without faith it is impossible to please Him (Heb 11:6).
For when will a man resolve to serve God, unless he believes that He is a
giver of reward? When will a young woman choose a virgin life, or a
young man live soberly, if they believe not that for chastity there is a
crown that fades not away? Faith is an eye that enlightens every
conscience, and imparts understanding; for the Prophet says, And if ye believe not, ye shall not understand (Isa 7:9).

Faith stops the mouths of lions, as in Daniel’s case: for the Scripture
says concerning him, that Daniel was brought up out of the den, and no
manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God
(Dan 6:23). Is there anything more fearful than the devil? Yet even
against him we have no other shield than faith, a spiritual shield against
an invisible foe. For he sends forth divers arrows, and shoots down in
the dark night those who are not on their watch; but, since the enemy is unseen, we have faith as our strong armour, according to the saying of the Apostle, “In all things taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye
shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one” (Eph 6:16).
A fiery dart of lust of some shameful desire is often cast forth from the
devil: but faith, suggesting a picture of the judgment, cools down the mind, and quenches the dart.
10. For the word Faith is in the form of speech one, but has two distinct senses. For there is one kind of faith, the dogmatic, involving an
assent of the soul on some particular doctrine: and it is profitable to the
soul, as the Lord says: “He that hears My words, and believes Him that sent Me, has everlasting life, and comes not into judgment (John 5:24):
and again, “He that believes in the Son is not judged, but has passed from death unto life” (John 3:18). Oh the great loving-kindness of God!
For the righteous spent many years in pleasing Him: but what they succeeded in gaining by many years of well-pleasing, this Jesus now bestows on you in a single hour. “For if you shall believe that Jesus Christ is Lord, and that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved, and shall be transported into Paradise by Him who brought in there the robber. And doubt not whether it is possible; for He who on this sacred Golgotha saved the robber after one single hour of belief, the same shall save you also on your believing.
11. But there is a second kind of faith, which is given by Christ as a gift of grace. “For to one is given through the Spirit the word of wisdom, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit: to another faith, by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing” (I Cor 12:8-9). This faith then which is given of grace from the Spirit is not merely doctrinal, but also empowers activities surpassing man's power. For whosoever has this faith, “shall say to this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove” (Mat 17:20). For whenever any one shall say this in faith, believing that it comes to pass, and shall not doubt in his heart, then receives he the grace.
And of this faith it is said, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed. For just as the grain of mustard seed is small in size, but fiery in its operation, and though sown in a small space has a circle of great branches, and when grown up is able even to shelter the fowls (Mark 4:31-32); so, likewise, faith in the swiftest moment works the greatest effects in the soul. For, such a one places the thought of God before his mind, and as far as enlightenment by faith permits it, beholds God, and ranges round the bounds of the universe, and before the end of this world already beholds the Judgment, and the payment of the promised rewards. Hold on therefore that faith in Him which you possess, so
that you may also receive from Him that faith which empowers activities surpassing man’s power.

12. But in learning the Faith and in professing it, acquire and keep that only, which is now delivered to you by the Church, and which is confirmed strongly by the Scriptures. For since not every one can read the Scriptures, some because of lack of learning, and others by lack of time, in order that the soul may not perish from ignorance, we comprise the whole doctrine of the Faith in a few lines. This summary I wish you both to commit to memory when I recite it, and to rehearse it with all diligence among yourselves, not writing it out on paper, but engraving it by the memory upon your heart. I wish you also to keep this as a provision through the whole course of your life, and beside this to receive no other, neither if we ourselves should change and contradict our present teaching, nor if an adverse angel, transformed into an angel of light should wish to lead you astray. “For though we or an angel from heaven preach to you any other gospel than that ye have received, let him be to you anathema” (Gal 1:8-9). So for the present listen while I simply say the Creed, and commit it to memory; but at the proper season expect the confirmation out of Holy Scripture of each part of the contents. For the articles of the Faith were not composed as seemed good to men; but the most important points collected out of all the Scripture make up one complete teaching of the Faith. And just as the mustard seed in one small grain contains many branches, so also this Creed has embraced in few words all the knowledge of godliness in the Old and New Testaments. Take heed then, brethren, and “hold fast the traditions which ye now receive” (II Thes 2:15), and write them an the table of your heart. (Prov 7:3)

13. Guard them with reverence, lest per chance the enemy spoil any of your thoughts if you have grown slack; or lest some heretic pervert any of the truths delivered to you. For faith is like putting money into the bank, (which is what we have now done); but God will ask you to account for the deposit. “I charge you, before God, who quickens all things, and Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession, that ye keep this faith which is committed to you, without spot, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Tim 5:21, 6:13-14). A treasure of life has now been committed to you, and the Master will demand the deposit at His appearing, which in His own times He shall show, “Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only has immortality, dwelling in light which no man can approach unto; Whom no man has seen nor can see. To
Whom be glory, honour, and power for ever and ever. Amen”. (I Tim 6:15-16)

LECTURE VI
CONCERNING THE UNITY OF GOD
ISAIAH xlvi. 16, 17. (Septuagint)
Sanctify yourselves unto Me, O islands. Israel is saved by the Lord with an everlasting salvation; they shall not be ashamed, neither shall they be confounded for ever, &c.

1. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (II Cor 1:3) Blessed also be His Only-begotten Son. For with the thought of God let the thought of Father at once be joined, that the ascription of glory to the Father and the Son may be made indivisible For the Father has not one glory, and the Son another, but one and the same, since He is the Father’s Only-begotten Son. And when the Father is glorified, the Son also shares the glory with Him, because the glory of the Son flows from His Father’s honour: and again, when the Son is glorified, the Father of so excellent a Son is greatly honoured.

2. Now though the mind is most rapid in its thoughts, yet the tongue needs words, and a long recital of intermediary speech. For the eye embraces at once a multitude of the stars but when any one wishes to describe them one by one, which is the Morning-star, and which, the Evening-star, and which each one of them, he has need of many words. In like manner again the mind in the briefest moment compasses earth and sea and all the bounds of the universe; but what it conceives in an instant, it uses many words to describe. Yet forcible as is the example I have mentioned, still it is after all weak and inadequate. For what we speak about God is not what should be said (for that is known to Him only), but so much as the capacity of human nature has received, and so much as our weakness can bear. For we explain not what God is but candidly confess that we have not exact knowledge concerning Him. For in what concerns God to confess our ignorance is the best knowledge. Therefore “magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His Name together” (Ps 34:3), all of us in common, for one alone is powerless; rather, even if we be all united together, we shall yet not do it as we ought. I mean not you only who are here present, but even if all the children of the whole Church throughout the world, both that which now is and that which shall be, should meet together, they would not be able worthily to sing the praises of their Shepherd.

3. A great and honourable man was Abraham, but only great in
comparison with men. And when he came before God, then speaking
the truth candidly he says, “I am earth and ashes” (Gen 18:27). He did
not say “earth,” and then cease, lest he should call himself by the
name
of that great element; but he added “and ashes,” that he might
represent his perishable and frail nature. Is there anything, smaller
or
lighter than ashes? For take the comparison of ashes to a house, of a
house to a city, a city to a province, a province to the Roman Empire,
and the Roman Empire to the whole earth and all its bounds, and the
whole earth to the heaven in which it is embosomed;--the earth, which
bears the same proportion to the heaven as the centre to the whole
circumference of a wheel, for the earth is no more than this in
comparison with the heaven. Consider then that this first heaven which
is seen is less than the second, and the second than the third,
for so far
Scripture has named them, not that they are only so many, but because
it was expedient for us to know so many only. And when in thought you
have surveyed all the heavens, not yet will even the heavens be able
to
praise God as He is, not if they should resound with a voice louder
than
thunder. But if these great vaults of the heavens cannot worthily sing
God's praise, how can “earth and ashes,” the smallest and least of
things
existing, be able to send up a worthy hymn of praise to God, or
worthily
to speak of God, “that sits upon the circle of the earth, and holds
the
inhabitants thereof as grasshoppers.” ((Isa 40:22)

4. If any man attempt to speak of God, let him first describe the
bounds of the earth. You dwell on the earth, and the limit of this
earth
which is your dwelling you do not know: how then shall you be able to
form a worthy thought of its Creator? You behold the stars, but their
Maker you cannot behold: count these stars which are visible, and then
14The Fathers spoke of three heavens: the first heaven is
the sky, the second is that of the stars and the third is
Paradise into which St. Paul was caught in the Spirit.
44
describe Him who is invisible, “Who tells the number of the stars, and
calls them all by their names” (Ps 147:4). Violent rains lately came
pouring down upon us, and nearly destroyed us: number the drops in
this city alone. Rather, number the drops on your own house for one
single hour, if you can: but you cannot. Learn then your own weakness;
learn from this instance the mightiness of God: for “He has numbered
the drops of rain” (Job 36:27), which have been poured down on all
the
earth, not only now but in all time. The sun is a work of God, which,
great though it be, is but a spot in comparison with the whole heaven.
First gaze steadfastly upon the sun, and then curiously scan the Lord of
the sun. “Seek not the things that are too deep for you, neither search
out the things that are above your strength: what is commanded you,
think thereupon” (Ecclus 3:21-22)

5. But some one will say, If the Divine Being is incomprehensible,
why then do you discourse of these things? So then, because I cannot
drink up all the river, can I not even take in moderation what is
expedient for me? Because with eyes so constituted as mine I cannot
take in all the sun, can I not even look upon it enough to satisfy my
desire? Or again, because I have entered into a great garden, and
cannot eat all of its fruits, must I go away altogether hungry? I praise
and glorify Him that made us; for it is a divine command which says,
“Let every breath praise the Lord” (Ps 150:6). I am attempting now to
glorify the Lord, but not to describe Him, knowing nevertheless that I
shall fall short of glorifying Him worthily, yet deeming it a work of piety
even to attempt it at all. For the Lord Jesus encourages my weakness,
by saying, “No man has seen God at any time” (John 1:18).

6. What then, some man will say, is it not written, “The little ones’
Angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven?”
(Mat 18:10) Yes, but the Angels see God not as He is, but as far as they
themselves are capable. For it is Jesus Himself who says, “Not that any
man has seen the Father, save He which is of God, He has seen the
Father” (John 6:46). The Angels therefore behold as much as they can
bear, and Archangels as much as they are able; and Thrones and
Dominions more than the former, but yet less than His worthiness: for
with the Son, the Holy Spirit alone can rightly behold Him: for “He
searches all things, and knows even the deep things of God” (I Cor
45 2:10): Only the Son and the Holy Spirit, know the Father fully: “For no
one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the
Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal
Him.” (Matt 11:27) For the Son fully beholds the Father, and, according
to each man's ability, He reveals God through the Spirit: since the Only-begotten Son together with the Holy Spirit is a partaker
of the Father's Godhead. He, who was begotten knows Him who begat
Him; and He Who begat knows Him who is begotten. Since Angels
then are ignorant (for to each according to his own capacity does the
Only-begotten reveal Him through the Holy Spirit, as we have said), let
no man be ashamed to confess his ignorance.

7. For the sake of our religion it is sufficient to us simply to know that
we have a God; a God who is One; an ever-existing God; Who is ever self-existing; No one has begotten Him, and no one is mightier than Himself; Whom no successor will follow to oust Him out from His kingdom: Who in name is manifold, in power infinite, in substance single. For though He is called Good. and Just, and Almighty and Sabaoth15, He is not on that account diverse and various; but being one and the same, He sends forth countless operations of His Godhead, not exceeding here and deficient there, but being in all things like unto Himself. Not great in loving-kindness only, and little in wisdom, but with wisdom and loving-kindness in equal power: not seeing in part, and in part devoid of sight; but being all eye, and all ear, and all mind: not like us perceiving in part and in part not knowing; for such a statement were blasphemous, and unworthy of the Divine substance. He foreknows the things that will be; He is Holy, and Almighty, and excels all in goodness, and majesty, and wisdom: of Whom we can declare neither beginning, nor form, nor shape. “For you have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape” (John 5:37). Therefore Moses says also to the Israelites: “Take good heed to your own souls, for you saw no manner of similitude.” (Deut 4:15) For if it is wholly impossible to imagine His likeness, how shall thought come near His Being? 15God is called Kyrios Sabaoth which means Lord of Hosts.

LECTURE X
ON THE CLAUSE, AND IN ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST
READING FROM THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS.

3. You are to believe “IN ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD”. For we say “One Lord Jesus Christ,” that His Son-ship may be “Only-begotten”: we say “One,” that you may not suppose another: we say “One,” that you may not be confused by the many names of His action as to think that there are many sons. For He is called a Door; but take not the name literally for a thing of wood, but a spiritual, a living Door, discriminating those who enter in. He is called a Way, not one trodden by feet, but leading to the Father in heaven; He is called a Sheep, not an irrational one, but the one which through its precious blood cleanses the world from its sins, which is led before the shearers, and knows when to be silent. This Sheep again is called a Shepherd, who says, “I am the Good Shepherd” (John 10:11): a Sheep because of His manhood, a Shepherd because of the loving-kindness of His Godhead. Do you want to know that there are rational sheep? the Saviour says to the Apostles, “Behold, I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves.” (Mat 10:16) Again, He is called a
Lion, not as a devourer of men, but indicating as it were by the title His kingly, and steadfast, and confident nature: He is also called a Lion in opposition to the lion our adversary, who roars and devours those who have been deceived. For the Saviour came, not as having changed the gentleness of His own nature, but as the strong Lion of the tribe of Judah, saving them that believe, but treading down the adversary. He is called a Stone, not a lifeless stone, cut out by men's hands, but a chief corner-stone, on whom whosoever believeth shall not be put to shame.

4. He is called CHRIST, not as having been anointed by men's hands, but eternally anointed by the Father to His High-Priesthood: on behalf of men. He is called Dead, not as having abode among the dead, as all in Hades, but as being alone “free among the dead” (Ps 88:5). He is called Son of Man, not as having had His generation from earth, as each of us, but as coming upon the clouds TO JUDGE BOTH LIVING AND DEAD. He is called LORD, not improperly as those who are so called among men, but as having a natural and eternal Lordship. He is called JESUS, a fitting name, because of His saving medicine. He is called Son, not as advanced by adoption, but as naturally begotten. And many are the titles of our Saviour; lest, therefore, His manifold appellations should make you think of many sons, and because of the errors of the heretics, who say that Christ is one, and Jesus another, and the Door another, and so on, the Creed secures you beforehand, saying well, “IN ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST”: for though the titles are many, yet their subject is one.

5. But the Saviour comes in various forms to each man for his profit. For to those who have need of gladness He becomes a Vine; and to those who want to enter in He stands as a Door; and to those who need to offer up their prayers He stands as a mediating High Priest. Again, to those who have sins He becomes a Sheep, that He may be sacrificed for them. He is made all things to all men, remaining in His own nature what He is. For so remaining, and holding the dignity of His Sonship in reality unchangeable, He adapts Himself to our infirmities, just as some excellent physician or compassionate teacher; though He is Very Lord, and received not the Lordship by advancement, but has the dignity of His Lordship from nature, and is not called Lord improperly, as we are, but is so in truth, since by the Father's bidding He is Lord of His own works. For our lordship is over men of equal rights and like passions, nay often over our elders, and often a young master rules over aged servants. But in the case of our Lord Jesus Christ the Lordship is not
but He is first Maker, then Lord: first He made all things by the Father's will, then, He is Lord of the things which were made by Him.

6. Christ the Lord is He who was born in the city of David. And do you want to know that Christ is Lord with the Father even before His Incarnation, that you may not only accept the statement by faith, but may also receive proof from the Old Testament? Go to the first book, Genesis: God said, Let us make man, not “in My image,” but, “in Our image”. ... For he did not limit the dignity of the Godhead to the Father alone, but included the Son also: that it might be shewn that man is not only the work of God, but also of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is Himself also Very God. This Lord, who works together with the Father, worked with Him also in the case of Sodom, according to the Scripture: “And the Lord rained upon Sadam and Gomorrah fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven.” (Gen 19:24) This Lord is He who afterwards was seen of Moses, as much as he was able to see. For the Lord is loving unto man, ever condescending to our infirmities.

7. Moreover, that you may be sure that this is He who was seen of Moses, hear Paul’s testimony, when he says, “For they all drank of a spiritual rock that followed them; and the rock was Christ” (I Cor 10:4).

And again: “By faith Moses forsook Egypt, and shortly after he says, “For they all drank of a spiritual rock that followed them; and the rock was Christ” (I Cor 10:4).

8. Now here I wish you to take a firm hold on what I am going to say, because of the Jews. For our object is to prove that the Lord Jesus Christ was with the Father. The LORD then says to Moses, “I will pass
by before you with My glory, and will proclaim the name of the LORD before you” (Ex 33:19). Being Himself the LORD, what LORD does He proclaim? Do you see how He was teaching the godly doctrine of the Father and the Son in a veiled way? And again, in what follows it is written word for word: “And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, both keeping righteousness and shewing mercy unto thousands, taking away iniquities, and transgressions, and sins”. Then in what follows, Moses bowed his head and worshipped before the Lord who proclaimed the Father, and said: “Go then, O Lord, in the midst of us.” (Ex 34:5-9)

9. This is the first proof: receive now a second obvious one. “The LORD said unto my Lord, sit on My right hand.”(Ps 110:1) The LORD says this to the Lord, not to a servant, but to the Lord of all, and His own Son, to whom He put all things in subjection. “But when He saith that all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, Who put all things under Him, and what follows; that God may be all in all” (I Cor 15:27-28). The Only-begotten Son is Lord of all, but the obedient Son of the Father, for He grasped not the Lordship, but received it by nature of the Father’s own will. For neither did the Son grasp it, nor the Father grudge to impart it. He is the same Who said, “All things are delivered unto Me of My Father;” (Mat 11:27) delivered unto Me, not as though I had them not before; and I keep them well, not robbing Him who has given them.”

12. There is One Lord Jesus Christ, a wondrous name, indirectly announced beforehand by the Prophets. For Esaias the Prophet says, “Behold, your Saviour cometh, having His own reward” (Isa 62:11 Septuagint). Now Jesus in Hebrew is by interpretation Saviour. For the Prophetic gift, foreseeing the murderous spirit of the Jews against their Lord, veiled His name, lest from knowing it plainly beforehand they might plot against Him readily. But He was openly called Jesus not by men, but by an Angel, who came not by his own authority, but was sent by the power of God, and said to Joseph, “Fear not to take unto you Mary your wife; for that which is conceived ,in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus” (Mat 1:11). And immediately he renders the reason of this name, saying, for “He shall save His people from their sins”. Tell me, how can one who was not yet born have a people, unless He was existing before He was born? This is also what the Prophet says in the person of Christ, “From
the bowels of my mother has He made mention of My name” (Isa 49:1); because the Angel foretold that He should be called Jesus. And again concerning Herod's plot again he says, “And under the shadow of His hand He has hidden Me.” (Isa 49:2)

50

14. Jews admit that He is Jesus, but never that He is Christ. Therefore the Apostle says, “Who is the liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?” (I John 2:22) Now “Christ” means that He is a High Priest, whose priesthood passes not away. His Priesthood neither has begun in time, nor will anyone succeed Him in His High-Priesthood: You heard me on Sunday, when I was preaching at the Liturgy on the subject: “After the Order of Melchizedek”. Christ received not the High-Priesthood from human succession, nor was He anointed with oil prepared by man, but received it from the Father before all ages; and He so far excels all others because with an oath He is made Priest: For they are priests without an oath, but He with an oath by Him that said, “The Lord sware, and will not repent.” (Heb 7:21) The mere will of the Father was sufficient for surety: but the mode of assurance is twofold, namely that with the will there follows the oath also, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong encouragement for our faith, by which we acknowledge Christ Jesus as the Son of God.

16. This is Jesus Christ who came “a High-Priest of the good things to come” (Heb 9:11); who from the generosity of His Godhead imparted His own title to us all. For kings among men have their royal title which others may not share: but Jesus Christ being the Son of God gave us the dignity of being called Christians. But some one will say, The name of “Christians” is new, and was not in use aforetime: and new-fashioned phrases are often objected to on the score of strangeness. The prophet made this point safe beforehand, saying, “But upon My servants shall a new name be called, which shall be blessed upon the earth” (Isa 65:15 Septuagint). Let us question the Jews: Are you servants of the Lord, or not? Shew then your new name. For you were called Jews and Israelites in the time of Moses, and the other prophets, and after the return from Babylon, and up to the present time: where then is your new name? But we, since we are servants of the Lord, have that new name: new indeed, but the new name, which shall be blessed upon the earth. This name caught the world in its grasp: for Jews are only in a certain region, but Christians reach to the ends of the world: for it is the name of the Only-begotten Son of God that is proclaimed.

51
19. Many, my beloved, are the true testimonies concerning Christ. The Father bears witness from heaven of His Son: the Holy Spirit bears witness, descending bodily in likeness of a dove: the Archangel Gabriel bears witness, bringing good tidings to Mary: the Virgin Mother of God bears witness: the blessed place of the manger bears witness. Egypt bears witness, which received the Lord while yet young in the body: Symeon bears witness, who received Him in his arms, and said, “Now, Lord, let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all people” (Luke 2:29-30). Anna also, the prophetess, a most devout widow, of austere life, bears witness of Him. John the Baptist bears witness, the greatest among the Prophets, and leader of the New Covenant, who in a manner united both Covenants in Himself, the Old and the New. Jordan is His witness among rivers; the sea of Tiberias among seas: the blind and the lame bear witness, and the dead men raised to life, and the devils saying, “What have we to do with You, Jesus? we know who You are, the Holy One of God” (Mark 1:24). Winds bear witness, silenced at His bidding: five loaves multiplied into five thousand bear Him witness. The holy wood of the Cross bears witness, seen among us to this day, and from this place now almost filling the whole world, by means of those who in faith take portions from it. The palm-tree on the ravine bears witness, having supplied the palm-branches to the children who then hailed Him. Gethsemane bears witness, still to the thoughtful almost showing Judas. Golgotha, the holy hill standing above us here, bears witness to our sight: the Holy Sepulchre bears witness, and the stone which lies there to this day. The sun now shining is His witness, which then at the time of His saving Passion was eclipsed: the darkness is His witness, which was then from the sixth hour to the ninth: the light bears witness, which shone forth from the ninth hour until evening. The Mount of Olives bears witness, that holy mount from which He ascended to the Father: the rain-bearing clouds are His witnesses, having received their Lord: yea, 16Note the early use of the title “theotokos” 17Already, the places where the holy family stayed in Egypt were venerated. and the gates of heaven bear witness having received their Lord, concerning which the Psalmist said, “Lift up your doors, O ye Princes, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors; and the King Glory shall come in.” (Ps 24:7 Septuagint) His former enemies bear witness, of whom the blessed Paul is one, having been a little while His enemy, but for
long time His servant: the Twelve Apostles are His witnesses, having preached the truth not only in words, but also by their own torments and deaths: the shadow of Peter bears witness, having healed the sick in the name of Christ. The handkerchiefs and aprons bear witness, as in like manner by Christ's power they wrought cures of old through Paul Persians and Goths, and all the Gentile converts bear witness, by dying for His sake, whom they never saw with eyes of flesh: the devils, who to this day are driven out by the faithful, bear witness to Him.

20. So many and diverse, yea and more than these, are His witnesses: how can Christ thus witnessed any longer be disbelieved? Rather, if there is any one who formerly believed not, let him now believe: and if any was before a believer, let him receive a greater increase of faith, by believing in our Lord Jesus Christ, and let him understand whose name he bears. You are called a Christian: be careful of that name; let not our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, be blasphemed on your account: but rather “let your good works shine before men that they who see them may in Christ Jesus our Lord glorify the Father which is in heaven” (Mat 5:16): To whom be the glory, both now and for ever and ever. Amen.

53

LECTURE XI
ON THE WORDS, THE ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD, BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER VERY GOD BEFORE ALL AGES, BY WHOM ALL THINGS WERE MADE.

HEBREWS i. 1.

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the Fathers by the Prophets, has in these last days spoken unto us by His Son.

6. Believe therefore on Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, the ONLY-BEGOTTEN, according to the Gospel which says, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His Only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). And again, “He that believes on the Son is not judged, but has passed out of death into life. But he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him” (John 3:36). And John testified concerning Him, saying, “And we beheld His glory, glory as of the only-begotten from the father,--full of grace and truth” (John 1:14): at whom the devils trembled and said, Ah! “what have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of the living God” (Mark 5:7).

7. He is then the Son of God by nature and not by adoption, begotten
of the Father. And he that loves Him that begat, loves Him also that is begotten of Him; but he that despises Him that is begotten casts back the insult upon Him who begat. And whenever you hear of God begetting, sink not down in thought to bodily things, nor think of a corruptible generation, lest you be guilty of impiety. God is a Spirit, His generation is spiritual: for bodies beget bodies, and for the generation of bodies time must intervene; but time intervenes not in the generation of the Son from the Father. And in our case what is begotten is begotten imperfect: but the Son of God was begotten perfect; for what He is now, that is He also from the beginning, begotten without beginning. We are begotten so as to pass from infantile ignorance to a state of reason: your generation, O man, is imperfect, for your growth is progressive. But think not that it is thus in His case, nor impute weakness to Him who has begotten. For if that which He begat was imperfect, and acquired its perfection in time, you are imputing weakness to Him who has begotten; if the Father did not bestow from the beginning that which, as you say, time bestowed afterwards. 18

8. Think not therefore that this generation is human, as Abraham begat Isaac. For in begetting Isaac, Abraham begat not what he willed, but what another granted. But in God the Father's begetting there is neither ignorance nor intermediate deliberation. For to say that He knew not what He was begetting is the greatest impiety; and it is no less impious to say, that after deliberation in time He then became a Father. For God was not previously without a Son, and afterwards in time became a Father; but has the Son eternally, having begotten Him not as men beget men, but as Himself only knoweth, who begat Him before all ages Very God. 19

9. For the Father being True God begot the Son like unto Himself, True God; not as teachers beget disciples, not as Paul says to some, For in Christ Jesus I begat you through the Gospel. For in this case he who was not a son by nature became a son by discipleship, but in the case of the Son He was a Son by nature, a true Son. Not as you, who are to be illuminated, are now becoming sons of God: for you also will become sons, but by adoption of grace, as it is written, “But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to became children of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12-13). And we indeed are begotten of water and of the Spirit, but not
thus was Christ begotten of the Father. For at the time of His Baptism addressing Him, and saying, This is My Son, He did not say, “This has now become My Son,” but, “This is My Son”; that He might make manifest, that even before the operation of Baptism He was a Son.  

10. Neither did the Father beget the Son in the way human mind begets word. For the mind is permanently existent in us; but the word when spoken is dispersed into the air and perishes. But we know Christ to have been begotten not as a word uttered, but as a Word hypostatically existing and living; not spoken by the lips, and dispersed, but begotten of the Father eternally and ineffably, as a hypostasis. For, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1). The Word is sitting at God’s right hand; understanding the Father's will, and creating all things at His bidding: the Word, which came down and went up; for the word of utterance when spoken comes not down, nor goes up; the Word speaking and saying, “The things which I have seen with My Father, these I speak” (John 8:38): the Word possessed of power, and reigning over all things: for “the Father has committed all things unto the Son” (John 5:22).  

11. The Father then begat Him not in a way that no man could understand, but as Himself only knoweth. For we can not to tell in what manner He begot Him, but we insist that it was not in this manner. And not we only are ignorant of the generation of the Son from the Father, but so is every created nature. Speak to the earth, if perchance it may teach you: and though you inquire of all things which are upon the earth, they shall not be able to tell you. For the earth cannot tell the Being of Him who is its own potter and fashioner. Nor is the earth alone ignorant, but the sun also: for the sun was created on the fourth day, without knowing what had been made in the three days before it; and that which knows not the things made in the three days before it, cannot tell about the Maker Himself. Heaven will not declare this: for at the Father’s bidding the heaven also was like smoke established by Christ. Nor shall the heaven of heavens declare this, nor the waters which are above the heavens. Why then are you cast down, O man, at being ignorant of that which even the heavens know not? not only are the heavens ignorant of this generation, but also every angelic nature. For if any one should ascend, were it possible, into the heaven, and perceiving the ranks of the Angels there should approach and ask them
how God begot His own Son, they would say perhaps, “We have above us beings greater and higher; ask them.” Go up to the second heaven and the third; attain, if you canst, to Thrones, and Dominions, and Principalities, and Powers: and even if any one should reach them, which is impossible, they also would decline the explanation, for they know it not.

12. For my part, I have ever wondered at the curiosity of the bold men, who by their imagined reverence fall into impiety. For though they know nothing of Thrones, and Dominions, and Principalities, and Powers, the workmanship of Christ, they attempt to scrutinise their Creator Himself. Tell me first, O most daring man, how does Throne differ from Dominion, and then scrutinise what pertains to Christ. Tell me what is a Principality, and what a Power, and what a Virtue, and what an Angel: and then search out their Creator, for all things were made by Him. But you will not, or you can not ask Thrones or Dominions. What else is there that knows the deep things of God, save only the Holy Spirit, who spoke the Divine Scriptures? But not even the Holy Spirit Himself has spoken in the Scriptures concerning the generation of the Son from the Father. Why then do you busy yourself about things which not even the Holy Spirit has written in the Scriptures? You who do not know the things which are written, why do you enquire about the things which are not written? There are many questions in the Divine Scriptures; what is written we comprehend not, why do we busy ourselves about what is not written? It is sufficient for us to know that God has begotten One Only Son.

22. I wish to give also a certain illustration of what I am saying, but I know that it is weak; for of things visible what can be an exact illustration of the Divine Power? But nevertheless as weak it is spoken by the weak to the weak. For just as any king, whose son was a king, if he wished to form a city, might suggest to his son, his partner in the kingdom, the form of the city, and he having received the pattern, brings the design to completion; so, when the Father wished to form all things, the Son created all things at the Father’s bidding, that the act of bidding might secure to the Father His absolute authority, and yet the Son in turn might have authority over His own workmanship, and neither the Father be separated from the lordship over His own works, nor the Son rule over things created by others, but by Himself. For, as I have said, Angels did not create the world, but the Only-begotten Son,
begotten, as I have said, before all ages, BY WHOM ALL THINGS WERE MADE, nothing having been excepted from His creation. And let this suffice to have been spoken by us so far, by the grace of Christ.

23. But let us now come back to our Creed, and so for the present finish our discourse. Christ made all things, whether you speak of Angels, or Archangels, of Dominions, or Thrones. Not that the Father lacked strength to create the works Himself, but because He willed that the Son should reign over His own workmanship, God Himself giving Him the design of the things to be made. For honouring His own Father the Only-begotten says, “The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do; for what things soever He does, these also does the Son likewise” (John 5:19). And again, “My Father works hitherto, and I work” (John 5:17), there being no opposition in those who work. “For all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine” (John 17:10), the Lord says in the Gospels. And this we may certainly know from the Old and New Testaments. For He who said, “Let us make man in our image and after our likeness” (Gen 1:26), was certainly speaking to some one present. But clearest of all are the Psalmist's words, “He spoke and they were made; He commanded, and they were created” (Ps 148:5), as if the Father commanded and spoke, and the Son made all things at the Father's bidding. And this Job said mystically, “Which alone spread out the heaven, and walketh upon the sea as on firm ground” (Job 9:8); signifying to those who understand that He who when present here on earth walked upon the sea is also He who in the former time made the heavens. And again the Lord says, “Or did You take earth, and fashion clay into a living beings?” (Job 38:14) then afterwards, “Are the gates of death opened to You through fear, and did the door-keepers of hell shudder at sight of You?” (Job 38:17) thus signifying that He who through loving-kindness descended into hell, also in the beginning made man out of clay.

24. Christ then is the Only-begotten Son of God, and Maker of the world. For “He was in the world, and the world was made by Him” (John 1:10); and He came unto His own, as the Gospel teaches us. And not only of the things which are seen, but also of the things which are not seen, is Christ the Maker at the Father's bidding. For in Him, according to the Apostle, “were all things created that are in the heavens, and that are upon the earth, things visible and invisible, whether Thrones, or Dominions, or Principalities, or Powers; all
things have been created by Him and for Him; and He is before all, and in Him all things consist” (Col 1:16:17). Even if you speak of the worlds, of these also Jesus Christ is the Maker by the Father's bidding. “For in these last days God spake unto us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds” (Heb 1:2). To whom be the glory, honour, mighty, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

59

LECTURE XV
ON THE CLAUSE, AND SHALL COME IN GLORY TO JUDGE THE LIVING AND THE DEAD; OF WHOSE KINGDOM THERE SHALL BE NO END

DANIEL vii. 9--14
I beheld till thrones were placed, and one that was ancient of days did sit, and then, I saw in a vision of the night, and behold one like unto the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven.

1. WE preach not one advent only of Christ, but a second also, far more glorious than the former. For the former gave a view of His patience; but the latter brings with it the crown of a divine kingdom. For all things, for the most part, are twofold in our Lord Jesus Christ: a twofold generation; one, of God the Father, before the ages; and one, of a Virgin, at the close of the ages: His descents twofold; one, the unobserved, like rain on a fleece (Ps 72:6 Septuagint,) and a second, His open coming, which is to be. In His former advent, He was wrapped in swaddling clothes in the manger; in His second, “He covers Himself with light as with a garment.” (Ps 104:2) In His first coming, “He endured the Cross, despising shame” (Heb 12:20, in His second, He comes attended by a host of Angels, receiving glory. We rest not then upon His first advent only, but look also for His second. And as at His first coming we said, Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord, so will we repeat the same at His second coming; that when with Angels we meet our Master, we may worship Him and say, Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord. The Saviour comes, not to be judged again, but to judge them who judged Him; He who before held His peace when judged, shall remind the transgressors who did those daring deeds at the Cross, and shall say, “These things have you done, and I kept silence.” (Ps 50:21) He came, then, because of a divine dispensation, teaching men with persuasion; but this time they will of necessity have Him for their King, even though they wish it not.

2. And concerning these two comings, Malachi the Prophet says, “And the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple”; (that
is the first coming). And again of the second coming he says, And the Messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in. Behold, He comes, says the Lord Almighty. But who shall abide the day of His coming? or who shall stand when He appears? Because He comes in like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap; and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier”. (Mal 3:1-3) And a few verses later, we hear the Saviour Himself saying, “And I will draw near to you in judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulteresses, and against those who swear falsely in My Name” (Mal 3:5), and the rest. For this cause Paul warning us beforehand says, “If any man buildeth on the foundation gold, and silver, and precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man’s work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed in fire.” (I Cor 3:12) Paul also knew these two comings, when writing to Titus and saying, “The grace of God has appeared which brings salvation unto all men, instructing us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and godly, and righteously in this present world; looking for the blessed hope, and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” (Titus 2:11) You see how he spoke of a first, for which he gives thanks; and of a second, to which we look forward. Therefore the words also of the Creed which we are announcing were just now delivered thus; that we believe in Him, who also ASCENDED INTO THE HEAVENS, AND SAT DOWN ON THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER AND SHALL COME IN GLORY TO JUDGE LIVING AND DEAD; WHOSE KINGDOM SHALL HAVE NO END.

3. Our Lord Jesus Christ, then, comes from heaven; and He comes with glory at the end of this world, in the last day. For of this world there is to be an end, and this created world is to be re-made anew. For since corruption, and theft, and adultery, and every sort of sins have been poured forth over the earth, and blood has been mingled with blood in the world, therefore, that this wondrous dwelling-place may not remain filled with iniquity, this world passeth away, that the fairer world may be made manifest. And would you want the proof of this out of the words of Scripture? Listen to Esaias, saying, “And the heaven shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all the stars shall fall, as leaves...
from a vine, and as leaves fall from a fig-tree.” (Isa 34:4) The Gospel also says, “The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven.” (Mat 24:29) Let us not sorrow, as if we alone died; the stars also shall die; but perhaps rise again. And the Lord rolls up the heavens, not that He may destroy them, but that He may raise them up again more beautiful. Hear David the Prophet saying, “You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands; they shall perish, but You remain.” (Ps 102:25-26)

4. The things then which are seen shall pass away, and there shall come the things which are looked for, things fairer than the present; but as to the time let no one be curious. For it is not far you, He says, “to know times or seasons, which the Father has put in His own power.” (Acts 1:7) And venture not to declare when these things shall be, nor on the other hand carelessly sleep. For He says, “Watch, for in such an hour as ye expect not the Son of Man comes.” (Mat 24:44) But since it was needful for us to know the signs of the end, and since we are looking for Christ, therefore, that we may not die deceived and be led astray by that false Antichrist, the Apostles, moved by the divine will, address themselves by a providential arrangement to the True Teacher, and say, “Tell us, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the world?” (Mat 24:3) We look for You to come again, but Satan transforms himself into an Angel of light; put us therefore on our guard, that we may not worship another instead of You. And He, opening His divine and blessed mouth, says, “Take heed that no man mislead you.” (Mat 24:4) You too, my hearers, as seeing Him now with the eyes of your mind, hear Him saying the same things to you; “Take heed that no man mislead you.” And this word exhorts you all to give heed to what is spoken; for it is not a history of things gone by, but a prophecy of things future, and which will surely come. Not that we prophesy, for we are unworthy; but that the things which are written will be set before you, and the signs declared. Observe then, which of them have already come to pass, and which yet remain; and make yourself safe.

6. “And you shall hear of wars and rumours of wars.” (Mat 24:6) Is there then at this time war between Persians and Romans for Mesopotamia, or no? Does nation rise up against nation and kingdom against kingdom, or no? “And there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in divers places.” (Mat 24:7) These things have
already 62 come to pass. And again, “And fearful sights from heaven, and mighty storms.” (Luke 21:11) Watch therefore, He says; “for you know not at what hour your Lord comes.” (Mat 24:42)

7. But we seek our own sign of His coming; we Churchmen seek a sign proper to the Church. And the Saviour says, “And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.” (Mat 24:10) If you hear that bishops throw out bishops, and clergy fight against clergy, and laity against laity even unto bloodshed, be not troubled; for it has been foretold. Do not worry about the things now happening, but attend to the things which are written in the Scripture; and even though I who teach you fall out of grace, you need not also perish with me. On the contrary, even a hearer may become better than his teacher, and he who came last may be first, since even those about the eleventh hour the Master receives. If among Apostles there was found treason, do you wonder that hatred of brethren is found among bishops? But the sign concerns not only rulers, but the people also; for He says, “And because iniquity shall abound, the love of the many shall grow cold.” (Mat 24:12) Will any then among those present boast that he entertains sincere friendship towards his neighbour? Do not the lips often kiss, and the face smiles, and the eyes light up, while the heart is planning treason, and the man is plotting evil with words of peace?

8. You have also this sign: “And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.” (Mat 24:14) And as we see, nearly the whole world is now filled with the doctrine of Christ.

9. And what comes to pass after this? He says next, “When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, standing in the Holy Place, let him that read understand.” (Mat 24:15) And again, “Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is the Christ, or, Lo, there; believe it not.” (Mat 24:23) Hatred of the brethren makes room next for Antichrist; for the devil prepares beforehand the divisions among the people, that he who is to come may be acceptable to them. But God forbid that any of Christ’s servants here, or elsewhere, should run over to the enemy! Writing concerning this matter, the Apostle Paul gave a manifest sign, saying, “For that day 63 shall not come, except there came first the falling away, and the man
of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself against all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not that when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know that which restrains, to the end that he may be revealed in his own season. For the mystery of iniquity is already at work, only there is one that restrains now, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall the lawless one be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming. Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that are perishing.” (II Thes 2:3-10) Thus wrote Paul, and now is the falling away. For men have fallen away from the right faith; and some preach the identity of the Son with the Father, and others dare to say that Christ was brought into being out of nothing. And formerly the heretics were manifest; but now the Church is filled with heretics in disguise. For men have fallen away from the truth, and have itching ears. Is it a plausible discourse? all listen to it gladly. Is it a word of correction? all turn away from it. Most have departed from right words, and rather choose the evil, than desire the good. This therefore is the falling away, and the enemy is soon to be looked for: and meanwhile he has in part begun to send forth his own forerunners, that he may then come prepared upon the prey. Look therefore to yourself, O man, and make safe your soul. The Church now charges you before the Living God; she declares to you the things concerning Antichrist before they arrive. Whether they will happen in your time we know not, or whether they will happen after you we know not; but it is well that, knowing these things, you should make yourself secure beforehand. 10. The true Christ, the Only-begotten Son of God, comes no more from the earth. If any come making false shows in the wilderness, go not forth. If they say, Lo, here is the Christ, Lo, there, believe it not. Look no longer downwards and to the earth; for the Lord descends from heaven; not alone as before, but with many, escorted by tens of thousands of Angels; nor secretly as the dew on the fleece; but shining forth openly as the lightning. For He has said Himself, “As the lightning comes out of the east, and shines even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be” (Mat 24:27); and again, “And they shall
see the Son of Man coming upon the clouds with power and great glory, and He shall send forth His Angels with a great trumpet;” (Mat 24:30)

11. But as, when formerly He was to take man’s nature, and God was expected to be born of a Virgin, the devil created prejudice against this, by craftily preparing among idol-worshippers fables of false gods, begetting and begotten of women, that, the falsehood having come first, the truth, as he supposed, might be disbelieved. So now, since the true Christ is to come a second time, the adversary, taking occasion by the expectation of the simple, and especially of them of the circumcision, brings in a certain man who is a magician, and most expert in sorceries and enchantments of beguiling craftiness; who shall seize for himself the power of the Roman empire21, and shall falsely style himself Christ; by this name of Christ deceiving the Jews, who are looking for the Anointed, and seducing those of the Gentiles by his magical illusions.

12. But this aforesaid Antichrist is to come when the times of the Roman empire shall have been fulfilled, and the end of the world is now drawing near. There shall rise up together ten kings of the Romans, reigning in different parts perhaps, but all about the same time; and after these an eleventh, the Antichrist, who by his magical craft shall seize upon the Roman power; and of the kings who reigned before him, three he shall humble, and the remaining seven he shall keep in subjection to himself. At first indeed he will put on a show of mildness (as though he were a learned and discreet person), and of soberness and benevolence: and by the lying signs and wonders of his magical deceit, having beguiled the Jews, as though he were the expected Christ, he shall afterwards be characterized by all kinds of crimes of inhumanity and lawlessness, so as to outdo all unrighteous and ungodly men who have gone before him displaying against all men, but especially against us Christians, a spirit murderous and most cruel, merciless and crafty. And after perpetrating such things for three years and six months only, he shall be destroyed by the glorious second advent from heaven of the only-begotten Son of God, our Lord and Saviour Jesus, the true Christ, who shall slay Antichrist with the breath of His mouth, and shall deliver him over to the fire of hell.

21 This of course did not happen since the Roman empire fell apart and Antichrist did not come.

65

13. Now these things we teach, not of our own invention, but having learned them out of the divine Scriptures used in the Church, and chiefly from the prophecy of Daniel just now read; as Gabriel also the Archangel interpreted it, speaking thus: “The fourth beast shall be a
fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall surpass all kingdoms. (Dan 7:23)" And that this kingdom is that of the Romans, has been the tradition of the Church's interpreters. For as the first kingdom which became renowned was that of the Assyrians, and the second, that of the Medes and Persians together, and after these, that of the Macedonians was the third, so the fourth kingdom now is that of the Romans. Then Gabriel goes on to interpret, saying, “His ten horns are ten kings that shall arise; and another king shall rise up after them, who shall surpass in wickedness all who were before him” (Dan 7:24); he says, not only the ten, but also all who have been before him; “and he shall subdue three kings” (Dan 7:24); manifestly out of the ten former kings: but it is plain that by subduing three of these ten, he will become the eighth king; “and he shall speak words against the Most High.” (Dan 7:25) A blasphemer the man is and lawless, not having received the kingdom from his fathers, but having usurped the power by means of sorcery.

14. And who is this, and from what sort of working? Interpret to us, O Paul. Whose coming, he says, “is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders” (II Thes 2:9); implying, that Satan has used him as an instrument, working in his own person through him; for knowing that his judgment shall not be delayed any longer, he wages war no more by his ministers, as he usually does, but from now on by himself more openly. And with all signs and lying wonders; for the father of falsehood will make a show of the works of falsehood, that the multitudes may think that they see a dead man raised, who is not raised, and lame men walking, and blind men seeing, when the cure has not been wrought.

15. And again he says, “Who opposes and exalts himself against all that is called God, or that is worshipped” (II Thes 2:4); against every God or that is worshipped means that Antichrist will abhor the idols, ... exalting himself against all idols; at first indeed making a pretence of benevolence, but afterwards displaying his relentless temper, and that chiefly against the Saints of God. For he says, “I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints” (Dan 7:21); and again elsewhere," there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation upon earth, even to that same time” (Dan 12:1). Dreadful is that beast, a mighty dragon, unconquerable by man, ready to devour; concerning whom though we have more things to speak out of the divine Scriptures, yet we will content ourselves at present with thus much,
in order to keep within our limits.

16. For this cause the Lord knowing the greatness of the adversary grants indulgence to the godly, saying, “Then let them which be in Judaea flee to the mountains” (Mat 24:16). But if any man is conscious that he is very stout-hearted, to encounter Satan, let him stand (for I do not despair of the Church's nerves), and let him say, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ and the rest?” (Rom 8:35) But, let those of us who are fearful provide for our own safety; and those who are of a good courage, stand fast: “for then shall be great tribulation, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be” (Mat 24:21). But thanks be to God who has confined the greatness of that tribulation to a few days; for He says, “But for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened” (Mat 24:22); and Antichrist shall reign for three years and a half only. We speak not from apocryphal books, but from Daniel; for he says, “And they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and half a time” (Dan 7:25).
A time is the one year in which his coming shall for a while have increase; and the times are the remaining two years of iniquity, making up the sum of the three years; and the half a time is the six months. And again in another place Daniel says the same thing, “And he swear by Him that lives for ever that it shall be for a time, and times, and half a time” (Dan 12:7). And some peradventure have referred what follows also to this; namely, “a thousand two hundred and ninety days” (Dan 12:11); and this, “Blessed is he that endures and comes to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days (Dan 12:12). For this cause we must hide ourselves and flee; for perhaps we shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come (Mat 10:23).

17. Who then is the blessed man, that shall at that time devoutly witness for Christ? For I say that the Martyrs of that time excel all martyrs. For the Martyrs so far, have wrestled with men only; but in the time of Antichrist they shall do battle with Satan in his own person. And former persecuting kings only put to death; they did not pretend to raise the dead, nor did they make false shows of signs and wonders. But in his time there shall be the evil persuasion both of fear and of deceit, “so that if it be possible the very elect shall be deceived” (Mat 24:24). Let it never enter into the heart of any then alive to ask,
What did Christ more? For by what power does this man work these things? Were it not God’s will, He would not have allowed them. The Apostle warns you, and says beforehand, “And for this cause God shall send them a working of error” (II Thes 2:11); that is, shall allow to happen; not that they might make excuse, but that they might be condemned. And why? They, he says, “who believed not the truth”, that is, the true Christ, “but had pleasure in unrighteousness”, that is, in Antichrist. But as in the persecutions which happen from time to time, so also then God will permit these things, not because He lacks power to hinder them, but because as He usually does, He will through patience crown His own champions like as He did His Prophets and Apostles; to the end that having toiled for a little while they may inherit the eternal kingdom of heaven, according to that which Daniel says, “And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book” (manifestly, the book of life); “and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and same to shame and everlasting contempt; and they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and of the many righteous, as the stars for ever and ever” (Dan 12:1-3).

18. Guard yourself then, O man; you have been given the signs of Antichrist; and remember them not only yourself, but impart them also freely to all. If you have a child according to the flesh, admonish him of this now; if you have begotten one through catechizing, put him also on his guard, lest he receive the false one as the True. For the mystery of iniquity is already at work. I fear these wars of the nations; I fear the schisms of the Churches; I fear the mutual hatred of the brethren. But enough on this subject; only God forbid that it should be fulfilled in our days; nevertheless, let us be on our guard. And this is enough concerning Antichrist.

19. But let us wait and look for the Lord’s coming upon the clouds from heaven. Then shall Angelic trumpets sound; the dead in Christ shall rise first, the godly persons who are alive shall be caught up in the clouds, receiving as the reward of their labours more than human honour, inasmuch as theirs was a more than human strife; according as the Apostle Paul writes, saying, “For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which
are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” (I Thes 4:16-17)

22. But what is the sign of His coming? lest a hostile power dare to counterfeit it. And then shall appear, He says, the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. Now Christ's own true sign is the Cross; a sign of a luminous Cross shall go before the King, plainly declaring Him who was formerly crucified: that the Jews who before pierced Him and plotted against Him, when they see it, may “mourn tribe by tribe” (Zech 12:12), saying, "This is He who was buffeted, this is He whose face they spat on, this is He whom they bound with chains, this is He whom of old they crucified, and set at nought. Whither, they will say, shall we flee from the face of Your wrath?" ... The sign of the Cross shall be a terror to His foes; but joy to His friends who have believed in Him, or preached Him, or suffered for His sake. Who then is the happy man, who shall then be found a friend of Christ? That King, so great and glorious, attended by the Angel-guards, the partner of the Father’s throne, will not despise His own servants. For that His elect may not be confused with His foes, He shall send forth His Angels with a great trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds. He despised not Lot, who was but one; how then shall He despise many righteous? Come, ye blessed of My Father, will He say to them who shall then ride on chariots of clouds, and be assembled by Angels.

24. The Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the Angels with Him. Note my friend, before how many you shall come to be judged. Every race of mankind will then be present. Think, therefore, how many are the Roman nation; and how many the barbarian tribes now living, and how many have died within the last hundred years; count how many nations have been buried during the last thousand years; count all the people from Adam to this day. Great indeed is the multitude; but yet it is little, for the Angels are many more. They are the ninety and nine sheep, but mankind is the single one. For according to the extent of universal space, must we calculate the number of its inhabitants. The whole earth is but as a point in the midst of the one heaven, and yet contains so great a multitude; what a multitude must the heaven which encircles it contain? And must not the heaven of heavens contain unimaginable numbers? And it is written, Thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him; not that the multitude is only so great, but because the
Prophet could not express more than these. So there will be present at the judgment in that day, God, the Father of all, Jesus Christ being seated with Him, and the Holy Spirit present with Them; and an angel’s trumpet shall summon us all to bring our deeds with us. Ought we not then from this time on to be concerned? Don’t you think my friend that even apart from punishment, how humiliating it will be to be condemned in the presence of so many? Shall we not choose rather to die many deaths, than be condemned by friends?

27. And should you ever hear any one say that the kingdom of Christ shall have an end abhor the heresy;... A certain one has dared to affirm, that after the end of the world Christ shall reign no longer; he has also dared to say, that the Word having come forth from the Father shall be again absorbed into the Father, and shall be no more; uttering such blasphemies to his own perdition. For he has not listened to the Lord, saying, “The Son abides for ever” (John 8:35). He has not listened to Gabriel, saying, “And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 1:33)..... Listen to the testimony of Daniel in the text; “I saw in a vision of the night, and behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days. .... And to Him was given the honour, and the dominion, and the kingdom: and all peoples, tribes, and languages shall serve Him; His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom shall not be destroyed” (Dan 7:13-14). Hold fast these things, believe in them, and dismiss the words of heresy; for you have heard most clearly of the endless kingdom of Christ.

29. Would you like to know why those who teach this heresy ran into such madness? They read wrongly that good word of the Apostle, “For He must reign, till He has put all enemies under His feet” (I Cor 15:25); and they say, when His enemies shall have been put under His feet, He shall cease to reign, wrongly and foolishly alleging this. For He who is king before He has subdued His enemies, how shall He not rather be king, after He has gotten the mastery over them?

31. But let us examine them; what is the meaning of “until” or “till” For I will discuss with them that phrase, and try to overthrow their error. Since they have dared to say that the words, “till He has put His enemies under His feet”, show that He Himself shall have an end, and have presumed to set bounds to the eternal kingdom of Christ, and to bring to an end, as far as words go, His never-ending sovereignty, come then, let us read the like expressions in the Apostle: “Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam till Moses” (Rom 5:14). Did men then die up to that time, and did none die any more after Moses? ... Well then,
you see that the word “unto” is not to limit time; but rather St. Paul meant this, “And even though Moses was a righteous and wonderful man, nevertheless the sentence of death, which was uttered against Adam, reached even unto him, and those that came after him; although they had not committed the sin of Adam, by eating of the tree.”

32. Take again another similar text. “For until this day... when Moses is read, a veil is upon their hearts” (II Cor 3:14-15). Does the expression “until this day mean” mean only “until the time Paul wrote his epistle and no more?” Is it not until this day present, and even to the end? ...

In what sense then should you understand that Scripture, “till He has put all enemies under His feet”? ... For as we may not speak of the “beginning of the days” of Christ, so neither should we ever speak of the end of His kingdom. For it is written, His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.

33. And though I have many more testimonies out of the divine Scriptures, concerning the kingdom of Christ which has no end for ever, I will be content at present with those above mentioned, because the day is far spent. But you, my hearer, worship only Him as your King, and flee all heretical error. And if the grace of God permits us, the remaining Articles also of the Creed shall be in good time declared to you. And may the God of the whole world keep you all in safety, bearing in mind the signs of the end, and remaining unsubdued by Antichrist. You have received the signs of the Deceiver who is to come; you have received the proofs of the true Christ, who shall openly come down from heaven. Flee therefore the one, the False one; and look for the other, the True. You have learnt the way, how in the judgment you may be found among those on the right hand; guard that which is committed to you concerning Christ, and be conspicuous in good works, that you may stand with a good confidence before the Judge, and inherit the kingdom of heaven:--Through whom, and with whom, be glory to God with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

LECTURE XVI
ON THE ARTICLE, AND IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE COMFORTER, WHO SPOKE IN THE PROPHETS
1 CORINTHIANS xii. 1, 4.
Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.
... Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit, &c.

1. I truly need spiritual grace, in order to discourse concerning the Holy Spirit; not that I may speak what is worthy of Him, for this is
impossible, but that by speaking the words of the divine Scriptures, I may do this without peril to my soul. For a truly fearful thing is written in the Gospels, where Christ has plainly said, “Whosoever shall speak a word against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come” (Mat 12:32). And there is often fear, lest a man should receive this condemnation, through speaking what he ought not concerning Him, either from ignorance, or from supposed reverence. The Judge of the living and the dead, Jesus Christ, declared that he has no forgiveness; if therefore any man offend, what hope has he?

2. It must therefore belong to Jesus Christ’s grace itself to grant me both to speak without deficiency, and to you to hear with discretion; for discretion is needful not to them only who speak, but also to them that hear, lest they hear one thing, and understand another in their mind. Let us then speak concerning the Holy Spirit nothing but what is written; and whatsoever is not written, let us not busy ourselves about it. The Holy Spirit Himself spoke the Scriptures; He has also spoken concerning Himself as much as He pleased, or as much as we could receive. Let us therefore speak those things which He has said; for whatsoever He has not said, we dare not say.

3. There is One Only Holy Spirit, the Comforter; and as there is One God the Father, and no second Father; and as there is One Only-begotten Son and Word of God, who has no brother; so there is One Only Holy Spirit, and no second spirit equal in honour to Him.

The Holy Spirit is a most mighty Power, a divine Being, of unsearchable nature; for He is living and rational, and sanctifies all things made by God through Christ. He enlightens the souls of the righteous; He was in the Prophets, He was also in the Apostles in the New Testament. Abhorred are those who dare to separate the operation of the Holy Spirit! There is One God, the Father, Lord of the Old and of the New Testament: and One Lord, Jesus Christ, who was prophesied of in the Old Testament, and came in the New; and One Holy Spirit, who through the Prophets preached of Christ, and when Christ was come, descended, and manifested Him.

4. Let no one therefore separate the Old from the New Testament; let no one say that the Spirit in the former is one, and in the latter another; since thus he offends against the Holy Spirit Himself, who with the Father and the Son together is honoured, and at the time of Holy Baptism is included with them in the Holy Trinity. For the
Only-begotten Son of God said plainly to the Apostles, “Go ye, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (Mat 28:19). Our hope is in Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit. ... We preach according to godliness One Father, who sent His Son to be our Saviour. We preach One Son, who promised that He would send the Comforter from the Father; we preach the Holy Spirit, who spoke in the Prophets, and who on the day of Pentecost descended on the Apostles in the form of fiery tongues, here, in Jerusalem, in the Upper Church of the Apostles; for we are privileged here in every matter. Here Christ came down from heaven; here the Holy Spirit came down from heaven. And in truth it were most fitting, that as we discourse concerning Christ ... here in Golgotha, so also we should speak concerning the Holy Spirit in the Upper Church; yet since He who descended there jointly partakes of the glory of Him who was crucified here, we here speak concerning Him also who descended there: for their worship is indivisible.

22. Great indeed, and all-powerful in gifts, and wonderful, is the Holy Spirit. Consider, how many of you are now sitting here, how many souls of us are present. He is working suitably for each, and being present in the midst, beholds the temper of each, beholds also his reasoning and his conscience, and what we say, and think, and believe. Great indeed is what I have now said, and yet is it small. For consider, with mind enlightened by Him, how many Christians there are in all this diocese, and how many in the whole province of Palestine, and carry forward your mind from this province, to the whole Roman Empire; and after this, consider the whole world; races of Persians, and nations of Indians, Garbs and Sarmatians, Gauls and Spaniards, and Moors, Libyans and Ethiopians, and the rest for whom we have no names; for of many of the nations not even the names have reached us. Consider, of each nation, Bishops, Presbyters, Deacons, Monks, Nuns, and laity besides; and then behold their great Protector, and the Dispenser of their gifts;--how throughout the world He gives to one chastity, to another perpetual virginity, to another almsgiving, to another voluntary poverty, to another power of repelling hostile spirits. And as the light, with one touch of its radiance sheds brightness on all things, so also the Holy Spirit enlightens those who have eyes; for if any one, because of spiritual blindness cannot receive His grace, let him not blame the Spirit, but his own unbelief.

23. You have seen His power, which is allover the world; do not restrict your thoughts to the earth, but ascend on high. Ascend, I
say,
in imagination even unto the first heaven, and behold there so many
countless myriads of Angels. Mount up in your thoughts, if you can,
yet higher. Consider, the Archangels, consider also the Spirits; consider the
Virtues, consider the Principalities, consider the Powers, consider the
Thrones, consider the Dominions;--of all of these the Comforter is the
Divine Ruler, and the Teacher, and the Sanctifier. To speak of men, Elias
has need of Him, and Elisseus, and Esaias. Among Angels Michael and
Gabriel have need of Him. Nothing created is equal in honour to Him: for
the families of the Angels, and all their hosts assembled together, have no
equality with the Holy Spirit. All of these the all-excellent power of the
Comforter overshadows. And they indeed are sent forth to ministers, but He
searches even the deep things of God, according to the Apostle, “For the
Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God” (I Cor 2:10). For
what man knows the thing of a man, save the spirit of the man which is in
him? even so the things of God no man knows, but the Spirit of God. (I Cor 2:11)
24. He preached concerning Christ in the Prophets; He worked
mightily in the Apostles; Until this day He seals the souls in
Baptism.
And the Father indeed gives (these souls) to the Son; and the Son
shares with the Holy Spirit. For it is Jesus Himself, who says, “All things
are delivered unto Me of My Father” (Mat 11:27); and of the Holy
Spirit He says, “When He, the Spirit of Truth, shall come,.... He
shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you.”
(John 16:13-14) The Father through the Son, with the Holy Spirit, is
the giver of all grace; the gifts of the Father are none other than those
of the Son, and those of the Holy Spirit; for there is one Salvation, one
Power, one Faith; One God, the Father; One Lord, His only-begotten
Son; One Holy Spirit, the Comforter. And it is enough for us to know
these things; but inquire not curiously into His nature or hypostasis:
for had it been written, we would have spoken of it; what is not written,
let us not venture on. It is sufficient for our salvation to know, that there
is Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit.
25. This Spirit descended upon the seventy Elders in the days of
Moses. The seventy Elders were chosen; And the Lord came down in
a cloud, and “took of the Spirit that was upon Moses, and put it upon
the seventy Elders” (Num 11:25); not that the Spirit was divided, but
that His grace was distributed in proportion to the vessels, and the
capacity of the recipients. Now there were present sixty and eight, and
they prophesied; but Eldad and Modad were not present: therefore that
it might be shown that it was not Moses who bestowed the gift, but the
Spirit who works, Eldad and Modad, who though called, had not as yet
presented themselves, did also prophesy.

26. Joshua the Son of Nun, the successor of Moses, was amazed; and
came to him and said, “Have you heard that Eldad and Modad are
prophesying? They were called, and they came not; my lord Moses,
forbid them.” Moses answered, “I cannot forbid them, “for this grace is
from Heaven; so far am I from forbidding them, that I myself am
thankful for it. I do not think, however, that you have said this in
envy;

are you jealous for my sake, because that they prophesy, and you do
not
prophesy yet? Wait for the proper season; and oh that all the Lord's
people may be prophets, whenever the Lord shall give His Spirit upon
them!” (Num 11:28-29) Moses said this prophetically, “whenever the
Lord shall give” Surely he meant that as yet this had not happened.
Had not then Abraham received, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph?
And they of old, had they not received Him? No! For the words,
“whenever the Lord shall give” refer to a general outpouring of the
Spirit. For as yet indeed the grace is partial, but then it shall be
given richly. Moses was secretly alluding to what was to happen among us on
the day of Pentecost. For He Himself came down among us. He had
come down upon many before. For it is written, “And Joshua the son
of Nun was filled with a spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his
hands
upon him” (Deut 34:9). You see that both in the Old and New
Testament there is one symbolic action;--in the days of Moses, the
Spirit was given by laying on of hands; and by laying on of hands
Peter
also gives the Spirit. And on you also, who are about to be baptized,
shall His grace come; yet in what manner I will not say, for I will not
anticipate the proper season. And may the God of peace, through our
Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, count all of you
worthy of His spiritual and heavenly gifts:--To whom be glory and
power for ever and ever. Amen.

LECTURE XVIII
ON THE WORDS, AND IN ONE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH,
AND IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE FLESH, AND THE LIFE
EVERLASTING

EZEKIEL xxxvii. 1.
The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones.

1. THE root of all good works is the hope of the Resurrection; for the expectation of the recompense encourages the soul to good works. For every labourer is ready to endure the toils, if he sees their reward in prospect; but when men weary themselves for nothing, their heart soon sinks as well as their body. A soldier who expects a prize is ready for war, but no one is ready to die for a king who is indifferent about those who serve under him, and bestows no honours on their toils. In like manner every soul believing in a Resurrection is naturally careful of itself; but, disbelieving it, abandons itself to perdition. He who believes that his body shall remain to rise again, is careful of it, and defiles it not with fornication; but he who disbelieves the Resurrection, gives himself to fornication, and misuses his own body, as if it were not his own. Faith therefore in the Resurrection of the dead, is a great commandment and doctrine of the Holy Catholic Church; great and most necessary, though disputed by many, yet surely warranted by the truth. Greeks contradict it, Samaritans disbelieve it, heretics mutilate it; the contradiction is manifold, but the truth is uniform.

2. Now Greeks and Samaritans together argue against us thus. The dead man has fallen, and decomposed away, and is all turned into worms; and the worms have died also; such is the decay and destruction which has overtaken the body; how then is it to be raised? Those who are shipwrecked have been devoured by fishes, which are themselves devoured. Those who fight with wild beasts, their very bones are ground to powder, and consumed by bears and lions. Vultures and ravens feed on the flesh of the unburied dead, and then fly away over all the world; from where then is the body to be collected? For of the fowls who have devoured it some by chance die in India, some in Persia, some in the land of the Goths. Other men again are consumed by fire, and their very ashes scattered by rain or wind; from where is the body to be brought together again?

3. To you, poor little feeble man, India is far from the land of the Goths, and Spain from Persia; but to God, who holds the whole earth in the hallow of His hands (Isa 40:12), all things are near at hand. Attribute not then weakness to God, from a comparison of your
feebleness, but rather dwell on His power. Does then the sun, a small
work of God, by one glance of his beams give warmth to the whole
world; does the atmosphere, which God has made, encompass all things
in the world; and is God, who is the Creator both of the sun, and of the
atmosphere, far off from the world? Imagine a mixture of seeds of
different plants (for as you are weak concerning the faith, the
examples
which I say are weak also), and that these different seeds are
contained
in your single hand; is it then to you, who are a man, a difficult or an
easy matter to separate what is in your hand, and to collect each seed
according to its nature, and restore it to its own kind? Can you then
separate the things in your hand, and cannot God separate the things
contained in His hand, and restore them to their proper place?
Consider what I say, whether it is not impious to deny it?

4. But further, attend, I pray, to the very principle of justice, and
come to your own case. You have different sorts of servants: and some
are good and some bad; you honour therefore the good, and punish the
bad. And if you are a judge, to the good you will award praise, and to
the transgressors, punishment. Is then justice observed by you a
mortal
man; and with God, the ever changeless King of all, is there no
retributive justice? To deny this is impious. For consider what I say.
Many murderers have died in their beds unpunished; where then is the
righteousness of God? Sometimes a murderer guilty of fifty murders is
beheaded once; where then shall he suffer punishment for the forty and
nine? Unless there is a judgment and a retribution after this world, you
charge God with unrighteousness. Marvel not, however, because of the
delay of the judgment; no combatant is crowned or disgraced, till the
contest is over; and no president of the games ever crowns men while
yet striving, but he waits till all the combatants are finished, and then
deciding between them he may dispense the prizes and the crowns. God
deals with us in the same way, so long as the strife in this world
lasts, He
helps the just but partially, but afterwards He renders to them their
rewards fully.

16. And many Scriptures there are which testify of the Resurrection
of the dead; for there are many other sayings on this matter. But now,
by way of remembrance only, we will make a passing mention of the
raising of Lazarus on the fourth day; and just allude, because of the
shortness of the time, to the widow's son also who was raised, and
merely for the sake of reminding you, let me mention the ruler of the
synagogue's daughter, and the rending of the rocks, and how there
arose many bodies of the saints which slept, their graves having been
opened. But specially it should be remembered that Christ has been
raised from the dead. I speak but in passing of Elias, and the widow's
son whom he raised; of Elisha also, who raised the dead twice; once in
his lifetime, and once after his death. For when alive he wrought the
resurrection by means of his own soul; but that not the souls only of the
just might be honoured, but that it might be believed that in the bodies
also of the just there lies a power, the corpse which was cast into the
sepulchre of Elisha, when it touched the dead body of the prophet, was
resurrected, and the dead body of the prophet did the work of the soul,
and that which was dead and buried gave life to the dead, and though
it gave life, yet continued itself among the dead. Why? Lest if Elisha
should rise again, the work should be ascribed to his soul alone; and to
show, that even though the soul is not present, a power resides in the
body of the saints, because of the righteous soul which has for so many
years dwelt in it, and used it as its servant. And let us not foolishly
disbelieve, as though this thing had not happened: for if handkerchiefs
and aprons, which are from without, touching the bodies of the
diseased, raised up the sick, how much more should the very body of
the Prophet raise the dead?

17. And with respect to these instances we might say much,
rehearsing in detail the marvellous circumstances of each event: but
as you have been already wearied both by the prolonged fast of Great
Friday, and the succeeding all night vigil25, let what has been
briefly
spoken concerning them suffice for a while; these words having been as
it were sown thinly, that you, receiving the seed like richest ground,
may in bearing fruit increase them. But remember that the Apostles also
raised the dead; Peter raised Tabitha in Joppa (Acts 9:36-42), and
Paul raised Eutychus in Troas (Acts 20:7-12); and thus did all the other
Apostles, even though the wonders wrought by each have not all been
written. Further, remember all the sayings in the first Epistle to the
Corinthians, which Paul wrote against them who said, How are the dead
raised, and with what manner of body do they come? And how he says,
“For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised” (I Cor:15); and how
he called them fools, who believed not; and remember the whole of his
teaching there concerning the resurrection of the dead, and how he
wrote to the Thessalonians, “But we would not have you to be ignorant,
brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even
as the rest which have no hope”, and all that follows: but chiefly
that,
“And the dead in Christ shall rise first” (I Thes 4:13-16).
18. But especially note this, how very clearly Paul says, “For this
corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on
immortality” (I Cor 15:53). For this body shall be raised not
remaining
weak as now; but raised the very same body, though by putting on
incorruption it shall be fashioned anew,—as iron blending with fire
becomes fire, or rather as He knows how, the Lord who raises us. This
body therefore shall be raised, but it shall not be such as it now is,
but
an eternal body; no longer needing for its life such nourishment as
now,
nor stairs for its ascent, for it shall be made spiritual, a
marvellous
thing, such as we cannot worthily speak of. Then, it is said. “the
righteous shall shine forth as the sun, and the moon, and as the
brightness of the firmament” (Dan 12:3).
19. We shall be raised therefore, all with eternal bodies, but not
all
in the same manner: for if a man is righteous, he will receive a
heavenly
body, that he may be worthy to hold conversation with Angels. But if a
man is a sinner, he shall receive an eternal body, fitted to endure
the
penalties of sins, that he may burn eternally in fire, without ever
being
consumed. And righteously will God assign this portion to either
company; for we do nothing without the body. We blaspheme with the
mouth, and with the mouth we pray. With the body we commit
fornication, and with the body we keep chastity. With the hand we rob,
and by the hand we give alms; and the rest in like manner. Since then
the body has been our servant in all things, it shall also share with
us in
the future the fruits of the past.
20. Therefore, brethren, let us take good care of our bodies, and not
misuse them as if not belonging to us. Let us not say like the
heretics,
that this vesture of the body belongs not to us, but let us take good
care
of it as our own; for we must give account to the Lord of all things
done
through the body. Say not, none sees me; think not, that there is no
witness of the deed. Human witness may not be there; but He who
fashioned us, an unerring witness, abides faithful in heaven, and
beholds what you do. And the stains of sin also remain in the body; for
as when a wound has gone deep into the body, even if there has been
a healing, the scar remains, so sin wounds soul and body, and the
marks of its scars remain in all; and they are removed only from those who
receive the washing of Baptism. The past wounds therefore of soul and
body God heals by Baptism; against future ones let us one and all
jointly guard ourselves, that we may keep this vestment of the body
pure, and may not for practising fornication and sensual indulgence or
any other sin for a short time, lose the salvation of heaven, but may
inherit the eternal kingdom of God; of which may God, of His own
grace, deem all of you worthy.

21. Enough now in proof of the Resurrection of the dead; and now,
let me again recite to you the profession of the faith, and you, with
all diligence pronounce it while I speak, and remember it.

26At this stage, the lecture is interrupted and St. Cyril
recites the Baptismal Creed, asking the candidates to
repeat it after him till they memorize it.

22. The Faith which we rehearse contains in order the following,
"AND IN ONE BAPTISM OF REPENTANCE FOR THE
REMISSION OF SINS; AND IN ONE HOLY CATHOLIC
CHURCH; AND IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE FLESH; AND
IN ETERNAL LIFE."

Now of Baptism and repentance I have spoken in the earliest
Lectures; and my present remarks concerning the resurrection of the
dead have been made with reference to the Article “In the resurrection
of the flesh.” Now then let me finish what still remains to be said
for the
Article, “In one Holy Catholic Church,” on which, though one might say
many things, we will speak but briefly.

23. The Church is then called Catholic because it extends over all
the world, from one end of the earth to the other; and because it teaches
universally and completely every doctrine men ought to know,
concerning things both visible and invisible, heavenly and earthly;
and
because it brings into subjection to godliness the whole race of
mankind, governors and governed, learned and unlearned; and because
it universally treats and heals the whole class of sins, which are
committed by soul or body, and possesses in itself every form of
virtue
which is named, both in deeds and words, and in every kind of
spiritual
gifts.

24. The Church is rightly named (Ecclesia) because it calls forth
and assembles together all men; according to the Lord’s saying in
Leviticus,  
“And make an assembly for all the congregation at the door of the tabernacle of witness” (Lev 8:3). And it should be noted, that the word “assemble”, is used for the first time in the Scriptures here, at the time when the Lord puts Aaron into the High-priesthood. And in Deuteronomy also the Lord says to Moses, “Assemble the people unto Me, and let them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me” (Deut 4:10). And he again mentions the name of the Church, when he says concerning the Tables of the Law, “And on them were written all the words which the Lord spoke with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the Assembly ecclesia (Deut 9:10); as if he had said more plainly, in the day in which ye were called and gathered together by God. The Psalmist also says, “I will give thanks unto You, O Lord, in the great assembly; I will praise You among much people. (Ps 35:18)  
25. In the old Testament the Psalmist sang, Bless ye God in the churches, even the Lord, from the fountains of Israel” (Ps 68:26). But since then the Jews, because of the plots which they made against the Saviour were cast away from His grace, and the Saviour built out of the Gentiles a second Holy Church, the Church of us Christians, concerning which he said to Peter, “And upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Mat 16:18).  
And David prophesying of both these, said plainly of the first which was rejected, “I have hated the church of evil doers” (Ps 26:5); but of the second which is built up he says in the same Psalm, “Lord, I have loved the beauty of Your house”; and immediately afterwards. In the churches will I bless you, O Lord”(Ps 26:8-12). For now that the one Church in Judaea is cast off, the Churches of Christ are increased over all the world; and of them it is said in the Psalms, “Sing unto the Lord a new song, His praise in the church of the Saints” (Ps 149:1). In agreement with these passages is what the prophet also said to the Jews, “I have no pleasure in you, says the Lord Almighty”; and immediately afterwards, “For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, My name is glorified among the Gentiles” (Mal 1:10-11). Concerning this Holy Catholic Church Paul writes to Timothy, “That you may know haw you ought to behave yourself in the House of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. (I Tim 3:15)
26. But since the word Ecclesia is applied to different things as also it is written of the multitude in the theatre of the Ephesians, “And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the Assembly” (Acts19:41), and since one might properly and truly say that there is a Church of evil doers, I mean the meetings of the heretics, the Marcionists and Manicheans, and the rest, for this cause the Creed has securely delivered to you now the Article, “And in one Holy Catholic Church;” that you may avoid their wretched meetings, and ever abide with the Holy Catholic Church in which you were regenerated. And if ever you are sojourning in cities, inquire not simply where the Lord's House is (for the other sects of the profane also attempt to call their own dens houses of the Lord), nor merely where the Church is, but where is the Catholic Church. For this is the peculiar name of this Holy Church, the mother of us all, which is the spouse of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Only-begotten Son of God, for it is written, “As Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it” (Eph 5:25), and is a figure and copy of “Jerusalem which is above, which is free, and the mother of us all” (Gal 4:26); which before was barren, but now has many children. (Gal 4:27) 27. For when the first Church was cast off, in the second, which is the Catholic Church, as Paul says, “God has set first Apostles, secondly Prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of headings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues” (Gal 4:26), and every sort of virtue, I mean wisdom and understanding, temperance and justice, mercy and loving-kindness, and patience unconquerable in persecutions. She, “by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour” (II Cor 6:7-8), in former days amid persecutions and tribulations crowned the holy martyrs with the varied and blooming crowns of patience, and now in times of peace by God's grace receives her due honours from kings and those who are in high place, and from every sort and kindred of men. And while the kings of particular nations have bounds set to their authority, the Holy Catholic Church alone extends her power without limit over the whole world; for God, as it is written, “has made her border peace” (Ps 147:14). But I need to lecture for many more hours, if I were to speak of all things which concern her. 28. Now, if in this Holy Catholic Church we receive her teachings and conduct ourselves virtuously, we shall attain the kingdom of heaven,
and inherit ETERNAL LIFE; for which also we endure all toils, that we may enjoy it from the Lord's hands. For what we aim at is nothing trivial, but our endeavour is for eternal life. Wherefore in the profession of the Faith, after the words, “AND IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE FLESH,” that is, of the dead (of which we have discoursed), we are taught to believe also “IN THE LIFE ETERNAL,” for which as Christians we are striving.

29. The real and true life then is the Father, who through the Son in the Holy Spirit pours forth as from a fountain His heavenly gifts to all; and through His love to man, the blessings of the life eternal are promised without fail to us men also. We must not disbelieve the possibility of this, but having an eye not to our own weakness but to His power, we must believe; for with God all things are possible. And that this is possible, and that we may look for eternal life, Daniel declares,

“And many righteous shall shine as the stars for ever and ever” (Dan 12:3). And Paul says, “And so shall we be ever with the Lord” (I Thes 4:17): for the being for ever with the Lord implies the life eternal. But the clearest of all is what the Saviour Himself says in the Gospel, “And these shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.” (Mat 25:46)

30. And many are the proofs concerning the life eternal. And when we desire to gain this eternal life, the sacred Scriptures suggest to us the ways of gaining it; of which, because of the length of our discourse, the texts we now set before you shall be but few, the rest being left to the search of the diligent. They declare at one time that it is by faith; for it is written, “He that believeth on the Son has eternal life” (John 3:36); and again He says Himself, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that hears My word, and believes Him that sent Me, has eternal life. (John 5:24) At another time, it is by the preaching of the Gospel; for He says, that “He that reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit unto life eternal.” (John 4:36) At another time, by martyrdom and confession in Christ's name; for He says, “And he that hates his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal.” (John 12:25) And again, by preferring Christ to riches or kindred; “And every one that has forsaken brethren, or sisters,
and the rest, shall inherit eternal life.” (Mat 19:29) Moreover it is by keeping the commandments, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not kill, and the rest which follow; as He answered to him that came to Him, and said, “Good Master, what shall I do that I may have eternal life?” (Mark 10:17-19) But further, it is by departing from evil works, and henceforth serving God; for Paul says, “But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end eternal life.” (Rom 6:22)

31. Indeed, the ways of finding eternal life are many, though I have passed over them by reason of their number. For the Lord in His loving-kindness has opened, not one or two only, but many doors, by which to enter into the life eternal, so that, as far as He is concerned, all might enjoy it without hindrance. For the time being, this is as much as I intend to speak concerning THE LIFE ETERNAL, which is the last doctrine of the profession of our Faith, and its conclusion; may we all, both teachers and hearers, by God's grace enjoy this life eternal!

32. Finally, beloved brethren, this course of instruction exhorts you all, to prepare your souls to receive the heavenly gifts. As regards the Holy and Apostolic Faith delivered to you to profess, we have spoken through the grace of the Lord as many Lectures, as was possible, in these past days of Lent; not that this is all we ought to have said, for many are the points omitted; and these perhaps should be taught by more excellent teachers. But now the holy day of the Passover is at hand, and ye, beloved in Christ, are to be enlightened by “the Laver of regeneration.” (Titus 3:5) Therefore you will be instructed once again, God willing, in the appropriate things; with how great devotion and order you must enter in when summoned, for what purpose each of the holy mysteries of Baptism is performed, and with what reverence and order you must go from Baptism to the Holy Altar of God, and enjoy its spiritual and heavenly mysteries. And this is so that your souls being previously enlightened by the word of doctrine, you may appreciate the greatness of the gifts bestowed on you by God.

33. And after Easter’s Holy Day of salvation, beginning on Monday, when you come on each successive day, after the Liturgy into the Holy Place of the Resurrection, God willing, you shall hear other Lectures; in which you shall again be taught the reasons of every thing which
has been done, and shall receive the proofs thereof from the Old and New Testaments,—first, of the things done just before Baptism,—next, how you were cleansed from your sins by the Lord, by the washing of water with the word,—and how like Priests you have become partakers of the Name of Christ,—and how the Seal of the fellowship of the Holy Spirit was given to you,—and concerning the mysteries at the Altar of the New Testament, which have taken their beginning from this place, both what the Divine Scriptures have delivered to us, and what is the power of these mysteries, and how you must approach them, and when and how receive them;—and at the end of all, how for the time to come you must behave yourselves worthily of this grace both in words and deeds, that you may all be enabled to enjoy the life everlasting. And these things shall be spoken, if it be God's pleasure.28

34. “Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord alway; again I will say, Rejoice” (Phil 4:4): for your redemption has drawn near, and the heavenly host of the Angels is waiting for your salvation. And there is now the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; and the Prophet cries, “Ho, you that thirst, come to the water”; and immediately afterwards, “Hearken unto me, and ye shall eat that which is good, and your soul shall delight itself in good things.” (Isa 55:1-2) And within a little while ye shall hear that excellent lesson which says, “Shine, shine, O you new Jerusalem; for your light is come.” (Isa 60:1) Of this Jerusalem the prophet has said, “And afterwards you shall be called the city of righteousness, Zion, the faithful mother of cities; because of the law which went forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem,”(Isa 1:26, 2:3) that word which has from hence been showered forth on the whole world. To that New Jerusalem the Prophet also says concerning you, “Lift up your eyes round about, and behold your children gathered together” (Isa 49:18); and she answers, saying, “Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves with their young ones to me?” (Isa 60:8); clouds, because of their spiritual nature, and doves, from their purity. And again, she says, “Who knows such things? or who has seen it thus? did ever a land bring forth in one day? or was ever a nation born all at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.”(Isa 66:8) The world shall be filled with joy unspeakable because of the Lord who said, “Behold, I
create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy .”(Isa 65:18) And may He ever keep you in good works, and words, and thoughts; to Whom be glory, honour, and power, through our Lord Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto all the endless ages of eternity. Amen.

28For the week of Easter, daily lectures were given to those who have received Baptism explaining the Sacraments.

THE CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTIONS
of
ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

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THE APOSTLES' CREED
WHAT IS FAITH?
The Nature and Effects of Faith.--The first thing that is necessary for every Christian is faith, without which no one is truly called a faithful Christian.[1] Faith brings about four good effects.
The first is that through faith the soul is united to God, and by it there is between the soul and God a union akin to marriage. "I will espouse thee in faith."[2] When a man is baptised the first question that is asked him is: "Do you believe in God?"[3] This is because Baptism is the first Sacrament of faith. Hence, the Lord said: "He that believeth and is baptised shall
be saved."[4] Baptism without faith is of no value. Indeed, it must be known that no one is acceptable before God unless he have faith. "Without faith it is impossible to please God."[5] St. Augustine explains these words of St. Paul, "All that is not of faith is sin,"[6] in this way: "Where there is no knowledge of the eternal and unchanging Truth, virtue even in the midst of the best moral life is false."

The second effect of faith is that eternal life is already begun in us; for eternal life is nothing else than knowing God. This the Lord announced when He said: "This is eternal life, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."[7] This knowledge of God begins here through faith, but it is perfected the future life when we shall know God as He is. Therefore, St. Paul says: "Faith is the substance of things to be hoped for."[8] No one then can arrive at perfect happiness of heaven, which is the true knowledge of God, unless first he knows God through faith. "Blessed are they that have not seen and have believed."[9]

The third good that comes from faith is that right direction which it gives to our present life. Now, in order that one live a good life, it is necessary that he know what is necessary to live rightly; and if he depends for all this required knowledge on his own efforts alone, either he will never attain such knowledge, or if so, only after a long time. But faith teaches us all that is necessary to live a good life. It teaches us that there is one God who is the rewarder of good and the punisher of evil; that there is a life other than this one, and other like truths whereby we are attracted to live rightly and to avoid what evil. "The just man liveth by faith."[10] This is evident in that no one of the philosophers before the coming of Christ could, through his own powers, know God and the means necessary for salvation as well as any old woman since Christ's coming knows Him through faith. And, therefore, it is said in Isaias that "the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord."[11] The fourth effect of faith is that by it we overcome temptations: "The holy ones by faith conquered 17 investigate the nature of even one little fly. We even read that a certain philosopher spent thirty years in solitude in order to know the nature of the bee. If, therefore, our intellect is so weak, it is
foolish to be willing to believe concerning God only that which man can know by himself alone.
And against this is the word of Job: "Behold, God is great, exceeding our knowledge."[16] One can also answer this question by supposing that a certain master had said something concerning his own special branch of knowledge, and some uneducated person would contradict him for no other reason than that he could not understand what the master said! Such a person would be considered very foolish. So, the intellect of the Angels as greatly exceeds the intellect of the greatest philosopher as much as that of the greatest philosopher exceeds the intellect of the uneducated man. Therefore, the philosopher is foolish if he refuses to believe what an Angel says, and far greater fool to refuse to believe what God says. Against such are these words: "For many things are shown to thee above the understanding of men."
Then, again, if one were willing to believe only those things which one knows with certitude, one could not live in this world. How could one live unless one believed others? How could one know that this man is one's own father? Therefore, it is necessary that one believe others in matters which one cannot know perfectly for oneself. But no one is so worthy of belief as is God, and hence they who do not believe the words of faith are not wise, but foolish and proud. As the Apostle says: "He is proud, knowing nothing."[18] And also: "I know whom I have believed; and I am certain."[19] And it is written: "Ye who fear the Lord, believe Him and your reward shall not be made void."
Finally, one can say also that God proves the truth of the things which faith teaches. Thus, if a king sends letters signed with his seal, no one would dare to say that those letters did not represent the will of the king. In like manner, everything that the Saints believed and handed down to us concerning the faith of Christ is signed with the seal of God. This seal consists of those works which no mere creature could accomplish; they are the miracles by which Christ confirmed the sayings of the apostles and of the Saints. If, however, you would say that no one has witnessed these miracles, I would reply in this manner. It is a fact that the entire world worshipped idols and that the faith of Christ was persecuted, as the histories of the pagans also testify. But now all are turned to Christ--wise men and noble and rich--
converted by the words of the poor and simple preachers of Christ. Now, this fact was either miracle or it was not. If it is miraculous, you have what you asked for, a visible fact; if it is not, then there could not be a greater miracle than that the whole world should have been converted without miracles. And we need go no further. We are more certain, therefore, in believing the things of faith than those things which can be seen, because God's knowledge never deceives us, but the visible sense of man is often in error. (For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES

1. "The Catechism of the Council of Trent," known as the "Roman Catechism" (and so called throughout this book), thus introduces the explanation of the twelve Articles of the Creed: "The Christian religion proposes to the faithful many truths which either singly or all together must be held with a certain and firm faith. That which must first and necessarily be believed by all is that which God Himself has taught us as the foundation of truth and its summary concerning the unity of the Divine Essence, the distinction of Three Persons, and the actions which are by particular reason attributed to each. The pastor should teach that the Apostles' Creed briefly sets forth the doctrine of these mysteries. . . . The Apostles' Creed is divided into three principal parts. The first part describes the First Person of the Divine Nature and the marvellous work of the creation. The second part treats of the Second Person and the mystery of man's redemption. The third part concludes with the Third Person, the head and source of our sanctification. The varied and appropriate propositions of the Creed are called Articles, after a comparison often made by the Fathers; for just as the 18 members of the body are divided by joints (articuli), so in this profusion of faith whatever must be distinctly and separately believed from everything else is rightly and aptly called an Article" (Part I, Chapter I, 4).

2. Osee, ii. 20

3. In the ceremony of administering The Sacrament of Baptism, the priest asks the Sponsor: "N., do you believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?"

4. Mark, xvi. 16.

5. Heb., xi. 6.


7. John, xvii. 3.

10. Hab., ii. 4.
11. Isa., xi. 9.
12 Heb., xi. 33.
13. I Peter v. 8.
15. Eph., vi. 16.
17. Ecclus., iii. 25.
18. I Tim., vi. 4.
19. II Tim., i. 12.

THE FIRST ARTICLE: "I Believe in One God."

Among all the truths which the faithful must believe, this is the first— that there is one God. We must see that God means the ruler and provider of all things. He, therefore, believes in God who believes that everything in this world is governed and provided for by Him. He who would believe that all things come into being by chance does not believe that there is a God. No one is so foolish as to deny that all nature, which operates with a certain definite time and order, is subject to the rule and foresight and an orderly arrangement of someone. We see how the sun, the moon, and the stars, and all natural things follow a determined course, which would be impossible if they were merely products of chance. Hence, as is spoken of in the Psalm, he is indeed foolish who does not believe in God: "The fool hath said in his heart: There is no God."[1] There are those, however, who believe that God rules and sustains all things of nature, and nevertheless do not believe God is the overseer of the acts of man; hence they believe that human acts do not come under God's providence. They reason thus because they see in this world how the good are afflicted and how the evil enjoy good things, so that Divine Providence seems to disregard human affairs. Hence the words of Job are offered to apply to this view: "He doth not consider our things; and He walketh about the poles of heaven."[2] But this is indeed absurd. It is just as though a person who is ignorant of medicine should see a doctor give water to one patient and wine to another. He would believe that this is mere chance, since he does not understand the science of
medicine which for good reasons prescribes for one wine and for another water. So is it with God. For God in His just and wise Providence knows what is good and necessary for men; and hence He afflicts some who are good and allows certain wicked men to prosper. But he is foolish indeed who believes this is due to chance, because he does not know the causes and method of God's dealing with men. "I wish that God might speak with thee, and would open His lips to thee, that He might show thee the secrets of wisdom, and that His law is manifold: and thou mightest understand that He exacteth much less of thee than thy iniquity deserveth."[3] We must, therefore, firmly believe that God governs and regulates not only all nature, but also the actions of men. "And they said: The Lord shall not see; neither shall the God of Jacob understand. Understand, ye senseless among the people, and, you fools, be wise at last. He that planted the ear, shall He not hear, He that formed the eye, doth He not consider? . . . The Lord knoweth the thoughts of men."[4] God sees all things, both our thoughts and the hidden desires of our will. Thus, the necessity of doing good is especially imposed on man since all his thoughts, words and actions are known in the sight of God: "All things are naked and open to His eyes."[5] We believe that God who rules and regulates all things is but one God. This is seen in that wherever the regulation of human affairs is well arranged, there the group is found to be ruled and provided for by one, not many. For a number of heads often brings dissension in their subjects. But since divine government exceeds in every way that which is merely human, it is evident that the government of the world is not by many gods, but by one only.[6]

SOME MOTIVES FOR BELIEF IN MANY GODS
There are four motives which have led men to believe in a number of gods. (1) The dullness of the human intellect. Dull men, not capable of going beyond sensible things, did not believe anything existed except physical bodies. Hence, they held that the world is disposed and ruled by those bodies which to them seemed most beautiful and most valuable in this world. And, accordingly, to things such as the sun, the moon and the stars, they attributed and gave a divine worship. Such men are like to one who, going to a royal court to see the king, believes that whoever is sumptuously
dressed or of official position is the king! "They have imagined either the sun and moon or the
circle of the stars . . . to be the gods that rule the world. With
whose beauty, if they being delighted,
took them to be gods."[7]
(2) The second motive was human adulation. Some men, wishing to fawn
upon kings and rulers,
obey and subject themselves to them and show them honour which is due
to God alone. After the
death of these rulers, sometimes men make them gods, and sometimes
this is done even whilst they
are living. "That every nation may know that Nabuchodonosor is god of
the earth, and besides him
there is no other."[8]
(3) The human affection for sons and relatives was a third motive.
Some, because of the excessive
love which they had for their family, caused statues of them to be
erected after their death, and
gradually a divine honour was attached to these statues.[9] "For men
serving either their affections
or their kings, gave the incommunicable Name to stones and wood."[10]
(4) The last motive is the malice of the devil. The devil wished from
the beginning to be equal to
God, and thus he said: "I will ascend above the height of the clouds.
I will be like the Most
High."[11] The devil still entertains this desire. His entire purpose
is to bring about that man adore
him and offer sacrifices to him; not that he takes delight in a dog or
cat that is offered to him, he
does relish the fact that thereby irreverence is shown to God. Thus,
he spoke to Christ: "All these
will I give Thee, if falling down Thou wilt adore me.[12] For this
reason those demons who entered
into idols said that they would be venerated as gods. "All the gods of
the Gentiles are demons."[13]
"The things which the heathens sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils,
and not to God."[14]
Although all this is terrible to contemplate, yet at times there are
any who fall into these abovementioned four causes. Not by their words
and hearts, but by their actions, they show that they
believe in many gods. Thus, those who believe that the celestial
bodies influence the will of man
and regulate their affairs by astrology, really make the heavenly
bodies gods, and subject
themselves to them. Be not afraid of the signs of heaven which the
heathens fear. For the laws of
the people are vain."[15] In the same category are all those who obey
temporal rulers more than
God, in that which they ought not; such actually set these up as gods.
"We ought to obey God rather
than men."[16] So also those who love their sons and kinsfolk more than God show by their actions that they believe in many gods; as likewise do those who love food more than God: "Whose god is their belly."[17] Moreover, all who take part in magic or in incantations believe that the demons are gods, because they seek from the devil that which God alone can give, such as revealing the future or discovering hidden things. We must, therefore, believe that there is but one God.

(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES
1. Ps. xiii. 1.
3. Job, xi. 5-6.
4. Ps. xciii. 7-11.
6. "There is but one God, not many gods. We attribute to God the highest goodness and perfection, and it is impossible that what is highest and absolutely perfect could be found in many. If a being lack that which constitutes supreme perfection, it is, therefore, imperfect and cannot have the nature of God" ("Roman Catechism," "The Creed," First Article, 7).
7. Wis., xiii. 2-3.
9. All this is fully explained in the fourteenth chapter of the Book of Wisdom, verses 15-21.
10. Wis., xiv. 21.
13. Ps. cxv. 5.
14. I Cor., x. 20.
15. Jerem., x. 2-3.
17. Phil., iii. 19.

THE FIRST ARTICLE (CONTINUED): "The Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth."
It has been shown that we must first of all believe there is but one God. Now, the second is that this God is the Creator and maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. Let us leave more subtle reasons for the present and show by a simple example that all things are created and made by God. If a person, upon entering a certain house, should feel-a warmth at the door of the house, and going within should feel a greater warmth, and so on the more he went into its interior,
he would believe that somewhere within was a fire, even if he did not see the fire itself which
causeditself which he felt. So also is it when we consider the
of this world. For one finds
all things arranged in different degrees of beauty and worth, and the
closer things approach to God,
the more beautiful and better they are found to be. Thus, the heavenly
bodies are more beautiful and
nobler than those which are below them; and, likewise, the invisible
things in relation to the visible.
Therefore, it must be seen that all these things proceed from one God
who gives His being and
beauty to each and everything. "All men are vain, in whom there is not
the knowledge of God: and
who by these good things that are seen could not understand Him that
is. Neither by attending to the
works have acknowledged who was the workman. . . . For by the
greatness of the beauty, and of the
creature, the creator of them may be seen, so as to be known
thereby."[1] Thus, therefore, it is
certain for us that all things in the world are from God.

ERRORS RELATING TO THE FIRST ARTICLE
There are three errors concerning this truth which we must avoid.
First, the error of the Manicheans,
who say that all visible created things are from the devil, and only
the invisible creation is to be
attributed to God. The cause of this error is that they hold that God
is the highest good, which is
ture; but they also assert that whatsoever comes from good is itself
good. Thus, not distinguishing
what is evil and what is good, they believed that whatever is partly
evil is essentially evil--as, for
instance, fire because it burns is essentially evil, and so is water
because it causes suffocation, and
so with other things. Because no sensible thing is essentially good,
but mixed with evil and

defective, they believed that all visible things are not made by God
who is good, but by the evil one.
Against them St. Augustine gives this illustration. A certain man
entered the shop of a carpenter and
found tools which, if he should fall against them, would seriously
wound him. Now, if he would
consider the carpenter a bad workman because he made and used such
tools, it would be stupid of
him indeed. In the same way it is absurd to say that created things
are evil because they may be
harmful; for what is harmful to one may be useful to another. This
error is contrary to the faith of
the Church, and against it we say: "Of all things visible and
invisible."[2] "In the beginning God created heaven and earth."[3] "All things were made by Him."[4] The second error is of those who hold the world has existed from eternity: "Since the time that the fathers slept, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."[5] They are led to this view because they do not know how to imagine the beginning of the world. They are, says Rabbi Moses, in like case to a boy who immediately upon his birth was placed upon an island, and remained ignorant of the manner of child-bearing and of infants' birth. Thus, when he grew up, if one should explain all these things to him, he would not believe how a man could once have been in his mother's womb. So also those who consider the world as it is now, do not believe that it had a beginning. This is also contrary to the faith of the Church, and hence we say: "the Maker of heaven and earth." For if they were made, they did not exist forever. "He spoke and they were made."[7] The third is the error which holds that God made the world from prejacent matter (ex praejacenti materia). They are led to this view because they wish to measure divine power according to human power; and since man cannot make anything except from material which already lies at hand, so also it must be with God. But this is false. Man needs matter to make anything, because he is a builder of particular things and must bring form out of definite material. He merely determines the form of his work, and can be only the cause of the form that he builds. God, however, is the universal cause of all things, and He not only creates the form but also the matter. Hence, He makes out of nothing, and thus it is said in the Creed: "the Creator of heaven and earth." We must see in this the difference between making and creating. To create is to make something out of nothing; and if everything were destroyed, He could again make all things. He, thus, makes the blind to see, raises up the dead, and works other similar miracles. "Thy power is at hand when Thou wilt."[8] GOOD EFFECTS OF OUR FAITH From a consideration of all this, one is led to a fivefold benefit. (1) We are led to a knowledge of the divine majesty. Now, if a maker is greater than the things he makes, then God is greater than all things which He has made. "With whose beauty, if they being delighted, took them to be gods, let them know how much the Lord of them is more beautiful than they...
Or if they admired their power and their effects, let them understand by them that He that made them, is mightier than they."[9] Hence, whatsoever can even be affirmed or thought of is less than God. "Behold: God is great, exceeding our knowledge."[10]

(2) We are led to give thanks to God. Because God is the Creator of all things, it is certain that what we are and what we have is from God: "What hast thou that thou hast not received."[11] "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world and all they that dwell therein."[12] "We, therefore, must render thanks to God: What shall I render to the Lord for all the things that He hath rendered to me?"[13]

(3) We are led to bear our troubles in patience. Although every created thing is from God and is good according to its nature, yet, if something harms us or brings us pain, we believe that such comes from God, not as a fault in Him, but because God permits no evil that is not for good. Affliction purifies from sin, brings low the guilty, and urges on the good to a love of God: "If we have received good things from the hand of God, why should we not receive evil?"[14]

(4) We are led to a right use of created things. Thus, we ought to use created things as having been made by God for two purposes: for His glory, "since all things are made for Himself"[15] (that is, for the glory of God), and finally for our profit: "Which the Lord thy God created for the service of all the nations."[16] Thus, we ought to use things for God's glory in order to please Him no less than for our own profit, that is, so as to avoid sin in using them: All things are Thine, and we have given Thee what we received of Thy hand."[17] Whatever we have, be it learning or beauty, we must revere all and use all for the glory of God.

(5) We are led also to acknowledge the great dignity of man. God made all things for man: "Thou hast subjected all things under is feet,"[18] and man is more like to God than all other creatures save the Angels: "Let us make man to Our image and likeness."[19] God does not say this of the heavens or of the stars, but of man; and this likeness of God in man does not refer to the body but to the human soul, which has free will and is incorruptible, and therein man resembles God more than other creatures do. We ought, therefore, to consider the nobleness of
man as less than the Angels
but greater than all other creatures. Let us not, therefore, diminish
his dignity by sin and by an
inordinate desire for earthly things which are beneath us and are made
for our service. Accordingly,
we must rule over things of the earth and use them, and be subject to
God by obeying and serving
Him. And thus we shall come to he enjoyment of God forever.
(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES
1. Wis., xiii. 1, 5.
2. In the Nicene Creed.
4. John, i. 3.
5. II Peter, iii. 4.
6. In the Nicene Creed.
7. Ps. cxlviii. 5.
8. wis., xii. 18.
11. I Cor., iv. 7.
12. Ps. xxiii. 1.
13. Ps, cxv. 12.
15. Prov., xvi. 4.
16 Deut., iv. 19.
18. Ps. viii. 8.

THE SECOND ARTICLE: "And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord."
It is not only necessary for Christians to believe in one God who is
the Creator of heaven and earth
and of all things; but also they must believe that God is the Father
and that Christ is the true Son of
God. This, as St. Peter says, is not mere fable, but is certain and
proved by the word of God on the
Mount of Transfiguration. "For we have not by following artificial
fables made known to you the
power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ; but we were eyewitnesses
of His greatness. 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.' And this voice, we heard
brought from heaven, when we were with Him in the holy mount."[1]
Christ Jesus Himself in many
places called God His Father, and Himself the Son of God. Both the
Apostles and the Fathers
placed in the articles of faith that Christ is the Son of God by
saying: "And (I believe) in Jesus
Christ, His (i.e., God's) only Son."[2]

23

ERRORS RELATING TO THE SECOND ARTICLE
There were, however, certain heretics who erred in this belief. Photinus, for instance, believed that Christ is not the Son of God but a good man who, by a good life and by doing the will of God, merited to be called the son of God by adoption; and so Christ who lived a good life and did the will of God merited to be called the son of God. Moreover, this error would not have Christ living before the Blessed Virgin, but would have Him begin to exist only at His conception. Accordingly, there are here two errors: the first, that Christ is not the true Son of God according to His nature; and the second, that Christ in His entire being began to exist in time. Our faith, however, holds that He is the Son of God in His nature, and that he is from all eternity. Now, we have definite authority against these errors in the Holy Scriptures. Against the first error it is said that Christ is not only the Son, but also the only-begotten Son of the Father: "The only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him:"[3] And again the second error it is said: "Before Abraham was made, I AM."[4] It is evident that Abraham lived before the Blessed Virgin. And what the Fathers added to the other Creed [i.e., the Nicene Creed], namely, "the only-begotten Son of God," is against the first error; and "born of the Father before all ages" is against the second error.

Sabellius said that Christ indeed was before the Blessed Virgin, but he held that the Father Himself became incarnate and, therefore, the Father and the Son is the same Person. This is an error because it takes away the Trinity of Persons in God, and against it is this authority: "I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent Me."[5] It is clear that one cannot be sent from himself. Sabellius errs therefore, and in the "Symbol"[6] Of the Fathers it is said: "God of God; Light of Light," that is, we are to believe in God the Son from God the Father, and the Son who is Light from the Father who is Light.

Arius, although he would say that Christ was before the Blessed Virgin and that the Person of the Father is other than the Person of the Son, nevertheless made a three-fold attribution to Christ: (1) that the Son of God was a creature; (2) that He is not from eternity, but was formed the noblest of
all creatures in time by God; (3) that God the Son is not of one
nature with God the Father, and
therefore that He was not true God. But this too is erroneous and
contrary to the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. It is written: "I and the Father are one."[7] That
is, in nature; and therefore, just as the Father always existed, so also the Son; and just as the Father is
true God, so also is the Son.
That Christ is a creature, as said by Arius, is contradicted in the "Symbol" by the Fathers: "True
God of true God;" and the assertion that Christ is not from eternity but in time is also contrary to the
"Symbol": "Begotten not made;" and finally, that Christ is not of the same substance as the Father is
denied by the "Symbol": "Consubstantial with the Father."
It is, therefore, clear we must believe that Christ is the Only-
begotten of God, and the true Son of God, who always was with the Father, and that there is one Person of
the Son and another of the Father who have the same divine nature.[8] All this we believe now
through faith, but we shall know it with a perfect vision in the life eternal. Hence, we shall now
speak somewhat of this for our own edification.
THE DIVINE GENERATION
It must be known that different things have different modes of
generation. The generation of God is
different from that of other things. Hence, we cannot arrive at a
notion of divine generation except
through the generation of that created thing which more closely
approaches to a likeness to God.
We have seen that nothing approaches in likeness to God more than the
human soul. The manner of
generation in the soul is effected in the thinking process in the soul
of man, which is called a
conceiving of the intellect. This conception takes its rise in the
soul as from a father, and its effect is
called the word of the intellect or of man. In brief, the soul by its
act of thinking begets the word. So
also the Son of God is the Word of God, not like a word that is
uttered exteriorly (for this is 24
transitory), but as a word is interiorly conceived; and this Word of
God is of the one nature as God
and equal to God.[9]
The testimony of St. John concerning the Word of God destroys these	hree heresies, viz., that of
Photinus in the words: "In the beginning was the Word;"[10] that of
Sabellius in saying: "And the
Word was with God;"[11] and that of Arius when it says: "And the Word
But a word in us is not the same as the Word in God. In us the word is an accident; whereas in God the Word is the same as God, since there is nothing in God that is not of the essence of God. No one would say God has not a Word, because such would make God wholly without knowledge; and therefore, as God always existed, so also did His Word ever exist. Just as a sculptor works from a form which he has previously thought out, which is his word; so also God makes all things by His Word, as it were through His art: "All things were made by Him." Now, if the Word of God is the Son of God and all the words of God bear a certain likeness of this Word, then we ought to hear the Word of God gladly; for such is a sign that we love God. We ought also believe the word of God whereby the Word of God dwells in us, who is Christ: "That Christ may dwell by faith in your hearts." And you have not His word abiding in you." But we ought not only to believe that the Word of God dwells in us, but also we should meditate often upon this; for otherwise we will not be benefited to the extent that such meditation is a great help against sin: "Thy words have I hidden in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee." Again it is said of the just man: "On His law he shall meditate day and night." And it is said of the Blessed Virgin that she "kept all these words, pondering them in her heart." Then also, one should communicate the word of God to others by advising, preaching and inflaming their hearts: "Let no evil speech proceed from your mouth; but that which is good, to the edification of faith." Likewise, "let the word of Christ dwell in you abundantly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another." So also: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine." Finally, we ought to put the word of God into practice: "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." The Blessed Virgin observed these five points when she gave birth to the Word of God. First, she heard what was said to her: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee." Then she gave her consent through faith: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord." And she also received and carried the Word in her womb. Then she brought forth the Word of God and, finally, she nourished and cared for
Him. And so the Church sings: "Only a Virgin didst nourish Him who is King of the Angels."[26]
(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES
1. II Peter, I. 16.
2. "Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and true God, like the Father who begot Him from all eternity. We also believe that He is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, in all things equal to the Father and to the Holy Spirit. Since we acknowledge the essence, will and power of all the Divine Persons to be one, then in them nothing unequal or unlike should exist or even be imagined to exist: ("Roman Catechism," Second Article, 8).
3. John, i. 18.
4. John, viii. 58.
5. John, viii. 16.
6. "Symbol" (from the Greek "Symbolon," and the late Latin "Symbolum") is a formal authoritative statement of the religious belief of the Church, referring here to the Nicene Creed. This treatise of St. Thomas is indeed called by him an "Explanations of the Symbol of the Apostles," or the Apostles Creed.
7. John x. 30.

8. "... we believe Him [Christ] to be one son, because His divine and human natures meet in one Person. As to His divine generation, He has no brethren or coheirs. being the Only-begotten Son of the Father, and we men are the image and work of His hands" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit."
9. "Among the different comparisons brought forth to show the mode and manner of this eternal generation, that which is taken from the production of thought in our mind seems to come nearest to its illustration, and hence St. John calls the Son 'the Word.' For our mind, understanding itself in some way, forms an image of itself which theologians have called the word; so God, in so far as we may compare human things to divine, understanding Himself, begets the Eternal Word. But it is more advantageous to consider what faith proposes, and with all sincerity of mind to believe and profess that Jesus Christ is true God and true Man--as God, begotten before all time; as Man, born in time of Mary, His Virgin Mother" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.
9). St. Thomas treats more fully the eternal generation and Sonship of Christ in the "Summa Theol.," I, Q. xxvii, art. 2; Q. xxxiv.
10. John, i. 1.
11. "Ibid."
12. "Ibid."
13. An accident is an attribute which is not part of the essence.
14. John, i. 3.
15. Eph., iii. 17.
17. Ps. cxviii. 11.
18. Ps. i. 2.
20. Eph., iv. 29
21. Colos., iii. 16.
22. II Tim., iv. 2.
23. James, i. 22.
25. Luke, i. 38

THE THIRD ARTICLE

"Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary."
The Christian must not only believe in the Son of God, as we have seen, but also in His Incarnation. St. John, after having written of things subtle and difficult to understand,[1] points out the Incarnation to us when he says: "And the Word was made flesh."[2] Now, in order that we may understand something of this, I give two illustrations at the outset. It is clear that there is nothing more like the Word of God than the word which is conceived in our mind but not spoken. Now, no one knows this interior word in our mind except the one who conives it, and then it is known to others only when it is pronounced.[3] So also as long as the Word of God was in the heart of the Father, it was not known except by the Father Himself; but when the Word assumed flesh--as a word becomes audible--then was It first made manifest and known. "Afterwards He was seen upon earth and conversed with men."[4] Another example is that, although the spoken word is known through hearing, yet it is neither seen nor touched, unless it is written on paper. So also the Word of God was made both visible and tangible when He became flesh. And as the paper upon which the word of a king is written is called the word of the king, so also Man to whom the Word of God is conjoined in one "hypostasis"[5] is called the Son of God. "Take thee a great book and write in it with a man's pen."[6] Therefore, the holy Apostles affirmed: "Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary."

ERRORS RELATING TO THE THIRD ARTICLE
On this point there arose many errors; and the holy Fathers at the Council of Nicea added in that other Creed a number of things which suppress all these errors.

Origen said that Christ was born and came into the world to save even the devils, and, therefore, at the end of the world all the demons will be saved. But this is contrary to the Holy Scripture: Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels."[7]

Consequently, to remove this error they added in the Creed: "Who for us men (not for the devils) and for our salvation, came down from heaven." In this the love of God for us is made more apparent.

Photinus would have Christ born of the Blessed Virgin, but added that He was a mere man who by a good life in doing the will of God merited to become the son of God even as other holy men. This, too, is denied by this saying of John: "I came down from heaven, not to do My own will but the will of Him that sent Me." 8 Now if Christ were not in heaven, He would not have descended from heaven, and were He a mere man, He would not have been in heaven. Hence, it is said in the Nicene Creed: "He came down from heaven."

Manichaeus, however, said that Christ was always the Son of God and He descended from heaven, but He was not actually but only in appearance clothed in true flesh. But this is false, because it is not worthy of the Teacher of Truth to have anything to do with what is false, and just as He showed His physical Body, so it was really His: "Handle, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see Me to have."[9] To remove this error, therefore, they added: "And He was incarnate."

Ebion, who was a Jew, said that Christ was born of the Blessed Virgin in the ordinary human way.[10] But this is false, for the Angel said of Mary: "That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."[11] And the holy Fathers to destroy this error, added: "By the Holy Ghost."

Valentinus believed that Christ was conceived by the Holy Ghost, but would have the Holy Spirit deposit a heavenly body in the Blessed Virgin, so that she contributed nothing to Christ's birth except to furnish a place for Him. Thus, he said, this Body appeared by means of the Blessed Virgin, as though she were a channel. This is a great error, for the Angel said: "And therefore also
the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."[12] And the Apostle adds:
"But when the fullness of time was come, God sent His Son, made of a woman."[13] Hence the Creed says: "Born of the Virgin Mary."

Arius and Apollinarius held that, although Christ was the Word of God and was born of the Virgin Mary, nevertheless He did not have a soul, but in place of the soul was His divinity. This is contrary to the Scripture, for Christ says: "Now is My soul troubled."[14] And again: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death."[15] For this reason the Fathers added: "And was made man." Now, man is made up of body and soul. Christ had all that a true man has save sin. All the above-mentioned errors and all others that can be offered are destroyed by this, that He was made man. The error of Eutyches particularly is destroyed by it. He held that, by a commixture of the divine nature of Christ with the human, He was neither purely divine nor purely human. This is not true, because by it Christ would not be a man. And so it is said: "He was made man." This destroys also the error of Nestorius, who said that the Son of God only by an indwelling was united to man. This, too, is false, because by this Christ would not be man but only in a man, and that He became man is clear from these words:
"He was in habit found as man."[16] "But now you seek to kill Me, a man who have spoken the truth to you, which I have heard of God.[17]

GOOD EFFECTS OF THESE CONSIDERATIONS
We can learn something from all this. (1) Our faith is strengthened. If, for instance, someone should tell us about a certain foreign land which he himself had never seen, we would not believe him to the extent we would if he had been there. Now, before Christ came into the world, the Patriarchs and Prophets and John the Baptist told something of God; but men did not believe them as they believed Christ, who was with God, nay more, was one with God. Hence, far more firm is our faith in what is given us by Christ Himself: "No one hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him."[18] Thus, many mysteries of our faith which before the coming of Christ were hidden from us, are now made clear.

(2) Our hope is raised up. It is certain that the Son of Man did not come to us, assuming our flesh,
for any trivial cause, but for our exceeding great advantage. For He made as it were a trade with us, assuming a living body and deigning to be born of the Virgin, in order that to us might be vouchsafed part of His divinity.[19] And thus He became man that He might make man divine.[20]

(3) Our charity is enkindled. There is no proof of divine charity so clear as that God, the Creator of all things, is made a creature; that Our Lord is become our brother, and that the Son of God is made the Son of man: "For God so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son."[21] Therefore, upon consideration of this our love for God ought to be re-ignited and burst into flame.

(4) This induces us to keep our souls pure. Our nature was exalted and ennobled by its union with God to the extent of being assumed into union with a Divine Person.[22] Indeed, after the Incarnation the Angel would not permit St. John to adore him, although he allowed this to be done by even the greatest patriarchs.[23] Therefore, one who reflects on this exaltation of his nature and is ever conscious of it, should scorn to cheapen and lower himself and his nature by sin. Thus, says St. Peter: "By whom He hath given us most great and precious promises; that by these you may be made partakers of the divine nature; flying the corruption of that concupiscence which is in the world."[24] Finally, by consideration of all this, our desire to come to Christ is intensified. If a king had a brother who was away from him a long distance, that brother would desire to come to the king to see, to be with him and to abide with him. So also Christ is our brother, and we should desire to be with Him and to be united to Him. "Wheresoever the body shall be, there shall the eagles also gathered together."[25] The Apostle desired "to be dissolved and be with Christ."[26] And it is this desire which grows in us as we meditate upon the Incarnation of Christ.

(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES

3. See above, p. 17.
4. Baruch, iii. 38.
5. Hypostasis is person distinct from nature, as in the one hypostasis of Christ as distinct from His two natures, human and divine; also distinct from
substance, as in the three hypostases of the Godhead, which are the same in substance.

7. Matt., xxv. 41.
8. John, vi. 38.
10. We believe and confess that the same Jesus Christ, our only Lord, the son of God when He assumed human flesh for us in the womb of the virgin. was not conceived like other men, from the seed of man but in a manner above the order of nature, i. e., by the power of the Holy Ghost; so that the same Person, remaining God as He was from all eternity, became man, what He was not before" ("Roman Catechism," Third Article, 1).

11. Matt., i. 20.
12. Luke, i. 35
14. John, xii, 27.
15. Matt., xxvi. 38.
16. Phil. ii. 7.
17. John viii. 40.
18. "Ibid.," i. 18.
19. Thus, in the Mass, when the Priest puts wine and water in the chalice, he says: ". . . Grant that by the mystery of this water and wine we may be made partakers of His Divinity who vouchsafed to become partakers of our humanity, Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Our Lord." 20. "Et sic factus est homo, ut hominem faceret Deum."
21. John. iii. 16.
22. "The Word, who is a Person of the divine nature, assumed human nature in such a manner that there should be one and the same Person in both the divine and human natures" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.,” 2).
23. "And after I had heard and seen, I fell down to adore before the feet of the Angel who showed me these things. And he said to me: 'See thou do it not' " (Apoc., xxii. 8).
24. II Peter, i, 4. "God deigned to assume the lowliness and frailty of our flesh in order to lift man up to the highest degree of dignity . . . We may now glory that the Son of God is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, a privilege which is not granted to the Angels" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.,” 11).
25. Matt., xxiv. 28.
26. Phil., i. 23.
THE FOURTH ARTICLE: "Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried."

It is just as necessary for the Christian to believe in the passion and death of the Son of God as it is to believe in His Incarnation. For, as St. Gregory says, "there would have been no advantage in His having been born for us unless we had profited by His Redemption."

That Christ died for us is so tremendous a fact that our intellect can scarcely grasp it; for in no way does it fall in the natural way of our understanding. This is what the Apostle says: "I work in your days, a work which you will not believe, if any man shall tell it to you."[1] The grace of God is so great and His love for us is such that we cannot understand what He has done for us. Now, we must believe that, although Christ suffered death, yet His Godhead did not die; it was the human nature in Christ that died. For He did not die as God, but as man.[2]

This will be clear from two examples, one of which is taken from himself. Now, when a man dies, in the separation of the soul from the body the soul does not die but the body or flesh does die. So also in the death of Christ, His Divinity did not die, but His man nature suffered death. But if the Jews did not slay the Divinity of Christ, it would seem that their sin was not any greater than if they killed any ordinary man. In answering this we say that it is as if a king were clothed only in one garment, and if someone befouled this garment, such a one has committed as grave a crime as if he had defiled the king himself. Likewise, although the Jews could not slay God, yet in putting to death the human nature which Christ assumed, they were as severely punished as if they had put the Godhead itself to death. Another example is had from what we said before, viz., that the Son of God is the Word of God, and the Word of God made flesh is like the word of a king written on paper.[3]

So if one should tear this royal paper in pieces, it would be considered that he had rent apart the word of the king. Thus, the sin of the Jews was as grievous as if they had slain the Word of God.

But what need was there that the Son of God should suffer for us? There was a great need; and indeed it can be assigned to two reasons. The first is that it was a remedy against sin, and the second is for an example of what we ought to do. It was a remedy to such an extent that in the passion of Christ we find a remedy against all the evils which we incur by our
sins. And by our sins we incur five different evils.

29

EVIL EFFECTS OF SIN
The first evil that man incurs by sin is the defilement of his soul. Just as virtue gives the soul its beauty, so sin makes it ugly. "How happened it, O Israel, that thou art in thy enemies' land? . . . Thou art defiled with the dead."[4] But all this is taken away by the passion of Christ, whereby Christ poured out His blood as a laver wherein sinners are cleansed: "Who hath loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood."[5] So, too, the soul is washed by the blood of Christ in baptism because then a new birth is had in virtue of His blood, and hence when one defiles one's soul by sin, one offers insult to Christ and sins more gravely than before one's baptism. "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!"[6]

Secondly, we commit an offense against God. A sensual man loves the beauty of the flesh, but God loves spiritual beauty, which is the beauty of the soul. When, however, the soul is defiled by sin, God is offended and the sinner incurs His hatred: "To God the wicked and his wickedness are hateful alike."[7] This also is removed by the passion of Christ, which made satisfaction to God the Father for sin--a thing which man of himself could never do. The charity and obedience of Christ in His suffering were greater than the sin and disobedience of the first man: "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son."[8]

Thirdly, we have been weakened by sin. When a person sins the first time, he believes that he will thereafter keep away from sin, but what happens is the very opposite. This is because by that first sin he is weakened and made more prone to commit sins, and sin more and more has power over him. Such a one, as far as he alone is concerned, has lowered himself to such a condition that he cannot rise up, and is like to a man who jumps into a well from which, without God's help, he would never be rescued. After the fall of man, our nature was weakened and corrupted, and we were made more prone to sin. Christ, however, lessened this sickness and weakness, although He
did not entirely take it away. So now man is strengthened by the passion of Christ, and sin is not given such power over him. Moreover, he can rise clean from his sins when aided by God's grace conferred by the Sacraments, which receive their efficacy from the passion of Christ: "Our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin may be destroyed."[9] Indeed, before the passion of Christ few there were who lived without falling into mortal sin; but afterwards many have lived and are living without mortal sin.

Fourthly, we incur the punishment due to sin. For the justice of God demands that whosoever sins must be punished. This punishment, however, is in proportion to the guilt. But the guilt of mortal sin is infinite, because it is an offense against the infinite good, namely, God, whose commandments the sinner holds in contempt. Therefore, the punishment due to mortal sin is infinite. Christ, however, through His passion has taken away this punishment from us and borne it Himself: "Who His own self bore our sins in His body upon the tree." "Our sins [that is, the punishment due to sin] His own self bore in His body." The passion of Christ was of such value that it sufficed to expiate for all the sins of the whole world, even of a hundred thousand worlds. And so it is that, when a man is baptized, he is released from all his sins; and so also is it that the priest forgives sins; and, again, the more one conforms himself to the passion of Christ, the greater is the pardon and the grace which he gains.

Fifthly, we incur banishment from the kingdom of heaven. Those who offend kings are compelled to go into exile. Thus, man is expelled from heaven on account of sin. Adam was driven out of paradise immediately after his sin, and the gate of paradise was shut. But Christ by His sufferings and death opened this gate and recalled all the exiles to the kingdom. With the opening of the side of Christ, the gate of paradise is opened; and with the pouring out of His blood, guilt is washed away, satisfaction is made to God, infirmity is removed, punishment is expiated, and the exiles are called back to the kingdom. Hence, the thief received the immediate response: "This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise."[11] Never before was this spoken to anyone, not to Adam, not to Abraham, not to David; but this day (i.e., as soon as the gate is
opened) the thief, having asked for pardon, received it: "Having a confidence in the entering into the holy places by the blood of Christ."[12]

CHRIST, EXEMPLAR OF VIRTUES

From all this then is seen the effect of the passion of Christ as a remedy for sin. But no less does it profit us as an example. St. Augustine says that the passion of Christ can bring about a complete reformation of our lives. Whoever wishes to live perfectly need do nothing other than despise what Christ despised on the cross, and desire what Christ desired. There is no virtue that did not have its example on the Cross.

So if you seek an example of charity, then, "greater love than his no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends."[13] And this Christ did upon the Cross. If, therefore, He gave His life or us, we ought to endure any and all evils for Him: "What shall I render to the Lord for all the things that He hath rendered to me?"[14]

If you seek an example of patience, you will find it in its highest degree upon the Cross. Great patience is exemplified in two ways: either when one suffers intensely in all patience, or when one suffers that which he could avoid if he so wished. Christ suffered greatly upon the Cross: "O all ye that pass by the way, attend, and see if there be any sorrow like to My sorrow."[15] And with all patience, because, "when He suffered, He threatened not."[16] And again: "He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter and shall be dumb before His shearer, and shall not open His mouth.[17] He could have avoided this suffering, but He did not: "Thinkest thou that I cannot ask My Father, and He will give Me presently more than twelve legions of Angels?"[18] The patience of Christ upon the cross, therefore, was of the highest degree: "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, despising the shame."[19]

If you seek an example of humility, look upon Him who is crucified; although He was God, He chose to be judged by Pontius Pilate and to be put to death: "Thy cause has been judged as that of the wicked."[20] Truly "that of the wicked," because: "Let us condemn Him to a most shameful death."[21] The Lord chose to die for His servant; the Life of the Angels suffered death for man: "He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death
of the cross."[22]
If you seek an example of obedience, imitate Him who was obedient to
the Father unto death: "For
by the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners; so also by the
obedience of one, many
shall be made just."[23]
If you seek an example of contempt for earthly things, imitate Him who
is the King of kings, the
Lord of rulers, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom; but on the
Cross He was stripped naked,
ridiculed, spat upon, bruised, crowned with thorns, given to drink of
vinegar and gall, and finally
put to death. How falsely, therefore, is one attached to riches and
raiment, for: "They parted My
garments amongst them; and upon My vesture they cast lots."[24] How
falsely to honors, since "I
was covered with lashes and insults;" how falsely to positions of
power, because "taking a crown of
thorns, they placed it upon My brow;" how falsely to delicacies of the
table, for "in My thirst they
gave Me to drink of vinegar." Thus, St. Augustine, in commenting on
these words, "Who, having
joy set before Him, endured the Cross despising the shame,"[25] says:
"The man Christ despised all
earthly things in order to teach us to despise them.
(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)
31
ENDNOTES
1. Acts, xiii. 41 (quoting Hab., i. 5).
2. "As Christ was true and perfect man, He was
capable of truly dying. Now, man dies when the soul is
separated from the body. When, therefore, we say that
Jesus died, we mean this, that His soul was disunited
from His body. We do not admit, however, that the
Divinity was separated from His Body. On the
contrary, we firmly believe and profess that when His
soul was dissociated from His body, His Divinity
continued always united both to His body in the
sepulchre and to His soul in limbo" ("Roman
Catechism," Fourth Article, 6).
3. See above, p. 6.
5. Apoc., i. 5.
6. Heb., x. 28-29.
7. Wis., xiv. 9.
8. Rom., v. 10.
12. Heb., x. 19
THE FIFTH ARTICLE: "He Descended into Hell."
The death of Christ was the separation of His soul from His body as it is with other men. But the Divinity was so indissolubly conjoined to the Man-Christ that although His soul and body were disunited, His Divinity was always most perfectly united to both the soul and body. This we have seen above. Therefore in the Sepulchre His body was together with the Son of God who together with His soul descended into hell.[1]

REASONS FOR CHRIST'S DESCENT

There are four reasons why Christ together with His soul descended into hell. First, He wished to take upon Himself the entire punishment for our sin, and thus atone for its entire guilt. The punishment for the sin of man was not alone death of the body, but there was also a punishment of the soul, since the soul had its share in sin; and it was punished by being deprived of the beatific vision; and as yet no atonement had been offered whereby this punishment would be taken away. Therefore, before the coming of Christ all men, even the holy fathers after their death, descended into hell. Accordingly in order to take upon Himself most perfectly the punishment due to sinners, Christ not only suffered death, but also His soul descended into hell.[2] He, however, descended for a different cause than did the fathers; for they did so out of necessity and were of necessity taken there and detained, but Christ descended there of His own power and free will: "I am counted among them that go down to the pit; I am become as a man without help, free among the dead."[3]
The others were there as captives, but Christ was freely there. The second reason is that He might perfectly deliver all His friends. Christ had His friends both in the world and in hell. The former were His friends in that they possessed charity; and the latter were they who departed this life with charity and faith in the future Redeemer, such as Abraham, Isaac,
Jacob, Moses, David, and other just and good men. Therefore, since Christ had dwelt among His friends in this world and had delivered them by His death, so He wished to visit His friends who were detained in hell and deliver them also: "I will penetrate to all the lower parts of the earth, and will behold all that hope in the Lord."

The third reason is that He would completely triumph over the devil. Now, a person is perfectly vanquished when he is not only overcome in conflict, but also when the assault is carried into his very home, and the seat of his kingdom is taken away from him. Thus Christ triumphed over the devil,[5] and on the Cross He completely vanquished him: "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world (that is, the devil) be cast out."[6] To make this triumph complete, Christ wished to deprive the devil of the seat of his kingdom and to imprison him in his own house—which is hell. Christ, therefore, descended there, and despoiled the devil of everything and bound him, taking away his prey: "And despoiling the principalities and powers, He hath exposed them confidently in open show, triumphing over them in Himself." Likewise, Christ who had received the power and possession of heaven and earth, desired too the possession of hell, as says the Apostle: "That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth."[9] "In My name they shall cast out devils."[10] The fourth and final reason is that Christ might free the just who were in hell [or Limbo]. For as Christ wished to suffer death to deliver the living from death, so also He would descend into hell to deliver those who were there: "Thou also by the blood of Thy testament, hast sent forth Thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water."[11] And again: "O death, I will be thy death; O hell, I will be thy bite."[12] Although Christ wholly overcame death, yet not so completely did He destroy hell, but, as it were, He bit it. He did not free all from hell, but those only who were without mortal sin. He likewise liberated those without original sin, from which they, as individuals, were freed by circumcision; or before [the institution of] circumcision, they who had been saved through their parents' faith (which refers to those who died before having the use of reason); or by the sacrifices, and by their faith in the future coming of Christ (which refers to adults).[13] The reason they were
there in hell [i.e., Limbo] is original sin which they had contracted from Adam, and from which as members of the human race they could not be delivered except by Christ. Therefore, Christ left there those who had descended there with mortal sin, and the non-circumcised children. Thus, it is seen that Christ descended into hell, and for what reasons. Now we may gather four considerations from this for our own instruction. WHAT WE MAY LEARN FROM THIS

(1) A firm hope in God. No matter how much one is afflicted, one ought always hope in the assistance of God and have trust in Him. There is nothing so serious as to be in hell. If, therefore, Christ delivered those who were in hell, what great confidence ought every friend of God have that he will be delivered from all his troubles! "She [that is, wisdom] forsook not the just when he was sold, but delivered him from sinners. She went down with him into the pit. And in bonds she left him not."[14] God helps in a special manner those who serve Him, and hence the servant of God should feel secure in Him: "He that feareth the Lord shall tremble at nothing and shall not be afraid; for He is his hope."[15]

(2) We ought to conceive a fear of God and avoid all presumption. We have already seen that Christ suffered for sinners and descended into hell for them. However, He did not deliver all sinners, but only those who were free from mortal sin. He left there those who departed this life in mortal sin. Hence, anyone who descends into hell in mortal sin has no hope of deliverance; and he will remain in hell as long as the holy fathers remain in paradise, that is, for all eternity: "And these shall go into everlasting punishment; but the just, into life everlasting."[16]

(3) We ought to arouse in ourselves a mental anxiety. Since Christ descended into hell for our salvation, we ought in all care go down there in spirit by considering, for instance, its punishments as did that holy man, Ezechias: "I said: In the midst of my days I shall go to the gates of hell.[17] Indeed, he who during this life frequently descends into hell by thinking of it, will not easily fall into hell at death; for such meditation keeps one from sin, and draws one out of it. We see how men of this world guard themselves against wrongdoing because of the temporal punishment; but with how much more care ought they avoid the punishment of hell which far
exceeds all else in its duration, its severity, and its varied nature! "In all thy works remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin."[18]

(4) There comes to us in this an example of love. Christ descended into hell in order to deliver His own; and so we should go down there to rescue our own. They cannot help themselves. Therefore, let us deliver those who are in purgatory. He would be very hard-hearted who does not come to the aid of a relative who is detained in an earthly prison; but much more cruel is he who will not assist a friend who is in purgatory, for there is no comparison between the pains of this world and of that: "Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you my friends, because the hand of the Lord hath touched me."[19] "It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins."[20] We may assist these souls in three ways as St. Augustine tells us, viz., through Masses, prayers, and almsgiving. St. Gregory adds a fourth, that is, fasting. All this is not so amazing, for even in this world a friend can pay a debt for his friend; but this applies only to those who are in purgatory.

(For "Questions for Discussions" see pp. 181-194.)

ENDNOTES

1. "Hell here means those far-removed places in which are detained those souls that have not been awarded the happiness of heaven. . . These places are not of the same nature. There is that most abominable and most dark prison where the souls of the damned, together with the unclean spirits, are punished in eternal and unquenchable fire. This is gehenna or the 'abyss,' and is Hell, strictly so-called. There also is the fire of Purgatory, in which the suffering souls of the just are purified for a definite time in order that they be permitted to enter into the everlasting Fatherland, where nothing unclean is admitted. . . The third and last place is that in which the souls of the just before the coming of the Lord were received; there without any pain, sustained by the blessed hope of the redemption, they enjoyed a quiet repose. It was to these souls who waited in the bosom of Abraham that Christ the Lord descended, and whom He delivered" ("Roman Catechism," Fifth Article, Chapter VI, 2-3). Therefore, "He descended into hell" means that the soul of Jesus Christ, after His death, descended into Limbo, i.e., to the place where the souls of the just who died before Christ were detained, and were waiting for
the time of their redemption. St. Peter writes: "He was
put to death indeed in the flesh, but enlivened in the
spirit, in which also coming, He preached to those
spirits that were in prison" (I Peter, iii, 18-19). "We
profess that immediately after the death of Christ, His
soul descended into hell, and remained there as long as
His body was in the sepulchre; and we believe also that
the one Person of Christ was at the same time in hell
and in the tomb" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit."
1).
2. See last footnote. This place is also called Limbo.
3. Ps. lxxxvii. 5. "They descended as captives; He as
free and victorious amongst the dead, to overcome
those devils by whom, in consequence of their guilt,
34
they were held in captivity" ("Roman Catechism," "loc.
cit."
5).
4. Ecclus., xxiv. 45.
5. This refers to the temptation of Our Lord in the
desert.
6. John, xii. 31.
7. St. Thomas says that the soul of Christ descended to
the hell of the just or to Limbo "per suam essentiam,"
but to the hell of the damned only "per suum effectum"
("Summa Theol."
III, Q. lii, Art. 2).
8. Col., ii. 15.
9. Phil., ii. Io
10. Mark, xvi. 17.
11. Zach., ix. 11.
13. Italics added.
15. Ecclus., xxxiv. 16.
17. Isa., xxxviii. 10.
20. II Mach., xii. 46.

THE FIFTH ARTICLE (CONTINUED): "The third day He arose again from the
dead."
We must necessarily know two things: the glory of God and the
punishment of hell. For being
attracted by His glory and made fearful by punishments, we take
warning and withdraw ourselves
from sin. But for us to appreciate these facts is very difficult.
Thus, it is said of God's glory: "But
the things that are in heaven, who shall search out?"[1] For those who
are worldly minded this is
indeed difficult, because "he that is of the earth, of the earth he
is, and of the earth he speaketh;"[2]
but it is easier for the spiritually minded, because, "he that cometh
from above is above all," as is said in the same place. Accordingly, God descended from heaven and became incarnate to teach us heavenly things. Once it was difficult to know about the punishments of hell: "no man hath been known to have returned from hell,"[3] as it is said in the person of the wicked. But this cannot be said now, for just as Christ descended from heaven to teach us heavenly things, so also He came back from the region of hell to teach us about it. It is, therefore, necessary that we believe not only that Christ was made man, and died, but also that He arose again from the dead. Therefore, it is said in the Creed: "The third day He arose again from the dead."

We find that many arose from the dead, such as Lazarus,[4] the son of the widow,[5] and the daughter of the Ruler of the synagogue.[6] But the resurrection of Christ differed from the resurrection of these and of all others in four points. SPECIAL CHARACTER OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

(1) Christ's resurrection differed from that of all others in its cause. Those others who arose did so not of their own power, but either by the power of Christ or through the prayers of some Saint. Christ, on the contrary, arose by His own power, because He was not only Man but also God, and the Divinity of the Word was at no time separated either from His soul or from His body. Therefore, His body could, whenever He desired, take again the soul, and His soul the body: "I lay down My life, that I may take it again. . . . And I have power to lay it down; and I have power to take it up again."[7] Christ truly died, but not because of weakness or of necessity but rather of His own will entirely and by His own power. This is seen in that moment when He yielded up the ghost; He cried out with a loud voice,[8] which could not be true of others at the moment of dying, because they die out of weakness. . . . For this the centurion said: "Indeed, this was the Son of God."[9] By that same power whereby He gave up His soul, He received it again; and hence the Creed says, "He arose again," because He was not raised up as if by anyone else. "I have slept and have taken My rest; and I have risen up."[10] Nor can this be contrary to these words, "This Jesus hath God raised again,"[11] because both the Father and the Son raised Him up, since one and the same power is of the Father and the Son.
(2) Christ's resurrection was different as regards the life to which He arose. Christ arose again to a glorious and incorruptible life: "Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father."[12] The others, however, were raised to that life which they had before, as seen of Lazarus and the others.

(3) Christ's resurrection was different also in effect and efficacy. In virtue of the resurrection of Christ all shall rise again: "And many bodies of the saints that had slept arose."[13] The Apostle declares that "Christ is risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep."[14] But also note that Christ by His Passion arrived at glory: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and so to enter into His glory?"[15] And this is to teach us how we also may arrive at glory: "Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God."[16]

(4) Christ's resurrection was different in point of time. Christ arose on the third day; but the resurrection of the others is put off until the end of the world. The reason for this is that the resurrection and death and nativity of Christ were "for our salvation,"[17] and thus He wished to rise again at a time when it would be of profit to us. Now, if He had risen immediately, it would not have been believed that He died; and similarly, if He had put it off until much later, the disciples would not have remained in their belief, and there would have been no benefit from His Passion. He arose again, therefore, on the third day, so that it would be believed that He died, and His disciples would not lose faith in him.[18]

WHAT WE MAY LEARN FROM THE RESURRECTION
From all this we can take four things for our instruction. Firstly, let us endeavour to arise spiritually, from the death of the soul which we incur by our sins, to that life of justice which is had through penance: "Rise, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead; and Christ shall enlighten thee."[19] This is the first resurrection: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection."[20]

Secondly, let us not delay to rise until our death, but do it at once, since Christ arose on the third day: "Delay not to be converted to the Lord; and defer it not from day to day."[21] You will not be able to consider what pertains to salvation when weighed down by illness, and, moreover, by persevering in sin, you will lose part of all the good which is done in the Church, and you will incur
many evils. Indeed, the longer you possess the devil, the harder it is to put him away, as St. Bede tells us.

Thirdly, let us rise up again to an incorruptible life in that we may not die again, but resolve to sin no more: "Knowing that Christ, rising again from the dead, dieth now no more. Death shall no more have dominion over Him. . . . So do you also reckon that you are dead to sin, but alive unto God, in Christ Jesus our Lord. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of iniquity unto sin; but present yourselves to God, as those that are alive from the dead."[22] 

Fourthly, let us rise again to a new and glorious life by avoiding all that which formerly were the occasions and the causes of our death and sin: "As Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life."[23] This new life is the life of justice which renews the soul and leads it to the life of glory. (For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES
1. Wis., ix. 16.
2. John, iii. 31.
3. Wisd., ii. 1.
4. John, xi 1-44
7. John, x. 18.
8. Matt., xxvii. 50.
9. Matt., xxvii. 54.
10. Ps. iii. 6.
12. Matt., xxvii. 52.
13. I Cor., xv. 20.
16. From the Nicene Creed.
17. "Chirst did not remain in the grave during all of these three days, but as He lay in the sepulchre during an entire natural day during part of the preceding day and part of the following day, he is said, in very truth, to have lain in the grave for three days, and on the third day to have risen again from the dead" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit., 10).
22. Rom., vi. 9, 11-14.
THE SIXTH ARTICLE: "He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty."

Besides the resurrection of Christ, we must also believe in His ascension; for He ascended into heaven on the fortieth day. Hence, the Creed says: "He ascended into heaven." Concerning this we ought to observe three things, viz., that it was sublime, reasonable, and beneficial.

THE SUBLIMITY OF THE ASCENSION
It was certainly sublime that Christ ascended into heaven. This is expounded in three ways. Firstly, He ascended above the physical heaven: "He ... ascended above all the heavens."[1] Secondly, He ascended above all the spiritual heavens, i.e., spiritual natures: "Raising [Jesus] up from the dead and setting Him on His right hand in the heavenly places. Above all principality and power and virtue and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come. And He hath subjected all things under His feet."[2] Thirdly, He ascended up to the very throne of the Father: "Lo, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven. And He came even to the Ancient of days."[3] "And the Lord Jesus, after He had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God."[4] Now, it is not to be taken in the literal sense, but figuratively, that Christ is at the right hand of God. Inasmuch as Christ is God, He is said to sit at the right hand of the Father, that is, in equality with the Father; and as Christ is man, He sits at the right hand of the Father, that is, in a more preferable place.[5] The devil once feigned to do this: "I will ascend above the height of the clouds. I will be like the Most High."[6] But Christ alone succeeded in this, and so it is said: "He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father." "The Lord said to my Lord: Sit Thou at My right hand."[7]

THE REASONABLENESS OF THE ASCENSION
The Ascension of Christ into heaven is in accord with reason: (1) because heaven was due to Christ by His very nature. It is natural for one to return to that place from whence he takes his origin. The beginning of Christ is from God, who is above all things: "I came forth from the Father and am come into the world; again I leave the world and I go to the Father."[8] "No man hath ascended into heaven, but He that descended from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven."[9] The just ascend...
into heaven, but not in the manner that Christ ascended, i.e., by His own power; for they are taken up by Christ:[10] "Draw me, we will run after Thee."[11] Or, indeed, we can say that no man but Christ has ascended into heaven, because the just do not ascend except in so far as they are the members of Christ who is the head of the Church. "Wheresoever the body shall be, there shall the eagles also be gathered together."[12]

(2) Heaven is due to Christ because of His victory. For He was sent into the world to combat the devil, and He did overcome him. Therefore, Christ deserved to be exalted above all things: "I also have overcome and am set down with My Father in His throne."[13]

(3) The Ascension is reasonable because of the humility of Christ. There never was humility so great as that of Christ, who, although He was God, yet wished to become man; and although He was the Lord, yet wished to take the form of a servant, and, as St. Paul says: "He was made obedient unto death,"[14] and descended even into hell. For this He deserved to be exalted even to heaven and to the throne of God, for humility leads to exaltation: "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted."[15] "He that descended is the same also that ascended above all the heavens."[16]

THE BENEFITS OF THE ASCENSION

The Ascension of Christ was very beneficial for us. This is seen three ways. Firstly, as our Leader, because He ascended in order to lead us; for we had lost the way, but He has shown it to us. "For He shall go up that shall open the way before them,"[17] and thus we may be made certain of possessing the heavenly kingdom: "I go to prepare a place for you."[18] Secondly, that He might draw our hearts to Himself: "For where thy treasure is, there is thy heart so."[19] Thirdly, to let us withdraw from worldly things: "Therefore, if you be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Mind the things that are above, not the things that are upon the earth."[20]

(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES

1. Eph., iv. 10.
2. "Ibid.," i. 20-22
5. "In these words we observe a figure of speech, that
is, the changing of a word from its literal to a figurative meaning, something which is not infrequent in the Scriptures: for when accommodating its language to human ideas, it attributes human affections and human members to God, who is pure spirit and can admit of nothing corporeal. For, just as among men, he who sits at the right hand is considered to occupy the most honoured place: so, transferring the idea to heavenly things to express the glory which Christ as Man enjoys above all others, we say that He sits at the right hand of His Eternal Father. Now, this does not mean actual position and figure of body, but declares the fixed and permanent possession of royal and supreme power and glory which Christ received from the Father" ("Roman Catechism," Sixth Article, 3).

7. Ps. cix. 1.
8. John, xvi. 28.
10. "He ascended by His own power, not by the power of another as did Elias, who was taken up into heaven in a fiery chariot (IV Kings, ii. 1); or as the prophet Habacuc (Dan., xiv. 35); or Philip, the deacon. who was borne through the air by the divine power and traversed the distant regions of the earth (Acts, viii. 39). Neither did He ascend into heaven solely by the exercise of His supreme power as God. but also, by virtue of the power which He possessed as Man; although human power alone was insufficient to raise Him from the dead, yet the virtue with which the blessed soul of Christ was endowed, was capable of moving the body as it pleased, and His body, now glorified, readily obeyed the soul that moved it" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 2).
11. Cant., i. 3.
18. John, xiv. 2.
20. Col., iii. 1.

THE SEVENTH ARTICLE: "From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead."
It is of the office of the King and Lord to pronounce judgement: "The king that sitteth on the throne of judgement scattereth away all evil with His look."[1] Since Christ,
therefore, ascended into
heaven and sits at the right hand of God as Lord of all, it is clear
that His is the office of Judge. For
this reason we say in the rule of Catholic faith that "He shall come
to judge the living and the dead."
Indeed the Angels have said that: "This Jesus who is taken up from you
into heaven shall so come
as you have seen Him going into heaven."[2]
We shall consider three facts about the judgement: (1) the form of the
judgement; (2) the fear of the
judgement; (3) our preparation for the judgement.
THE FORM OF THE JUDGEMENT
Now, concerning the form of the judgement there is a threefold
question. Who is the judge, who are
to be judged, and upon what will they be judged? Christ is the Judge:
"It is He who is appointed by
God to be judge of the living and of the dead."[3] We may here
interpret "the dead" to mean sinners
and "the living" to mean the just; or "the living" to refer to those
who at that time were living and
"the dead" to mean those who had died. Christ of a certain is Judge,
not only in that He is God, but
also in that He is man. The first reason for this is because it is
necessary that they who are to be
judged may see the Judge. But the Godhead is so wholly delightful that
no one could behold it
without great enjoyment; and hence the damned are not permitted to see
the Judge, nor in
consequence to enjoy anything. Christ, therefore, of necessity will
appear in the form of man so that
He may be seen by all: "And He hath given Him power to do judgement,
because He is the Son of
man."[4] Again Christ deserved this office as Man, for as Man He was
unjustly judged, and
therefore God constitutes Him Judge of the entire world: "Thy cause
hath been judged as that of the
wicked. Cause and judgment Thou shalt recover."[5] And, lastly, if God
alone should judge men,
they, being terrified, would despair; but this despair disappears from
men if they are to be judged by
a Man: "And then they shall see the Son of man coming in a cloud."[6]
WHO ARE TO BE JUDGED?
All are to be judged--those who are, who were, and who will be: "We
must all be manifested before
the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the proper
things of the body, according as
he hath done, whether it be good or evil."[7] There are, says St.
Gregory, four different classes of
people to be judged. The chief difference is between the good and the
wicked.
Of the wicked, some will be condemned but not judged. They are the infidels whose works are not to be discussed because, as St. John says: "He that doth not believe is already judged."[8] Others will be both condemned and judged. They are those possessing the faith who departed this life in mortal sin: "For the wages of sin is death."[9] They shall not be excluded from the judgment because of the faith which they possessed.

Of the good also, some will be saved and shall not be judged. They are the poor in spirit for God's sake who rather shall judge others: "Amen, I say to you that you, who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the seat of His majesty, you also shall sit on twelve seats judging the twelve tribes of Israel."[10] Now, this is not to be understood only of the disciples, but of all those who are poor in spirit; for otherwise Paul, who labored more than others, would not be among this number. These words, therefore, must refer also to all the followers of the apostles and to all apostolic men: "Know you not that we shall judge Angels?[11] "The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of His people and its princes."[12] Others shall both be saved and judged, that is, they who die in a state of righteousness. For although they departed this life in justice, nevertheless they fell somewhat amiss in the business of temporal matters, and hence shall be judged but saved. The judgment will be upon all their deeds good and bad: "Walk in the ways of thy heart, . . . and know that for all these God will bring thee into judgment."[13] "And all things that are done, God will bring into judgment for every error, whether it be good or evil."[14] Even idle words shall be judged: "But I say to you that every idle word hat men shall speak, they shall render an account for it in the day of judgment."[15] And thoughts also: "For inquisition shall be made into the thought of the ungodly."[16] Thus, the form of the judgment is clear.

THE FEAR OF THE JUDGMENT
The judgment ought indeed to be feared. (a) Because of the wisdom of the Judge. God knows all things, our thoughts, words and deeds, and "all things are naked and open to his eyes."[17] "All the ways of men are open to His eyes."[18] He knows our words: "The ear of jealousy heareth all things."[19] Also our thoughts: "The heart is perverse above all
things and unsearchable. Who can know it? I am the Lord, who search the heart and prove the reins; who give to every one according to his way and according to the fruit of his devices."[20] There will be infallible witnesses-- men's own consciences: "Who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness to them; and their thoughts between themselves accusing or also defending one another, in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men."[21]

(b) Because of the power of the Judge, who is almighty in Himself: "Behold, the Lord God will come with strength."[22] And also almighty in others: "The whole world shall fight with Him against the unwise."[23] Hence, Job says: "Whereas there is no man that can deliver out of Thy hand."[24] "If I ascend into heaven, Thou art there; if I descend into hell, Thou art present," says the Psalmist.[25]

(c) Because of the inflexible justice of the Judge. The present is the time for mercy; but the future is the time solely for justice; and so the present is our time, but the future is God's time: "When I shall take a time, I shall judge justices."[26] "The jealousy and rage of the husband will not spare in the day of revenge. Nor will he yield to any man's prayers; nor will he accept for satisfaction ever so many gifts."[27]

(d) Because of the anger of the Judge. He shall appear in different ways to the just and to the wicked. To the just, He will be pleasant and gracious: "They will behold the King of beauty."[28] To the wicked He will be angry and pitiless, so that they may say to the mountains: "Fall upon us and hide us from the wrath of the Lamb."[29] But this anger of God does not bespeak in Him any perturbation of soul, but rather the effect of His anger which is the eternal punishment inflicted upon sinners.

40

OUR PREPARATION FOR THE JUDGMENT
Now, against this fear of the judgment we ought to have four remedies. The first is good works: "Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same."[30] The second is confession and repentance for sins committed; and this ought to include sorrow in thinking of hem, feeling of shame in confessing them, and all severity in making satisfaction for them. And these will take away the eternal
punishment. The third is giving of alms, which makes all things clean: "Make unto you friends of the mammon of iniquity; that when you shall fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings."[31] The fourth is charity, viz., the love of God and our neighbour, for "charity covereth a multitude of sins."[32]
(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES
1. Prov., xx. 8.
2. Acts, i. 11.
3. Acts, x. 42.
4. John, v. 27.
5. Job, xxxvi. 17.
7. II Cor., v. 10.
8. John, iii. 18.
9. Rom., vi. 23.
10. Matt., xix. 28.
11. I Cor., vi. 3.
15. Matt., xii. 36.
16. Wis., i. 9.
18 Prov., xvi. 2.
19. Wis., i. 10.
22. Isa., xl. 10.
23. Wis., v. 21.
24. Job, x. 7.
25. Ps., cxxxviii. 8.
26. Ps., lxxiv. 3.
27. Prov., vi. 34-35.
29. Apoc., vi. 16.
30. Rom., xiii. 3.
32. I Peter, iv. 8.

THE EIGHTH ARTICLE: "I Believe in the Holy Ghost."
As we have said, the Word of God is the Son of God just as in a way the word of man is the concept of his intellect.[1] But sometimes man has a word which is dead. This is when, for instance, he conceives what he ought to do, but he has not the will to do it; or when one believes but does not practise; then his faith is said to be dead, as St. James points out.[2] The word of God, however, is
alive: "For the word of God is living."[3] It is necessary, therefore, that in God there be will and love. Thus, St. Augustine says: "The word of God which we plan to speak is knowledge with love."[4] Now, as the Word of God is the Son of God, God's love is the Holy Ghost. Hence, it is that one possesses the Holy Ghost when he loves God: "The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost who is given to us."[5]

41

TEACHING OF THE NICENE CREED

There are some who held false opinions concerning the Holy Ghost. They said, for instance, that He was only the servant and minister of God. Hence, to remove these errors the holy Fathers added five phrases concerning the Holy Ghost.[6]

"The Holy Ghost, the Lord."--The first is, that although there are other spirits, such as the Angels who are ministers of God (Art they not all ministering spirits?),[7] nevertheless the Holy Ghost is the Lord. "God is a Spirit,"[8] and, "Now the Lord is a Spirit,"[9] and also, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."[10] The reason is that He makes us love God and cease to love the world. Thus, the Creed says: "In the Holy Ghost, the Lord."

"And Life-Giver."--The second phrase is there because the soul's life is to be united to God, inasmuch as God is the life of the soul, and as truly as the soul is the life of the body.[11] Now, the Holy Ghost unites the soul to God through love, because He is the love of God, and therefore He gives life. "It is the spirit that quickeneth."[12] Therefore, it is said: "and Life-giver."

"Who Proceeds from the Father and the Son."--The third is that the Holy Ghost is one in substance with the Father and the Son; because as the Son is the Word of the Father, so the Holy Spirit is the love both of the Father and the Son, and, therefore, He proceeds from them both. Moreover, just as the Word of God is of the same substance as the Father, so also is Love [Holy Ghost] of the same substance as the Father and the Son. Hence, it is said: "who proceedeth from the Father and the Son." From this it is seen that the Holy Spirit is not a Creature.

"Who . . . is Adored and Glorified."--The fourth phrase is that the Holy Ghost as regards adoration is equal to the Father and the Son: "The true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and truth."[13]

"Teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy
Ghost."[14] Hence, it is said: "Who together with the Father and the Son is adored."[15]
"Who Spoke by the Prophets."--The fifth phrase, wherein the Holy Ghost is declared equal to God, is that the holy prophets spoke on behalf of God. It is clear that, if the Holy Ghost were not God, then it would not be said that the prophets had spoken of God on His behalf. Thus, says St. Peter: "The holy men of God spoke, inspired by the Holy Ghost."[16] Also: "The Lord God hath sent me, and His Spirit."[17] And so it is said: "Who spoke by the prophets."
In all this two errors are condemned. The Manicheans said that the Old Testament was not from God. But this is false because the Holy Spirit spoke through the prophets. Likewise, the error of Priscillian and Montanus was that they believed that the prophets did not speak by the Holy Ghost but were somewhat beside themselves.

BENEFITS FROM THE HOLY GHOST
Many benefits come to us from the Holy Ghost. (1) He cleanses us from our sins. The reason is that one must repair that which one has made. Now, the soul is created by the Holy Spirit, because God has made all things through Him; for God, by loving His goodness, created everything: "Thou lovest all things that are, and hastest none of the things which Thou hast made."[18] Thus, Dionysius says: "Divine love did not permit Him to be without offspring."[19] It is necessary, therefore, that the hearts of men, destroyed by sin, be made anew by the Holy Ghost: "Thou shalt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth."[20] Nor is it any wonder that the Spirit cleanses, since all sins are taken away by love: "Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much."[21] "Charity covereth all sins."[22] And likewise: "Charity covereth a multitude of sins."[23]

(2) The Holy Spirit enlightens the intellect, since all that we know, we know through the Holy Ghost: "But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you."[24] Also: "His unction teacheth you all things."[25]

(3) He assists us and, to a certain extent, compels us to keep the commandments. No one can keep the commandments unless he loves God: "If any one love Me, he will keep My word."[26] Thus,
the Holy Spirit makes us love God: "And I give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit in the midst of you; and I will cause you to walk in My commandments and to keep My judgments and do them."[27]

(4) He strengthens in us the hope of eternal life, because He is the pledge to us of this our destiny: "You were signed with the Holy Spirit of promise who is the pledge of our inheritance."[28] He is, as it were, the surety of our eternal life. The reason is that eternal life is due to man inasmuch as he is become the son of God; and this is brought about in that he is made like unto Christ; and this, in turn, follows from his having the Spirit of Christ, and this is the Holy Ghost: "For you have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear; but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry: Abba (Father). For the Spirit Himself giveth testimony to our spirit that we are the sons of God."[29] And also: "Because you are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying: Abba, Father."[30]

(5) He counsels us when we are in doubt, and teaches us what is the will of God: "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches."[31] Likewise: "I may hear him as a master."[32]

(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.

ENDNOTES
1. See above, p. 17.
2. "So faith also, if it have not works, is dead in itself" (James, ii. 17).
5. Rom., v. 5.
6. "And I believe in the Holy Ghost, (1) the Lord and (2) Life-giver, (3) who proceeds from the Father and the son: (4) who together with the Father and the son is adored and glorified (5) who spoke by the Prophets" (The Nicene Creed).
9. II Cor., iii. 17.
10. "Ibid."
11. "Cum ipse Deus sit vita animae, sicut anima vita corporis."
12. John, vi. 64.
15. "The Holy Ghost is equally God with the Father and the Son, equally omnipotent, eternal, perfect, the supreme good, infinitely wise and of the same nature with the Father and the Son. . . . If the Father is God, and the son, God, we must confess that the Holy Ghost, who is united with them in the same degree of honour, is also God. . . . The Holy Ghost is God, the third Person in the divine nature, distinct from the Father and the son, and produced by their will" ("Roman Catechism," Eighth Article, 4-5).
16. II Peter, i. 21.
17. Isa., xlviii. 16.
18. Wis., xi. 25.
43
20. Ps. ciii. 30.
22. Prov., x. 12.
23. I Peter, iv. 8.
25. I John, ii. 27.
29. Rom., viii. 15-16.
31. Apoc., ii. 7
32. Isa., l. 4.

THE NINTH ARTICLE: "I Believe in the Holy Catholic Church."

We see that in a man there are one soul and one body; and of his body there are many members. So also the Catholic Church is one body and has different members. The soul which animates this body is the Holy Spirit.[1] Hence, after confessing our faith in the Holy Ghost, we are bid to believe in the Holy Catholic Church. Thus, in the Symbol it is said, "the Holy Catholic Church."

It must be known that "church" is the same as assembly.[2] So, the Holy Church is the same as the assembly of the faithful, and every Christian is a member of this Church, of which it is written: "Draw near to Me, ye unlearned; and gather yourselves together into the house of discipline."

[3] The Church has four essential conditions, in that she is one, holy, catholic, and strong and firm.[4]

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH

Of the first, it must be known that the Church is one. Although various heretics have founded various sects, they do not belong to the Church, since they are but so
many divisions. Of her it is said: "One is My dove; My perfect one is but one."[5] The unity of the Church arises from three sources:

(1) the unity of faith. All Christians who are of the body of the Church believe the same doctrine. "I beseech you . . . that you all speak the same thing and that there be no schisms among you."[6] And: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism;"[7] (2) the unity of hope. All are strengthened in one hope of arriving at eternal life. Hence, the Apostle says: "One body and one Spirit, as you are called in one hope of your calling;"[8] (3) the unity of charity. All are joined together in the love of God, and to each other in mutual love: "And the glory which Thou hast given Me, I have given them; that they may be one, as We also are one."[9] It is clear that this is a true love when the members are solicitous for one another and sympathetic towards each other: "We may in all things grow up in Him who is the head, Christ. From whom the whole body, being compacted, and fitly joined together, by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in charity."[10] This is because each one ought to make use of the grace God grants him, and be of service to his neighbour. No one ought to be indifferent to the Church, or allow himself to be cut off and expelled from it; for there is but one Church in which men are saved, just as outside of the ark of Noah no one could be saved.

THE HOLINESS OF THE CHURCH

Concerning the second mark, holiness, it must be known that there is indeed another assembly, but it consists of the wicked: "I hate the assembly of the malignant."[11] But such a one is evil; the Church of Christ, however, is holy: "For the temple of God is holy, which you are."[12] Hence, it is said: "the Holy Church." The faithful of this Church are made holy because of four things: (1) Just as a church is cleansed materially when it is consecrated, so also the faithful are washed in the blood of Christ: "Jesus Christ . . . who hath loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood."[13] And: "That He might sanctify the people by his blood, suffered without the gate."[14] (2) Just as there is the anointing of the church, so also the faithful are anointed with a
spiritual unction in order to be sanctified. Otherwise they would not be Christians, for Christ is the same as Anointed. This anointing is the grace of the Holy Spirit: "He that confirmeth us with you in Christ and that hath anointed us, is God."[15] And: "You are sanctified . . . in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."[16]

(3) The faithful are made holy because of the Trinity who dwells in the Church; for wheresoever God dwells, that place is holy. "The place whereon thou standest is holy."[17] And: "Holiness becometh Thy house, O Lord."[18] (4) Lastly, the faithful are sanctified because God is invoked in the Church: "But Thou, O Lord, art among us, and Thy name is called upon by us; forsake us not."[19] Let us, therefore, beware, seeing that we are thus sanctified, lest by sin we defile our soul which is the temple of God: "Know you not that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? But if any man violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy."[20]

THE CATHOLICITY OR UNIVERSALITY OF THE CHURCH

The Church is Catholic, that is, universal. Firstly, it is universal in place, because it is worldwide. This is contrary to the error of the Donatists.[21] For the Church is a congregation of the faithful; and since the faithful are in every part of the world, so also is the Church: "Your faith is spoken of in the whole world."[22] And also: "Go ye into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature."[23] Long ago, indeed, God was known only in Judea; now, however, He is known throughout the entire world. The Church has three parts: one is on earth, one is in heaven, and one is in purgatory. Secondly, the Church is universal in regard to all the conditions of mankind; for no exceptions are made, neither master nor servant, neither man nor woman: "Neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female."[24] Thirdly, it is universal in time. Some have said that the Church will exist only up to a certain time. But this is false, for the Church began to exist in the time of Abel and will endure up to the end of the world: "Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."[25] Nay more, even after the end of the world, it will continue to exist in heaven.

THE APOSTOLICITY OF THE CHURCH

The Church is firm. A house is said to be firm if it has a solid foundation. The principal foundation
of the Church is Christ: "For other foundation no men can lay but that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus."[26] The secondary foundation, however, is the Apostles and their teaching. Therefore, the Church is firm. It is said in the Apocalypse that the city has "twelve foundations," and therein were "written the names of the twelve Apostles."[27] From this the Church is called Apostolic. Likewise, to indicate this firmness of the Church St. Peter is called the crowning head.[28]

The firmness of a house is evident if, when it is violently struck, it does not fall. The Church similarly can never be destroyed, neither by persecution nor by error. Indeed, the Church grew during the persecutions, and both those who persecuted her and those against whom she threatened[29] completely failed: "And whosoever shall fall upon this stone, shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder."[30] As regards errors, indeed, the more errors arise, the more surely truth is made to appear: "Men corrupt in mind, reprobate in faith; but they shall proceed no further."[31]

Nor shall the Church be destroyed by the temptations of the demons. For she is like a tower towards which all flee who war against the devil: "The name of the Lord is a strong tower."[32] The devil, therefore, is chiefly intent on destroying the Church, but he will not succeed, for the Lord has said: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."[33] This is as if He said: "They shall make war against thee, but they shall not overcome thee." And thus it is that only the Church of Peter (to whom it was given to evangelize Italy when the disciples were sent to preach) was always firm in faith. On the contrary, in other parts of the world there is either no faith at all or faith mixed with many errors. The Church of Peter flourishes in faith and is free from error. The Church of Peter has said to Peter: "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and thou, being once converted, confirm thy brethren."[34]

(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES

1. "For as the body is one and hath many members; and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body, so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body. . . . For the body also is not one member, but many" (I Cor., xii. 12-14).
For St. Paul's admirable description of the Church, Christ's mystical body, see all of this chapter.

2. "The word "ecclesia" (church) which is borrowed by the Latins from the Greek has been applied since the preaching of the Gospel to sacred things. The word "ecclesia" (church) means a calling forth, but writers afterwards used it to mean a council or assembly. . . . However, in the ordinary sense used in the Scriptures, the word was afterwards used to designate the Christian society only, and the assemblies of the faithful: that is, of those who were called by faith to the light of truth, and the knowledge of God" ("Roman Catechism," Ninth Article, 2).


4. "The distinctive marks of the Church are also to be made known to the faithful that they thus may be able to appreciate the extent of the blessing conferred by God on those who have the happiness to be born and educated in her fold" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 2).

5. Cant., vi. 8.
6. I Cor., i. 10.
7. Eph., iv. 5.
11. Ps. xxv. 5.
12. I Cor., iii. 17.
13. Apoc., i. 5.
15. II Cor., i. 21.
16. I Cor., vi. 11.
17. Josue, v. 16; cfr. also Gen., xxviii. 16.
18. Ps. xcii, 5.
20. I Cor., iii. 16-17. "It should not be considered surprising that the Church, although among her children are many sinners, is called holy. For as those who profess any art, even though they may violate its rules, are still artists, so the faithful, although offending in many things and violating the promises which they have made, are still called holy, because they are made the people of God, and are consecrated to Christ by baptism and faith" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 15).

22. Rom., i. 8.
23. Mark. xvi. 15.
24. Gal., iii. 28.
26. I Cor., iii. 11.
28. As it is spoken of by Our Lord: "And I say to thee that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt., xvi. 18).
29. That is, enemies of the Church who in one or other ways resisted the authority or teachings of the Church.
30. Matt., xxi. 44.
31. Tim., iii. 8.
32. Prov., xviii. 10.
33. Matt., xvi. 18.
34. Luke, xxii. 32.

THE TENTH ARTICLE: "The Communion of Saints, the Forgiveness of Sins."
As in our natural body the operation of one member works for the good of the entire body, so also is it with a spiritual body, such as is the Church. Because all the faithful are one body, the good of one member is communicated to another: "And every one members, one of another."[1] So, among the points of faith which the Apostles have handed down is that there is a common sharing of good in the Church. This is expressed in the words, "the Communion of Saints."[2] Among the various members of the Church, the principal member is Christ, because He is the Head: "He hath made Him head over all the Church, which is His body."[3] Christ communicates His good, just as the power of the head is communicated to all the members.

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS: A REVIEW
This communication takes place through the Sacraments of the Church in which operate the merits of the passion of Christ, which in turn operates for the conferring of grace unto the remission of sins. These Sacraments of the Church are seven in number.
"Baptism."--The first is Baptism which is a certain spiritual regeneration. Just as there can be no physical life unless man is first born in the flesh, so spiritual life or grace cannot be had unless man is spiritually reborn. This rebirth is effected through Baptism: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."[4] It must be known that, just as a man can be born but once, so only once is he baptized. Hence, the holy Fathers put into the Nicene Creed: "I confess one baptism." The power of Baptism consists in this, that it cleanses from all sins
as regards both their guilt and their punishment. For this reason no penance is imposed on those who are baptized, no matter to what extent they had been sinners. Moreover, if they should die immediately after Baptism, they would without delay go to heaven. Another result is that, although only priests "ex officio" may baptize, yet any one may baptize in case of necessity, provided that the proper form of Baptism is used. This is: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This Sacrament receives its power from the passion of Christ. "All we who are baptized in Christ Jesus are baptized in His death."[5] Accordingly there is a threefold immersion in water after the three days in which Christ was in the sepulchre.[6] "Confirmation."--The second Sacrament is Confirmation. Just as they who are physically born need certain powers to act, so those who are reborn spiritually must have the strength of the Holy Spirit which is imparted to them in this Sacrament. In order that they might become strong, the Apostles received the Holy Spirit after the Ascension of Christ: "Stay you in the city till you be endowed with power from on high."[7] This power is given in the Sacrament of Confirmation. They, therefore, who have the care of children should be very careful to see that they be confirmed, because great grace is conferred in Confirmation. He who is confirmed will, when he dies, enjoy greater glory than one not confirmed, because greater grace will be his. "Holy Eucharist."--The Eucharist is the third Sacrament. In the physical life, after man is born and acquires powers, he needs food to sustain and strengthen him. Likewise in the spiritual life, after being fortified, he has need of spiritual food; this is the Body of Christ: "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you."

[8] According to the prescribed law of the Church, therefore, every Christian must at least once a year receive the Body of Christ, and in a worthy manner and with a clean conscience: "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily [that is, by being conscious of unconfessed mortal sin on his soul, or with no intent to abstain from it] eateth and drinketh judgment to himself."[9] "Penance."--The fourth Sacrament is Penance. In the physical life, one who is sick and does not
have recourse to medicine, dies; so in the spiritual order, one becomes ill because of sin. Thus, medicine is necessary for recovery of health; and this is the grace which is conferred in the Sacrament of Penance: "Who forgiveth all thy iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases."[10] Three things must be present in the Sacrament of Penance: contrition, which is sorrow for sin together with a resolution not to sin again; confession of sins, as far as possible entire; and satisfaction which is accomplished by good works.

"Extreme Unction."--Extreme Unction is the fifth Sacrament. In this life there are many things which prevent one from a perfect purification from one's sins. But since no one can enter into eternal life until he is well cleansed, there is need of another Sacrament which will purify man of his sins, and both free him from sickness and prepare him for entry into the heavenly kingdom. This is the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. That this Sacrament does not always restore health to the body is due to this, that perhaps to live is not to the advantage of the soul's salvation. "Is any man sick amongst you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man. And the Lord shall raise him up; and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him."[11] It is now clear that the fullness of life is had from these five Sacraments.

"Holy Orders."--It is necessary that these Sacraments be administered by chosen ministers. Therefore, the Sacrament of Orders is necessary, by whose powers these Sacraments are dispensed. Nor need one note the life of such ministers, if here and there one fail in his office, but remember the virtue of Christ through whose merits the Sacraments have their efficacy, and in whose Name the ministers are but dispensers: "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ and the dispensers of the mysteries of God."[12] This then is the sixth Sacrament, namely, Orders.

"Matrimony."--The seventh Sacrament is Matrimony, and in it men, if they live uprightly, are saved; and thereby they are enabled to live without mortal sin. Sometimes the partners in marriage fall into venial sin, when their concupiscence does not extend beyond the rights of matrimony; but if they do go beyond such rights, they sin mortally.[13] THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS
By these seven Sacraments we receive the remission of sins,[14] and so in the Creed there follows immediately: "the forgiveness of sins." The power was given to the Apostles to forgive sins. We must believe that the ministers of the Church receive this power from the Apostles; and the Apostles received it from Christ; and thus the priests have the power of binding and loosing. Moreover, we believe that there is the full power of forgiving sins in the Church, although it operates from the highest to the lowest, i.e., from the Pope down through the prelates.[15]

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS
We must also know that not only the efficacy of the Passion of Christ is communicated to us, but also the merits of His life; and, moreover, all the good that all the Saints have done is communicated to all who are in the state of grace, because all are one: "I am a partaker of all them that fear Thee."

Therefore, he who lives in charity participates in all the good that is done in the entire world; but more specially does he benefit for whom some good work is done; since one man certainly can satisfy for another.[17] Thus, through this communion we receive two benefits. One is that the merits of Christ are communicated to all; the other is that the good of one is communicated to another. Those who are excommunicated, however, because they are cut off from the Church, forfeit their part of all the good that is done, and this is a far greater loss than being bereft of all material things. There is a danger lest the devil impede this spiritual help in order to tempt one; and when one is thus cut off, the devil can easily overcome him. Thus it was in the primitive Church that, when one was excommunicated, the devil even physically attacked him.[18]

(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES
1. Rom., xii. 5.
2. "The evangelist St. John, writing to the faithful on the divine mysteries, tells them that he undertook to instruct them on the subject; 'that you,' he says, 'may have fellowship with us, and our fellowship be with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ' (I John, i. 3). Now, this fellowship consists in the Communion of Saints... This Article is, as it were, a sort of explanation of the preceding one, which takes up the unity, sanctity, and catholicity of the Church. For the
unity of the Spirit, by which she is governed, establishes among all her members a community of spiritual blessings, whereas the fruit of all the Sacraments, particularly Baptism, the door, as it were, by which we are admitted into the Church, are so many connecting links which bind and unite them to Jesus Christ." The "Roman Catechism" makes the Communion of Saints the last part of the Ninth Article of the Creed; and the Tenth Article is the forgiveness of Sins ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 24-25).

3. Eph. i. 22.
4. John iii. 5.
5. Rom., vi. 3.
6. Immersion is the act of dipping or plunging the subject into the water used in the administration of Baptism. It was a method generally employed in the early Church, and was still in vogue at the time of St. Thomas. The Greek Church still retains it; but though valid, for obvious reasons immersion is practically no longer employed in the Latin Church. It is practiced by some sects today in America.
8. John, vi. 54
9. I Cor., xi. 29.
10. Ps. cii. 3.
12. Cor., iv. 1.
14. Baptism and Penance are called Sacraments of the dead, because they take away sin and give the first grace of justification. The other five Sacraments are called Sacraments of the living, because one who receives them worthily is already living the life of grace. But the Sacraments of the living produce the first grace when the subject, guilty of a grievous fault, approaches the Sacraments in good faith, that is to say, with the invincible ignorance of his fault, and with attrition (cfr. Pourrat, "Theology of the Sacraments," St. Louis, 1914, p. 201).
15. "For Our Lord did not give the power of so sacred a ministry to all, but to bishops and priests only. The same must be said regarding the manner in which the power is to be exercised; for sin can be forgiven only through the Sacraments, when duly administered. The Church has received no power otherwise to remit sins. Hence it follows that in the forgiveness of sins both priests and Sacraments are, as it were, the instruments which Christ, Our Lord, the Author and giver of salvation, make use of to accomplish in us pardon of
sin and the grace of justification" ("Roman Catechism." loc. cit., 6).
16. Ps. cxviii. 63.
17. "But there is also another Communion in the Church which demands attention; every pious and holy action done by one belongs to and becomes profitable to all, through charity which 'seeks not her own' " ("Roman Catechism," loc. cit., 25).
18. "The advantage of so many and such exalted blessings bestowed by Almighty God are especially enjoyed by those who lead a Christian life in charity and are just and beloved of God" ("Roman Catechism," loc. cit., 26).

THE ELEVENTH ARTICLE: "The Resurrection of the Body."
Not only does the Holy Spirit sanctify the Church as regards the souls of its members, but also our bodies shall rise again by His power: "We believe in Him that raised up Jesus Christ, Our Lord, from the dead."[1] And: "By a man came death: and by a Man the resurrection of the dead."[2] In this there occur four considerations: (1) the benefits which proceed from our faith in the resurrection; (2) the qualities of those who shall rise, taken all in general; (3) the condition of the blessed; (4) the condition of the damned.

THE BENEFITS OF THE RESURRECTION
Concerning the first, our faith and hope in the resurrection is beneficial in four ways. Firstly, it takes away the sorrow which we feel for the departed. It is impossible for one not to grieve over the death of a relative or friend; but the hope that such a one will rise again greatly tempers the pain of parting: "And we will not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that you be not sorrowful, even as others who have no hope."[3] Secondly, it takes away the fear of death. If one does not hope in another and better life after death, then without doubt one is greatly in fear of death and would willingly commit any crime rather than suffer death. But because we believe in another life which will be ours after death, we do not fear death, nor would we do anything wrong through fear of it: "That, through death He might destroy him who had the empire of death, that is to say, the devil. And might deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject of servitude."[4] Thirdly, it makes us watchful and careful to live uprightly. If, however, this life in which we live were all, we would not have this great incentive to live well, for
whatever we do would be of little
importance, since it would be regulated not by eternity, but by brief,
determined time. But we
believe that we shall receive eternal rewards in the resurrection for
whatsoever we do here. Hence,
we are anxious to do good: "If in this life only we have hope in
Christ, we are of all men most
miserable."[5]
Finally, it withdraws us from evil. Just as the hope of reward urges
us to do good, so also the fear of
punishment, which we believe is reserved for wicked deeds, keeps us
from evil: "But they that have
done good things shall come forth unto the resurrection of life; but
they that have done evil, unto
the resurrection of judgment."[6]
QUALITIES OF THE RISEN BODIES
There is a fourfold condition of all those who shall take part in the
resurrection.
(a) The Identity of the Bodies of the Risen.--It will be the same body
as it is now, both as regards its
flesh and its bones. Some, indeed, have said that it will not be this
same body which is corrupted
that shall be raised up; but such view is contrary to the Apostle:
"For this corruptible must put on
incorruption."[7] And likewise the Sacred Scripture says that by the
power of God this same body
shall rise to life: "And I shall be clothed again with my skin; and in
my flesh I shall see my
God."[8]
(b) The Incorruptibility of the Risen Bodies.--The bodies of the risen
shall be of a different quality
from that of the mortal body, because they shall be incorruptible,
both of the blessed, who shall be
ever in glory, and of the damned, who shall be ever in punishments:
"For this corruptible must put
on incorruption; and this mortal must put on immortality."[9] And
since the body will be
incorruptible and immortal, there will no longer be the use of food or
of the marriage relations: "For
in the resurrection they shall neither marry nor be married, but shall
be as the Angels of God in
heaven."[10] This is directly against the Jews and Mohammedans: "Nor
shall he return any more
into his house."[11]
(c) The Integrity of the Risen Bodies.--Both the good and the wicked
shall rise with all soundness
of body which is natural to man. He will not be blind or deaf or bear
any kind of physical defect:
50
"The dead shall rise again incorruptible,"[12] this is to mean, wholly
free from the defects of the present life.[13]

(d) The Age of the Risen Bodies.--All will rise in the condition of perfect age, which is of thirtytwo or thirty-three years. This is because all who were not yet arrived at this age, did not possess this perfect age, and the old had already lost it. Hence, youths and children will be given what they lack, and what the aged once had will be restored to them: "Until we all attain the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fullness of Christ."[14]

CONDITION OF THE BLESSED
It must be known that the good will enjoy a special glory because the blessed will have glorified bodies which will be endowed with four gifts.
(a) Brilliance.--"Then shall the just shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."[15]
(b) Impassibility (i.e., Incapability of Receiving Action).--"It is sown in dishonor; it shall rise in glory." 16 "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and death shall be no more. Nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be anymore, for the former things are passed away."[17]
(c) Agility.--"The just shall shine and shall run to and fro like sparks among the reeds."[18]
(d) Subtlety.--"It is sown a natural body; it shall rise a spiritual body."[19] This is in the sense of not being altogether a spirit, but that the body will be wholly subject to the spirit.

CONDITION OF THE DAMNED
It must also be known that the condition of the damned will be the exact contrary to that of the blessed. Theirs is the state of eternal punishment, which has a fourfold evil condition. The bodies of the damned will not be brilliant: "Their countenances shall be as faces burnt." 20 Likewise they shall be possible, because they shall never deteriorate and, although burning eternally in fire, they shall never be consumed: "Their worm shall not die and their fire shall not be quenched."[21] They will be weighed down, and the soul of the damned will be as it were chained therein: "To bind their kings with fetters, and their nobles with manacles of iron."[22] Finally, they will be in a certain manner fleshly both in soul and body: "The beasts have rotted in their dung."[23]

(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES
2. I Cor., xv. 21. "In this Article the resurrection of mankind is called 'the resurrection of the body.' The Apostles had for object thus to convey an important truth, the immortality of the soul. Lest, therefore, contrary to the Sacred Scriptures, which in many places clearly teach the soul to be immortal, any one may imagine that it dies with the body, and denies that both are to be raised up, the Creed speaks only of 'the resurrection of the body' " ("Roman Catechism," Eleventh Article, 2).

5. I Cor., xv. 19.
6. John, v. 29
7. I Cor., xv. 53.
8. Job, xix. 26. "The identical body which belongs to each one of us during life shall, though corrupt, and dissolved into its original dust, be raised up again to life. . . . Man is, therefore, to rise again in the same body with which he served God, or was a slave to the devil that in the same body he may experience rewards and a crown of victory, or endure the severest punishments and everlasting torments" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 7).
9. I Cor., xv. 53
11. Job. vii. 10. "To omit many other points, the chief difference between the state of all bodies when risen from the dead, and what they had previously been, is that before the resurrection they were subject to dissolution; but when reanimated they shall all, without distinction of good and bad, be invested with immortality. This marvellous restoration of nature is the result of the glorious victory of Christ over death" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 12).
12. I Cor., xv. 52.
13. "Not only will the body rise, but it will rise endowed with whatever constitutes the reality of its nature and adorns and ornaments man. . . . The members, because essential to the integrity of human nature, shall all be restored. . . . For the resurrection like the creation, is clearly to be accounted among the chief works of God. And as at the creation all things came perfect from the hand of God, so at the resurrection all things shall be perfectly restored by the same omnipotent hand" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 9).
15. Matt., xiii. 43. "This brightness is a sort of
refulgence reflected from the supreme happiness of the soul; it is an emanation of the beatitude which it enjoys and which shines through the body. Its communication is like to the manner in which the soul itself is made happy, by a participation of the happiness of God" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.,” 13).

16. I Cor., xv. 43

17. Apoc., xxi. 4. "The first is 'impassibility,' which shall place them beyond the reach of pain or inconvenience of any sort. . . . This quality the Scholastics called 'impassibility,' not incorruption, in order to distinguish it as a property peculiar to a glorified body. The bodies of the damned shall not be impassible, though incorruptible; they shall be capable of experiencing heat and cold and of feeling pain." ("Roman Catechism," "ibid.").

18. Wis., iii. 7. "Agility, as it is called, is a quality by which the body shall be freed from the heaviness that now presses it down; and shall acquire a capability of moving with the utmost ease and quickness wheresoever the soul pleases" ("Roman Catechism," "ibid.").

19. I Cor., xv. 44. "Another quality is that of subtility, a quality which subjects the body to the absolute dominion of the soul, and to an entire obedience to her control" ("Roman Catechism," "ibid.").


22. Ps. cxlix. 8.

23. Joel, i. 17.

THE TWELFTH ARTICLE: "Life everlasting. Amen."
The end of all our desires, eternal life, is fittingly placed last among those things to be believed; and the Creed says: "life everlasting. Amen." They wrote this to stand against those who believe that the soul perishes with the body. If this were indeed true, then the condition of man would be just the same as that of the beasts. This agrees with what the Psalmist says: "Man when he was in honour did not understand; he hath been compared to senseless beasts, and made like to them."[1] The human soul, however, is in its immortality made like unto God, and in its sensuality alone is it like the brutes. He, then, who believes that the soul dies with the body withdraws it from this similarity to God and likens it to the brutes. Against such it is said: "They knew not the secrets of God, nor hoped for the wages of justice, nor esteemed the honour of holy souls. For God created man incorruptible, and to the image of His own likeness He made him."[2]
WHAT IS EVERLASTING LIFE?
We must first consider in this Article what is everlasting life. And in this, we must know that in everlasting life man is united to God. God Himself is the reward and the end of all our labors: "I am thy protector, and thy reward exceeding great."[3] This union with God consists, firstly, in a perfect vision: "We see now through a glass in a dark manner; but then face to face."[4] Secondly, in a most fervent love; for the better one is known, the more perfectly is one loved: "The Lord hath said it, whose fire is in Sion, and His furnace in Jerusalem."[5] Thirdly, in the highest praise. "We shall see, we shall love, and we shall praise," as says St. Augustine.[6] "Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of praise."[7]

Then, too, in everlasting life is the full and perfect satisfying of every desire; for there every blessed soul will have to overflowing what he hoped for and desired. The reason is that in this life no one can fulfill all his desires, nor can any created thing fully satisfy the craving of man. God only satisfies and infinitely exceeds man's desires; and, therefore, perfect satiety is found in God alone.

As St. Augustine says: "Thou hast made us for Thee, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in Thee."[8] Because the blessed in the Fatherland will possess God perfectly, it is evident that their desires will be abundantly filled, and their glory will exceed their hopes. The Lord has said: "Enter thou into the joy of the Lord."[9] And as St. Augustine says: "Complete joy will not enter into those who rejoice, but all those who rejoice will enter into joy." "I shall be satisfied when Thy glory shall appear."[10] And again: "Who satisfieth thy desire with good things."[11]

THE FULLNESS OF DESIRES
Whatever is delightful will be there in abundant fullness. Thus, if pleasures are desired, there will be the highest and most perfect pleasure, for it derives from the highest good, namely, God: "Then shalt thou abound in delights in the Almighty."[12] "At the right hand are delights even to the end."[13] Likewise, if honors are desired, there too will be all honour. Men wish particularly to be kings, if they be laymen; and to be bishops, if they be clerics. Both these honors will be there: "And hath made us a kingdom and priests."[14] "Behold how they are numbered among the children of
God."[15] If knowledge is desired, it will be there most perfectly, because we shall possess in the life everlasting knowledge of all the natures of things and all truth, and whatever we desire we shall know. And whatever we desire to possess, that we shall have, even life eternal: "Now, all good things come to me together with her."[16] "To the just their desire shall be given."[17]

Again, most perfect security is there. In this world there is no perfect security; for in so far as one has many things, and the higher one's position, the more one has to fear and the more one wants. But in the life everlasting there is no anxiety, no labor, no fear. "And My people shall sit in the beauty of peace,"[18] and "shall enjoy abundance, without fear of evils."[19]

Finally, in heaven there will be the happy society of all the blessed, and this society will be especially delightful. Since each one will possess all good together with the blessed, and they will love one another as themselves, and they will rejoice in the others' good as their own. It will also happen that, as the pleasure and enjoyment of one increases, so will it be for all: "The dwelling in thee is as it were of all rejoicing."[20]

WHAT IS EVERLASTING DEATH?
The perfect will enjoy all this in the life everlasting, and much more that surpasses description. But the wicked, on the other hand, will be in eternal death suffering pain and punishment as great as will be the happiness and glory of the good. The punishment of the damned will be increased, firstly, by their separation from God and from all good. This is the pain of loss which corresponds to aversion, and is a greater punishment than that of sense: "And the unprofitable servant, cast ye out into the exterior darkness."[21] The wicked in this life have interior darkness, namely sin; but then they shall also have exterior darkness. Secondly, the damned shall suffer from remorse of conscience: "I will reprove thee, and set before thy face."[22] "Groaning for anguish of spirit."[23] Nevertheless, their repentance and groaning will be of no avail, because it rises not from hatred of evil, but from fear and the enormity of their punishments. Thirdly, there is the great pain of sense. It is the fire of hell which tortures the soul and the body; and this, as the Saints tell us, is the sharpest of all punishments. They shall be ever
dying, and yet never die; hence it is called eternal death, for as
dying is the bitterest of pains, such
will be the lot of those in hell: "They are laid in hell like sheep;
death shall feed upon them."[24]
Fourthly, there is the despair of their salvation. If some hope of
delivery from their punishments
would be given them, their punishment would be somewhat lessened; but
since all hope is
withdrawn from them, their sufferings are made most intense: "Their
worm shall not die, and their
fire shall not be quenched.
We thus see the difference between doing good and doing evil. Good
works lead to life, evil drags
us to death. For this reason, men ought frequently to recall these
things to mind, since they will
incite one to do good and withdraw one from evil. Therefore, very
significantly, at the end of the
 Creed is placed "life everlasting," so that it would be more and more
deply impressed on the
memory. To this life everlasting may the Lord Jesus Christ, blessed
God for ever, bring us! Amen.
(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES
1. Ps. xlviii. 21.
2. Wis., ii. 22-23. Note also: "And though in the sight
of men they suffer torments their hope is full of
immortality" ("ibid.," iii. 4).
4. I Cor., xiii. 12. "The blessed always see God
present, and by this greatest and most exalted of gifts,
'being made partakers of the divine nature' (II Peter, i.
4), they enjoy true and solid happiness" ("Roman
Catechism," Twelfth Article, 9)
5. Isa., xxxi. 9. Note: This second consideration is
found in the vives edition Chapter XV
amabimus: amabimus, et laudabimus" ("There we shall
rest and we shall see; we shall see and we shall love;
we shall love and we shall praise," in "The city of
God," Book XXII, Chapter xxx).
7. Isa., li. 3.
10. Ps. xvi. 15.
11. Ps. cii. 5.
13. Ps. xv. 11. "To enumerate all the delights with
which the souls of the blessed will be filled, would be
an endless task. We cannot even conceive them in
thought. The happiness of the Saints is filled to
overflowing of all those pleasures which can be enjoyed or even desired in this life, whether they pertain to the powers of the mind or the perfection of the body" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 12).

14. Apoc., v. 10
15. Wis., v. 5. "How distinguished that honour must be which is conferred by God Himself, who no longer calls them servants, but friends, brethren, and sons of God. Hence, the Redeemer will address His elect in these infinitely loving and highly honorable words: 'Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you' " ("Roman Catechism." "loc. cit.," 11).

16. Wis., vii. 11.
17. Prov., x. 24.
18. Isa., xxxii. 10. This is in the Vives edition, Chapter XV.
19. Prov., i. 33.
20. Ps. lxxxvi. 7.
22. Ps. xliv. 21.
23. Wis., v. 3.
24. Ps. xlviii. 15.

EXPLANATION OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

I. I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me. Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not adore them, nor serve them. I am the Lord thy God, mighty, jealous, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments.

II. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

III. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

IV. Honour thy father and thy mother.

V. Thou shalt not kill.

VI. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VII. Thou shalt not steal.

VIII. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

IX. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife.

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, nor his field, nor his servant, nor his handmaid, nor
his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his.[1]

ENDNOTE
1. Exod., xx. 2-17, and Deut., v. 6-21.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT: "Thou Shalt Not Have Strange Gods Before Me."
The entire law of Christ depends upon charity. And charity depends on two precepts, one of which concerns loving God and the other concerns loving our neighbour.
Now God, in delivering the law to Moses, gave him Ten Commandments written upon two tablets of stone. Three of these Commandments that were written on the first tablet referred to the love of God; and the seven Commandments written on the other tablet related to the love of our neighbour.
The whole law, therefore, is founded on these two precepts.[1] The First Commandment which relates to the love of God is: "Thou shalt not have strange gods."
For an understanding of this Commandment, one must know how of old it was violated. Some worshipped demons. "All the gods of the Gentiles are devils."[2] This is the greatest and most detestable of all sins. Even now there are many who transgress this Commandment: all such as practise divinations and fortune-telling. Such things, according to St. Augustine, cannot be done without some kind of pact with the devil. "I would not that you should be made partakers with devils."[3] Some worshipped the heavenly bodies, believing the stars to be gods: "They have imagined the sun and the moon to be the gods that rule the world."[4] For this reason Moses forbade the Jews to raise their eyes, or adore the sun and moon and stars: "Keep therefore your souls carefully . . . lest perhaps lifting up thy eyes to heaven, thou see the sun and the moon, and all the stars of heaven, and being deceived by error thou adore and serve them, which the Lord thy God created for the service of all the nations."[5] The astrologers sin against this Commandment in that they say that these bodies are the rulers of souls, when in truth they were made for the use of man whose sole ruler is God.
Others worshipped the lower elements: "They imagined the fire or the wind to be gods."[6] Into this error also fall those who wrongly use the things of this earth and love them too much: "Or covetous person (who is a server of idols)."[7] Some men have erred in worshipping their ancestors. This arose from three causes.
(1) From Their Carnal Nature.--"For a father being afflicted with a bitter grief, made to himself the image of his son who was quickly taken away; and him who then had died as a man, he began now to worship as a god, and appointed him rites and sacrifices among his servants."[8]  
(2) Because of Flattery.--Thus being unable to worship certain men in their presence, they by practitioners of divination, and of them it is said: "Should not the people seek of their God, for the living and the dead?"[18]  
God's Bounty.--We receive every good from God; and this also is of the dignity of God, that He is the maker and giver of all good things: "When Thou openest Thy hand, they shall all be filled with good."[13] And this is implied in the name of God, namely, Deus, which is said to be distributor, that is, "dator" of all things, because He fills all things with His goodness. You are, indeed, ungrateful if you do not appreciate what you have received from Him, and, furthermore, you make for yourself another god; just as the sons of Israel made an idol after they had been brought out of Egypt: "I will go after my lovers."[20] One does this also when one puts too much trust in someone other than God, and this occurs when one seeks help from another: "Blessed is the man whose hope is in the name of the Lord."[21] Thus, the Apostle says: "Now that you have known God . . . how turn you again to the weak and needy elements? . . . You observe days and months and times and years."[22]  
The Strength of Our Promise.--The third reason is taken from our solemn promise. For we have renounced the devil, and we have promised fidelity to God alone. This is a promise which we cannot break: "A man making void the law of Moses dieth without mercy under two or three witnesses. How much more think ye he deserveth punishment who hath trodden under foot 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!"[23] "Whilst her husband liveth, she shall be called an adulteress, if she be with another man."[24] Woe, then, to the sinner who enters the land by two ways, and who "halts between two sides."[25]  
Against Service of the Devil.--The fourth reason is because of the great burden imposed by service
to the devil: "You shall serve strange gods day and night, who will give you no rest."[26] The devil is not satisfied with leading to one sin, but tries to lead on to others: "Whosoever sins shall be a slave of sin."[27] It is, therefore, not easy for one to escape from the habit of sin. Thus, St. Gregory says: "The sin which is not remitted by penance soon draws man into another sin."[28] The very opposite of all this is true of service to God; for His Commandments are not a heavy burden: "My yoke is sweet and My burden light." A person is considered to have done enough if he does for God as much as what he has done for the sake of sin: "For as you have yielded your members to serve uncleanness and iniquity, unto iniquity; so now yield your members to serve justice unto sanctification."[30] But on the contrary, it is written of those who serve the devil: "We wearied ourselves in the way of iniquity and destruction, and have walked through hard ways."[31] And again: "They have laboured to commit iniquity."

Greatness of the Reward.--The fifth reason is taken from the greatness of the reward or prize. In no law are such rewards promised as in the law of Christ. Rivers flowing with milk and honey are promised to the Mohammedans, to the Jews the land of promise, but to Christians the glory of the Angels: "They shall be as the Angels of God in heaven." It was with this in mind that St. Peter asked: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."[34] (For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES

1. "The Decalogue is the summary and epitome of the entire law of God," is the opinion of St. Augustine (Quest. cxi super Exod., lib. ii). "Although the Lord had spoken many things, yet He gave only two tablets of stone to Moses . . . . If carefully examined and well understood, it will be found that on them depend whatever else is commanded by God. Again, these ten commandments are reducible to two, the love of God and our neighbour, on which 'depend the whole law and the prophets' " ("Roman Catechism," "The Decalogue," Chapter I, 1).

57
2. Ps. xcv. 5
3. I Cor., x. 20.
4. Wis., xiii. 2.
5. Deut., iv. 15, 19.
6. Wis., xiii. 2.
7. Eph., v. 5.
8. Wis., xiv. 15.
10. Matt., x. 37.
11. Ps. cxlvi. 3.
13. Phil., iii. 19.
14. Rom., i. 23.
15. Isa., xlii. 8.
19. Ps. ciii. 28.
20. Osee, ii. 5.
21. Ps. xxxix. 5.
22. Gal., iv. 9, 10.
23. Heb., x. 28-29.
24. Rom., vii. 3.
25. III Kings, xviii. 21.
27. John, viii.
30. Rom., vi. 19.
31. Wis., v. 7.
32. Jerem., ix. 5.
33. Matt., xxiii. 30.
34. John, vi. 69. "The faithful should continually remember these words, 'I am the Lord thy God.' They will learn from these words that their Lawgiver is none other than their Creator, by whom they were made and are preserved. . . . 'Who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage' appear at first to relate solely to the Jews liberated from the bondage of Egypt. But if we ponder on the meaning of the salvation of the entire human race, these words will be seen to apply still more specifically to all Christians who are liberated by God, not from the bondage of Egypt, but from the bondage of sin and 'the powers of darkness, and are translated into the kingdom of His beloved Son' (Col., i. 13). . . . And when it is said, 'Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me,' it is the same as to say: 'Thou shalt worship Me who am the true God, thou shalt not worship strange gods.' . . . It should be accurately taught that the veneration and invocation of the Angels, of the Saints, and of the blessed souls who enjoy the glory of heaven—and, moreover, the honour which the Catholic Church has always paid even to the bodies and ashes
of the Saints- -are not
forbidden by this Commandment" ("Roman Catechism," "First
Commandment," 1, 2, 5, 8).

SECOND COMMANDMENT: "Thou Shalt Not Take the Name of the Lord Thy God in Vain."

This is the Second Commandment of the law. Just as there is but one
God whom we must worship,
so there is only one God whom we should reverence in a special manner.
This, first of all, has
reference to the name of God. "Thou shalt not take the name of the
Lord thy God in vain."

THE MEANING OF IN VAIN

"In vain" has a threefold meaning. Sometimes it is said of that which
is false: "They have spoken
vain things every one to his neighbour."[2] One, therefore, takes the
name of God in vain when one
uses it to confirm that which is not true: "Love not a false oath."
"Thou shalt not live because
thou hast spoken a lie in the name of the Lord." Any one so doing does
injury to God, to himself,
and to all men.

It is an insult to God because, when you swear by God, it is nothing
other than to call Him to
witness; and when you swear falsely, you either believe God to be
ignorant of the truth and thus
place ignorance in God, whereas "all things are naked and open to His
eyes,"[5] or you think that
God loves a lie, whereas He hates it: "Thou wilt destroy all that
speak a lie."[6] Or, again, you
detract from His power, as if He were not able to punish a lie.

Likewise, such a one does an injury to himself, for he binds himself
to the judgement of God. It is
the same thing to say, "By God this is so," as to say, "May God punish
me if it is not so!"

He, finally, does an injury to other men. For there can be no lasting
society unless men believe one
another. Matters that are doubtful may be confirmed by oaths: "An oath
in confirmation puts an end
to all controversy."[7] Therefore, he who violates this precept does
injury to God, is cruel to
himself, and harmful to other men.

59

Sometimes "vain" signifies useless: "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of
men, that they are vain."[8]

God's name, therefore, is taken in vain when it is used to confirm
vain things.

In the Old Law it was forbidden to swear falsely: "Thou shalt not take
the name of the Lord thy God
in vain."[9] And Christ forbade the taking of oaths except in case of
necessity: "You have heard that
it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not forswear thyself. . . . But I say to you not to swear at all."[10] And the reason for this is that in no part of our body are we so weak as in the tongue, for "the tongue no man can tame."[11] And thus even in light matter one can perjure himself. "Let your speech be: Yea, yea; No, no. But I say to you not to swear at all."[12] Note well that an oath is like medicine, which is never taken continually but only in times of necessity. Hence, the Lord adds: "And that which is over and above these is evil."[13] "Let not the mouth be accustomed to swearing, for in it there are many falls. And let not the name of God be usual in thy mouth, and meddle not with the names of saints. For thou shalt not escape free from them."[14] Sometimes "in vain" means sin or injustice: "O ye sons of men, how long will you be dull of heart? Why do you love vanity?"[15] Therefore, he who swears to commit a sin, takes the name of his God in vain. Justice consists in doing good and avoiding evil. Therefore, if you take an oath to steal or commit some crime of this sort, you sin against justice. And although you must not keep this oath, you are still guilty of perjury. Herod did this against John.[16] It is likewise against justice when one swears not to do some good act, as not to enter a church or a religious community. And although this oath, too, is not binding, yet, despite this, the person himself is a perjurer.

CONDITIONS OF A LAWFUL OATH

One cannot, therefore, swear to a falsehood, or without good reason, or in any way against justice: "And thou shalt swear: As the Lord liveth, in truth, and in judgement and in justice."[17] Sometimes "vain" also means foolish: "All men are vain, in whom there is not the knowledge of God."[18] Accordingly, he who takes the name of God foolishly, by blasphemy, takes the name of God in vain: "And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, dying let him die."[19]

TAKING GOD'S NAME JUSTLY

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." However, the name of God may be taken for six purposes. First, to confirm something that is said, as in an oath. In this we show God alone is the first Truth, and also we show due reverence to God. For this reason it was commanded in the Old Law that one must not swear except by God.[20] They who
swore otherwise violated this order: "By the name of strange gods you shall not swear."[21] Although at times one swears by creatures, nevertheless, it must be known that such is the same as swearing by God. When you swear by your soul or your head, it is as if you bind yourself to be punished by God. Thus: "But I call God to witness upon my soul."[22] And when you swear by the Gospel, you swear by God who gave the Gospel. But they sin who swear either by God or by the Gospel for any trivial reason.
The second purpose is that of sanctification. Thus, Baptism sanctifies, for as St. Paul says: "But you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Spirit of God."[23] Baptism, however, does not have power except through the invocation of the Trinity: "But Thou, O Lord, art among us, and Thy name is called upon by us."[24]
The third purpose is the expulsion of our adversary; hence, before Baptism we renounce the devil: "Only let Thy name be called upon us; take away our reproach."[25] Wherefore, if one return to his sins, the name of God has been taken in vain.
Fourthly, God's name is taken in order to confess it: "How then shall they call on Him, in whom they have not believed?"[26] And again: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved."[27] First of all, we confess by word of mouth that we may show forth the glory of God: "And every one that calleth upon My name, I have created him for My glory."[28] Accordingly, if one says anything against the glory of God, he takes the name of God in vain. Secondly, we confess God's name by our works, when our very actions show forth God's glory: "That they may see your good works, and may glorify your Father who is in heaven."[29] "Through you the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles."[30] Fifthly it is taken for our defence: "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the just runneth to it and shall be exalted."[31] "In My name they shall cast out devils."[32] "There is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved."[33] Lastly, it is taken in order to make our works complete. Thus says the Apostle: "All whatsoever you do in word or work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."[34] The reason is because "our help is in the name of the Lord."[35] Sometimes it happens that one
begins a work imprudently by
starting with a vow, for instance, and then not completing either the
work or the vow. And this
again is taking God's name in vain. "If thou hast vowed anything to
God, defer not to pay it."[36]
"Vow and pay to the Lord your God; all ye that are round about Him
bring presents."[37] "For an
unfaithful and foolish promise displeaseth Him."[38]
(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES
1. "He who requires that honour be paid Him, also demands that we
speak of Him with reverence,
and He forbids the contrary. . . . There are those who are so blinded
by darkness of error as not to
fear to blaspheme His name, whom the Angels glorify. Men are not
deterred by this Commandment
from shamelessly and daringly outraging His divine majesty every day,
or rather every hour and
moment of the day. Who does not know that every assertion is
accompanied with an oath and teems
with curses and imprecations? To such lengths has this impiety been
carried that one scarcely buys
or sells, or transacts ordinary business of any sort, without having
recourse to swearing, and who,
even in matters the most unimportant and trivial, does not profane the
most holy name of God
thousands of times" ("Roman Catechism," "Second Commandment," 2). See
also teaching of St.
Thomas in "Summa Theol.," II-II, Q. lxxxix, art. 3, 5, 6.
2. Ps. xi. 3.
4. "Ibid.," xiii. 3.
6. Ps. v. 7.
7. Heb., vi. 16.
8. Ps. xciii. 11.
61
9. Deut., v. 11.
10. Matt., v. 33-34.
11. James, iii. 8.
12. Matt., v. 34, 37. "It cannot be stated that these words condemn
oaths universally and under all
circumstances, since the Apostles and Our Lord Himself made frequent
use of oaths (Deut., vi. 13;
Ps. lxii. 12; II Cor., i. 23; Philem., 8; Apoc., x. 6). The object of
the Lord was rather to reprove the
perverse opinion of the Jews, which was to the effect that the only
thing to be avoided in an oath
was a lie. . . . For oaths have been instituted on account of human
frailty. They bespeak the
inconstancy of him who takes it or the stubbornness of him who refuses to believe without it.

However, an oath can be justified by necessity. When Our Lord says, 'Let your speech be: Yea, yea; No, no,' He evidently forbids the habit of swearing in familiar conversation and on trivial matters" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 19).

14. Ecclus., xxiii. 9, 10.
15. Ps. iv. 3.
17. Jerem., iv. 2. Although to constitute an oath it is sufficient to call God to witness, yet to make a holy and just oath many other conditions are required . . . . The words [of Jeremias, cited above] briefly sum up all the conditions that constitute the perfection of an oath, namely, truth, judgement, justice ("Roman Catechism., "loc. cit.," 11).

18. Wis., xiii. 1.
19. Levit., xxiv. 16.
22. Cor., i. 23.
23. I Cor., vi. 11.
29. Matt., v. 16.

62
31. Prov., xviii. 10.
32. Mark, xvi. 17.
34. Col., iii. 17.
35. Ps. cxxiii. 8.
36. Eccles., v. 3.
37. Ps. lxxv. 12.
38. Eccles., v. 3.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT: "Remember that You Keep Holy the Sabbath Day." This is the Third Commandment of the law, and very suitably is it so. For we are first commanded to adore God in our hearts, and the Commandment is to worship one God: "Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me." In the Second Commandment we are told to reverence God by word: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." The Third commands us to reverence God by act. It is: "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day." God
wished that a certain day be set aside on which men direct their minds to the service of the Lord.

REASONS FOR THIS COMMANDMENT
There are five reasons for this Commandment. The first reason was to put aside error, for the Holy Spirit saw that in the future some men would say that the world had always existed. "In the last days there shall come deceitful scoffers, walking after their own lusts, saying: Where is His promise or His coming? For since the time that the fathers slept, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation. For this they are willfully ignorant of, that the heavens were before, and the earth out of water, and through water, created by the word of God."[2] God, therefore, wished that one day should be set aside in memory of the fact that He created all things in six days, and that on the seventh day He rested from the creation of new creatures. This is why the Lord placed this Commandment in the law, saying: "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day."
The Jews kept holy the Sabbath in memory of the first creation; but Christ at His coming brought about a new creation. For by the first creation an earthly man was created, and by the second a heavenly man was formed: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." This new creation is through grace, which came by the Resurrection: "That as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, so shall we also be in the likeness of His resurrection." And thus, because the Resurrection took place on Sunday, we celebrate that day, even as the Jews observed the Sabbath on account of the first creation.
The second reason for this Commandment is to instruct us in our faith in the Redeemer. For the flesh of Christ was not corrupted in the sepulchre, and thus it is said: "Moreover My flesh also shall rest in hope." "Nor wilt Thou give Thy holy one to see corruption." Wherefore, God wished that the Sabbath should be observed, and that just as the sacrifices of the Old Law signified the death of Christ, so should the quiet of the Sabbath signify the rest of His body in the sepulchre. But
we do not now observe these sacrifices, because with the advent of the reality and the truth, figures of it must cease, just as the darkness is dispelled with the rising of the sun. Nevertheless, we keep the Saturdays in veneration of the Blessed Virgin, in whom remained a firm faith on that Saturday while Christ was dead.

The third reason is that this Commandment was given to strengthen and foreshadow the fulfillment of the promise of rest. For rest indeed was promised to us: "And it shall come to pass on that day, that when God shall give thee rest from thy labor, and from thy vexation, and from the hard bondage, wherewith thou didst serve before." "My people shall sit in the beauty of peace, and in the tabernacle of confidence, and in wealthy rest."

We hope for rest from three things: from the labors of the present life, from the struggles of temptations, and from the servitude of the devil. Christ promised this rest to all those who will come to Him: "Come to Me, all ye that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take up My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart; and you shall find rest to your souls. For My yoke is sweet and My burden light."

However, the Lord, as we know, worked for six days and on the seventh He rested, because it is necessary to do a perfect work: "Behold with your eyes how I have labored a little, and have found much rest to Myself." For the period of eternity exceeds the present time incomparably more than a thousand years exceeds one day.

Fourthly, this Commandment was given for the increase of our love: "For the corruptible body is a load upon the soul." And man always tends downwards towards earthly things unless he takes means to raise himself above them. It is indeed necessary to have a certain time for this; in fact, some do this continually: "I will bless the Lord at all times, His praise shall ever be in my mouth."[13] And again: "Pray without ceasing."[14] These shall enjoy the everlasting Sabbath.

There are others who do this (i.e., excite love for God) during a certain portion of the day: "Seven times a day I have given praise to Thee."[15] And some, in order to avoid being entirely apart from God, find it necessary to have a fixed day, lest they become too lukewarm in their love of God: "If you call the Sabbath delightful . . . then shalt thou be delighted in the Lord."[16] Again: "Then shalt
thou abound in delights of the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face to
God."[17] And accordingly
this day is not set aside for the sole exercise of games, but to
praise and pray to the Lord God.
Wherefore, St. Augustine says that it is a lesser evil to plough than
to play on this day.[18]
Lastly, we are given this Commandment in order to exercise works of
kindliness to those who are
subject to us. For some are so cruel to themselves and to others that
they labor ceaselessly all on
account of money. This is true especially of the Jews, who are most
avaricious. "Observe the day of
the Sabbath to sanctify it . . . that thy man-servant and thy maid-
servant may rest, even as
thyself."[19] This Commandment, therefore, was given for all these
reasons.
FROM WHAT WE SHOULD ABSTAIN ON THE SABBATH
"Remember that you keep holy (sanctify) the Sabbath day." We have
already said that, as the Jews
celebrated the Sabbath, so do we Christians observe the Sunday and all
principal feasts. Let us now
see in what way we should keep these days. We ought to know that God
did not say to "keep" the
Sabbath, but to remember to keep it holy. The word "holy" may be taken
in two ways. Sometimes
"holy" (sanctified) is the same as pure: "But you are washed, but you
are sanctified"[20] (that is,
made holy). Then again at times "holy" is said of a thing consecrated
to the worship of God, as, for
instance, a place, a season, vestments, and the holy vessels.
Therefore, in these two ways we ought
to celebrate the feasts, that is, both purely and by giving ourselves
over to divine service.
We shall consider two things regarding this Commandment. First, what
should be avoided on a
feast day, and secondly, what we should do. We ought to avoid three
things. The first is servile
work.
Avoidance of Servile Work.--"Neither do ye any work; sanctify the
Sabbath day."[21] And so also
it is said in the Law: "You shall do no servile work therein."[22]
Now, servile work is bodily work;
whereas "free work" (i.e., non-servile work) is done by the mind, for
instance, the exercise of the
intellect and such like. And one cannot be servilely bound to do this
kind of work.
When Servile Work Is Lawful.--We ought to know, however, that servile
work can be done on the
Sabbath for four reasons. The first reason is necessity. Wherefore,
the Lord excused the disciples
plucking the ears of corn on the Sabbath, as we read in St. Matthew
(xii. 3-5). The second reason is
when the work is done for the service of the Church; as we see in the
same Gospel how the priests
did all things necessary in the Temple on the Sabbath day. The third
reason is for the good of our
neighbour; for on the Sabbath the Saviour cured one having a withered
hand, and He refuted the
Jews who reprimanded Him, by citing the example of the sheep in a pit
("ibid."). And the fourth
reason is the authority of our superiors. Thus, God commanded the Jews
to circumcise on the
Sabbath.[13]

Avoidance of Sin and Negligence on the Sabbath.--Another thing to be
avoided on the Sabbath is
sin: "Take heed to your souls, and carry no burdens on the Sabbath
day."[24] This weight and
burden on the soul is sin: "My iniquities as a heavy burden are become
heavy upon me."[25] Now,
sin is a servile work because "whosoever committing sin is the servant
of sin."[26] Therefore, when
it is said, "You shall do no servile work therein,"[27] it can be
understood of sin. Thus, one violates
this commandment as often as one commits sin on the Sabbath; and so
both by working and by sin
God is offended.[28] "The Sabbaths and other festivals I will not
abide." And why? "Because your
assemblies are wicked. My soul hateth your new moon[29] and your
solemnities; they are become
troublesome to me."[30]
Another thing to avoid on the Sabbath is idleness: "For idleness hath
taught much evil."[31] St.
Jerome says: "Always do some good work, and the devil will always find
you occupied."[32]
Hence, it is not good for one to keep only the principal feasts, if on
the others one would remain
idle. "The King's honour loveth judgment,"[33] that is to say,
discretion. Wherefore, we read that
certain of the Jews were in hiding, and their enemies fell upon them;
but they, believing that they
were not able to defend themselves on the Sabbath, were overcome and
killed.[34] The same thing
happens to many who are idle on the feast days: "The enemies have seen
her, and have mocked at
her Sabbaths."[35] But all such should do as those Jews did, of whom
it is said: "Whosoever shall
come up against us to fight on the Sabbath day, we will fight against
him."[36]

WITH WHAT THE SABBATH AND FEASTS SHOULD BE OCCUPIED
"Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day." We have already said that man must keep the feast days holy; and that "holy" is considered in two ways, namely, "pure" and "consecrated to God." Moreover, we have indicated what things we should abstain from on these days. Now it must be shown with what we should occupy ourselves, and they are three in number.

The Offering of Sacrifice.--The first is the offering of sacrifices.[37] In the Book of Numbers (xxviii) it is written how God ordered that on each day there be offered one lamb in the morning and another in the evening, but on the Sabbath day the number should be doubled. And this showed that on the Sabbath we should offer sacrifice to God from all that we possess: "All things are Thine; and we have given Thee what we received from Thy hand."[38] We should offer, first of all, our soul to God, being sorry for our sins: "A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit;"[39] and also pray for His blessings: "Let my prayer be directed as incense in Thy sight."[40] Feast days were instituted for that spiritual joy which is the effect of prayer. Therefore, on such days our prayers should be multiplied.

Secondly, we should offer our body, by mortifying it with fasting:[41] "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercy of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice,"[42] and also by praising God: "The sacrifice of praise shall honour Me."[43] And thus on these days our hymns should be more numerous. Thirdly, we should sacrifice our possessions by giving alms: "And do not forget to do good, and to impart; for by such sacrifice God's favor is obtained."[44] And this alms ought to be more than on other days because the Sabbath is a day of common joys: "Send portions to them that have not prepared for themselves, because it is the holy day of the Lord."[45]

Hearing of God's Word.--Our second duty on the Sabbath is to be eager to hear the word of God. This the Jews did daily: "The voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath."[46] Therefore Christians, whose justice should be more perfect, ought to come together on the Sabbath to hear sermons and participate in the services of the Church! "He that is God, heareth the words of God."[47] We likewise ought to speak with profit to others: "Let no evil speech proceed from your
mouth; but that which is good unto sanctification."[48] These two practices are good for the soul of the sinner, because they change his heart for the better: "Are not My words as a fire, saith the Lord, and as a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"[49] The opposite effect is had on those, even the perfect, who neither speak nor hear profitable things: "Evil communications corrupt good manners. Awake, ye just, and sin not."[50] "Thy words have I hidden in my heart."[51] God's word enlightens the ignorant: "Thy word is a lamp to my feet."[52] It inflames the lukewarm: "The word of the Lord inflamed him."[53]

THE SPIRITUAL SABBATH
The contemplation of divine things may be exercised on the Sabbath. However, this is for the more perfect.[54] "O taste, and see that the Lord is sweet,"[55] and this is because of the quiet of the soul. For just as the tired body desires rest, so also does the soul. But the soul's proper rest is in God: "Be Thou unto me a God, a protector, and a house of refuge."[56] "There remaineth therefore a day of rest for the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, the same also hath rested from his works, as God did from His."[57] When I go into my house, I shall repose myself with her" (i.e., Wisdom).[58]

However, before the soul arrives at this rest, three other rests must precede. The first is the rest from the turmoil of sin: "But the wicked are like the raging sea which cannot rest."[59] The second rest is from the passions of the flesh, because "the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh."[60] The third is rest from the occupations of the world: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and art troubled about many things."[61]

THE HEAVENLY SABBATH[62]
And then after all these things the soul rests peacefully in God: "If thou call the Sabbath delightful . . . then shalt thou be delighted in the Lord,"[63] The Saints gave up everything to possess this rest, "for it is a pearl of great price which a man having found, hid it, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."[64] This rest in truth is eternal life and heavenly joy: "This is my rest for ever and ever; here will I dwell, for I have chosen it."[65] And to this rest may the Lord bring us all!

(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES
1. St. Thomas also treats of this Commandment in the "Summa
Theologica," I- ll Q. cii, art. 4, 10;
"ibid.," II-II, Q. cxxii, art. 4.
2. II Peter, iii. 3-5.
3. Gal., vi. 15.
4. Rom., vi. 4-5.
5. "The Apostles, therefore, resolved to consecrate the first of the
seven days of the week to the divine worship, and they called it 'the Lord's Day.' St. John makes mention of 'the Lord's Day' in the
 Apocalypse (i. 10), and St. Paul commands collections to be made 'on
the first day of the week' (I Cor., xvi. 2). . . . From all this we learn that even then the Lord's Day was kept holy in the Church . .
. . . The Church of God has thought it well to transfer the celebration
and observance of the Sabbath to Sunday. On that day light first shone on the world when the Lord arose on that day, and the gate
of eternal life was thrown open to us and we were called out of
darkness into light. . . . We also
learn from the Holy Scriptures that the first day of the week was held sacred for other reasons, viz.,
on that day the creation began, and on that day the Holy Ghost
descended upon the Apostles"
("Roman Catechism." Third Commandment, 7, 18).
6. Ps. xv. 9.
8. Isa., xiv. 3.
11. Ecclus., li. 35.
12. Wis., ix. 15.
13. Ps. xxxiii. 2.
15. Ps. cxviii. 164.
18. This is a reference to the great public spectacles and games.
20. I Cor., vi. 11.
67
22. Levit., xxiii. 25.
25. Ps. xxxvii. 5.
26. John, viii. 34.
27. Levit., iii. 25.
28. St. Thomas' comparison of sin and servile work follows from the
words: "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin," quoted above. This does not mean that commission of sin on the Sabbath changes the species of the sin or gravely increases its malice.

29. This refers to the celebration and special sacrifices offered on the first day of the month. The Lord here is displeased not with the external ritual itself, but with the lack of proper internal dispositions on the part of the Jews.

30. Isa., i. 13.
31. Ecclus., xxxiii. 29.
32. "Ep. ad Rusticum."
33. Ps. xcviii. 4.
34. I Mach, ii. 31-38.
35. Lam., i. 7.
36. I Mach., ii. 41.
37. For the Catholic, of course, the great Sacrifice is that of the Mass. And we are bound to assist at Mass on Sundays and Holydays of obligation unless we are excused for serious reason. "The pastor should not omit to teach the faithful what words and actions they should perform on the festival days. These are: to go to church and there with true piety and devotion assist at the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; and to approach frequently the Sacraments of the Church which were instituted for our salvation" ("Roman Catechism," "Third Commandment," 25).
39. Ps. l. 19.
40. Ps. cxl. 2.
41. St. Thomas here refers not to the "fast of affliction" ("jejunium afflictionis") but to the "fast of joy" ("ijeunium exultationis"), which is a joyful lifting of the mind to higher things and proceeds from the Holy Ghost who is the spirit of liberty (cfr. "Summa Theol.," III, Q. cxlvii, art. 5).
42 Rom., xii. 1.
68
43. Ps. xlix. 23.
44. Heb., xiii. 16.
45. II Esdras, viii. 10.
46. Acts, xiii. 27.
47. John, viii. 47.
49. Jerem., xxiii. 29.
50. I Cor., xv. 33.
51. Ps. cxviii. 11.
52. "Ibid.," 105.
53. Ps. civ. 19.  
54. "The spiritual Sabbath consists in a holy and mystical rest wherein, the carnal man (vetus homo, Rom., vi. 4) being buried with Christ, the new man is renewed to life and carefully applies himself to exercise the spirit of Christian piety" ("Roman Catechism," "Third Commandment," 15).  
55. Ps. xxxiii. 9.  
56. Ps. xxx. 3.  
57. Heb., iv. 9-10.  
58. Wis., viii. 16.  
60. Gal., v. 17.  
62. "The heavenly Sabbath, as St. Cyril observes on the words of St. Paul, 'There remaineth therefore a day of rest for the people of God' (Eph., v. 8), is that life in which, living with Christ, we shall experience all joy and all sin will be wiped away ("In Joan.," lib. 4). And in this vision of God the souls of the saints shall obtain every good" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 16).  
64. Matt., xiii. 44-46.  
65. Ps. cxxxi. 14.  
69  
Perfection for man consists in the love of God and of neighbour. Now, the three Commandments which were written on the first tablet pertain to the love of God; for the love of neighbour there were the seven Commandments on the second tablet. But we must "love, not in word nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth."[2] For a man to love thus, he must do two things, namely, avoid evil and do good. Certain of the Commandments prescribe good acts, while others forbid evil deeds. And we must also know that to avoid evil is in our power; but we are incapable of doing good to everyone. Thus, St. Augustine says that we should love all, but we are not bound to do good to all. But among those to whom we are bound to do good are those in some way united to us. Thus, "if any man have not care of his own and especially of those of his house, he hath denied the faith."[3] Now, amongst all our relatives there are none closer than our father and mother. "We ought to love God first," says St. Ambrose, "then our father and mother." Hence, God has given us the
Commandment: "Honour thy father and thy mother."[4]
The Philosopher also gives another reason for this honour to parents, in that we cannot make an equal return to our parents for the great benefits they have granted to us; and, therefore, an offended parent has the right to send his son away, but the son has no such right.[5] Parents, indeed, give their children three things. The first is that they brought them into being: "Honour thy father, and forget not the groanings of thy mother; remember that thou hadst not been born but through them."[6] Secondly, they furnished nourishment and the support necessary for life. For a child comes naked into the world, as Job relates (i. 24), but he is provided for by his parents. The third is instruction: "We have had fathers of our flesh for instructors."[7] "Hast thou children? Instruct them."[8]
Parents, therefore, should give instruction without delay to their children, because "a young man according to his way, even when he is old will not depart from it."[9] And again: "It is good for a man when he hath borne the yoke from his youth."[10] Now, the instruction which Tobias gave his son (Tob., iv) was this: to fear the Lord and to abstain from sin. This is indeed contrary to those parents who approve of the misdeeds of their children. Children, therefore, receive from their parents birth, nourishment, and instruction.

WHAT CHILDREN OWE PARENTS
Now, because we owe our birth to our parents, we ought to honour them more than any other superiors, because from such we receive only temporal things: "He that feareth the Lord honoreth his parents, and will serve them as his masters that brought him into the world. Honour thy father in work and word and all patience, that a blessing may come upon thee from him."[11] And in doing this you shall also honour thyself, because "the glory of a man is from honour of his father, and a father without honour is the disgrace of his son."[12]
Again, since we receive nourishment from our parents in our childhood, we must support them in their old age: "Son, support the old age of thy father, and grieve him not in his life. And if his understanding fail, have patience with him; and despise him not when thou art in thy strength. . . . Of what an evil fame is he that forsaketh his father! And he is cursed of God that angereth his
mother."[13] For the humiliation of those who act contrary to this, Cassiodorus relates how young storks, when the parents have lost their feathers by approaching old age and are unable to find suitable food, make the parent storks comfortable with their own feathers, and bring back food for their worn-out bodies. Thus, by this affectionate exchange the young ones repay the parents for what they received when they were young."[14]

We must obey our parents, for they have instructed us. "Children, obey your parents in all things."[15] This excepts, of course, those things which are contrary to God. St. Jerome says that the only loyalty in such cases is to be cruel:[16] "If any man hate not his father and mother . . . he cannot be My disciple."[17] This is to say that God is in the truest sense our Father: "Is not He thy Father who hath possessed thee, and hath made thee, and created thee?"[18]

REWARDS FOR KEEPING THIS COMMANDMENT
"Honour thy father and thy mother." Among all the Commandments, this one only has the additional words: "that thou mayest be long-lived upon the land." The reason for this is lest it be thought that there is no reward for those who honour their parents, seeing that it is a natural obligation. Hence it must be known that five most desirable rewards are promised those who honour their parents.

Grace and Glory.--The first reward is grace for the present life, and glory in the life to come, which surely are greatly to be desired: "Honour thy father . . . that a blessing may come upon thee from God, and His blessing may remain in the latter end."[19] The very opposite comes upon those who dishonor their parents; indeed, they are cursed in the law by God.[20] It is also written: "He that is unjust in that which is little, is unjust also in that which is greater."[21] But this our natural life is as nothing compared with the life of grace. And so, therefore, if you do not acknowledge the blessing of the natural life which you owe to your parents, then you are unworthy of the life of grace, which is greater, and all the more so for the life of glory, which is the greatest of all blessings.

A Long Life.--The second reward is a long life: "That thou mayest be long-lived upon the land."

For "he that honoreth his father shall enjoy a long life."[22] Now, that is a long life which is a full
life, and it is not observed in time but in activity, as the Philosopher observes. Life, however, is full inasmuch as it is a life of virtue; so a man who is virtuous and holy enjoys a long life even if in body he dies young: "Being perfect in a short space, he fulfilled a long time; for his soul pleased God."[23] Thus, for example, he is a good merchant who does as much business in one day as another would do in a year. And note well that it sometimes happens that a long life may lead up to a spiritual as well as a bodily death, as was the case with Judas. Therefore, the reward for keeping this Commandment is a long life for the body. But the very opposite, namely, death is the fate of those who dishonor their parents. We receive our life from them; and just as the soldiers owe fealty to the king, and lose their rights in case of any treachery, so also they who dishonor their parents deserve to forfeit their lives: "The eye that mocketh at his father and that despiseth the labor of his mother in bearing him, let the ravens pick it out, and the young eagles eat it."[24] Here "the ravens" signify officials of kings and princes, who in turn are the "young eagles." But if it happens that such are not bodily punished, they nevertheless cannot escape death of the soul. It is not well, therefore, for a father to give too much power to his children: "Give not to son or wife, brother or friend, power over thee while thou livest; and give not thy estate to another, lest thou repent."[25]

The third reward is to have in turn grateful and pleasing children. For a father naturally treasures his children, but the contrary is not always the case: "He that honoreth his father shall have joy in his own children."[26] Again: "With what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again."[27]

The fourth reward is a praiseworthy reputation: "For the glory of a man is from the honour of his father."[28] And again: "Of what an evil fame is he that forsaketh his father?"[29] A fifth reward is riches: "The father's blessing establisheth the houses of his children, but the mother's curse rooteth up the foundation."[30]

THE DIFFERENT APPLICATIONS OF FATHER
"Honour thy father and thy mother." A man is called father not only by reason of generation, but also for other reasons, and to each of these there is due a certain reverence. Thus, the Apostles and the Saints are called fathers because of their doctrine and their exemplification of faith: "For if you
have ten thousands instructors in Christ, yet not many fathers. For in Christ Jesus, by the gospel, I have begotten you."[31] And again: "Let us now praise men of renown and our fathers in their generation."[32] However, let us praise them not in word only, but by imitating them; and we do this if nothing is found in us contrary to what we praise in them. Our superiors in the Church are also called fathers; and they too are to be respected as the ministers of God: "Remember your prelates, ... whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."[33] And again: "He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me."[34] We honour them by showing them obedience: "Obey your prelates, and be subject to them."[35] And also by paying them tithes: "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and give Him of the first of thy fruits."[36] Rulers and kings are called fathers: "Father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, surely thou shouldst have done it."[37] We call them fathers because their whole care is the good of their people. And we honour them by being subject to them: "Let every soul be subject to higher powers."[38] We should be subject to them not merely through fear, but through love; and not merely because it is reasonable, but because of the dictates of our conscience. Because "there is no power but from God."[39] And so to all such we must render what we owe them: "Tribute, to whom tribute is due; custom, to whom custom; fear, to whom fear; honour, to whom honour."[40] And again: "My son, fear the Lord and the king."[41] Our benefactors also are called fathers: "Be merciful to the fatherless as a father."[42] He, too, is like a father [who gives his bond] of whom it is said: "Forget not the kindness of thy surety."[43] On the other hand, the thankless shall receive a punishment such as is written: "The hope of the unthankful shall melt away as the winter's ice."[44] Old men also are called fathers: "Ask thy father, and he will declare to thee; thy elders and they will tell thee."[45] And again: "Rise up before the hoary head, and honour the person of the aged man."[46] "In the company of great men take not upon thee to speak; and when the ancients are present, speak not much."[47] "Hear in silence, and for thy reverence good grace shall come to thee."[48] Now, all these fathers must be honored,
because they all resemble to some degree our Father who is in heaven; and of all of them it is said:
"He that despiseth you, despiseth Me."[49]
(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES
1. Exod., xx. 12; Deut., v. 16.
2. I John, iii. 18.
3. I Tim., v. 8.
4. St. Thomas also treats of the Fourth Commandment in "Summa Theol."
   II-II, QQ. cxxii, ci.
5. Aristotle, "Ethics."
7. Heb., xii. 9.
8. Ecclus., vii. 25.
10. Lam., iii. 27.
11. Ecclus. iii. 10.
14. Epist., lib. II.
15. Col., iii. 20.
16. "Ad Heliod."
20. Deut., xxvii. 16.
22. Ecclus., iii. 7.
23. Wis., iv. 13.
27. Matt., vii. 2.
31. I Cor., iv. 15.
32. Ecclus., xlii. 1.
33. Heb., xiiii. 7.
34. Luke, x. 16.
35. Heb., xiiii. 17.
36. Prov., iii. 9.
37. IV Kings, v. 13.
38. Rom., xiiii. 1.
39. "Ibid.," 7
40. "Ibid."
41. Prov., xxiv. 21.
42. Ecclus., iv. 10.
44. Wis., xvi. 29.
45. Deut., xxxii. 7.
46. Lev., xix. 32.
47. Ecclus., xxxii. 13.
49. Luke, x. 16.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT: "Thou Shalt Not Kill."

THE SIN OF KILLING

In the divine law which tells us we must love God and our neighbour, it is commanded that we not only do good but also avoid evil. The greatest evil that can be done to one's neighbour is to take his life. This is prohibited in the Commandment: "Thou shalt not kill."[1] Killing of Animals Is Lawful.--In connection with this Commandment there are three errors. Some have said that it is not permitted to kill even brute animals. But this is false, because it is not a sin to use that which is subordinate to the power of man. It is in the natural order that plants be the nourishment of animals, certain animals nourish others, and all for the nourishment of man: "Even the green herbs have I delivered them all to you."[2] The Philosopher says that hunting is like a just war.[3] And St. Paul says: "Whatsoever is sold in the shambles eat; asking no questions for conscience' sake."[4] Therefore, the sense of the Commandment is: "Thou shalt not kill men."

The Execution of Criminals.--Some have held that the killing of man is prohibited altogether. They believe that judges in the civil courts are murderers, who condemn men to death according to the laws. Against this St. Augustine says that God by this Commandment does not take away from Himself the right to kill. Thus, we read: "I will kill and I will make to live."[5] It is, therefore, lawful for a judge to kill according to a mandate from God, since in this God operates, and every law is a command of God: "By Me kings reign, and lawgivers decree just things."[6] And again: "For if thou dost that which is evil, fear; for he beareth not the sword in vain. Because he is God's minister."[7] To Moses also it was said: "Wizards thou shalt not suffer to live."[8] And thus that which is lawful to God is lawful for His ministers when they act by His mandate. It is evident that God who is the Author of laws, has every right to inflict death on account of sin. For "the wages of sin is death."[9] Neither does His minister sin in inflicting that
punishment. The sense, therefore, of "Thou shalt not kill" is that one shall not kill by one's own authority.[10] Suicide is Prohibited.--There are those who held that although this Commandment forbids one to kill another, yet it is lawful to kill oneself. Thus, there are the examples of Samson (Judges, xvi) and Cato and certain virgins who threw themselves into the flames, as St. Augustine relates in "The City of God."[11] But he also explains this in the words: "He who kills himself, certainly kills a man."[12] If it is not lawful to kill except by the authority of God, then it is not lawful to kill oneself except either upon the authority of God or instructed by the Holy Ghost, as was the case of Samson. Therefore, "thou shalt not kill."[13] Other Meanings of "To Kill."--It ought to be known that to kill a man may happen in several ways. Firstly, by one's own hand: "Your hands are full of blood."[14] This is not only against charity, which tells us to love our neighbour as ourself: "No murderer hath eternal life abiding in himself."[15] But also it is against nature, for "every beast loveth its like."[16] And so it is said: "He that striketh a man with a will to kill him, shall be put to death."

[17] He who does this is more cruel than the wolf, of which Aristotle says that one wolf will not eat of the flesh of another wolf.[18] Secondly, one kills another by word of mouth. This is done by giving counsel to anyone against another by provocation, accusation, or detraction: "The sons of men whose teeth are weapons and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword."[19] Thirdly, by lending aid, as it is written: "My son, walk not thou with them... for their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood."[20] Fourthly, by consent: "They are worthy of death, not only they that do them, but they also that consent to them that do them."[21] Lastly, one kills another by giving a partial consent when the act could be completely prevented: "Deliver them that are led to death;"[22] or, if one can prevent it, yet does not do so through negligence or avarice. Thus, St. Ambrose says: "Give food to him that is dying of hunger; if you do not, you are his murderer." We have already considered the killing of the body, but some kill the soul also by drawing it away from the life of grace, namely, by inducing it to commit mortal sin: "He was a murderer from the beginning,"[23] that is, in so far as he drew men into sin. Others,
however, slay both body and soul. This is possible in two ways: first, by the murder of one with child, whereby the child is killed both in body and soul; and, secondly, by committing suicide.

THE SIN OF ANGER
Why We Are Forbidden to Be Angry.--In the Gospel of St. Matthew (chapter V) Christ taught that our justice should be greater than the justice of the Old Law. This means that Christians should observe the Commandments of the law more perfectly than the Jews observed them. The reason is that greater effort deserves a better reward: "He who soweth sparingly, shall also reap sparingly."[24] The Old Law promised a temporary and earthly reward: "If you be willing and will hearken to Me, you shall eat the good things of the land."[25] But in the New Law heavenly and eternal things are promised. Therefore, justice, which is the observance of the Commandments, should be more generous because a greater reward is expected.

The Lord mentioned this Commandment in particular among the others when He said: "You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not kill. . . . But I say to you that anyone who is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment."[26] By this is meant the penalty which the law prescribes: "If any man kill his neighbour on set purpose, and by lying in wait for him; thou shalt take him away from My altar, that he may die."[27]

Ways of Avoiding Anger.--Now, there are five ways to avoid being angry. The first is that one be not quickly provoked to anger: "Let every man be swift to hear, but slow to speak and slow to anger."[28] The reason is that anger is a sin, and is punished by God. But is all anger contrary to virtue? There are two opinions about this. The Stoics said that the wise man is free from all passions; even more, they maintained that true virtue consisted in perfect quiet of soul. The Peripatetics, on the other hand, held that the wise man is subject to anger, but in a moderate degree. This is the more accurate opinion. It is proved firstly by authority, in that the Gospel shows us that these passions were attributed to Christ, in whom was the full fountainhead of wisdom. Then, secondly, it is proved from reason. If all the passions were opposed to virtue, then there would be some powers of the soul which would be without good purpose; indeed, they would be positively
harmful to man, since they would have no acts in keeping with them. Thus, the irascible and concupiscible powers would be given to man to no purpose. It must, therefore, be concluded that sometimes anger is virtuous, and sometimes it is not.

Three Considerations of Anger.--We see this if we consider anger in three different ways. First, as it exists solely in the judgment of reason, without any perturbation of soul; and this is more properly not anger but judgment. Thus, the Lord punishing the wicked is said to be angry: "I will bear the wrath of the Lord because I have sinned against Him."[29]

Secondly, anger is considered as a passion. This is in the sensitive appetite, and is twofold. Sometimes it is ordered by reason or it is restrained within proper limits by reason, as when one is angry because it is justly fitting to be angry and within proper limits. This is an act of virtue and is called righteous anger. Thus, the Philosopher says that meekness is in no way opposed to anger. This kind of anger then is not a sin.

There is a third kind of anger which overthrows the judgment of reason and is always sinful, sometimes mortally and sometimes venially. And whether it is one or the other will depend on that object to which the anger incites, which is sometimes mortal, sometimes venial. This may be mortal in two ways: either in its genus or by reason of the circumstances. For example, murder would seem to be a mortal sin in its genus, because it is directly opposite to a divine Commandment. Thus, consent to murder is a mortal sin in its genus, because if the act is a mortal sin, then the consent to the act will be also a mortal sin. Sometimes, however, the act itself is mortal in its genus, but, nevertheless, the impulse is not mortal, because it is without consent. This is the same as if one is moved by the impulse of concupiscence to fornication, and yet does not consent; one does not commit a sin. The same holds true of anger. For anger is really the impulse to avenge an injury which one has suffered. Now, if this impulse of the passion is so great that reason is weakened, then it is a mortal sin; if, however, reason is not so perverted by the passion as to give its full consent, then it will be a venial sin. On the other hand, if up to the moment of consent, the reason is not perverted by the passion, and consent is given without this perversion of reason, then there is no mortal sin. "Whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be in danger
of the judgment," must be understood of that impulse of passion tending to do injury to the extent that reason is perverted--and this impulse, inasmuch as it is consented to, is a mortal sin.

Why We Should Not Get Angry Easily.--The second reason why we should not be easily provoked to anger is because every man loves liberty and hates restraint. But he who is filled with anger is not master of himself: "Who can bear the violence of one provoked?"[30] And again: "A stone is heavy, and sand weighty, but the anger of a fool is heavier than both."[31] One should also take care that one does not remain angry over long: "Be ye angry, and sin not."[32] And: "Let not the sun go down upon your anger."[33] The reason for this is given in the Gospel by Our Lord: "Be at agreement with thy adversary betimes whilst thou art in the way with him; lest perhaps the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Amen, I say to thee, thou shalt not go out from hence till thou repay the last farthing."[34] We should beware lest our anger grow in intensity, having its beginning in the heart, and finally leading on to hatred. For there is this difference between anger and hatred, that anger is sudden, but hatred is long-lived and, thus, is a mortal sin: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer."[35] And the reason is because he kills both himself (by destroying charity) and another. Thus, St. Augustine in his "Rule" says: "Let there be no quarrels among you; or if they do arise, then let them end quickly, lest anger should grow into hatred, the mote becomes a beam, and the soul becomes a murderer."[36] Again: "A passionate man stirreth up strifes."[37] "Cursed be their fury, because it was stubborn, and their wrath, because it was cruel."[38] We must take care lest our wrath explode in angry words: "A fool immediately showeth his anger."[39] Now, angry words are twofold in effect; either they injure another, or they express one's own pride in oneself. Our Lord has reference to the first when He said: "And whosoever shall say to his brother: 'Thou fool,' shall be in danger of hell fire."[40] And He has reference to the latter in the words: "And he that shall say: 'Raca,' shall be in danger of the council."[41] Moreover: "A mild answer breaketh wrath, but a harsh word stirreth up fury."[42] Finally, we must beware lest anger provoke us to deeds. In all our
dealings we should observe two things, namely, justice and mercy; but anger hinders us in both: "For the anger of a man worketh not the justice of God."[43] For such a one may indeed be willing but his anger prevents him. A certain philosopher once said to a man who had offended him: "I would punish you, were I not angry." "Anger hath no mercy, nor fury when it breaketh forth."[45] And: "In their fury they slew a man."[46]

It is for all this that Christ taught us not only to beware of murder but also of anger. The good physician removes the external symptoms of a malady; and, furthermore, he even removes the very root of the illness, so that there will be no relapse. So also the Lord wishes us to avoid the beginnings of sins; and anger is thus to be avoided because it is the beginning of murder.

(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES

1. St. Thomas also treats of this Commandment in "Summa Theol.," II-II, Q. lxix. art. 2, 3; Q. cxii, art. 6. "The Lord points out (Matt., v. 21) the twofold force of this Commandment. The one is prohibitory and forbids us to kill; the other is mandatory and commands us to cultivate charity, peace, and friendship towards our enemies, to have peace with all men, and finally to suffer all things with patience" ("Roman Catechism," "Fifth Commandment," 2).

2. Gen., ix. 3
4. I Cor., x. 25.
6. Prov., viii. 15.
7. Rom., xiii. 4.
8. Exod., xxii. 18.
10. Killing in a just war and killing by accident are among the other exceptions to this Commandment. The soldier is guiltless who in a just war takes the life of an enemy, provided that he is not actuated by motives of ambition or cruelty, but by a pure desire to serve the interests of his country. . . . Again, death caused, not by intent or design, but by accident, is not murder" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 5-6).

12. "Ibid."
13.--"It is not lawful to take one's own life. No man possesses such
power over his own life as to be free to put himself to death. We find that the Commandment does not say, 'Thou shalt not kill another,' but simply, 'Thou shalt not kill' " ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.") 10).

15. John, iii. 15.
17. Exod., xxi. 12.
18. "De Animal.," IV.
19. Ps. lvi. 5.
20. Prov., i. 15-16.
21. Rom., i. 32.
22. Prov., xxiv. 11.
23. John, viii. 44.
24. II Cor., ix. 6.
25. Isa., i. 19.
27. Exod., xxi. 14. "The Gospel has taught us that it is unlawful even to be angry with anyone. . . . From these words [of Christ, cited above] it clearly follows that he who is angry with his brother is not free from sin, even though he does not display his wrath. So also he who gives indication of his anger sins grievously; and he who treats another with great harshness and hurls insults at him, sins even more grievously. This, however, is to be understood of cases in which no just cause of anger exists. God and His laws permit us to be angry when we correct the faults of those who are subject to us. But even in these cases the anger of a Christian should spring from stern duty and not from the impulse of passion, for we are temples of the Holy Ghost in which Jesus Christ may dwell" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.").
28. James, i. 19.
29. Mic., vii. 9.
30. Prov., xxvii. 4.
32. Ps. iv. 5.
34. Matt., v. 25, 26.
35. I John, iii. 15.
36. "Epist.," cxi.
37. Prov., xv. 18.
38. Gen., xlix. 7.
39. Prov., xlii. 16.
40. Matt., v. 22.
41. "Ibid."
THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT: "Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery."

After the prohibition of murder, adultery is forbidden. This is fitting, since husband and wife are as one body. "They shall be," says the Lord, "two in one flesh."[1]

Therefore, after an injury inflicted upon a man in his own person, none is so grave as that which is inflicted upon a person with whom one is joined.[2]

Adultery is forbidden both to the wife and the husband. We shall first consider the adultery of the wife, since in this seems to lie the greater sin, for a wife who commits adultery is guilty of three grave sins, which are implied in the following words: "So every woman that leaveth her husband, . . . first, she hath been unfaithful to the law of the Most High; and secondly, she hath offended against her husband; thirdly, she hath fornicated in adultery, and hath gotten her children of another man."

First, therefore, she has sinned by lack of faith, since she is unfaithful to the law wherein God has forbidden adultery. Moreover, she has spurned the ordinance of God: "What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder."[4] And also she has sinned against the institution or Sacrament. Because marriage is contracted before the eyes of the Church, and thereupon God is called, as it were, to witness a bond of fidelity which must be kept: "The Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth whom thou hast despised."[5]

Therefore, she has sinned against the law of God, against a precept of the Church and against a Sacrament of God.

Secondly, she sins by infidelity because she has betrayed her husband: "The wife hath not power of her own body: but the husband."[6] In fact, without the consent of the husband she cannot observe chastity. If adultery is committed, then, an act of treachery is perpetrated in that the wife gives herself to another, just as if a servant gave himself to another master: "She forsaketh the guide of her youth, and hath forgotten the covenant of her God."[7]

Thirdly, the adulteress commits the sin of theft in that she brings forth children from a man not her husband; and this is a most grave theft in that she expends her heredity upon children not her
husband's. Let it be noted that such a one should encourage her children to enter religion, or upon such a walk of life that they do not succeed in the property of her husband. Therefore, an adulteress is guilty of sacrilege, treachery and theft. Husbands, however, do not sin any less than wives, although they sometimes may salve themselves to the contrary. This is clear for three reasons. First, because of the equality which holds between husband and wife, for "the husband also hath not power of his own body, but the wife."[8] Therefore, as far as the rights of matrimony are concerned, one cannot act without the consent of the other. As an indication of this, God did not form woman from the foot or from the head, but from the rib of the man. Now, marriage was at no time a perfect state until the law of Christ came, because the Jew could have many wives, but a wife could not have many husbands; hence, equality did not exist.

The second reason is because strength is a special quality of the man, while the passion proper to the woman is concupiscence: "Ye husbands, likewise dwelling with them according to knowledge, giving honour to the female as to the weaker vessel."[9] Therefore, if you ask from your wife what you do not keep yourself, then you are unfaithful. The third reason is from the authority of the husband. For the husband is head of the wife, and as it is said: "Women may not speak in the church, . . . if they would learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home."[10] The husband is the teacher of his wife, and God, therefore, gave the Commandment to the husband. Now, as regards fulfillment of their duties, a priest who fails is more guilty than a layman, and a bishop more than a priest, because it is especially incumbent upon them to teach others. In like manner, the husband that commits adultery breaks faith by not obeying that which he ought.

WHY ADULTERY AND FORNICATION MUST BE AVOIDED
Thus, God forbids adultery both to men and women. Now, it must be known that, although some believe that adultery is a sin, yet they do not believe that simple fornication is a mortal sin. Against them stand the words of St. Paul: "For fornicators and adulterers God will judge."[11] And: "Do not err: neither fornicators, . . . nor adulterers, nor the effeminate, nor liers with mankind shall possess the kingdom of God."[12] But one is not excluded from the kingdom of
God except by mortal sin; therefore, fornication is a mortal sin. But one might say that there is no reason why fornication should be a mortal sin, since the body of the wife is not given, as in adultery. I say, however, if the body of the wife is not given, nevertheless, there is given the body of Christ which was given to the husband when he was sanctified in Baptism. If, then, one must not betray his wife, with much more reason must he not be unfaithful to Christ: "Know you not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them the members of a harlot? God forbid!"[13] It is heretical to say that fornication is not a mortal sin.

Moreover, it must be known that the Commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," not only forbids adultery but also every form of immodesty and impurity.[14] There are some who say that intercourse between married persons is not devoid of sin. But this is heretical, for the Apostle says: "Let marriage be honorable in all and the bed undefiled."[15] Not only is it devoid of sin, but for those in the state of grace it is meritorious for eternal life. Sometimes, however, it may be a venial sin, sometimes a mortal sin. When it is had with the intention of bringing forth offspring, it is an act of virtue. When it is had with the intent of rendering mutual comfort, it is an act of justice. When it is a cause of exciting lust, although within the limits of marriage, it is a venial sin; and when it goes beyond these limits, so as to intend intercourse with another if possible, it would be a mortal sin.

Adultery and fornication are forbidden for a number of reasons. First of all, because they destroy the soul: "He that is an adulterer, for the folly of his heart shall destroy his own soul."[16] It says: "for the folly of his heart," which is whenever the flesh dominates the spirit. Secondly, they deprive one of life; for one guilty of such should die according to the Law, as we read in Leviticus (xx. 10) and Deuteronomy (xxii. 22). Sometimes the guilty one is not punished now bodily, which is to his disadvantage since punishment of the body may be borne with patience and is conducive to the remission of sins; but nevertheless he shall be punished in the future life. Thirdly, these sins consume his substance, just as happened to the prodigal son in that "he wasted his substance living
riotously."[17] "Give not thy soul to harlots in any point; lest thou destroy thyself and thy inheritance."[18] Fourthly, they defile the offspring: "The children of adulterers shall not come to perfection, and the seed of the unlawful bed shall be rooted out. And if they live long they shall be nothing regarded, and their last old age shall be without honour."[19] And again: "Otherwise your children should be unclean; but now they are holy."[20] Thus, they are never honored in the Church, but if they be clerics their dishonor may go without shame. Fifthly, these sins take away one's honour, and this especially is applicable to women: "Every woman that is a harlot shall be trodden upon as dung in the way."[21] And of the husband it is said: "He gathereth to himself shame and dishonor, and his reproach shall not be blotted out."[22] St. Gregory says that sins of the flesh are more shameful and less blameworthy than those of the spirit, and the reason is because they are common to the beasts: "Man when he was in honour did not understand; and he hath been compared to senseless beasts, and made like to them."[23]

ENDNOTES
2. "The bond between husband and wife is one of the strictest union, and nothing can be more gratifying to both than to realize that they are objects of mutual and undivided affection. On the other hand, nothing inflicts greater anguish than to feel that the legitimate love which they owe to each other has been transferred elsewhere. This Commandment which prohibits adultery follows properly and in order that which protects human life against the hand of the murderer" ("Roman Catechism," "Sixth Commandment," 1). St. Thomas treats of this Commandment also in the "Summa Theol.," II-II, Q. cxxii, art. 6; Q. cliv.
6. Cor., vii. 4.
81
8. I Cor., vii. 4.
9. I Peter, iii. 7.
10. I Cor., xiv. 34-35.
11. Heb., xiii. 4.
12. I Cor., vi. 9.
13. I Cor., vi. 15.
14. "By the prohibition of adultery, every kind of impurity and immodesty by which the body is defiled is also forbidden. Nay more, every inward thought against chastity is forbidden by this Commandment. . . . You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say to you, that whcsoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart." ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 5).

15. Heb., xiii. 4.
16. Prov., vi. 32.
19. Wis., iii. 16-17.
22. Prov., vi. 33.
23. Ps.xlviii. 21. "If the occasions of sin which we have just enumerated [viz., idleness, intemperance in eating and drinking, indulgence of the eyes, immodest dress, immodest conversation and reading] be carefully avoided, almost every excitement to lust will be removed. But the most efficacious means to subdue its violence are frequent use of confession and reception of the Holy Eucharist. Unceasing and devout prayer to God, accompanied by fasting and giving of alms, has the same salutary effect. Chastity is a gift of God. To those who ask it aright, He does not deny it; nor does He allow us to be tempted beyond our strength" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 12).

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT: "Thou Shalt Not Steal."

The Lord specifically forbids injury to our neighbour in the Commandments. Thus, "Thou shalt not kill" forbids us to injure our neighbour in his own person; "Thou shalt not commit adultery" forbids injury to the person to whom one is bound in marriage; and now the Commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," forbids us to injure our neighbour in his goods. This Commandment forbids any worldly goods whatsoever to be taken awaywrongfully. Theft is committed in a number of ways. First, by taking stealthily: "If the goodman of the house knew at what hour the thief would come."[2] This is an act wholly blameworthy because it is a form of treachery. "Confusion . . . is upon the thief."[3] Secondly, by taking with violence, and this is an even greater injury: "They have violently robbed the fatherless."[4] Among such that do such things are wicked kings
and rulers: "Her princes are in the midst of her as roaring lions; her judges are evening wolves, they left nothing for the morning."[5] They act contrary to God's will who wishes a rule according to justice: "By Me kings reign and lawgivers decree just things."[6] Sometimes they do such things stealthily and sometimes with violence: "Thy princes are faithless companions of thieves, they all love bribes, they run after rewards."[7] At times they steal by enacting laws and enforcing them for profit only: "Woe to them that make wicked laws."[8] And St. Augustine says that every wrongful usurpation is theft when he asks: "What are thrones but forms of thievery?"[9] Thirdly, theft is committed by not paying wages that are due: "The wages of him that hath been hired by thee shall not abide by thee until the morning."[10] This means that a man must pay every one his due, whether he be prince, prelate, or cleric, etc.: "Render therefore to all men their dues. Tribute, to whom tribute is due, custom, to whom custom."[11] Hence, we are bound to give a return to rulers who guard our safety. The fourth kind of theft is fraud in buying and selling: "Thou shalt not have divers weights in thy bag, a greater and a less."[12] And again: "Do not any unjust thing in judgment, in rule, in weight, or in measure."[13] All this is directed against the keepers of wine-shops who mix water with the wine. Usury is also forbidden: "Who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle, or who shall rest in Thy holy hill? . . . He that hath not put his money out to usury."[14] This is also against money-changers who commit many frauds, and against the sellers of cloth and other goods. Fifthly, theft is committed by those who buy promotions to positions of temporal or spiritual honour. "The riches which he hath swallowed, he shall vomit up, and God shall draw them out of his belly,"[15] has reference to temporal position. Thus, all tyrants who hold a kingdom or province or land by force are thieves, and are held to restitution. Concerning spiritual dignities: "Amen, amen, I say to you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold but climbeth up another way is a thief and a robber."[16] Therefore, they who commit simony are thieves.

WHY STEALING MUST BE AVOIDED "Thou shalt not steal." This Commandment, as has been said, forbids taking things wrongfully, and we can bring forth many reasons why it is given. The first is because
of the gravity of this sin, which is likened to murder: "The bread of the needy is the life of the poor; he that defraudeth them thereof is a man of blood."[18] And again: "He that sheddeth blood and he that defraudeth the laborer of his hire are brothers."[19]
The second reason is the peculiar danger involved in theft, for no sin is so dangerous. After committing other sins a person may quickly repent, for instance, of murder when his anger cools, or of fornication when his passion subsides, and so on for others; but even if one repents of this sin, one does not easily make the necessary satisfaction for it. This is owing to the obligation of restitution and the duty to make up for what loss is incurred by the rightful owner. And all this is above and beyond the obligation to repent for the sin itself: "Woe to him that heapeth together that which is not his own, how long doth he load himself with thick clay!"[20] For thick clay is that from which one cannot easily extricate himself.[21]
The third reason is the uselessness of stolen goods in that they are of no spiritual value: "Treasures of wickedness shall profit nothing."[22] Wealth can indeed be useful for almsgiving and offering of sacrifices, for "the ransom of a man's life are his riches."[23] But it is said of stolen goods: "I am the Lord that love judgment, and hate robbery in a holocaust."[24]. And again: "He that offereth sacrifice of the goods of the poor is as one that sacrificeth the son in the presence of his father."[25]
The fourth reason is that the results of theft are peculiarly harmful to the thief in that they lead to his loss of other goods. It is not unlike the mixture of fire and straw: "Fire shall devour their tabernacles, who love to take bribes."[26] And it ought to be known that a thief may lose not only his own soul, but also the souls of his children, since they are bound to make restitution.

(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES
1. St. Thomas also treats of this Commandment in the "Summa Theol.," II-II, Q. cxxii, Art. 6.
2. Matt., xxiv. 43.
3. Ecclus., v. 17.
5. Soph., iii. 3.
6. Prov., viii. 15.
7. Isa., i. 23.
9. "The City of God," IV, 4. "It must be seen that the word 'steal' is understood not only of the taking away of anything from its rightful owner privately and without his consent, but also the possession of that which belongs to another, contrary to his will, although not without his knowledge. Otherwise we would say that he who forbids theft does not also forbid robbery, which is accomplished by violence and injustice. . . . So robbery is a greater sin than theft, inasmuch as it not only deprives another of his property, but also offers violence and insult to him. Nor can it be a matter of surprise that the Commandment is expressed in the lighter word, 'steal,' instead of 'rob.' A good reason for this is that theft is more general and of wider extent than robbery" ("Roman Catechism," "Seventh Commandment," 3-4).
14. Ps. xiv. 1, 5.
15. Job, xx. 15.
18. Ecclus., xxxiv. 25.
20. Hab., ii. 6.
21. "The possession of other men's property is called 'thick clay' by the prophet because it is difficult to emerge and disengage oneself from [ill- gotten goods]. . . . What shall we say of the obligation imposed by God on all of satisfying for the injury done? 'Without restitution,' says St. Augustine, 'the sin is not forgiven' " ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 8).
22. Prov., x. 2.
26. Job, xv. 34.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT: "Thou Shalt Not Bear False Witness Against Thy Neighbour."
The Lord has forbidden anyone to injure his neighbour by deed; now he forbids us to injure him by word. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."[1] This may occur in two ways, either in a court of justice or in ordinary conversation. In the court of justice it may happen in three ways, according to the
three persons who may violate this Commandment in court.[2] The first person is the plaintiff who makes a false accusation: "Thou shalt not be a detractor nor a whisperer among the people."[3] And note well that it is not only wrong to speak falsely, but also to conceal the truth: "If thy brother shall offend against thee, go and rebuke him."[4] The second person is the witness who testifies by lying: "A false witness shall not be unpunished."[5] For this Commandment includes all the preceding ones, inasmuch as the false witness may himself be the murderer or the thief, etc. And such should be punished according to the law. "When after most diligent inquisition, they shall find that the false witness hath told a lie against his brother, they shall render to him as he meant to do to his brother. . . . Thou shalt not pity him, but shalt require life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot."[6] And again: "A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour is like a dart and a sword and a sharp arrow."[7] The third person is the judge who sins by giving an unjust sentence: "Thou shalt not . . . judge unjustly. Respect not the person of the poor, nor honour the countenance of the mighty. But judge thy neighbour according to justice."[8]

WAYS OF VIOLATING THIS COMMANDMENT

In ordinary conversation one may violate this Commandment in five ways. The first is by detraction: "Detractors, hateful to God."[9] "Hateful to God" here indicates that nothing is so dear to a man as his good name: "A good name is better than great riches."[10] But detractors take away this good name: "If a serpent bite in silence, he is no better that backbiteth secretly."[11] Therefore, if detractors do not restore this reputation, they cannot be saved. Secondly, one may break this precept by listening to detractors willingly: "Hedge in thy ears with thorns, hear not a wicked tongue, and make doors and bars to thy mouth."[12] One should not listen deliberately to such things, but ought to turn away, showing a sad and stern countenance: "The north wind driveth away rain as doth a sad countenance a backbiting tongue."[13] Thirdly, gossipers break this precept when they repeat whatever they hear: "Six things there are which the Lord hateth, and the seventh His soul detesteth . . . him that soweth discord among brethren."[14] Fourthly, those who speak honied words, the flatterers:
"The sinner is praised in the desires of his soul, and the unjust man is blessed."[15] And again: "O My people, they that call thee blessed, the same shall deceive thee."[16]

SPECIAL EFFECTS OF TELLING LIES

The prohibition of this Commandment includes every form of falsehood: "Be not willing to make any manner of lie; for the custom thereof is no good."[17] There are four reasons for this. The first is that lying likens one to the devil, because a liar is as the son of the devil. Now, we know that a man's speech betrays from what region and country he comes from, thus: "Even thy speech doth discover thee."[18] Even so, some men are of the devil's kind, and are called sons of the devil because they are liars, since the devil is "a liar and the father of lies."[19] Thus, when the devil said, "No, you shall not die the death,"[20] he lied. But, on the contrary, others are the children of God, who is Truth, and they are those who speak the truth.

The second reason is that lying induces the ruin of society. Men live together in society, and this is soon rendered impossible if they do not speak the truth to one another. "Wherefore putting away lying, speak ye the truth, every man with his neighbour; for we are members one of another."[21] The third reason is that the liar loses his reputation for the truth. He who is accustomed to telling lies is not believed even when he speaks the truth: "What can be made clean by the unclean? And what truth can come from that which is false?"[22] The fourth reason is because a liar kills his soul, for "the mouth that belieoth killeth the soul."[23] And again: "Thou wilt destroy all that speak a lie."[24] Accordingly, it is clear that lying is a mortal sin; although it must be known that some lies may be venial. It is a mortal sin, for instance, to lie in matters of faith. This concerns professors, prelates and preachers, and is the gravest of all other kinds of lies: "There shall be among you lying teachers, who shall bring in sects of perdition."[25] Then there are those who lie to wrong their neighbour: "Lie not to one another."[26] These two kinds of lies, therefore, are mortal sins.

There are some who lie for their own advantage, and this in a variety of ways. Sometimes it is out of humility. This may be the case in confession, about which St. Augustine says: "Just as one must avoid concealing what he has committed, so also he must not mention what he has not committed."
"Hath God any need of your lie?"[27] And again: "There is one that humbleth himself wickedly, and his interior is full of deceit; and there is one that humbleth himself exceedingly with a great lowness."[28] There are others who tell lies out of shame, namely, when one tells a falsehood believing that he is telling the truth, and on becoming aware of it he is ashamed to retract: "In no wise speak against the truth, but be ashamed of the lie of thy ignorance."[29] Other some lie for desired results as when they wish to gain or avoid something: "We have placed our hope in lies, and by falsehood we are protected."[30] And again: "He that trusteth in lies feedeth the winds."[31] Finally, there are some who lie to benefit another, that is, when they wish to free someone from death, or danger, or some other loss. This must be avoided, as St. Augustine tells us: "Accept no person against thy own person, nor against thy soul a lie."[32] But others lie only out of vanity, and this, too, must never be done, lest the habit of such lead us to mortal sin: "For the bewitching of vanity obscureth good things."[33] (For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES
1. St. Thomas also treats of this Commandment in the "Summa Theol.," II-II, Q. cxxii, art. 6.
2. "The Commandment specially prohibits that species of false testimony which is given on oath in a court of justice. The witness swears by the Deity and thus pledges God's holy name for the truth of what he says, and this has very great weight and constitutes the strongest claim for credit. Such testimony, therefore, because it is dangerous, is particularly prohibited. When no legal exceptions can be taken against a sworn witness, and when he cannot be convicted of open dishonesty and malice, even the judge himself cannot reject his testimony. This is especially true since it is commanded by divine authority that 'in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall stand' " ("Roman Catechism," "Eighth Commandment," 3).
3. Lev., xix. 16.
4. Matt., xviii. 15.
5. Prov., xix. 5.
7. Prov., xxv. 18.
8. Lev., xix. 15. "This Commandment prohibits deceit, lying, and
perjury on the part of witnesses. The same prohibition also applies to plaintiffs, defendants, promoters, representatives, procurators, and advocates; in a word, all who take any part in lawsuits. . . . Finally, God forbids all testimony which may injure others or do them injustice, whether it be a matter of legal evidence or not" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 6).

9. Rom., i. 30.


11. Eccles., x. 11.


13. Prov., xxv. 23. "This Commandment not only forbids false testimony, but also the abominable sin of detraction. This is a moral pestilence which is the poisoned source of many and calamitous evils. . . . That we may see the nature of the sin of detraction more clearly, we must know that reputation is injured not only by calumniating the character, but also by exaggerating the faults of others. He who makes known the secret sin of any man at any time or place unnecessarily, or before persons who have no right to know, is also rightly regarded as a detractor and evil-speaker, if his revelation seriously injures the other's reputation" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 9).


15. Ps. ix. 24

16. Isa., iii. 12. "Flatterers and sycophants are among those who violate this Commandment, for by fawning and insincere praise they gain the hearing and good will of those whose favor, money, and honors they seek" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 11).


18. Matt., xxvi. 73.

19. John, viii. 44.

20. Gen. iii. 4.


22. Ecclus., xxxiv. 4.

23. Wis., i. 11.

24. Ps. v. 7.

25. II Peter, ii. 1.


27. Job, xiii. 7.


30. Isa., xxviii. 15.

31. Prov., x. 4.

The NINTH (TENTH) COMMANDMENT:[1] "Thou shalt Not Covet Thy Neighbour’s Goods."

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s goods." There is this difference between the divine and the human laws that human law judges only deeds and words, whereas the divine law judges also thoughts. The reason is because human laws are made by men who see things only exteriorly, but the divine law is from God, who sees both external things and the very interior of men. "Thou art the God of my heart."[2] And again: "Man seeth those things that appear, but the Lord beholdeth the heart."[3] Therefore, having considered those Commandments which concern words and deeds, we now treat of the Commandments about thoughts. For with God the intention is taken for the deed, and thus the words, "Thou shalt not covet," mean to include not only the taking by act, but also the intention to take. Therefore, it says: "Thou shalt not even covet thy neighbour’s goods."

There are a number of reasons for this.

The first reason for the Commandment is that man's desire has no limits, because desire itself is boundless. But he who is wise will aim at some particular end, for no one should have aimless desires: "A covetous man shall not be satisfied with money."[4] But the desires of man are never satisfied, because the heart of man is made for God. Thus, says St. Augustine: "Thou hast made us for Thee, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in Thee."[5] Nothing, therefore, less than God can satisfy the human heart: "Who satisfieth thy desire with good things."[6]

The second reason is that covetousness destroys peace of heart, which is indeed highly delightful. The covetous man is ever solicitous to acquire what he lacks, and to hold that which he has: "The fullness of the rich will not suffer him to sleep."[7] "For where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also."[8] It was for this, says St. Gregory, that Christ compared riches to thorns.[9]

Thirdly, covetousness in a man of wealth renders his riches useless both to himself and to others, because he desires only to hold on to them: "Riches are not comely for a covetous man and a niggard."[10] The fourth reason is that it destroys the equality of justice: "Neither shalt thou take bribes, which even blind the wise, and pervert the words of the
just."[11] And again: "He that loveth gold shall not be justified."[12] The fifth reason is that it destroys the love of God and neighbour, for says St. Augustine: "The more one loves, the less one covets," and also the more one covets, the less one loves. "Nor despise thy dear brother for the sake of gold."[13] And just as "No man can serve two masters," so neither can he serve "God and mammon."[14]
Finally, covetousness produces all kinds of wickedness. It is "the root of all evil," says St. Paul, and when this root is implanted in the heart it brings forth murder and theft and all kinds of evil. "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 in destruction and perdition. For the desire of money is the root of all evil."[15] And note, furthermore, that covetousness is a mortal sin when one covets one's neighbour's goods without reason; and even if there be a reason, it is a venial sin.[16]

ENDNOTES
1. St. Thomas places the Tenth Commandment (in the present traditional enumeration) before the Ninth. The Tenth Commandment is wider in extension than the Ninth, which is specific. The "Roman Catechism" ("Ninth and Tenth Commandments" 1) treats both the Ninth and Tenth Commandments together, and remarks that "what is commanded in these two precepts amounts to this, that to observe the preceding Commandments we must be particularly careful not to covet. For he who does not covet, being content with what he has, will not desire what belongs to others, but will rejoice in their prosperity, giving glory to God."
3. I Kings, xvi. 7.
4. Eccles., v. 9.
5. "Confessions," I.
6. Ps. cii. 5.
7. Eccles., v. 11.
10. Ecclus., xiv. 3.
12. Ecclus., xxxi. 5.
15. I Tim., vi. 9, 10.
16. "Another reason for these two Commandments is that they clearly and in definite terms forbid some things not expressly prohibited in the Sixth and Seventh Commandments. The Seventh Commandment, for instance, forbids an unjust desire to take what belongs to another; but the Tenth Commandment further prohibits even to covet it in any way, even though it could be acquired justly and lawfully—if we foresee that by such acquisition our neighbour would suffer some loss. . . . Another reason why this sort of vicious desire is condemned is that it has for its object that which belongs to another, such as a house, maidservant, field, wife, ox, ass, and many other things, all of which the law of God forbids us to covet, simply because they belong to another. The desire for such things, when consented to, is criminal, and is numbered among the most grievous sins. When the mind, yielding to the impulse of evil desires, is pleased with evil or does not resist it, sin is necessarily committed" ("Roman Catechism," loc. cit.," 11).

THE TENTH (NINTH) COMMANDMENT: "Thou Shalt Not Covet Thy Neighbour's Wife."

St. John says in his first Epistle that "all that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life."[1] Now, all that is desirable is included in these three, two of which are forbidden by the precept: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house."[2] Here "house," signifying height, refers to avarice, for "glory and wealth shall be in his house."[3] This means that he who desires the house, desires honors and riches. And thus after the precept forbidding desire for the house of one's neighbour comes the Commandment prohibiting concupiscence of the flesh: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife."[4] Because of the corruption which resulted from the Fall, none has been free from concupiscence except Christ and the glorious Virgin. And wherever there is concupiscence, there is either venial or mortal sin, provided that it is allowed to dominate the reason.[5] Hence the precept is not, let sin not be; for it is written: "I know that there dwelleth not in me [that is to say, in my flesh] that which is good."[6] First of all, sin rules in the flesh when, by giving consent to it, concupiscence reigns in the heart. And, therefore, St. Paul adds "so as to obey the lusts thereof" to the words: "Let not sin reign in
Accordingly the Lord says: "Whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart." For with God the intention is taken for the act.

Secondly, sin rules in the flesh when the concupiscence of our heart is expressed in words: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." And again: "Let no evil speech proceed from your mouth." Therefore, one is not without sin who composes frivolous songs. Even the philosophers so thought, and poets who wrote amatory verses were sent into exile. Lastly, sin rules in the flesh when at the behest of desire the members are made to serve iniquity: "As you have yielded your members to serve uncleanness and iniquity unto iniquity." These, therefore, are the progressive steps of concupiscence.

WAYS TO OVERCOME CONCUPISCENCE

We must realize that the avoidance of concupiscence demands much labor, for it is based on something within us. It is as hard as trying to capture an enemy in one's own household. However, this desire can be overcome in four ways. Firstly, by fleeing the external occasions such as, for instance, bad company; and in fact whatever may be an occasion for this sin: "Gaze not upon a maiden lest her beauty be a stumbling-block to thee. . . . Look not around about thee in the ways of the city, nor wander up and down in the streets thereof. Turn away thy face from a woman dressed up, and gaze not about upon another's beauty. For many have perished by the beauty of a woman, and hereby lust is enkindled as a fire." And again: "Can a man hide fire in his bosom, and his garments not burn?" And thus Lot was commanded to flee, "neither stay thou in all the country about."
The second way is by not giving an opening to thoughts which of themselves are the occasion of lustful desires. And this must be done by mortification of the flesh: "I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection." The third way is perseverance in prayer: "Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it." And also: "I knew that I could not otherwise be continent, except God gave it." Again: "This kind is not cast out save by prayer and fasting." All this is not unlike to a fight between two persons, one of whom you desire to win, the other to lose. You
must sustain the one and withdraw all support from the other. So also between the spirit and the flesh there is a continual combat. Now, if you wish the spirit to win, you must assist it by prayer, and likewise you must resist the flesh by such means as fasting; for by fasting the flesh is weakened.

The fourth way is to keep oneself busy with wholesome occupations: "Idleness hath taught much evil." [19] Again: "This was the iniquity of Sodom thy sister, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance, and the idleness of her." [20] St. Jerome says: "Be always busy in doing something good, so that the devil may find you ever occupied." Now, study of the Scriptures is the best of all occupations, as St. Jerome tells us: "Love to study the Scriptures and you will not love the vices of the flesh." [21]

ENDNOTES
1. John, ii. 16.
2. The text of Exodus xx. 17, which contains the Ninth and Tenth Commandments, reads as follows: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house: neither shalt thou desire his wife, nor his servant, nor his hand-maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his."
3. Ps. cxii. 3.
4. "He [the pastor] will show how these two Commandments are dissimilar; how one covetousness looks only to utility and interest (the tenth), the other to unlawful desire and criminal pleasure (the ninth). If one covets a field or house, he acts out of desire for gain or utility, while he who covets another man's wife yields to a desire for criminal pleasure rather than monetary gain" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit., 2).
5. "Concupiscence, the fuel of sin, which originated in sin, is always present in our fallen nature: from it we know that we are born in sin, and, therefore, we suppliantly fly to Him who alone can efface the sordid stains of sin" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 5).
6. Rom., vii. 18.
7. ibid., vi. 12.
8. Matt., v. 28.
9. Matt., xii. 34.
13. Prov., vi. 27.
15. Cor., ix. 27.
16. Ps. cxxvi. 1.
17. Wis., viii. 21.
20. Ezech., xvi. 49.

SUMMARY OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS
These are the ten precepts to which Our Lord referred when He said: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matt., xix. 17). There are two main principles of all the Commandments, namely, love of God and love of neighbour. The man that loves God must necessarily do three things: (1) he must have no other God. And in support of this is the Commandment: "Thou shalt not have strange gods"; (2) he must give God all honour. And so it is commanded: "Thou shalt not take the name of God in vain"; (3) he must freely take his rest in God. Hence: "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day."
But to love God worthily, one must first of all love one's neighbour. And so: "Honour thy father and mother." Then, one must avoid doing harm to one's neighbour in act. "Thou shalt not kill" refers to our neighbour's person; "Thou shalt not commit adultery" refers to the person united in marriage to our neighbour; "Thou shalt not steal" refers to our neighbour's external goods. We must also avoid injury to our neighbour both by word, "Thou shalt not bear false witness," and by thought, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods" and "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife."

(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter.)

EXPLANATION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER
FIVE QUALITIES OF PRAYER
"Our Father who art in heaven." Among all other prayers, the Lord's Prayer holds the chief place. It has five excellent qualities which are required in all prayer. A prayer must be confident, ordered, suitable, devout and humble.
It must be confident: "Let us, therefore, go with confidence to the throne of grace."[1] It must not be wanting in faith, as it is said: "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering."[2] That this is a most trustworthy prayer is reasonable, since it was formed by Him who is our Advocate and the most wise Petitioner for us: "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom

and knowledge;"[3] and of whom it is said: "For we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the just one."[4] Hence, St. Cyprian says: "Since we have Christ as our Advocate with the Father for our sins, when we pray on account of our faults, we use the very words of our Advocate."[5] Furthermore, this prayer is even more worthy of confidence in that He who taught us how to pray, graciously hears our prayer together with the Father, as it is said in the Psalm: "He shall cry to Me, and I will hear him."[6] Thus writes St. Cyprian: "It is a friendly, familiar, and devout prayer to ask of the Lord in His own words."[7] And so no one goes away from this prayer without fruit. St. Augustine says that through it our venial sins are remitted.[8] Moreover, our prayer must be suitable, so that a person asks of God in prayer what is good for him. St. John Damascene says: "Prayer is the asking of what is right and fitting from God."[9] Many times our prayer is not heard because we seek that which is not good for us: "You ask and you do not receive, because you ask amiss."[10] To know, indeed, what one ought to pray for is most difficult; for it is not easy to know what one ought to desire. Those things which we rightly seek in prayer are rightly desired; hence the Apostle says: "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought."[11] Christ Himself is our Teacher; it is He who teaches us what we ought to pray for, and it was to Him that the disciples said: "Lord, teach us to pray."[12] Those things, therefore, which He has taught us to pray for, we most properly ask for. "Whatsoever words we use in prayer," says St. Augustine, "we cannot but utter that which is contained in our Lord's Prayer, if we pray in a suitable and worthy manner."[13] Our prayer ought also to be ordered as our desires should be ordered, for prayer is but the expression of desire. Now, it is the correct order that we prefer spiritual to bodily things, and heavenly things to those merely earthly. This is according to what is written: "Seek ye first therefore the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you."[14] Here Our Lord shows that heavenly things must be sought first, and then things material. Our prayer must be devout, because a rich measure of piety makes the sacrifice of prayer acceptable to God: "In Thy name I will lift up my hands. Let my soul be filled with marrow and fatness."[15]
Many times because of the length of our prayers our devotion grows cool; hence Our Lord taught us to avoid wordiness in our prayers: "When you are praying, speak not much."[16] And St. Augustine says: "Let much talking be absent from prayer; but as long as fervor continues, let prayer likewise go on."[17] For this reason the Lord made His Prayer short. Devotion in prayer rises from charity which is our love of God and neighbour, both of which are evident in this prayer. Our love for God is seen in that we call God "our Father;" and our love for our neighbour when we say: "Our Father . . . forgive us our trespasses," and this leads us to love of neighbour.

Prayer ought to be humble: "He hath had regard for the prayer of the humble."[18] This is seen in the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican (Luke, xviii. 9-15), and also in the words of Judith: "The prayer of the humble and the meek hath always pleased Thee."[19] This same humility is observed in this prayer, for true humility is had when a person does not presume upon his own powers, but from the divine strength expects all that he asks for. It must be noted that prayer brings about three good effects. First, prayer is an efficacious and useful remedy against evils. Thus, it delivers us from the sins we have committed: "Thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my sin. For this shall every one that is holy pray to Thee in a seasonable time."[20] The thief on the Cross prayed and received forgiveness: "This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise."[21] Thus also prayed the Publican, and "went down to his home justified."[22] Prayer, also, frees one from the fear of future sin, and from trials and sadness of soul: "Is any one of you sad? Let him pray."[23] Again it delivers one from persecutors and enemies: "Instead of making me a return of love, they detracted me, but I gave myself to prayer."[24] In the second place, prayer is efficacious and useful to obtain all that one desires: "All things whatsoever you ask when you pray, believe that you shall receive."[25] When our prayers are not heard, either we do not persevere in prayer, whereas "we ought always to pray, and not to faint,"[26] or we do not ask for that which is more conducive to our salvation. "Our good Lord often does not give us what we wish," says St. Augustine, "because it would really be what we do not wish for." St. Paul gives us an example of this in that he thrice
prayed that the sting of his flesh
be removed from him, and his prayer was not heard.[27] Thirdly, prayer
is profitable because it
makes us friends of God: "Let my prayer be directed as incense in Thy
sight."[28]

ENDNOTES
1. Heb., iv. 16.
2. James, i. 6.
3. Col., ii. 3.
4. I John, ii. 1.
5. "De oratione dominica."
6. Ps. xc. 15.
7. "Ibid."
10. James, iv. 3.
15. Ps. lxii. 5.
17. "Loc. cit."
18. Ps. ci. 18.
19. Jud., ix. 16.
20. Ps. xxxi. 5.
22. Ibid., xviii. 14.
24. Ps. xviii. 4.
27. II Cor., xii. 7.
28. Ps. cxi. 2.

THE OPENING WORDS OF THE LORD'S PRAYER
PREPARATION FOR THE PETITIONS

Our FATHER.--Note here two things, namely, that God is our Father, and
what we owe to Him
because He is our Father. God is our Father by reason of our special
creation, in that He created us
in His image and likeness, and did not so create all inferior
creatures: "Is not He thy Father, that
made thee, and created thee?"[1] Likewise God is our Father in that He
governs us, yet treats us as
masters, and not servants, as is the case with all other things. "For
Thy providence, Father,
governeth all things;"[2] and "with great favor disposest of us."[3]
God is our Father also by reason
of adoption. To other creatures He has given but a small gift, but to
us an heredity—indeed, "if sons, heirs also."[4] "For you have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear; but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry, Abba (Father)."[5] We owe God, our Father, four things. First, honour: "If then I be a Father, where is My honour?"[6] Now, honour consists in three qualities. (1) It consists in giving praise to God: "The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me."[7] This ought not merely come from the lips, but also from the heart, for: "This people draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips glorify Me, but their heart is far from Me."[8] (2) Honour, again, consists in purity of body towards oneself: "Glorify and bear God in your body."[9] (3) Honour also consists in just estimate of one's neighbour, for: "The king's honour loveth judgment."[10] Secondly, since God is our Father, we ought to imitate Him: "Thou shalt call Me Father, and shalt not cease to walk after Me."[11] This imitation of our Father consists of three things. (1) It consists in love: "Be ye therefore followers of God, as most dear children; and walk in love."[12] This love of God must be from the heart. (2) It consists in mercy: "Be ye merciful."[13] This mercy must likewise come from the heart, and it must be in deed. (3) Finally, imitation of God consists in being perfect, since love and mercy should be perfect: "Be ye therefore perfect, as also your Heavenly Father is perfect."[14] Thirdly, we owe God obedience: "Shall we not much more obey the Father of spirits?"[15] We must obey God for three reasons. First, because He is our Lord: "All things that the Lord has spoken we will do, we will be obedient."[16] Secondly, because He has given us the example of obedience, for the true Son of God "became obedient to His Father even unto death."[17] Thirdly, because it is for our good: "I will play before the Lord who hath chosen me."[18] Fourthly, we owe God patience when we are chastised by Him: "Reject not the correction of the Lord; and do not faint when thou art chastised by Him. For whom the Lord loveth He chastises; and as a father in the son He pleaseth Himself.[19] OUR Father.—From this we see that we owe our neighbour both love and reverence. We must love our neighbour because we are all brothers, and all men are sons of God, our Father: "For he that
loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he
seeth not?"[20] We owe reverence to our neighbour because he is also a child of God: "Have we
not all one Father? Hath not one God created us? Why then does everyone of us despise his
brother?"[21] And again: "With honour preventing one another."[22] We do this because of the fruit we
receive, for "He became to all that obey the cause of eternal salvation."[23]
(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

THE PREEMINENCE OF GOD
Who Art in Heaven.--Among all that is necessary for one who prays, faith is above all important:
"Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering."[24] Hence, the Lord, teaching us to pray, first mentions
that which causes faith to spring up, namely, the kindness of a father. So, He says "Our Father," in
the meaning which is had in the following: "If you then being evil
know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father from heaven give the
good Spirit to them that ask him!"[25] Then, He says "Who art in heaven" because of the greatness
of His power: "To Thee have I lifted up my eyes, who dwellest in heaven."[26]
The words, "who art in heaven," signify three things. First, it serves as a preparation for him who
utters the prayer, for, as it is said: "Before prayer prepare thy soul."[27] Thus, "in heaven" is understood for the glory of heaven: "For your reward is very great in heaven."[28] And this preparation ought to be in the form of an imitation of heavenly things, since the son ought to imitate his Father: "Therefore, as we have borne the image of the earthly, let us bear also the image of the heavenly."[29] So also this preparation ought to be through contemplation of heavenly things, because men are wont to direct their thoughts to where they have a Father and others whom they love, as it is written: "For where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also."[30] The Apostle wrote: "Our conversation is in heaven."[31] Likewise, we prepare through attention to heavenly things, so that we may then seek only spiritual things from Him who is in heaven: "Seek things that are above, where Christ is."[32] "Who art in heaven" can also pertain to Him who hears us, who is nearest to us; and then the "in heaven" is understood to mean "in devout persons" in whom God dwells, as it is written: "Thou, O Lord, art among us."[33] For holy persons are called "the heavens" in
the Psalm: "The heavens show forth the glory of God,"[34] since God dwells in the devout through faith. "That Christ may dwell by faith in your hearts."[35] God also dwells in us through love: "He that abideth in charity, abideth in God and God in him."[36] And also through the keeping of the commandments: "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."[37] In the third place, "who art in heaven" can pertain to Him who is in heaven, He who cannot be included in the physical heavens, for "the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee."[38] And so it can mean that God is all-seeing in His survey of us, in that He sees us from above, that is, from heaven: "Because He hath looked forth from His high sanctuary; from heaven the Lord hath looked upon the earth."[39] It also signifies how sublime is God in His power: "The Lord hath prepared His throne in heaven";[40] and that He lives without change through eternity: "But Thou, O Lord, endurest forever."[41] And again: "Thy years shall not fail."[42] And so of Christ was it written: "His throne as the days of heaven."[43] The Philosopher says that on account of the incorruptibility of the heavens all have considered them as the abode of spirits.[44] And so "who art in heaven" tends to give us confidence in our prayer which arises from a threefold consideration: of God's power, of our familiarity with Him, and of the fitness of our requests. The power of Him to whom we pray is implied if we consider "heaven" as the corporeal heavens. God is not limited by any physical bounds: "Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord."[45] Nevertheless, He is said to be in the corporeal heavens to indicate two things: the extent of His power and the greatness of His nature. The former of these attributes is contrary to the view that all things happen out of necessity, by a fate regulated by the celestial bodies; and thus all prayer would be vain and useless. But such is absurd, since God dwells in the heavens as their Lord: "The Lord has prepared His throne in heaven."[46] The latter attribute, viz., His sublime nature, is against those who in praying propose or build up any corporeal images of God. Therefore, God is stated to be "in heaven" in that He exceeds all corporeal things, and even the
desires and intellects of men; so that whatsoever man thinks or desires is far less than God. Thus, it is said: "Behold, God is great, exceeding our knowledge."[47] And again: "The Lord is high above all nations."[48] And finally: "To whom then have you likened God? Or what image will you make for Him?"[49]

Familiar intercourse with God is shown through this "in heaven." Some indeed have said that because of His great distance from us God does not care for men, and they cite these words: "He walketh about the poles of heaven, and He doth not consider our things."[50] Against this is the fact that God is nearer to us than we are to ourselves. This brings confidence to one who prays. First, because of the nearness of God: "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him."[51] Hence, it is written: "But thou when thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber,"[52] that is, into thy heart.

Second, because of the intercession of all the Saints among whom God dwells; for from this arises faith to ask through their merits for what we desire: "Turn to some of the Saints,"[53] and, "Pray one for another, that you may be saved."[54]

This part of the prayer--that is, "in heaven"--is appropriate and fitting also, if "in heaven" is taken to mean that spiritual and eternal good in which true happiness consists. Because of it our desires are lifted up towards heavenly things; since our desires ought to tend towards where we have our Father, because there is our true home: "Seek the things that are above."[55] And again: "Unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that cannot fade, reserved in heaven for you."[56]

Moreover, from it we are told that, if our life is to be in heaven, then we ought to be conformed to our Heavenly Father: "Such as is the heavenly, such also are they that are heavenly."[57] From all this the words "in heaven" are most appropriate in prayer in that they signify both a heavenly desire and heavenly life.

(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES

97

1. Deut., xxxii. 6. "The first word which, by the command and institution of Our Lord, we say in this prayer is 'Father.' The Saviour could, indeed, have begun this prayer with some other word more expressive of His majesty, such as 'Creator' or 'Lord.' Yet, He omitted all such expressions as
they might be associated with fear, and instead of them He has chosen a word which inspires love and confidence. What name is more tender than that of Father? It is a name which expresses both indulgence and love" ("Roman Catechism," Lord's Prayer, Chapter IX, 1).

2. Wis. xiv. 3.
4. Rom., viii. 17.
6. Mal., i. 6.
7. Ps. xxix. 13.
9. I Cor., vi. 20.
10. Ps. xcvi. 3.
15. Heb., xi. 9.
17. Phil., ii. 8.
18. II Kings, vi. 21.
19. Prov., iii. 11-12.
20. I John, iv. 20. "When we call upon the Father, invoking Him as our Father, we are to understand it as a necessary consequence of the gift and right of divine adoption and that we are all brethren, and should love one another as brothers. 'You are all brethren,' says Our Lord, 'for one is your Father, He that is in heaven' (Matt., xxiii. 8). For this reason the Apostles in their Epistles call the faithful, 'brethren'" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 14).
21. Mal., ii. 10.
22. Rom., xii. 10.
23. Heb., v. 9.
24. James, i. 6.
26. Ps. cxxii. 1.
27. Ecclus., xviii. 23.
29. I Cor., xv. 49.
32. Colos., iii. 1.
34. Ps. xvii. 2.
35. Eph., iii. 17.
36. I John, iv. 16.
ed.
38. III Kings, viii. 27.
39. Ps. ci. 20.
40. Ps. cii. 19.
41. Ps. ci. 13.
42. "Ibid.," 28.
43. Ps. lxxxviii. 30.
44. Aristotle, "De Coelo," 1.
46. Ps. cii. 19.
48. Ps. cxii. 4
49. Isa., xl. 18.
51. Ps. cxxiv. 18.
52 Matt., vi. 6.
53 Job, v. 1.
54. James, v. 16.
55. Col., iii. 1.
56. I Pet., i. 4.
57. I Cor., xv. 48.

THE FIRST PETITION: "Hallowed Be Thy Name."
This is the first petition, and in it we ask that God's name be manifested and declared in us. The name of God, first of all, is wonderful because it works wonders in all creatures. Thus said Our Lord: "In My name they shall cast out devils, they shall speak new tongues. They shall take up serpents; and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them."[1]

GOD'S NAME IS LOVABLE
This name is lovable: "There is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved."[2] We all should desire to be saved. We have an example in Blessed Ignatius, who had such great love for the name of Christ that, when Trajan ordered him to deny it, he affirmed that it could not be dragged from his mouth. Then, the emperor threatened to have him beheaded, and thus take the name of Christ out of the mouth of the Saint. But Ignatius replied: "Even though you take it from my mouth, you will never snatch it from my heart. I have this name written in my heart and there I never cease to invoke it." Trajan heard this and wished to put it to the test. He had the servant of God beheaded and then commanded that his heart be taken out, and there upon the heart was found the name of Christ inscribed in letters of gold. This name had been engraved on the heart
as a seal.

GOD'S NAME IS VENERABLE
The name of God is venerable: "In the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth."[3] "Those that are in heaven" refers to the Angels and the blessed; "those that are on earth" to people living in this world, who do so for love of heaven which they wish to gain; "those under the earth" to the damned, who do so out of fear.

GOD'S NAME IS INEFFABLE
This name is ineffable, for in the telling of it every tongue is wholly inadequate. Accordingly, it is sometimes compared to created things as, for instance, it is likened to a rock because of its firmness: "Upon this rock I will build My Church."[4] It is likened to a fire because of its purifying power; for as fire purifies metal, so does God purify the hearts of sinners: "My God is a consuming fire."
[5] It is compared to light because of its power of enlightening; for as light illumines the darkness, so does the name of God overcome the darkness of the mind: "O my God, enlighten my darkness."[6]

MEANING OF HALLOWED
We pray that this name may be manifested in us, that it be known and revered as holy. Now "holy" (or hallowed) may have a threefold meaning. First, it is the same as firm. Thus, those who are firmly established in eternal happiness are all the blessed in heaven, the Saints. In this sense, none is a "Saint" on earth because here all is continually changeable. As St. Augustine says: "I sank away from Thee, O Lord, and I wandered too much astray from Thee who art my firm support."[7]
Secondly, "holy" may be understood as "unearthly." The holy ones who are in heaven have naught earthly about them: "I count (all things) . . . but as dung, that I may gain Christ."[8] Earth may signify sinners. This would arise as reference to production. For if the earth is not cultivated, it will produce thorns and thistles. Similarly, if the soul of the sinner is not cultivated by grace, it will produce only thistles and thorns of sins: "Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee."[9] Again, earth may signify sinners as regards its darkness. The earth is dark and opaque; and so also is the sinner dark and obstructive to light: "Darkness was on the face of the deep."[10] And, finally, earth
is a dry element which will fall to pieces unless it is mixed with the moisture of water. So God
placed earth just above water: "Who established the earth above the waters."[11] So also the soul of
the sinner is dry and without moisture as it is said: "My soul is as earth without water unto
Thee."[12]
"Holy" may, finally, be understood as "laved in blood," since the Saints in heaven are called Saints
because they have been washed in blood: "These are they who are come out of great tribulation, and
have washed their robes, and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb."[13] And again: "He
hath washed us from our sins in His blood."[14]
(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES
3. Phil., ii. 10.
6. Ps. xvii. 29.
8. Phil., iii. 8.
10. Gen., i. 2.
11. Ps. cxxxv. 6.
12. Ps. cxlii. 6.
14. "Ibid.," i. 5.

THE SECOND PETITION: "Thy Kingdom Come."
The Holy Spirit makes us love, desire and pray rightly; and instills in us, first of all, a fear whereby
we ask that the name of God be sanctified. He gives us another gift, that of piety. This is a devout
and loving affection for our Father and for all men who are in trouble. Now, since God is our
Father, we ought not only reverence and fear Him, but also have towards Him a sweet and pious
affection. This love makes us pray that the kingdom of God may come: "We should live soberly and
justly in this world, looking for the blessed hope and coming of the glory of the great God."[1]
It may be asked of us: "Why, since the kingdom of God always was, do we then ask that it may
come?" This, however, can be understood in three ways. First, a king sometimes has only the right
to a kingdom or dominion, and yet his rule has not been declared because the men in his kingdom
are not as yet subject to him. His rule or dominion will come only when the men of his kingdom are his subjects. Now, God is by His very essence and nature the Lord of all things; and Christ being God and Man is the Lord over all things: "And He gave Him power and glory and a kingdom."[2] It is, therefore, necessary that all things be subject to Him. This is not yet the case, but will be so at the end of the world: "For He must reign, until He hath put all His enemies under His feet."[3] Hence it is for this we pray when we say: "Thy kingdom come.

WHY WE PRAY THIS
In so doing we pray for a threefold purpose: that the just may be strengthened, that sinners may be punished, and that death be destroyed. Now, the reason is that men are subject to Christ in two ways, either willingly or unwillingly. Again, the will of God is so efficacious that it must be fully complied with; and God does wish that all things be subject to Christ. Hence, two things are necessary: either man will do the will of God by subjecting himself to His commands, as do the just; or God shall exert His will and punish those who are sinners and His enemies; and this will take place at the end of the world: "Until I make Thy enemies Thy footstool."[4] It is enjoined upon the faithful to pray that the kingdom of God may come, namely, that they subject themselves completely to Him. But it is a terrible thing for sinners, because for them to ask the coming of God's kingdom is nothing else than to ask that they be subjected to punishment: "Woe to them that desire the day of the Lord!"[5] By this prayer, too, we ask that death be destroyed. Since Christ is life, death cannot exist in His kingdom,[6] because death is the opposite of life: "And the enemy, death, shall be destroyed last."[7] "He shall cast death down headlong forever."[8] And this shall take place at the last resurrection: "Who will reform the body of our lowness, made like to the body of His glory."[9] In a second sense, the kingdom of heaven signifies the glory of paradise. Nor is this to be wondered at, for a kingdom ("regnum") is nothing other than a government ("regimen"). That will be the best government where nothing is found contrary to the will of the governor. Now, the will of God is the very salvation of men, for He "will have all men to be saved";[10] and this especially shall come to pass in paradise where there will be nothing contrary to man's
salvation. "They shall gather out of His kingdom all scandals."[11] In this world, however, there are many things contrary to the salvation of men. Hence, when we pray, "Thy kingdom come," we pray that we might participate in the heavenly kingdom and in the glory of paradise.

WHY WE DESIRE THIS KINGDOM

This kingdom is greatly to be desired for three reasons. (1) It is to be greatly desired because of the perfect justice that obtains there: "Thy people shall be all just."[12] In this world the bad are mingled with the good, but in heaven there will be no wicked and no sinners. (2) The heavenly kingdom is to be desired because of its perfect liberty. Here below there is no liberty, although all men naturally desire it; but above there will be perfect liberty without any form of oppression: "Because the creature also shall be delivered from the servitude of corruption."[13] Not only will men then be free, but indeed they will all be kings: "And Thou hast made us to our God a kingdom."[14] This is because all shall be of one will with God, and God shall will what the Saints will, and the Saints shall will whatsoever God wills; hence, in the will of God shall their will be done. All, therefore, shall reign, because the will of all shall be done, and the Lord shall be their crown: "In that day, the Lord of hosts shall be a crown of glory and a garland of joy to the residue of His people."[15] (3) The kingdom of God is to be desired because of the marvellous riches of heaven: "The eye hath not seen O God, besides Thee, what things Thou hast prepared for them that wait for Thee."[16] And also: "Who satisfieth thy desire with good things."[17] Note that man will find everything that he seeks for in this world more excellently and more perfectly in God alone. Thus, if it is pleasure you seek, then in God you will find the highest pleasure: "You shall see and your heart shall rejoice."[18] "And everlasting joy shall be upon their heads."[19] If it is riches, there you will find it in abundance: "When the soul strays from Thee, she looks for things apart from Thee, but she finds all things impure and useless until she returns to Thee," says St. Augustine.[20] Lastly, "Thy kingdom come" is understood in another sense because sometimes sin reigns in this world. This occurs when man is so disposed that he follows at once the
enticement of sin. "Let not sin reign in your mortal body,"[21] but let God reign in your heart; and this will be when thou art prepared to obey God and keep all His Commandments. Therefore, when we pray to God that His kingdom may come, we pray that God and not sin may reign in us. May we through this petition arrive at that happiness of which the Lord speaks: "Blessed are the meek!"[22] Now, according to what we have first explained above, viz., that man desires that God be the Lord of all things, then let him not avenge injuries that are done him, but let him leave that for the Lord. If you avenge yourself, you do not really desire that the kingdom of God may come. According to our second explanation (i.e., regarding the glory of paradise), if you await the coming of this kingdom which is the glory of paradise, you need not worry about losing earthly things. Likewise, if according to the third explanation, you pray that God may reign within you, then you must be humble, for He is Himself most humble: "Learn of Me because I am meek and humble of heart."[23]

(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES

1. Tit., ii. 12.
3. I Cor., xv. 25.
4. Ps. cix. 1.
5. Amos, v. 18.
8. Isa., xxv. 8. This is in Vives edition: not in Parma.
10. I Tim., ii. 4.
11. Matt, xiii. 41.
15. Isa., xxviii. 5.
17. Ps. cii. 5.
19. "Ibid.," xxxv. 10. These two citations in Vives edition are omitted in Parma.
22. Matt., v. 4.
23. "Ibid.," xi. 29. "Finally, we pray that God alone may live, alone
may reign, within us, that death
no longer may exist, but may be absorbed by the victory won by Christ
our Lord, who, having
broken and scattered the power of all His enemies, may, in His might,
subject all things to His
dominion. . . . Let us, therefore, earnestly implore . . . that His
commands may be observed, that
there be found no traitor, no deserter, and that all may so act that
they may come with joy into the
presence of God their King: and may reach the possession of the
heavenly kingdom prepared for
them from all eternity" ("Roman Catechism." "Lord's Prayer," Chapter
xi. 14, 19).

THE THIRD PETITION: "Thy Will Be Done on Earth as It Is in Heaven."
The third gift which the Holy Spirit works in us is called the gift of
knowledge. The Holy Spirit not
only gives us the gift of fear and the gift of piety (which is a sweet
affection for God, as we have
said); but He also makes man wise. It was this for which David prayed:
"Teach me goodness and
discipline and knowledge."[1] This knowledge which the Holy Spirit
teaches us is that whereby
man lives justly. Among all that goes to make up knowledge and wisdom
in man, the principal
wisdom is that man should not depend solely upon his own opinion:
"Lean not upon thy own
prudence."[2] Those who put all their trust in their own judgment so
that they do not trust others,
but only themselves, are always found to be stupid and are so adjudged
by others: "Hast thou seen a
man wise in his own conceit? There shall be more hope of a fool than
of him."[3]

THE WILL OF GOD
Out of humility one does not trust one's own knowledge: "Where
humility is there is also
wisdom."[4] The proud trust only themselves. Now, the Holy Spirit,
through the gift of wisdom,
teaches us that we do not our own will but the will of God. It is
through this gift that we pray of
God that His "will be done on earth as it is in heaven." And in this
is seen the gift of knowledge.
Thus, one says to God "let Thy will be done," in the same way as one
who is sick desires something
from the physician; and his will is not precisely his own, because it
is the will of the physician.
Otherwise, if his desire were purely from his own will, he would be
indeed foolish. So we ought not
to pray other than that in us God's will may be done; that is, that
His will be accomplished in us.
The heart of man is only right when it is in accord with the will of God. This did Christ: "Because I came down from heaven, not to do My own will but the will of Him that sent Me."[5] Christ, as God, has the same will with the Father; but as a Man He has a distinct will from the Father's, and it was according to this that He says He does not do His will but the Father's. Hence, He teaches us to pray and to ask: "Thy will be done."[6]

WHAT DOES GOD WILL?
But what is this that is asked? Does not the Psalm say: "Whatsoever the Lord pleased [has willed], He hath done?"[7] Now, if He has done all that He has willed both in heaven and on earth, what then is the meaning of this: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"? To understand this we must know that God wills of us three things, and we pray that these be accomplished. The first thing that God wills is that we may have eternal life. Whoever makes something for a certain purpose, has a will regarding it which is in accord with the purpose for which he made it. In like manner, God made man, but it was not for no purpose, as it is written: "Remember what my substance is; for hast Thou made all the children of men in vain?"[8] Hence, God made men for a purpose; but this purpose was not for their mere pleasures, for also the brutes have these, but it was that they might have eternal life. The Lord, therefore, wills that men have eternal life. Now, when that for which a thing is made is accomplished, it is said to be saved; and when this is not accomplished, it is said to be lost. So when man gains eternal life, he is said to be saved, and it is this that the Lord wills: "Now, this is the will of My Father that sent Me, that every one who seeth the Son and believeth in Him may have life everlasting."[9] This will of God is already fulfilled for the Angels and for the Saints in the Fatherland, for they see God and know and enjoy Him. We, however, desire that, as the will of God is done for the blessed who are in heaven, it likewise be done for us who are on earth. For this we pray when we say "Thy will be done" for us who are on earth, as it is for the Saints who are in heaven.

THE COMMANDMENTS: GOD'S WILL
In the second place, the will of God for us is that we keep His Commandments. When a person desires something, he not only wills that which he desires, but also everything which will bring that about. Thus, in order to bring about a healthy condition which he
desires, a physician also wills to
put into effect diet, medicine, and other needs. We arrive at eternal
life through observance of the
Commandments, and, accordingly, God wills that we observe them: "But
if thou wilt enter into life,
keep the Commandments."[10] "Your reasonable service . . . that you
may prove what is the good
and the acceptable and the perfect will of God."[11] That is, good
because it is profitable: "I am the
Lord thy God that teach thee profitable things."[12] And acceptable,
that is, pleasing: "Light is risen
to the just; and joy to the right heart."[13] And perfect, because
noble: "Be you therefore perfect, as
your Heavenly Father is perfect."[14] When we say "Thy will be done,"
we pray that we may fulfill
the Commandments of God. This will of God is done by the just, but it
is not yet done by sinners.
"In heaven" here signifies the just; while "on earth" refers to
sinners. We, therefore, pray that the
will of God may be done "on earth," that is, by sinners, "as it is in
heaven," that is, by the just.[15]

LET THY WILL BE DONE
It must be noted that the very words used in this petition teach us a
lesson. It does not say "Do" or
"Let us do," but it says, "[Let] Thy will be done," because two things
are necessary for eternal life:
the grace of God and the will of man. Although God has made man
without man, He cannot save
man without his cooperation. Thus, says St. Augustine: "Who created
thee without thyself, cannot
save thee without thyself,"[16] because God wills that man cooperate
with Him or at least put no
obstacle in His way: "Turn ye to Me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I
will turn to you."[17] "By the
grace of God, I am what I am. And His grace in me hath not been
void."[18] Do not, therefore,
presume on your own strength, but trust in God's grace; and be not
negligent, but use the zeal you
have. It does not say, therefore, "Let us do," lest it would seem that
the grace of God were left out;
nor does it say, "Do," lest it would appear that our will and our zeal
do not matter. He does say "Let
it be done" through the grace of God at the same time using our desire
and our own efforts.
Thirdly, the will of God in our regard is that men be restored to that
state and dignity in which the
first man was created. This was a condition in which the spirit and
soul felt no resistance from
sensuality and the flesh. As long as the soul was subject to God, the
flesh was in such subjection to the spirit that no corruption of death, or weakness, or any of the passions were felt. When, however, the spirit and the soul, which were between God and the flesh, rebelled against God by sin, then the body rebelled against the soul. From that time death and weaknesses began to be felt together with continual rebellion of sensuality against the spirit: "I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind."[19] "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh."[20]

Thus, there is an endless strife between the flesh and the spirit, and man is continually being brought lower by sin. The will of God, therefore, is that man be restored to his primal state so that no more would the flesh rebel against the spirit: "For this is the will of God, your sanctification."[21] Now, this will of God cannot be fulfilled in this life, but it will be fulfilled in the resurrection of the just, when glorified bodies shall arise incorrupt and most perfect: "It is sown a natural body; it shall rise a spiritual body."[22] In the just the will of God is fulfilled relative to the spirit, which abides in justice and knowledge and perfect life. Therefore, when we say "Thy will be done," let us pray that His will also may be done regarding the flesh. Thus, the sense of "Thy will be done on earth" is that it may be done "for our flesh," and "as it is in heaven" means in our spirit. Thus, we take "in heaven" for our spirit, and "on earth" as our flesh.[23]

By means of this petition we arrive at the happiness of those who mourn, as it is written: "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted."[24] This can be applied to each of the threefold explanations we have given above. According to the first we desire eternal life. And in this very desire we are brought to a mourning of soul: "Woe is me, that my sojourning is prolonged."[25] This desire in the Saints is so vehement that because of it they wish for death, which in itself is something naturally to be avoided: "But we are confident and have a good will to be absent rather from the body and to be present with the Lord."[26] Likewise, according to our second explanation--viz., that we will to keep the Commandments --they who do so are in sorrow. For although such be sweet for the soul, it is bitter indeed for the flesh which is continually kept in discipline. "Going,
they went and wept," which refers to the flesh, "But coming, they shall come with joyfulness," which pertains to the soul. [27] Again, from our third explanation (that is, concerning the struggle which is ever going on between the flesh and the spirit), we see that this too causes sorrow. For it cannot but happen that the soul be wounded by the venial faults of the flesh; and so in expiating for these the soul is in mourning. "Every night," that is, the darkness of sin, "I will wash my bed [that is, my conscience] with my tears." [28] Those who thus sorrow will arrive at the Fatherland, where may God bring us also!

106

(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES

1. Ps. cxviii. 66.
2. Prov. iii. 5.
5. John, vi. 38.
6. "Now, this is what we implore when we address these words to God: 'Thy will be done.' We have fallen into this state of misery by disobeying and despising the divine will. Now, God deigns to propose to us, as the sole corrective of all our evils, a conformity to His will which by our sins we despised. He commands us to regulate all our thoughts and actions by this standard. And to be able to accomplish this is our aim when we humbly say this prayer to God: 'Thy will be done' " ("Roman Catechism," "Lord’s Prayer,"Chapter xli, 8).
7. Ps. clxxiv. 6.
8. Ps. lxxxviii. 48.
12. Isa., xlvi. 11.
13. Ps. xcvi. 11.
15. "When, therefore, we pray, 'Thy will be done,' we first of all ask our Heavenly Father to enable us to obey His divine commands, and to serve Him all the days of our lives in holiness and justice. Likewise that we do all things in accord with His will and pleasure, that we perform all the duties prescribed for us in the sacred writings and thus, guided and assisted by Him, so conduct ourselves in all things as becomes those 'who are born, not of the will of flesh but of God' " ("Roman
Catechism," "loc. cit.," 12).
17. Zach., i. 3
18. I Cor., xv. 10.
20. Gal., v. 17.
21. Thess., iv. 3.
22. I Cor., xv. 44.
23. "When we say, 'Thy will be done,' we expressly detest the works of
the flesh, of which the
Apostle writes: 'The works of the flesh are manifest, which are
fornication, uncleanness,
immodesty, lust, etc.' (Gal., v. 19); 'if you live according to the
flesh you shall die' (Rom. viii. 13).
We also pray God not to permit us to yield to the suggestions of
sensual appetite, of our lusts, of our
infirmities, but to govern our will by His will" ("Roman Catechism,"
"loc. cit.," 14).
24. Matt., v. 5.
25. Ps. cxix. 5.
26. II Cor., v. 8.
27. Ps. cxxv. 6.
28. Ps. vi. 7.

THE FOURTH PETITION THE FOURTH PETITION "Give Us This Day Our Daily
Bread."
Sometimes it happens that one of great learning and wisdom becomes
fearful and timid; and,
therefore, it is necessary that he have fortitude of heart lest he
lack necessities: "It is He that giveth
strength to the weary, and increaseth force and might to them that are
not."[1] The Holy Spirit gives
this fortitude: "And the Spirit entered into me, . . . and He set me
upon my feet."[2] This fortitude
which is given by the Holy Ghost so strengthens the heart of man that
he does not fear for the things
that are necessary for him, but he trusts that God will provide for
all his needs. The Holy Spirit who
gives us this strength teaches us to pray to God: "Give us this day
our daily bread." And thus He is
called the Spirit of fortitude.
It must be noted that in the first three petitions of this prayer only
things spiritual are asked for--
those which indeed begin to be in this world but are only brought to
fruition in the life eternal.
Thus, when we pray that the name of God be hallowed, we really ask
that the name of God be
known; when we pray that the kingdom of God may come, we ask that we
may participate in God's
kingdom; and when we pray that the will of God be done, we ask that
His will be accomplished in us. All these things, however, although they have their beginning here on earth, cannot be had in their fullness except in heaven. Hence, it is necessary to pray for certain necessaries which can be completely had in this life. The Holy Spirit, then, taught us to ask for the requirements of this present life which are here obtainable in their fullness, and at the same time He shows that our temporal wants are provided us by God. It is this that is meant when we say: "Give us this day our daily bread."[3]

In these very words the Holy Spirit teaches us to avoid five sins which are usually committed out of the desire for temporal things. The first sin is that man, because of an inordinate desire, seeks those things which go beyond his state and condition of life. He is not satisfied with what befits him. Thus, if he be a soldier and desires clothes, he will not have them suitable for a soldier, but rather for a knight; or if he be a cleric, clothes fit for a bishop. This vicious habit withdraws man from spiritual things, in that it makes his desires cleave to transitory things. The Lord taught us to avoid this vice by instructing us to ask for the temporal necessities of this present life as they are in accord with the position of each one of us. All this is understood under the name of "bread." And so He does not teach us to pray for that which is luxurious, nor for variety, nor for what is over-refined, but for bread which is common to all and without which man's life could not be sustained: "The chief thing for man's life is water and bread."[4] And: "Having food and wherewith to be covered, with these we are content."[5]

The second sin is that some in acquiring temporal goods burden others and defraud them. This vicious practice is dangerous, because goods thus taken away can be restored only with difficulty. For, as St. Augustine says: "The sin is not forgiven until that which is taken away is restored."[6]

"They eat the bread of wickedness."[7] The Lord teaches us to avoid this sin, and to pray for our own bread, not that of another. Robbers do not eat their own bread, but the bread of their neighbour. The third sin is unnecessary solicitude. There are some who are never content with what they have, but always want more. This is wholly immoderate, because one's desire must always be measured
by his need: "Give me neither beggary nor riches, but give me only the necessaries of life."[8] We are taught to avoid this sin in the words, "our daily bread," that is, bread of one day or for one time.[9]

The fourth sin is inordinate voracity. There are those who in one day would consume what would be enough for many days. Such pray not for bread for one day, but for ten days. And because they spend too much, it happens what they spend all their substance. "They that give themselves to drinking and that club together shall be consumed."[10] And: "A workman that is a drunkard shall not be rich."[11]

The fifth sin is ingratitude. A person grows proud in his riches, and does not realize that what he has comes from God. This is a grave fault, for all things that we have, be they spiritual or temporal, are from God: "All things are Thine; and we have given Thee what we received of Thy hand."[12]

Therefore, to take away this vice, the prayer has, "Give us" even "our daily bread," that we may know that all things come from God.

From all this we draw one great lesson. Sometimes one who has great riches makes no use of them, but suffers spiritual and temporal harm; for some because of riches have perished. "There is also another evil which I have seen under the sun, and that frequent among men. A man to whom God hath given riches and substance and honour, and his soul wanteth nothing of all that he desireth; yet God doth not give him power to eat thereof, but a stranger shall eat it up."[13] And again: "Riches kept to the hurt of the owner."[14] We ought, therefore, pray that our riches will be of use to us; and it is this we seek for when we say, "Give us our bread," that is, make our riches be of use to us. "His bread in his belly shall be turned into the gall of asps within him. The riches which he hath swallowed, he shall vomit up; and God shall draw them out of his belly."[15]

Another great vice is concerned with the things of this world, viz., excessive solicitude for them. For there are some who daily are anxious about temporal goods which are enough for them for an entire year; and they who are thus troubled will never have rest: "Be not solicitous therefore, saying: "What shall we eat, or What shall we drink, or Wherewith shall we be clothed?"[16] The Lord, therefore, teaches us to pray that to-day our bread will be
given us, that is, those things which will be needful for us for the present time. One may also see in this bread another twofold meaning, viz., Sacramental Bread and the Bread of the Word of God. Thus, in the first meaning, we pray for our Sacramental Bread which is consecrated daily in the Church, so that we receive it in the Sacrament, and thus it profits us unto salvation: "I am the living bread which came down from heaven."[17] And: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself."[18] In the second meaning this bread is the Word of God: "Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God."[19] We pray, therefore, that He give us bread, that is, His Word.[20] From this man derives that happiness which is a hunger for justice. For after spiritual things are considered, they are all the more desired; and this desire arouses a hunger, and from this hunger follows the fullness of life everlasting. (For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES
1. Isa., xl. 29.
2. Ezech., ii. 2.
3. "The fourth and following petitions, in which we particularly and expressly pray for the necessary wants of soul and body, are subordinate to those which have preceded. According to the order of the Lord's Prayer, we ask for what regards the body and its preservation only after we have prayed for the things that pertain to God" ("Roman Catechism," "Lord's Prayer," Chapter xiii, 1).
4. Ecclus., xxi. 27.
5. I Tim., vi. 8. "We also ask 'our daily bread,' that is, necessary sustenance, and under the name of bread we understand whatever is necessary for food and raiment. . . . To comprehend fully the meaning of this petition, it is also to be noted that by this word 'bread' ought not to be understood an abundance of exquisite food and of rich clothing, but what is necessary and simple" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 10).
7. Prov., iv. 17.
9. "We also call it 'our daily bread,' because we use it to regain the vital energy that is daily consumed. . . . Finally, the word 'daily' implies the necessity of continually praying to God. in order
to be kept in the habit of loving and serving Him, and that we may be thoroughly convinced of the fact that upon Him we depend for life and salvation" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 12).

15. Job. xx. 14-15
17. John, vi. 51.
18. I Cor., xi. 29. "But Christ our Lord, substantially present in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, is preeminently this bread. This ineffable pledge of His love He gave us when about to return to His Father, and of it He said: 'He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me, and I in him' (John, vi. 57). 'Take ye and eat: this is My body' (Matt., xxvi. 26). . . . This Bread is called 'our bread' because it is the spiritual food of the faithful only, that is, of those who, uniting charity to faith, wash away sin from their souls in the Sacrament of Penance, and mindful that they are the children of God, receive and adore this divine mystery with all the holiness and veneration to which they can arouse themselves" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 20).
20. "It remains to speak of that spiritual bread which also is the object of this petition of the Lord's Prayer, which takes in everything that is necessary for the health and safety of the spirit and soul. Just as the food by which the body is nourished is of various sorts, so is the food which preserves the life of the spirit and soul not of one kind. Thus, the word of God is the food of the soul" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 18).

THE FIFTH PETITION: "And Forgive Us Our Trespasses As We Forgive Those Who Trespass Against Us."

There are some men of great wisdom and fortitude who, because they trust too much in their own strength, do not wisely carry out what they attempt, and they do not bring to completion that which they have in mind. "Designs are strengthened by counsels."[1] It must be known that the Holy Ghost who gives fortitude also gives counsel. Every good counsel concerning the salvation of man is from the Holy Ghost. Thus, counsel is necessary for man when he is
in difficulty, just as is the
counsel of physicians when one is ill. When man falls into spiritual
illness through sin, he must
look for counsel in order to be healed. This necessity for counsel on
the part of the sinner is shown
in these words: "Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to
thee, and redeem thou thy sins
with alms."[2] The best counsel, therefore, against sin is alms and
mercy. Hence, the Holy Spirit
teaches sinners to seek and to pray: "Forgive us our trespasses."[3]
We owe God that which we have taken away from His sole right; and this
right of God is that we do
His will in preference to our own will. Now, we take away from God's
right when we prefer our
will to God's will, and this is a sin. Sins, therefore, are our
trespasses.[4] And it is the counsel of the
Holy Spirit that we ask God pardon for our sins, and so we say:
"Forgive us our trespasses."

We can consider these words in three ways: (1) Why do we make this
petition? (2) How may it be
fulfilled? (3) What is required on our part?

WHY DO WE MAKE THIS PETITION?

It must be known that from this petition we can draw two things that
are necessary for us in this
life. One is that we be ever in a state of salutary fear and humility. There have been some, indeed,
so presumptuous as to say that man could live in this world and by his
own unaided strength avoid
sin. But this condition has been given to no one except Christ, who
had the Spirit beyond all
measure, and to the Blessed Virgin, who was full of grace and in whom
there was no sin. "And
concerning whom," that is, the Virgin, "when it is a question of sin I
wish to make no mention,"
says St. Augustine.[5] But for all the other Saints, it was never
granted them that they should not
incur at least venial sin: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive
ourselves and the truth is not in
us."[6] And, moreover, this very petition proves this; for it is
evident that all Saints and all men say
the "Our Father" in which is contained "Forgive us our trespasses."
Hence, all admit and confess
that they are sinners or trespassers. If, therefore, you are a sinner,
you ought to fear and humble
yourself.

Another reason for this petition is that we should ever live in hope.
Although we be sinners,
nevertheless we must not give up hope, lest our despair drive us into
greater and different kinds of
sins. As the Apostle says: "Who despairing, have given themselves up to lasciviousness, unto the working of all uncleanness."[7] It is, therefore, of great help that we be ever hopeful; for in the measure that man is a sinner, he ought to hope that God will forgive him if he be perfectly sorry for sin and be converted. This hope is strengthened in us when we say: "Forgive us our trespasses."

The Novatiani destroyed this hope, saying that one who has sinned but once after Baptism can never look for mercy. But this is not true, if Christ spoke truly when He said: "I forgave thee all the debt, because thou besoughtest Me."[8] In whatsoever day, therefore, you ask, you can receive mercy if with sorrow for sin you make your prayer. Both fear and hope arise from this petition. For all sinners who are contrite and confess their guilt, receive mercy. Hence, this petition is necessary.

THE FULFILLMENT OF THIS PETITION

Concerning the second consideration of this petition (viz., how it may be fulfilled), it must be known that there are two factors in sin: the fault by which God is offended, and the punishment which is due because of this fault. But the sin is taken away in contrition which goes with the purpose to confess and make satisfaction: "I said: I will confess against myself my injustice to the Lord. And Thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my sin"[9] One has no need to fear then, because for the remission of a fault contrition with a purpose to confess is sufficient.[10]

But one might say: "If sin is thus taken away when a man is contrite, of what necessity is the priest?" To this it must be said that God does forgive the sin in contrition, and eternal punishment is changed to temporal, but nevertheless the debt of temporal punishment remains. If one should die without confession, not out of contempt for it but prevented from it, one would go to purgatory, where the punishment, as St. Augustine says, is very great. When you confess, the priest absolves you of this punishment in virtue of the keys to which you subject yourself in confession.[11] When, therefore, one has confessed, something of this punishment is taken away; and similarly when he has again confessed, and it could be that after he has confessed many times, all would be remitted.

The successors of the Apostles found another mode of remission of this punishment, namely, the good use of indulgences, which have their force for one living in the
state of grace, to the extent
that is claimed for them and as indicated by the grantor. That the
Pope can bring this about, is
sufficiently evident. Many holy men have accomplished much good, and
they have not greatly
sinned, at least not mortally; and these good deeds were done for the
common use of the Church.
Likewise the merits of Christ and the Blessed Virgin are, as it were,
in a treasury; and from it the
Supreme Pontiff and they who are by him permitted can dispense these
merits where it is necessary.
Thus, therefore, sins are taken away not only as regards their guilt
by contrition,[12] but also as
regards punishment for them in confession and through indulgences.[13]

WHAT MUST WE DO?
Concerning the third consideration of this petition, it must be known
that on our part we are
required to forgive our neighbour the offenses which he commits
against us. Thus, we say: "As we
forgive those who trespass against us." Otherwise God would not
forgive us: "Man to man reserveth
anger: and doth he seek remedy of God?"[14] "Forgive and you shall be
forgiven."[15] Therefore,
only in this petition is there a condition when it says: "As we
forgive those who trespass against
us." If you do not forgive, you shall not be forgiven.
But you may think, "I shall say what goes first in the petition,
namely, 'forgive us,' but that 'As we
forgive those who trespass against us,' I shall not say." Would you
seek to deceive Christ? You
certainly do not deceive Him. For Christ who made this prayer
remembers it well, and cannot be
deceived. If therefore, you say it with the lips, let the heart
fulfill it.
But one may ask whether he who does not intend to forgive his
neighbour ought to say: "As we
forgive those who trespass against us." It seems not, for such is a
lie. But actually it must be said
that he does not lie, because he prays not in his own person, but in
that of the Church which is not
deceived, and, therefore the petition itself is in the plural
number.[16] And it must also be known
that forgiveness is twofold. One applies to the perfect, where the one
offended seeks out the
offender: "Seek after peace."[17] The other is common to all, and to
it all are equally bound, that
one offended grant pardon to the one who seeks it: "Forgive thy
neighbour if he hath hurt thee; and
then shall thy sins be forgiven to thee when thou prayest."[18] And
from this follows that other beatitude: "Blessed are the merciful." For mercy causes us to have pity on our neighbour. (For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES
1. Prov., xx. 18.
3. "In this petition we find a new manner of prayer. In the other petitions we asked of God not only eternal and spiritual goods, but also transient and temporal advantages. But now we ask to be liberated from the evils of the soul and of the body. of this life and of the life to come" ("Roman Catechism," "Lord's Prayer," Chapter XIV, 1).
4. Literally, our debts; that is, the difference between what we ought to give God and actually do not give Him. "The type of offense requiring expiation, a sin" (Oxford English Dictionary). What we pray for is that God may deliver us from sin This is the interpretation of St. Luke, who, instead of 'debts,' uses the word 'sins, because through our sins we become guilty before God and incur a debt of punishment which we must pay either by satisfaction or by suffering. . . . With regard to serious sins, however, this petition cannot procure forgiveness unless it derive that efficacy from the Sacrament of Penance, received, as we have already said, either actually or at least in desire' (Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," 15).
5. "De Natura et gratia," XXXVI.
6. I John, i. 8.
8. Matt., xviii. 32.
9. Ps. xxxi. 5.
11. The effects of the Sacrament of Penance are: (1) sanctifying grace is imparted whereby the guilt of mortal sin is taken away and at the same time the guilt of eternal punishment; (2) the guilt of temporal punishment is more or less remitted according to the dispositions of the penitent "and the disposition can be such that in virtue of contrition the entire punishment is removed," says St. Thomas (IV Sent., Dist. xviii, art. 3, sol. 2, ad. 4). The Council of
Trent (Session XIV, cap. 2) teaches that this entire remission of punishment, which is obtained through Baptism, is not obtained through the Sacrament of Penance "without much tears and labors" ("magnis nostris fletibus et laboribus"). For other effects of this Sacrament, such as the bestowal of sacramental grace and the revival of the merits of former good works, see the Manuals of Moral Theology (e.g., AertnysDamen, II, lib. VI, tract. v, n. 272).

12. See footnote above.
13. An indulgence is a remission of that temporal punishment which, even after the sin is forgiven, we have yet to undergo either here or in purgatory. Indulgences derive their value and efficacy from the spiritual treasury of the Church, which consists of the superabundant merits of Christ, His Blessed Mother, and the Saints. This treasury is to be considered as the common property of the faithful, committed to the administration of the Church. In virtue of the Communion of Saints, by which we are united as members of one body, the abundance of some supplies for the want of others. The Council of Trent (Session XXV) points out to all the faithful that the use of indulgences is very salutary.
14. Ecclus., xxviii. 3.
16. "Nor do we say 'forgive me,' but 'forgive us,' because the brotherly relationship and charity which subsist between all men demand of each of us that, being solicitous for the salvation of our neighbour, we pray also for them while offering prayers for ourselves" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.,” 16).
17. Ps. xxxiii. 15.
18. Ecclus., xxviii. 2.

THE SIXTH PETITION: "And Lead Us Not Into Temptation."

There are those who have sinned and desire forgiveness for their sins. They confess their sins and repent. Yet, they do not strive as much as they should in order that they may not fall into sin again. In this indeed they are not consistent. For, on the one hand, they deplore their sins by being sorry for them; and, on the other hand, they sin again and again and have them again to deplore. Thus it is written: "Wash yourselves, be clean. Take away the evil of your devices from my eyes. Cease to do perversely."[1] We have seen in the petition above that Christ taught us to seek forgiveness for our sins. In this
petition, He teaches us to pray that we might avoid sin—that is, that we may not be led into temptation, and thus fall into sin. "And lead us not into temptation."[2]

Three questions are now considered: (1) What is temptation? (2) In what ways is one tempted and by whom? (3) How is one freed from temptation?

WHAT IS TEMPTATION?

Regarding the first, it must be known that to tempt is nothing other than to test or to prove. To tempt a man is to test or try his virtue. This is done in two ways just as a man's virtue requires two things. One requirement is to do good, the other is to avoid evil: "Turn away from evil and do good."[3] Sometimes a man's virtue is tried in doing good, and sometimes it is tested in avoiding evil. Thus, regarding the first, a person is tried in his readiness to do good, for example, to fast and such like. Then is thy virtue great when thou art quick to do good. In this way does God sometimes try one's virtue, not, however, because such virtue is hidden from Him, but in order that all might know it and it would be an example to all. God tempted Abraham in this way, and Job also.[4] For this reason God frequently sends trials to the just, who in sustaining them with all patience make manifest their virtue and themselves increase in virtue: "The Lord your God trieth you, that it may appear whether you love Him with all your heart and with all your soul, or not."[5] Thus does God tempt man by inciting him to good deeds. As to the second, the virtue of man is tried by solicitation to evil. If he truly resists and does not give his consent, then his virtue is great. If, however, he falls before the temptation, he is devoid of virtue. God tempts no man in this way, for it is written: "God is not a tempter of evils, and He tempteth no man."[6]

HOW IS ONE TEMPTED?

The Temptations of the Flesh.--Man is tempted by his own flesh, by the devil and by the world. He is tempted by the flesh in two ways. First, the flesh incites one to evil. It always seeks its own pleasures, namely, carnal pleasures, in which often is sin. He who indulges in carnal pleasures neglects spiritual things: "Every man is tempted by his own concupiscence."[7] Secondly, the flesh tempts man by enticing him away from good. For the spirit on its part would
delight always in spiritual things, but the flesh asserting itself puts obstacles in the way of the spirit: "The corruptible body is a load upon the soul."[8] "For I am delighted with the law of God, according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin, that is in my members."[9] This temptation which comes from the flesh is most severe, because our enemy, the flesh, is united to us; and as Boethius says: "There is no plague more dangerous than an enemy in the family circle." We must, therefore, be ever on our guard against this enemy: "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation."[10] The Temptations of the Devil.—The devil tempts us with extreme force. Even when the flesh is subdued, another tempter arises, namely, the devil against whom we have a heavy struggle. Of this the Apostle says: "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 high places."[11] For this reason he is very aptly called the tempter: "Lest perhaps he that tempteth should have tempted you."[12] The devil proceeds most cunningly in tempting us. He operates like a skillful general when about to attack a fortified city. He looks for the weak places in the object of his assault, and in that part where a man is most weak, he tempts him. He tempts man in those sins to which, after subduing his flesh, he is most inclined. Such, for instance, are anger, pride and the other spiritual sins. "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour."[13] How the Devil Tempts Us.—The devil does two things when he tempts us. Thus, he does not at once suggest something that appears to us as evil, but something that has a semblance of good. Thereby he would, at least in the beginning, turn a man from his chief purpose, and then afterwards it will be easier to induce him to sin, once he has been turned away ever so little. "Satan himself transformeth himself into an angel of light."[14] Then when he has once led man into sin, he so enchains him as to prevent his rising up out of his sin. The devil, therefore, does two things: he deceives a man first, and then after betraying him, enthralls him in his sin. Temptations of the World.—The world has two ways of tempting man. The first is excessive and
intemperate desire for the goods of this life: "The desire of money is the root of all evil."[15] The second way is the fears engendered by persecutors and tyrants: "We are wrapped up in darkness."[16] "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."[17] And again: "Fear not those that slay the body."[18]

How Is One Freed from Temptation?--Now we have seen what temptation is, and also in what way and by whom one is tempted. But how is one freed from temptation? In this we must notice that Christ teaches us to pray, not that we may not be tempted, but that we may not be led into temptation. For it is when one overcomes temptation that one deserves the reward. Thus it is said: "Count it all joy when you shall fall into divers temptations."[19] And again: "Son, when thou comest to the service of God, . . . prepare thy soul for temptation."[20] Again: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he hath been proved, he shall receive the crown of life."[21] Our Lord, therefore, teaches us to pray that we be not led into temptation, by giving our consent to it: "Let no temptation take hold on you, but such as is human."[22] The reason is that it is human to be tempted, but to give consent is devilish. But does God lead one to evil, that he should pray: "Lead us not into temptation"? I reply that God is said to lead a person into evil by permitting him to the extent that, because of his many sins, He withdraws His grace from man, and as a result of this withdrawal man does fall into sin. Therefore, we sing in the Psalm: "When my strength shall fail, do not Thou forsake me."[23] God, however, directs man by the fervor of charity that he be not led into temptation. For charity even in its smallest degree is able to resist any kind of sin: "Many waters cannot quench charity."[24] He also guides man by the light of his intellect in which he teaches him what he should do. For as the Philosopher says: "Every one who sins is ignorant."[25] "I will give thee understanding and I will instruct thee."[26] It was for this last that David prayed, saying: "Enlighten my eyes that I never sleep in death; lest at any time my enemy say: I have prevailed against him."[27] We have this through the gift of understanding. Therefore, when we refuse to consent to temptation, we keep our hearts pure: "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see
And it follows from this petition that we are led up to the sight of God, and to it may God lead us all!

(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES

1. Isa., i. 16.
2. "We should implore the divine assistance in general under all temptations, and especially when we are assailed by any particular temptation" ("Roman Catechism," "Lord's Prayer," Chapter XV, 15).
3. Ps. xxxiii. 15.
4. Gen., xxii: Job, i.
5. Deut., xiii. 3.
6. James, i. 13.
8. Wis., ix. 15.
10. Matt., xxvi. 41.
12. I Thess., iii. 5.
15. Tim., vi. 10.
17. II Tim., iii. 12.
18. Matt., x. 28.
19. James, i. 2.
20. Ecclus. ii. I.
22. I Cor., x. 13.
23. Ps. lxx. 9.
26. Ps. xxxi. 8.
27. Ps. xii. 4-5.

SEVENTH PETITION: "But Deliver Us from Evil. Amen."
The Lord has already taught us to pray for forgiveness of our sins, and how to avoid temptations. In this petition, He teaches us to pray to be preserved from evil, and indeed from all evil in general, such as sin, illness, affliction and all others, as St. Augustine explains it.[1] But since we have already mentioned sin and temptation, we now must consider other evils, such as adversity and all afflictions of this world. From these God preserves us in a fourfold manner.

First, He preserves us from affliction itself; but this is very rare
because it is the lot of the just in this world to suffer, for it is written: "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."[2] Once in a while, however, God does prevent a man from being afflicted by some evil; this is when He knows such a one to be weak and unable to bear it. Just so a physician does not prescribe violent medicines to a weak patient. "Behold, I have given before thee a door opened, which no man can shut; because thou hast little strength."[3] In heaven this will be a general thing, for there no one shall be afflicted. "In six troubles," those, namely, of this present life which is divided into six periods, "He shall deliver thee, and in the seventh evil shall not touch thee."[4] "They shall no more hunger nor thirst."[5] Second, God delivers us from afflictions when He consoles us in them; for unless He console us, we could not long persevere: "We were pressed out of measure above our strength so that we were weary even of life."[6] "But God, who comforteth the humble, comforted us."[7] "According to the multitude of my sorrows in my heart, Thy comforts have given joy to my soul."[8] Third, God bestows so many good things upon those who are afflicted that their evils are forgotten: "After the storm Thou makest a calm."[9] The afflictions and trials of this world, therefore, are not to be feared, both because consolations accompany them and because they are of short duration: "For that which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory."[10] Fourth, we are preserved from afflictions in this way that all temptations and trials are conducive to our own good. We do not pray, "Deliver us from tribulation," but "from evil." This is because tribulations bring a crown to the just, and for that reason the Saints rejoiced in their sufferings: "We glory also in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience."[11] "In time of tribulation Thou forgivest sins."[12]

THE VALUE OF PATIENCE
God, therefore, delivers man from evil and from affliction by converting them to his good. This is a sign of supreme wisdom to divert evil to good. And patience in bearing trials is a result of this. The other virtues operate by good things, but patience operates in evil things, and, indeed, it is very
necessary in evil things, namely, in adversity: "The learning of a man is known by his patience."[13]
The Holy Spirit through the gift of wisdom has us use this prayer, and by it we arrive at supreme happiness which is the reward of peace. For it is by patience we obtain peace, whether in time of prosperity or of adversity. For this reason the peace-makers are called the children of God, because they are like to God in this, that nothing can hurt God and nothing can hurt them, whether it be prosperity or adversity: "Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God."[14]
"Amen." This is general ratification of all the petitions.[15]
A SHORT EXPLANATION OF THE WHOLE PRAYER
By way of brief summary, it should be known that the Lord's Prayer contains all that we ought to desire and all that we ought to avoid. Now, of all desirable things, that must be most desired which is most loved, and that is God. Therefore, you seek, first of all, the glory of God when you say: "Hallowed be Thy name." You should desire three things from God, and they concern yourself. The first is that you may arrive at eternal life. And you pray for this when you say: "Thy kingdom come." The second is that you will do the will of God and His justice. You pray for this in the words: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." The third is that you may have the necessaries of life. And thus you pray: "Give us this day our daily bread." Concerning all these things the Lord says: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God," which complies with the second, "and all these things shall be added unto you,"[16] as in accord with the third.

118
We must avoid and flee from all things which are opposed to the good. For, as we have seen, good is above all things to be desired. This good is fourfold. First, there is the glory of God, and no evil is contrary to this: "If thou sin, what shalt thou hurt Him? And if thou do justly, what shall thou give Him?"[17] Whether it be the evil inasmuch as God punishes it, or whether it be the good in that God rewards it--all redound to His glory. The second good is eternal life, to which sin is contrary: because eternal life is lost by sin. And so to remove this evil we pray: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against
us." The third good is justice and good works, and temptation is contrary to this, because temptation hinders us from doing good. We pray, therefore, to have this evil taken away in the words: "Lead us not into temptation." The fourth good is all the necessaries of life, and opposed to this are troubles and adversities. And we seek to remove them when we pray: "But deliver us from evil. Amen."

(For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES

1. "Our Lord Himself made use of this petition when on the eve of His passion He prayed to God His Father for the salvation of all mankind. He said, 'I pray that Thou keep them from evil' (John, xvii. 15). In this form of prayer He, as it were, summarized the force and efficacy of the other petitions; and He delivered it by way of precept and confirmed it by example" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," Chapter XVI, 1).

2. II Tim., iii. 12.
3. Apoc., iii. 8.
5. Apoc., vii. 16.
6. II Cor., i. 8.
8. Ps. xciii. 19.
9. Tob., iii. 22.
10. II Cor., iv. 17.
11. Rom., v. 3.
13. Prov., xix. 11.
14. Matt., v. 9
15. 'The word 'Amen' which brings the Lord's Prayer to a close contains, as it were, the germs of many of those thoughts and considerations which we have just treated. Indeed, so frequent was this Hebrew word in the mouth of Our Lord that it pleased the Holy Spirit to have it retained in the Church of God. The meaning of it may be said to be: 'Know that thy prayers are heard.' It has the force of a response, as if God answers the prayer of the suppliant and graciously dismisses him after He has kindly heard his prayers" ("Roman Catechism," "loc. cit.," Chapter xvii. 4).

17. Job, xxxv. 6, 7.

THE HAIL MARY

THE ANGELIC SALUTATION

This salutation has three parts. The Angel gave one part, namely:
"Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women."[1] The other part was given by Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, namely: "Blessed is the fruit of thy womb."[2] The Church adds the third part, that is, "Mary," because the Angel did not say, "Hail, Mary," but "Hail, full of grace." But, as we shall see, this name, "Mary," according to its meaning agrees with the words of the Angels.[3]

"HAIL MARY"

We must now consider concerning the first part of this prayer that in ancient times it was no small event when Angels appeared to men; and that man should show them reverence was especially praiseworthy. Thus, it is written to the praise of Abraham that he received the Angels with all courtesy and showed them reverence. But that an Angel should show reverence to a man was never heard of until the Angel reverently greeted the Blessed Virgin saying: "Hail."

THE ANGEL'S DIGNITY

In olden time an Angel would not show reverence to a man, but a man would deeply revere an Angel. This is because Angels are greater than men, and indeed in three ways. First, they are greater than men in dignity. This is because the Angel is of a spiritual nature: "Who makest Thy angels spirits."[4] But, on the other hand, man is of a corruptible nature, for Abraham said: "I will speak to my Lord, whereas I am dust and ashes."[5] It was not fitting, therefore, that a spiritual and incorruptible creature should show reverence to one that is corruptible as is a man. Secondly, an Angel is closer to God. The Angel, indeed, is of the family of God, and as it were stands ever by Him: "Thousands of thousands ministered to Him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before Him."[6] Man, on the other hand, is rather a stranger and afar off from God because of sin: "I have gone afar off."[7] Therefore, it is fitting that man should reverence an Angel who is an intimate and one of the household of the King.

Then, thirdly, the Angels far exceed men in the fullness of the splendor of divine grace. For Angels participate in the highest degree in the divine light: "Is there any numbering of His soldiers? And upon whom shall not His light arise?"[8] Hence, the Angels always appear among men clothed in light, but men on the contrary, although they partake somewhat of the light of grace, nevertheless
do so in a much slighter degree and with a certain obscurity. It was, therefore, not fitting that an
Angel should show reverence to a man until it should come to pass that one would be found in
human nature who exceeded the Angels in these three points in which we have seen that they excel
over men--and this was the Blessed Virgin. To show that she excelled the Angels in these, the
Angel desired to show her reverence, and so he said: "Ave (Hail)."
"FULL OF GRACE"

The Blessed Virgin was superior to any of the Angels in the fullness of grace, and as an indication
of this the Angel showed reverence to her by saying: "Full of grace." This is as if he said: "I show
thee reverence because thou dost excel me in the fullness of grace."
The Blessed Virgin is said to be full of grace in three ways. First, as regards her soul she was full of
grace. The grace of God is given for two chief purposes, namely, to do good and to avoid evil. The
Blessed Virgin, then, received grace in the most perfect degree, because she had avoided every sin
more than any other Saint after Christ. Thus it is said: "Thou art fair, My beloved, and there is not a
spot in thee." [9] St. Augustine says: "If we could bring together all the Saints and ask them if they
were entirely without sin, all of them, with the exception of the Blessed Virgin, would say with one
voice: 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.' [10] I except,
however, this holy Virgin of whom, because of the honour of God, I wish to omit all mention of
sin." [11] For we know that to her was granted grace to overcome every kind of sin by Him whom
she merited to conceive and bring forth, and He certainly was wholly without sin.

VIRTUES OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

Christ excelled the Blessed Virgin in this, that He was conceived and born without original sin,
while the Blessed Virgin was conceived in original sin, but was not born in it. [12] She exercised the
works of all the virtues, whereas the Saints are conspicuous for the exercise of certain special
virtues. Thus, one excelled in humility, another in chastity, another in mercy, to the extent that they
are the special exemplars of these virtues--as, for example, St. Nicholas is an exemplar of the virtue
of mercy. The Blessed Virgin is the exemplar of all the virtues. In her is the fullness of the virtue of humility: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord." [13] And again:
"He hath regarded the humility of his handmaid."[14] So she is also exemplar of the virtue of chastity: "Because I know not man."[15] And thus it is with all the virtues, as is evident. Mary was full of grace not only in the performance of all good, but also in the avoidance of all evil. Again, the Blessed Virgin was full of grace in the overflowing effect of this grace upon her flesh or body. For while it is a great thing in the Saints that the abundance of grace sanctified their souls, yet, moreover, the soul of the holy Virgin was so filled with grace that from her soul grace poured into her flesh from which was conceived the Son of God. Hugh of St. Victor says of this: "Because the love of the Holy Spirit so inflamed her soul, He worked a wonder in her flesh, in that from it was born God made Man." "And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."[16]

MARY, HELP OF CHRISTIANS
The plenitude of grace in Mary was such that its effects overflow upon all men. It is a great thing in a Saint when he has grace to bring about the salvation of many, but it is exceedingly wonderful when grace is of such abundance as to be sufficient for the salvation of all men in the world, and this is true of Christ and of the Blessed Virgin. Thus, "a thousand bucklers," that is, remedies against dangers, "hang therefrom."[17] Likewise, in every work of virtue one can have her as one's helper. Of her it was spoken: "In me is all grace of the way and of the truth, in me is all hope of life and of virtue."[18] Therefore, Mary is full of grace, exceeding the Angels in this fullness and very fittingly is she called "Mary" which means "in herself enlightened": "The Lord will fill thy soul with brightness."[19] And she will illumine others throughout the world for which reason she is compared to the sun and to the moon.[20]

"THE LORD IS WITH THEE"
The Blessed Virgin excels the Angels in her closeness to God. The Angel Gabriel indicated this when he said: "The Lord is with thee"--as if to say: "I reverence thee because thou art nearer to God than I, because the Lord is with thee." By the Lord; he means the Father with the Son and the Holy Spirit, who in like manner are not with any Angel or any other spirit: "The Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."[21] God the Son was in
her womb: "Rejoice and praise, O thou habitation of Sion; for great is He that is in the midst of thee, the Holy One of Israel."[22]
The Lord is not with the Angel in the same manner as with the Blessed Virgin; for with her He is as a Son, and with the Angel He is the Lord. The Lord, the Holy Ghost, is in her as in a temple, so that it is said: "The temple of the Lord, the sanctuary of the Holy Spirit,"[23] because she conceived by the Holy Ghost. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee."[24] The Blessed Virgin is closer to God than is an Angel, because with her are the Lord the Father, the Lord the Son, and the Lord the Holy Ghost--in a word, the Holy Trinity. Indeed of her we sing: "Noble resting place of the Triune God."[25] "The Lord is with thee" are the most praiseladen words that the Angel could have uttered; and, hence, he so profoundly reverenced the Blessed Virgin because she is the Mother of the Lord and Our Lady. Accordingly she is very well named "Mary," which in the Syrian tongue means "Lady."
"BLESSED ART THOU AMONG WOMEN"
The Blessed Virgin exceeds the Angels in purity. She is not only pure, but she obtains purity for others. She is purity itself, wholly lacking in every guilt of sin, for she never incurred either mortal or venial sin. So, too, she was free from the penalties of sin. Sinful man, on the contrary, incurs a threefold curse on account of sin. The first fell upon woman who conceives in corruption, bears her child with difficulty, and brings it forth in pain. The Blessed Virgin was wholly free from this, since she conceived without corruption, bore her Child in comfort, and brought Him forth in joy: "It shall bud forth and blossom, and shall rejoice with joy and praise."[26] The second penalty was inflicted upon man in that he shall earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. The Blessed Virgin was also immune from this because, as the Apostle says, virgins are free from the cares of this world and are occupied wholly with the things of the Lord.[27] The third curse is common both to man and woman in that both shall one day return to dust. The Blessed Virgin was spared this penalty, for her body was raised up into heaven, and so we believe that after her death she was revived and transported into heaven: "Arise, O Lord, into Thy resting place, Thou and the ark which Thou hast sanctified."[28] Because the
Blessed Virgin was immune from these punishments, she is "blessed among women." Moreover, she alone escaped the curse of sin, brought forth the Source of blessing, and opened the gate of heaven. It is surely fitting that her name is "Mary," which is akin to the Star of the Sea ("Maria--maris stella"), for just as sailors are directed to port by the star of the sea, so also Christians are by Mary guided to glory.

"BLESSED IS THE FRUIT OF THY WOMB"

The sinner often seeks for something which he does not find; but to the just man it is given to find what he seeks: "The substance of the sinner is kept for the just."[29] Thus, Eve sought the fruit of the tree (of good and evil), but she did not find in it that which she sought. Everything Eve desired, however, was given to the Blessed Virgin.[30] Eve sought that which the devil falsely promised her, namely, that she and Adam would be as gods, knowing good and evil. "You shall be," says this liar, "as gods."[31] But he lied, because "he is a liar and the father of lies."[32] Eve was not made like God after having eaten of the fruit, but rather she was unlike God in that by her sin she withdrew from God and was driven out of paradise. The Blessed Virgin, however, and all Christians found in the Fruit of her womb Him whereby we are all united to God and are made like to Him: "When He shall appear, we shall be like to Him, because we shall see Him as He is."[33]

Eve looked for pleasure in the fruit of the tree because it was good to eat. But she did not find this pleasure in it, and, on the contrary, she at once discovered she was naked and was stricken with sorrow. In the Fruit of the Blessed Virgin we find sweetness and salvation: "He that eateth My flesh . . . hath eternal life."[34] The fruit which Eve desired was beautiful to look upon, but that Fruit of the Blessed Virgin is far more beautiful, for the Angels desire to look upon Him: "Thou art beautiful above the sons of men."[35] He is the splendor of the glory of the Father. Eve, therefore, looked in vain for that which she sought in the fruit of the tree, just as the sinner is disappointed in his sins. We must seek in the Fruit of the womb of the Virgin Mary whatsoever we desire. This is He who is the Fruit blessed by God, who has filled Him with every grace, which in turn is poured out upon us who adore Him:
"Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with spiritual blessings in Christ."[36] He, too, is revered by the Angels: "Benediction and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving, honour and power and strength, to our God."[37] And He is glorified by men: "Every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father."[38] The Blessed Virgin is indeed blessed, but far more blessed is the Fruit of her womb: "Blessed is He who cometh in the name of the Lord."[39] (For "Questions for Discussion" see Chapter 6.)

ENDNOTES

2. "Ibid.," 42.
3. The Hail Mary or Angelical Salutation or Ave Maria in the time of St. Thomas consisted only of the present first part of the prayer. The words, "Mary" and "Jesus," were added by the Church to the first part, and the second part--"Holy Mary, Mother of God, etc."--was also added by the Church later. "Most fittingly has the Holy Church of God added to this thanksgiving [i.e., the Hail Mary] a petition also and an invocation to the most holy Mother of God. This is to impress upon us the need to have recourse to her in order that by her intercession she may reconcile God with us sinners, and obtain for us the blessings necessary for this life and for life eternal" ("Roman Catechism," "On Prayer," Chapter V, 8).

4. Ps. ciii. 4.
5. Gen., xviii. 27.
7. Ps. liv. 8.
8. Job, xxv. 3.
10. I John, i. 8.
11. "De natura et gratia," c. xxxvi. Elsewhere St. Thomas says: "In the Angelic Salutation is shown forth the worthiness of the Blessed virgin for this conception when it says, 'Full of grace;' it expresses the Conception itself in the words, 'The Lord is with thee'; and it foretells the honour which will follow with the words, 'Blessed art thou among women'" ("Summa Theol.," III, Q. xxx, art. 4).
12. St. Thomas wrote before the solemn definition of the Immaculate conception by the Church and at a time when the subject was still a matter of controversy among
theologians. In an earlier work, however, he pronounced in favor of the doctrine (I Sent., c. 44 Q. i, ad. 3), although he seemingly concluded against it in the "Summa Theologica." "Yet much discussion has arisen as to whether St. Thomas did or did not deny that the Blessed virgin was immaculate at the instant of her animation ("Catholic Encyclopedia." art. "Immaculate Conception"). On December 8, 1854, Pope Pius IX settled the question in the following definition: "Mary, ever blessed Virgin in the first instant of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace granted by God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race, was preserved exempt from all stain of original sin."

15. "Ibid.," 34.
17. Cant., iv. 4.
18. Eccl., xxiv. 25.
19. Isa., lviii. 11.
20. "The Blessed Virgin Mary obtained such a plenitude of grace that she was closest of all creatures to the Author of Grace; and thus she received in her womb Him who is full of grace. and by giving Him birth she is in a certain manner the source of grace for all men" ("Summa Theol.," III, Q. xxvii, art. 5). St. Bernard says: "It is God's will that we should receive all graces through Mary" ("Serm. de aquaeductu," n. vii). Mary is called the "Mediatrix of all Graces," and her mediation is immediate and universal, subordinate however to that of Jesus.

21. Luke. i. 35
22. Isa., xii. 6.
23. Antiphon from the Little Office of Blessed Virgin.
24. Luke. i. 35
25. "Totius Trinitatis nobile Triclinium."
27. I Cor., vii. 34.
28. Ps. cxxxi. 8.
29. Prov., xiii. 22.
30. Here St. Thomas compares the fruit of the forbidden tree for Eve with the Fruit of Mary's womb for all Christians.
31. Gen., iii 5
32. John, viii. 44.
33. I John, iii. 2.
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

THE APOSTLES' CREED

WHAT IS FAITH?
1. What is the threefold division of the Apostles' Creed?
2. In what way is faith a union with God?
3. Explain these words: "Blessed are they that have not seen and have believed."
4. Explain the fourth effect of faith, viz., by it we overcome temptations. Discuss these questions:
   Why do we believe that which we cannot see? Does all our knowledge come solely through our senses? Do we take nothing in the natural order on faith?
5. Explain St. Thomas' statement that the spread of Christianity was a great miracle.

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD
1. Either we believe in God or in chance. Develop, therefore, the argument: "All nature operates with a certain definite time and order, and is subject to the rule and foresight and orderly arrangement of someone."
2. How does the Providence of God account for the fact that the good often are afflicted, and that the wicked often prosper?
3. Give one reason why there can be only one God.
4. Discuss any one of the causes or motives which led men to believe in many gods (polytheism).
5. What is astrology, and what is wrong about it?
6. Discuss fortune-telling, palm-reading, etc.

ONE GOD, THE CREATOR
1. St. Thomas here states the argument from causality or the First Cause for the existence of God. Can you restate it in your own words?
2. Note that the errors of which St. Thomas speaks are similar to certain views held to-day. Thus, the Manicheans and modern "reformers" who consider legitimate pleasures to be evil. Can you think of any errors to-day which correspond somewhat to the other errors mentioned in the text?
3. How does consideration of God as our Creator lead us to greater knowledge of God?
4. Gratitude, patience, and the right use of created things are taught us by our belief in the Creator. How?
5. Where does man belong in relation to the rest of God's creation?
6. Make personal the proof of the existence of God, the Creator: that He created me and is interested in me.

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST
1. From the words of St. Peter how does the Transfiguration prove the Divinity of Our Lord?
2. Do you see a similarity between the beliefs of some men to-day and the error of Photinus?
3. Arianism was one of the great heresies which still exists to-day (only less philosophically) in the Unitarian religion. Discuss this.
4. Did not the great English poet, John Milton, hold views similar to Arianism?
5. The eternal generation of the Word or Son of God is likened by St. Thomas to the generation of the word in the mind of man—a thought conceived in the intellect. Can you explain this?
6. In what ways are we told to give adoration and honour to the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Word of God?

THE INCARNATION
1. Explain the third article of the Creed by telling the story of the Annunciation by the Angel to the Blessed Virgin.
2. What do you mean by the Virgin Birth?
3. How is our faith strengthened by these considerations of the Incarnation?
4. What do you understand by the words of St. Thomas: "He [Christ] became man in order that He might make man divine"?
5. In what way does the thought of the Incarnation enkindle our charity?
6. Explain the words: "Christ our brother."

THE PASSION OF CHRIST
1. Why is it that we cannot fully understand the tremendous fact of the passion and death of Christ?
2. "He [Christ] did not die as God, but as man." Explain these words of St. Thomas.
3. Why did the Son of God suffer and die for us?
4. Discuss the various effects of sin, and observe how the passion of Christ is a remedy against sin.
5. How can our consideration of the passion and death of Our Lord bring about a complete reformation of our lives?
6. What are some of the virtues of which Our Lord is the supreme Exemplar and Model?

THE DESCENT INTO HELL
1. What are the three meanings of "hell" used by St. Thomas?
2. Where was Christ from the Death on the Cross until the Resurrection?
3. How does the descent of Christ into Limbo differ from that of the just men who died before the crucifixion of Our Lord?
4. Discuss a few of the reasons why Our Lord "descended into hell."
5. From a consideration of the descent of Christ into Limbo, hope, fear, and anxiety should be aroused in us. Explain.
6. How can we rescue the souls detained in purgatory?

THE RESURRECTION
1. What does the Resurrection of Christ really mean?
2. In what ways did Our Lord's Resurrection differ from the resurrection of Lazarus?
3. What was the actual number of days from Good Friday to Easter Sunday?
4. St. Thomas says: "Let us endeavor to arise spiritually." Discuss this.
5. What is the relation of the Resurrection of Our Lord and our own future resurrection?
6. Does the Resurrection prove the Divinity of Christ?

THE ASCENSION
1. Discuss the place, time, and other circumstances of Our Lord's Ascension into heaven as it is described by St. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles (chapter i).
2. What was the length of time between Easter Sunday and Ascension Thursday?
3. "And sitteth at the right hand of God." What does this mean?
4. Discuss the reasonableness of the Ascension of Our Lord.
5. What are the benefits to us of the Ascension?
6. If the other mysteries (incarnation, passion, death, etc.) of Our Lord manifest His humility and meekness, what is demonstrated by the Ascension into heaven?

THE LAST JUDGMENT
1. Does St. Thomas speak here of the general judgment of all men on the last day, or of the particular judgment which all of us will undergo immediately after death?
2. "God decreed a general judgment in addition to the particular judgment to show forth His glory and also that of Christ and of the just, also to put the wicked to shame, and in order that man might receive, both in body and soul, the sentence of reward or punishment in the presence of all" (Cardinal Gasparri's Catechism, chap. iii, sect. ii, art. 4). Discuss this.
3. Some do not hesitate to accuse God of injustice when they see the wicked prosper and the good suffer. Does not the last judgment show God's justice? Discuss this.
point.
4. What meaning do you attach to the phrases, "the living" and "the
dead"?
5. Discuss the four classes of those to be judged.
6. What sentence will be pronounced at the last judgment? (See Matt.,
xxv, 34-41-)
7. Why should we have a wholesome fear of the judgment?
8. Note the remedies against fear of the judgment?

THE HOLY GHOST
1. Why is it necessary that there be will and love in God?
2. "The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost
who is given to us." In what
way is this statement of St. Paul a definition of the Holy Ghost?
3. What was the purpose of placing five articles on the Holy Ghost in
the Nicene Creed?
4. Explain how each of these five articles indicates that the Holy
Ghost is not a mere angelic
minister but is truly God.
5. The Holy Ghost is love, and therefore He cleanses us from sin.
Discuss this.
6. Name two ways in which the Holy Ghost aids the intellect or mind of
man.
7. Discuss the role of the Holy Ghost in the attainment of our eternal
salvation.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
1. What is meant by the expression, "the Church"?
2. How do the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity give
unity to the Church? Would you
say that another source of her unity or oneness is sanctifying grace?
3. St. Thomas says the faithful are sanctified (that is, made holy) in
four ways. What is the Source
of this holiness? Discuss this.
4. Show that the Catholic Church merits the title or mark of
"catholic," despite the fact that there are
non-Catholics.
5. St. Thomas classifies the elements which make up the mark,
"apostolicity." Discuss how these
elements are contained in the text of St. Matthew, xvi, 18 (see
footnote 29).
6. Why is it necessary that the Church of Christ have marks?

SAINTS--SACRAMENTS--SINS
1. Discuss the similarity between the natural body with its head and
members, and the spiritual
body, the Church, with its Head and members. Why is the Church called
the Mystical Body of
Christ?
2. The Communion of Saints means that between the members of the
Church--in heaven, in
purgatory, and on earth--there exists, by reason of their close union
with one another under Christ
their head, a mutual communication in spiritual riches or "good." Discuss this doctrine.
3. Why does St. Thomas give us a review of the seven Sacraments in treating of the Communion of Saints?
4. Trace the origin and growth of the life in the Mystical Body by its analogy with the life of the physical body in each of the Sacraments.
5. Discuss St. Thomas' answer to the objection: men cannot forgive sins committed against God.
6. Some day I shall be thanking people whom I never knew existed. Explain and discuss this.
RESURRECTION OF THE BODY
1. Show that the Holy Ghost sanctifies (that is, makes holy) the whole man.
2. Discuss the practical effects of belief in the resurrection of the body.
3. How can a strong belief in the resurrection help us to attain salvation?
4. What will the body be like after it arises from the dead?
5. Discuss what St. Thomas calls the "perfect age" of thirty-three years.
6. Compare point for point the condition of the resurrected body of the blessed and that of the damned, showing in what they are alike and in what they differ; and also point out that these differences conduce to the happiness of the saved and the misery of the damned.

EVERLASTING LIFE
1. Discuss how in this article of the Creed, the dignity and destiny of man are set forth and defended.
2. The true end of love is union with the beloved. Will this be realized in heaven? If so, how?
3. Show that in heaven there are no unfulfilled desires.
4. If there is no heaven, earth is a hell. Explain this.
5. In what will the punishment of the damned consist?
EXPLANATION OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS
THE FIRST COMMANDMENT
1. Recall in detail the circumstances when God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses; and also when Christ confirmed them (see Exodus, xx. 2-17; Matt., v. 17-18, xix. 17-20).
2. Discuss how all the Commandments are founded on the two precepts of love of God and love of neighbour.
3. Would you say that the Ten Commandments constitute the very foundation of society? In what
4. How was the First Commandment violated by the ancient peoples? 5. Discuss the dignity of God and the necessity of adoring Him only. 6. What are some of the ways of refusing to give due adoration to God? 7. Does the First Commandment forbid veneration to the Saints, their relics, pictures and statues? Explain and discuss this.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT
1. What is actually forbidden by the Second Commandment? 2. What is the positive side of this precept, i.e., what does it tell us to do? 3. Read the words from the "Roman Catechism" in footnote 1. Do you think it exaggerates conditions? 4. Discuss one or two of the meanings of "in vain." 5. Discuss the conditions of a lawful oath. 6. "There can be no lasting society unless men believe one another." Explain and discuss this statement. 7. What is the relation of the Holy Name Society to this Commandment?

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT
1. Explain the first reason which St. Thomas gives for observance of the Sabbath or Sunday, i.e., to remind us of the creation of the world. 2. Why do we keep holy the Sunday and not Saturday? Explain this as though you were talking to a Seventh Day Adventist. 3. The third reason for the Third Commandment refers to "the promise of rest." Is rest for the body alone meant here? 4. What is the spiritual condition of men who do not keep one day "to praise and pray to the Lord"? Discuss this. 5. Just what does "holy" mean in this Commandment? 6. What is understood by "servile works," and when may one work on Sunday? 7. St. Thomas tells us not to work and not to be idle on Sunday. Do you think that he advocates a "blue Sunday"? 8. To assist at Holy Mass (see footnote 37) and to hear a sermon are the best ways to keep the Sunday in a proper way. Observe the references from the Scriptures in support of this. 9. There is also a "Spiritual Sabbath" for those who lead saintly lives (the "more perfect" of the text). This is a continual rest for the soul while it is still here on earth. Explain this. 10. What is meant by the "Heavenly Sabbath"?
THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT
1. Notice the difference as to object (God--neighbour) between the first three Commandments and the last series of seven Commandments.
2. Discuss some of the reasons which St. Thomas gives us to honour our parents, such as birth, nourishment and care, education.
3. Discuss a number of the references from the Scriptures which support this Commandment.
4. Although the obligation to honour our parents rests upon the natural law, yet observe the rewards which are promised those who keep this precept.
5. Our superiors in the Church, our temporal rulers, and our benefactors are called by the name "father." Discuss the obligation of giving them reverence and honour.
6. Parents also have an obligation to supervise the religious and moral education of their children; and if they find it insufficient in school, they must supply it. Discuss this teaching of the "Roman Catechism."

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT
1. What does this precept forbid, and what positive virtue does it command?
2. What does St. Thomas say about killing of animals?
3. How do you justify the killing of criminals, killing in a just war, killing by accident?
4. "But to repel force by force against an unjust aggressor, while careful to preserve due moderation in a blameless self-defense is permitted by every law and right" (Gasparri's Catechism, chap. iv, sect. ii, art. 2). Discuss this principle.
5. Why is suicide prohibited?
6. What is the relation between killing and anger? (See footnote 27.)
7. What are some ways of avoiding anger?
8. What is the difference between righteous anger and anger that is sinful?
9. Discuss St. Thomas' reasons why we should not get angry easily.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT
1. How does St. Thomas distinguish between stealing and robbery?
2. Discuss the forms of theft enumerated by St. Thomas which to-day would be listed as: paying starvation wages; cheating; "graft."
3. Explain the obligation of restoring to the rightful owner what is stolen.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT
1. Perjury is defined in civil law as the crime of willfully uttering false evidence while one is under oath to tell the truth. Recall the references from the Scriptures which support this definition.
2. Since calumny refers to spreading what is untrue about our neighbour, and detraction refers to spreading what is true but otherwise unknown about him—which seems to be the greater evil?
3. St. Thomas says this precept is violated by detraction, by listening to detractors, and by gossipers. Discuss this.
4. Why is lying in all its forms forbidden by this Commandment?
5. Some will tell a falsehood for their own advantage, viz., out of humility, out of shame, to gain or to avoid something, or even to benefit some one else, and even out of vanity. Give examples of these points, and discuss the wrongfulness of all such motives.

NINTH AND TENTH COMMANDMENTS
1. Covetousness—wrongful desires and longings—destroys a man's peace of soul. Discuss this.
2. Notice the similarity between the Seventh and Tenth Commandments, and also between the Sixth and Ninth Commandments (see footnote 16).
3. Discuss the differences which St. Thomas gives between human laws and divine laws.
4. Observe the differences between the Ninth and Tenth Commandments (see footnote 4 under Tenth Commandment).
5. Explain how love of God and neighbour is the one principle or force underlying all the Commandments.

THE SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH
1. "A sacrament is a visible sign of invisible grace." Explain these words of St. Thomas and give some Sacraments as examples (see footnote 3).
2. One Sacrament pertains to society, another to the entire Church, and five Sacraments perfect the individual. Explain this.
3. Discuss the parallels between the physical and the spiritual life.
4. Discuss the three elements that go to make up a Sacrament: (1) certain things as the matter; (2) certain words as the form; (3) a minister.
5. What is common to all the Sacraments?
6. What is characteristic of each individual Sacrament?

THE SACRAMENTS. PART I
1. What is Baptism?
2. Discuss the matter and the minister of Baptism.
3. How would you administer Baptism in case of necessity?
4. Discuss the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles on Pentecost Sunday, and relate it to the Sacrament of Confirmation.
5. Discuss the matter and form of Confirmation.
6. Why must we be confirmed?
7. Discuss the matter and form of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.
   St. Thomas says the chief
effects of the Holy Eucharist are: (1) the change of the bread and
wine into the Body and Blood of
Christ, and (2) the union of the soul of a communicant with Our Lord.
Discuss these effects.
9. Discuss the Last Supper and the institution of the Blessed
Sacrament. What is the relation of the
Last Supper to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass?
10. Explain the two separate consecrations, one of the bread and one
of the wine, in the Mass (see
footnote 21).

THE SACRAMENTS. PART II
1. Discuss the three parts of the Sacrament of Penance.
2. What is the form of the Sacrament of Penance?
3. Our Lord instituted this Sacrament when, after the Resurrection, He
breathed upon the Apostles
and said: "Receive you the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive
they are forgiven, and whose
sins you shall retain they are retained" (John, xx. 22-23; Matt., xvi.
l9). Did Christ mean that this
power would cease at the deaths of the Apostles?
4. Discuss the practical value of the Sacrament of Penance.
5. Discuss the words of St. James regarding the Sacrament of Extreme
Uction, and point out in
these words the different effects of this Sacrament.
6. Why does the priest anoint on "the places of the five senses"? What
are they, and what does the
priest say?
7. Discuss the view that the last anointing is a sure sign of death.

THE SACRAMENTS. PART III
1. Name and discuss the various orders according to their importance
(see "Roman Catechism" for
special treatment of each order).
2. Our Lord instituted the Sacrament of Holy Orders when He gave the
Apostles and their
successors in the priesthood the power to offer the Sacrifice of the
Mass (at the Last Supper: "Do
this for a commemoration of Me," Luke, xxi. 19), and when He breathed
on the Apostles and gave
them the power to remit or to retain sins (on the day of the
Resurrection, John, xx. 23). From this
discuss the power and dignity of the priest.
3. What is the effect of the Sacrament of Holy Orders?
4. How many years are required for the education of a priest?
5. The Sacrament of Matrimony is marriage validly entered upon between
Christians, that is, all
who are baptized. Does the Church legislate for marriage between non-
baptized persons? Explain and discuss this.
6. Who are the ministers of the Sacrament of Matrimony, and what is its form?
7. Discuss the importance of consent in the Sacrament of Matrimony.
8. What is the threefold "good" or purpose of marriage?

THE LORD'S PRAYER

1. Why should prayer be "confident" and "suitable"?
3. Discuss the connection between "fervor" and "brevity" in our prayers.
4. Discuss the qualities of the prayers made by the Publican and the Samaritan (Luke, xviii. 10-14).
5. Enlarge upon the three effects of prayer mentioned by St. Thomas. Why is the Our Father called the "Lord's Prayer"?
6. How should we honour and imitate God our Father?
7. In the Lord's Prayer, why not say "my Father" instead of "our Father"?

WHO ART IN HEAVEN
1. "Who art in heaven" in general signifies heaven where God dwells, and also the good things of heaven. Explain how this is an incentive for us to use this prayer.
2. We are told that "in heaven" also refers to devout persons in whom God dwells by sanctifying grace. Explain this, and cite the references from the Scriptures in support of it.
3. St. Thomas says that the phrase "who art in heaven" gives us confidence in our prayer because of God's power, our familiarity with God, and because we feel our petitions are good for us. Explain this and discuss it.

Hallowed BE THY NAME
1. There are seven petitions in the Lord's Prayer. Can you think of other series (such as Seven Sacraments) which are seven in number?
2. God's name is: wonderful, venerable, ineffable. Explain this and observe the Scriptural references.
3. The word "hallow" comes from Anglo-Saxon, meaning "to honour as holy," and is preserved in "Hallowe'en," etc. Discuss the other meanings of the word "hallow" in reference to God.

THY KINGDOM COME
1. St. Thomas joins the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost with the seven petitions of the Our Father. How does he bring in the gifts of fear and piety?
2. Why do we pray that the "kingdom of God may come," since it has
always existed?
3. The word "kingdom" here means the rule of God in the hearts of men by His grace, and the reign of God in all society and in every nation by His law. Discuss this.
4. How do we assist the foreign missions when we pray "Thy kingdom come"?
5. In another sense, "kingdom" means the glory of heaven. Explain.
6. We also pray that we may one day live in the kingdom of God because of its perfect justice, its perfect liberty, and its great riches. Explain and discuss this.
7. In what ways can we cooperate in the advancement of the kingdom of God on earth?

THY WILL BE DONE
1. Explain how the gifts of knowledge and wisdom teach us to pray that God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
2. God wills of us that we gain eternal life, and that we keep the Commandments. Discuss this.
3. "God has made man without the help of man, yet He cannot save man without his cooperation."
What does this mean?
4. "Thy will be done" is our prayer that we obey the will of the spirit and not the will of the flesh or of the world. Discuss this.
5. The final object of this petition is that we pray for the bliss and happiness of "those who mourn."
Explain this and notice the references from the Scriptures.

OUR DAILY BREAD
1. What is the relation between the gift of fortitude and this petition of the Lord's Prayer?
2. Notice how we ask only for spiritual things in the first three petitions of this prayer, and we ask for our temporal necessities in the fourth petition.
3. "Give us this day our daily bread" includes our prayer to avoid five sins associated with the temporal needs of man. What are these sins, and what are the means of avoiding them?
4. What does St. Thomas say about excessive solicitude for the things of this world? What well-known sermon of Our Lord does he recall? (See Matt., vi. 24-34.)
5. "Bread" here means all our temporal wants and our spiritual needs as well. Explain how this refers particularly to the Holy Eucharist.
6. Does the "Word of God" also have a share in this petition? How?

FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES
1. Through the gift of counsel we pray that God may "forgive us our trespasses." Explain this.
2. Discuss how "trespasses" are our debts or sins.
3. Explain how the virtues of fear and hope arise out of this petition.
4. The answer of this prayer for forgiveness is had first of all in the Sacrament of Penance. Discuss this.
5. Discuss the means of remitting the temporal punishment due to sin. 
6. Explain the last part of this petition, viz., we pray to forgive others the offenses they commit against us. Is this not included in a good confession?

WHAT IS TEMPTATION?
1. How is this petition connected with the previous petition?
2. What is temptation? Discuss how it refers to performance of good and to avoidance of sin.
3. Discuss the ways in which man is tempted by the world, by the flesh, and by the devil.

136
4. What is the chief safeguard against temptation?
5. Do we ask to be delivered entirely from temptations? Or do we pray that God may give us grace to overcome temptations?
6. Does God actually lead us into temptation? Explain this.

DELIVER US FROM EVIL
1. In this final petition do we not pray for deliverance from all sins and from all conceivable evils?
2. How does St. Thomas explain our deliverance from adversity and afflictions in this world?
3. What is the virtue of patience, and how do we practise this virtue?
4. How does this prayer secure peace for us?
5. Explain the meaning of "Amen."
6. Discuss how the Lord's Prayer contains all that we ought to desire and all that we ought to avoid.
7. Discuss how the Our Father has all those excellent qualities of prayer which St. Thomas says belongs to all prayer. The qualities are: confident, ordered, suitable, devout, and humble.

THE HAIL MARY
1. What parts of the Hail Mary were contributed by the Angel Gabriel, by St. Elizabeth, and by the Church?
2. Recall the words of the "Angelus" prayer, and discuss how it recalls the Annunciation.
3. Discuss how the Blessed Virgin was truly "full of grace" (see footnote 11).
4. Explain the difference between the Immaculate Conception and the Virgin Birth.
5. How is Mary the "Mother of Christians"?
6. Explain and discuss the title: "Mediatrix of all graces" (see footnote 20).
7. "The Lord is with thee" are words of greatest possible praise and honour to Mary. Explain this.
8. Discuss the Angel's words: "Blessed art thou among women."
9. What are the penalties of sin, and how was the Blessed Virgin
entirely free from them?
10. Explain Mary's beautiful title: "Star of the Sea."
11. Make a comparison between Mary and Eve.
12. Describe the visitation of Mary to Elizabeth, and explain the words: "Blessed is the fruit of thy womb."
13. The last part of the Hail Mary was added by the Church. Explain this prayer.
14. How is the Mother of God also our Mother? Recall the words of Our Lord to Mary spoken while He was dying on the cross (John, xix. 25-27)

On Loving God, by
Saint Bernard, of Clairvaux

DEDICATION
To the illustrious Lord Haimeric, Cardinal Deacon of the Roman Church, and Chancellor: Bernard, called Abbot of Clairvaux, wisheth long life in the Lord and death in the Lord.
Hitherto you have been wont to seek prayers from me, not the solving of problems; although I count myself sufficient for neither. My profession shows that, if not my conversation;
and to speak truth, I lack the diligence and the ability that are most essential. Yet I am glad
that you turn again for spiritual counsel, instead of busying yourself about carnal matters:
I only wish you had gone to some one better equipped than I am. Still, learned and simple
give the same excuse and one can hardly tell whether it comes from modesty or from ignorance, unless obedience to the task assigned shall reveal. So, take from my poverty what I
can give you, lest I should seem to play the philosopher, by reason of my silence. Only, I do
not promise to answer other questions you may raise. This one, as to loving God, I will deal
with as He shall teach me; for it is sweetest, it can be handled most safely, and it will be most
profitable. Keep the others for wiser men.
DEDICATION
2
DEDICATION
Chapter I.
Why we should love God and the measure of that love
You want me to tell you why God is to be loved and how much. I answer, the reason
for loving God is God Himself; and the measure of love due to Him is
immeasurable love.
Is this plain? Doubtless, to a thoughtful man; but I am debtor to the unwise also. A word to
the wise is sufficient; but I must consider simple folk too. Therefore I set myself joyfully to
explain more in detail what is meant above.
We are to love God for Himself, because of a twofold reason; nothing is more reasonable,
nothing more profitable. When one asks, Why should I love God? he may mean,
What is lovely in God? or What shall I gain by loving God? In either case, the same
sufficient cause
of love exists, namely, God Himself.
And first, of His title to our love. Could any title be greater than this, that He
gave Himself for us unworthy wretches? And being God, what better gift could He offer than
Himself? Hence, if one seeks for God’s claim upon our love here is the chiefest:
Because He
first loved us (I John 4.19).
Ought He not to be loved in return, when we think who loved, whom He loved, and
how much He loved? For who is He that loved? The same of whom every spirit testifies:
‘Thou art my God: my goods are nothing unto Thee’ (Ps. 16.2, Vulg.). And is not His love
that wonderful charity which ‘seeketh not her own’? (I Cor.13.5). But for whom
was such
unutterable love made manifest? The apostle tells us: ‘When we were enemies,
we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son’ (Rom. 5.10). So it was God
who loved us, loved us
freely, and loved us while yet we were enemies. And how great was this love of
His? St. John
answers: ‘God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that
whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life’ (John
spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all’ (Rom. 8.32); and the
Son says of
Himself, ‘Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for
his friends’
(John 15.13).
This is the claim which God the holy, the supreme, the omnipotent, has upon
men, defiled and base and weak. Some one may urge that this is true of
mankind, but not of angels.
True, since for angels it was not needful. He who succored men in their time of
need, preserved angels from such need; and even as His love for sinful men
wrought wondrously in
them so that they should not remain sinful, so that same love which in equal
measure He
poured out upon angels kept them altogether free from sin.
Chapter I. Why we should love God and the measure of that love
3
Chapter I. Why we should love God and the measure of that love
Chapter II.
On loving God. How much God deserves love from man in recognition of His
gifts, both material and spiritual: and how these gifts should be cherished
without
neglect of the Giver
Those who admit the truth of what I have said know, I am sure, why we are
bound to
love God. But if unbelievers will not grant it, their ingratitude is at once
confounded by His
innumerable benefits, lavished on our race, and plainly discerned by the
senses. Who is it
that gives food to all flesh, light to every eye, air to all that breathe? It would
be foolish to
begin a catalogue, since I have just called them innumerable: but I name, as
notable instances,
food, sunlight and air; not because they are God’s best gifts, but because they
are essential
to bodily life. Man must seek in his own higher nature for the highest gifts;
and these are
dignity, wisdom and virtue. By dignity I mean free-will, whereby he not only
excels all other
earthly creatures, but has dominion over them. Wisdom is the power whereby he recognizes this dignity, and perceives also that it is no accomplishment of his own. And virtue impels man to seek eagerly for Him who is man’s Source, and to lay fast hold on Him when He has been found. Now, these three best gifts have each a twofold character. Dignity appears not only as the prerogative of human nature, but also as the cause of that fear and dread of man which is upon every beast of the earth. Wisdom perceives this distinction, but owns that though in us, it is, like all good qualities, not of us. And lastly, virtue moves us to search eagerly for an Author, and, when we have found Him, teaches us to cling to Him yet more eagerly. Consider too that dignity without wisdom is nothing worth; and wisdom is harmful without virtue, as this argument following shows: There is no glory in having a gift without knowing it. But to know only that you have it, without knowing that it is not of yourself that you have it, means self-glorying, but no true glory in God. And so the apostle says to men in such cases, ‘What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it? (I Cor. 4.7). He asks, Why dost thou glory? but goes on, as if thou hadst not received it, showing that the guilt is not in glorying over a possession, but in glorying as though it had not been received. And rightly such glorying is called vain-glory, since it has not the solid foundation of truth. The apostle shows how to discern the true glory from the false, when he says, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord, that is, in the Truth, since our Lord is Truth (I Cor. 1.31; John 14.6). We must know, then, what we are, and that it is not of ourselves that we are what we are. Unless we know this thoroughly, either we shall not glory at all, or our glorying will be vain. Finally, it is written, ‘If thou know not, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock’ (Cant. 1.8). And this is right. For man, being in honor, if he know not his own honor, may fitly be compared, because of such ignorance, to the beasts that perish. Not
knowing himself
as the creature that is distinguished from the irrational brutes by the
possession of reason,
Chapter II. On loving God. How much God deserves love from man in
recognition of His gifts, both material and spiritual: and how these gifts
should be cherished without neglect of the Giver
4
Chapter II. On loving God. How much God deserves love from man in
recognition...
he commences to be confounded with them because, ignorant of his own true
glory which
is within, he is led captive by his curiosity, and concerns himself with
external, sensual
things. So he is made to resemble the lower orders by not knowing that he has
been more
highly endowed than they.
We must be on our guard against this ignorance. We must not rank ourselves
too low;
and with still greater care we must see that we do not think of ourselves more
highly than
we ought to think, as happens when we foolishly impute to ourselves whatever
good may
be in us. But far more than either of these kinds of ignorance, we must hate
and shun that
presumption which would lead us to glory in goods not our own, knowing that
they are not
of ourselves but of God, and yet not fearing to rob God of the honor due unto
Him. For
mere ignorance, as in the first instance, does not glory at all; and mere
wisdom, as in the
second, while it has a kind of glory, yet does not glory in the Lord. In the third
evil case,
however, man sins not in ignorance but deliberately, usurping the glory which
belongs to
God. And this arrogance is a more grievous and deadly fault than the ignorance
of the
second, since it contemns God, while the other knows Him not. Ignorance is
brutal, arrogance
is devilish. Pride only, the chief of all iniquities, can make us treat gifts as if
they were
rightful attributes of our nature, and, while receiving benefits, rob our
Benefactor of His
due glory.
Wherefore to dignity and wisdom we must add virtue, the proper fruit of them
both.
Virtue seeks and finds Him who is the Author and Giver of all good, and who
must be in
all things glorified; otherwise, one who knows what is right yet fails to perform it, will be beaten with many stripes (Luke 12.47). Why? you may ask. Because he has failed to put his knowledge to good effect, but rather has imagined mischief upon his bed (Ps. 36.4); like a wicked servant, he has turned aside to seize the glory which, his own knowledge assured him, belonged only to his good Lord and Master. It is plain, therefore, that dignity without wisdom is useless and that wisdom without virtue is accursed. But when one possesses virtue, then wisdom and dignity are not dangerous but blessed. Such a man calls on God and lauds Him, confessing from a full heart, ‘Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory’ (Ps. 115.1). Which is to say, ‘O Lord, we claim no knowledge, no distinction for ourselves; all is Thine, since from Thee all things do come.’ But we have digressed too far in the wish to prove that even those who know not Christ are sufficiently admonished by the natural law, and by their own endowments of soul and body, to love God for God’s own sake. To sum up: what infidel does not know that he has received light, air, food—all things necessary for his own body’s life—from Him alone who giveth food to all flesh (Ps. 136.25), who maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust (Matt. 5.45). Who is so impious as to attribute the peculiar eminence of humanity to any other except to Him who saith, in Genesis, ‘Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness’? (Gen. 1.26). Who else could be the Bestower 5

Chapter II. On loving God. How much God deserves love from man in recognition... of wisdom, but He that teacheth man knowledge? (Ps. 94.10). Who else could bestow virtue except the Lord of virtue? Therefore even the infidel who knows not Christ but does at least know himself, is bound to love God for God’s own sake. He is unpardonable if he does not love the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind; for his own innate justice and common sense cry out from within that he is bound
wholly to love
God, from whom he has received all things. But it is hard, nay rather, impossible, for a man by his own strength or in the power of free-will to render all things to God from whom they came, without rather turning them aside, each to his own account, even as it is written, ‘For all seek their own’ (Phil. 2.21); and again, ‘The imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth’ (Gen. 8.21).

Chapter II. On loving God. How much God deserves love from man in recognition...

Chapter III. What greater incentives Christians have, more than the heathen, to love God The faithful know how much need they have of Jesus and Him crucified; but though they wonder and rejoice at the ineffable love made manifest in Him, they are not daunted at having no more than their own poor souls to give in return for such great and condescending charity. They love all the more, because they know themselves to be loved so exceedingly; but to whom little is given the same loveth little (Luke 7.47). Neither Jew nor pagan feels the pangs of love as doth the Church, which saith, ‘Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love’ (Cant. 2.5). She beholds King Solomon, with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals; she sees the Sole-begotten of the Father bearing the heavy burden of His Cross; she sees the Lord of all power and might bruised and spat upon, the Author of life and glory transfixed with nails, smitten by the lance, overwhelmed with mockery, and at last laying down His precious life for His friends. Contemplating this the sword of love pierces through her own soul also and she cried aloud, ‘Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love.’ The fruits which the Spouse gathers from the Tree of Life in the midst of the garden of her Beloved, are pomegranates (Cant. 4.13), borrowing their taste from the Bread of heaven, and their color from the Blood of Christ. She sees death dying and its author overthrown: she beholds captivity led captive from hell to earth, from earth to heaven, so ‘that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth’ (Phil. 2.10). The earth under the ancient curse brought forth thorns and thistles; but now the Church beholds it laughing with flowers and restored by the grace of a new benediction. Mindful of the verse, ‘My heart danceth for joy, and in my song will I praise Him’, sherefreshes herself with the fruits of His Passion which she gathers from the Tree of the Cross, and with the flowers of His Resurrection whose fragrance invites the frequent visits of her Spouse. Then it is that He exclaims, ‘Behold thou art fair, My beloved, yea pleasant: also our bed is green’ (Cant. 1.16). She shows her desire for His coming and whence she hopes to obtain it; not because of her own merits but because of the flowers of that field which God hath blessed. Christ who willed to be conceived and brought up in Nazareth, that is, the town of branches, delights in such blossoms. Pleased by such heavenly fragrance the bridegroom rejoices to revisit the heart’s chamber when He finds it adorned with fruits and decked with flowers—that is, meditating on the mystery of His Passion or on the glory of His Resurrection. The tokens of the Passion we recognize as the fruitage of the ages of the past, appearing in the fullness of time during the reign of sin and death (Gal. 4.4). But it is the glory of the Resurrection, in the new springtime of regenerating grace, that the fresh flowers of the later age come forth, whose fruit shall be given without measure at the general resurrection, when time shall be no more. And so it is written, ‘The winter is past, the rain is over and gone, Chapter III. What greater incentives Christians have, more than the heathen, to love God 7 Chapter III. What greater incentives Christians have, more than the heathen,... the flowers appear on the earth’ (Cant. 2.11 f); signifying that summer has come back with Him who dissolves icy death into the spring of a new life and says, ‘Behold, I make all things new’ (Rev. 21.5). His Body sown in the grave has blossomed in the Resurrection (1 Cor. 15.42); and in like manner our valleys and fields which were barren or frozen,
as if dead,
glow with reviving life and warmth.
The Father of Christ who makes all things new, is well pleased with the
freshness of
those flowers and fruits, and the beauty of the field which breathes forth such
heavenly fragrance; and He says in benediction, ‘See, the smell of My Son is as
the smell of a field which
the Lord hath blessed’ (Gen. 27.27). Blessed to overflowing, indeed, since of
His fullness
have all we received (John 1.16). But the Bride may come when she pleases and
gather flowers
and fruits therewith to adorn the inmost recesses of her conscience; that the
Bridegroom
when He cometh may find the chamber of her heart redolent with perfume.
So it behoves us, if we would have Christ for a frequent guest, to fill our hearts with
faithful meditations on the mercy He showed in dying for us, and on His
mighty power in
rising again from the dead. To this David testified when he sang, ‘God spake
once, and twice
I have also heard the same; that power belongeth unto God; and that Thou, Lord, art merciful
(Ps. 62.11f). And surely there is proof enough and to spare in that Christ died
for our sins
and rose again for our justification, and ascended into heaven that He might
protect us from
on high, and sent the Holy Spirit for our comfort. Hereafter He will come again
for the
consummation of our bliss. In His Death He displayed His mercy, in His
Resurrection His
power; both combine to manifest His glory.
The Bride desires to be stayed with flagons and comforted with apples,
because she
knows how easily the warmth of love can languish and grow cold; but such
helps are only
until she has entered into the bride chamber. There she will receive His long-
desired caresses
even as she sighs, ‘His left hand is under my head and His right hand doth
embrace me’
(Cant. 2.6). Then she will perceive how far the embrace of the right hand
excels all sweetness,
and that the left hand with which He at first caressed her cannot be compared
to it. She will
understand what she has heard: ‘It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh
profiteth nothing’
(John 6.63). She will prove what she hath read: ‘My memorial is sweeter than
honey, and
mine inheritance than the honey-comb’ (Ecclus. 24.20). What is written elsewhere, ‘The memorial of Thine abundant kindness shall be showed’ (Ps. 145.7), refers doubtless to those of whom the Psalmist had said just before: ‘One generation shall praise Thy works unto another and declare Thy power’ (Ps. 145.4). Among us on the earth there is His memory; but in the Kingdom of heaven His very Presence. That Presence is the joy of those who have already attained to beatitude; the memory is the comfort of us who are still wayfarers, journeying towards the Fatherland.

Chapter III. What greater incentives Christians have, more than the heathen,... Chapter IV.

Of those who find comfort in the recollection of God, or are fittest for His love. But it will be well to note what class of people takes comfort in the thought of God. Surely not that perverse and crooked generation to whom it was said, ‘Woe unto you that are rich; for ye have received your consolation’ (Luke 6.24). Rather, those who can say with truth, ‘My soul refuseth comfort’ (Ps. 77.2). For it is meet that those who are not satisfied by the present should be sustained by the thought of the future, and that the contemplation of eternal happiness should solace those who scorn to drink from the river of transitory joys. That is the generation of them that seek the Lord, even of them that seek, not their own, but the face of the God of Jacob. To them that long for the presence of the living God, the thought of Him is sweetest itself: but there is no satiety, rather an ever-increasing appetite, even as the Scripture bears witness, ‘they that eat me shall yet be hungry’ (Ecclus. 24.21); and if the one an-hungred spake, ‘When I awake up after Thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it.’ Yea, blessed even now are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they, and they only, shall be filled. Woe to you, wicked and perverse generation; woe to you, foolish and abandoned people, who hate Christ’s memory, and dread His second Advent!

Well may you fear, who will not now seek deliverance from the snare of the hunter; because
‘they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts’ (I Tim. 6.9). In that day we shall not escape the dreadful sentence of condemnation, ‘Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire’ (Matt. 25.41). O dreadful sentence indeed, O hard saying! How much harder to bear than that other saying which we repeat daily in church, in memory of the Passion: ‘Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life’ (John 6.54). That signifies, whoso honors My death and after My example mortifies his members which are upon the earth (Col. 3.5) shall have eternal life, even as the apostle says, ‘If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him’ (II Tim. 2.12). And yet many even today recoil from these words and go away, saying by their action if not with their lips, ‘This is a hard saying; who can hear it?’ (John 6.60). ‘A generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit cleaveth not steadfastly unto God’ (Ps. 78.8), but chooseth rather to trust in uncertain riches, it is disturbed at the very name of the Cross, and counts the memory of the Passion intolerable. How can such sustain the burden of that fearful sentence, ‘Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels’? ‘On whomsoever that stone shall fall it will grind him to powder’ (Luke 20.18); but ‘the generation of the faithful shall be blessed’ (Ps. 112.2), since, like the apostle, they labor that whether present or absent they may be accepted of the Lord (II Cor. 5.9). At the last day they too shall hear the Judge pronounce their award, ‘Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world’ (Matt. 25.34). In that day those who set not their hearts aright will feel, too late, how easy is Christ’s yoke, to which they would not bend their necks and how light His burden, in comparison Chapter IV. Of those who find comfort in the recollection of God, or are fittest for His love 9 Chapter IV. Of those who find comfort in the recollection of God, or are... with the pains they must then endure. O wretched slaves of Mammon, you cannot glory in
the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ while you trust in treasures laid up on earth: you cannot
taste and see how gracious the Lord is, while you are hungering for gold. If you have not
rejoiced at the thought of His coming, that day will be indeed a day of wrath to you.
But the believing soul longs and faints for God; she rests sweetly in the contemplation
of Him. She glories in the reproach of the Cross, until the glory of His face shall be revealed.
Like the Bride, the dove of Christ, that is covered with silver wings (Ps. 68.13),
white with innocence and purity, she reposes in the thought of Thine abundant kindness,
Lord Jesus;
and above all she longs for that day when in the joyful splendor of Thy saints,
gleaming with the radiance of the Beatific Vision, her feathers shall be like gold, resplendent
with the joy of Thy countenance.
Rightly then may she exult, ‘His left hand is under my head and His right hand doth
embrace me.’ The left hand signifies the memory of that matchless love, which moved Him
to lay down His life for His friends; and the right hand is the Beatific Vision which He hath
promised to His own, and the delight they have in His presence. The Psalmist sings rapturously, ‘At Thy right hand there is pleasure for evermore’ (Ps.
16.11): so we are warranted in explaining the right hand as that divine and deifying joy of His presence.
Rightly too is that wondrous and ever-memorable love symbolized as His left hand,
upon which the Bride rests her head until iniquity be done away: for He sustains the purpose
of her mind, lest it should be turned aside to earthly, carnal desires. For the flesh wars against
the spirit: ‘The corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth
down the mind that museth upon many things’ (Wisdom 9.15). What could result from the contemplation of compassion so marvelous and so undeserved, favor so free and so well
attested, kindness so unexpected, clemency so unconquerable, grace so amazing except that
the soul should withdraw from all sinful affections, reject all that is inconsistent with God’s
love, and yield herself wholly to heavenly things? No wonder is it that the Bride, moved by
the perfume of these unctions, runs swiftly, all on fire with love, yet reckons herself as loving all too little in return for the Bridegroom's love. And rightly, since it is no great matter that a little dust should be all consumed with love of that Majesty which loved her first and which revealed itself as wholly bent on saving her. For 'God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life' (John 3.16). This sets forth the Father's love. But 'He hath poured out His soul unto death,' was written of the Son (Isa. 53.12). And of the Holy Spirit it is said, 'The Comforter which is the Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you' (John 14.26). It is plain, therefore, that God loves us, and loves us with all His heart; for the Holy Trinity altogether loves us, if we may venture so to speak of the infinite and incomprehensible Godhead who is essentially one.

10
Chapter IV. Of those who find comfort in the recollection of God, or are...
11
Chapter IV. Of those who find comfort in the recollection of God, or are...
Chapter V.
Of the Christian's debt of love, how great it is
From the contemplation of what has been said, we see plainly that God is to be loved, and that He has a just claim upon our love. But the infidel does not acknowledge the Son of God, and so he can know neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit; for he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which sent Him, nor the Spirit whom He hath sent (John 5.23). He knows less of God than we; no wonder that he loves God less. This much he understands at least—that he owes all he is to his Creator. But how will it be with me?
For I know that my God is not merely the bounteous Bestower of my life, the generous Provider for all my needs, the pitiful Consoler of all my sorrows, the wise Guide of my course: but that He is far more than all that. He saves me with an abundant deliverance: He
is my eternal Preserver, the portion of my inheritance, my glory. Even so it is written, ‘With Him is plenteous redemption’ (Ps. 130.7); and again, ‘He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us’ (Heb. 9.12). Of His salvation it is written, ‘He forsaketh not His that be godly; but they are preserved for ever’ (Ps. 37.28); and of His bounty, ‘Good measure, pressed down and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom’ (Luke 6.38); and in another place, ‘Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, those things which God hath prepared for them that love Him’ (I Cor. 2.9). He will glorify us, even as the apostle beareth witness, saying, ‘We look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body’ (Phil. 3.20f); and again, ‘I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us’ (Rom. 8.18); and once more, ‘Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen (II Cor. 4.17f). ’What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me?’ (Ps. 116.12). Reason and natural justice alike move me to give up myself wholly to loving Him to whom I owe all that I have and am. But faith shows me that I should love Him far more than I love myself, as I come to realize that He hath given me not my own life only, but even Himself. Yet, before the time of full revelation had come, before the Word was made flesh, died on the Cross, came forth from the grave, and returned to His Father; before God had shown us how much He loved us by all this plenitude of grace, the commandment had been uttered, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy might’ (Deut. 6.5), that is, with all thy being, all thy knowledge, all thy powers. And it was not unjust for God to claim this from His own work and gifts. Why should not the creature love his
Creator, who gave him the power to love? Why should he not love Him with all his being, since it is by His gift alone that he can do anything that is good? It was God’s creative grace that out of nothingness raised us to the dignity of manhood; and from this appears our duty. Chapter V. Of the Christian's debt of love, how great it is to love Him, and the justice of His claim to that love. But how infinitely is the benefit increased when we bethink ourselves of His fulfillment of the promise, 'thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast: how excellent is Thy mercy, O Lord!' (Ps. 36.6f.). For we, who 'turned our glory into the similitude of a calf that eateth hay' (Ps. 106.20), by our evil deeds debased ourselves so that we might be compared unto the beasts that perish. I owe all that I am to Him who made me: but how can I pay my debt to Him who redeemed me, and in such wondrous wise? Creation was not so vast a work as redemption; for it is written of man and of all things that were made, 'He spake the word, and they were made' (Ps. 148.5). But to redeem that creation which sprang into being at His word, how much He spake, what wonders He wrought, what hardships He endured, what shames He suffered! Therefore what reward shall I give unto the Lord for all the benefits which He hath done unto me? In the first creation He gave me myself; but in His new creation He gave me Himself, and by that gift restored to me the self that I had lost. Created first and then restored, I owe Him myself twice over in return for myself. But what have I to offer Him for the gift of Himself? Could I multiply myself a thousand-fold and then give Him all, what would that be in comparison with God?

Chapter V. Of the Christian's debt of love, how great it is
Chapter VI.
A brief summary
Admit that God deserves to be loved very much, yea, boundlessly, because He loved us first, He infinite and we nothing, loved us, miserable sinners, with a love so great and so
free. This is why I said at the beginning that the measure of our love to God is to love immeasurably. For since our love is toward God, who is infinite and immeasurable, how can we bound or limit the love we owe Him? Besides, our love is not a gift but a debt. And since it is the Godhead who loves us, Himself boundless, eternal, supreme love, of whose greatness there is no end, yea, and His wisdom is infinite, whose peace passeth all understanding; since it is He who loves us, I say, can we think of repaying Him grudgingly? ‘I will love Thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my strength, in whom I will trust’ (Ps. 18.1f). He is all that I need, all that I long for. My God and my help, I will love Thee for Thy great goodness; not so much as I might, surely, but as much as I can. I cannot love Thee as Thou deservest to be loved, for I cannot love Thee more than my own feebleness permits. I will love Thee more when Thou deemest me worthy to receive greater capacity for loving; yet never so perfectly as Thou hast deserved of me. ‘Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in Thy book all my members were written’ (PS. 139.16). Yet Thou recordest in that book all who do what they can, even though they cannot do what they ought. Surely I have said enough to show how God should be loved and why. But who has felt, who can know, who express, how much we should love him.

Chapter VI. A brief summary

14

Chapter VI. A brief summary

Chapter VII.

Of love toward God not without reward: and how the hunger of man’s heart cannot be satisfied with earthly things

And now let us consider what profit we shall have from loving God. Even though our knowledge of this is imperfect, still that is better than to ignore it altogether. I have already said (when it was a question of wherefore and in what manner God should be loved) that there was a double reason constraining us: His right and our advantage.

Having written as best I can, though unworthily, of God’s right to be loved. I have still to treat of
the recompense which that love brings. For although God would be loved without respect of reward, yet He wills not to leave love unrewarded. True charity cannot be left destitute, even though she is unselfish and seeketh not her own (I Cor. 13.5). Love is an affection of the soul, not a contract: it cannot rise from a mere agreement, nor is it so to be gained. It is spontaneous in its origin and impulse; and true love is its own satisfaction. It has its reward; but that reward is the object beloved. For whatever you seem to love, if it is on account of something else, what you do really love is that something else, not the apparent object of desire. St. Paul did not preach the Gospel that he might earn his bread; he ate that he might be strengthened for his ministry. What he loved was not bread, but the Gospel. True love does not demand a reward, but it deserves one. Surely no one offers to pay for love; yet some recompense is due to one who loves, and if his love endures he will doubtless receive it. On a lower plane of action, it is the reluctant, not the eager, whom we urge by promises of reward. Who would think of paying a man to do what he was yearning to do already? For instance no one would hire a hungry man to eat, or a thirsty man to drink, or a mother to nurse her own child. Who would think of bribing a farmer to dress his own vineyard, or to dig about his orchard, or to rebuild his house? So, all the more, one who loves God truly asks no other recompense than God Himself; for if he should demand anything else it would be the prize that he loved and not God. It is natural for a man to desire what he reckons better than that which he has already, and be satisfied with nothing which lacks that special quality which he misses. Thus, if it is for her beauty that he loves his wife, he will cast longing eyes after a fairer woman. If he is clad in a rich garment, he will covet a costlier one; and no matter how rich he may be he will envy a man richer than himself. Do we not see people every day, endowed with vast estates, who keep on joining field to field, dreaming of wider boundaries for their lands?
Those who dwell in palaces are ever adding house to house, continually building up and tearing down, remodeling and changing. Men in high places are driven by insatiable ambition to clutch at still greater prizes. And nowhere is there any final satisfaction, because nothing there can be defined as absolutely the best or highest. But it is natural that nothing should content a man’s desires but the very best, as he reckons it. Is it not, then, mad folly always to be craving for things which can never quiet our longings, much less satisfy them? No

Chapter VII. Of love toward God not without reward: and how the hunger of man's heart cannot be satisfied with earthly things

Chapter VII. Of love toward God not without reward: and how the hunger of... matter how many such things one has, he is always lusting after what he has not; never at peace, he sighs for new possessions. Discontented, he spends himself in fruitless toil, and finds only weariness in the evanescent and unreal pleasures of the world. In his greediness, he counts all that he has clutched as nothing in comparison with what is beyond his grasp, and loses all pleasure in his actual possessions by longing after what he has not, yet covets.

No man can ever hope to own all things. Even the little one does possess is got only with toil and is held in fear; since each is certain to lose what he hath when God’s day, appointed though unrevealed, shall come. But the perverted will struggles towards the ultimate good by devious ways, yearning after satisfaction, yet led astray by vanity and deceived by wickedness. Ah, if you wish to attain to the consummation of all desire, so that nothing unfulfilled will be left, why weary yourself with fruitless efforts, running hither and thither, only to die long before the goal is reached? It is so that these impious ones wander in a circle, longing after something to gratify their yearnings, yet madly rejecting that which alone can bring them to their desired end, not by exhaustion but by attainment. They wear themselves out in vain travail, without reaching their blessed consummation, because they delight in creatures, not in the Creator.
They want to traverse creation, trying all things one by one, rather than think of coming to Him who is Lord of all. And if their utmost longing were realized, so that they should have all the world for their own, yet without possessing Him who is the Author of all being, then the same law of their desires would make them contemn what they had and restlessly seek Him whom they still lacked, that is, God Himself. Rest is in Him alone. Man knows no peace in the world; but he has no disturbance when he is with God. And so the soul says with confidence, ‘Whom have I in heaven but Thee; and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee. God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. It is good for me to hold me fast by God, to put my trust in the Lord God’ (Ps. 73.25ff). Even by this way one would eventually come to God, if only he might have time to test all lesser goods in turn. But life is too short, strength too feeble, and competitors too many, for that course to be practicable. One could never reach the end, though he were to weary himself with the long effort and fruitless toil of testing everything that might seem desirable. It would be far easier and better to make the assay in imagination rather than in experiment. For the mind is swifter in operation and keener in discrimination than the bodily senses, to this very purpose that it may go before the sensuous affections so that they may cleave to nothing which the mind has found worthless. And so it is written, ‘Prove all things: hold fast that which is good’ (I Thess. 5.21). Which is to say that right judgment should prepare the way for the heart. Otherwise we may not ascend into the hill of the Lord nor rise up in His holy place (Ps. 24.3). We should have no profit in possessing a rational mind if we were to follow the impulse of the senses, like brute beasts, with no regard at all to reason. Those whom reason does not guide in their course may indeed run, but not in the appointed race-track,
neglecting the apostolic counsel, ‘So run that ye may obtain’. For how could they obtain the prize who put that last of all in their endeavor and run round after everything else first?

But as for the righteous man, it is not so with him. He remembers the condemnation pronounced on the multitude who wander after vanity, who travel the broad way that leads to death (Matt. 7.13); and he chooses the King’s highway, turning aside neither to the right hand nor to the left (Num. 20.17), even as the prophet saith, ‘The way of the just is uprightness (Isa. 26.7). Warned by wholesome counsel he shuns the perilous road, and heeds the direction that shortens the search, forbidding covetousness and commanding that he sell all that he hath and give to the poor (Matt. 19.21). Blessed, truly, are the poor, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 5.3). They which run in a race, run all, but distinction is made among the racers. ‘The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: and the way of the ungodly shall perish’ (Ps. 1.6). ‘A small thing that the righteous hath is better than great riches of the ungodly’ (Ps. 37.16). Even as the Preacher saith, and the fool discovereth, ‘He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver’ (Eccles. 5.10). But Christ saith, ‘Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled’ (Matt. 5.6).

Righteousness is the natural and essential food of the soul, which can no more be satisfied by earthly treasures than the hunger of the body can be satisfied by air. If you should see a starving man standing with mouth open to the wind, inhaling draughts of air as if in hope of gratifying his hunger, you would think him lunatic. But it is no less foolish to imagine that the soul can be satisfied with worldly things which only inflate it without feeding it.

What have spiritual gifts to do with carnal appetites, or carnal with spiritual? Praise the Lord, O my soul: who satisfieth thy mouth with good things (Ps. 103.1ff). He bestows bounty immeasurable; He provokes thee to good, He preserves thee in goodness; He prevents, He sustains, He fills thee. He moves thee to longing, and it is He for whom thou longest.
I have said already that the motive for loving God is God Himself. And I spoke truly,
for He is as well the efficient cause as the final object of our love. He gives the occasion for
love, He creates the affection, He brings the desire to good effect. He is such that love to
Him is a natural due; and so hope in Him is natural, since our present love
would be vain
did we not hope to love Him perfectly some day. Our love is prepared and
rewarded by His.
He loves us first, out of His great tenderness; then we are bound to repay Him
with love;
and we are permitted to cherish exultant hopes in Him. ‘He is rich unto all that
call upon
Him’ (Rom. 10.12), yet He has no gift for them better than Himself. He gives Himself as
prize and reward: He is the refreshment of holy soul, the ransom of those in
captivity. ‘The
Lord is good unto them that wait for Him’ (Lam. 3.25). What will He be then to
those who
gain His presence? But here is a paradox, that no one can seek the Lord who
has not already
found Him. It is Thy will, O God, to be found that Thou mayest be sought, to be sought that
Thou mayest the more truly be found. But though Thou canst be sought and
found, Thou

Chapter VII. Of love toward God not without reward: and how the hunger of...
canst not be forestalled. For if we say, ‘Early shall my prayer come before Thee’ (Ps. 88.13),
yet doubtless all prayer would be lukewarm unless it was animated by Thine
inspiration.
We have spoken of the consummation of love towards God: now to consider
whence
such love begins.

Chapter VII. Of love toward God not without reward: and how the hunger of...
Chapter VIII.
Of the first degree of love: wherein man loves God for self’s sake
Love is one of the four natural affections, which it is needless to name since everyone
knows them. And because love is natural, it is only right to love the Author of
nature first
of all. Hence comes the first and great commandment, ‘Thou shalt love the
Lord thy God.’
But nature is so frail and weak that necessity compels her to love herself first;
and this is
carnal love, wherewith man loves himself first and selfishly, as it is written, 'That was not first which is spiritual but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual' (I Cor. 15.46). This is not as the precept ordains but as nature directs: 'No man ever yet hated his own flesh' (Eph. 5.29). But if, as is likely, this same love should grow excessive and, refusing to be contained within the restraining banks of necessity, should overflow into the fields of voluptuousness, then a command checks the flood, as if by a dike: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself'. And this is right: for he who shares our nature should share our love, itself the fruit of nature. Wherefore if a man find it a burden, I will not say only to relieve his brother's needs, but to minister to his brother's pleasures, let him mortify those same affections in himself, lest he become a transgressor. He may cherish himself as tenderly as he chooses, if only he remembers to show the same indulgence to his neighbor. This is the curb of temperance imposed on thee, O man, by the law of life and conscience, lest thou shouldst follow thine own lusts to destruction, or become enslaved by those passions which are the enemies of thy true welfare. Far better divide thine enjoyments with thy neighbor than with these enemies. And if, after the counsel of the son of Sirach, thou goest not after thy desires but refrainest thyself from thine appetites (Ecclus. 18.30); if according to the apostolic precept having food and raiment thou art therewith content (I Tim. 6.8), then thou wilt find it easy to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, and to divide with thy neighbors what thou hast refused to thine own desires. That is a temperate and righteous love which practices self-denial in order to minister to a brother's necessity. So our selfish love grows truly social, when it includes our neighbors in its circle. But if thou art reduced to want by such benevolence, what then? What indeed, except to pray with all confidence unto Him who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not (James 1.5), who openeth His hand and filleth all things living with plenteousness (Ps.)
145.16). For doubtless He that giveth to most men more than they need will not fail thee as
to the necessaries of life, even as He hath promised: ‘Seek ye the Kingdom of God, and all
those things shall be added unto you’ (Luke 12.31). God freely promises all things needful
to those who deny themselves for love of their neighbors; and to bear the yoke of modesty
and sobriety, rather than to let sin reign in our mortal body (Rom. 6.12), that is indeed to
seek the Kingdom of God and to implore His aid against the tyranny of sin. It is surely justice
to share our natural gifts with those who share our nature.
Chapter VIII. Of the first degree of love: wherein man loves God for self's sake 19
Chapter VIII. Of the first degree of love: wherein man loves God for self's...
But if we are to love our neighbors as we ought, we must have regard to God also: for
it is only in God that we can pay that debt of love aright. Now a man cannot love his
neighbor in God, except he love God Himself; wherefore we must love God first, in order
to love our neighbors in Him. This too, like all good things, is the Lord's doing, that we
should love Him, for He hath endowed us with the possibility of love. He who created nature
sustains it; nature is so constituted that its Maker is its protector for ever. Without Him
nature could not have begun to be; without Him it could not subsist at all. That we might
not be ignorant of this, or vainly attribute to ourselves the beneficence of our Creator, God
has determined in the depths of His wise counsel that we should be subject to tribulations.
So when man's strength fails and God comes to his aid, it is meet and right that man, rescued
by God's hand, should glorify Him, as it is written, ‘Call upon Me in the time of trouble; so
will I hear thee, and thou shalt praise Me’ (Ps. 50.15). In such wise man, animal and carnal
by nature, and loving only himself, begins to love God by reason of that very self-love; since
he learns that in God he can accomplish all things that are good, and that without God he
can do nothing. 20
Chapter VIII. Of the first degree of love: wherein man loves God for self's...
Chapter IX.
Of the second and third degrees of love
So then in the beginning man loves God, not for God’s sake, but for his own. It is
something for him to know how little he can do by himself and how much by
God’s help,
and in that knowledge to order himself rightly towards God, his sure support. But when
tribulations, recurring again and again, constrain him to turn to God for
unfailing help,
would not even a heart as hard as iron, as cold as marble, be softened by the
goodness of
such a Savior, so that he would love God not altogether selfishly, but because
He is God?
Let frequent troubles drive us to frequent supplications; and surely, tasting,
we must see
how gracious the Lord is (Ps. 34.8). Thereupon His goodness once realized
draws us to love
Him unselfishly, yet more than our own needs impel us to love Him selfishly:
even as the
Samaritans told the woman who announced that it was Christ who was at the
well: ‘Now
we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and
know that this
is indeed the Christ, the savior of the world’ (John 4.42). We likewise bear the
same witness
to our own fleshly nature, saying, ‘No longer do we love God because of our
necessity, but
because we have tasted and seen how gracious the Lord is’. Our temporal
wants have a
speech of their own, proclaiming the benefits they have received from God’s
favor. Once
this is recognized it will not be hard to fulfill the commandment touching love
to our
neighbors; for whosoever loves God aright loves all God’s creatures. Such love
is pure, and
finds no burden in the precept bidding us purify our souls, in obeying the
truth through
the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren (I Peter 1.22). Loving as he
ought, he counts
that command only just. Such love is thankworthy, since it is spontaneous;
pure, since it is
shown not in word nor tongue, but in deed and truth (I John 3.18); just, since
it repays what
it has received. Whoso loves in this fashion, loves even as he is loved, and
seeks no more his
own but the things which are Christ’s, even as Jesus sought not His own
welfare, but ours, or rather ourselves. Such was the psalmist’s love when he sang: ‘O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is gracious’ (Ps. 118.1). Whosoever praises God for His essential goodness, and not merely because of the benefits He has bestowed, does really love God for God’s sake, and not selfishly. The psalmist was not speaking of such love when he said: ‘So long as thou doest well unto thyself, men will speak good of thee’(Ps. 49.18). The third degree of love, we have now seen, is to love God on His own account, solely because He is God. Chapter IX. Of the second and third degrees of love

Chapter IX. Of the second and third degrees of love

Chapter X. Of the fourth degree of love: wherein man does not even love self save for God’s sake

How blessed is he who reaches the fourth degree of love, wherein one loves himself only in God! Thy righteousness standeth like the strong mountains, O God. Such love as this is God’s hill, in the which it pleaseth Him to dwell. ‘Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?’ ‘O that I had wings like a dove; for then would I flee away and be at rest.’ ‘At Salem is His tabernacle; and His dwelling in Sion.’ ‘Woe is me, that I am constrained to dwell with Mesech!’ (Ps. 24.3; 55.6; 76.2; 120.5). When shall this flesh and blood, this earthen vessel which is my soul’s tabernacle, attain thereto? When shall my soul, rapt with divine love and altogether self-forgetting, yea, become like a broken vessel, yearn wholly for God, and, joined unto the Lord, be one spirit with Him? When shall she exclaim, ‘My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever’ (Ps. 73.26). I would count him blessed and holy to whom such rapture has been vouchsafed in this mortal life, for even an instant to lose thyself, as if thou wert emptied and lost and swallowed up in God, is no human love; it is celestial. But if sometimes a poor mortal feels that heavenly joy for a rapturous moment, then this wretched life envies his happiness, the malice of daily trifles disturbs
him, this body of death weighs him down, the needs of the flesh are imperative, the weakness of corruption fails him, and above all brotherly love calls him back to duty. Alas! that voice summons him to re-enter his own round of existence; and he must ever cry out lamentably, ‘O Lord, I am oppressed: undertake for me’ (Isa. 38.14); and again, ‘O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?’ (Rom. 7.24). Seeing that the Scripture saith, God has made all for His own glory (Isa. 43.7), surely His creatures ought to conform themselves, as much as they can, to His will. In Him should all our affections center, so that in all things we should seek only to do His will, not to please ourselves. And real happiness will come, not in gratifying our desires or in gaining transient pleasures, but in accomplishing God’s will for us: even as we pray every day: ‘Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven’ (Matt. 6.10). O chaste and holy love! O sweet and gracious affection! O pure and cleansed purpose, thoroughly washed and purged from any admixture of selfishness, and sweetened by contact with the divine will! To reach this state is to become godlike. As a drop of water poured into wine loses itself, and takes the color and savor of wine; or as a bar of iron, heated red-hot, becomes like fire itself, forgetting its own nature; or as the air, radiant with sun-beams, seems not so much to be illuminated as to be light itself; so in the saints all human affections melt away by some unspeakable transmutation into the will of God. For how could God be all in all, if anything merely human remained in man? The substance will endure, but in another beauty, a higher power, a greater glory. When will that be? Who will see, who possess it? ‘When shall I come to appear before the presence Chapter X. Of the fourth degree of love: wherein man does not even love self save for God's sake 22 Chapter X. Of the fourth degree of love: wherein man does not even love... of God?’ (Ps. 42.2). ‘My heart hath talked of Thee, Seek ye My face: Thy face, Lord, will I seek’ (Ps. 27.8). Lord, thinkest Thou that I, even I shall see Thy holy temple? In this life, I think, we cannot fully and perfectly obey that precept, ‘Thou
shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind’ (Luke 10.27). For here the heart must take thought for the body; and the soul must energize the flesh; and the strength must guard itself from impairment. And by God’s favor, must seek to increase. It is therefore impossible to offer up all our being to God, to yearn altogether for His face, so long as we must accommodate our purposes and aspirations to these fragile, sickly bodies of ours. Wherefore the soul may hope to possess the fourth degree of love, or rather to be possessed by it, only when it has been clothed upon with that spiritual and immortal body, which will be perfect, peaceful, lovely, and in everything wholly subject to the spirit. And to this degree no human effort can attain: it is in God’s power to give it to whom He wills. Then the soul will easily reach that highest stage, because no lusts of the flesh will retard its eager entrance into the joy of its Lord, and no troubles will disturb its peace. May we not think that the holy martyrs enjoyed this grace, in some degree at least, before they laid down their victorious bodies? Surely that was immeasurable strength of love which enraptured their souls, enabling them to laugh at fleshly torments and to yield their lives gladly. But even though the frightful pain could not destroy their peace of mind, it must have impaired somewhat its perfection.

Chapter X. Of the fourth degree of love: wherein man does not even love...

Chapter XI. Of the attainment of this perfection of love only at the resurrection

What of the souls already released from their bodies? We believe that they are overwhelmed in that vast sea of eternal light and of luminous eternity. But no one denies that they still hope and desire to receive their bodies again: whence it is plain that they are not yet wholly transformed, and that something of self remains yet unsurrendered. Not until death is swallowed up in victory, and perennial light overflows the uttermost bounds of darkness, not until celestial glory clothes our bodies, can our souls be freed entirely from
self and give themselves up to God. For until then souls are bound to bodies, if not by a vital connection of sense, still by natural affection; so that without their bodies they cannot attain to their perfect consummation, nor would they if they could. And although there is no defect in the soul itself before the restoration of its body, since it has already attained to the highest state of which it is by itself capable, yet the spirit would not yearn for reunion with the flesh if without the flesh it could be consummated. And finally, ‘Right dear in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints’ (Ps. 116.15). But if their death is precious, what must such a life as theirs be! No wonder that the body shall seem to add fresh glory to the spirit; for though it is weak and mortal, it has availed not a little for mutual help. How truly he spake who said, ‘All things work together for good to them that love God’ (Rom. 8.28). The body is a help to the soul that loves God, even when it is ill, even when it is dead, and all the more when it is raised again from the dead: for illness is an aid to penitence; death is the gate of rest; and the resurrection will bring consummation. So, rightly, the soul would not be perfected without the body, since she recognizes that in every condition it has been needful to her good. The flesh then is a good and faithful comrade for a good soul: since even when it is a burden it assists; when the help ceases, the burden ceases too; and when once more the assistance begins, there is no longer a burden. The first state is toilsome, but fruitful; the second is idle, but not monotonous: the third is glorious. Hear how the Bridegroom in Canticles bids us to this threefold progress: ‘Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved’ (Cant. 5.1). He offers food to those who are laboring with bodily toil; then He calls the resting souls whose bodies are laid aside, to drink; and finally He urges those who have resumed their bodies to drink abundantly. Surely those He styles ‘beloved’ must overflow with charity; and that is the difference between them and the others, whom He calls not ‘beloved’ but ‘friends’. Those who yet groan in the body are dear to Him, according to the love that they have; those released from the bonds of flesh are dearer because they have
become readier and abler to love than hitherto. But beyond either of these classes are those whom He calls ‘beloved’: for they have received the second garment, that is, their glorified bodies, so that now nothing of self remains to hinder or disturb them, and they yield themselves eagerly and entirely to loving God. This cannot be so with the others; for the first have the Chapter XI. Of the attainment of this perfection of love only at the resurrection

Chapter XI. Of the attainment of this perfection of love only at the resurrection of the body of the believer, and the second desires the body again with something of selfish expectation.

At first then the faithful soul eats her bread, but alas! in the sweat of her face. Dwelling in the flesh, she walks as yet by faith, which must work through love. As faith without works is dead, so work itself is food for her; even as our Lord saith, ‘My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me’ (John 4.34). When the flesh is laid aside, she eats no more the bread of carefulness, but is allowed to drink deeply of the wine of love, as if after a repast. But the wine is not yet unmixed; even as the Bridegroom saith in another place, ‘I have drunk My wine with My milk’ (Cant. 5.1). For the soul mixes with the wine of God’s love the milk of natural affection, that is, the desire for her body and its glorification. She glows with the wine of holy love which she has drunk; but she is not yet all on fire, for she has tempered the potency of that wine with milk. The unmixed wine would enrapture the soul and make her wholly unconscious of self; but here is no such transport for she is still desirous of her body. When that desire is appeased, when the one lack is supplied, what should hinder her then from yielding herself utterly to God, losing her own likeness and being made like unto Him? At last she attains to that chalice of the heavenly wisdom, of which it is written, ‘My cup shall be full.’ Now indeed she is refreshed with the abundance of the house of God, where all selfish, carking care is done away, and where, for ever safe, she drinks the fruit of
the vine, new and pure, with Christ in the Kingdom of His Father (Matt. 26.29).
It is Wisdom who spreads this threefold supper where all the repast is love; Wisdom
who feeds the toilers, who gives drink to those who rest, who floods with rapture those that
reign with Christ. Even as at an earthly banquet custom and nature serve meat first and then
wine, so here. Before death, while we are still in mortal flesh, we eat the labors of our hands,
we swallow with an effort the food so gained; but after death, we shall begin eagerly to drink
in the spiritual life and finally, reunited to our bodies, and rejoicing in fullness of delight,
we shall be refreshed with immortality. This is what the Bridegroom means when He saith:
‘Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.’ Eat before death; begin to drink
after death; drink abundantly after the resurrection. Rightly are they called beloved who
have drunk abundantly of love; rightly do they drink abundantly who are worthy to be
brought to the marriage supper of the Lamb, eating and drinking at His table in His Kingdom
(Rev. 19.9; Luke 22.30). At that supper, He shall present to Himself a glorious Church, not
having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing (Eph. 5.27). Then truly shall He refresh His beloved;
then He shall give them drink of His pleasures, as out of the river (Ps. 36.8). While the
Bridegroom clasps the Bride in tender, pure embrace, then the rivers of the flood thereof
shall make glad the city of God (Ps. 46.4). And this refers to the Son of God Himself, who
will come forth and serve them, even as He hath promised; so that in that day the righteous
shall be glad and rejoice before God: they shall also be merry and joyful (Ps. 68.3). Here indeed is appeasement without weariness: here never-quenched thirst for knowledge, without
25
Chapter XI. Of the attainment of this perfection of love only at the re...
distress; here eternal and infinite desire which knows no want; here, finally, is that sober
inebriation which comes not from drinking new wine but from enjoying God (Acts 2.13).
The fourth degree of love is attained for ever when we love God only and supremely, when
we do not even love ourselves except for God's sake; so that He Himself is the reward of them that love Him, the everlasting reward of an everlasting love.

Chapter XI. Of the attainment of this perfection of love only at the re...

Chapter XII.
Of love: out of a letter to the Carthusians
I remember writing a letter to the holy Carthusian brethren, wherein I discussed these degrees of love, and spoke of charity in other words, although not in another sense, than here. It may be well to repeat a portion of that letter, since it is easier to copy than to dictate anew.

To love our neighbor's welfare as much as our own: that is true and sincere charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned (I Tim. 1.5). Whosoever loves his own prosperity only is proved thereby not to love good for its own sake, since he loves it on his own account. And so he cannot sing with the psalmist, 'O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is gracious' (Ps. 118.1). Such a man would praise God, not because He is goodness, but because He has been good to him: he could take to himself the reproach of the same writer, 'So long as Thou doest well unto him, he will speak good of Thee' (Ps. 49.18, Vulg.). One praises God because He is mighty, another because He is gracious, yet another solely because He is essential goodness. The first is a slave and fears for himself; the second is greedy, desiring further benefits; but the third is a son who honors his Father. He who fears, he who profits, are both concerned about self-interest. Only in the son is that charity which seeketh not her own (I Cor. 13.5). Wherefore I take this saying, 'The law of the Lord is an undefiled law, converting the soul' (Ps. 19.7) to be of charity; because charity alone is able to turn the soul away from love of self and of the world to pure love of God. Neither fear nor self-interest can convert the soul. They may change the appearance, perhaps even the conduct, but never the object of supreme desire. Sometimes a slave may do God's work; but because he does not toil voluntarily, he remains in bondage. So a
mercenary may serve
God, but because he puts a price on his service, he is enchained by his own
greediness. For
where there is self-interest there is isolation; and such isolation is like the
dark corner of a
room where dust and rust befoul. Fear is the motive which constrains the
slave; greed binds
the selfish man, by which he is tempted when he is drawn away by his own
lust and enticed
(James 1.14). But neither fear nor self-interest is undefiled, nor can they
convert the soul.
Only charity can convert the soul, freeing it from unworthy motives.
Next, I call it undefiled because it never keeps back anything of its own for
itself. When
a man boasts of nothing as his very own, surely all that he has is God's; and
what is God's
cannot be unclean. The undefiled law of the Lord is that love which bids men
seek not their
own, but every man another's wealth. It is called the law of the Lord as much
because He
lives in accordance with it as because no man has it except by gift from Him.
Nor is it improper to say that even God lives by law, when that law is the law
of love. For what preserves
the glorious and ineffable Unity of the blessed Trinity, except love? Charity,
the law of the
Lord, joins the Three Persons into the unity of the Godhead and unites the holy
Trinity in
the bond of peace. Do not suppose me to imply that charity exists as an
accidental quality
Chapter XII. Of love: out of a letter to the Carthusians
27
Chapter XII. Of love: out of a letter to the Carthusians
of Deity; for whatever could be conceived of as wanting in the divine Nature is
not God.
No, it is the very substance of the Godhead; and my assertion is neither novel
nor extraordinary, since St. John says, 'God is love' (I John 4.8). One may
therefore say with truth that love
is at once God and the gift of God, essential love imparting the quality of love.
Where the
word refers to the Giver, it is the name of His very being; where the gift is
meant, it is the
name of a quality. Love is the eternal law whereby the universe was created
and is ruled.
Since all things are ordered in measure and number and weight, and nothing is
left outside
the realm of law, that universal law cannot itself be without a law, which is
itself. So love
though it did not create itself, does surely govern itself by its own decree.

Chapter XII. Of love: out of a letter to the Carthusians

Chapter XIII.
Of the law of self-will and desire, of slaves and hirelings
Furthermore, the slave and the hireling have a law, not from the Lord, but of their own contriving; the one does not love God, the other loves something else more than God. They have a law of their own, not of God, I say; yet it is subject to the law of the Lord. For though they can make laws for themselves, they cannot supplant the changeless order of the eternal law. Each man is a law unto himself, when he sets up his will against the universal law, perversely striving to rival his Creator, to be wholly independent, making his will his only law. What a heavy and burdensome yoke upon all the sons of Adam, bowing down our necks, so that our life draweth nigh unto hell. ‘O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?’ (Rom. 7.24). I am weighed down, I am almost overwhelmed, so that ‘If the Lord had not helped me, it had not failed but my soul had been put to silence’ (Ps. 94.17). Job was groaning under this load when he lamented: ‘Why hast Thou set me as a mark against Thee, so that I am a burden to myself?’ (Job 7.20). He was a burden to himself through the law which was of his own devising: yet he could not escape God’s law, for he was set as a mark against God. The eternal law of righteousness ordains that he who will not submit to God’s sweet rule shall suffer the bitter tyranny of self: but he who wears the easy yoke and light burden of love (Matt. 11.30) will escape the intolerable weight of his own self-will. Wondrously and justly does that eternal law retain rebels in subjection, so that they are unable to escape. They are subject to God’s power, yet deprived of happiness with Him, unable to dwell with God in light and rest and glory everlasting. O Lord my God, ‘why dost Thou not pardon my transgression and take away mine iniquity?’ (Job 7.21). Then freed from the weight of my own will, I can breathe easily under the light burden of love. I shall not be coerced by fear, nor allured by mercenary desires; for I shall be
led by the Spirit of God, that free Spirit whereby Thy sons are led, which beareth witness with my spirit that I am among the children of God (Rom. 8.16). So shall I be under that law which is Thine; and as Thou art, so shall I be in the world. Whosoever do what the apostle bids, 'Owe no man anything, but to love one another' (Rom. 13.8), are doubtless even in this life conformed to God's likeness: they are neither slaves nor hirelings but sons.

Chapter XIII. Of the law of self-will and desire, of slaves and hirelings

Chapter XIV. Of the law of the love of sons

Now the children have their law, even though it is written, 'The law is not made for a righteous man' (I Tim. 1.9). For it must be remembered that there is one law having to do with the spirit of servitude, given to fear, and another with the spirit of liberty, given in tenderness. The children are not constrained by the first, yet they could not exist without the second: even as St. Paul writes, 'Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father' (Rom. 8.15). And again to show that that same righteous man was not under the law, he says: 'To them that are under the law, I became as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ)' (I Cor. 9.20f). So it is rightly said, not that the righteous do not have a law, but, 'The law is not made for a righteous man', that is, it is not imposed on rebels but freely given to those willingly obedient, by Him whose goodness established it. Wherefore the Lord saith meekly: 'Take My yoke upon you', which may be paraphrased thus: 'I do not force it on you, if you are reluctant; but if you will you may bear it. Otherwise it will be weariness, not rest, that you shall find for your souls.' Love is a good and pleasant law; it is not only easy to bear, but it makes the laws of slaves and hirelings tolerable; not destroying but completing them; as the Lord saith:
‘I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill’ (Matt. 5.17). It tempers the fear of the slave, it regulates the desires of the hireling, it mitigates the severity of each. Love is never without fear, but it is godly fear. Love is never without desire, but it is lawful desire. So love perfects the law of service by infusing devotion; it perfects the law of wages by restraining covetousness. Devotion mixed with fear does not destroy it, but purges it. Then the burden of fear which was intolerable while it was only servile, becomes tolerable; and the fear itself remains ever pure and filial. For though we read: ‘Perfect love casteth out fear’ (I John 4.18), we understand by that the suffering which is never absent from servile fear, the cause being put for the effect, as often elsewhere. So, too, self-interest is restrained within due bounds when love supervenes; for then it rejects evil things altogether, prefers better things to those merely good, and cares for the good only on account of the better. In like manner, by God's grace, it will come about that man will love his body and all things pertaining to his body, for the sake of his soul. He will love his soul for God's sake; and he will love God for Himself alone.

Chapter XIV. Of the law of the love of sons

Chapter XV. Of the four degrees of love, and of the blessed state of the heavenly fatherland

Nevertheless, since we are carnal and are born of the lust of the flesh, it must be that our desire and our love shall have its beginning in the flesh. But rightly guided by the grace of God through these degrees, it will have its consummation in the spirit: for that was not first which is spiritual but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual (I Cor. 15.46). And we must bear the image of the earthy first, before we can bear the image of the heavenly. At first, man loves himself for his own sake. That is the flesh, which can appreciate nothing beyond itself. Next, he perceives that he cannot exist by himself, and so begins by faith to seek after God, and to love Him as something necessary to his own welfare. That is
the second degree, to love God, not for God’s sake, but selfishly. But when he has learned to worship God and to seek Him aright, meditating on God, reading God’s Word, praying and obeying His commandments, he comes gradually to know what God is, and finds Him altogether lovely. So, having tasted and seen how gracious the Lord is (Ps. 34.8), he advances to the third degree, when he loves God, not merely as his benefactor but as God. Surely he must remain long in this state; and I know not whether it would be possible to make further progress in this life to that fourth degree and perfect condition wherein man loves himself solely for God’s sake. Let any who have attained so far bear record; I confess it seems beyond my powers. Doubtless it will be reached when the good and faithful servant shall have entered into the joy of his Lord (Matt. 25.21), and been satisfied with the plenteousness of God’s house (Ps. 36.8). For then in wondrous wise he will forget himself and as if delivered from self, he will grow wholly God’s. Joined unto the Lord, he will then be one spirit with Him (I Cor. 6.17). This was what the prophet meant, I think, when he said: ‘I will go forth in the strength of the Lord God: and will make mention of Thy righteousness only’ (Ps. 71.16). Surely he knew that when he should go forth in the spiritual strength of the Lord, he would have been freed from the infirmities of the flesh, and would have nothing carnal to think of, but would be wholly filled in his spirit with the righteousness of the Lord. In that day the members of Christ can say of themselves what St. Paul testified concerning their Head: ‘Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more’ (II Cor. 5.16). None shall thereafter know himself after the flesh; for ‘flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God’ (I Cor. 15.50). Not that there will be no true substance of the flesh, but all carnal needs will be taken away, and the love of the flesh will be swallowed up in the love of the spirit, so that our weak human affections will be made divinely strong. Then the net of charity which as it is drawn through the great and wide sea
doth not cease to gather every kind of fish, will be drawn to the shore; and the bad will be cast away, while only the good will be kept (Matt. 13.48). In this life the net of all-including love gathers every kind of fish into its wide folds, becoming all things to all men, sharing adversity or prosperity, rejoicing with them that do rejoice, and weeping with them that Chapter XV. Of the four degrees of love, and of the blessed state of the heavenly fatherland

31 Chapter XV. Of the four degrees of love, and of the blessed state of the... weep (Rom. 12.15). But when the net is drawn to shore, whatever causes pain will be rejected, like the bad fish, while only what is pleasant and joyous will be kept. Do you not recall how St. Paul said: ‘Who is weak and I am not weak? Who is offended and I burn not?’ And yet weakness and offense were far from him. So too he bewailed many which had sinned already and had not repented, though he was neither the sinner nor the penitent. But there is a city made glad by the rivers of the flood of grace (Ps. 46.4), and whose gates the Lord loveth more than all the dwellings of Jacob (Ps. 87.2). In it is no place for lamentation over those condemned to everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25.41). In these earthly dwellings, though men may rejoice, yet they have still other battles to fight, other mortal perils to undergo. But in the heavenly Fatherland no sorrow nor sadness can enter: as it is written, ‘The habitation of all rejoicing ones is in Thee’ (Ps. 87. 7, Vulg.); and again, ‘Everlasting joy shall be unto them’ (Isa. 61.7). Nor could they recall things piteous, for then they will make mention of God’s righteousness only. Accordingly, there will be no need for the exercise of compassion, for no misery will be there to inspire pity.

The Journey of the Mind unto God
by Saint Bonaventure of Bagnoregio
Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, Minister General of the Order of Friars Minor, and Doctor of the Universal Church
PROLOGUE
1. In the beginning the First Principle, from whom all other illuminations
descend as from the Father of lights,
by whom is every best gift and every perfect gift, that is the Eternal Father, I
do invoke through His Son, Our
Lord Jesus Christ, with the intercession of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, the
same Mother of Our God and Lord
Jesus Christ, and of blessed Francis, our leader and father, to grant that the
eyes of our mind (be) illumined to
direct our feet in the way of His peace, which exceeds every sense; which peace
Our Lord Jesus Christ has
proclaimed and has given; the renewer of whose preaching was our Father
Francis, announcing at the
beginning and end of all his preaching peace, in every salutation choosing
peace, in every contemplation
longing towards ecstatic peace, as a citizen of that Jerusalem, concerning
which that man of peace speaks,
who with those who hate peace, was peaceable: Ask for those things which are
for the peace of Jerusalem.
For he knew, that the throne of Solomon was not but in peace, since it was
written: In peace is made His
place, and His dwelling in Sion.
2. When therefore by the example of most blessed Father Francis I sought with
a panting spirit this peace, I a
sinner, who, unworthy in all things ascend to the place of the most blessed
father himself as seventh in the Minister generalship after his transitus; it happened that with the divine permission about the (time of) the Transitus of the Blessed himself, in the thirty-third year (of its celebration, 1259 A.D.), I turned aside with the love of seeking peace of spirit towards mount Alverna as towards a quiet place, and staying there, while I considered in mind some mental ascensions into God, among others there occurred that miracle, which in the aforesaid place happened to blessed Francis himself, that is, of the vision of the Seraph winged after the likeness of the Crucified. In consideration of which it suddenly seemed to me, that that vision showed the suspension of our father himself in contemplating Him and the way, through which one arrives at that (suspension).

3. For through those six wings there can be rightly understood six suspensions of illumination, by which the soul as if to certain steps or journeys is disposed, to pass over to peace through ecstatic excesses of Christian wisdom. The way is, however, naught but through the most ardent love of the Crucified, who to this extent transformed Paul rapt to the third heaven into Christ, that he said: to Christ I have been crucified, now not I; but Christ lives in me; who also to this extent absorbed the mind of Francis, since the mind lay in the flesh, while he bore about the most sacred stigmata of the Passion in his own flesh for two years before his death. The likenesses of the six seraphic wings intimates six stair-like illuminations, which begin from creatures and lead through even to God, to Whom no one rightly enters except through the Crucified. For he who does not enter through the gate, but ascends by another way, that one is a thief and mercenary. If anyone indeed goes inside through the gate, he will step in and out and find pasture. On which account John says in the Apocalypse: Blessed are they who wash their vestments in the Blood of the Lamb, to have power in the Tree of life, and to step in the city through the gates; as if he said, that through contemplation one cannot step into the supernal Jerusalem, unless he enter through the Blood of the Lamb as through a gate. For one has not been disposed in any manner to divine contemplations, which lead towards mental excesses, except with Daniel one be a man of desires. Moreover desires are inflamed in us in a twofold manner, that is through the clamour of praying, which makes one shout from a groan of the heart, and
though the lightning of speculation, by which the mind thoroughly turns itself most directly and most intensely towards the rays of light.

4. Therefore to the groan of praying through Christ crucified, through whose Blood we are purged from the filth of vice, I indeed first invite the reader, lest perhaps he believes that reading without unction, speculation without devotion, investigation without admiration, circumspection without exsultation, industry without piety, knowledge without charity, understanding without humiliy, study apart from divine grace, gaze apart from divinely inspired wisdom is sufficient for him. - Anticipated, therefore, by divine grace, for the humble and pious, the compunct and devout, for those anointed with the oil of gladness both for the lovers of divine wisdom and for those inflamed with desire for it, I propose the following speculations to be free for those willing to magnify, admire and even take a taste of God, intimating, that too little or nothing is the proposed, exterior gaze, unless the mirror of our mind has been wiped and polished. Exert yourself, therefore, man of God, before the sting of conscience bites again, and before you raise your eyes towards the rays of wisdom glittering in His reflections, lest by chance from the sight itself of the rays you fall into the more grave pit of shadows.

5. Moreover it is pleasing to divide the tract into seven chapters, by previewing their titles for an easier understanding of the things to be said. I ask therefore, that the intention of the one writing be thought of more, than the work, more the sense of the things said than the uncultured speech, more its truth than its charm, more the exercise of affection than the erudition of the intellect. Because as it is, one must not run perfunctorily through the course of these speculations, but ruminate (on them) with the greatest of lingering.

HERE BEGINS THE SIGHT OF THE POOR MAN IN THE DESERT

CHAPTER I - ON THE STEPS OF ASCENSION INTO GOD AND ON THE SIGHT OF HIM THROUGH HIS VESTIGES IN THE UNIVERSE

1. Blessed the man, whose assistance is from Thee, he has arrainged ascensions in his own heart in the vale of tears, in the place, which he placed them. Since beatitude is nothing other, than the fruition of the Most High Good; and the Most High Good is above us: no one can become blessed, unless he ascends above his very self, not by an ascent with the body, but with the heart. But we are not able to
be raised above ourselves
unless by means of a superior virtue raising us. For however much as interior
steps are arrainged, nothing is
done, unless the Divine Assistance accompanies. However the Divine
Assistance accompanies those who
seek it from their heart humbly and devoutly; and this is to long for it in this
vale of tears, which is done
through fervent praying. Let us pray therefore and say to the Lord Our God:
Lead me forth, Lord, in Thy
way, and let me step in Thy truth; let my heart be glad, that it fears Thy Name.
2. In praying this prayer one is illumined so as to become acquainted with the
steps of the divine ascension.
Since the university of things is the stairway to ascend into God; and among
things there are a certain vestige,
a certain image, certain corporal things, certain spiritual things, certain
temporal things, certain aeviturnal
things, and for this reason certain ones outside of us, certain ones inside us:
for this purpose, that we arrive at
considering the First Principle, which is most spiritual and eternal and above
us, it is proper, that we enter into
our mind, which is an aeviternal image of God, spiritual and within us, and
this is to step in the truth of God; it
is fitting, that we transcend to the eternal, most spiritual, and above us by
looking towards the First Principle,
and this is to be glad in the knowledge of God and the reverence of His
Majesty.
3. This is therefore the way of three days in the solitude; this is the threefold
illumination of one day, and the
first is as vespers, the second as morning, the third as midday; this relates to
the threefold existence of things,
that is in matter, in understanding and in the Eternal Art, according to what is
said: Let it be, He has made and
it has been made; this also relates to the threefold substance in Christ, who is
our Stairway, that is the
corporal, the spiritual, and the Divine.
4. According to this threefold progress our mind has three principle powers of
sight. One is towards exterior
corporals, according to that which is named the animal or the sensory: the
other within the self and in the self,
according to that which is called the spirit; the third above the self, according
to that which is called the mind.
- From all of which it ought to arrange itself to climb thoroughly into God, to
love Him with a whole heart,
and with a whole heart, and with a whole soul, in which consists the perfect
observance of the Law and, at
the same time with this, christian wisdom.
5. Moreover since whatever of the aforesaid manners is joined together,
according to which one happens to consider God as the Alpha and the Omega, or inasmuch as one happens to see God in any one of the aforesaid manners as through a mirror and as in a mirror, or because one of these considerations is has been mixed up with another conjoined with itself, and has to be considered in its purity; hence it is, that it is necessary, that these three principle steps ascend towards a group of six, so that, as God in six days perfected the entire world and on the seventh rested; so the microcosm is itself lead forth in six steps of illumination proceeding upwards in a most ordered manner towards the quiet of contemplation. In the figure of which one ascended in six steps towards the throne of Solomon; the Seraphim, which Isaiah saw, had six wings; after six days the Lord called Moses from the midst of gloom, and Christ after six days, as is said in Matthew, led the disciples unto the mountain and was transfigured before them.

6. Therefore alongside the six steps of ascension into God, there are six steps of the soul’s powers through which we climb thoroughly from the depths towards the heights, from exterior things towards things most interior, from temporal things we ascend together towards eternal, that is the sense, the imagination, the reason, the intellect, the intelligence, and the apex of the mind or the spark of synderesis. These steps we have planted in us by nature, deformed by fault, reformed by grace; are to be purged by justice, exercised by knowledge, perfected by wisdom.

7. For according to the first institution of nature there was created a man fit for the quiet of contemplation, and for that reason God placed him in the paradise of delights. But turning himself away from the true Light towards the completely changeable good, he was himself stooped down through his own fault, and his whole race by original sin, which infects human nature in a twofold manner, that is the mind by ignorance, the flesh by concupiscence; so that man thoroughly blinded and stooped down sits in the shadows and does not see the light of Heaven unless grace succors him with justice against his concupiscence, and knowledge with wisdom against his ignorance. Which is entirely done through Jesus Christ, who has been made for us by God our wisdom and justice and sanctification and redemption. Who though He be the Virtue of God and the Wisdom of God, (and though) He be the Incarnate Word full of grace and truth, has made grace and truth, that is has
infused the grace of charity, which, since it is from a pure heart and a good conscience and an unfeigned faith, rectifies the whole soul according to its own threefold, abovesaid power of sight; He has thoroughly taught the knowledge of the truth according to the threefold manner of theology, that is, the symbolic, the proper, and the mystical, so that through the symbol we rightly use the sensible, through the proper we rightly use the intelligible, through the mystical we be rapt to super-mental excesses.

8. Therefore it is necessary that he who will to ascend into God, as a nature having avoided the deforming fault, exercise his abovesaid, natural powers in accord with reforming grace, and this by praying; in accord with justifying purification and this in comportment; in accord with illuminating knowledge and this in meditation; in accord with perfecting wisdom and this in contemplation. Therefore as no one comes to wisdom except through grace, justice, and knowledge; so one does not come to contemplation except through perspicacious mediation, holy comportment and devout prayer. Therefore as grace is the foundation of the rectitude of the will and of the perspicacious brightening of the reason; so at first we must pray, then live holily, third understand the spectacles of truth and by understanding ascend gradually, and come at last to the exalted mountain, where there is seen the God of Gods in Sion.

9. Since therefore first one is to ascend rather than descend upon Jacob’s stair, let us situate the first step of ascension at the bottom, by considering this whole world sensible to us as a mirror, through which we passover to God, the Most High Artisan, so that we may be true Hebrews passing over from Egypt to the land promised again-and-again to our Fathers, that we may be also Christians passing over with Christ from this world to the Father, that we may be also lovers of wisdom, who calls and says: Passover to me all you, who desire me, and be filled full by my generations. For from the magnitude of beauty and creature the Creator of these things could be familiarly seen.

10. Moreover the highest power and wisdom and benevolence of the Creator glitters in created things according to that which the sense of the flesh announces in this threefold manner to the interior sense. For the sense of the flesh either devoutly serves the intellect in a rational manner as it investigates, or in a faithful manner as it believes, or in an intellectual manner as it contemplates. Contemplating it considers the actual
existence of things, believing the habitual descent of things, reasoning the potential excellence of things.

11. In the first manner the power of sight of the one contemplating, considering the things in themselves, sees in them the weight, number and measure; the weight in regard to the position, where they are inclining, the number, by which they are distinguished, and the measure, by which they are limited. And for this reason it sees in them measure, species, and order, and also the substance, virtue, and activity. From which it can rise together, as from a vestige, to understand the power, wisdom and immense goodness of the Creator.

12. In the second manner the power of sight of the believer, considering this world attends to the origin, the descent and the end. For by faith we believe, that the ages have been made ready for the Word of life; by faith we believe, that the seasons of the three laws, that is of nature, of Scripture and of grace succeed one another and have descended in a most orderly manner; by faith we believe, that the world must be terminated by a final judgement; adverting in the first to power, in the second to providence, in the third to justice of the Most High Principle.

13. In the third manner the power of sight of the one investigating in a reasoning manner sees, that certain things only are, moreover that certain things are and live, but that certain things are, live, and discern; and indeed that the first things are the lesser, the second ones the middle, the third the best. - Again it sees, that certain things are only corporal, certain things partly coporal, partly spiritual; from which it adverts, that some are merely spiritual as the better and more worthy of both. Nevertheless it sees, that certain things are mutable and incorruptible, as the celestial things; from which it adverts, that certain things are immutable and incorruptible, as the supercelestial.

From these visible things, therefore, it rises up together to consider the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, as the existing, living, understanding, merely spiritual and incorruptible and instransmutable One.

Moreover the magnitude of things according to the quantity of (their) length, breadth and depth; according to the excellence (their) virtue extending far, wide, and deeply, as is clear in the diffusion of light; according to the efficacy of (their) most interior, continual and diffuse activity, as is clear in the activity of fire, manifestly indicates the immensity of the power, wisdom and goodness of the Triune God
who in all other things by
power, presence and essence exists as One uncircumscribed.
Indeed their multitude according to (their) general, special and individual
diversity in substance, in form or
figure and efficacious beyond every human estimation, manifestly intimates
and shows the immensity of the
aforesaid three conditions in God.
Moreover the beauty of things according to the variety of (their) lights, figures
and colors in bodies simple,
mixed and even connected, as in celestial and mineral bodies, as stones and
metals, plants and animals,
proclaims in an evident manner the aforesaid three things.
Moreover the fulness of things, according to which matter is full of forms
according to seminal reasons; form
is full of virtue according to active power; virtue is full of effects according to
efficiency, manifestly declares
the very thing.
The manifold activity (of things), according to that which is natural, according
to that which is artificial,
according to that which is moral, by its most manifold variety shows the
immensity of His virtue, art, and
goodness, which is for all things "the cause of existing, the reason for
understanding and the order of living".
Moreover their order according to the reckoning of duration and influence,
that is by prior and posterior,
superior and inferior, more noble and more ignoble, manifestly intimates in
the Book of Creatures the
primacy, sublimity and dignity of the First Principle, as much as it regards the
infinity of His power; indeed
the order of divine laws, precepts, and judgements in the Book of Scripture the
immensity of His wisdom;
moreover the order of divine Sacraments, benefactions and retributions in the
Body of the Church the
immensity of His goodness, so that the order itself most evidently leads us by
hand to the First and Most High,
the Most Powerful, the Most Wise and the Best. 15. Therefore he who is not
brightened by such splendors of
created things is blind; he who does not awake at such clamors is deaf; he who
does not praise God on
account of all these effects is mute; he who does not turn towards the First
Principle on account of such
indications is stupid. - Open therefore your eyes, employ your spiritual ears,
loose your lips and rouse your
heart, to see, hear, praise, love and worship, magnify and honor your God in
all creatures, lest perhaps the
whole circle of the earth rise together against you. For on this account the
circle of the earth will fight against
the insensate and against the sensate there will be the matter of glory, who according to the Prophet can say:
Thou has loved me, Lord, in what you are to do and in the works of Thy hands shall I exult. How magnified
are Thy works, Lord! you have made all things in wisdom, the earth is filled with Thy possesion.

CHAPTER II - ON THE SIGHT OF GOD IN HIS VESTIGES IN THIS SENSIBLE WORLD

1. But since concerning the sensible reflection not only does it happen that God is contemplated through these
as through vestiges, but also in these, inasmuch as He is in them through essence, power, and presence; and
this is to consider Him higher than before; for that reason a consideration of this kind holds second place as
the second step of contemplation, by which we ought to be lead by hand to contemplate God in all other
creatures, which enter our minds through bodily senses. 2. Therefore it must be noted, that this world, which
is called a macrocosm, enters our soul, which is called a microcosm, through the gates of the five senses,
according to (their) apprehension, enjoyment and dijudication of these sensible (images). That this is clearly
so: because in it certain things are generating, certain things generated, certain thing governing the former and
the latter. The things generating are the simple bodies, that is the celestial bodies and the four elements. For
from the elements by virtue of a light unifying the contrariety of elements in mixtures there has been
generated and produced, whatever is generated and produced by the activity of natural virtue. But the things
generated are the bodies composed from the elements, as minerals, vegetables, sensibles and human bodies.
The things ruling the former and the latter are the spiritual substances whether entirely conjoined, as are the
brute animals, or conjoined in a separable manner, as are the rational spirits, or conjoined in an inseparable
manner, as are the celestial spirits, whom the philosophers name Intelligences, we the Angles. To whom
according to philosophers it pertains to move the celestial bodies, and for this reason to them there is
attributed the administration of the universe, taking up from the First Cause, that is from God, the influence of
virtue, which they pour back according to the work of governing, which respects the natural consistency of
things. Moreover according to theologians there is attributed to these same the control of the universe
according to the empire of the Most High God as much as regards the works of
reparation, according to what is called the spirits of administration, sent on account of those who have seized the inheritance of salvation.

3. Man therefore, who is called the microcosm, has five senses like five gates, through which acquaintance with all things, which are in the sensible world, enters into his soul. For through vision there enters bodies sublime and luminous and the other colored things, but through touch bodies solid and terrestrial, indeed through the three intermediary senses there enters intermediary things, as through taste liquids, through hearing gases, through smell vapours, which have something of the humid nature, something of the gaseous, something of the fiery or hot (nature), as is clear in the smoke released from aromatics. Therefore there enters through these gates both simple bodies and also composite ones, from these (which are) mixed. But because in sensing we perceive no only these particular sensibles, which are light, sound, odor, taste and the four primary qualities, which apprehend (our) touch; but also the common sensibles, which are number, magnitude, figure, rest and movement; both "all, which is moved is moved by another" and certain things are moved by themselves and rest, as are the animals: while through those five senses we apprehend the movement of bodies, we are lead by hand towards acquaintance with spiritual movers as through an effect towards acquaintance with its causes.

4. Therefore there enters, as much as regards three genera of things, into the human soul through apprehension, that whole sensible world. Moreover these exterior sensibles are those which at first step into the soul through the gates of the five senses; they enter, I say, not through substances, but through their similitudes at first generated in the midst and from the midst in the organ and from the exterior organ in the interior, and from this into the apprehensive power; and thus the generation of the species in the midst and from the midst in the organ and the conversion of the apprehensive power over it causes the apprehension of all these which the soul apprehends exteriorly.

5. To this apprehension, if it belongs to something agreeable, there follows enjoyment. Moreover the sense takes delight in the object perceived through the abstract similitude and/or by reason of its beauty, as in sight, and/or by reason of its savor, as in smell and hearing, and/or by reason of its wholesomeness, as in taste and
touch, respectively. Moreover every delectation is by reason of its proportionality. But since the species holds the reason for the form, virtue and activity, according to which it has a relation to the beginning, from which it flows, to the middle, through which it passes over, and to the end, in which it acts; for that reason proportionality either is attended in similitude, according to which it accounts for the species or form, and so is called beauty, because "beauty is nothing other than numeric equality", or "a certain one of the parts of position together with the savor of color". Or proportionality attends, inasmuch as it accounts for power or virtue, and so is called savor, when acting virtue does not improportionately exceed the recipient; because sense is saddened in extremes and takes delight in means. Or it is attended, inasmuch as it accounts for efficacy and impression, which is then proportional, when acting in impressing it fills full the indigence of the one impressed, and this is to save and feed itself, which most appears in taste and touch. And thus through enjoyment exterior delectables, according to the three fold reason for taking delight, enter into the soul through similitude.

6. After this apprehension and enjoyment there occurs dijudication, by which not only is it distinguished, whether this be white, and/or black, because this pertains to a particular sense; not only, whether it be wholesome, and or noxious, because this pertains to interior sense; but also, because it is distinguished and an account is rendered, why it takes delight in this; and in this act one inquires for a reason for the delectation, which in the sense is perceived from the object. This is moreover, when the reason for the beautiful, savory and wholesome is sought: and one finds that this is the proportion of equality. Moreover the reason for equality is the same in great things and in small and it neither is extended in dimensions nor succeeds or passes over with those things passing over nor is it altered by movements. Therefore it abstracts from place, time and movement, and for this reason it is thoroughly unchangeable, uncircumscribable and entirely spiritual. Therefore dijudication is an action, which causes the sensible species, accepted sensibly through sense, to go into the intellectual power by pruning and abstracting (it). And thus, this whole world has to go into the human soul through the gates of the senses according to the three aforesaid activities.
7. Moreover all these are vestiges, in which we gaze upon Our God. For since
the species apprehended is a
similitude born in the midst and then impressed on the organ itself and
through that impression it leads into its
beginning, that is into the object with which one is to become acquainted; it
manifestly intimates, that that
One who is the invisible image of God and the splendor of His glory and the
figure of His substance, who is
everywhere by His first generation - as an object in the center generates its
own similitude - is united by the
grace of union - as a species to the bodily organ - to an individual of rational
nature, to lead us back through
that union to the Father as to the fontal beginning and object. Therefore as all
things with which one can
become acquainted have to generate their own species, they manifestly
proclaim, that in them as in mirrors
can be seen the eternal generation of the Word, the Image and Son eternally
eemanating from God the Father.
8. According to this manner (of speaking) the species taking delight as one
beautiful, savory and wholesome,
intimates, that in that first species there is prime beauty, savor and
wholesomeness, in which there is most
high proportionality and equality to the one generating; in which there is
unstaining virtue, not through
phantasm, but through the truth of apprehension: in which there is saving
impression, expelling both
substitutes and every indigence of apprehension. If therefore "delectation is a
conjunction of agreeable to
agreeable"; and solely the similitude of God accounts most highly for the
beautiful, savory and the
wholesome; and it is united according to truth and interiority and fulness
filling full every capacity: it can
manifestly be seen, that in God alone there is fontal and true delectation, and
that we are lead by hand to
require that from all delectations.
9. Moreover by a more excellent and immediate manner dijudication leads us
to gaze upon eternal truth with
more certainty. For if dijudication has occured through reason abstracting
from place, time and mutability and
for this reason from dimension, succession and transmutation, through
immutable and incircumscriptible and
interminalbe reason; nothing however is entirely immutable,
incircumscriptible and interminalbe, except what
is eternal; everything however which is eternal, is God, and/or in God: if
therefore all things, however more
certainly we distinguish them, we distinguish through reason of this kind; it is
clear, that He himself is the
reason for all things and the infallible rule and the light of truth, in which all
other things glitters infallibly,
indelibly, undoubtedly, unbreakably, indistinguishably, thoroughly
unchangeably, unconfinably, interminably,
indivisibly, and intellectually. And for that reason those laws, through which
we judge with certainty
concerning all sensibles, coming into our consideration; although they are
infallible and undoubtable by the
intellect of the one apprehending (them), indelible from the memory of the
one recalling (them) as things
always present, unbreakable and indistinguishable by the intellect of the one
judging (them), because, as
Augustine says "no one judges from them, but through them": it is necessary,
that they be thoroughly
unchangeable and incorruptible as necessaries, unconfinable as
uncircumscribed, interminable as eternals, and
for this reason indivisible as intellectual and incorporeal (beings), not made,
but uncreated, eternally existing
in the eternal Art, from which, through which and according to which all
shapely things are formed; and for
that reason they cannot be with certainty judged except through That which
was not only producing all other
forms, but also conserving and distinguishing all others, as the Being holding
the form and directing the rule
over all things, and through Which our mind distinguishes all others, which
enter into itself through the senses.
10. Moreover this speculation broadens according to the consideration of seven
numerically different things,
by which as by seven steps one climbs thoroughly into God, according to that
which Augustine (says) in his
book De vera Religione and in its sixth (chapter) Musicae, where he assignes
numerically different things
climbing step-by-step thoroughly from these sensibles even to the Artisan of
all, so that God is seen in all (of
them). For he says, that numbers are in bodies and most in sounds and voices,
and these he names notes; that
numbers (have been) abstracted from these and received in our senses, and
these he names messages;
numbers (are) proceding from the soul into the body, as is clear in
gesticulations and gestured-dances, and
these he names instructions; that (there are) numbers in the delectations of
the sense from the conversion of
intention over the species received, and these he names sensations; that
numbers (have been) retained in the
memory, and these he calls memories; that (there are) even numbers, through
which we judge concerning all
these things, and these he names judgements, which as has been said are
necessarily above the mind as infallibles and indistinguishables. By these moreover there are impressed upon our minds artificial numbers, which nevertheless Augustine does not enumerate among those steps, because they have been connected with judgements; and from these flow the number-instructions, from which are created numerous forms of crafts, so that from most high things through middle things towards the lowest things an ordered descent comes into being. Towards these we also ascend step-by-step by numbers (that are) notes, intervening messages, sensations, and memories. Therefore since all things are beautiful and in a certain manner delectable; and beauty and delectation are not apart from proportion; and proportion is first in numbers: it is necessary, that all things be numerous; and for this reason "number is the foremost exemplar in the mind of the Founder"; and in things the foremost vestige leading to Wisdom. Because when (this vestige) is most evident to all and closest to God, and most closely as through seven differences leads into God and causes, us to acquaint ourselves with Him in all other corporal and sensible things, we at the same time apprehend numerous things, take delight in numerous proportions and judge most securely by means of laws of numerous proportions.

11. From these two first steps, by which we are lead by hand to gaze upon God in (His) vestiges as after the manner of the two wings decending about the feet, we can gather, that all creatures of this sensible world lead the spirit of the one contemplating and tasting (them) into the eternal God, for the reason that of that First Principle most powerful, most wise and best, of that eternal Origin, Light, and Fullness, of that, I say, Art efficient, exemplary and ordering there are shadows, resonances and pictures, there are vestiges, likenesses and spectacles divinely given to us as first premises of a syllogism and signs to survey God; which, I say, are exemplary and/or rather examples, proposed to minds still rough and sensible, to be transferred through the sensibles, which they see, to the intelligibles, which they do not see, as through signs to things signified.

12. Moreover these manner of creatures of this sensible world signify the invisible things of God, partly because God is the Origin, Exemplar and End, of every creature, and (because) every effect is a sign of a cause, and an example of an exemplar, and a way for the end, towards which it...
leads: partly from its own representation; partly from a prophetic prefiguration; partly from angelic activity; partly from a superadded institution. For every creature by its nature is a certain likeness and similitude of that eternal Wisdom, and especially those things which have been assumed in the book of Scripture through the spirit of prophecy for the prefiguration of spiritual things; moreover more especially those creatures, in the likeness of which God has willed to appear as an angelic minister; but most especially that which He willed to institute for signification, which not only accounts for the common name of sign, but also of Sacrament.

13. From all of which is gathered, that the invisible things of God from the creatures of the world, through those which have been made, are perceived as things understood so that those who do not want to advert to these and to acquaint themselves with, bless and love God in all these are inexcusable so long as they do not want to be transferred from darkness into the admirable light of God. But thanks to God through Jesus Christ, Our Lord, who has transferred us from darkness into His own admirable light, while through these lights given exteriorly to the mirror of our mind in which divine things glitter, we dispose (ourselves) to reenter.

CHAPTER III - ON THE SIGHT OF GOD THROUGH HIS IMAGE MARKED ON NATURAL POWERS

1. Moreover since the two aforesaid steps, by leading us into God through His vestiges, though which He glitters in all other creatures, has lead us by hand even unto this, to reenter ourselves, that is our mind, in which the Divine Image glitters; hence it is that already in the third place, entering our very selves and as if relinquishing the outer entrance hall, in the Holy, that is in the anterior part of the Tabernacle, we ought to begin to see God as through a mirror; where after the manner of a candlestick the Light of Truth glitters upon the face of our mind, in which, that is, the Image of the Most Blessed Trinity glitters again. Enter therefore yourself and see, that your mind most fervently loves itself; nor can it love itself, unless it knows; nor does it know itself, unless it remembers itself, because we can seize nothing through understanding, that is not present among our memory; and from this you advert, that your soul has a threefold power, not in the eye of the flesh, but in the eye of the mind. Therefore consider the activities and characteristics of these three
powers, and you can see God through yourself as through an image, which is to see (Him) through a mirror in mystery.

2. Moreover the activity of the memory is the retention and representation not only of things present, corporal and temporal, but also of things coming afterwards, simple and sempiternal. For the memory retains things past through remembrance, things present through capture, things future through foresight. It also retains simple things, like the principles of continuous and discrete quantities, such as point, presence and unity, without which it is impossible to remember or think of those things which are derived by means of them. Nevertheless it retains the principles and ranks of the sciences, as sempiternal things and in a sempiternal manner, because it can never so forget them, while it uses reason, on the contrary it approves those things heard and assents to them, perceives (them) not as from something new, but recognizes them as things innate and familiar to itself; as is clear, is the self-evident: "The affirmation and/or negation of anything"; and/or "Every whole is greater than its part", and/or whatever other rank, for which there is no contradiction "in accord with internal reason". Therefore from the first actual retention of all temporal things, that is of all things past, present, and future, it has a likeness to eternity, whose indivisible presence extends itself to all times. From the second it appears, that it not only has to be itself formed from the exterior through phantasms, but also from the superior by taking up simple forms, which cannot not enter through the gates of the senses and the phantasies of sensibles. From the third is had, that it has itself a thoroughly unchangeable light present to itself, in which it remembers the truth of invariables. And thus through the activities of memory it appears, that the soul itself is an image and similitude of God, to this extent, that present become acquainted except through its positions", our intellect does not come to resolve fully the understanding of anything of existing creatures, unless it be aided by the understanding of the most pure, most actual, most complete and absolute being; which is Being simply and eternal, in which there are reasons for all things in its purity. Moreover in what manner does the intellect know, that this being is defective and incomplete, if it has no acquaintance with being apart from any fault? And thus concerning the other things
already touched upon. Moreover the intellect is said next to truly comprehend
the understanding of
propositions, when it knows with certitude, that they are true; and to know
this is to know, since it cannot fail
in its comprehension. For it knows, that that truth cannot otherwise be
regarded; therefore it knows, that that
truth is not thoroughly changeable. But since our mind itself is thoroughly
changeable, it cannot see that
(truth) glittering in so thoroughly an unchangeable manner unless through
another light radiating entirely in a
thoroughly unchangeable manner, which cannot possibly be a mutable
creature. Therefore it knows in that
light, which illumes every man coming into this world, which is the True
Light and the Word in the
beginning with God. But our intellect next truly perceives the understanding of
illation, when it sees, that the
conclusion follows necessarily from the premises; because not only does it
see in necessary terms, but also in
contingents, as, if a man run, a man is moved. Moreover it perceives this
necessary characteristic not only in
things existing, but also in non-existing ones. For as, with man existing, it
follows: if man runs, man is moved;
so also, (when) non-existing. Therefore the necessity of illations of this
manner does not come from the
existence of a thing in matter, which is contingent, nor from existence of a
thing in the soul, which then would
be a fiction, if did not exist in the thing: therefore it comes from the
exemplarity in the eternal Art, according
to which the thing has an aptitude and characteristic alternatively according
to the eternal Art's
representation of it. Therefore, as Augustine says in De vera religione, every
light of one who reasons truly is
enkindled by that Truth and exerts itself to arrive at It. From which it appears
manifestly, that our intellect has
been conjoined to eternal Truth itself, while it cannot with certitude seize
anything truly unless through
learning about It. Therefore you can see through youself the Truth, which
teaches you, if concupiscences and
phantasms do not impede you and do not interpose themselves as clouds
between you and the ray of Truth.
4. Moreover the activity of elective virtue is attended in counsel, judgement
and desire. Moreover counsel is
in inquiring, what be better this or that. But it is not called better unless
through access to the best; however
access is according to the greater assimilation; therefore no one knows
whether this be better than that,
unless he knows, that it is more assimilated to the best. However, no one
knows, that anything is assimilated more to another, unless he becomes acquainted with it; for not I do not know, that this is like Peter, unless I know or become acquainted with Peter; therefore upon everyone giving counsel there is necessarily impressed the notion of the Most High Good. Moreover certain judgement from those able to give counsel es through some law. However no one judges with certainty through law, unless he be certain that that law is upright, and that one ought not judge it; but our mind judges about its very self: therefore since it cannot judge about the law, through which it judges; that law is superior to our mind, and it judges through this, according to that which is impressed upon itself. However nothing is superior to the human mind, except the One alone who made it; therefore in judging our deliverative (power) extends to divine laws, if it would give a full explanation. Moreover desire is principally for that which most moves it. However that moves most which loves most; however to be blessed is loved most; however to be blessed is not had except through the best and last end: therefore human desire seeks after nothing except because (it is) the Most High Good, and/or because it is for That, and/or because it has come likeness to It. So great is the force of the Most High Good, that nothing can be loved by a creature except through a desire for It, which (creature) thereby fails and errs, since it accepts a likeness and imitation in place of the Truth. Therefore see, in what manner the soul is nigh to God, and in what manner the memory leads into eternity, the intelligence into Truth, the elective power into the Most High Goodness according to their activities. 5. Moreover according to the order and origin and characteristic of these powers (the soul) leads into the Most Blessed Trinity Itself. For from memory there arises intelligence as its offspring, because we next understand, since the similitude, which is in the memory, results in the keeness of the intellect, which is nothing other than a word; from memory and intelligence is spirated love as the connexion of both. These three, that is the generating mind, word, and love, are in the soul in regard to the memory, intelligence and the will, which are consubstantial, coeternal and coeval, circumsessing one another. Therefore if the perfect God is a spirit, He has memory, intelligence and will, He has also a begotten Word and a spirated Love, which are necessarily distinguished, since one is produced from the other, not
essentially, not accidentally, therefore personally. Therefore while the mind considers its very self, through itself as through a mirror it rises together to gaze upon the Blessed Trinity of the Father, the Word and the Love, of the three coeternal, coequal and consubstantial persons, so that whoever in whomever is of the others, is nevertheless one not the other, but the three themselves are the One God.

6. Towards this speculation which the soul has concerning its own beginning, triune and one through the trinity of its powers, through which it is an image of God, one is assisted through the lights of the sciences, which perfect it and inform it and represent the Most Blessed Trinity in a threelfold manner. For every philosophy either is natural, or rational, or moral. The first deals with the cause of existing, and for that reason leads into the power of the Father; the second with the reason for understanding, and for that reason leads into the wisdom of the Word; the third with the order of living, and for that reason leads into the goodness of the Holy Spirit. Again, the first is divided into metaphysics, mathematics and physics. And the first concerns the beings of things, the second numbers and figures, the third natures, virtues and diffuse activities. And for that reason the first leads into the First Principle, the Father, the second into His Image, the Son, the third into the gift of the Holy Spirit. The second is divided into grammar, which makes us able to express; into logic, which makes us perspicacious to argue; into rhetoric, which makes us skillful to persuade or move. And this similarly intimates the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity Itself. The third is divided into the monastic, the domestic and the political. And for that reason the first intimates the unbegottenness of the First Principle, the second the Sonâ€™s being-in-a-family, the third the liberality of the Holy Spirit.

7. Moreover all these sciences have certain and infallible rules as lights and rays descending from the eternal law in our mind. And for that reason our mind irradiated and superfused by so great splendors, unless it be blind, can be lead by hand through its very self to contemplate that eternal light. Moreover the irradiation and consideration of this light suspends wise men into admiration and conversely it leads the foolish, who do not believe, that they do understand, into confusion, to fulfill that prophetic (word): Thou illuminating from eternal mountains, have unsettled the foolish of heart.
CHAPTER IV - ON THE SIGHT OF GOD IN HIS IMAGE REFORMED BY GRATUITOUS GIFTS

1. But since not only when passing over through us, but also in us does it happen that the First Principle is contemplated; and this is greater than the preceding: for that reason this fourth manner of considering reaches the step of contemplation. Moreover it is wonderful to see, when it is shown, that God is so close to our minds, because to so few does it belong to gaze upon the First Principle in their very selves. But the reason (for this) is easy, because the human mind, distracted by cares, does not enter into itself through memory; beclouded by phantasms, it does not go back towards itself through intelligence; enticed by concupiscences, it turns back not at all towards itself through a desire for internal savor and spiritual gladness. For that reason lying down totally in these senses, it cannot reenter into itself as into an image of God.

2. And since, where one has fallen, there he will inevitably fall down again, unless someone places himself nearby and lies by its side, to raise him; our soul could not be perfectly revealed by these senses to survey itself and the eternal Truth in its very self, unless the Truth, having assumed a human form in Christ, became by Its own power the stairway repairing the prior stairway, which had been broken in Adam. For that reason, howevermuch one be illuminated by the light of nature and acquired knowledge, one cannot enter into himself, to delight in his very self in the Lord, unless by means of Christ, who says: I am the door. He who goes within through Me, shall be saved and he will step in and out and find pasture. Moreover we do not approach towards this door, unless we believe, hope and love. It is therefore necessary, if we want to reenter to the fruition of Truth as to paradise, that we step in through faith, hope and love of the Mediator of God and man, Jesus Christ, who is as the tree of life in the midst of paradise.

3. Therefore the image of our mind must be put on by the three theological virtues, by which the soul is purified, and thus the image is reformed and is conformed to the supernal Jerusalem and made a part of the Church militant, which is, according to the Apostle, the offspring of the heavenly Jerusalem. For he said: That which is on high is that free Jerusalem which is our mother. Therefore the soul, believing, hoping and loving Jesus Christ, who is the incarnate, uncreated and inspired word, that is the way, the truth and the life: while
through faith it believes in Christ as in the uncreated Word, which is the Word and splendor of the Father, it recovers its spiritual hearing and sight, hearing to perceive the sermons of Christ, sight to consider the splendors of His light. Moreover when by hope it longs to capture the inspired Word, through desire and affection it recovers its spiritual smell. While by charity it holds fast the incarnate Word, as one taking delight from Him and as one passing over into Him though ecstatic love, it recovers taste and touch. With which senses having been recovered, while it sees and listens to its spouse, it smells, tastes and embraces Him, as a bride can sing repeatedly the Canticle of Canticles, which had been written for the exercise of contemplation according to this fourth step, which no one lays hold of, except he who accepts it, because there is more in affectual experience than in rational consideration. For on this step, with its interior senses repaired to sense the Most High Beauty, to hear the Most High Harmony, to smell the Most High Fragrance, to take a taste of the Most High Savor, to apprehend the Most High Delectable, the soul is disposed towards mental excesses, that is through devotion, admiration and exultation, accord to those three exclamations, which are made in the Canticle of Canticles. Of which the first occurs through an abundance of devotion, through which the soul becomes as a stream of smoke (rising) from aromatics of myrrh and incense: the second through excellence of admiration, through which the soul becomes as dawn, moon and son, according to the process of illuminations suspending the soul to admire the spouse (thus) considered; the third through a superabundance of exsulation, through which the soul becomes affluent with the most savory delights of delectation, leaning totally upon its beloved.

4. Which when attained, our spirit is made hierarchical to climb thoroughly on high according to its conformity to that supernal Jerusalem, in which no one enters, unless it descends first into the heart by grace, as John saw in his Apocalypse. Moreover it descends next into the heart, when through reformation of the image, through the theological virtues and through the enjoyments of the spiritual senses and the suspensions of excesses our spirit is made hierarchical, that is purged, illuminated and perfected. - So also by nine steps of orders is (the soul) marked, while in it, in an orderly manner, there is arrainged announcement, dictation,
duction, ordination, reinforcement, command, undertaking, revelation, unction, which step-by-step corresponds to the nine orders of Angels, so that the first of the aforesaid three steps pertain in the human mind to nature, the three following to skill, and the last three to grace. Which when had, the soul by entering into its very self, enters into the supernal Jerusalem, where considering the orders of the Angels, it sees in them the God, who dwelling in them works all their operations. Whence says (Saint) Bernard ad Eugenium, that "God in the Seraphim loves as charity, in the Cherubim knows as truth, in the Thrones sits as equity, in the Dominations dominates as majesty, in the Principalities rules as Principle, in the Powers guards as health, in the Virtues works as virtue, in the Archangels reveals as light, in the Angels assists as piety". From all of which it is seen that God is all in all through contemplation of Him in minds, in which He dwells by the gifts of the most affluent charity.

5. Moreover the consideration of Sacred Scripture, divinely sent forth, is especially and chiefly is supported upon speculating on (this) step, as philosphy was on the preceeding. For Sacred Scripture principally concerns the works of reparation. Whence it also chiefly deals with faith, hope and charity, though which virtues the soul has to be reformed, and most especially with charity. Of which the Apostle says, that it is the end of the precept, according to that which is in a pure heart and a good conscience and in an unfeigned faith. It is the fullness of the Law, as says the same (author). And Our Savior asserts that the whole Law and the Prophets hang upon these two precepts, that is upon the love of God and of neighbor; which two bow their heads to the one spouse of the Church, Jesus Christ, who is at the same time neighbor and God, at the same time brother and lord, at the same time also king and friend, at the same time uncreated and incarnate Word, our former and reformer, as the Alpha and the Omega; who is also the Most High Hierarch, purging and illuminating and perfecting the bride, that is the whole Church and every holy soul.

6. Therefore concerning this hierarch and ecclesiatical hierarch is the whole Sacred Scripture, through which we are taught how to be purged, illuminated and perfected, and this according to the threefold law handed down in Her, that is of nature, of Scripture and of grace; and/or rather according to Her threefold principle part, that is the Mosaic law purging, the prophetic revelation brightening and
the evangelic teaching
perfecting; or more rather according to Her threefold spiritual intelligence:
the tropologic which purges for
honesty of life; the allegoric, which illumines for clarity of intelligence; the
anagogic, which perfects through
mental excesses and the most savory perceptions of wisdom, according to the
aforesaid three theological
virtues and reformed spiritual senses and the three above said excesses and
the hierarchic acts of the mind, by
which our mind steps back to interior things, to gaze upon God there in the
splendors of the Saints and in
them as in beds to sleep in peace and rest, with the spouse having promised on
oath, that she will not be
roused, until she comes forth by His will.
7. Moreover from these two middle steps, through which we step in to
contemplate God within us as in the
reflections of the images of creatures, and this as if according to the manner of
wings outstretched to fly,
which hold a middle place, we can understand, that in divine things we are
lead by hand through the powers
of the rational soul itself, naturally engrafted as much as regards their
activities, characteristics and habits of
knowledge; according to what appears from the third step. We are also lead by
hand through the powers of
the soul itself reformed - and this by gratuitous virtues - by the spiritual
senses and mental excesses; as is
clear from the fourth (step). Nevertheless we are lead by hand through
hierarchical activities, that is of the
purgation, illumination and perfection of human minds, through the
hierarchichal revelations of the Sacred
Scriptures given to us through the Angels, according to that (saying) of the
Apostle, that the Law has been
given through the Angels into the hand of the Mediator. And last in order we
are lead by hand through
hierarchs and hierarchical orders, which have to be arrainged in our mind
after the likeness of the supernal
Jerusalem.
8. Having been filled full by all of which intellectual lights our mind, is
inhabited by Divine Wisdom as a
house of God, made a daughter, bride and friend of God; made a member,
sister and coheir with Christ the
Head; made nevertheless the temple of the Holy Spirit, founded through faith,
elevated through hope and
dedicated to God through holiness of mind and body. Which together causes
the most sincere charity for
Christ, which is diffused in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been
given to us, without which Spirit
we cannot know the secrets of God. For as what are of a man no one can know except the spirit of the man, which is in him; so also what are of God no one can know except the Spirit of God. In charity therefore we are rooted and founded, to be able to comprehend with all the Saints, what is the length of the eternity, what is breadth of the liberality, what is the sublimity of the majesty and what is the depth of the wisdom of the Judge.

CHAPTER V - ON THE SIGHT OF THE DIVINE UNITY THROUGH ITS PRIMARY NAME, WHICH IS BEING
1. Moreover since it happens that God is contemplated not only outside of us and within us, but also above us: outside through vestige, within through image and above through the light of Eternal Truth, since "our mind itself is formed immediately by Truth Itself"; those who have been exercised in the first manner, have entered already into the entrance-hall before the tabernacle; but they who in the second, have entered into the holies; moreover they who in the third, enter with the supreme Pontiff into the Holy of Holies; where above the ark are the Cherubim of glory overshadowing the propitiatory; through which we understand two manners or steps of contemplating the invisible and eternal things of God, of which one hovers around the things essential to God, but the other around the things proper to the persons.
2. The first manner at first and principally fixes its power of sight upon being itself, saying, that He who is is the first Name of God. The second manner fixes its gaze upon the good itself, saying, that this is the first Name of God. The first looks most powerfully towards the Old Testament, which preaches most the unity of the Divine Essence; whence it is said by Moses: I am who am; according to the New, which determines the plurality of persons, by baptising in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. For that reason Christ Our Teacher, wanting to raise the youth, who observed the Law, towards evangelical perfection, attributed the name of goodness to God principally and precisely. No one he said, is good except God alone. Therefore (St. John) Damascene following Moyses says, that He who is is the first Name of God; (St.) Dionysius (the Areopagite) following Christ says, that the Good is the first Name of God.
3. Wanting therefore to contemplate the invisible things of God in regard to (their) unity of essence it first fixes its power of sight upon being itself and sees, that being itself to this
extent is in itself most certain, because it cannot be thought not to be, because most pure being itself does not occur except in full flight from non-being, as even nothing is in full flight from being. Therefore as it has entirely nothing from being or from its conditions; so conversely being itself has nothing from non-being, neither in act nor in power, nor according to the truth of a thing nor according to our estimation. Moreover since non-being is a privation of existing, it does not fall into the intellect except through being; moreover being does not fall through another, because everything, which is understood, either is understood as not a being, or as a being in potency, or as a being in act. If therefore non-being cannot be understood except through a being, and a being in potency not except through a being in act; and being names the pure act itself of a being: therefore being is what first falls in an intellect, and being is that which is a pure act. But this is not particular being, which is analogous being, because it has the least from act, in this that it is the least. It follows therefore, that that being is the divine being.

4. Wonderful therefore is the blindness of the intellect, which does not consider that which it sees first and without which it can become acquainted with nothing. But as eye intent upon various differences of colors does not see the light, through which it sees other things, and if it sees it, it does not advert to it; so the eye of our mind, intent upon particular and universal beings, though being itself, outside of every genus, first occurs to the mind and through it other things, it does not however advert to it. Whence it most truly appears, that "as the eye of the evening holds itself towards the light, so the eye of our mind holds itself towards the most manifest things of nature"; because accustomed to the shadows of beings and to the phantasms of sensibles, when it surveys the light itself of Most High Being, it seems to it that it sees nothing; not understanding, that that darkness is the Most High Illumination of our mind, as, when the eye sees pure light, it seems to it that is sees nothing.

5. Therefore see that most pure being, if you can, and it occurs to you, that it cannot be though of as accepted from another; and for this reason it is necessarily thought of as first in every manner, because it can be neither from nothing nor from anything. For what is it through itself, if being itself is not through itself nor from itself?
It occurs also to you that (it is) lacking entirely non-being and for this reason as never beginning, never stoping, but eternal. It occurs to you also that it has in no manner (anything) in itself, except that which is being itself, and for this reason that it has been composed with nothing, but is most simple. It occurs to you that it has nothing of possibility, because every possible has in some manner something from non-being, and for this reason that it is most actual. It occurs that has nothing of defectibility, and for this reason that it is most perfect. It occurs lastly that it has nothing of diversification, and for this reason that it is most highly one.

Being therefore, which is pure being and simply being and absolute being, is primary, eternal, most simple, most actual, most perfect and most hightly one being.

6. And these are so certain, that the opposite of these cannot be thought by understanding being itself, and one necessarily infers the other. For because it is simply being, for that reason it is simply first; because it is simply first, for that reason it is not made from another, nor can it be from its very self, therefore it is eternal. Likewise, because it is first and eternal; for that reason it is not from others, therefore it is most simple. Likewise, because it is first, eternal, most simple; for that reason there is nothing in it of possibility mixed with act, for that reason it is most actual. Likewise, because it is first, eternal, most simple, most actual; therefore it is most perfect; as such it entirely fails in nothing, nor can there be anything added to it. Because it is first, eternal, most simple, most actual, most perfect; for that reason most highly one. For what is through a superabundance in every manner is said to be in respect to all things. " Also what is through superabundance simply-speaking is not said to be possibly comprised except in only one thing" Whence if God names primary, eternal, most simple, most actual, most perfect being; it is impossible that it is thought to not to be, nor to be except as only one thing. Listen therefore, O Israel, God thy God is one. If you see this in the pure simplicity of (your) mind, you will in somewise be filled with the brightening of eternal light.

7. But you have that from which you will be lifted into admiration. For being itself is first and last, is eternal and most present, is most simple and greatest, is most actual and most immutable, is most perfect and immense, is most highly one and nevertheless in every measure. If you wonder
at these things with a pure
mind, you shall be filled with a greater light, while you see further, that it is
for that reason last, because it is
first. For because it is first, it works all things on account of its very self; and
for that reason it is necessary,
that it be the last end, the start and the consummation, the Alpha and Omega.
For that reason it is the most
present, because it is eternal. For because it is eternal, it does not flow from
another nor fails by its very self
nor runs down from one thing into another: therefore it has neither a past nor
a future, but only a present
being. For that reason it is greatest, because it is most simple. For because it is
most actual, for that reason it is
pure act; and what is such acquires nothing new, loses no habit, and for this
reason cannot be changed. For
that reason it is immense, because it is most perfect. For because it is most
perfect, it can think of nothing
better, more noble, nor more worthy beyond itself, and for this reason nothing
greater; and everything that is
such is immense. For that reason it is in every measure, because it is most
highly one. For what is most highly
one, is the universal principle of every multitude; and for this reason it is the
universal efficient, exemplary
and final cause of all things, as "the cause of existing, the reason of
understanding and the order of living".
Therefore it is in every measure not as the essences of all things, but as the
most superexcellent and most
universal cause of the essences of all others; whose virtue, because it is most
highly united in an essence, is
for that reason most highly most infinite and most manifold in efficacy.
8. Returning again (to this) let us say: that therefore most pure and absolute
being, which is simply being, is
primary and last. Because it is eternal and most present, for that reason it
encompasses and enters all
durations, as if existing at the same time as their center and circumferences.
Because it is most simple, for that
reason wholly within all and wholly outside, and for this reason it is an
intelligible sphere, whose center is
everywhere and circumferences nowhere. Because it is most actual and most
immutable, for that reason
remaining stable it grants all to move. Because it is most perfect and immense,
for that reason it is within all
things, not as included, outside of all things, not as excluded, above all things,
not as lifted up, below all
things, not as prostrated. But because it is most highly one and in every
measure, for that reason it is all in all
although all things be many and itself is not but one; and this, because
through the most simple unity, the most serene truth, it is every exemplarity and every communicability; and for this reason from Him and through Him and in Him are all things and this, because it is omnipotent, omniscient and in every measure good, which to see perfectly is to be blessed, as is said by Moses: Therefore show Thyself to be every good thing.

CHAPTER VI - ON THE SIGHT OF THE MOST BLESSED TRINITY IN HIS NAME, WHICH IS THE GOOD

1. After the consideration of essentials the eye of the intelligence is lifted up to survey the Most Blessed Trinity, as the other Cherub placed alongside the other. Moreover as being itself is the radical principle and name of the vision of essentials, through which the others become known; so the good itself is the most principle foundation of the contemplation of emanations.

2. Therefore see and attend since the best is simply that than which nothing better can be thought; and thus it is such, because it cannot be rightly thought to not to be, because being is entirely better than non being; thus it is, that it cannot rightly be thought, rather let it be thought as triune and one. For "the good is said to be diffusive of itself"; therefore the Most High Good is most highly diffusive of Itself. However the most hight diffusion cannot be, unless it be actual and intrinsic, substantial and hypostatic, natural and voluntary, liberal and necessary, unfailing and perfect. Therefore unless there be eternally in the Most High Good an actual and consubstantial production, and a hypostatis equally noble, as is one producing through the manner of generation and spiration - so that it be the eternal (production) of an eternally co-principating principle - so that it be beloved, co-beloved, begotten and spirated, that is the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; it would never be the Most High Good, because it would not diffuse itself most highly. For there is no diffusion in time into creatures except (when it is) central and/or punctual in respect to the immensity of eternal goodness; whence also can any diffusion be thought greater than those, namely these, in which diffusing itself it communicates to another its whole substance and nature. Therefore it would not be the Most High good, if in reality, or intellect it could be lacking (anything). Therefore if you can with the eye of your mind survey the purity of goodness, which is the pure act of the Principle loving in a charitable manner with a love, free and owed and commingled from both, which is the fullest diffusion in the manner
of nature and will, which is a diffusion in the manner of the Word, in which all things are said to be, and in the manner of the Gift, in whom all other gifts are given; (then) you can see, that through the most high communicability of the good the Trinity of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is necessary. In whom it is necessary on account of the Most High Goodness being the Most High Communicability, and from the Most High Communicability the Most High Consubstantiality, and from the Most High Consubstantiality the Most High Configurability, and from these the Most High Co-equality, and for this reason the Most High Co-eternity, and from all the aforesaid the Most High Co-intimacy, by which one is in the other necessarily through the Most High Circumincession and one works with the other through an in-every-measure indivision of substance and virtue and activity of the Most Blessed Trinity itself.

3. But when you contemplate these, see, that you do not consider yourself able to comprehend the incomprehensible. For in these six conditions you still have to consider what leads the eye of our mind vehemently into the stupor of admiration. For there is the Most High Communicability together with the property of the Persons, the Most High Consubstantiality together with the plurality of the hypostases, the Most High Configurability together with discrete personality, the Most High Co-equality together with order, the Most High Co-eternity together with emanation, the Most High Co-intimacy together with emission. Who at the sight of so great wonders does not rise up with others in admiration? But all these we most certainly understand to be in the Most Blessed Trinity, if we raise our eyes to the most superexcellent Goodness. For if there is a most high communication and true diffusion, there is a true origin and a true distinction; and because the whole is communicated, not the part; for that reason that which is given, is what is had, and it is the whole; therefore emanating and producing, they are both distinguished in properties, and are essentially one. Therefore because they are distinguished in properties, for that reason the have personal properties and a plurality of hypostates and an emanation of origin and and order not of posteriority, but of origin, and an emission not of local change, but by the gratuity of inspiration, on account of the authority of the one producing, which the one being sent has in respect to being sent. But because
they ar substantially one, for that reason it is proper, that there be a unity in essent and in form and dignity and eternity and existence and incircumscription. Therefore while you consider these things singly through themselves, you have that from which is the truth you contemplate; while comparing these one to another, you have that from which you are suspended into the highest admiration; and for that reason, as your mind ascends through admiration into admirable contemplation, these things must be considered at the same time.

4. For the Cherubim, who were looking at one another, also designate this. Nor was this free from mystery, because they looked backwards at each other in the face upon the propitiatory, to verify that which the Lord says in (the Gospel of) John: This is eternal life, to know Thee the only True God, and how Thou has sent Jesus Christ For we ought to admire not only the conditions of God, essential and personal in Himself, but also through comparison to the superwonderful union of God and man in the unity of the person of Christ.

5. For if you are a Cherub in contemplating the essentials of God, and your wonder, because at the same time the Divine Being is first and last, eternal and most present, most simple and greatest or incircumscribed, wholly everywhere and never comprehended, most actual and never moved, most perfect and having nothing superfluous nor diminished, and nevertheless immense and infinite without terminus, Most Highly One, and nevertheless in every measure, as having all things in Himself, as all virtue, all truth, all good; look back towards the propitiatory and wonder, that in Himself the First Principle has been joined with the last, God with the man formed on the sixth day, the Eternal One has been joined with temporal man, in the fullness of times born from the Virgin, the Most Simple with the most highly composite, the Most Actual with the one who has most highly suffered and died, the Most Perfect and Immense with the limited, the Most Highly One and in every measure with the individual composite and distinct from all others, that is with the Man Christ Jesus.

6. Moreover if you are the other Cherub by contemplating the things proper to the Persons, and you wonder, that communicability is together with property, consubstantiality together with plurality, configurability together with personality, co-equality together with order, co-eternity together with production, co-intimacy
together with emission, because the Son has been sent from the Father, and
the Holy Spirit from them both,
who nevertheless is with them and never recedes from them; look back upon
the propitiatory and wonder,
because in Christ there stands a personal union together with a trinity of
substances and a duality of natures;
there stands an in-every-measure consensus together with a plurality of wills,
there stands a co-predication of
God and man together with a plurality of properties, there stands co-adoration
together with a plurality of
nobilities, there stands a co-exaltation above all things together with a
plurality of dignities, there stands a
co-domination together with a plurality of powers.
7. Moreover in this consideration there is a perfection of the illumination of
the mind, while as in on the sixth
day one sees that man has been made after the image of God. For if the image
is an expressive similitude,
while our mind contemplates it in Christ the Son of God, who is the invisible
Image of God by nature, our
humanity so wonderfully exalted, so ineffably united, by seeing that at the
same time it is the first and last
One, most high and most deep, circumference and center, the Alpha and the
Omega, the caused and the
cause, the Creator and the creature, that is the book written inside and out; it
has already arrived at a certain
perfect thing, as one who arrives together with God at the perfection of his
illuminations on the sixth step as if
on the sixth day, nor does anything more ample now follow except the day of
rest, in which through an excess
of the mind the perspicacity of the human mind rests from every work, which
one accomplished.
CHAPTER VII - ON THE MENTAL AND MYSTICAL EXCESS, IN WHICH REST IS
GIVEN TO THE INTELLECT, BY AN AFFECTION PASSING WHOLLY INTO GOD
THROUGH EXCESS
1. Therefore with these six considerations having run out as the six steps of
the throne of the true Solomon, by
which one arrives at peace, where the true Pacifier rests in a pacifying mind as
if in the interior of Jerusalem;
as if also by six wings of the Cherub, by which the mind of the true
contemplative is able to be driven above
by a full brightening of supernal wisdom; as if also on the first six days, in
which the mind has to be exercised,
to arrive at last to the sabbath of quiet; afterwhich our mind has surveyed God
outside of Himself through
vestiges and in vestiges, within Himself through image and in image, above
Himself through a similitude of the
divine light glittering above us and in that light itself, according to that which
is possible according to the state of the way and the exercise of our mind; when one arrives so far on the sixth step to this, that in the First and Most High Principle and the Mediator of God and men, Jesus Christ, one gazes upon those things the like of which can in nowise be discovered among creatures, and which exceed every perspicacity of the human intellect: it follows, that this (mind) by gazing transcends and passes over not only this sensible world, but also its very self; in which transit Christ is the Way and the Gate, Christ is the Stair and the Vehicle as the propitiatory located above the ark of God and the Sacrament hidden from the ages.

2. Towards which propitiatory he who looks at it with a full conversion of face, by looking at him suspended upon the Cross through faith, hope and charity, devotion, admiration, exsultation, appreciation, praise and jubilation; makes the Passover, that is the transit, together with Him, to pass over the Red Sea through the rod of the Cross, from Egypt entering the desert, where he tastes the hidden bread, and rests together with Christ upon the funeral mound as if exteriorly dead, sensing, nevertheless, as much as is possible according to the state of the way, that there is said to the thief handing on a cross with Christ: Today you shall be with Me in Paradise.

3. Which also has been shown to blessed Francis, when in an excess of contemplation on the exalted mountaing - where those things, which have been written, he treated with his mind - there appeared the Seraph of six wings fastened upon a cross, as I and many others have heard about in the same place from his companion, who was with him at that time; where he passed over into God through an excess of contemplation; and has been placed as an example of perfect contemplation; as first he had been of action, as if another Jacob and Israel, so that God may invite all truly spiritual men through him to a transit of this kind and an excess of the mind more by example than by word.

4. Moreover in this transit, if one be perfect, it is proper that all intellectual activities be relinquished, and the whole apex of affection be transfered and transformed into God. However this is mystical and most secret, because no one knows it, except him who accepts it, nor does he accept it unless he be one who desires it, nor does he desire it unless he be one whom the fire of the Holy Spirit, which Chirst sent upon earth, inflamnes to
the marrow of his bones. And for that reason the Apostle says, that this
mystical wisdom has been revealed by
the Holy Spirit.
5. Therefore since for this reason there can be nothing by nature, a limited
amount by industry, a little by
investigation, and much byunction; little must be given to the tongue, and
most to internal gladness; little
must be given by word and by writing, and the whole by a gift of God, that is
by the Holy Spirit; little or
nothing must be given to the creature, and the whole to the creative Essence,
to the Father and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit, by saying with (St.) Dionysius (the Areopagite) to God
the Trinity: "O Trinity
superessential and super-God and super-best of the Christians, inspector of
Godly-wisdom, direct us into the
super-unknown and super-shining and most sublime vertex of mystical speech;
where the new and absolute
and ineffable (because they are super-shining) mysteries of theology are
hidden secretly in the greatest
obscurity of the silence that teaches a super-splendent darkness, because it is
the most super-manifest, and
that in which everything glitters, and (which) super-fulfills invisible intellects
with the splendors of invisible
super-goods". This to God. However to his friend these things are written, said
together with the former:
"Moreover you, O friend, concerning mystical visions, having been
strengthened on the journey, desert both
the senses and the intellectual activities, both sensibles and invisibles and
everything not a being and a being,
and unknowingly restore (yourself) to the unity, as is possible, of Him, who is
above every essence and
knowledge. For indeed deserting all things and absolved from all, you do
ascend by yourself and by (that
which is) unboundable by all and by an absolute excess of pure mind, to the
super-essential ray of divine
shadows".
6. Moreover if you seek, in what manner these things occur, interrogate grace,
not doctrine, desire, not
understanding; the groan of praying, not the study of reading; the spouse, not
the teacher; God, not man,
darkness, not brightness; not light, but the fire totally inflamming,
transferring one into God both by its
excessive unctions and by its most ardent affections. Who indeed is the God of
fire, and whose forge is in
Jerusalem, and Christ ignites this in the fervor, of His most ardent Passion,
which He alone truly perceived,
who said: My soul has chosen suspense, and my bones death. He who loves this
death can see God, because it is indubitably true: No man will see Me and live. Therefore let us die and step into the darkness, let us put on silence with its cares, and concupiscences and phantasms; let us pass over together with Christ Crucified from this world to the Father, that, by showing us the Father, we may say with Phillip: It suffices for us; let us hear with Paul: My grace is sufficient for you; let us exult with David saying: My flesh and my heart failed, God of my heart and my portion God forever. Blessed be the Lord forever, and let every people say: Fiat, Fiat. Amen.

Here ends The Journey of the Mind into God by Saint Bonaventure of Bagnoregio; translated from the Quarrachi Edition of the Opera Omnia S. Bonaventurae. This document was derived from the text file version available from the Christian Classics Ethereal Library at Calvin College. Edited slightly to correct a couple of typos, and to remove the in-text Latin citations.

Saint Bonaventure
Born 1221 at Bagnoregio, Tuscany, Italy; died on 15 July 1274 at Lyon, France. Doctor of the Church, Cardinal-Bishop of Albano, born Bagnoarea, Italy; died Lyons, France. Cured of an illness in his youth by Saint Francis, he entered the Order of Friars Minor, c.1243. He lectured at the University of Paris, 1248-1255. Elected Minister General of the order, he governed until 1273, when he was made Cardinal-Bishop of Albano. In this capacity he instituted needed reforms, settled the dispute between the Spirituales and Relaxati (contending groups of Friars Minor), revised the constitution of the order, and wrote a life of Saint Francis which was approved as authoritative at the chapter of Pisa, 1263. He was commissioned by Pope Gregory X to prepare the questions for discussion at the Fourteenth AEcumenical Council at Lyons, 1274, but he died while the council was still in session. Emblems: communion, ciborium, cardinal's hat, tongue of Saint Anthony of Padua. Canonized, 1482. Relics at Bagnoarea. Feast, Roman Calendar, 14 July

THE LOVE OF ETERNAL WISDOM
by, St. Louis De Montfort
AND EXCELLENCE OF ETERNAL WISDOM
1. Wisdom in reference to the Father
2. The activity of eternal Wisdom in souls

Prayer to Eternal Wisdom
O divine Wisdom, Lord of heaven and earth, I humbly beg pardon for my
audacity in attempting to speak
of your perfections, ignorant and sinful as I am. I beg you not to consider the
darkness of my mind or the
uncleanness of my lips unless it be to take them away with a glance of your
eyes and a breath of your mouth.
There is in you so much beauty and delight; you have shielded me from so
many evils and showered on
me so many favors, and you are moreover so little known and so much
slighted. How can I remain silent?
Not only justice and gratitude, but my own interests urge me to speak about
you, even though it be so
imperfectly. It is true, I can only lisp like a child, but then I am only a child,
anxious to learn how to speak
properly through my lisping, once I have attained the fullness of your age (cf.
Eph. 4:13).
I know there seems to be neither order nor sense in what I write, but because I
long so dearly to possess
you, I am looking for you everywhere, like Solomon, wandering in all
directions (Wisd. 8:18). If I am striving to
make you known in this world, it is because you yourself have promised that
all who explain you and make
you known will have eternal life (cf. Sir. 8:18).
Accept, then, my loving Lord, these humble words of mine as though they were
a masterly discourse.
Look upon the strokes of my pen as so many steps to find you and from your
throne above bestow your
blessings and your enlightenment on what I mean to say about you, so that
those who read it may be filled
with a fresh desire to love you and possess you, on earth as well as in heaven.
Admonitions of divine Wisdom to the rulers of this world
given in the sixth chapter of the "Book of Wisdom"
1. Wisdom is better than strength and prudence is better than courage.
2. Listen, therefore, kings, and understand. Learn, you judges of the nations.
3. Hear this, you who rule the people and boast of the large number of nations
subject to you.
4. Remember you have received your power from the Lord and your authority
from the Most High, who will
examine your works and scrutinize your thoughts.
5. For, though ministers of his kingdom, you have not judged fairly, nor
observed the law of justice, nor walked
according to his will.
6. He will appear to you terribly and swiftly, because those who rule others
will be judged severely.
7. For God has more compassion for the lowly and they are forgiven more
easily, but the mighty will be
punished mightily.
8. God shows no partiality; he does not stand in awe of anyone's greatness,
because he himself made both
the lowly and the great and he is concerned for all alike.
9. But the great are threatened with greater punishment.
10. To you then, rulers, my words are directed so that you may learn wisdom
and may not go astray.
11. For they who perform just deeds will be considered just and those who have
understood what I teach will
have a valid defence.
12. Therefore, desire ardently to know my words, love them and you will find
instruction in them.
13. Wisdom is resplendent and her beauty never fades. Those who love her will
have no trouble in recognizing
her; and those who seek her will find her.
14. She anticipates those who desire her and makes herself known first to
them.
15. He who rises early to look for her will not be disappointed, for she will be
found sitting at his gate.
16. To reflect on Wisdom is the highest prudence and he who foregoes sleep to
possess her will soon be
given repose.
17. For she goes around seeking those worthy of her, graciously shows her
ways to them, guides them and
provides for them with loving care.
18. The first step, then, towards acquiring Wisdom is a sincere desire for instruction; the desire for instruction is love; and love is the keeping of her laws.
19. Assiduous obedience to her laws assures a perfect purity of soul.
20. And perfect purity brings one close to God.
21. Thus the desire for Wisdom leads to the everlasting kingdom.
22. If then, rulers of nations, you delight in thrones and scepters, love Wisdom and you will reign eternally.
23. All you who rule over the peoples of the world, love the insight given by Wisdom.
24. I will tell you now what Wisdom is and how she came to be. I will not hide the secrets of God from you but I will trace her right from the beginning. I will throw light upon her and make her known and not hide the truth.
25. I will not imitate the man consumed with envy, for the envious have nothing in common with Wisdom.
26. Multitudes of wise men will bring salvation to the world, and a prudent king is a strong support for his people.
27. Accept, then, instruction from my words and you will draw profit from them.

Preliminary observations
I did not want, my dear reader, to mingle my poor words with the inspired words of the Holy Spirit. Yet I make bold to offer a few comments:
How gentle, attractive and approachable is eternal Wisdom who possesses such splendour, excellence and grandeur. He invites men to come to him because he wants to teach them the way to happiness. He is for ever searching for them and always greets them with a smile. He bestows blessings on them many times over and forestalls their needs in a thousand different ways, and even goes as far as to wait at their very doorstep to give them proofs of his friendship. Who could be so heartless as to refuse to love this gentle conqueror? How unfortunate are the rich and powerful if they do not love eternal Wisdom. How terrifying are the warnings he gives them, so terrifying that they cannot be expressed in human terms: "He will appear to you terribly and swiftly ... those who rule will be judged severely ... the mighty will be punished mightily ... the great are threatened with greater punishment" (Wisd. 6:6,7,9).
To these words can be added those he uttered after he became man: "Woe to you who are rich (Lk. 6:24) ... it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mat. 19; Mk. 10; Lk. 18).
So often were these last words repeated by divine Wisdom while on earth that the three evangelists handed them down without the least variation. They ought to make the rich weep and lament: "And now, you rich people, weep and wail over the miseries that are coming upon you" (Jas. 5:1).

But alas! they find their consolation (Lk. 6:24) here on earth; they are as though captivated by the riches and pleasures they enjoy and are blind to the evils that hang over their heads. Solomon promises that he will give a faithful and exact description of divine Wisdom and that neither envy nor pride - both contrary to love - can prevent him from making known this heaven-sent knowledge, and he has not the least fear that anyone will surpass him or equal him in knowledge (cf. Wisd. 6:24-26).

Following the example of this great man, I am going, in my simple way, to portray eternal Wisdom before, during and after his incarnation and show by what means we can possess and keep him.

But as I do not have Solomon's profound learning or his insights I have less to fear from pride and envy than from my incompetence and ignorance, which I trust, in your kindness, you will overlook.

CHAPTER 1.

TO LOVE AND SEEK DIVINE WISDOM WE NEED TO KNOW HIM

1. Our need to acquire knowledge of divine Wisdom

Can we love someone we do not even know? Can we love deeply someone we know only vaguely? Why is Jesus, the adorable, eternal and incarnate Wisdom loved so little if not because he is either too little known or not known at all?

Hardly anyone studies the supreme science of Jesus, as did St. Paul (Eph. 3:19). And yet this is the most noble, the most consoling, the most useful and the most vital of all sciences and subjects in heaven and on earth.

First, it is the most noble of all sciences because its subject is the most noble and the most sublime:

Wisdom uncreated and incarnate. He possesses in himself the fullness of divinity and humanity alike and all that is great in heaven and on earth, namely, all creatures visible and invisible, spiritual and corporal.

St. John Chrysostom says that our Lord is the summary of all God's works, the epitome of all the perfections to be found in God and in his creatures (cf. Col. 1:16; 2:9).

"Jesus Christ is everything that you can and should wish for. Long for him, seek for him, because he is
that unique and precious pearl for which you should be ready to sell everything you possess."
"Let the wise man boast no more of his wisdom nor the strong man of his strength, nor the rich man of his wealth. But if anyone wants to boast, let him boast only of understanding and knowing me and nothing else (Jer. 9:23-24)."
Nothing is more consoling than to know divine Wisdom. Happy are those who listen to him; happier still are those who desire him and seek him; but happiest of all are those who keep his laws.
Their hearts will be filled with that infinite consolation which is the joy and happiness of the eternal Father and the glory of the angels (cf. Prov. 2:1-9).
If only we knew the joy of a soul that perceives the beauty of divine Wisdom and is nourished with the milk of divine kindness, we would cry out with the bride in the Song of Songs: "Your love is better than wine" (Song 1:3) better by far than all created delights. This is especially true when divine Wisdom says to those who contemplate him, "Taste and see" (Ps. 33:9) eat and drink, be filled with my eternal sweetness (Song 5:1), for you will discover that conversing with me is in no way distasteful, that my companionship is never tedious and in me only will you find joy and contentment (Wisd. 8:16).
This knowledge of eternal Wisdom is not only the most noble and the most consoling of all, it is also the most useful and the most necessary since eternal life consists in knowing God and Jesus Christ, his Son (Jn. 17:3). Speaking to eternal Wisdom, the Wise man exclaims, "To know you is perfect righteousness and to know your justice and your power is the root of immortality" (Wisd. 15:3). If we really want to have eternal life let us learn all there is to know about eternal Wisdom.
If we wish to have roots of immortality deeply embedded in our heart we must have in our mind knowledge of eternal Wisdom. To know Jesus Christ incarnate Wisdom, is to know all we need. To presume to know everything and not know him is to know nothing at all.
Of what use is it for an archer to hit the outer part of a target if he cannot hit the centre? What good will it do us to know all the other branches of knowledge necessary for salvation if we do not learn the only essential one, the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, the centre towards which all the other branches of knowledge must tend? Although the great Apostle St. Paul was a man of such extensive knowledge and so well versed in
human learning, still he said that he did not know anything except Jesus Christ and him nailed to a cross (1 Cor. 2:2).
Let us then say with him, "I count as loss all the knowledge I have prized so highly until now when I compare it to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, my Saviour" (Phil. 3:7-8). Now I see and understand that this knowledge is so excellent, so captivating, so profitable, so admirable that I no longer take any interest in other branches of knowledge that I used to like so much. Everything else is so meaningless, so absurd and a foolish waste of time. "I say this to make sure that no one deceives you with beguiling words. Make sure that no one ensnares you with empty, rational philosophy" (Col. 2:4,8). I state that Jesus is the abyss of all knowledge so that you do not let yourself be deceived by the fine, glowing words of orators or by the specious subtleties of philosophers. "Grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18).
That we may all grow in the knowledge and grace of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, incarnate Wisdom, we are going to speak of him in the following chapters. But first, let us consider the different kinds of wisdom.
2. Definition and division of the subject
In the general sense of the term wisdom means a delectable knowledge, a taste for God and his truth.
There are several kinds of wisdom. First, true and false wisdom. True wisdom is a taste for truth without falsehood or deception. False wisdom is a taste for falsehood disguised as truth. This false wisdom is the wisdom or the prudence of the world, which the Holy Spirit divides into three classes: earthly, sensual, and diabolical.
True wisdom may be divided into natural and supernatural wisdom. Natural wisdom is the knowledge, in an outstanding degree, of natural things in their principles. Supernatural wisdom is knowledge of supernatural and divine things in their origin.
This supernatural wisdom is divided into substantial or uncreated Wisdom, and accidental or created wisdom. Accidental or created wisdom is the communication that uncreated Wisdom makes of himself to mankind. In other words, it is the gift of wisdom. Substantial or uncreated Wisdom is the Son of God, the second person of the most Blessed Trinity. In other words, it is eternal Wisdom in eternity or Jesus Christ in
time.
It is precisely about this eternal Wisdom that we are going to speak.
Starting with his very origin, we shall consider Wisdom in eternity, dwelling
in his Father's bosom and
object of his Father's love.
Next, we shall see him in time, shining forth in the creation of the universe.
Then we shall consider him in the deep abasement of his incarnation and his
mortal life; and then we shall
see him glorious and triumphant in heaven.
Finally we shall propose the means to acquire and keep him.
I leave to philosophers their useless philosophical arguments and to scientists
the secrets of their worldly
wisdom.
Let us now speak to chosen souls seeking perfection (1 Cor. 2:6) of true
wisdom, eternal Wisdom,
Wisdom uncreated and incarnate.
CHAPTER 2.
ORIGIN AND EXCELLENCE OF ETERNAL WISDOM
Here, with St. Paul, we must declare, "O the depth, the immensity and the
incomprehensibility of the
Wisdom of God" (Rom. 11:33) : Generationem ejus quis enarrabit? (Is. 53:8;
Acts 8:33). Who is the angel so
enlightened, who is the man rash enough as to attempt to give us an adequate
explanation of the origin of
eternal Wisdom? For here all human beings must close their eyes so as not to
be blinded by the vivid
brightness of his light.
All should be silent for fear of tarnishing his perfect beauty by attempting to
portray him.
Every mind should realize its inadequacy and adore, lest in striving to fathom
him, it be crushed by the
tremendous weight of his glory.
1. Wisdom in reference to the Father
Adapting himself to our weakness, the Holy Spirit offers this description of
eternal Wisdom in the Book of
Wisdom which he composed just for us.
"Eternal Wisdom is a breath of the power of God, a pure emanation of the
glory of the Almighty. Hence
nothing defiled gains entrance into him. He is the reflection of eternal light,
the spotless mirror of God's
majesty, the image of his goodness" (Wisd. 7:25,26).
He is the substantial and eternal idea of divine beauty which was shown to St.
John the Evangelist in his
ecstatic vision on the island of Patmos, when he exclaimed, "In the beginning
was the Word - the Son of God,
or eternal Wisdom - and the Word was in God and the Word was God" (Jn. 1:1).
This is the eternal Wisdom of which Solomon often speaks in his book (cf. Sir.
1:4,8; 24:14) when he says that Wisdom was created - that is, produced - from the very beginning before anything was made or even before the beginning of time. Speaking of himself, Wisdom says, "I was begotten from eternity, before the creation of the world. The depths did not exist as yet and I was already conceived" (Prov. 8:23,24).

God the Father was well pleased with the sovereign beauty of eternal Wisdom, his Son, throughout time and eternity, as he himself explicitly testified on the day of his Son's baptism and his transfiguration, "This is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased" (Mt. 17:5; cf. Mt. 3:17. Cf. Nos. 55, 98).

This splendour of dazzling and incomprehensible light of which the apostles caught a glimpse in the Transfiguration, filled them with delight and lifted them to the heights of ecstasy:

Illustre quiddam (cernimus)
Sublime, celsum, interminum,
Antiquius caelo et chao:
This eternal Wisdom is
Something resplendent,
Sublime, immense, and infinite,
More ancient than the universe.

My words fail to give even the faintest idea of his beauty and supreme gentleness, and fall infinitely short of his excellence: for who can ever form an adequate idea of him? Who could ever portray him faithfully? You alone, great God, know who he is and can reveal him to all you wish (cf. Mt. 11:27; Lk. 10:22).

2. The activity of eternal Wisdom in souls

This is how divine Wisdom himself describes in the twenty-fourth chapter of Ecclesiasticus the effects of his activity in souls. I shall not mingle my poor words with his for fear of diminishing their clarity and sublime meaning.

1. Wisdom will sing her own praises. She will be honoured in the Lord and will proclaim his glory before his own people.

2. In the assembly of the Most High she will open her mouth; she will glorify herself in the armies of the Lord.

3. She will be raised up in the midst of her own people and will be admired in the assembly of all the saints.

4. In the multitude of the elect she will be praised and will be blessed by those who are blessed by God. She will say:

5. I came forth from the mouth of the Most High; I was born before all
creatures.
6. I made an unquenchable light appear in the sky and I covered the whole earth like a mist.
7. I had my dwelling in the heights and my throne was in a pillar of cloud.
8. Alone I compassed the vault of heaven; I penetrated into the depths of the abyss; I walked on the waves of the sea,
9. and travelled all over the earth.
10. I held sway over every people and every nation.
11. By my power I have trodden underfoot the hearts of all men, great and small; and among all these things I searched for a resting-place and a dwelling in the heritage of the Lord.
12. Then the Creator of the universe commanded me and spoke to me: he who created me rested in my tent.
13. And he said to me: "Dwell in Jacob, let Israel be your heritage, and take root in my elect."
14. In the beginning, before all ages, he created me and through the ages I shall never cease to be, and in the holy tabernacle I ministered before him.
15. I fixed my abode in Sion; I found rest in the holy City, and Jerusalem became my domain.
16. I took root in the people whom the Lord had honoured, whose heritage is the portion of the Lord. I fixed my abode in the assembly of all the saints.
17. Like a cedar on Lebanon and like a cypress on Mount Sion I have grown tall.
18. I raised my branches high like a palm-tree in Engedi and like the rose-bushes of Jericho.
19. I grew tall like a beautiful olive-tree in the field, like a plane-tree planted along the road near the water.
20. I gave forth fragrance like cinnamon or the most precious balm; I gave forth perfume like the most exquisite myrrh.
21. I have filled my house with sweet fragrance as of galbanum, onycha, myrrh and with the sweet smell of incense; I exude the scent of the purest balm.
22. I spread out my branches like a terebinth and my branches are glorious and graceful.
23. I have grown sweet-smelling flowers like the vine; my blossoms are the fruits of glory and wealth.
24. I am the mother of pure love, of fear, of knowledge and of holy hope.
25. In me is all grace of the way and of the truth; in me is all hope of life and strength.
26. Come to me, all you who desire for me, and be filled with my fruits.
27. For my spirit is sweeter than honey and my inheritance more delightful than the sweetest honeycomb.
28. My renown will endure down through the ages.
29. Those who eat of me will hunger for more; those who drink of me will
thirst for more.
30. Those who listen to me will not be put to shame; those who work with me will not sin.
31. Those who make me known will possess eternal life.
32. All this is the book of life, the covenant of the Most High, and the knowledge of the truth."

Eternal Wisdom compares himself to all these trees and plants, characterised by their varied fruits and qualities which illustrate the great variety of states, functions and virtues of privileged souls. These resemble cedars by the loftiness of their hearts raised up towards heaven, or cypress trees by their constant meditation on death. They resemble palm-trees by their humble endurance of labour, or rose-bushes by martyrdom and the shedding of their blood. They resemble plane-trees planted along river banks, or terebinths with their branches spread out wide, signifying their great love for their fellow-men. They resemble all the other less noticeable but fragrant plants like balm, myrrh and others which symbolise all those retiring souls who prefer to be known by God more than by man.

Divine Wisdom shows himself to be the mother and source of all good and he exhorts all men to give up everything and desire him alone. Because, as St Augustine says, "he gives himself only to those who desire him and seek him with all the zeal such a lofty aim deserves."

In verses 30 and 31 divine Wisdom lists three degrees in holy living, the last of which constitutes perfection:
(1) Listen to God with humble submission;
(2) Act in him and through him with persevering fidelity;
(3) Seek to acquire the light and unction you need to inspire others with that love for Wisdom which will lead them to eternal life.

CHAPTER 3.
THE MARVELOUS POWER OF DIVINE WISDOM SHOWN IN THE CREATION OF THE WORLD AND MAN
1. In the creation of the world
Eternal Wisdom began to manifest himself outside the bosom of God the Father when, after a whole eternity, he made light, heaven and earth. St John tells us that everything was made through the Word, that is eternal Wisdom: "All things were made by him" (Jn. 1:3; cf. Heb. 1:2; Col. 1:16-17).

Solomon says that eternal Wisdom is the mother and maker of all things. Notice that Solomon does not call him simply the maker of the universe but also its mother because the maker does not love and care for
the work of his hands like a mother does for her child (Wisd. 7: 12,21).
After creating all things, eternal Wisdom abides in them to contain, maintain and renew them (Wisd. 1:7; 7:27). It was this supremely perfect beauty who, after creating the universe, established the magnificent order we find there. He it was who separated, arranged, evaluated, augmented and calculated everything.
He spread out the skies; he set the sun, the moon, the stars and the planets in perfect order. He laid the foundations of the earth and assigned limits and laws to the sea and depths to the ocean. He raised mountains and gave moderation to all things even to the springs of water. Finally, he says, "I was with God and I disposed everything with such perfect precision and such pleasing variety that it was like playing a game to entertain my Father and myself" (Prov. 8:30-31).
This mysterious game of divine Wisdom is clearly seen in the great variety of all he created. Apart from considering the different species of angels whose number is well-nigh infinite, and the varied brightness of the stars and the different temperaments of men, we are filled with wonderment at the changes we see in the seasons and the weather, at the variety of instincts in animals, at the different species of plants, at the diversified beauty of the flowers and the different tastes of the fruits. "Let him who is wise understand these things" (Hos. 14:10; cf. Jer. 9:12; Ps. 106:43). Who is the one to whom eternal Wisdom has communicated his wisdom? That person alone will understand these mysteries of nature. Eternal Wisdom has revealed these things to the saints, as we learn from their biographies. At times they were so astonished at the beauty, the harmony and the order that God has put into the smallest things, such as a bee, an ant, an ear of corn, a flower, a worm, that they were carried away in rapture and ecstasy.
2. In the creation of man
If the power and gentleness of eternal Wisdom were so luminously evident in the creation, the beauty and order of the universe, they shone forth far more brilliantly in the creation of man. For man is his supreme masterpiece, the living image of his beauty and his perfection, the great vessel of his graces, the wonderful treasury of his wealth and in a unique way his representative on earth. "By your wisdom you appointed man to have dominion over every creature you made" (Wisd. 9:2).
For the glory of this magnificent and powerful Worker I must describe the original beauty and excellence of
man as created by divine Wisdom. But the state of man's grievous sin has fallen upon me, poor miserable child of Eve, dulling my understanding to the point that I can describe only very imperfectly the work of man's creation.

We might say that eternal Wisdom made copies, that is, shining likenesses of his own intelligence, memory, and will, and infused them into the soul of man so that he might become the living image of the Godhead. In man's heart he enkindled the fire of the pure love of God. He gave him a radiant body and virtually enshrined within him a compendium of all the various perfections of angels, animals, and other created things.

Man's entire being was bright without shadow, beautiful without blemish, pure without stain, perfectly proportioned without deformity, flaw, or imperfection. His mind, gifted with the light of wisdom, understood perfectly both Creator and creature. The grace of God was in his soul making him innocent and pleasing to the most High God. His body was endowed with immortality. He had the pure love of God in his heart without any fear of death, for he loved God ceaselessly, without wavering and purely for God himself. In short, man was so godlike, so absorbed and rapt in God that he had no unruly passions to subdue and no enemies to overcome.

Such was the generosity shown to man by eternal Wisdom and such was the happiness that man enjoyed in his state of innocence.

But, alas, the vessel of the Godhead was shattered into a thousand pieces. This beautiful star fell from the skies. This brilliant sun lost its light. Man sinned, and by his sin lost his wisdom, his innocence, his beauty, his immortality. In a word, he lost all the good things he was given and found himself burdened with a host of evils. His mind was darkened and impaired. His heart turned cold towards the God he no longer loved.

His sin-stained soul resembled Satan himself. The passions were in disorder; he was no longer master of himself. His only companions are the devils who have made him their slave and their abode. Even creatures have risen up in warfare against him.

In a single instant, man became the slave of demons, the object of God's anger (Cf. Eph. 2:3), the prey of the powers of hell.

He became so hideous in his own sight that he hid himself for shame. He was
cursed and condemned to
death. He was driven from the earthly paradise and excluded from heaven. With no hope of future happiness, he was doomed to eke out a pitiable life upon an earth under curse (cf. Gen. 3:10; 17:23; 4:11,12). He would eventually die like a criminal and after death, together with all his posterity, share the devil's damnation in body and soul. Such was the frightful calamity which befell man when he sinned. Such was the well-deserved sentence God in his justice pronounced against him. Seeing himself in such a plight, Adam came close to despair. He could not hope for help from angels or any of God's creatures. Nothing could restore his privileges because he had been so eminently fair, so very magnificently fashioned when he was created, and now by his sin he had become so hideous, so repulsive. He saw himself banished from Paradise and from the presence of God. He could see God's justice pursuing him in all his descendants. He saw heaven closed and no one to open it; he saw hell open and no one to close it.

CHAPTER 4.
MARVELS OF WISDOM'S GOODNESS AND MERCY BEFORE HIS INCARNATION
Eternal Wisdom was deeply moved by the plight of Adam and all his descendants. He was profoundly distressed at seeing his vessel of honour shattered, his image torn to pieces, his masterpiece destroyed, his representative in this world overthrown. He listened tenderly to man's sighs and entreaties and he was moved with compassion when he saw the sweat of his brow, the tears in his eyes, the fatigue of his arms, his sadness of heart, his affliction of soul.

1. The Incarnation is decreed
I seem to see this lovable Sovereign convoking and assembling the most holy Trinity, a second time, so to speak, for the purpose of rehabilitating man in the state he formerly created him (cf. Gen. 1:26). We can picture a kind of contest going on in this grand council between eternal Wisdom and God's justice. I seem to hear eternal Wisdom, in his plea on behalf of man, admit that because of his sin man and all his descendants deserve to be condemned and to spend all eternity with the rebel angels. Still, man should be pitied because he sinned more through ignorance and weakness than through malice. He points out that it would be a pity if such an exquisite masterpiece were to become the slave of
the devil for ever, and millions
upon millions of men were to be lost eternally, through the sin of only one
man. Besides, eternal Wisdom
draws attention to the places left vacant by the fall of the apostate angels.
Would it not be fitting to fill these
places? And would not God receive great glory in time and in eternity if man
were saved?
It seems to me that I hear the God of justice replying that the sentence of death
and eternal damnation has
been pronounced against man and his descendants, and it must be carried out
without pardon or mercy, just
as happened in the case of Lucifer and his followers. Man has shown himself
ungrateful for the gifts he
received, has followed the devil in pride and disobedience and should
therefore follow him in his punishment,
for sin must necessarily be punished.
Eternal Wisdom seeing that nothing on earth can expiate man's sin, that
nothing can satisfy divine justice
and appease God's anger and still, wishing to save unfortunate man whom he
cannot help loving, finds a
wonderful way of accomplishing this.
Wonder of wonders! With boundless and incomprehensible love, this tender-
hearted Lord offers to comply
with his justice, to calm the divine anger, to rescue us from the slavery of the
devil and from the flames of hell,
and to merit for us eternal happiness.
His offer is accepted; a decision is reached and made. Eternal Wisdom, the Son
of God, will become
man at a suitable time and in determined circumstances. For about four
thousand years - from the creation of
the world and Adam's sin until the Incarnation of divine Wisdom - Adam and
his descendants were subject to
death, just as God had decreed. But in view of the Incarnation of the Son of
God, they received the graces
they needed to obey his commandments and do salutary penance for any they
might have transgressed. If
they died in the state of grace and in God's friendship, their souls went to
Limbo, there to await their Saviour
and Deliverer who would open the gates of heaven for them.
2. The time before the Incarnation
During the whole time preceding his Incarnation, eternal Wisdom proved in a
thousand ways his
friendship for men and his great desire to bestow his favors on them and to
converse with them. "My delight
is to be with the children of men" (Prov. 8:31). He went about seeking those
worthy of him (Wisd. 6:16), that is
those worthy of his friendship, his precious gifts, his very person. He passed
through different nations, making them prophets and friends of God (Wisd. 7:27; cf. 7:14). He it was who instructed all the holy patriarchs, all the friends of God, all the saints and prophets of the old and new testaments (Wisd. 7).

This same Wisdom inspired men of God and spoke by the mouths of the prophets. He directed their ways and enlightened them in their doubts. He upheld them in their weakness and freed them from all harm.

This is how the Holy Spirit tells it in the tenth chapter of the Book of Wisdom (Wisd. 10:1-21).

1. It was Wisdom who safeguarded Adam, the first man, created alone to be the father of all men.
2. He rescued him from his sin and gave him power to control and rule over all things.
3. When the sinful Cain in anger withdrew from Wisdom, he perished because through his fury he became the murderer of his brother.
4. When the Deluge flooded the earth, because of him, it was Wisdom again who saved it, piloting the just man Noah in a frail wooden ark.
5. When the nations conspired together to do evil, Wisdom discerned the just man, Abraham, preserved him in innocence before God and kept him resolute in overcoming the pity he felt for his son, Isaac.
6. Wisdom rescued the righteous man, Lot, when he fled from the company of wicked men who perished as fire descended upon the Five Cities.
7. Evidence of their wickedness still remains - a smoking wasteland, plants bearing fruit that never ripen, and a pillar of salt standing as a monument to an unbelieving soul.
8. For those who neglected to see Wisdom were not only kept from knowledge of good, but they also left to mankind a memorial of their folly, and so their crime could never remain hidden.
9. But Wisdom delivered those who served him from all evils.
10. When the just man Jacob fled from the wrath of his brother Esau, Wisdom guided him along straight paths and showed him the kingdom of God. God gave him knowledge of holy things, prospered him in his labours and increased the fruits of his work.
11. He stood by him against the greed of defrauders and made him rich.
12. He protected him from his enemies and saved him from seducers. He gave him victory in his arduous struggle so that he might know that Wisdom is mightier than anything.
13. He did not abandon Joseph, the just man, when he was old, but delivered him from the hands of
sinners and went down with him into the well.
14. He did not desert him in his chains until he brought him the scepter of
royalty and authority over his
oppressors. He showed those who had defamed him to be liars and gave him an
eternal renown.
15. He liberated a holy people and a blameless race, the Hebrews, from a
nation of oppressors.
16. He entered the soul of God's servant, Moses, and withstood fearsome kings
with signs and wonders.
17. He gave the holy ones the reward of their labours, led them along a perfect
way, and became a shelter
for them by day and shed a starry light upon them by night.
18. He brought them across the Red Sea and led them through the deep waters.
19. He submerged their enemies in the sea and gathered his own people up
from the depths of the sea.
Thus he carried off the spoils of the wicked.
20. They extolled you in their songs, O Lord, and together praised your
conquering hand.
21. For Wisdom opened the mouths of the dumb and made the tongues of the
babes speak with fluency.
In the next chapter of the Book of Wisdom (Wisd. 11) the Holy Spirit describes
the various evils from
which eternal Wisdom delivered Moses and the Israelites during the time they
lived in the desert. To this we
may add those who were delivered from great dangers by eternal Wisdom in
the Old and New Testaments.
Among them were Daniel who was freed from the lions' den, Susanna from the
false crime she was accused
of, the three young men from the furnace in Babylon, St Peter from prison, St
John from the cauldron of boiling
oil and numberless martyrs and confessors from the physical torments they
were made to suffer and the
calumnies which blackened their good name. All these were delivered and
healed by eternal Wisdom. "O
Lord, those who have pleased you from the beginning were healed by Wisdom
(Wisd. 9:19).
Conclusion
And now let us proclaim: "A thousand times happy is the man into whose soul
Wisdom has entered to
have his abode! No matter what battles he has to wage, he will emerge
victorious. No matter what dangers
threaten him, he will escape unharmed. No matter what sorrows afflict him,
he will find joy and consolation.
No matter what humiliations are heaped upon him, he will be exalted and
glorified in time and throughout
eternity."
CHAPTER 5.
MARVELOUS EXCELLENCE OF ETERNAL WISDOM

In the eighth chapter of the Book of Wisdom, the Holy Spirit shows the excellence of eternal Wisdom in terms so sublime and yet so clear that we need only quote them here, adding a few reflections.

1. "Wisdom reaches mightily from one end of the earth to the other and orders all things graciously."

Nothing is so gracious as eternal Wisdom. Of his very nature he is gracious without bitterness; gracious to those who love him, never showing displeasure; gracious in his conduct, never showing severity. He is so gentle and unobtrusive that you might often think that he is not present when you meet with accidents and contradictions. But, possessed of invincible power, he quietly but effectively brings all things to a happy issue in ways unknown to men. After his example, the wise man should be graciously firm and firmly gracious - suaviter fortis et fortiter suavis.

2. "From my youth I have loved and sought him and desired to take him for my inseparable companion."

Whoever wishes to find this precious treasure of Wisdom should, like Solomon, search for him (a) early and, if possible, while still young; (b) purely and spiritually as a chaste young man seeks a bride; (c) unceasingly, to the very end, until he has found him. It is certain that eternal Wisdom loves souls so much that he even espouses them, contracting with them a true, spiritual marriage which the world cannot understand. History furnishes us with examples of this.

3. "Wisdom shows his glorious origin by being so intimately in union with God and by being loved by him who is Lord of all."

Wisdom is God himself - such is his glorious origin. God the Father has testified that he is pleased with him proving how much Wisdom is loved (Cf. Chapter One and No. 98).

4. "Wisdom is the teacher of the knowledge of God and director of all his works."

Eternal Wisdom alone enlightens every man that comes into this world (Jn. 1:9). He alone came from heaven to teach the secrets of God (Cf. Jn. 1:18; Mt. 11:27; 1 Cor. 2:10). We have no real teacher (Mt. 23:8,10) except the incarnate Wisdom, whose name is Jesus Christ. He alone brings all the works of God to perfection, especially the saints, for he shows them what they must do and teaches them to appreciate and put into practice all he has taught them.

5. "If it is riches we seek in this life, who is richer than divine Wisdom who
created all things?"
6. "If the mind of man can produce things, who is more able than the fashioner of everything that exists?"
7. "If someone loves holiness, again the great virtues are the handiwork of Wisdom, for he teaches temperance and prudence, justice and fortitude, and nothing in this life is more useful than these."
Solomon clearly shows that since we should love Wisdom alone, then from Wisdom alone we should expect all things - material goods, knowledge of nature's secrets, all spiritual good, the theological and cardinal virtues.
8. "If anyone desires knowledge, eternal Wisdom knows the past and can forecast the future. He understands the subtilities of speech and the lessons of parables. He recognizes signs and wonders and knows all that is going to happen as seasons and ages pass by."
If anyone desires to possess a deep, holy and special knowledge of the treasures of grace and nature, and not merely dry, common and superficial knowledge, he must make every effort to acquire Wisdom. Without him, man is nothing in the sight of God, no matter how learned he may appear in the eyes of men. "He will count for nothing" (Wisd. 3:17).
9. "I therefore resolved to take him as my companion in life, knowing that he would share his goods with me and be my consolation in my cares and sorrows."
Eternal Wisdom is so rich and generous; how can anyone who possesses him be poor? He is so gentle, attractive and tender; how can anyone who possesses him be unhappy? But among all those who seek eternal Wisdom how many can honestly say with Solomon, "I have resolved to possess him"? The majority of men do not make such a resolution with real sincerity. Their decisions are mere wishful thinking or at best weak and wavering resolves. That is why they never find eternal Wisdom.
10. "Through him, I shall be acclaimed among the people and, although still a youth, honoured by the elders."
11. "I shall be considered shrewd when I sit in judgment. The most powerful will be surprised when they see me and princes will show their admiration for me."
12. "When I am silent, they will wait for me to speak; when I speak, they will pay attention to what I say. If I speak at some length, they will place their hands on their lips."
13. "He it is who will give me immortality, and through him I shall leave an everlasting remembrance to
those who come after me."
14. "I shall govern people through him and nations shall be my subjects."
St Gregory has this comment to make on Solomon's self-praise, "Those whom
God has chosen to write
his sacred words are filled with the Holy Spirit. In a way, they seem to rise
above themselves and enter into
the very one who possesses them. Thus they become mouthpieces of God
himself, for they are concerned
with God alone in everything they say, and they speak of themselves as though
speaking of someone else."
15. "The most formidable kings shall be afraid when they hear of me. I shall
show myself kind to my
people and valiant in war."
16. "When I go home, I shall be at my ease with Wisdom, for his conversation
is never disagreeable nor his
company unpleasant. With him there is only contentment and joy."
17. "I thought about these things and I reflected in my heart that immortality
is found in union with Wisdom."
18. "I found pure contentment in his friendship, inexhaustible wealth in his
accomplishments, understanding
in his teaching and conversation, and great joy listening to his counsels; and
so I went about seeking him
everywhere to make him my companion."
After summing up his previous commentary, Solomon draws this conclusion:
"I went about seeking for
eternal Wisdom in all directions." To possess him we must seek ardently; in
other words, we must be ready
to give up everything, to suffer everything, in order to obtain possession of
him. Only a few find him because
only a few look for him in a manner worthy of him.
In the seventh chapter of the Book of Wisdom, the Holy Spirit speaks of the
excellence of eternal Wisdom
in these terms: "In Wisdom there is a spirit that is intelligent, holy, unique,
fruitful, subtle, eloquent, active,
unsullied, lucid, gentle, benevolent, keen, irresistible, beneficent, kindly, firm,
unfailing, unperturbed,
all-powerful, all-seeing, possessing every spirit, understandable, pure and
subtle. For Wisdom is more active
than any active thing. He is so pure he penetrates all things" (Wisd. 7:22-24).
"Wisdom is an infinite treasure for men. Those who have utilized this treasure
have become God's friends,
and praiseworthy for their gifts of knowledge."
After reading such powerful but tender words which the Holy Spirit uses to
show the beauty, the
excellence and the treasures of eternal Wisdom, we cannot but love him and
search for him with all our
strength. All the more so since he is an inexhaustible source of riches for man
who was made for him and
infinitely eager to give himself to man.

CHAPTER 6.

EARNEST DESIRE OF DIVINE WISDOM TO GIVE HIMSELF TO MEN

The bond of friendship between eternal Wisdom and man is so close as to be
beyond our understanding.

Wisdom is for man and man is for Wisdom. "He is an infinite treasure for
man," (Wisd. 7:14) and not for
angels or any other creatures.

Wisdom's friendship for man arises from man's place in creation, from his
being an abridgement of eternal
Wisdom's marvels, his small yet ever so great world, his living image and
representative on earth (cf. Nos.
35-38). Since Wisdom, out of an excess of love, gave himself up to death to
save man, he loves man as a
brother, a friend, a disciple, a pupil, the price of his own blood and co-heir of
his kingdom. For man to withhold his heart from Wisdom or to wrench it away
from him would constitute an outrage.

1. Eternal Wisdom's letter of love

This eternal beauty, ever supremely loving, is so intent on winning man's
friendship that for this very
purpose he has written a book in which he describes his own excellence and
his desire for man's friendship.

This book reads like a letter written by a lover to win the affections of his
loved one, for in it he expresses such
ardent desires for the heart of man, such tender longings for man's friendship,
such loving invitations and
promises, that you would say he could not possibly be the sovereign Lord of
heaven and earth and at the
same time need the friendship of man to be happy.

In his pursuit of man, he hastens along the highways, or scales the loftiest
mountain peaks, or waits at the
city gates, or goes into the public squares and among the gatherings of people,
proclaiming at the top of his
voice, "You children of men, it is you I have been calling so persistently; it is
you I am addressing; it is you I
desire and seek; it is you I am claiming. Listen, draw close to me, for I want to
make you happy" (Prov. 8:4).

And the better to attract men, Wisdom says to them, "It is through me and
through my grace that kings
reign, princes rule, monarchs and sovereigns bear the scepter and crown, I
inspire legislators with the ability
to enact just laws for the good of their people. I give magistrates the courage
to administer justice fairly and
fearlessly."

"I love those who love me and those who seek me diligently find me," and in
finding me they will find good
things in abundance. "For riches, glory, honours, dignities, real pleasure and true virtue are found in me; and it is far better for a man to possess me than to possess all the gold and silver, all the precious stones, and all the wealth of the whole universe. Those who come to me, I will lead along the paths of justice and prudence. I will enrich them with the inheritance due to rightful children and fulfill their greatest desires (cf. Prov. 8:15-21). Rest assured, it is my greatest pleasure and purest delight to converse and to abide with the children of men" (cf. Prov. 8:31).

"And now, my children, listen to me. Happy are those who keep my ways. Hear my instructions, be wise and do not ignore them. Happy is the man who listens to me, watching at my gates every day, waiting beside my door. He who finds me finds life and obtains salvation from the Lord, but he who sins against me, wounds his own soul. All who hate me love death" (Prov. 8:32-36). Even though eternal Wisdom has spoken so kindly and so reassuringly to win the friendship of men, he still fears that they, filled with awe at his glorious state and sovereign majesty, will not dare approach him. That is why he tells them that "he is easily accessible, is quickly recognized by those who love him and is found by those who seek him; that he hastens to meet those who desire him and that anyone who rises early to look for him will have no trouble, for he will find him sitting at his door, waiting for him" (Wisd. 6:13b-15).

2. Incarnation, Death and the Eucharist

Finally, in order to draw closer to men and give them a more convincing proof of his love, eternal Wisdom went so far as to become man, even to become a little child, to embrace poverty and to die upon a cross for them. How many times while here on earth could he be heard pleading, "Come to me, come to me, all of you. Do not be afraid, it is I. Why are you afraid? I am just like you; I love you. Are you afraid because you are sinners? But they are the very ones I am looking for; I am the friend of sinners. If it is because you have strayed from the fold through your own fault, then I am the good shepherd. If it is because you are weighted down with sin, covered with grime and utterly dejected, then that is just why you should come to me for I will unburden you, purify you and console you."

Eternal Wisdom, on the one hand, wished to prove his love for man by dying in his place in order to save
him, but on the other hand, he could not bear the thought of leaving him. So he devised a marvelous way of dying and living at the same time, and of abiding with man until the end of time. So, in order fully to satisfy his love, he instituted the sacrament of Holy Eucharist and went to the extent of changing and overturning nature itself.

He does not conceal himself under a sparkling diamond or some other precious stone, because he does not want to abide with man in an ostentatious manner. But he hides himself under the appearance of a small piece of bread - man's ordinary nourishment - so that when received he might enter the heart of man and there take his delight. Ardenter amantium hoc est - Those who love ardently act in this way. "O eternal Wisdom," says a saint, "O God who is truly lavish with himself in his desire to be with man."

3. The ingratitude of those who refuse
How ungrateful and insensitive we would be if we were not moved by the earnest desire of eternal Wisdom, his eagerness to seek us out and the proofs he gives us of his friendship!
How cruel we would be, what punishment would we not deserve even in this world, if, instead of listening to him, we turn a deaf ear; if, instead of loving him, we spurn and offend him.
The Holy Spirit tells us, "Those who neglected to acquire Wisdom not only inherited ignorance of what is good, but they actually left in the world a memorial of their folly in that their sins could not go unnoticed" (Wisd. 10:8).
Those who during their lifetime do not strive to acquire Wisdom suffer a triple misfortune. They fall (a) into ignorance and blindness, (b) into folly, (c) into sin and scandal.
But how unhappy they will be at the door of death when, despite themselves, they hear Wisdom reproach them, "I called you and you did not answer (Prov. 1:24). All the day long I held out my hands to you and you spurned me. Sitting at your door, I waited for you but you did not come to me. Now it is my turn to deride you (Prov. 1:26). No longer do I have ears to hear you weeping, eyes to see your tears, a heart to be moved by your sobs, or hands to help you."
How great will be their misery in hell! Read what the Holy Spirit himself has to say about the miseries, the wailings, the regrets and the despair of the fools in hell who, all too late, realize their folly and misfortune in rejecting the eternal Wisdom of God. "They are now beginning to speak
sensibly - but they are in hell" (Wisd. 5:14).
4. Conclusion
Above all else let us seek and long for divine Wisdom. "All other things that are desired are not to be compared with Wisdom" (Prov. 3:15). And again, "Nothing that you desire can be compared with him" (Prov. 8:11). You may desire the gifts of God and even heavenly treasures, but if you do not desire Wisdom you desire always something of far less worth.
If only we could realize what Wisdom actually is, i.e. an infinite treasure made for man - and I must confess that what I have said about him really amounts to nothing at all - we would be longing for him night and day. We would fly as fast as we could to the ends of the earth, we would cheerfully endure fire and sword, if need be, to merit this infinite treasure. But we must beware of choosing a wrong wisdom, because there is more than one kind.

CHAPTER 7.

CHOICE OF TRUE WISDOM

God himself has his Wisdom, the one and only true Wisdom which we should love and seek as a great treasure. The corrupt world also has its wisdom which must be condemned and detested, for it is evil and destructive. Philosophers also have their wisdom which must be spurned as useless for it can often endanger our salvation.
So far we have been speaking of God's wisdom to those who are spiritually mature, as the Apostle calls them (cf. 1 Cor. 2:6), but lest they be deceived by the false glitter of worldly wisdom, let us unmask its hypocrisy and malice.
1. Wisdom of the world
The wisdom of the world is that of which it is said, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise (1 Cor. 1:19; cf. Is. 29:14), i.e. those whom the world calls wise." "The wisdom of the flesh is an enemy of God" (Rom. 8:7), and does not come from above. It is earthly, devilish and carnal (Jas. 3:15). This worldly wisdom consists in an exact conformity to the maxims and fashions of the world; a continual inclination towards greatness and esteem; and a subtle and endless pursuit of pleasure and self-interest, not in an uncouth and blatant way by scandalous sin, but in an astute, discreet, and deceitful way. Otherwise the world would no longer label it wisdom but pure licentiousness.
In the opinion of the world, a wise man is one with a keen eye to business;
who knows how to turn
everything to his personal profit without appearing to do so. He excels in the
art of duplicity and well-concealed
fraud without arousing suspicion. He thinks one thing and says or does
another. Nothing concerning the
graces and manners of the world is unknown to him. He accommodates himself
to everyone to suit his own
end, completely ignoring the honour and interests of God. He manages to make
a secret but fatal
reconciliation of truth and falsehood, of the gospel and the world, of virtue
and sin, of Christ and Belial. He
wishes to be considered an honest man but not a devout man, and most readily
scorns, distorts and
condemns devotions he does not personally approve of. In short, a man is
worldly-wise who, following solely
the lead of his senses and human reasoning, poses as a good Christian and a
man of integrity, but makes
little effort to please God or atone by penance for the sins he has committed
against him.
The worldly man bases his conduct on personal honour, on "What will people
say?", on convention, on
high living, on self-interest, on ceremonious manners, and on witty
conversation. These seven principles are
the irreproachable supports on which, he believes, he can safely depend to
enjoy a peaceful life.
The world will canonise him for such virtues as courage, finesse, tactfulness,
shrewdness, gallantry,
politeness and good humour. It stigmatizes as serious offenses,
insensitiveness, stupidity, poverty,
boorishness and bigotry.
He obeys as faithfully as he can the commandments which the world gives
him:
You shall be well acquainted with the world.
You shall be respectable.
You shall be successful in business.
You shall hold on to whatever is yours.
You shall rise above your background.
You shall make friends for yourself.
You shall frequent fashionable society.
You shall seek the good life.
You shall not be a kill-joy.
You shall not be singular, uncouth or over-pious.
Never has the world been so corrupt as it is now, for never has it been so
cunning, so wise in its own way,
and so crafty. It cleverly makes use of the truth to foster untruth, virtue to
justify vice, and the very maxims of
Jesus Christ to endorse its own so that even those who are wisest in the sight
of God are often deceived. "Infinite is the number of these men, wise in the sight of the world but foolish in the eyes of God" (Eccles. 1:15).

Earthly wisdom of which St James speaks, is love for the things of this world. Worldly men secretly subscribe to this wisdom when they set their hearts on worldly possessions and strive to become rich. They institute court proceedings and engage in needless disputes to acquire wealth or hold on to it. Most of the time they are thinking, speaking, acting with the sole aim of acquiring or keeping some temporal possession. They pay little or no attention to their eternal salvation or to the means of saving their souls, such as Confession, Holy Communion, prayer, etc.; except in an offhand way out of routine, once in a while, and for the sake of appearances.

The wisdom of the flesh is the love of pleasure. This is the wisdom shown by the worldly-wise who seek only the satisfaction of the senses. They want to have a good time. They shun everything that might prove unpleasant or mortifying for the body, such as fasting, and other austerities. Usually they think only of eating, drinking, playing, laughing, enjoying life and having a good time. They must always be comfortable and insist on having entertaining pastimes, the best of food and good company. They regale themselves with all these pleasures without the least scruple, with no disapproval from the world and no inconvenience to their health. Then they can go looking for some broad-minded confessor (that is how they describe lax confessors who shirk their duty) to obtain from him on easy terms the peaceful sanction for their soft and effeminate way of living and a generous pardon for their sins. I say "on easy terms" because these worldly people usually want as a penance only a few prayers or a small offering to the poor.

They detest anything that could possibly cause them any bodily discomfort. Diabolical wisdom is the love and esteem of honours. This is the wisdom of the worldly-wise who, secretly, of course, long for distinctions, honours, dignities and high offices. They strive to be seen, esteemed, praised and applauded by men. In their studies, their work, their undertakings, their words and actions, all they want is the esteem and praise of men, to be reputed as devout or learned people, as great leaders, eminent lawyers, men of great and distinguished merit or deserving of high consideration. They
cannot bear insult or blame and so they hide their shortcomings and parade their better qualities.

We must, like our Lord Jesus Christ, incarnate Wisdom, detest and condemn these three kinds of false wisdom if we are to possess the true one, which is not self-seeking, not found in the world nor in the heart of those who lead a comfortable life, and which loathes everything that men consider great and noble.

2. Natural wisdom
Besides worldly wisdom, which is pernicious and must be condemned, there is the natural wisdom of philosophers.

It was this natural wisdom that the Egyptians and Greeks eagerly sought for, "The Greeks look for wisdom" (1 Cor. 1:22). Those who had acquired this wisdom were called magi or wise men. This wisdom consists in an eminent knowledge of nature in its primary elements. It was given in full to Adam before the Fall. It was conferred on Solomon, and down through the ages many great men have received it, as history testifies.

Philosophers boast that their wisdom is acquired through philosophical argumentation. Alchemists boast of cabalistic secrets for finding the philosopher's stone in which, they imagine, this wisdom is to be found.

It is true that scholastic philosophy, when studied in a truly Christian way, develops the mind and enables it to understand the higher sciences, but it will never confer that so-called natural wisdom which the ancients prided themselves on possessing.

The science of alchemists, which purports to teach that natural bodies can be reduced to their basic principles, is still more worthless and dangerous. This science, although valid in itself, has duped and deceived multitudes of people regarding the end it proposes to attain. Judging by my own experience, I am sure that the devil is using this false science to cause a loss of money and time, as well as grace, and even the soul itself, under the pretext of finding the philosopher's stone. No other science claims to accomplish such great effects by such obvious means.

This science claims to produce the philosopher's stone or a powder (which they call "projection") which, when thrown upon any metal in a liquid state, will change it into silver or gold, which will restore health, cure illnesses, even prolong life, and effect countless marvels which ignorant people believe are divine and miraculous.
There is a group of people who consider themselves experts in this science and who are called "Cabalists" and these keep such a close guard on the hidden mysteries of this science that they would rather lose their life than reveal its so-called secrets. They justify what they teach by:

(1) The history of Solomon, whom they firmly believe had been given the secret of the philosopher's stone, and as proof they produce a secret book which is false and insidious, entitled "The Clavicle of Solomon".

(2) The history of Esdras, to whom God gave a heavenly liquid to drink and which gave him "wisdom", as is related in the seventh book of Esdras.

(3) The history of Raymond Lully and of several great philosophers who say they have found this philosopher's stone.

(4) Finally, the better to cover their imposture with a cloak of piety, they call it a gift of God, which is given only to those who have persevered in asking for it and who have merited it by their works and prayers.

I have given an account of the fantasies or illusions of this futile science so that like many others you may not be deceived. I know that some who, after having spent so much money and wasted so much time, under the most laudable and pious pretexts in the world and in a most devoted manner, have finally regretted everything and confessed their pretense and their delusions.

I do not admit that the philosopher's stone is a possibility. A learned man named Del Rio is certain it is and has given proofs; others deny it. Be that as it may, it is not befitting, it is even dangerous, for a Christian to occupy himself in seeking it. It would be an insult to Jesus Christ, Wisdom incarnate, in whom are found all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge of God (Col. 2:3) as well as every gift of nature, grace and glory. It implies disobedience to the Holy Spirit who tells us in Ecclesiasticus 3: "Do not seek what is beyond your capabilities" (Sir. 3:22).

3. Conclusion
So let us remain with Jesus, the eternal and incarnate Wisdom. Apart from him, there is nothing but aimless wandering, untruth and death. "I am the way, I am the truth, I am the life" (Jn. 14:6). Now let us see the effects of Wisdom in souls.

CHAPTER 8.
MARVELOUS EFFECTS OF WISDOM IN THE SOULS OF THOSE WHO POSSESS HIM
Eternal Wisdom, ever transcendent in beauty, by nature loves everything that is good, especially the good of man (Wisd. 7:22), and consequently nothing gives him more pleasure than to communicate himself. That is why the Holy Spirit tells us that Wisdom is for ever seeking throughout the world for souls worthy of him (Wisd. 6:17), and he fills these holy souls with his presence making them "friends of God and prophets" (Wisd. 7:27).

In former times he entered into the soul of God's servant Moses and filled him with abundant light to see great things, and endowed him with prodigious power to work miracles and gain victories. "He entered the soul of the servant of God and withstood fearsome kings with signs and wonders" (Wisd. 10:16).

When divine Wisdom enters a soul, he brings all kinds of good things with him and bestows vast riches upon that soul. "All good things came to me along with him and untold riches from his hand" (Wisd. 7:11).

This is Solomon's own testimony to the truth after he had received Wisdom. Among the countless effects eternal Wisdom produces in souls, often in such a secret way that the soul is not aware of them, the most usual are the following:

(1) Eternal Wisdom communicates his Spirit of enlightenment to the soul that possesses him, "I prayed, and understanding was given to me. I pleaded and the spirit of wisdom came upon me" (Wisd. 7:7). This subtle and penetrating spirit (cf. Wisd. 7:22-24) enables a man, as it enabled Solomon, to judge all things with keen discernment and deep penetration. "Because of Wisdom, who communicated his spirit to me, I shall be found keen in judgment and even the great shall be surprised in my presence" (Wisd. 8:11).

Eternal Wisdom communicates to man the great science of holiness as well as the natural sciences, and even the most secret ones when they are needed. "If anyone desires deep knowledge, eternal Wisdom knows the past and can forecast the future. He understands the subtleties of speech and the lessons of parables" (Wisd. 8:8). To Jacob he gave the science of the saints (Wisd. 10:10). To Solomon he gave a true knowledge of the whole of nature (Wisd. 7:17). He revealed to him countless secrets that no one before him had ever known (Wisd. 7:21).

From this infinite source of light the great Doctors of the Church, like St Thomas (as he himself testifies) drew that eminent knowledge for which they are renowned. Note that this
enlightened understanding given by eternal Wisdom is not dry, barren and unspiritual, but radiating splendour, unction, vigour and devotion. It moves and satisfies the heart at the same time as it enlightens the mind. (2) Wisdom gives man not only light to know the truth but also a remarkable power to impart it to others. "Wisdom has the voice to convey knowledge" (Wisd. 1:7). Wisdom knows what we want to say and communicates to us the art of saying it well, for "he opened the mouths of those who were dumb and made the tongues of babies eloquent" (Wisd. 10:21). He cured Moses of his impediment of speech (cf. Ex. 4:10-12). He imparted his words to the prophets, enabling them "to root up and to pull down, to destroy and to demolish, to build and to plant" (Jer. 1:10), although they acknowledged that left to themselves they could speak no better than children (Jer. 1:6). It was eternal Wisdom who gave the apostles the facility they had to preach the gospel everywhere and to proclaim the wonderful works of God (Acts 2:11). "He made their mouths a real treasury of words." Since divine Wisdom is the Word of God throughout time and eternity, he has never ceased speaking and by his word everything was made and everything was restored (cf. Jn. 1:3-13). He spoke through the mouths of the prophets and apostles (Cf. No. 47) and he will go on speaking through the mouths of those to whom he gives himself until the end of time. But the words that divine Wisdom communicates are not just ordinary, natural, human words; they are divine, "truly the words of God" (1 Thess. 2:13). They are powerful, touching, piercing words, "sharper than a two-edged sword" (Heb. 4:12), words that go from the heart of the one through whom he speaks straight to the heart of the listener. Solomon is referring to this gift of Wisdom he himself had received when he said that God gave him the grace to speak according to the feelings of his heart (Wisd. 7:15). These are the words which our Lord promised to his apostles, "I will give you an eloquence and a wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist" (Lk. 21:15). How few preachers there are today who possess this most wonderful gift of eloquence and who can say with St Paul, "We preach the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 2:7). Most of them speak according to the natural light of their minds, or from what they have taken from books. They do not speak under the impulse of divine Wisdom.
or from a heart filled to overflowing with wisdom (Mt. 12:34). That is why in these times we see so few conversions made through preaching. If a preacher had truly received from eternal Wisdom this gift of eloquence, his listeners would hardly be able to resist his words, as happened in the early days of the Church: "They could not resist the wisdom and the Spirit speaking in him" (Acts 6:10). Such a preacher would speak with so much unction and such authority (Mk. 1:22) that his words could never be ineffectual and void (cf. Is. 55:10-11).

(3) Eternal Wisdom, besides being the object of the eternal Father's delight, and the joy of angels (cf. Nos. 10,19,55), is also the source of purest joy and consolation for man who possesses him. He gives to man a relish for everything that comes from God and makes him lose his taste for things created. He enlightens his mind with the brightness of his own light and pours into his heart an indescribable joy, sweetness and peace even when he is in the midst of the most harrowing grief and suffering, as St Paul bears witness when he exclaims, "I exceedingly abound with joy in all our tribulations" (2 Cor. 7:4). Whenever I go into my house, says Solomon, even though I am alone, I will take my rest with Wisdom because Wisdom's company is always pleasing, his companionship is never tedious but always satisfying and joyful (Wisd. 8:16). And not only at home did I find joy in conversing with him, but everywhere and in everything, because Wisdom went before me (Wisd. 7:12). There is a true and holy joy in Wisdom's friendship (Wisd. 8:18), while the joys and pleasures we find in created things are illusory, leading only to affliction of spirit.

(4) When eternal Wisdom communicates himself to a soul, he gives that soul all the gifts of the Holy Spirit and all the great virtues to an eminent degree. They are: the theological virtues - lively faith, firm hope, ardent charity; the cardinal virtues - well-ordered temperance, complete prudence, perfect justice, invincible fortitude; the moral virtues - perfect religion, profound humility, pleasing gentleness, blind obedience, complete detachment, continuous mortification, sublime prayer, etc. These are the wonderful virtues and heavenly gifts described briefly by the Holy Spirit when he says, "If anyone loves justice, great virtues are again Wisdom's handiwork, for he teaches temperance and prudence, justice and fortitude. Nothing in the world is more useful
to man in this life than these" (Wisd. 8:7).
(5) Finally, as "nothing is more active than Wisdom" (Wisd. 7:24), he does not leave those who enjoy his friendship to languish in mediocrity and negligence. He sets them on fire, inspiring them to undertake great things for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. In order to discipline them and make them more worthy of himself, he permits them to engage in strenuous conflicts and in almost everything they undertake they encounter contradictions and disappointments.
At times, he allows the devil to tempt them, the world to calumniate and scorn them, their enemies to defeat and crush them, their friends and relatives to forsake and betray them. Sometimes they may have to suffer illness or loss of possessions, and at other times endure insults, sadness and heartbreak. In short, Wisdom tests them thoroughly in the crucible of tribulation like God is tested in a furnace. "But their affliction", says the Holy Spirit, "was light and their reward will be great, for God has put them to the test and found them worthy of himself. He has tried them like gold in a furnace and accepted them as sacrificial victims. When the time comes, he will look upon them with favor" (Wisd. 3:4,6).
It is Wisdom who enriched the virtuous man in his labours and enabled him to reap the fruit of his toil. He came to his aid against those who were trying to deceive him and made him prosperous. He protected him against his enemies, shielded him against seducers and engaged him in combat so that he might come through victorious and so convince him that Wisdom is more powerful than anything in the world (Wisd. 10:10).
We read in the life of Blessed Henry Suso, a Dominican friar, that in his eagerness to possess Wisdom, he often offered himself to undergo any torment in return for his friendship. One day he said to himself, "Do you not know that lovers endure suffering upon suffering for the sake of the one they love? For them wakeful nights are pleasant, fatigue is delightful, labour is restful, once they are assured that the one they love is pleased and grateful. If men go to such lengths to please a mere mortal, are you not ashamed to show weakness in your resolve to obtain Wisdom? No, eternal Wisdom, I will never falter in my love for you, even though I have to plunge through thicket and bush to reach you, even though I have to undergo a thousand
torments in body and soul. I will always prize your friendship more than anything else on earth and you will always have the first place in my affections."
While travelling a few days later, he fell into the hands of robbers who beat him so unmercifully that they themselves could not help pitying him. Seeing himself in such a state, Henry Suso forgot his resolution to be brave no matter what might happen and gave way to deep depression, weeping and wondering why God had afflicted him in this way. As he pondered over his plight, he fell asleep. Early next morning he heard a voice reproaching him, "Look at this warrior of mine. He can scale mountains, climb over rocks, break into strongholds, cut to pieces his enemies when everything is going right for him. But when he meets with adversity his courage fades and he is helpless and useless. In time of consolation he is a fierce lion, but in time of tribulation he is a timid deer. Wisdom does not share his friendship with such faint-hearted cowards."
At this reprimand, Blessed Henry confessed he was wrong in giving way to excessive discouragement, and went on to ask divine Wisdom to allow him to weep and so unburden his heart weighed down by grief.
"No," replied the voice, "all the saints in heaven would lose their respect for you, were you to cry like a baby or a woman. Wipe away your tears and show the world a cheerful face."
The cross, then, is the portion and reward of those who desire or already possess eternal Wisdom. But our loving Saviour numbers, weighs and measures everything and sends crosses to his friends in proportion to their strength, and tempers them with divine unction to such an extent that their hearts are filled with joy.
CHAPTER 9.
THE INCARNATION AND LIFE OF ETERNAL WISDOM
1. The Incarnation
When the eternal Word, eternal Wisdom, decided in the grand council of the Blessed Trinity (cf. Nos. 41-46) to become man in order to restore fallen humanity, it is possible he made it known to Adam, and Scripture tells us he promised the patriarchs of the Old Law that he would become man in order to redeem the world. This explains why, during the 4,000 years since the creation of the world, all the holy people of the Old Law pleaded earnestly in their prayers for the coming of the Messiah. They groaned, they wept and cried out,
"Clouds, rain forth the just one. Earth, bud forth the Saviour" (cf. Is. 45:8). "O Wisdom, who proceeded from the mouth of the Most High, come bring us deliverance."

But their cries, their prayers, and their sacrifices had not the power to draw the Son of God, Wisdom Eternal, from the bosom of his Father. They reached out towards heaven but their arms were not long enough to reach the throne of the Most High. They offered the sacrifice of their hearts unceasingly to God but they were not worthy enough to obtain the greatest of all graces. At last, when the time appointed for the redemption of mankind came, eternal Wisdom built himself a house worthy to be his dwelling-place (Prov. 9:1). He created the most holy Virgin, forming her in the womb of St Anne with even greater delight than he had derived from creating the universe. It is impossible on the one hand to put into words the gifts with which the Blessed Trinity endowed this most fair creature, or on the other hand to describe the faithful care with which she corresponded to the graces of her Creator.

The torrential outpouring of God's infinite goodness which had been rudely stemmed by the sins of men since the beginning of the world, was now released precipitately and in full flood into the heart of Mary. Eternal Wisdom gave to her all the graces which Adam and his descendants would have received so liberally from him had they remained in their original state of justice. The fullness of God, says a saint, was poured into Mary, in so far as a mere creature is capable of receiving it. O Mary, masterpiece of the Most High, miracle of eternal Wisdom, prodigy of the Almighty, abyss of grace! I join all the saints in the belief that only the God who created you knows the height, the breadth and the depth of the grace he has conferred on you. During the first fourteen years of her life the most holy Virgin Mary grew so marvelously in the grace and wisdom of God and responded so faithfully to his love that the angels and even God himself were filled with rapturous admiration for her. Her humility, deep as an abyss, delighted him. Her purity so other-worldly drew him down to her. He found her lively faith and her ceaseless entreaties of love so irresistible that he was lovingly conquered by her appeals of love. "So great was the love of Mary," explains St Augustine, "that it conquered the omnipotent God" - O quantus amor illius qui vincit omnipotentem. Wondrous to relate, this divine Wisdom chose to leave the bosom of his Father
and enter the womb of a virgin and there repose amid the lilies of her purity. Desiring to give himself to her by becoming man in her, he sent the archangel Gabriel to greet her on his behalf and to declare to her that she had won his heart and he would become man within her if she gave her consent. The archangel fulfilled his mission and assured her that she would still remain a virgin while becoming a mother. Notwithstanding her desire to be lowly, Mary wholeheartedly gave the angel that priceless consent which the Blessed Trinity, all the angels and the whole world awaited for so many centuries. Humbling herself before her Creator she said "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Let it be done to me according to your word" (Lk. 1:38). Notice that at the very moment Mary consented to become the Mother of God, several miraculous events took place. The Holy Spirit formed from the most pure blood of Mary's heart a little body which he fashioned into a perfect living being: God created the most perfect soul that ever could be created. Eternal Wisdom, the Son of God, drew the body and soul into union with his person. Here we have the great wonder of heaven and earth, the prodigious excess of the love of God. "The Word was made flesh" (Jn. 1:14). Eternal Wisdom became incarnate. God became man without ceasing to be God. This God-man is Jesus Christ and his name means Saviour.

2. Life of Wisdom Incarnate
Here is a summary of his divine life on earth:
1. He wished to be born of a married woman, though she was indeed a virgin, lest he should be reproached as one born out of wedlock. Other important reasons are given by Fathers of the Church. His conception, as we have just said, was announced to the Blessed Virgin by the angel Gabriel. He became a child of Adam without inheriting Adam's sin.
2. His conception took place on Friday, 25th March, and on 25th December the Saviour of the world was born at Bethlehem and was cradled in a manger in a poor stable. An angel brought the news of the Saviour's birth to shepherds who were keeping watch over their flocks in the fields. He invited them to go to Bethlehem to adore their Saviour. At the same time they heard celestial music, voices of angels singing, "Glory to God in the heavens and peace on earth to men who are God's friends" (Lk. 2:14).
3. On the eighth day after his birth, as prescribed by the Law of Moses, he was circumcised, even though
he was not subject to the law, and he was called Jesus, the name that came
from heaven. Three wise men
came from the east to adore him having learnt of his birth through the
appearance of an extraordinary star
which guided them to Bethlehem. This event is celebrated on 6th January, the
feast of the Epiphany, that is,
the manifestation of God.

4. Forty days after his birth he chose to offer himself in the Temple, observing
all that the Law of Moses
prescribed for the redeeming of the first-born. Some time later the angel told
St Joseph, spouse of the
Blessed Virgin, to take the infant Jesus and his Mother into Egypt to escape the
wrath of Herod. This he did.
Some authors hold the opinion that our Lord stayed in Egypt for two years;
others say for three, and others
such as Baronius, think it was as many as eight years. He sanctified the whole
of the country by his presence
by making it worthy to be dwelt in by the holy hermits, as history has shown.
Eusebius tells us that at the
approach of Jesus the devils took to flight, and St Athanasius adds that the
idols toppled over.

5. At the age of twelve the Son of God, sitting among the doctors, questioned
them with such wisdom that
all his hearers were filled with admiration. After this incident the gospel
makes no mention of him until his
baptism when he was thirty years old. He then retired into the desert,
abstaining from food and drink for forty
days. There he fought the devil and vanquished him.

6. After this he began to preach in Judea, choosing his apostles and working all
the miracles related in the
gospels. I need only mention that Jesus during the third year of his public
preaching and at the age of
thirty-three, raised Lazarus from the dead, made his triumphant entry into
Jerusalem on the 29th day of March,
and on the 2nd day of April which was Thursday, the fourteenth day of the
month of Nisan, celebrated the
Pasch with his disciples, washed the feet of the apostles and instituted the
sacrament of the holy Eucharist
under the species of bread and wine.

7. On the evening of this day he was apprehended by his enemies with Judas
the traitor at their head.
The next day, 3rd April, even though it was a feast-day of the Jews, he was
condemned to death after being
scourged, crowned with thorns, and treated most shamefully.
That same day he was led to Calvary and nailed to a cross between two
criminals. The God of all
innocence thus chose to die the most shameful of all deaths and undergo the
torments which should have
been incurred by a robber named Barabbas whom the Jews had preferred to
him. The ancient Fathers
believed that Jesus was attached to the cross by four nails and that there was
in the middle of the cross a
wooden support on which his body rested.
8. After languishing for three hours, the Saviour of the world died at the age of
thirty-three. Joseph of
Arimathea had the courage to ask Pilate for the body and laid it in a new
sepulcher which he had built. We
must not forget that nature showed its sorrow at the death of its maker by
many marvelous happenings which
took place at the moment of his death. He rose from the dead on the fifth day
of April and appeared several
times to his Mother and his disciples during forty days. On Thursday, 14th
May, he took his disciples to Mount
Olivet and there in their presence, by his own power he ascended into heaven
to take his place at the right
hand of his Father, leaving on this earth the imprint of his sacred feet.
CHAPTER 10.
THE CAPTIVATING BEAUTY AND THE INEXPRESSIBLE
GENTLENESS OF INCARNATE WISDOM
As the divine Wisdom became man only to stir the hearts of men to love and
imitate him, he took
pleasure in gracing his human nature with every kind of quality, especially an
endearing gentleness and a
kindness without any defect or blemish.
1. Wisdom is gentle in his origin
If we consider him in his origin he is everything that is good and gentle. He is
a gift sent by the love of the
eternal Father and a product of the love of the Holy Spirit. He was given out of
love and fashioned by love
(Jn. 3:16). He is therefore all love, or rather the very love of the Father and the
Holy Spirit.
He was born of the sweetest, tenderest and the most beautiful of all mothers,
Mary, the divinely favored
Virgin. To appreciate the gentleness of Jesus we must first consider the
gentleness of Mary, his Mother,
whom he resembles by his pleasing nature. Jesus is Mary's child; consequently
there is no haughtiness, or
harshness, or unpleasantness in him and even less, infinitely less, in him than
in his Mother, since he is the
eternal Wisdom and therefore pure gentleness and beauty.
2. He is declared gentle by the Prophets
The prophets, who had in advance been shown the incarnate Wisdom, referred
to him as a sheep and a
lamb because of his gentleness. They foretold that because of his gentleness
"he would not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax" (Is. 42:3). He is so full of kindness that even if a poor sinner be weighed down, blinded, and depraved by his sins, with already, as it were, one foot in hell, he will not condemn him unless the sinner compels him to do so.

St John the Baptist for almost thirty years lived in the desert practising austerities to gain the knowledge and love of incarnate Wisdom. No sooner had he seen Jesus approaching than he pointed him out to his disciples, exclaiming, "Behold the Lamb of God. Behold him who takes away the sins of the world." (Jn. 1:29).

He did not say, as seemingly he should, "Behold the Most High, behold the King of Glory, behold the Almighty." But knowing him more thoroughly than any man at any time, he said: Behold the Lamb of God, behold that eternal Wisdom who, to captivate our hearts and to take away our sins, has gathered into his person all that is meek in God and in man, in heaven and on earth.

3. He is gentle in his name
But what does the name of Jesus, the proper name of incarnate Wisdom signify to us if not ardent charity, infinite love and engaging gentleness? The distinctive characteristic of Jesus, the Saviour of the world, is to love and save men. "No song is sweeter, no voice is more pleasing, no thought is more appealing, than Jesus Son of God." How sweet the name of Jesus sounds to the ear and the heart of a chosen soul! Sweet as honey to the lips, a delightful melody to the ears, thrilling joy to the heart.

4. He is gentle in his looks
"Gentle is Jesus in his looks, and in his words and actions." The face of our loving Saviour is so serene and gentle that it charmed the eyes and hearts of those who beheld it. The shepherds who came to the stable to see him were so spellbound by the serenity and beauty of his face that they tarried for many days gazing in rapture upon him. The three Kings, proud though they were, had no sooner seen the tender features of this lovely child than, forgetting their high dignity, they fell down on their knees beside his crib. Time and again they said to one another,"Friend, how good it is to be here! There are no enjoyments in our palaces comparable to those we are experiencing in this stable looking at this dear Infant-God."

When Jesus was still very young, children and people in trouble came from the country around to see him and find comfort and joy. They would say to each other, "Let us go and see young Jesus, the lovely child of
Mary. St John Chrysostom says, "The beauty and majesty of his face were at once so sweet and so worthy of respect that those who knew him could not prevent themselves from loving him, and distant kings, hearing of his beauty, desired to have a painting of him. It is even said that our Lord by special favor sent his portrait to King Abogare. Some writers tell us that the Roman soldiers and the Jews covered his face in order to strike and buffet him freely because there was in his eyes and face such a kindly and ravishing radiance as would disarm the most cruel of men.

5. He is gentle in his words
Jesus is also gentle in his words. When he dwelt on earth he won everyone over by his gentle speech. Never was he heard to raise his voice or argue heatedly. The prophets foretold this of him (Is. 42:2). Those who listened to him with good intentions were charmed by the words of life which fell from his lips and they exclaimed, "No man has ever spoken as this man" (Jn. 7:46). Even those who hated him were so surprised at his eloquence and wisdom that they asked one another, "Where did he get such wisdom?" (Mt. 13:54). No man has ever spoken with such meekness and unction. "Where did he acquire such wisdom in his speech?" they asked.

Multitudes of poor people left their homes and families and went even as far as the desert to hear him, going several days without food or drink, for his gentle words were food enough for them. The apostles were led to follow him by his kindly manner of speaking. His words healed the incurable and comforted the afflicted. He spoke only one word, - "Mary" - to the grief-stricken Mary Magdalene and she was overwhelmed with joy and happiness.

CHAPTER 11.
THE GENTLENESS OF THE INCARNATE WISDOM IN HIS ACTIONS

6. He is gentle in his actions
Finally, Jesus is gentle in his actions and in the whole conduct of his life. "He did everything well" (Mt. 7:37), which means that everything he did was done with such uprightness, wisdom, holiness and gentleness that nothing faulty or distorted could be found in him. Let us consider what gentleness our loving Saviour always manifested in his conduct.
Poor people and little children followed him everywhere seeing him as one of their own. The simplicity, the kindliness, the humble courtesy and the charity they witnessed in our dear
Saviour made them press close about him. One day when he was preaching in the streets the children who were usually about him, pressed upon him from behind. The apostles who were nearest to our Lord pushed them back. On seeing this Jesus rebuked his apostles and said to them, "Do not keep the children away from me" (Mt. 19:14). When they gathered about him he embraced and blessed them with gentleness and kindness.

The poor, on seeing him poorly dressed and simple in his ways, without ostentation or haughtiness, felt at ease with him. They defended him against the rich and the proud when these calumniated and persecuted him, and he in his turn praised and blessed them on every occasion. But how describe the gentleness of Jesus in his dealings with poor sinners: his gentleness with Mary Magdalene, his courteous solicitude in turning the Samaritan woman from her evil ways, his compassion in pardoning the adulterous woman taken in adultery, his charity in sitting down to eat with public sinners in order to win them over? Did not his enemies seize upon his great kindness as a pretext to persecute him, saying that his gentleness only encouraged others to transgress the law of Moses, and tauntingly called him the friend of sinners and publicans? With what kindness and concern did he not try to win over the heart of Judas who had decided to betray him, even when Jesus was washing his feet and calling him his friend! With what charity he asked God his Father to pardon his executioners, pleading their ignorance as an excuse.

How beautiful, meek and charitable is Jesus, the incarnate Wisdom! Beautiful from all eternity, he is the splendour of his Father, the unspotted mirror and image of his goodness. He is more beautiful than the sun and brighter than light itself. He is beautiful in time, being formed by the Holy Spirit pure and faultless, fair and immaculate, and during his life he charmed the eyes and hearts of men and is now the glory of the angels.

How loving and gentle he is with men, and especially with poor sinners whom he came upon earth to seek out in a visible manner, and whom he still seeks in an invisible manner every day. 7. He continues to be gentle in heaven, Do you think that Jesus, now that he is triumphant and glorious, is any the less loving and condescending? On the contrary, his glory, as it were, perfects his kindness. He wishes to appear forgiving rather than majestic, to show the riches of his mercy rather than the gold of
his glory.
Read the accounts of his apparitions and you will see that when Wisdom
incarnate and glorified showed
himself to his friends, he did not appear accompanied by thunder and
lightning but in a kindly and gentle
manner. He did not assume the majesty of a King or of the Lord of hosts, but
the tenderness of a spouse and
the kindliness of a friend. On some occasions he has shown himself in the
Blessed Sacrament, but I cannot
remember having read that he ever did so otherwise than in the form of a
gentle and beautiful child.
Not long ago an unhappy man, enraged because he had lost all his money at
gambling, drew his sword
against heaven, blaming our Lord for the loss of his money. Then, instead of
thunderbolts and fiery darts
falling upon this man, there came fluttering down from the sky a little piece of
paper. Quite taken aback, he
cought the paper, opened it and read, "O God, have mercy on me." The sword
fell from his hands, and, stirred
to the depths of his heart, he fell on his knees and begged for mercy.
St Denis the Areopagite relates that a certain bishop, Carpas by name, had,
after a great deal of trouble,
converted a pagan. On hearing afterwards that a fellow-pagan had lost no time
in making the new convert
abjure the faith, Carpas earnestly prayed to God all night to wreak vengeance
and punishment upon the guilty
one for his attack on the supreme authority of God. Suddenly, when his fervor
and his entreaties were
reaching their peak, he saw the earth opening and on the brink of hell he saw
the apostate and the pagan
whom the demons were trying to drag into the abyss. Then lifting up his eyes,
he saw the heavens open and
Jesus Christ accompanied by a multitude of angels coming to him and saying,
"Carpas, you asked me for
vengeance, but you do not know me. You do not realize what you are asking
for, nor what sinners have cost
me. Why do you want me to condemn them? I love them so much that if it were
necessary I would be ready
to die again for each one of them." Then our Lord approached Carpas, and,
uncovering his shoulders, said to
him, "Carpas, if you want to take vengeance, strike me rather than these poor
sinners."

With this knowledge of eternal Wisdom, shall we not love him who has loved
us and still loves us more
than his own life; and whose beauty and meekness surpass all that is loveliest
and most attractive in heaven
and on earth?
We read in the life of Blessed Henry Suso that one day the eternal Wisdom, whom he so ardently desired, appeared to him. It happened in this way. Our Lord appeared in human form surrounded by a bright transparent cloud and seated upon a throne of ivory. A brightness like the rays of the sun at noonday radiated from his eyes and face. The crown he wore signified eternity; his robe blessedness; his word meekness; his embrace the fullness of bliss possessed by all the blessed. Henry contemplated this spectacle of the divine Wisdom. What surprised him most was to see Jesus at one moment appearing as a young maiden of incomparable heavenly and earthly beauty and, at the next moment, appearing as a young man who, judging from his face, would seem to have espoused all that is beautiful in God's creation. Sometimes he saw him raise his head higher than the heavens and at the same time tread the chasms of the earth. Sometimes he looked wholly majestic and at other times condescending, gentle, meek and full of tenderness for those who came to him. Then he turned to Henry and said with a smile, "My son, give me your heart" (Prov. 23:26). At once Henry threw himself at his feet and offered him for all time the gift of his heart. Following the example of this holy man, let us offer eternal Wisdom for all time the gift of our heart. That is all he asks for.

CHAPTER 12.

THE PRINCIPAL SAYINGS OF WISDOM INCARNATE WHICH WE MUST BELIEVE AND PRACTICE IF WE ARE TO BE SAVED

1. If anyone wishes to follow me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me. Lk. 9:23.
2. If anyone loves me, he will keep my commandments, and my Father will love him and we will come to him. Jn. 14:23.
3. If you present your gift at the altar and you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift before the altar and go make peace with your brother. Mt. 23:24.
4. If someone comes to me and does not hate his father, mother, wife, children, brothers and sisters and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Lk. 14:26.
5. Whoever has left his house, or brothers or sisters, or children, or inheritance, out of love for me, will receive a hundredfold reward and will possess eternal life. Mt. 19:29.
6. If you wish to be perfect, go sell what you possess and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven. Mt. 19:21.
7. Not everyone who cries out to me, "Lord, Lord" will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who obeys the will of my heavenly Father will enter there. Mt. 7:21.
8. Whoever hears my words and obeys them is like a wise man who builds upon solid rock. Mt. 7:24.
9. I tell you solemnly, if you do not change and become as children you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Mt. 18:3.
10. Learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart and you will find rest for your souls. Mt. 11:29.
11. When you pray, beware of acting like those hypocrites who love to stand and pray in their synagogues so that men may notice them. Mt. 6:5.
12. Of what use is it when you pray to use many words, since your heavenly Father knows your needs before you place them before him. Mt. 6:7.
13. As you prepare to pray, forgive your neighbour the wrongs he may have committed against you so that your heavenly Father may show mercy to you. Mk. 11:25.
14. When you ask God in prayer for anything, believe that you will receive it, and you will indeed receive it. Mk. 11:24.
15. When you are fasting, do not imitate those gloomy hypocrites who go about looking worn out to show others they are fasting. I tell you solemnly, they have already received their reward. Mt. 6:16.
16. There will be greater rejoicing in heaven when one sinner is seen to be penitent than when ninety-nine just people show no repentance. Lk. 15:7.
17. I have not come to call the just, but to call sinners and draw them to repentance. Lk. 5:32.
18. Blessed are they who suffer persecution for the sake of justice, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Mt. 5:10.
19. Blessed are you when men hate you and reject you from their company because of the Son of man; rejoice, for your reward will be great in heaven. Lk. 6:22.
20. If the world hates you and persecutes you, recall that it hated me before you. If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as its own; but because I have chosen you, it will hate you. Jn. 15:18.
21. Come to me all you who are afflicted and heavily-burdened and I will refresh you. Mt. 11:28.
22. I am the bread of life come down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread he will live for ever, and the bread that I give is my flesh. Jn. 6:51.
23. My food is the real food and my blood is the real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood
lives in me and I live in him. Jn. 6:55,56.
24. You will be hated by all men because of me, but I promise you, not a single hair of your head will be lost. Lk. 21:17-18.
25. No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate one and love the other, or he will uphold one and despise the other. Mt. 6:24.
26. Evil thoughts which come from the heart make a person unclean: but eating with unwashed hands does not make a person unclean. Mt. 15:19.
27. A good man draws only what is good from his store of goodness; but the wicked man can only draw what is evil from his store. Mt. 12:35.
28. No one is worthy of the kingdom of God, if, after putting his hand to the plough, he looks behind him. Lk. 9:62.
29. Every hair of your head is counted; so never fear, you are worth more than many sparrows. Lk. 12:7.
30. God did not send his son into the world to judge and condemn the world, but that he might save the world. Jn. 3:17.
31. Every man who does evil avoids the light; he is afraid his evil deeds will be exposed. Jn. 3:20.
32. God is a spirit and those who adore him must do so in spirit and in truth. Jn. 4:24.
33. It is the spirit that gives life to everything; the flesh has nothing to offer. The words I have spoken to you are words of life. Jn. 6:63.
34. Whoever commits sin becomes the servant and slave of sin, and the servant does not remain in the house for ever. Jn. 8:34-35.
35. Whoever is faithful in small things will be faithful in the greater; and whoever is dishonest in small things will be yet more dishonest in greater things. Lk. 16:10.
36. It is more likely that heaven and earth should perish than that one detail of the law should not be accomplished. Lk. 16:17.
37. Your light must shine before men so that they will see your good works and they will glorify your Father who is in heaven. Mt. 5:16.
38. If your virtue is no better than that of the scribes and pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Mt. 5:20.
39. If your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out; for it is better for you to lose one part of your body than to have your whole body thrown into hell. Mt. 5:29.
40. The kingdom of heaven suffers violence and only those who are violent can
take it by force. Mt. 11:12.
41. Do not store up a treasure on earth to be destroyed by moths and rust or stolen by thieves; rather store up a treasure in heaven which no one can steal. Mt. 6:19.
42. Do not judge, and you will not be judged; for God will judge you in the same way as you judge others. Mt. 7:1.
43. Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but who in their hearts are ravenous wolves; you will recognize them by their fruits. Mt. 7:15.
44. Beware of showing contempt for any of my little ones; their angels see the face of my Father who is in heaven. Mt. 18:10.
45. Be on the watch, for you do not know the day or the hour when the Lord will come. Mt. 25:13.
46. Do not be afraid of those who can kill the body; fear rather the one who can kill the body, and then is able to cast the soul into hell. Lk. 12:4,5.
47. Do not worry over what you are to eat or how you are to clothe your body; your heavenly Father is well aware of all your needs. Lk. 12:22,30.
48. All that is hidden will be made known and all that is covered up will be revealed. Lk. 8:17.
49. Anyone who aspires to be the greatest among you must become the servant of all, and anyone who wishes to be the first must serve as if he were the last. Mt. 20:26,27.
50. How difficult it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of heaven. Mk. 10:23.
51. It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven. Lk. 18:25.
52. And I say to you, love your enemies; do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who persecute and calumniate you. Mt. 5:44.
53. Alas for you who are rich; you have your consolation in this world. Lk. 6:24.
54. Enter by the narrow gate, for the road that leads to perdition is broad and spacious and many pass along that way. But the gate and the road that lead to eternal life are narrow and only a few find them. Mt. 7:13,14.
55. The last will be first and the first will be last; for many are called but few are chosen. Mt. 20:16.
56. If anyone strikes you on the right cheek turn to him the other, and if anyone takes you to court to claim your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. Mt. 5:39,40.
57. You must always pray and never become discouraged. Lk. 18:1. Keep watch
and pray, lest you fall
into temptation. Mt. 26:41.
58. Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and everyone who humbles
himself will be exalted. Lk.
14:11.
59. Give alms and everything will be clean for you. Lk. 11:41.
60. If your hand or your foot become a cause of sin for you, cut it off and cast
it from you. If your eye is a
cause of sin for you, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better that you
enter heaven with only one hand or
foot or one eye than to enter hell with two hands, two feet, and two eyes. Mt.
18:8,9.
61. The eight beatitudes:
1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.
2. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
3. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall find consolation.
4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be
fully satisfied.
5. Blessed are the merciful, for mercy shall be shown to them.
6. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.
8. Blessed are those who suffer persecution for the sake of righteousness,
for the kingdom of heaven is theirs. Mt. 5:3-10.
62. I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for having hidden these
things from the wise and
prudent of this world and for revealing them to humble and little ones; yes,
Father, for that is what it has
pleased you to do. Mt. 11:25.
Such is the summary of the great and important truths which eternal Wisdom
came on earth to teach us,
having first put them into practice himself. His aim was to rid us of the
blindness and waywardness caused by
our sins.
Blessed are those who understand these eternal truths.
Still more blessed are those who believe them.
Most blessed of all are those who believe them, put them into practice and
teach them to others; for they
will shine in heaven like stars for all eternity (Dan. 12:13).
CHAPTER 13.
SUMMARY OF THE UNBELIEVABLE SORROWS THE INCARNATE
WISDOM CHOSE TO ENDURE OUT OF LOVE FOR US
1. The most convincing reason for loving Wisdom
Among all the motives impelling us to love Jesus Christ, the Wisdom incarnate,
the strongest, in my
opinion, is the sufferings he chose to endure to prove his love for us.
"There is," says St Bernard, "one motive which excels all others which I feel
most keenly and which urges
me to love Jesus. It is, dear Jesus, the bitter chalice which you drank for our
sakes, and the great work of our
Redemption which makes you so lovable to us. Indeed this supreme blessing
and incomparable proof of your
love makes us want to return your love. This motive attracts us more
agreeably, makes most just demands
upon us, moves us more pressingly and influences us more forcibly." And he
gives the reason in a few
words, "Our dear Saviour has laboured and suffered much to accomplish our
redemption. What pain and
anguish he has endured!"
2. The circumstances of his Passion
But what makes us realize more clearly the infinite love of eternal Wisdom for
us is the circumstances
surrounding his sufferings.
(a) The first of these is the perfection of his person. Being infinite he gave
infinite value to all the sufferings
of his passion. Had God sent a seraph or an angel of the lowest order to
become man and die for us, it would
have been a stupendous thing and worthy of our eternal gratitude. But that the
Creator of heaven and earth,
the only Son of God, eternal Wisdom himself should come and offer up his life!
This is inconceivable charity,
for, compared with his life, the lives of all angels and all men and all creatures
together are of infinitely less
value than say, the life of a gnat when compared with the lives of the kings of
this earth. Such an excess of
love is shown to us in this mystery that our admiration and our gratitude
should be great indeed.
(b) A second circumstance is the condition of the people for whom he suffered.
They were human
beings - unworthy creatures and his enemies, from whom he has nothing to
fear nor anything to hope for. We
sometimes hear of people dying for their friends; but are we ever likely to
hear of anyone but the Son of God
dying for his enemies?
But Jesus Christ proved how well he loved us because though we were sinners -
and consequently his
enemies - he died for us.
(c) The third circumstance is the amount, the grievousness and the duration of
his sufferings. Their
extent was so great that he is called "Man of sorrows". "A man of every sorrow
in whom there is no
soundness from the sole of the foot to the top of the head." (Is 53.3)
This dear friend of our souls suffered in every way exteriorly and inwardly, in
body and soul.
He suffered even in material things, apart from the poverty of his birth, of his
flight into Egypt and his stay there, and the poverty of his entire life; during his passion he was stripped of his garments by soldiers who shared them among themselves, and then fastened him naked to a cross without as much as a rag to cover his body.

He suffered in honour and reputation, for he was overwhelmed with insults and called a blasphemer, a revolutionary, a drunkard, a glutton and a possessed person. He suffered in his wisdom when they classed him as an ignorant man and an imposter, and treated him as a fool and a madman. He suffered in his power, for his enemies considered him a sorcerer and a magician who worked false miracles through a compact with the devil.

He suffered in his disciples, one of whom bartered him for money and betrayed him; another, their leader, denied him; and the rest abandoned him. He suffered from all kinds of people; from kings, governors, judges, courtiers, soldiers, pontiffs, priests, officials of the temple and lay members; from Jews and gentiles, from men and women; in fact, from everyone. Even his Blessed Mother's presence added painfully to his sufferings for, as he was dying, he saw her standing at the foot of the cross engulfed in a sea of sorrow.

Moreover, our dear Saviour suffered in every member of his body. His head was pierced with a crown of thorns. His hair and beard were torn out; his cheeks were buffeted; his face covered with spittle; his neck and arms bound with cords; his shoulders weighed down and bruised by the weight of the cross. His hands and feet were pierced by the nails, his side and heart opened by a lance; his whole body lacerated by more than five thousand strokes of the scourge, so that his almost fleshless bones became visible. All his senses were almost immersed in a sea of sufferings. He suffered in his sight as he beheld the mocking faces of his enemies and the tears of grief of his friends. He suffered in his hearing as he listened to insulting words, false testimonies, calumnious statements and horrible blasphemies which evil tongues vomited against him. He suffered in his sense of smell by the foulness of the filth they spat into his face. He suffered in his sense of taste by a feverish thirst in which he was only given gall and vinegar to drink. He suffered in his sense of touch by the excruciating pain of the lashes, thorns and nails.

His most holy soul was grievously tormented because every sin committed by
man was an outrage
against his Father whom he loved infinitely; because sin was the cause of the
damnation of so many souls
who would be lost despite his passion and death; and because he had
compassion not only for all men in
general but for each one in particular, as he knew them all individually.
All these torments were much increased by the length of time they lasted, that is, from the first instance of
his conception to the moment of his death, because all the sufferings he was to
endure were, in the timeless
view of his wisdom, always distinctly present to his mind.
To all these torments we must add the most cruel and the most fearful one,
namely his abandonment upon
the cross which caused him to cry out, "My God, my God, why have you
forsaken me?"

3. The great love with which he suffered
From all this we must conclude with St. Thomas and the Fathers of the Church
that our good Jesus
suffered more than all the martyrs both those of past ages and those of the
future up to the end of the world.
Now if the smallest pain of the Son of God is more precious and more likely to
stir our hearts than all the
sufferings of angels and men together had they died and given up everything
for us, how deep then should be
our grief, our love and our gratitude for our Lord who endured for our sakes
freely and with the utmost love all
that a man could possibly suffer. "For the joy set before him, he endured the
cross." (Heb 12.2) According to
the Fathers of the Church, these words mean that Jesus Christ, Eternal
Wisdom, could have remained in his
heavenly glory, infinitely distant from our misfortunes. But he chose on our
account to come down upon earth,
take the nature of man and be crucified. Even when he had become man he
could have imparted to his body
the same joy, the same immortality, the same blessedness which he now
enjoys. But he did not choose this
because he wanted to be free to suffer.
Rupert adds to this that at the Incarnation, the eternal Father proposed to his
Son the saving of the world
either by joyful means or by suffering, by acquiring honours or by suffering
contempt, by richness or by
poverty, by living or by dying. Hence while remaining himself glorious and
triumphant, he could have
redeemed men and taken them with him along a way paved with joys, delights,
honours and riches had he
wished to do so. But he chose rather to endure the cross and sufferings in
order to give to God his Father
greater glory and to men a proof of greater love. Further, he loved us so much that instead of shortening his sufferings he chose to prolong them and to suffer even more. That is why when he was hanging on the cross, covered with opprobrium and plunged deep in sorrow, as if not suffering enough, he cried out, "I thirst." For what was he thirsting? St. Laurence Justinian gives us the answer. "His thirst arose from the ardour of his love, from the depth and abundance of his charity. He was thirsting for us, thirsting to give himself to us and suffer for us."

4. Conclusion
Knowing all this are we not right in exclaiming with St. Francis of Paula, "O God who is love, what excesses of love you have shown us in suffering and in dying!" Or with St. Mary Magdalene of Pazzi, kissing the crucifix, "O Love, how little are you known!" Or St. Francis of Assisi, trudging along the dusty streets, "Jesus, my crucified Love, is not loved."
Holy Church makes us repeat every day, "The world does not know Jesus Christ," (Jn 1.10) incarnate Wisdom; and in truth, to know what our Lord has endured for us, and yet like the world not to love him ardently, is morally impossible.

CHAPTER 14.
THE TRIUMPH OF ETERNAL WISDOM IN AND BY THE CROSS
The Cross is according to my belief the greatest secret of the King (Tob 12.7) - the greatest mystery of Eternal Wisdom.
1. Wisdom and the Cross
How remote and how different are the thoughts and the ways of eternal Wisdom from those of even the wisest of men. (cf Is 55.8) This great God wished to redeem the world, to cast out and chain up the devils, to seal the gates of hell and open heaven to men, and give infinite glory to his eternal Father. Such was his purpose, his arduous task, his great undertaking. What means will be chosen by divine Wisdom, whose knowledge reaches from one end of the universe to the other and orders all things well? (cf Wis 8.1) His arm is almighty; at a stroke he can destroy all that is opposed to him and do whatever he wills. By a single word he can annihilate and create. What more can I say? He has but to will and all is done. But his power is regulated by his love. He wishes to become incarnate in order to convince men of his friendship; he wishes to come down upon earth to help men to go up to
heaven. So be it! It would be expected then that this Wisdom incarnate would appear glorious and triumphant, accompanied by millions and millions of angels, or at least by millions of chosen men and women. With these armies, majestic in his splendour and untouched by poverty, dishonour, humiliations and weaknesses, he will crush all his enemies and win the hearts of men by his attractiveness, his delights, his magnificence and his riches. Surely nothing less than that. But O wonder! He perceives something which is a source of scandal and horror to Jews and an object of foolishness to pagans. (cf 1 Cor 1.23) He sees a piece of vile and contemptible wood which is used to humiliate and torture the most wicked and the most wretched of men, called a gibbet, a gallows, a cross. It is upon this cross that he casts his eyes; he takes his delight in it; he cherishes it more than all that is great and resplendent in heaven and on earth. He decides that that will be the instrument of his conquests, the adornment of his royal state. He will make it the wealth and joy of his empire, the friend and spouse of his heart. O the depths of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How amazing is his choice and how sublime and incomprehensible are his ways! But how inexpressible his love for that cross! (Rom 11.33) Incarnate Wisdom loved the cross from his infancy. (cf Wis 8.2) At his coming into the world, while in his Mother's womb, he received it from his eternal Father. He placed it deep in his heart, there to dominate his life, saying, "My God and my Father, I chose this cross when I was in your bosom. (Ps 39.9) I choose it now in the womb of my Mother. I love it with all my strength and I place it deep in my heart to be my spouse and my mistress." (cf Wis. 8.2) Throughout his life he eagerly sought after the Cross. If, like a thirsting deer, (cf Ps 41.2) he hastened from village to village, from town to town; if with giant strides (cf Ps 18.6) he pursued his way towards Calvary; if he spoke so frequently of his sufferings and death to his apostles and disciples, (cf Mt 16.21; 17.12,22,23; 20.17-19) and even to his prophets during his Transfiguration; (cf Lk 9.31) if he so often exclaimed, "I have longed for it with an infinite desire" (Lk 22.15); it was because all his journeying, all his eagerness, all his pursuits, all his desires were directed towards the Cross and because to die in its embrace was for him the
very height of glory and success. He espoused the Cross at his Incarnation with indescribable love. He sought it out and carried it with the utmost joy, throughout his whole life, which became but one continuous cross. After having made several efforts to embrace it in order to die upon it on Calvary, he asked, "How great is my distress until it is completed!" How am I hindered? What is delaying me? Why can I not embrace you yet, dear cross of Calvary? (Lk 12.50) At last his wishes were fully satisfied. Bearing a stigma of shame he was attached to the cross, indissolubly joined to it, and died joyfully upon it as if in the arms of a dear friend and upon a couch of honour and triumph. Do not think that, wanting to be more triumphant, he rejected the cross after his death. Far from it; he united himself so closely to it that neither angel nor man, nor any creature in heaven or on earth, could separate him from it. The bond between them is indissoluble, their union is eternal. Never the Cross without Jesus, or Jesus without the Cross. Through his dying upon it the Cross of ignominy became so glorious, its poverty and starkness so enriching, its sorrows so agreeable, its austerity so attractive, that it became as it were deified and an object to be adored by angels and by men. Jesus now requires that all his subjects adore it as they adore him. It is not his wish that the honour even of a relative adoration be given to any other creature however exalted, such as his most Blessed Mother. This special worship is due and given only to his dear Cross. On the day of the last judgment he will bring to an end all veneration to the relics of the saints, even those most venerable, but not to those of his Cross. He will command the chief Seraphim and Cherubim to collect from every part of the world all the particles of the true Cross. By his loving omnipotence he will re-unite them so well that the whole Cross will be re-formed, the very Cross on which he died. He will have his Cross borne in triumph by angels joyfully singing its praises. It will go before him, borne upon the most brilliant cloud that has ever been seen. And with this Cross and by it, he will judge the world. Great will be the joy of the friends of the Cross on beholding it. Deep will be the despair of its opponents who, not being able to bear the brilliant and fiery sight of this Cross, will plead for the mountains to fall upon
them and for hell to swallow them. (cf Lk 23.30)

2. The Cross and ourselves
While waiting for that great day of the last judgment, Eternal Wisdom has decreed the Cross to be the sign, the emblem and the weapon of his faithful people. He welcomes no child that does not bear its sign. He recognizes no disciple who is ashamed to display it, or who has not the courage to accept it, or who either drags it reluctantly or rejects it outright. He proclaims, "If anyone wishes to come after me, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me." (Mt 16.24; Lk 9.23)
He enlists no soldier who does not take up the cross as the weapon to defend himself against all his enemies, to attack, to overthrow and to crush them. And he exclaims, "In this sign you will conquer. Have confidence, soldiers of mine, I am your leader; I have conquered my enemies by the cross (Jn 16.33), and by it you also will be victorious."
He has enclosed in the cross such an abundance of grace, life and happiness that only those who enjoy his special favor know about them. He often reveals to his friends his other secrets, as he did to his Apostles: "All things I have made known to you," (Jn 15.15) but he reveals the secrets of the Cross only to those who make themselves worthy by their great fidelity and great labours. One must be humble, little, self-disciplined, spiritual and despised by the world to learn the mystery of the Cross. The Cross even today is a source of scandal and an object of folly not only to Jews and pagans, Moslems and heretics, the worldly-wise and bad Catholics, but even to seemingly devout and very devout people. Yes, the Cross remains an object of scandal, folly, contempt and fear: not in theory, for never has so much been spoken or written about its beauty and its excellence than in these times; but in practice, because people lose courage, complain, excuse themselves, and run away as soon as a possibility of suffering arises.
"Father," said this incarnate Wisdom, when beholding in joyful rapture the beauty of the Cross, "I thank you for having hidden these things - the treasures and graces of my cross - from the wise and prudent of this world and revealed them to the little ones." (Lk 10.21)
If the knowledge of the mystery of the Cross is such a special grace, how great must be the enjoyment when one actually possesses it? This is a favor Eternal Wisdom bestows only
on his best friends and only 
after they have prayed for it, longed for it, pleaded for it. However excellent is 
the gift of faith by which we 
please God, draw near to him and overcome our enemies, and without which 
we would be lost, the Cross is 
an even greater gift.
"It was a greater happiness for St. Peter," says St. John Chrysostom, "to be 
imprisoned for Jesus Christ 
than to be a witness of his glory on Mount Thabor; he was more glorious 
bound in chains than holding the keys 
of paradise in his hand." (Acts 12.3-7; Mt 16.19) St. Paul esteemed it a greater 
glory to wear a prisoner's 
chains for his Saviour than to be raised to the third heaven (Eph 3.1; 4.1; 2 Cor 
12.2). God bestowed a greater 
favor on the Apostles and martyrs in giving them his Cross to carry in their 
humiliations, privations and cruel 
tortures than in conferring on them the gift of miracles or the grace to convert 
the world.
All those to whom Eternal Wisdom gave himself have desired the Cross, sought 
after it, welcomed it.
Whatever sufferings came their way, they exclaimed from the depths of their 
heart with St. Andrew, "O 
wonderful Cross, so long have I yearned for you!"
The Cross is precious for many reasons:
1. Because it makes us resemble Jesus Christ;
2. Because it makes us worthy children of the eternal Father, worthy members 
of Jesus Christ, worthy 
temples of the Holy Spirit. "God the Father chastises every son he accepts;"
(Heb 12.6) Jesus Christ accepts 
as his own only those who carry their crosses. The Holy Spirit cuts and 
polishes all the living stones of the 
heavenly Jerusalem, that is, the elect (cf 1 Pet 2.5; Apoc 21.2,10). These are 
revealed truths.
3. The Cross is precious because it enlightens the mind and gives it an 
understanding which no book in the 
world can give. "He who has not been tried, what can he know?" (Sir 34.9)
4. Because when it is well carried it is the source, the food and the proof of 
love. The Cross enkindles the 
fire of divine love in the heart by detaching it from creatures. It keeps this 
love alive and intensifies it; as wood 
is the food of flames, so the Cross is the food of love. And it is the soundest 
proof that we love God. The 
Cross was the proof God gave us of his love for us; and it is also the proof 
which God requires to show our 
love for him.
5. The Cross is precious because it is an abundant source of every delight and 
consolation; it brings joy,
peace and grace to our souls.

6. The Cross is precious because it brings the one who carries it "a weight of everlasting glory." (2 Cor 4.17)

If we knew the value of the Cross, we would, like St. Peter of Alcantara, have novenas made in order to acquire such a delightful morsel of paradise. We would say, like St. Theresa, "Either to suffer or to die;" or with St. Mary Magdalene of Pazzi, "Not to die but to suffer." Like blessed John of the Cross we would ask only for the grace to suffer and be despised. Heaven esteems nothing in this world except the Cross, he said after his death to a saintly person. And our Lord said to one of his servants, "I have crosses of such great value that my Mother, most powerful as she is, can procure from me nothing more precious for her faithful servants."

Wise and honest people living in this world, you do not understand the mysterious language of the Cross. You are too fond of sensual pleasures and you seek your comforts too much. You have too much regard for the things of this world and you are too afraid to be held up to scorn or looked down upon. In short, you are too opposed to the Cross of Jesus. True, you speak well of the Cross in general, but not of the one that comes your way. You shun this as much as you can or else you drag it along reluctantly, grumbling, impatient and protesting. I seem to see in you the oxen that drew the Ark of the Covenant against their will, bellowing as they went, unaware that what they were drawing contained the most precious treasure upon earth. (1 Kgs 6.12)

The number of fools and unhappy people is infinite, says Wisdom (Ecc 1.15), because infinite is the number of those who do not know the value of the Cross and carry it reluctantly. But you, true disciples of Eternal Wisdom, if you have trials and afflictions, if you suffer much persecution for justice's sake, if you are treated as the refuse of the world, be comforted, rejoice, be glad, and dance for joy because the cross you carry is a gift so precious as to arouse the envy of the saints in heaven, were they capable of envy. All that is honourable, glorious and virtuous in God and in his Holy Spirit is vested in you, for your reward is great in heaven and even on earth, because of the spiritual favors it obtains for you.

3. Practical conclusion

Friends of Jesus Christ, drink of his bitter cup and your friendship with him will increase. Suffer with him
and you will be glorified with him. Suffer patiently and your momentary suffering will be changed into an eternity of happiness. Make no mistake about it; since incarnate Wisdom had to enter heaven by the Cross, you also must enter by the same way. No matter which way you turn, says the Imitation of Christ, you will always find the Cross. Like the elect you may take it up rightly, with patience and cheerfulness out of love for God; or else like the reprobate you may carry it impatiently and unwillingly as those doubly unfortunate ones who are constrained to repeat perpetually in hell, "We have laboured and suffered in the world and after it all, here we are with the damned." (Wis 5.7) True wisdom is not to be found in the things of this world nor in the souls of those who live in comfort. He has fixed his abode in the Cross so firmly that you will not find him anywhere in this world save in the Cross. He has so truly incorporated and united himself with the Cross that in all truth we can say: Wisdom is the Cross, and the Cross is Wisdom. CHAPTER 15. MEANS TO ACQUIRE DIVINE WISDOM THE FIRST MEANS: AN ARDENT DESIRE Children of men, how long will your hearts remain heavy and earthbound? How long will you go on loving vain things and seeking what is false? (Ps 4.3) Why do you not turn your eyes and your hearts towards divine Wisdom who is supremely desirable and who, to attract our love, makes known his origin, shows his beauty, displays his riches, and testifies in a thousand ways how eager he is that we should desire him and seek him? "Be desirous, therefore, of hearing my words," (Wis 6.12) he tells us. "Wisdom anticipates those who want her. (Wis 6.14) The desire of Wisdom leads to the everlasting kingdom." (Wis 6.21) The desire for divine Wisdom must indeed be a great grace from God because it is the reward for the faithful observance of his commandments. "Son, if you rightly desire wisdom, observe justice and God will give it to you. Reflect on what God requires of you and meditate continually on his commandments and he himself will give you insight, and your desire for wisdom will be granted." (Sir 1.26; 6.37) "For Wisdom will not enter into a deceitful soul, nor dwell in a body subject to sin." (Wis 1.4) This desire for Wisdom must be holy and sincere, and fostered by faithful adherence to the commandments of God. There are indeed an infinite number of fools and
sluggards moved to be good by countless desires, or rather would-be desires, which, by not bringing them to renounce sin and do violence to themselves, are but spurious and deceitful desires which are fatal and lead to damnation. (Prov 21.25) The Holy Spirit, who is the teacher of true knowledge, shuns what is deceitful and withdraws himself from thoughts that are without understanding; iniquity banishes him from the soul. (Wis 1.5) Solomon, the model given us by the Holy Spirit in the acquiring of Wisdom, only received this gift after he had desired it, sought after it and prayed for it for a long time. "I desired wisdom and it was given to me. I called upon God and the spirit of wisdom came to me." (Wis 7.7) "I have loved and sought wisdom from my youth, and in order to have her as my companion and spouse I went about seeking her." (Wis 8.2,18) Like Solomon and Daniel we must be men of desire if we are to acquire this great treasure which is wisdom. (cf Dan 9.23)

THE SECOND MEANS: CONTINUOUS PRAYER
The greater the gift of God, the more effort is required to obtain it. Much prayer and great effort, therefore, will be required to obtain the gift of Wisdom, which is the greatest of all God's gifts. Let us listen to the voice of Wisdom himself: "Seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened to you, ask and it shall be given you." (Mt 7.7; Lk 11.9) It is as if he said: If you wish to find me, you must seek me; if you wish to enter my palace, you must knock at my door; If you wish to receive me, you must ask for me. Nobody finds me unless he searches for me; nobody enters my house unless he knocks at my door; nobody possesses me unless he asks for me. We can only do this by prayer. Prayer is the usual channel by which God conveys his gifts, especially his Wisdom. The world was asking for the incarnation of divine Wisdom for four thousand years. For fourteen years Mary prepared herself by prayer to receive him in her womb. Solomon received Wisdom only after praying most fervently for a long time: "I went to the Lord and besought him, and I said with all my heart... Give me that Wisdom that sits by your throne." (Wis 8.21; 9.4) "If any of you lacks wisdom let him ask God, and it shall be given him, for God gives his gifts to all men abundantly and ungrudgingly." (Jas 1.5) Note here that the Holy Spirit does not say, "If anyone lack charity, humility, patience, etc.," although these are most excellent virtues, but he says, "If anyone
lacks Wisdom." For by asking for Wisdom we ask for all the virtues possessed by incarnate Wisdom. Therefore to possess Wisdom we must pray. But how should we pray? First, we should pray for this gift with a strong and lively faith, not wavering, because he who wavers in his faith must not expect to receive any gift from the Lord. (Jas 1.6,7) Secondly, we must pray for it with a pure faith, not counting on consolations, visions or special revelations. Although such things may be good and true, as they have been in some saints, it is always dangerous to rely on them. For the more our faith is dependent on these extraordinary graces and feelings, the less pure and meritorious it is. The Holy Spirit has revealed to us the grandeur and the beauty of Wisdom, and the desire of God to bestow this gift upon us, and our own need of it. Here we find motives strong enough to make us want it and pray God for it with unbounded faith and eagerness. Simple faith is both the cause and the effect of Wisdom in our soul. The more faith we have, the more we shall possess wisdom. The more we possess it, the stronger our faith (cf Rom 1.17) without seeing, without feeling, without tasting and without faltering. "God has said it or promised it;" these words form the basis of all the prayers and actions of every wise man, although from a natural point of view it may seem that God is blind to his plight, deaf to his prayers, powerless to crush his enemies, seemingly empty-handed when help is needed, even though he may be troubled by distractions and doubts, by darkness of the mind, by illusions of the imagination, by weariness and boredom of the heart, by sadness and anguish of soul. The wise man does not ask to see extraordinary things such as saints have seen, nor to experience sensible sweetness in his prayers. He asks with faith for divine Wisdom. And he will feel surer that this Wisdom will be given him than if it were vouched for by an angel come down from heaven, because God has said that all who pray in the right manner will receive what they ask for. (Lk 11.10) "If you, then, being evil, know how to give good things to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the good spirit (of Wisdom) to those who ask him?" (Lk 11.13) Thirdly, we must pray perseveringly to obtain this Wisdom. The acquisition of this precious pearl and infinite treasure requires from us a holy importunity in praying to God, without which we shall not obtain it. We ought not to act as so many do when praying for some grace: after they have
prayed for a long time, perhaps for years, and God has not granted their request, they become discouraged and give up praying, thinking that God does not want to listen to them. Thus they deprive themselves of the benefit of their prayers and offend God, who loves to give and who always answers, in some way or another, prayers that are well said. Whoever then wishes to obtain Wisdom must pray for it day and night without wearying or becoming disheartened. Blessings in abundance will be his if, after ten, twenty, thirty years of prayer, or even an hour before he dies, he comes to possess it. And if he does obtain this treasure after having spent his whole life seeking for it and praying for it and meriting it with much toil and suffering, let him remind himself that it is not a gift due to him in justice, a recompense that he has earned, but rather a charitable alms given to him out of mercy.

No, it is not those who are careless and inconstant in their prayers and searchings who obtain Wisdom, but those rather who are like the man in the Gospel who goes during the night to knock at the door of a friend, wanting to borrow three loaves of bread (cf Lk 11.15). Note that it is divine Wisdom himself who in this parable or story teaches us how we should pray if we wish to be heard. This man knocked and repeated his knocking and entreaties four or five times with increased force and insistence, in spite of the untimely hour, near midnight, and his friend having already gone to bed; and in spite of having been rebuffed and told repeatedly to be off and not make himself a selfish nuisance. At length the friend became so annoyed by the persistence of the man that he got out of bed, opened the door and gave him all he asked for. (cf Lk 11.5-8)

That is how we must pray to obtain Wisdom. And assuredly God wants to be importuned, will sooner or later rise up, open the door of his mercy and give us the three loaves of Wisdom, that is, the bread of life, the bread of understanding and the bread of angels. (cf Sir 15.3; Jn 6.35)

Here is a prayer composed by the Holy Spirit to ask for divine Wisdom:

Prayer of Solomon

God of my fathers, God of mercy, you created all things by your word, and by your wisdom you formed man that he might have dominion over all the creatures you have made; that he might govern the world in fairness and justice and pronounce judgment with an upright heart; give me this Wisdom that sits with you on
your throne.
Do not exclude me from the number of your children for I am your servant and
the son of your handmaid, a
man who is weak and short-lived, with little understanding of judgment and
laws. For even though a person be
considered perfect among the children of men, he is nonetheless worthless if
your Wisdom does not dwell in
him.
It is your Wisdom who has knowledge of your works, who was with you when
you made the world, and
who knows what is pleasing in your sight and shows what is right according to
your commandments.
Send him then from your sanctuary in heaven and from the throne of your
majesty, for him to be with me
and work with me so that I may know what is pleasing to you; for he possesses
the knowledge and
understanding of all things. He will lead me in all my works with true
perception, and by his power will guard
me. My actions then will be pleasing to you and I will lead your people with
justice and be worthy of the throne
of my father; for what man can know the designs of God, or can discover what
is his will?
The thoughts of men are unsure and their plans uncertain, for a perishable
body weighs heavily upon their
soul, and the earthly dwelling depresses the spirit disturbed by many cares.
We understand only with difficulty
what is happening upon earth and we find it hard to discern even what is
before our eyes. How can we know
what is happening in heaven, and how can we know your thoughts unless you
give us your Wisdom and send
us your Holy Spirit from heaven so that he may straighten out the paths of
those living on earth and teach us
what is pleasing to you. Lord, it is through your Wisdom that all those who
have been pleasing to you since
the beginning of time have been saved. (Wis 9.1-6, 9-19)
To vocal prayer we must add mental prayer, which enlightens the mind,
inflames the heart and disposes
the soul to listen to the voice of Wisdom, to savor his delights and possess his
treasures.
For myself, I know of no better way of establishing the kingdom of God,
Eternal Wisdom, than to unite vocal
and mental prayer by saying the holy Rosary and meditating on its fifteen
mysteries.
CHAPTER 16.
THE THIRD MEANS: UNIVERSAL MORTIFICATION
1. Necessity of Mortification
The Holy Spirit tells us that Wisdom is not found in the hearts of those who
live in comfort, (Job 28.13)
gratifying their passions and bodily desires, because "they who are of the
flesh cannot please God," and "the
wisdom of the flesh is an enemy to God." (Rom 8.8,7) "My spirit will not
remain in man, because he is flesh."
(Gen 6.3)
All those who belong to Christ, incarnate Wisdom, have crucified their flesh
with its passions and desires.
They always bear about in their bodies the dying of Jesus. They continually do
disobedience to themselves, carry
their cross daily. They are dead and indeed buried with Christ. (Gal 5.24; 2 Cor
4.10; Lk 9.23; Rom 6.4,8)
These words of the Holy Spirit show us more clearly than the light of day that,
if we are to possess
incarnate Wisdom, Jesus Christ, we must practice self-denial and renounce the
world and self.
Do not imagine that incarnate Wisdom, who is purer than the rays of the sun,
will enter a soul and a body
soiled by the pleasures of the senses. Do not believe that he will grant his rest
and ineffable peace to those
who love worldly company and vanities. "To him that overcomes the world and
himself, I will give the hidden
manna." (Apoc 2.17)
Although this lovable prince knows and perceives all things in an instant by
his own infinite light, he still
looks for persona worthy of him. (Wis 6.17) He has to search because there are
so few and he can scarcely
find any sufficiently unworldly or sufficiently interior and mortified to be
worthy of him, of his treasures, and of
union with him.
2. Qualities required for mortification
Wisdom is not satisfied with half-hearted mortification or mortification of a
few days, but requires one that
is total, continuous, courageous and prudent if he is to give himself to us.
If we would possess Wisdom:
1. We must either give up actually our worldly possessions as did the apostles,
the disciples and the first
Christians, and as religious do now - this is the quickest, the best and the
surest means to possess Wisdom -
or at least we must detach our heart from material things, and possess them
as though not possessing them,
(cf 1 Cor 7.30) not eager to acquire more or being anxious to retain any of
them, and not complaining or
worrying when they are lost. This is something very difficult to accomplish.
2. We must not follow the showy fashions of the world in our dress, our
furniture or our dwellings. Neither
must we indulge in sumptuous meals or other worldly habits and ways of
living. "Be not conformed to this world." (Rom 12.2) Putting this into practice is more necessary than is generally thought.

3. We must not believe or follow the false maxims of the world or think, speak or act like people of the world. Their doctrine is as opposed to that of incarnate Wisdom as darkness is to light, and death to life. Look closely at their opinions and their words: they think and speak disparagingly of all the great truths of our religion. True, they do not tell brazen lies, but they cover their falsehood with an appearance of truth; they do not think they are being untruthful, but they lie nonetheless. In general, they do not teach sin openly, but they speak of it as if it were virtuous, or blameless, or a matter of indifference and of little consequence. This guile which the devil has taught the world in order to conceal the heinousness of sin and falsehood is the wickedness spoken of by St. John when he wrote, "The whole world lies in the power of evil" (1 Jn 5.19) and now more than ever before.

4. We must flee as much as possible from the company of others, not only from that of worldly people, which is harmful and dangerous, but even from that of religious people when our association with them would be useless and a waste of time. Whoever wishes to become wise and perfect must put into practice these three golden counsels which eternal Wisdom gave to St. Arsenius, "Flee, hide, be silent." Flee as much as possible the company of men, as the greatest saints have done. Let your life be hidden with Christ in God. (Col 3.3) In short, be silent with others, so as to converse with divine Wisdom. "He who knows how to keep silent is a wise man." (Sir 20.5)

5. If we would possess Wisdom, we must mortify the body, not only by enduring patiently our bodily ailments, the inconveniences of the weather and the difficulties arising from other people's actions, but also by deliberately undertaking some penances and mortifications, such as fasts, vigils and other austerities practised by holy penitents. It requires courage to do that because the body naturally idolizes itself, and the world considers all bodily penances as pointless and rejects them. The world does and says everything possible to deter people from practising the austerities of the saints. Of every saint, it can be said, with due allowances, "the wise or the saintly man has brought his body into subjection by vigils, fasts and
disciplines, by enduring the cold and
nakedness and every kind of austerity, and he has made a compact not to give
it any rest in this world" (cf Rom. Brev. St. Peter of Alcantara). The Holy Spirit says of all the saints, that they were enemies of the
stained robe of the flesh (Jude 23).

6. For exterior and voluntary mortification to be profitable, it must be
accompanied by the mortifying of the judgment and the will through holy obedience, because without this obedience all mortification is spoiled by self-will and often becomes more pleasing to the devil than to God. That is why no exceptional mortification should be undertaken without seeking counsel. "I, Wisdom, dwell in counsel." (Prov 8.12) "He who trusts in himself, trusts in a fool." (Prov 28.26) "The prudent man does all things with counsel." (Prov 13.16) And the great counsel given by the Holy Spirit is this: Do nothing without counsel and you shall have nothing to regret afterwards. (Sir 32.24) Seek counsel always of a wise man. (Tob 4.19)

By holy obedience we do away with self-love, which spoils everything; by obedience the smallest of our actions become meritorious. It protects us from illusions of the devil, enables us to overcome our enemies, and brings us surely, as though while sleeping, into the harbour of salvation. All that I have just said is contained in this one great counsel: "Leave all things and you will find all things by finding Jesus Christ, incarnate Wisdom." (Imitation of Christ, III, c. 32, No. 1)

CHAPTER 17.
FOURTH MEANS: A LOVING AND GENUINE DEVOTION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN

The greatest means of all, and the most wonderful of all secrets for obtaining and preserving divine Wisdom is a loving and genuine devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

1. Necessity of genuine devotion to Mary

No one but Mary ever found favor with God (cf Lk 1.30) for herself and for the whole human race. To no other person was given the power to conceive and give birth to Eternal Wisdom. No one else had the power to "incarnate" him, so to speak, in the predestinate by the operation of the Holy Spirit.

The patriarchs, prophets and saints of the Old Testament yearned and prayed for the incarnation of Eternal Wisdom, but none of them was able to merit it. Only Mary, by her exalted holiness, could reach the throne of the Godhead and merit this gift of infinite value. She became the mother, mistress and throne of divine Wisdom.
Mary is his most worthy Mother because she conceived him and brought him forth as the fruit of her womb. "Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus." (Lk 1.42) Hence it is true to say that Jesus is the fruit and product of Mary wherever he is present, be it in heaven, on earth, in our tabernacles or in our hearts. She alone is the tree of life and Jesus alone is the fruit of that tree. Therefore anyone who wishes to possess this wonderful fruit in his heart must first possess the tree that produces it; whoever wishes to possess Jesus must possess Mary. Mary is also mistress of divine Wisdom. Not that she is above him who is truly God, or even equal to him. To think or say such a thing would be blasphemous. But because the Son of God, Eternal Wisdom, by making himself entirely subject to her as his Mother, gave her a maternal and natural authority over himself which surpasses our understanding. He not only gave her this power while he lived on earth but still gives it now in heaven, because glory does not destroy nature but makes it perfect. And so in heaven Jesus is as much as ever the Son of Mary, and Mary the Mother of Jesus. As his Mother, Mary has authority over Jesus, who because he wills it, remains in a sense subject to her. This means that Mary by her powerful prayers and because she is the Mother of God, obtains from Jesus all she wishes. It means that she gives him to whom she decides, and produces him every day in the souls of those she chooses. Happy are those who have won Mary's favors! They can rest assured that they will soon possess divine Wisdom, for as she loves those who love her (cf Prov 8.17), she generously shares her blessings with them, including that infinite treasure which contains every good, Jesus, the fruit of her womb. If it is true to say that Mary is, in a sense, mistress of Wisdom incarnate, what control must she have over all the graces and gifts of God, and what freedom must she enjoy in giving them to whom she chooses. The Fathers of the Church tell us that Mary is an immense ocean of all the perfections of God, the great storehouse of all his possessions, the inexhaustible treasury of the Lord, as well as the treasurer and dispenser of all his gifts. Because God gave her his Son, it is his will that we should receive all gifts through her, and that no heavenly gift should come down upon earth without passing through her as through a channel.
Of her fullness we have all received, and any grace or hope of salvation we may possess is a gift which comes to us from God through Mary. So truly is she mistress of God's possessions that she gives to whom she wills, all the graces of God, all the virtues of Jesus Christ, all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, every good thing in the realm of nature, grace and glory. These are the thoughts and expressions of the Fathers of the Church, whose words, for the sake of brevity, I do not quote in the Latin. But whatever gifts this sovereign and lovable Queen bestows upon us, she is not satisfied until she has given us incarnate Wisdom, Jesus her Son; and she is ever on the look-out for those who are worthy of Wisdom (Wis 6.17), so that she may give him to them. Moreover, Mary is the royal throne of Eternal Wisdom. It is in her that he shows his perfection, displays his treasures, and takes his delight. There is no place in heaven or on earth where Eternal Wisdom shows so much magnificence or finds more delight than in the incomparable Virgin Mary. That is why the Fathers of the Church call her the tabernacle of the divinity, the place of rest and contentment of the Blessed Trinity, the throne of God, the city of God, the altar of God, the temple of God, the world of God and the paradise of God. All these titles are most correct with regard to the different wonders which the most high God has worked in Mary. Only through Mary, then, can we possess divine Wisdom. But if we do receive this great gift, where are we to lodge him? What dwelling, what seat, what throne are we to offer this Prince who is so dazzling that the very rays of the sun are dust and darkness in his presence? No doubt we will be told that he has asked only for our heart, that it is our heart we must offer him, and it is there we must lodge him. But we know that our heart is tainted, carnal, full of unruly inclinations and consequently unfit to house such a noble and holy guest. If we had a thousand hearts like our own and offered him the choice of one of them as his throne, he would rightly reject our offer, turn a deaf ear to our entreaties, and even accuse us of boldness and impertinence in wanting to house him in a place so unclean and so unworthy of his royal dignity. What then can we do to make our hearts worthy of him? Here is the great way, the wonderful secret. Let us, so to speak, bring Mary into our abode by consecrating ourselves unreservedly to her as servants and
slaves. Let us surrender into her hands all we possess, even what we value most highly, keeping nothing for ourselves. This good mistress who never allows herself to be surpassed in generosity will give herself to us in a real but indefinable manner; and it is in her that Eternal Wisdom will come and settle as on a throne of splendour.

Mary is like a holy magnet attracting Eternal Wisdom to herself with such power that he cannot resist. This magnet drew him down to earth to save mankind, and continues to draw him every day into every person who possesses it. Once we possess Mary, we shall, through her intercession, easily and in a short time possess divine Wisdom.

Mary is the surest, the easiest, the shortest, and the holiest of all the means of possessing Jesus Christ. Were we to perform the most frightful penances, undertake the most painful journeys, or the most fatiguing labours, were we to shed all our blood in order to acquire divine Wisdom, all our efforts would be useless and inadequate if not supported by the intercession of the Blessed Virgin and a devotion to her. But if Mary speaks a word in our favor, if we love her and prove ourselves her faithful servants and imitators, we shall quickly and at little cost possess divine Wisdom.

Note that Mary is not only the Mother of Jesus, Head of all the elect, but is also Mother of all his members. Hence she conceives them, bears them in her womb and brings them forth to the glory of heaven through the graces of God which she imparts to them. This is the teaching of the Fathers of the Church, and among them St. Augustine, who says that the elect are in the womb of Mary until she brings them forth into the glory of heaven. Moreover, God has decreed that Mary should dwell in Jacob, make Israel her inheritance and place her roots in his elect and predestinate (cf Sir 24.13).

From these truths we must conclude:
1. that it is futile for us to compliment ourselves on being the children of God and disciples of Wisdom, if we are not children of Mary;
2. that to be numbered among the elect we must have a loving and sincere devotion to our Lady, so that she may dwell in us and plant the roots of her virtues in us;
3. that Mary must beget us in Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ in us, nurturing us towards the perfection and the fullness of his age (Eph 4.13), so that she may say more truthfully than St. Paul, "My dear children, I am in
travail over you afresh until Jesus Christ my Son is perfectly formed in you" (Gal 4.19).

2 What genuine devotion to Mary consists in
If I were asked by someone seeking to honour our Lady, "What does genuine devotion to her involve?" I would answer briefly that it consists in a full appreciation of the privileges and dignity of our Lady; in expressing our gratitude for her goodness to us; in zealously promoting devotion to her; in constantly appealing for her help; in being completely dependent on her; and in placing firm reliance and loving confidence in her motherly goodness.

We must beware of those false devotions to our Lady which the devil makes use of to deceive and ruin many souls.

I shall not describe them here. I shall only say that genuine devotion to Mary must be sincere, free from hypocrisy and superstition; loving, not lukewarm or scrupulous; constant, not fickle or unfaithful; holy, without being presumptuous or extravagant.

We must avoid joining those whose devotion is false and hypocritical, being only on their lips and in their outward behavior.

Neither must we be among those who are critical and scrupulous, who are afraid of going too far in honouring our Lady, as if honour given to our Lady could detract from her Son.

We must not be among those who are lukewarm or self-interested, who have no genuine love for our Lady or filial confidence in her, and who only pray to her to obtain or keep some temporal benefit.

We must not be like those who are inconstant and casual in their devotion to the Blessed Virgin, who serve her in fits and starts, honour her for a short time and fall away when temptation comes.

Lastly, we must avoid joining those whose devotion is presumptuous, who under the cloak of some exterior practices of devotion to Mary, conceal a heart corrupted by sin, and who imagine that because of such devotion to Mary they will not die without the sacraments but will be saved, no matter what sins they commit.

We must not neglect to become members of our Lady's confraternities, especially the Confraternity of the Holy Rosary, fulfilling faithfully the duties prescribed which can only make us holy.

But the most perfect and most profitable of all devotions to the Blessed Virgin consists in consecrating ourselves entirely to her, and to Jesus through her, as their slaves. It involves
consecrating to her completely
and for all eternity our body and soul, our possessions both spiritual and
material, the atoning value and the
merits of our good actions and our right to dispose of them. In short, it
involves the offering of all we have
acquired in the past, all we actually possess at the moment, and all we will
acquire in the future.
As there are several books treating of this devotion, I will content myself with
saying that I have never found
a practice of devotion to our Lady more solid than this one, since it takes its
inspiration from the example of
Jesus Christ. Neither have I found any devotion which redounds more to God's
joy, is more salutary to the
soul, and more feared by the enemies of our salvation; nor, finally, have I
found a devotion that is more
attractive and more satisfying.
This devotion, if well practised, not only draws Jesus Christ, Eternal Wisdom,
into our soul, but also
makes it agreeable to him and he remains there to the end of our life. For, I
ask you, what would be the good
of searching for secrets of finding divine Wisdom and of making every effort
to possess this treasure, if after
acquiring it, we were, like Solomon, to have the misfortune to lose it by our
unfaithfulness? Solomon was
wiser than we perhaps shall ever be, and consequently stronger and more
enlightened. He went astray, was
overcome by temptation, and fell into sin and folly. Thus he left to all those
who came after him a double
source of wonderment, that he should be so enlightened and still not see; so
wise and still be so foolish in his
sins. We can say that, if his example and writings have moved so many who
came after him to desire and
seek Wisdom, the example of his fall - a fact, as far as we can judge - has kept
multitudes of souls from
effectively going after something which, although priceless, could easily be
lost.
To be then in some way wiser than Solomon, we should place in Mary's care all
that we possess and the
treasure of all treasures, Jesus Christ, that she may keep him for us. We are
vessels too fragile to contain
this precious treasure, this heavenly manna. We are surrounded by too many
cunning and experienced
enemies to trust in our own prudence and strength. And we have had too many
sad experiences of our
fickleness and natural thoughtlessness. Let us be distrustful of our own
wisdom and fervor.
Mary is wise: let us place everything in her hands. She knows how to dispose
of us and all that we have
for the greater glory of God.
Mary is charitable: she loves us as her children and servants. Let us offer everything to her and we will
lose nothing by it; she will turn everything to our gain.
Mary is liberal: she returns more than we give her. Let us give her unreservedly all that we own without any reservation; she will give us a hundredfold in return.
Mary is powerful: nothing on earth can take from her what we have placed in her keeping. Let us then commit ourselves to her care; she will defend us against our enemies and help us to triumph over them.
Mary is faithful: she will not permit anything we give her to be lost or wasted. She stands alone as the Virgin most faithful to God and to men. She faithfully guarded and kept all that God entrusted to her, never allowing the least bit to be lost; and she still keeps watch every day, with a special care, over all those who have placed themselves entirely under her protection and guidance.
Let us, then, confide everything to the faithful Virgin Mary, binding ourselves to her as to a pillar that cannot be moved, as to an anchor that cannot slip, or, better still, as to Mount Sion which cannot be shaken.
Thus whatever may be our natural blindness, our weakness, and our inconstancy, however numerous and wicked our enemies may be, we shall never go wrong or go astray or have the misfortune to lose the grace of God and that infinite treasure which is Eternal Wisdom.

CONSECRATION OF ONESELF TO JESUS CHRIST, WISDOM INCARNATE, THROUGH THE HANDS OF MARY
Eternal and incarnate Wisdom, most lovable and adorable Jesus, true God and true man, only Son of the eternal Father and of Mary always Virgin, I adore you profoundly, dwelling in the splendour of your Father from all eternity and in the virginal womb of Mary, your most worthy Mother, at the time of your incarnation.
I thank you for having emptied yourself in assuming the condition of a slave to set me free from the cruel slavery of the evil one.
I praise and glorify you for having willingly chosen to obey Mary, your holy Mother, in all things, so that through her I may be a faithful slave of love.
But I must confess that I have not kept the vows and promises which I made to you so solemnly at my baptism. I have not fulfilled my obligations, and I do not deserve to be called your child or even your loving
slave.
Since I cannot lay claim to anything except what merits your rejection and displeasure, I dare no longer approach the holiness of your majesty on my own. That is why I turn to the intercession and the mercy of your holy Mother, whom you yourself have given me to mediate with you. Through her I hope to obtain from you contrition and pardon for my sins, and that Wisdom whom I desire to dwell in me always.
I turn to you, then, Mary immaculate, living tabernacle of God, in whom eternal Wisdom willed to receive the adoration of both men and angels.
I greet you as Queen of heaven and earth, for all that is under God has been made subject to your sovereignty.
I call upon you, the unfailing refuge of sinners, confident in your mercy that has never forsaken anyone.
Grant my desire for divine Wisdom and, in support of my petition, accept the promises and the offering of myself which I now make, conscious of my unworthiness.
I, an unfaithful sinner, renew and ratify today through you my baptismal promises. I renounce for ever Satan, his empty promises, and his evil designs, and I give myself completely to Jesus Christ, the incarnate Wisdom, to carry my cross after him for the rest of my life, and to be more faithful to him than I have been till now.
This day, with the whole court of heaven as witness, I choose you, Mary, as my Mother and Queen. I surrender and consecrate myself to you, body and soul, with all that I possess, both spiritual and material, even including the spiritual value of all my actions, past, present, and to come. I give you the full right to dispose of me and all that belongs to me, without any reservations, in whatever way you please, for the greater glory of God in time and throughout eternity.
Accept, gracious Virgin, this little offering of my slavery to honour and imitate the obedience which eternal Wisdom willingly chose to have towards you, his Mother. I wish to acknowledge the authority which both of you have over this little worm and pitiful sinner. By it I wish also to thank God for the privileges bestowed on you by the Blessed Trinity. I solemnly declare that for the future I will try to honour and obey you in all things as your true slave of love.
O admirable Mother, present me to your dear Son as his slave now and for always, so that he who
redeemed me through you, will now receive me through you.  
Mother of mercy, grant me the favor of obtaining the true Wisdom of God, and so make me one of those whom you love, teach and guide, whom you nourish and protect as your children and slaves.  
Virgin most faithful, make me in everything so committed a disciple, imitator, and slave of Jesus, your Son, incarnate Wisdom, that I may become, through your intercession and example, fully mature with the fullness which Jesus possessed on earth, and with the fullness of his glory in heaven.  
Amen.  
Let those accept it who can (Mt 19.12).  
Let the wise consider these things (Hos 14.9; cf Jer 9.12; Ps 106.43).  

The Little Catechism of the Curé of Ars  
By St John Vianney (Patron Saint of Parish Priests)  
Including  
Instructions on the Catechism and  
Explanations and Exhortations

Preface: The Blessed Curé of Ars in His Catechetical Instructions  
"THERE IS no doubt," says Pere Gratry, "that, through purity of heart, innocence, either preserved or recovered by virtue, faith, and religion, there are in man capabilities and resources of mind, of body, and of heart which most people would not suspect. To this order of resources belongs what theology calls infused science, the intellectual virtues which the Divine Word inspires into our minds when He dwells in us by faith and love."  
And Pere Gratry quotes with enthusiasm, excusing himself for not translating them better, these magnificent words of a saint who lived in the
eleventh century in one of the mystic monasteries on the banks of the Rhine: "This is what purifies the eye of the heart, and enables it to raise itself to the true light: contempt of worldly cares, mortification of the body, contrition of heart, abundance of tears . . . meditation on the admirable Essence of God and on His chaste Truth, fervent and pure prayer, joy in God, ardent desire for Heaven. Embrace all this," adds the saint, "and continue in it. Advance towards the light which offers itself to you as to its sons, and descends of itself into your hearts. Take your hearts out of your breasts, and give them to Him who speaks to you, and He will fill them with deific splendour, and you will be sons of light and angels of God."

The description we have just read seems to have been traced from the very life of the Curé of Ars. Every detail recalls him, every feature harmonises marvellously with his. Who has ever carried further "contempt of worldly cares, mortification of the body, abundance of tears?" He was always bathed in tears. And then, "meditation on the admirable Essence of God and on His chaste Truth, and fervent and pure prayer, joy in God, ardent desire for Heaven" -- how characteristic is this! "He had advanced towards the light, and the light had descended of itself into his heart. . . . He had taken his heart from his breast, and given it to Him who spoke to him; and He who spoke to him," who is the Divine, uncreated Word of God, "filled him with deific splendour." No one could doubt it who has had the happiness of assisting at any of the catechisms of Ars; of hearing that extraordinary language, which was like no human language; who has seen the irresistible effect produced upon hearers of all classes by that voice, that emotion, that intuition, that fire, and the signal beauty of that unpolished and almost vulgar French, which was transfigured and penetrated by his holy energy, even to the form, the arrangement, and the harmony of its words and syllables. And yet the Curé of Ars did not speak words: true eloquence consists in speaking things; he spoke things, and in a most wonderful manner. He poured out his whole soul into the souls of the crowds who listened to him, that he might make them believe, love, and hope like himself. That is the aim and the triumph of evangelical eloquence.

How could this man, who had nearly been refused admittance into the great seminary because of his ignorance, and who had, since his promotion to the priesthood, been solely employed in prayer and in the labours of the confessional-how could he have attained to the power of teaching like one of the Fathers of the Church? Whence did he derive his astonishing knowledge of God, of nature, and of the history of the soul? How was it that his thoughts and expressions so often coincided with those of the greatest Christian geniuses,
St. Augustine, St. Bernard, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Teresa?

For example, we have often heard him say that the heart of the saints was liquid. We were much struck with this energetic expression, without suspecting that it was so theologically accurate; and we were surprised and touched to find, in turning over the pages of the Summa, that the angelical doctor assigns to love four immediate effects, of which the first is the liquefaction of the heart. M. Vianney had certainly never read St. Thomas, which makes this coincidence the more remarkable; and, indeed, it is inexplicable to those who are ignorant of the workings of grace, and who do not comprehend those words of the Divine Master: "You have hid these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them to little ones." [Matt. 11: 25].

The Spirit of God had been pleased to engrave on the heart of this holy priest all that he was to know and to teach to others; and it was the more deeply engraved, as that heart was the more pure, the more detached, and empty of the vain science of men; like a clean and polished block of marble, ready for the tool of the sculptor.

The faith of the Curé of Ars was his whole science; his book was Our Lord Jesus Christ. He sought for wisdom nowhere but in Jesus Christ, in His death and in His Cross. To him no other wisdom was true, no other wisdom useful. He sought it not amid the dust of libraries, not in the schools of the learned, but in prayer, on his knees, at his Master's Feet, covering His Divine Feet with tears and kisses. In the presence of the Blessed Sacrament where he passed his days and nights before the crowd of pilgrims had yet deprived him of liberty day and night, he had learnt it all.

When persons have heard him discourse upon Heaven, on the Sacred Humanity of Our Lord, on His dolorous Passion, His Real Presence in the most Holy Sacrament of our altars, on the Blessed Virgin Mary, her attractions and her greatness, on the happiness of the saints, the purity of the angels, the beauty of souls, the dignity of man -- on all those subjects which were familiar to him -- it often happened to them to come out from the discourse quite convinced that the good father saw the things of which he had spoken with such fullness of heart, with such eloquent emotion, in such passionate accents, with such abundance of tears; and indeed his words were then impressed with a character of divine tenderness, of sweet gentleness, and of penetrating unction, which was beyond all comparison. There was so extraordinary a majesty, so marvellous a power, in his voice, in his gestures, in his looks, in his transfigured countenance, that it was impossible to listen to him and remain cold and
unmoved.

Views and thoughts imparted by a divine light have quite a different bearing from those acquired by study. Doubt was dispelled from the most rebellious hearts, and the admirable clearness of faith took its place before so absolute a certainty, an exposition at once so luminous and so simple. The word of the Curé of Ars was the more efficacious because he preached with his whole being. His mere presence was a manifestation of the Truth; and of him it might well be said that he would have moved and convinced men even he would have moved and convinced men even by his silence. When there appeared in the pulpit that pale, thin, and transparent face; when you heard that shrill, piercing voice, like a cry, giving out to the crowd sublime thoughts clothed in simple and popular language, you fancied yourself in the presence of one of those great characters of the Bible, speaking to men in the language of the prophets. You were already filled with respect and confidence, and disposed to them alone! How many have recognised themselves in the picture he drew of their weaknesses! How many have listened to the secret history of their failings, of their temptations, of their combats, of their uneasiness, and of their remorse! To those to whom it was given to assist at these catechisms, two things were equally remarkable—the preacher and the hearer. It was not words that the preacher gave forth, it was more than words; it was a soul, a holy soul, all filled with faith and love, that poured itself out before you, of which you felt in your own soul the immediate contact and the warmth. As for the hearer, he was no longer on the earth, he was transported into those pure regions from which dogmas and mysteries descend. As the saint spoke, new and clear views opened to the mind: Heaven and earth, the present and the future life, the things of time and of eternity, appeared in a light that you had never before perceived. When a man, coming fresh from the world, and bringing with him worldly ideas, feelings, and impressions, sat down to listen to this doctrine, it stunned and amazed him; it set so utterly at defiance the world, and all that the world believes, loves and extols. At first he was astonished and thunderstruck; then by degrees he was touched, and surprised into weeping like the rest. No eloquence has drawn forth more tears, or penetrated deeper into the hearts of men. His words opened a way before them like flames, and the most hardened hearts melted like wax before the fire. They were burning, radiating, triumphant; they did more than charm the mind, they subdued the whole soul and brought it back to God, not by the long and difficult way of argument, but by
the paths of emotion which lead shortly and directly to the desired end.
M. Vianney was listened to as a new apostle, sent by Jesus Christ to His Church, to renew in Her the holiness and fervour of His Divine Spirit, in an age whose corruption had so effaced them from the souls of most men. And it is a great marvel that, proposing, like the apostles, a doctrine incomprehensible to human reason, and very bitter to the depraved taste of the world -- speaking of nothing but crosses, humiliations, poverty, and penance -- his doctrine was so well received. Those who had not yet received it into their hearts were glad to feed their minds upon it. If they had not courage to make it the rule of their conduct, they could not help admiring and wishing to follow it.
It is not less remarkable that, though he spoke only in the incorrect and common French natural to the people brought up in the country, one might say of him as of the Apostles, that he was heard by all the nations of the world, and that his voice resounded through all the earth. He was the oracle that people went to consult, that they might learn to know Jesus Christ. Not only the simple but the learned, not only the fervent but the indifferent, found in it a divine unction which penetrated them and made them long to hear it again. The more they heard, the more they wished to hear; and they always came back with love to the foot of that pulpit, as to a place where they had found beauty and truth.
Nothing more clearly showed that the Curé of Ars was full of the Spirit of God, who alone is greater than our heart; we may draw from His depths without ever exhausting them, and the divine satiety which He gives only excites a greater appetite.
The holy Curé spoke without any other preparation than his continual union with God; he passed without any interval or delay from the confessional to the pulpit; and yet he showed an imperturbable confidence, which sprang from complete and absolute forgetfulness of himself. Besides, no one was tempted to criticise him. People generally criticise those who are not indifferent to their opinion of them. Those who heard the Curé of Ars had something else to do -- they had to pass judgment on themselves.
M. Vianney cared nothing for what might be said or thought of him. Of whomsoever his audience might consist, though bishops and other illustrious personages often mingled with the crowd that surrounded his pulpit, he never betrayed the least emotion, nor the least embarrassment proceeding from human respect. He, who was so timid and so humble, was no longer the same person when he passed through the compact mass that filled the church at the hour of catechism; he wore an air of triumph, he carried his head high, his face was lighted up, and his eyes cast brilliant glances.
He was asked one day if he had never been afraid of his audience. "No," he answered; "on the contrary, the more people there are, the better I am pleased.

"Then, to impose on us, he added, "A proud man always thinks he does well." If he had had the pope, the cardinals, and kings around his pulpit, he would have said neither more nor less, for he thought only of souls, and made them think only of God. This real power of his word supplied in him the want of talent and rhetoric; it gave a singular majesty and an irresistible authority to the most simple things that issued from that venerable mouth.

The power of his word was also increased by the high opinion the pilgrims entertained of his sanctity. "The first quality of the man called to the perilous honour of instructing the people," says St. Isidore, "is to be holy and irreproachable. He whose mission it is to deter others from sin must be a stranger to sin; he whose task it is to lead model of perfection." In the holy catechist of Ars, virtue was preaching truth. When he spoke of the love of God, of humility, gentleness, patience, mortification, sacrifice, poverty, or the desire of suffering, his example gave immense weight to his words; for a man who practices what he teaches is very powerful in convincing and persuading others.

He used to put his ideas into the most simple and transparent form, letting them suggest the expression that best suited them. He could bring truths of the highest order within the reach of every intellect; he clothed them in familiar language; his simplicity touched the heart, and his doctrine delighted the mind.

That science which is not sought for is abundant; it flows like the fountain of living water, which the Samaritan woman knew not, and of which the Saviour taught her the virtue. Thus, his considerations on sin, on the offence it is against God, and the evil it inflicts on man, were the painful result of his thoughts. They penetrated him, they overwhelmed him; they were like a burning arrow piercing his breast; he relieved his pain by giving utterance to it.

It was a wonderful thing that this man, so ready to proclaim his own ignorance, had by nature a great attraction for the higher faculties of the mind. The greatest praise that he could give anyone was to say that he was clever. When the good qualities of any great person, whether an ecclesiastic or a layman, were enumerated before him, he seldom failed to complete the panegyric in these words: "What pleases me most is that he is learned."

M. Vianney appreciated the gift of eloquence in others; he blessed God, who for His own glory gives such privileges to man, but he disdained them for himself. He had no scruple in utterly neglecting grammar and syntax in his discourses; he seemed to do it on purpose, out of humility, for there were faults in them that he might easily have avoided. But this incorrect language penetrated the souls of his hearers, enlightened and converted them. "A
polished
discourse," says St. Jerome, "only gratifies the ears; one which is not so
makes its way to the heart."

His manner of speaking was sudden and impetuous; he loosed his words like
arrows from a bow, and his whole soul seemed to fly with them. In these
effusions the pathetic, the profound, the sublime, was often side by side with
the simple and vulgar. They had all the freedom and irregularity, but also all
the originality and power of an improvisation. We have sometimes tried to
write
down what we had just heard, but it was impossible to recall the things that
had
most moved us and to put them into form. What is most divine in the heart of
man
cannot be expressed in writing. We have, however, set down a few words, in
which
we find more than a remembrance. We find the Curé of Ars himself, the simple
expression of his heart and of his soul. These are some of his lofty and deep
thoughts:
"To love God! oh how beautiful it is! We must be in Heaven to comprehend
love. . . . Prayer helps us a little, because prayer is the elevation of the
soul to Heaven. . . . The more we know men, the less we love them. It is the
reverse with God; the more we know Him, the more we love Him. This
knowledge
inflames the soul with such a love, that it can no longer love or desire
anything from God. . . . Man was created by love; therefore he is so disposed to
love. On the other hand, he is so great that nothing on the earth can satisfy
him. He can be satisfied only when he turns towards God. . . . Take a fish out
of the water, and it will not live. Well, such is man without God.
"There are some who do not love the good God, who do not pray to Him, and
who prosper; that is a bad sign. They have done a little good in the midst of a
great deal of evil. The good God rewards them in this life.
"This earth is a bridge to cross the water; it serves only to support our
steps. . . . We are in this world, but we are not of this world, since we say
every day, 'Our Father, Who art in Heaven.' We must wait, then, for our
reward
till we are at home, in our Father's house. This is the reason why good
Christians suffer crosses, contradictions, adversities, contempt, calumnies --
so
much the better! . . . But people are astonished at this. They seem to think
that because we love the good God a little, we ought to have nothing to
contradict us, nothing to make us suffer. . . . We say, 'There is a person who
is not good, and yet everything goes well with him; but with me, it is of no use
doing my best; everything goes wrong. It is because we do not understand the
value and the happiness of crosses. We say sometimes that God chastises those
whom He loves. That is not true. Trials are not chastisements; they are graces
to those whom God loves. . . . We must not consider the labor, but the
recompense. A merchant does not consider the trouble he undergoes in his
commerce, but the profit he gains by it. . . . What are twenty years, thirty years, compared to eternity? What, then, have we to suffer? A few humiliations, a few annoyances, a few sharp words; that will not kill us.

"It is glorious to be able to please God, so little as we are! Our tongue should be employed only in praying, our heart in loving, our eyes in weeping. We are great, and we are nothing. . . . There is nothing greater than man, and nothing less. Nothing is greater, if we consider his soul; nothing is less, if we look at his body. . . . We occupy ourselves with the body, as if we had it alone to take care of; we have, on the contrary, it alone to despise. . . . We are the work of a God. . . . One always loves one's own work. . . . It is easy enough to understand that we are the work of a God; but that the crucifixion of a God should be our work! that is incomprehensible.

"Some people attribute a hard heart to the Eternal Father. Oh, how mistaken they are! The Eternal Father, to disarm His own justice, gave to His Son an excessively tender heart; no one can give what he does not possess. Our Lord said to His Father: 'Father, do not punish them!' . . . Our Lord suffered more than was necessary to redeem us. But what would have satisfied the justice of His Father would not have satisfied His love. Without Our Lord's death, all mankind together could not expiate a single little lie.

"In the world, people hide Heaven and Hell: Heaven, because if we knew its beauty, we would wish to go there at all costs -- we would, indeed, leave the world alone; Hell, because if we knew the torments that are endured there, we would do all we could to avoid going there.

"The Sign of the Cross is formidable to the devil, because by the Cross we escape from him. We should make the Sign of the Cross with great respect. We begin with the forehead: it is the head, creation -- the Father; then the heart: love, life, redemption -- the Son; then the shoulders: strength -- the Holy Spirit.

Everything reminds us of the Cross. We ourselves are made in the form of a cross. In Heaven we shall be nourished by the breath of God. . . . The good God will place us as an architect places the stones of a building -- each one in the spot to which it is adapted. The soul of the saints contained the foundations of Heaven. They felt an emanation from Heaven, in which they bathed and lost themselves. . . . As the disciples on Mount Thabor saw nothing but Jesus alone, so interior souls, on the Thabor of their hearts no longer see anything but Our Lord. They are two friends, who are never tired of each other. . . .

"There are some who lose the faith, and never see Hell till they enter it. The lost will be enveloped in the wrath of God, as the fish are in the water. It plenty of time to rest in all eternity.

"If we understood our happiness aright, we might almost say that we are happier than the saints in Heaven. They live upon their income; they can earn no more, while we can augment our treasure every moment. The Commandments of God
are the guides which God gives us to show us the road to Heaven, like the names
written up at the corners of the streets and on guideposts, to point out the way. The grace of God helps us to walk and supports us. He is as necessary to us as crutches are to a lame man.
"When we go to confession, we ought to understand what we are going to do. It might be said that we are going to unfasten Our Lord from the Cross. When you have made a good confession, you have chained up the devil. The sins that we conceal will all come to light.
"In order to conceal our sins effectually, we must confess them thoroughly. Our faults are like a grain of sand beside the great mountain of the mercies of the good God."
M. Vianney made great use of comparisons and similes in his teachings; he borrowed them from nature, which was known and loved by the crowd whom he addressed, from the beauties of the country, from the emotions of rural life. The recollections of his childhood had kept all their freshness, and in his old age he could not resist the innocent pleasure of recalling for a moment the lively sympathies of his youth. This return of the thoughts to the brightest days of life is like an anticipation of the Resurrection. After the manner of Our Lord, he used the most well known events, the most common facts, the incidents that came before him as figures of the spiritual life, and made them the theme of his instructions. The Gospel is full of symbols and figures, fitted to lead the soul to the comprehension of eternal truths by a comparison with what is more evident to the senses. In like manner, allusions, metaphors, parables and figures colored all the discourses of the Curé of Ars. His mind had acquired the habit of raising itself, by means of visible things, to God and to the invisible. There was not one of his catechisms in which he did not often speak of rivulets, forests, trees, birds, flowers, dew, lilies, balm, perfume and honey. All contemplatives love this language, and the innocence of their thoughts attaches itself by predilection to all the beautiful and pure things with which the Author of creation has embellished His work. A good man, Our Lord says, brings forth good things out of the good treasures of his heart. The sweet writings of St. Francis de Sales are a model of this style, dear to all mystics; and we are not surprised to find these graces of language and this exquisite taste in the Bishop of Geneva. But where had this poor country cure learnt his flowers of eloquence? Who had taught him to use them with such delicate tact and ingenuity? Let us listen:
"Like a beautiful white dove rising from the midst of the waters, and coming to shake her wings over the earth, the Holy Spirit issues from the infinite ocean of the Divine perfections, and hovers over pure souls, to pour into them the balm of love. The Holy Spirit reposes in a pure soul as on a bed
of roses. There comes forth from a soul in which the Holy Spirit resides a sweet door, like that of the vine when it is in flower.

"He who has preserved his baptismal innocence is like a child who has never disobeyed his father. . . . One who has kept his innocence feels himself lifted up on high by love, as a bird is carried up by its wings. Those who have pure souls are like eagles and swallows, which fly in the air. . . . A Christian who is pure is upon earth like a bird that is kept fastened down by a string. Poor little bird! it only waits for the moment when the string is cut to fly away.

"Good Christians are like those birds that have large wings and small feet, and which never light upon the ground, because they could not rise again and would be caught. They make their nests, too, upon the points of rocks, on the roofs of houses, in high places. So the Christian ought to be always on the heights. As soon as we lower our thoughts towards the earth, we are taken captive.

"A pure soul is like a fine pearl. As long as it is hidden in the shell, at the bottom of the sea, no one thinks of admiring it. But if you bring it into the sunshine, this pearl will shine and attract all eyes. Thus, the pure soul, which is hidden from the eyes of the world, will one day shine before the angels in the sunshine of eternity. The pure soul is a beautiful rose, and the Three Divine Persons descend from Heaven to inhale its fragrance.

"The mercy of God is like an overflowing torrent -- it carries away hearts with it as it passes. The good God will pardon a repentant sinner more quickly than a mother would snatch her child out of the fire. The elect are like the ears of corn that are left by the reapers, and like the bunches of grapes after the vintage. Imagine a poor mother obliged to let fall the blade of the guillotine upon the head of her child: such is the good God when He condemns a sinner.

"What happiness will it be for the just, at the end of the world, when the soul, perfumed with the odours of Heaven, shall be reunited to its body, and enjoy God for all eternity! Then our bodies will come out of the ground like linen that has been bleached. . . . The bodies of the just will shine in Heaven like fine diamonds, like globes of love! What a cry of joy when the soul shall come to unite itself to its glorified body -- to that body which will never more be to it an instrument of sin, nor a cause of suffering! It will revel in the sweetness of love, as the bee revels in flowers. . . . Thus the soul will be embalmed for eternity!"

We see that the Curé of Ars was a poet, in the highest sense of the word; his heart was endowed with exquisite sensibility, and he gave expression to it in the simplest and truest manner.

"One day in spring," he said, "I was going to see a sick person; the bushes were full of little birds that were singing with all their might. I took pleasure in listening to them, and I said to myself, 'Poor little birds, you know not what you are doing! What a pity that is! You are singing the praises of
God." Does not this recall St. Francis of Assisi?
"Our holy Curé," writes one of his most intelligent hearers, "is always equally admirable in his life, his works, and his words. This may perhaps surprise you, but it is perfectly true. There is something astonishing in the satisfaction, or rather the enthusiasm, with which the crowd of all classes presses in to hear his so-called catechisms. I have heard distinguished ecclesiastics, men of the world, learned men, and artists, declare that nothing had ever touched them so much as that expansion of a heart that is contemplating, loving, and adoring. A collection might almost be made of the Fioretti of the Curé of Ars. Nothing could be more graceful and brilliant than the picture he drew, a few days ago, of spring."
A few lines further on, he added, "Yesterday, our old St. Francis of Assisi was more poetical than ever, in the midst of his tears and of his bursts of love. Speaking of the soul of man, which ought to aspire to God alone, he cried out, 'Does the fish seek the trees and the fields? No; it darts through the water. Does the bird remain on the earth? No; it flies in the air. . . . And man, who is created to love God, to possess God, to contain God, what will he do with all the powers that have been given to him for that end?"
He liked to relate the simple and poetic legend of St. Maur, who, when he was one day carrying St. Benedict his dinner, found a large serpent. He took it up, put it in the fold of his habit, and showed it to St. Benedict, saying, "See, Father, what I have found: ' When the holy patriarch and all the religious were assembled, the serpent began to hiss, and tried to bite them. Then St. Benedict said, "My child, go back and put it where you found it." And when St. Maur was gone, he added, "My brethren, do you know why that animal is so gentle with that child? It is because he has kept his baptismal innocence."
He also repeated with great pleasure the anecdote of St. Francis of Assisi preaching to the fishes. "One day," he said, "St. Francis of Assisi was preaching in a province where there were a great many heretics. These miscreants stopped their ears to avoid hearing him. The saint then led the people to the seashore, and called the fishes to come and listen to the Word of God, since men rejected it. The fishes came to the edge of the water, the large ones behind the little ones. St. Francis asked them this question, 'Are you grateful to the good God for saving you from the deluge?' The fishes bowed their heads. Then St. Francis said to the people, 'See, these fishes are grateful for the benefits of God, and you are so ungrateful as to despise them!'"
M. Vianney mingled with his discourses some happy reminiscenses of his shepherd's life: "We ought to do like shepherds who are in the fields in winter -- life is indeed a long winter. They kindle a fire, but from time to time they run about in all directions to look for wood to keep it up. If we, like the shepherds, were always to keep up the fire of the love of God in our hearts by prayers and good works, it would never go out. If you have not the love of God, you are very poor. You are like a tree without flowers or fruit. It is always
springtime in a soul united to God." When he spoke of prayer, the most pleasing
meet him; but it is held back by the bonds of the flesh, in men who give
everything to the senses, who live only for their body.
"Our soul is swathed in our body, like a baby in its swaddling-clothes; we
can see nothing but its face." Everyone will be struck with the truth and
aptitude of this last simile. Besides these touching comparisons, some of M.
Vianney's were original and energetic. To exalt the benefits of the Sacrament
of Penance, he made use of metaphors and parables: "A furious wolf once came into
our country, devouring everything. Finding on his way a child of two years old,
he seized it in his mouth, and carried it off; but some men, who were pruning a
vineyard, ran to attack him, and snatched his prey from him. It is thus that the
Sacrament of Penance snatches us from the claws of the devil."
When he had to draw a parallel between Christians and worldly people, he
said, "I think none so much to be pitied as those poor worldly people. They
wear a cloak lined with thorns -- they cannot move without pricking themselves;
while
good Christians have a cloak lined with soft fur. The good Christian sets no
value on the goods of this world. He escapes from them like a rat out of the
water.
"Unhappily, our hearts are not sufficiently pure and free from all earthly
affections. If you take a very clean and very dry sponge, and soak it in water,
it will be filled to overflowing; but if it is not dry and clean, it will take
up nothing. In like manner, when the heart is not free and disengaged from
the things of the earth, it is in vain that we steep it in prayer; it will absorb
nothing.
"The heart of the wicked swarms with sins like an anthill with ants. It is
like a piece of bad meat full of worms. When we abandon ourselves to our
passions, we interweave thorns around our heart. We are like moles a week
old;
no sooner do we see the light, than we bury ourselves in the ground. The devil
amuses us till the last moment, as a poor man is kept amused while the
soldiers
are coming to take him. When they come, he cries and struggles in vain, for they
will not release him.
"When men die, they are often like a very rusty bar of iron, that must be
put into the fire. Poor sinners are stupefied like snakes in winter. The
slanderer is like the snail, which crawling over flowers, leaves its slime upon
them and defiles them. What would you say of a man who should plough his
neighbour's field, and leave his own uncultivated? Well, that is what you do.
You are always at work on the consciences of others, and you leave your own
untilled. Oh, when death comes, how we shall regret having thought so much
of others, and so little of ourselves; for we shall have to give an account of ourselves, and not of others! Let us think of ourselves, of our own conscience, which we ought always to examine, as we examine our hands to see if they are clean.

"We always have two secretaries: the devil, who writes down our bad actions, to accuse us of them; and our good angel, who writes down our good ones, to justify us at the Day of Judgment. When all our actions shall be brought before us, how few will be pleasing to God, even among the best of them!

So many imperfections, so many thoughts of self-love, human satisfactions, sensual pleasures, self-complacency, will be found mingled with them all! They appear good, but it is only appearance, like those fruits which seem yellow and ripe because they have been pierced by insects."

We see by these fragments that M. Vianney was one of those contemplatives who do not disdain to soften the austerity of their ideas by simple graces of expression, whether out of compassionate kindness to their disciples, or from the natural attraction felt by those who are good for what is beautiful. He found in beautiful creatures Him who is supremely beautiful; he disdained not the least of them. At peace with all things, and having returned in a manner to the primitive innocence and condition of Eden, when Adam beheld creatures in the divine light, and loved them with fraternal charity, his heart overflowed with love, not only for men, but also for all beings visible and invisible. His words breathed an affectionate sympathy for the whole of creation, which no doubt appeared to him in its original dignity and purity. He looked upon it as a sister, who expressed the same thoughts and the same love as himself in another manner. This is shown in his apostrophe to the little birds. Where other eyes perceived nothing but perishable beauties, he discovered, as with a sort of second sight, the holy harmony and the eternal relations which connect the physical with the moral order -- the mysteries of nature with those of faith. He did the same in the region of history. Ages, events, and men were to him only symbols and allegories, prophecies and their accomplishment. Nothing could be more beautiful, touching, and pathetic, than the application that he made of the legend of St. Alexis to the Real Presence of Our Lord. At the moment when the mother of St. Alexis recognises her son in the lifeless body of the beggar, who has lived thirty years under the staircase of her palace, she cries out, "O my son, why have I known you so late?" . . The soul, on quitting this life, will see Him whom it possessed in the Holy Eucharist; and at the sight of the consolations, of the beauty, of the riches that it failed to recognize, it also will cry out, "O Jesus! O my God! why have I known You so late."

The Curé of Ars sometimes made edifying reflections on recent events and circumstances which had made an impression upon himself; and, though he
with reserve, we have in this way gained some valuable information, which would otherwise have been lost. "Because Our Lord does not show Himself in the Holy Sacrament in all His majesty you behave without respect in His Presence; but, nevertheless, He Himself is there He is in the midst of you. . . . So, when that good bishop was here the other day, everybody was pushing against him . . . Ah, if they had known he was a bishop! . . . "We give our youth to the devil, and the remains of our life to the Good God, who is so good that He deigns to be content with even that. . . but, happily, everyone does not do so. A great lady has been here, of one of the first families in France; she went away this morning. She is scarcely three-and-twenty, and she is rich—very rich indeed. . . . She has offered herself in sacrifice to the good God for the expiation of sins, and for the conversion of sinners. She wears a girdle all armed with iron points; she mortifies herself in a thousand ways; and her parents know nothing of it. She is white as a sheet of paper. Hers is a beautiful soul, very pleasing to the good God, such as are still to be found now and then in the world, and they prevent the world from coming to an end. "One day, two Protestant ministers came here, who did not believe in the Real Presence of Our Lord. I said to them, 'Do you think that a piece of bread could detach itself, and go, of its own accord, to place itself on the tongue of a person who came near to receive it?' 'No.' 'Then it is not bread.' There was a man who had doubts about the Real Presence, and he said, 'What do we know about it? It is not certain. What is consecration? What happens on the altar at that moment?' But he wished to believe, and he prayed the Blessed Virgin to obtain faith for him. Listen attentively to this. I do not say that this happened somewhere, but I say that it happened to myself. At the moment when this man came up to receive Holy Communion, the Sacred Host detached itself from my fingers while I was still a good way off, and went off itself and placed itself upon the tongue of that man." We will not undertake to give a consecutive view of the teaching of the Curée of Ars. There was indeed a sort of connection between the parts of it, but it would be impossible to describe the sudden inspirations that burst forth and ran through it like rays of light. His Catechisms in general defied analysis; and we should be afraid of disfiguring them by reducing them to the formality of a theological system. We shall therefore confine ourselves to offering to our readers an abridgment of some of the most remarkable discourses.

PART 1: INSTRUCTIONS ON THE CATECHISM
CHAPTER 1: Catechism on Salvation
THERE ARE many Christians who do not even know why they are in the
"Oh my God, why have You sent me into the world?" "To save your soul." "And why do You wish me to be saved?" "Because I love you." The good God has created us and sent us into the world because He loves us; He wishes to save us because He loves us. . . . To be saved, we must know, love and serve God. Oh, what a beautiful life! How good, how great a thing it is to know, to love and serve God! We have nothing else to do in this world. All that we do besides is lost time. We must act only for God, and put our works into His hands. . . . We should say, on awaking, "I desire to do everything today for You, O my God! I will submit to all that You shall send me, as coming from You. I offer myself as a sacrifice to You. But, O God, I can do nothing without You. Do help me!"

Oh, how bitterly shall we regret at the hour of death the time we have given to pleasures, to useless conversations, to repose, instead of having employed it in mortification, in prayer, in good works, in thinking of our poor misery, in weeping over our poor sins; then we shall see that we have done nothing for Heaven. Oh, my children, how sad it is! Three-quarters of those who are Christians labor for nothing but to satisfy this body, which will soon be buried and corrupted, while they do not give a thought to their poor soul, which must be happy or miserable for all eternity. They have neither sense nor reason: it makes one tremble.

Look at that man, who is so active and restless, who makes a noise in the world, who wants to govern everybody, who thinks himself as important, who seems as if he would like to say to the sun, "Go away, and let me enlighten the world instead of you." Some day this proud man will be reduced at the utmost to a little handful of dust, which will be swept away from river to river.

This is a good rule of conduct, to do nothing but what we can offer to the good God. Now, we cannot offer to Him slanders, calumnies, injustice, anger, blasphemy, impurity, night clubs, dancing; yet that is all that people do in the world. Speaking of dances, St. Francis of Sales used to say that "they were like mushrooms, the best were good for nothing." Mothers are apt to say indeed, "Oh, I watch over my daughters." They watch over their attire, but they cannot watch over their hearts. Those who have dances in their houses load themselves with a terrible responsibility before God; they are answerable for all the evil that is done -- for the bad thoughts, the slanders, the jealousies, the hatred, the revenge. . . . Ah, if they well understood this responsibility they would never have any dances. Just like those who make bad pictures and statues, or write bad books, they will have to answer for all the harm that these things will do
during all the time they last. . . . Oh that makes one tremble!
See, my children, we must reflect that we have a soul to save, and an
eternity that awaits us. The world, its riches, pleasures, and honors will pass
away. Let us take care, then. The saints did not all begin well; but they all
ended well. We have begun badly; let us end well, and we shall go one day and
meet them in Heaven.
CHAPTER 2: Catechism on The Love of God
OUR BODY is a vessel of corruption; it is meant for death and for the
worms, nothing more! And yet we devote ourselves to satisfying it, rather than
to enriching our soul, which is so great that we can conceive nothing
greater -- no, nothing, nothing! For we see that God, urged by the ardour of His
love, would not create us like the animals; He has created us in His own
image and likeness, do you see? Oh, how great is man!
Man, being created by love, cannot live without love: either he loves God,
or he loves himself and he loves the world. See, my children, it is faith that
we want. . . . When we have not faith, we are blind. He who does not see, does
not know; he who does not know does not love; he who does not love God loves
himself, and at the same time loves his pleasures. He fixes his heart on things
which pass away like smoke. He cannot know the truth, nor any good thing; he
can
know nothing but falsehood, because he has no light; he is in a mist. If he had
light, he would see plainly that all that he loves can give him nothing but
eternal death; it is a foretaste of Hell.
Do you see, my children, except God, nothing is solid -- nothing, nothing! If
it is life, it passes away; if it is a fortune, it crumbles away; if it is
health, it is destroyed; if it is reputation, it is attacked. We are scattered
like the wind. . . . Everything is passing away full speed, everything is going
to ruin. O God! O God! how much those are to be pitied, then, who set their
hearts on all these things! They set their hearts on them because they love
themselves too much; but they do not love themselves with a reasonable love-
they
love themselves with a love that seeks themselves and the world, that seeks
creatures more than God. That is the reason why they are never satisfied,
never
quiet; they are always uneasy, always tormented, always upset. See, my
children,
the good Christian runs his course in this world mounted on a fine triumphal
chariot; this chariot is borne by angels, and conducted by Our Lord Himself,
while the poor sinner is harnessed to the chariot of this life, and the devil
who drives it forces him to go on with great strokes of the whip.
My children, the three acts of faith, hope and charity contain all the
happiness of man upon the earth. By faith, we believe what God has promised
us:
we believe that we shall one day see Him, that we shall possess Him, that we
shall be eternally happy with Him in Heaven. By hope, we expect the
fulfilment
of these promises: we hope that we shall be rewarded for all our good actions,
for all our good thoughts, for all our good desires; for God takes into account even our good desires. What more do we want to make us happy?

In Heaven, faith and hope will exist no more, for the mist which obscures our reason will be dispelled; our mind will be able to understand the things that are hidden from it here below. We shall no longer hope for anything, because we shall have everything. We do not hope to acquire a treasure which we already possess. . . . But love; oh, we shall be inebriated with it! we shall be drowned, lost in that ocean of divine love, annihilated in that immense love of the Heart of Jesus! so that love is a foretaste of Heaven. Oh, how happy should we be if we knew how to understand it, to feel it, to taste it! What makes us unhappy is that we do not love God.

When we say, "My God, I believe, I believe firmly," that is, without the least doubt, without the least hesitation. . . Oh, if we were penetrated with these words: "I firmly believe that You are present everywhere, that You seest me, that I am under Thine eyes, that one day I myself shall see You clearly, that I shall enjoy all the good things You have promised me! O my God, I hope that You wilt reward me for all that I have done to please You! O my God, I love You; my heart is made to love You!" Oh, this act of faith, which is also an act of love, would suffice for everything! If we understood our own happiness in being able to love God, we should remain motionless in ecstasy. .

. . .

If a prince, an emperor, were to cause one of his subjects to appear before him, and should say to him, "I wish to make you happy; stay with me, enjoy all my possessions, but be careful not to give me any just cause of displeasure," with what care, with what ardour, would not that subject endeavour to satisfy his prince! Well, God makes the same proposals to us . . . and we do not care for His friendship, we make no account of His promises. . . . What a pity!

CHAPTER 3: Catechism on The Holy Spirit

O my CHILDREN, how beautiful it is! The Father is our Creator, the Son is our Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit is our Guide. . . . Man by himself is nothing, but with the Holy Spirit he is very great. Man is all earthly and all animal; nothing but the Holy Spirit can elevate his mind, and raise it on high. Why were the saints so detached from the earth? Because they let themselves be led by the Holy Spirit. Those who are led by the Holy Spirit have true ideas; that is the reason why so many ignorant people are wiser than the learned. When we are led by a God of strength and light, we cannot go astray.

The Holy Spirit is light and strength. He teaches us to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and between good and evil. Like glasses that magnify objects, the Holy Spirit shows us good and evil on a large scale. With the Holy Spirit we see everything in its true proportions; we see the greatness of the least actions done for God, and the greatness of the least faults. As a watchmaker with his glasses distinguishes the most minute wheels of a watch,
so we, with the light of the Holy Spirit, distinguish all the details of our poor life. Then the smallest imperfections appear very great, the least sins inspire us with horror. That is the reason why the most Holy Virgin never sinned. The Holy Spirit made her understand the hideousness of sin; she shuddered with terror at the least fault.

Those who have the Holy Spirit cannot endure themselves, so well do they know their poor misery. The proud are those who have not the Holy Spirit. Worldly people have not the Holy Spirit, or if they have, it is only for a moment. He does not remain with them; the noise of the world drives Him away.

A Christian who is led by the Holy Spirit has no difficulty in leaving the goods of this world, to run after those of Heaven; he knows the difference between them. The eyes of the world see no further than this life, as mine see no further than this wall when the church door is shut. The eyes of the Christian see deep into eternity. To the man who gives himself up to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, there seems to be no world; to the world there seems to be no God.

. . . We must therefore find out by whom we are led. If it is not by the Holy Spirit, we labor in vain; there is no substance nor savour in anything we do. If it is by the Holy Spirit, we taste a delicious sweetness. . . . it is enough to make us die of pleasure!

Those who are led by the Holy Spirit experience all sorts of happiness in themselves, while bad Christians roll themselves on thorns and flints. A soul in which the Holy Spirit dwells is never weary in the presence of God; his heart gives forth a breath of love. Without the Holy Spirit we are like the stones on the road. . . . Take in one hand a sponge full of water, and in the other a little pebble; press them equally. Nothing will come out of the pebble, but out of the sponge will come abundance of water. The sponge is the soul filled with the Holy Spirit, and the stone is the cold and hard heart which is not inhabited by the Holy Spirit.

A soul that possesses the Holy Spirit tastes such sweetness in prayer, that it finds the time always too short; it never loses the holy presence of God. Such a heart, before our good Saviour in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar, is a bunch of grapes under the wine press. The Holy Spirit forms thoughts and suggests words in the hearts of the just. . . . Those who have the Holy Spirit produce nothing bad; all the fruits of the Holy Spirit are good. Without the Holy Spirit all is cold; therefore, when we feel we are losing our fervour, we must instantly make a novena to the Holy Spirit to ask for faith and love. . . .

See, when we have made a retreat or a jubilee, we are full of good desires: these good desires are the breath of the Holy Spirit, which has passed over our souls, and has renewed everything, like the warm wind which melts the ice and brings back the spring. . . . You who are not great saints, you still have many moments when you taste the sweetness of prayer and of the presence of God:
these are visits of the Holy Spirit. When we have the Holy Spirit, the heart expands -- bathes itself in divine love. A fish never complains of having too much water, neither does a good Christian ever complain of being too long with the good God. There are some people who find religion wearisome, and it is because they have not the Holy Spirit.

If the damned were asked: Why are you in Hell? they would answer: For having resisted the Holy Spirit. And if the saints were asked, Why are you in Heaven? they would answer: For having listened to the Holy Spirit. When good thoughts come into our minds, it is the Holy Spirit who is visiting us. The Holy Spirit is a power. The Holy Spirit supported St. Simeon on his column; He sustained the martyrs. Without the Holy Spirit, the martyrs would have fallen like the leaves from the trees. When the fires were lighted under them, the Holy Spirit extinguished the heat of the fire by the heat of divine love. The good God, in sending us the Holy Spirit, has treated us like a great king who should send his minister to guide one of his subjects, saying, "You will accompany this man everywhere, and you will bring him back to me safe and sound." How beautiful it is, my children, to be accompanied by the Holy Spirit! He is indeed a good Guide; and to think that there are some who will not follow Him. The Holy Spirit is like a man with a carriage and horse, who should want to take us to Pans. We should only have to say "yes," and to get into it. It is indeed an easy matter to say "yes"!... Well, the Holy Spirit wants to take us to Heaven; we have only to say "yes," and to let Him take us there.

The Holy Spirit is like a gardener cultivating our souls. ... The Holy Spirit is our servant. ... There is a gun; well you load it, but someone must fire it and make it go off. ... In the same way, we have in ourselves the power of doing good. ... when the Holy Spirit gives the impulse, good works are produced. The Holy Spirit reposes in just souls like the dove in her nest. He brings out good desires in a pure soul, as the dove hatches her young ones. The Holy Spirit leads us as a mother leads by the hand her child of two years old, as a person who can see leads one who is blind.

The Sacraments which Our Lord instituted would not have saved us without the Holy Spirit. Even the death of Our Lord would have been useless to us without Him. Therefore Our Lord said to His Apostles, "It is good for you that I should go away; for if I did not go, the Consoler would not come." The descent of the Holy Spirit was required, to render fruitful that harvest of graces. It is like a grain of wheat -- you cast it into the ground; yes, but it must have sun and rain to make it grow and come into ear. We should say every morning, "O God, send me Your Spirit to teach me what I am and what You are."

CHAPTER 4: Catechism on the Blessed Virgin
THE FATHER takes pleasure in looking upon the heart of the most Holy
Virgin
Mary, as the masterpiece of His hands; for we always like our own work, especially when it is well done. The Son takes pleasure in it as the heart of His Mother, the source from which He drew the Blood that has ransomed us; the Holy Spirit as His temple. The Prophets published the glory of Mary before her birth; they compared her to the sun. Indeed, the apparition of the Holy Virgin may well be compared to a beautiful gleam of sun on a foggy day.

Before her coming, the anger of God was hanging over our heads like a sword ready to strike us. As soon as the Holy Virgin appeared upon the earth, His anger was appeased. . . . She did not know that she was to be the Mother of God, and when she was a little child she used to say, "When shall I then see that beautiful creature who is to be the Mother of God?" The Holy Virgin has brought us forth twice, in the Incarnation and at the foot of the Cross; she is then doubly our Mother. The Holy Virgin is often compared to a mother, but she is much better still than the best of mothers; for the best of mothers sometimes punishes her child when it displeases her, and even beats it: she thinks she is doing right. But the Holy Virgin does not so; she is so good that she treats us with love, and never punishes us.

The heart of this good Mother is all love and mercy; she desires only to see us happy. We have only to turn to her to be heard. The Son has His justice, the Mother has nothing but her love. God has loved us so much as to die for us; but in the heart of Our Lord there is justice, which is an attribute of God; in that of the most Holy Virgin there is nothing but mercy. Her Son being ready to punish a sinner, Mary interposes, checks the sword, implores pardon for the poor criminal. "Mother," Our Lord says to her, "I can refuse you nothing. If Hell could repent, you would obtain its pardon." The most Holy Virgin places herself between her Son and us. The greater sinners we are, the more tenderness and compassion does she feel for us. The child that has cost its mother most tears is the dearest to her heart. Does not a mother always run to the help of the weakest and the most exposed to danger? Is not a physician in the hospital most attentive to those who are most seriously ill? The Heart of Mary is so tender towards us, that those of all the mothers in the world put together are like a piece of ice in comparison to hers. See how good the Holy Virgin is! Her great servant St. Bernard used often to say to her, "I salute you, Mary." One day this good Mother answered him, "I salute you, my son Bernard." The Ave Maria is a prayer that is never wearisome. The devotion to the Holy Virgin is delicious, sweet, nourishing. When we talk on earthly subjects or politics, we grow weary; but when we talk of the Holy Virgin, it is always new. All the saints have a great devotion to Our Lady; no grace comes from Heaven without passing through her hands. We cannot go into a house without
speaking to
the porter; well, the Holy Virgin is the portress of Heaven.
When we have to offer anything to a great personage, we get it presented by
the person he likes best, in order that the homage may be agreeable to him. So
our prayers have quite a different sort of merit when they are presented by the
Blessed Virgin, because she is the only creature who has never offended God.
The
Blessed Virgin alone has fulfilled the first Commandment -- to adore God only,
and
love Him perfectly. She fulfilled it completely.
All that the Son asks of the Father is granted Him. All that the Mother
asks of the Son is in like manner granted to her. When we have handled
something
fragrant, our hands perfume whatever they touch: let our prayers pass
through
the hands of the Holy Virgin; she will perfume them. I think that at the end of
the world the Blessed Virgin will be very tranquil; but while the world lasts,
we drag her in all directions. . . . The Holy Virgin is like a mother who has a
great many children -- she is continually occupied in going from one to the
other.

CHAPTER 5: Catechism on The Word of God
MY CHILDREN, the Word of God is of no little importance! These were Our
Lord's first words to His Apostles: "Go and teach" . . to show us that
instruction is before everything.
My children, what has taught us our religion? The instructions we have
heard. What gives us a horror of sin? What makes us alive to the beauty of
virtue, inspires us with the desire of Heaven? Instructions. What teaches
fathers and mothers the duties they have to fulfil towards their children and
children the duties they have to fulfil towards their parents? Instructions.
My children, why are people so blind and so ignorant? Because they make so
little account of the Word of God. There are some who do not even say an Our
Father
and a Hail Mary to beg of the good God the grace to listen to it attentively, and to
profit well by it. I believe, my children, that a person who does not hear the
Word of God as he ought, will not be saved; he will not know what to do to be
saved. But with a well-instructed person there is always some resource. He
may
wander in all sorts of evil ways; there is still hope that he will return sooner
or later to the good God, even if it were only at the hour of death. Instead of
which a person who has never been instructed is like a sick person -- like one in
his agony who is no longer conscious: he knows neither the greatness of sin
nor
the value of virtue; he drags himself from sin to sin, like a rag that is
dragged in the mud....
My children, you make a scruple of missing holy Mass, because you commit a
great sin in missing it by your own fault; but you have no scruple in missing an instruction. You never consider that in this way you may greatly offend God. At the Day of Judgment, when you will all be there around me, and the good God will say to you, "Give Me an account of the instructions and the catechisms which you have heard and which you might have heard," you will think very differently. My children, you go out during the instructions, you amuse yourselves with laughing, you do not listen, you think yourselves too clever to come to the catechism . . . do you think, my children, that things will be allowed to go on so? Oh no, certainly not! God will arrange matters very differently. How sad it is! We see fathers and mothers stay outside during the instruction; yet they are under obligation to instruct their children; but how can they teach them? They are not instructed themselves. . . . All this leads straight to Hell. . . . It is a pity!...

My children, I will give you an example of what it is not to believe what priests tell you. There were two soldiers passing through a place where a mission was being given; one of the soldiers proposed to his comrade to go and hear the sermon, and they went. The missionary preached upon Hell. "Do you believe all that this priest says?" asked the least wicked of the two. "Oh, no!" replied the other, "I believe it is all nonsense, invented to frighten people." "Well, for my part, I believe it; and to prove to you that I believe it, I shall give up being a soldier, and go into a convent." "Go where you please; I shall continue my journey." But while he was on his journey, he fell ill and died. The other, who was in the convent, heard of his death, and began to pray that God would show him in what state his companion had died. One day, as he was praying, his companion appeared to him; he recognised him, and asked him, "Where are you?" "In Hell; I am lost!" "O wretched man! do you now believe what the missionary said?" "Yes, I believe it. Missionaries are wrong only in one respect; they do not tell you a hundredth part of what is suffered here."

My children, I often think that most of the Christians who are lost for want of instruction—they do not know their religion well. For example, here is a person who has to go and do his day's work. This person has a desire to do great penances, to pass half the night in prayer; if he is well instructed, he will say, "No, I must not do that, because then I could not fulfil my duty tomorrow; I should be sleepy, and the least thing would put me out of patience; I should be weary all the day, and I should not do half as much work as if I had rested at night; that must not be done."

Again, my children, a servant may have a desire to fast, but he is obliged to pass the whole day in digging and ploughing, or whatever you please. Well,
if
this servant is well instructed, he will think, "But if I do this, I shall not
be able to satisfy my master." Well, what will he do? He will eat his
breakfast, and mortify himself in some other way. That is what we must do --
we
must always act in the way that will give most glory to the good God.
A person knows that another is in distress, and takes from his parents what
will relieve that distress. He would certainly do much better to ask than to
take it. If his parents refuse to give it, he will pray to God to inspire a rich
person to give the alms instead of him. A well-instructed person always has
two
guides leading the way before him -- good counsel and obedience.
CHAPTER 6: Catechism on the Prerogatives of the Pure Soul
NOTHING IS so beautiful as a pure soul. If we understood this, we could not
lose our purity. The pure soul is disengaged from matter, from earthly things,
and from itself. . . . That is why the saints ill-treated their body, that is
why they did not grant it what it required, not even to rise five minutes later,
to warm themselves, to eat anything that gave them pleasure. . . . For what the
body loses the soul gains, and what the body gains the soul loses.
Purity comes from Heaven; we must ask for it from God. If we ask for it, we
shall obtain it. We must take great care not to lose it. We must shut our heart
against pride, against sensuality, and all the other passions, as one shuts the
doors and windows that nobody may be able to get in. What joy is it to the
guardian angel to conduct a pure soul! My children, when a soul is pure, all
and Hell. If we could understand what it is to be the child of God, we could not
do evil -- we should be like angels on earth. To be children of God, oh, what a
dignity!
It is a beautiful thing to have a heart, and, little as it is, to be able
to make use of it in loving God. How shameful it is that man should descend so
low, when God has placed him so high! When the angels had revolted against
God,
this God who is so good, seeing that they could no longer enjoy the happiness
for which He had created them, made man, and this little world that we see to
nourish his body. But his soul required to be nourished also; and as nothing
created can feed the soul, which is a spirit, God willed to give Himself for its
Food. But the great misfortune is that we neglect to have recourse to this
divine Food, in crossing the desert of this life. Like people who die of hunger
within sight of a well-provided table, there are some who remain fifty, sixty
years, without feeding their souls.
Oh, if Christians could understand the language of Our Lord, who says to
them, "Notwithstanding your misery, I wish to see near Me that beautiful soul
which I created for Myself. I made it so great, that nothing can fill it but
Myself. I made it so pure, that nothing but My Body can nourish it. "
Our Lord has always distinguished Pure souls. Look at St. John, the
well-beloved disciple, who reposed upon His breast. St. Catherine was pure,
and
she was often transported into Paradise. When she died, angels took up her
body, and carried it to Mount Sinai, where Moses had received the Commandments of the law. God has shown by this prodigy that a soul is so agreeable to Him, that it deserves that even the body which has participated in its purity should be buried by angels.

God contemplates a pure soul with love; He grants it all it desires. How could He refuse anything to a soul that lives only for Him, by Him, and in Him? It seeks God, and He shows Himself to it; it calls Him, and God comes; it is one with Him; it captivates His will. A pure soul is all-powerful with the gracious Heart of Our Lord. A pure soul with God is like a child with its mother. It caresses her, it embraces her, and its mother returns its caresses and embraces.

CHAPTER 7: Catechism on the Sanctification of Sunday

YOU LABOR, you labor, my children; but what you earn ruins your body and your soul. If one ask those who work on Sunday, "What have you been doing?" they might answer, "I have been selling my soul to the devil, crucifying Our Lord, and renouncing my Baptism. I am going to Hell; I shall have to weep for all eternity in vain." When I see people driving carts on Sunday, I think I see them carrying their souls to Hell.

Oh, how mistaken in his calculations is he who labours hard on Sunday, thinking that he will earn more money or do more work! Can two or three shillings ever make up for the harm he does himself by violating the law of the good God? You imagine that everything depends on your working; but there comes an illness, an accident. . . . so little is required! a tempest, a hailstorm, a frost. The good God holds everything in His hand; He can avenge Himself when He will, and as He will; the means are not wanting to Him. Is He not always the strongest? Must not He be the master in the end?

There was once a woman who came to her priest to ask leave to get in her hay on Sunday. "But," said the priest, "it is not necessary; your hay will run no risk." The woman insisted, saying, "Then you want me to let my crop be lost?" She herself died that very evening; she was more in danger than her crop of hay. "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting." [Jn. 6: 27].

What will remain to you of your Sunday work? You leave the earth just as it is; when you go away, you carry nothing with you. Ah! when we are attached to the earth, we are not willing to go! Our first end is to go to God; we are on the earth for no other purpose. My brethren, we should die on Sunday, and rise again on Monday.

Sunday is the property of our good God; it is His own day, the Lord's day.
He made all the days of the week: He might have kept them all; He has given you six, and has reserved only the seventh for Himself. What right have you to meddle with what does not belong to you? You know very well that stolen goods never bring any profit. Nor will the day that you steal from Our Lord profit you either. I know two very certain ways of becoming poor: they are working on Sunday and taking other people's property.

CHAPTER 8: Catechism on Prayer

SEE MY children; the treasure of a Christian is not on the earth, it is in Heaven. Well, our thoughts ought to be where our treasure is. Man has a beautiful occupation, that of praying and loving. You pray, you love -- that is the happiness of man upon the earth. Prayer is nothing else than union with God. When our heart is pure and united to God, we feel within ourselves a joy, a sweetness that inebriates, a light that dazzles us. In this intimate union God and the soul are like two pieces of wax melted together; they cannot be separated. This union of God with His little creature is a most beautiful thing. It is a happiness that we cannot understand....God, in His goodness, has permitted us to speak to Him. Our prayer is an incense which He receives with extreme pleasure.

My children, your heart is poor and narrow; but prayer enlarges it, and renders it capable of loving God. Prayer is a foretaste of Heaven, an overflow of paradise. It never leaves us without sweetness. It is like honey descending into the soul and sweetening everything. Troubles melt away before a fervent prayer like snow before the sun. Prayer makes time pass away very quickly, and so pleasantly that one does not perceive how it passes.... We see some persons who lose themselves in prayer like a fish in the water, because they are all for God. There is no division in their heart. Oh, how I love those generous souls! St. Francis of Assisi and St. Colette saw Our Lord and spoke to Him as we talk to each other. While we, how often we come to church without knowing what we come for, or what we are going to ask! And yet, when we go to one's house, we know very well what we are going for. Some people seem to say to God, "I am going to say two words to You, and then I can get rid of You." I often think that when we come to adore Our Lord, we should obtain all we wish, if we
would ask it with very lively faith, and a very pure heart. But, alas! we have no faith, no hope, no desire, no love!

There are two cries in man, the cry of the angel and the cry of the beast. The cry of the angel is prayer; the cry of the beast is sin. Those who do not pray, stoop towards the earth, like a mole trying to make a hole to hide itself in. They are all earthly, all brutish, and think of nothing but temporal things, . . . like that miser who was receiving the last Sacraments the other day; when they gave him a silver crucifix to kiss, he said, "That cross weighs a full ten ounces." If...the poor lost souls, notwithstanding their sufferings, could worship, there would be no more Hell. Alas! they had a heart to love God with, a tongue to bless Him with; that was their destiny. And now they are condemned to curse Him through all eternity....

"Our Father who art in Heaven!" Oh, how beautiful it is, my children, to have a father in Heaven! "Your kingdom come." If I make the good God reign in my heart, He will make me reign with Him in His glory. "Your will be done." There is nothing so sweet, and nothing so perfect, as to do the will of God. In order to do things well, we must do them as God wills, in all conformity with His designs. "Give us this day our daily bread." We are composed of two parts, the soul and the body. We ask the good God to feed our poor body, and He answers by making the earth produce all that is necessary for our support. . . . But we ask Him to feed our soul, which is the best part of ourselves; and the earth is too small to furnish enough to satisfy it; it hungers for God, and nothing but God can satisfy it. Therefore the good God thought He did not do too much in dwelling upon the earth and assuming a body, in order that this Body might become the Food of our souls. "My Flesh," said Our Lord, "is meat indeed. . . . The bread that I will give is my Flesh, for the life of the world." The bread of souls is in the tabernacle. The tabernacle is the storehouse of Christians. . . Oh, how beautiful it is, my children! When the priest presents the Host, and shows it to you, your soul may say, "There is my food." O my children, we are too blessed! . . . We shall never comprehend it till we are in Heaven. What a pity that is!

CHAPTER 9: Catechism on the Priesthood

MY CHILDREN, we have come to the Sacrament of Orders. It is a Sacrament which seems to relate to no one among you, and which yet relates to everyone. This Sacrament raises man up to God. What is a priest! A man who holds the place of God -- a man who is invested with all the powers of God. "Go," said Our Lord to the priest; "as My Father sent Me, I send you. All power has been given Me in Heaven and on earth. Go then, teach all nations. . . . He who listens to you, listens to Me; he who despises you despises Me." When the priest remits sins, he does not say, "God pardons you"; he says, "I absolve you." At the
Consecration, he does not say, "This is the Body of Our Lord;" he says, "This is My Body."

St. Bernard tells us that everything has come to us through Mary; and we may also say that everything has come to us through the priest; yes, all happiness, all graces, all heavenly gifts. If we had not the Sacrament of Orders, we should not have Our Lord. Who placed Him there, in that tabernacle?

It was the priest. Who was it that received your soul, on its entrance into life? The priest. Who nourishes it, to give it strength to make its pilgrimage? The priest. Who will prepare it to appear before God, by washing that soul, for the last time, in the blood of Jesus Christ? The priest -- always the priest. And if that soul comes to the point of death, who will raise it up, who will restore it to calmness and peace? Again the priest. You cannot recall one single blessing from God without finding, side by side with this recollection, the image of the priest.

Go to confession to the Blessed Virgin, or to an angel; will they absolve you? No. Will they give you the Body and Blood of Our Lord? No. The Holy Virgin cannot make her Divine Son descend into the Host. You might have two hundred angels there, but they could not absolve you. A priest, however simple he may be, can do it; he can say to you, "Go in peace; I pardon you." Oh, how great is a priest! The priest will not understand the greatness of his office till he is in Heaven. If he understood it on earth, he would die, not of fear, but of love. The other benefits of God would be of no avail to us without the priest. What would be the use of a house full of gold, if you had nobody to open you the door! The priest has the key of the heavenly treasures; it is he who opens the door; he is the steward of the good God, the distributor of His wealth. Without the priest, the Death and Passion of Our Lord would be of no avail. Look at the heathens: what has it availed them that Our Lord has died? Alas! they can have no share in the blessings of Redemption, while they have no priests to apply His Blood to their souls!

The priest is not a priest for himself; he does not give himself absolution; he does not administer the Sacraments to himself. He is not for himself, he is for you. After God, the priest is everything. Leave a parish twenty years without priests; they will worship beasts. If the missionary Father and I were to go away, you would say, "What can we do in this church? there is no Mass; Our Lord is no longer there: we may as well pray at home." When people wish to destroy religion, they begin by attacking the priest, because where there is no longer any priest there is no sacrifice, and where there is no longer any sacrifice there is no religion.

When the bell calls you to church, if you were asked, "Where are you going?" you might answer, "I am going to feed my soul." If someone were to ask you, pointing to the tabernacle, "What is that golden door?" "That is our
storehouse, where the true Food of our souls is kept." "Who has the key? Who lays in the provisions? Who makes ready the feast, and who serves the table?" "The priest." "And what is the Food?" "The precious Body and Blood of Our Lord."

O God! O God! how You have loved us! See the power of the priest; out of a piece of bread the word of a priest makes a God. It is more than creating the world. . . . Someone said, "Does St. Philomena, then, obey the Cure of Ars?"

Indeed, she may well obey him, since God obeys him.

If I were to meet a priest and an angel, I should salute the priest before I saluted the angel. The latter is the friend of God; but the priest holds His place. St. Teresa kissed the ground where a priest had passed. When you see a priest, you should say, "There is he who made me a child of God, and opened Heaven to me by holy Baptism; he who purified me after I had sinned; who gives nourishment to my soul." At the sight of a church tower, you may say, "What is there in that place?" "The Body of Our Lord." "Why is He there?" "Because a priest has been there, and has said holy Mass."

What joy did the Apostles feel after the Resurrection of Our Lord, at seeing the Master whom they had loved so much! The priest must feel the same joy, at seeing Our Lord whom he holds in his hands. Great value is attached to objects which have been laid in the drinking cup of the Blessed Virgin and of the Child Jesus, at Loretto. But the fingers of the priest, that have touched the adorable Flesh of Jesus Christ, that have been plunged into the chalice which contained His Blood, into the pyx where His Body has lain, are they not still more precious? The priesthood is the love of the Heart of Jesus. When you see the priest, think of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 10: Catechism on the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

ALL GOOD WORKS together are not of equal value with the sacrifice of the Mass, because they are the works of men, and the holy Mass is the work of God.

Martyrdom is nothing in comparison; it is the sacrifice that man makes of his life to God; the Mass is the sacrifice that God makes to man of His Body and of His Blood. Oh, how great is a priest! if he understood himself he would die. . . . God obeys him; he speaks two words, and Our Lord comes down from Heaven at his voice, and shuts Himself up in a little Host. God looks upon the altar. 

"That is My well-beloved Son," He says, "in whom I am well-pleased." He can refuse nothing to the merits of the offering of this Victim. If we had faith, we should see God hidden in the priest like a light behind a glass, like wine mingled with water.

After the Consecration, when I hold in my hands the most holy Body of Our Lord, and when I am in discouragement, seeing myself worthy of nothing but Hell, I say to myself, "Ah, if I could at least take Him with me! Hell would be sweet with Him; I could be content to remain suffering there for all eternity, if we
were together. But then there would be no more Hell; the flames of love would extinguish those of justice." How beautiful it is. After the Consecration, the good God is there as He is in Heaven. If man well understood this mystery, he would die of love. God spares us because of our weakness. A priest once, after the Consecration, had some little doubt whether his few words could have made Our Lord descend upon the Altar; at the same moment he saw the Host all red, and the corporal tinged with blood.

If someone said to us, "At such an hour a dead person is to be raised to life," we should run very quickly to see it. But is not the Consecration, which changes bread and wine into the Body and Blood of God, a much greater miracle than to raise a dead person to life? We ought always to devote at least a quarter of an hour to preparing ourselves to hear Mass well; we ought to annihilate ourselves before God, after the example of His profound annihilation in the Sacrament of the Eucharist; and we should make our examination of conscience, for we must be in a state of grace to be able to assist properly at Mass. If we knew the value of the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, or rather if we had faith, we should be much more zealous to assist at it.

My children, you remember the story I have told you already of that holy priest who was praying for his friend; God had, it appears, made known to him that he was in Purgatory; it came into his mind that he could do nothing better than to offer the holy Sacrifice of the Mass for his soul. When he came to the moment of Consecration, he took the Host in his hands and said, "O Holy and Eternal Father, let us make an exchange. You have the soul of my friend who is in Purgatory, and I have the Body of Your Son, Who is in my hands; well, deliver my friend, and I will offer You Your Son, with all the merits of His Death and Passion." In fact, at the moment of the elevation, he saw the soul of his friend rising to Heaven, all radiant with glory. Well, my children, when we want to obtain anything from the good God, let us do the same; after Holy Communion, let us offer Him His well-beloved Son, with all the merits of His death and His Passion. He will not be able to refuse us anything.

CHAPTER 11: Catechism on the Real Presence

OUR LORD is hidden there, waiting for us to come and visit Him, and make our request to Him. See how good He is! He accommodates Himself to our weakness. In Heaven, where we shall be glorious and triumphant, we shall see him in all His glory. If He had presented Himself before us in that glory now, we should not have dared to approach Him; but He hides Himself, like a person in a prison, who might say to us, "You do not see me, but that is no matter; ask of me all you wish and I will grant it." He is there in the Sacrament of His love,
sighing and interceding incessantly with His Father for sinners. To what outrages does He not expose Himself, that He may remain in the midst of us! He is there to console us; and therefore we ought often to visit Him. How pleasing to Him is the short quarter of an hour that we steal from our occupations, from something of no use, to come and pray to Him, to visit Him, to console Him for all the outrages He receives! When He sees pure souls coming eagerly to Him, He smiles upon them. They come with that simplicity which pleases Him so much, to ask His pardon for all sinners, for the outrages of so many ungrateful men. What happiness do we not feel in the presence of God, when we find ourselves alone at His feet before the holy tabernacle! "Come, my soul, redouble your fervour; you are alone adoring your God. His eyes rest upon you alone." This good Saviour is so full of love for us that He seeks us out everywhere. Ah! if we had the eyes of angels with which to see Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is here present on this altar, and who is looking at us, how we should love Him! We should never more wish to part from Him. We should wish to remain always at His feet; it would be a foretaste of Heaven: all else would become insipid to us. But see, it is faith we lack. We are poor blind people; we have a mist before our eyes. Faith alone can dispel this mist. Soon, my children, when I shall hold Our Lord in my hands, when the good God blesses you, ask Him then to open the eyes of your heart; say to Him like the blind man of Jericho, "O Lord, make me see!" If you say to Him sincerely, "Make me see!" you will certainly obtain what you desire, because He wishes nothing but your happiness. He has His hands full of graces, seeking someone to distribute them to; Alas! and no one will have them. . . . Oh, indifference! Oh, ingratitude! My children, we are most unhappy that we do not understand these things! We shall understand them well one day; but it will then be too late! Our Lord is there as a Victim; and a prayer that is very pleasing to God is to ask the Blessed Virgin to offer to the Eternal Father her Divine Son, all bleeding, all torn, for the conversion of sinners; it is the best prayer we can make, since, indeed, all prayers are made in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ. We must also thank God for all those indulgences that purify us from our sins. . . but we pay no attention to them. We tread upon indulgences, one might say, as we tread upon the sheaves of corn after the harvest. See,
there are [indulgences] for hearing the catechism, for reciting the Litany of the
Blessed Virgin, the Salve Regina, the Angelus. In short, the good God multiplies
His graces upon us; and how sorry we shall be at the end of our lives that we did
not profit by them!

When we are before the Blessed Sacrament, instead of looking about, let us shut our eyes and our mouth; let us open our heart: our good God will open His;
we shall go to Him, He will come to us, the one to ask, the other to receive; it will be like a breath from one to the other. What sweetness do we not find in forgetting ourselves in order to seek God! The saints lost sight of themselves that they might see nothing but God, and labor for Him alone; they forgot all created objects in order to find Him alone. This is the way to reach Heaven.

CHAPTER 12: Catechism on Communion

TO SUSTAIN the soul in the pilgrimage of life, God looked over creation, and found nothing that was worthy of it. He then turned to Himself, and resolved
to give Himself. O my soul, how great you are, since nothing less than God can satisfy you! The food of the soul is the Body and Blood of God! Oh, admirable Food! If we considered it, it would make us lose ourselves in that abyss of love for all eternity! How happy are the pure souls that have the happiness of being united to Our Lord by Communion! They will shine like beautiful diamonds in Heaven, because God will be seen in them.

Our Lord has said, Whatever you shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you. We should never have thought of asking of God His own Son. But God has done what man could not have imagined. What man cannot express nor conceive,
and what he never would have dared to desire, God in His love has said, has conceived, and has executed. Should we ever have dared to ask of God to put His Son to death for us, to give us His Flesh to eat and His Blood to drink? If all this were not true, then man might have imagined things that God cannot do; he would have gone further than God in inventions of love! That is impossible. Without the Holy Eucharist there would be no happiness in this world; life would be insupportable. When we receive Holy Communion, we receive our joy and our happiness. The good God, wishing to give Himself to us in the Sacrament of His love, gave us a vast and great desire, which He alone can satisfy. In the presence of this beautiful Sacrament, we are like a person dying of thirst by the side of a river -- he would only need to bend his head; like a person still remaining poor, close to a great treasure -- he need only stretch out his hand. He who communicates loses himself in God like a drop of water in the ocean.
They can no more be separated.
At the Day of Judgment we shall see the Flesh of Our Lord shine through the glorified body of those who have received Him worthily on earth, as we see gold shine in copper, or silver in lead. When we have just communicated, if we were asked, "What are you carrying away to your home?" we might answer, "I am carrying away Heaven." A saint said that we were Christ-bearers. It is very true; but we have not enough faith. We do not comprehend our dignity. When we leave the holy banquet, we are as happy as the Wise Men would have been, if they could have carried away the Infant Jesus. Take a vessel full of liquor, and cork it well -- you will keep the liquor as long as you please. So if you were to keep Our Lord well and recollectedly after Communion, you would long feel that devouring fire which would inspire your heart with an inclination to good and a repugnance to evil. When we have the good God in our heart, it ought to be very burning. The heart of the disciples of Emmaus burnt within them from merely listening to His voice.
I do not like people to begin to read directly when they come from the holy table. Oh no! what is the use of the words of men when God is speaking? We must do as one who is very curious, and listens at the door. We must listen to all that God says at the door of our heart. When you have received Our Lord, you feel your soul purified, because it bathes itself in the love of God. When we go to Holy Communion, we feel something extraordinary, a comfort which pervades the whole body, and penetrates to the extremities. What is this comfort? It is Our Lord, who communicates Himself to all parts of our bodies, and makes them thrill. We are obliged to say, like St. John, "It is the Lord!" Those who feel absolutely nothing are very much to be pitied.
CHAPTER 13: Catechism on Frequent Communion
MY CHILDREN, all beings in creation require to be fed, that they may live; for this purpose God has made trees and plants grow; it is a well-served table, to which all animals come and take the food which suits each one. But the soul also must be fed. Where, then, is its food? My brethren, the food of the soul is God. Ah! what a beautiful thought! The soul can feed on nothing but God. Only God can suffice for it; only God can fill it; only God can satiate its hunger; it absolutely requires its God! There is in all houses a place where the provisions of the family are kept; it is the store-room. The church is the home of souls; it is the house belonging to us, who are Christians. Well, in this house there is a store-room. Do you see the tabernacle? If the souls of Christians were asked, "What is that?" your souls would answer, "It is the store-room."
There is nothing so great, my children, as the Eucharist! Put all the good works in the world against one good Communion; they will be like a grain of dust beside a mountain. Make a prayer when you have the good God in your heart; the good God will not be able to refuse you anything, if you offer Him His Son, and the merits of His holy death and Passion. My children, if we understood the value of Holy Communion, we should avoid the least faults, that we might have the happiness of making it more often. We should keep our souls always pure in the eyes of God. My children, I suppose that you have been to confession today, and you will watch over yourselves; you will be happy in the thought that tomorrow you will have the joy of receiving the good God into your heart. Neither can you offend the good God tomorrow; your soul will be all embalmed with the precious Blood of Our Lord. Oh, beautiful life!

O my children, how beautiful will a soul be in eternity that has worthily and often received the good God! The Body of Our Lord will shine through our body, His adorable Blood through our blood; our soul will be united to the Soul of Our Lord during all eternity. There it will enjoy pure and perfect happiness. My children, when the soul of a Christian who has received Our Lord enters paradise, it increases the joy of Heaven. The Angels and the Queen of Angels come to meet it, because they recognize the Son of God in that soul. Then will that soul be rewarded for the pains and sacrifices it will have endured in its life on earth. My children, we know when a soul has worthily received the Sacrament of the Eucharist, it is so drowned in love, so penetrated and changed, that it is no longer to be recognised in its words or its actions. . . . It is humble, it is gentle, it is mortified, charitable, and modest; it is at peace with everyone. It is a soul capable of the greatest sacrifices; in short, you would not know it again.

Go, then, to Communion, my children; go to Jesus with love and confidence; go and live upon Him, in order to live for Him! Do not say that you have too much to do. Has not the Divine Savior said, "Come to Me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you"? Can you resist an invitation so full of love and tenderness? Do not say that you are not worthy of it. It is true, you are not worthy of it; but you are in need of it. If Our Lord had regarded our worthiness, He would never have instituted His beautiful Sacrament of love: for no one in the world is worthy of it, neither the saints, nor the angels, nor the archangels, nor the Blessed Virgin; but He had in view our needs, and we are
all in need of it. Do not say that you are sinners, that you are too miserable, and for that reason you do not dare to approach it. I would as soon hear you say that you are very ill, and therefore you will not take any remedy, nor send for the physician.

All the prayers of the Mass are a preparation for Communion; and all the life of a Christian ought to be a preparation for that great action. We ought to labor to deserve to receive Our Lord every day. How humbled we ought to feel when we see others going to the holy table, and we remain motionless in our place! How happy is a guardian angel who leads a beautiful soul to the holy table! In the primitive Church they communicated every day. When Christians had grown cold, they substituted blessed bread for the Body of Our Lord; this is both a consolation and a humiliation. It is indeed blessed bread; but it is not the Body and Blood of Our Lord!

There are some who make a spiritual communion every day with blessed bread.

If we are deprived of Sacramental Communion, let us replace it, as far as we can, by spiritual communion, which we can make every moment; for we ought to have always a burning desire to receive the good God. Communion is to the soul like blowing a fire that is beginning to go out, but that has still plenty of hot embers; we blow, and the fire burns again. After the reception of the Sacraments, when we feel ourselves slacken in the love of God, let us have recourse at once to spiritual communion. When we cannot come to church, let us turn towards the tabernacle: a wall cannot separate us from the good God; let us say five Paters and five Aves to make a spiritual communion. We can receive the good God only once a day; a soul on fire with love supplies for this by the desire to receive Him every moment. O man, how great you are! fed with the Body and Blood of a God! Oh, how sweet a life is this life of union with the good God! It is Heaven upon earth; there are no more troubles, no more crosses! When you have the happiness of having received the good God, you feel a joy, a sweetness in your heart for some moments. Pure souls feel it always, and in this union consists their strength and their happiness.

CHAPTER 14: Catechism on Sin

SIN IS the executioner of the good God, and the assassin of the soul. It snatches us away from Heaven to precipitate us into Hell. And we love it! What folly! If we thought seriously about it, we should have such a lively horror of sin that we could not commit it. O my children, how ungrateful we are! The good God wishes to make us happy; that is very certain; He gave us His Law for no
other end. The Law of God is great; it is broad. King David said that he found his delight in it, and that it was a treasure more precious to him than the greatest riches. He said also that he walked well, because he had sought after the Commandments of the Lord. The good God wishes, then, to make us happy, and we do not wish to be so. We turn away from Him, and give ourselves to the devil! We fly from our Friend, and we seek after our murderer! We commit sin; we plunge ourselves into the mire. Once sunk in this mire, we know not how to get out. If our fortune were in the case, we should soon find out how to get out of the difficulty; but because it only concerns our soul, we stay where we are.

We come to confession quite preoccupied with the shame that we shall feel. We accuse ourselves with hot air. It is said that many confess, and few are converted. I believe it is so, my children, because few confess with tears of repentance. See, the misfortune is, that people do not reflect. If one said to those who work on Sundays, to a young person who had been dancing for two or three hours, to a man coming out of an alehouse drunk, "What have you been doing? You have been crucifying Our Lord!" they would be quite astonished, because they do not think of it. My children, if we thought of it, we should be seized with horror; it would be impossible for us to do evil. For what has the good God done to us that we should grieve Him thus, and put Him to death again--Him, who has redeemed us from Hell? It would be well if all sinners, when they are going to their guilty pleasures, could, like St. Peter, meet Our Lord on the way, who would say to them, "I am going to that place where you are going yourself, to be there crucified again." Perhaps that might make them reflect.

The saints understood how great an outrage sin is against God. Some of them passed their lives in weeping for their sins. St. Peter wept all his life; he was still weeping at his death. St. Bernard used to say, "Lord! Lord! it is I who fastened You to the Cross!" By sin we despise the good God, we crucify the good God! What a pity it is to lose our souls, which have cost Our Lord so many sufferings! What harm has Our Lord done us, that we should treat Him so? If the poor lost souls could come back to the earth! if they were in our place! Oh, how senseless we are! the good God calls us to Him, and we fly from Him! He wishes to make us happy, and we will not have His happiness. He commands us to love Him, and we give our hearts to the devil. We employ in ruining ourselves the time He gives us to save our souls. We make war upon Him with the means He gave us to serve Him.

When we offend the good God, if we were to look at our crucifix, we should hear Our Lord saying to us in the depths of our soul, "Will you too, then, take the side of My enemies? Will you crucify Me again?" Cast your eyes on Our Lord
fastened to the Cross, and say to yourself, "That is what it cost my Savior to repair the injury my sins have done to God!" A God coming down to earth to be the victim of our sins, a God suffering, a God dying, a God enduring every torment, because He would bear the weight of our crimes! At the sight of the Cross, let us understand the malice of sin, and the hatred we ought to feel for it. Let us enter into ourselves; let us see what we can do to make amends for our poor life.

"What a pity it is!" the good God will say to us at our death; "why have you offended Me -- Me, who loved you so much?" To offend the good God, who has never done us anything but good; to please the devil, who can never do us anything but evil! What folly! Is it not real folly to choose to make ourselves worthy of Hell by attaching ourselves to the devil when we might taste the joys of Heaven, even in this life, by uniting ourselves to God by love? One cannot understand this folly; it cannot be enough lamented. Poor sinners seem as if they could not wait for the sentence which will condemn them to the society of the devils; they condemn themselves to it. There is a sort of foretaste in this life of Paradise, of Hell, and of Purgatory. Purgatory is in those souls that are not dead to themselves; Hell is in the heart of the impious; Paradise in that of the perfect, who are closely united to Our Lord.

He who lives in sin takes up the habits and the appearance of the beasts. The beast, which has not reason, knows nothing but its appetites. So the man who makes himself like the beasts loses his reason, and lets himself be guided by the inclinations of his body. He takes his pleasure in good eating and drinking, and in enjoying the vanities of the world, which pass away like the wind. I pity the poor wretches who run after that wind; they gain very little, they give a great deal for very little profit -- they give their eternity for the miserable smoke of the world.

My children, how sad it is! when a soul is in a state of sin, it may die in that state; and even now, whatever it can do is without merit before God. That is the reason why the devil is so pleased when a soul is in sin, and perseveres in it, because he thinks that it is working for him, and if it were to die he would have possession of it. When we are in sin, our soul is all diseased, all rotten; it is pitiful. The thought that the good God sees it ought to make it enter into itself. And then, what pleasure is there in sin? None at all. We have frightful dreams that the devil is carrying us away, that we are falling over precipices. Put yourself on good terms with God; have recourse to the Sacrament of Penance; you will sleep as quietly as an angel. You will be glad to waken in the night, to pray to God; you will have nothing but thanksgivings on your lips; you will rise I towards Heaven with great facility, as an eagle soars through the air.

See, my children, how sin degrades man; of an angel created to love God, it makes a demon who will curse Him for eternity. Ah! if Adam, our first father, had not sinned, and if we did not sin every day, how happy we should be! we should be as happy as the saints in Heaven. There would be no more unhappy
people on the earth. Oh, how beautiful it would be! In fact, my children, it is
sin that brings upon us all calamities, all scourges, war, famine, pestilence,
earthquakes, fires, frost, hail, storms -- all that afflicts us, all that makes
us miserable. See, my children, a person who is in a state of sin is always sad.
Whatever he does, he is weary and disgusted with everything; while he who is
at peace with God is always happy, always joyous. . . . Oh, beautiful life! Oh,
beautiful death!
   My children, we are afraid of death; I can well believe it. It is sin that
makes us afraid of death; it is sin that renders death frightful, formidable; it
is sin that terrifies the wicked at the hour of the fearful passage. Alas! O
God! there is reason enough to be terrified, to think that one is accursed --
accursed of God! It makes one tremble. Accursed of God! and why? for what do
men expose themselves to be accursed of God? For a blasphemy, for a bad thought,
for a bottle of wine, for two minutes of pleasure! For two minutes of pleasure to
lose God, one's soul, Heaven forever! We shall see going up to Heaven, in body
and soul, that father, that mother, that sister, that neighbour, who were here
with us, with whom we have lived, but whom we have not imitated; while we
shall go down body and soul to burn in Hell. The devils will rush to overwhelm us.
All
the devils whose advice we followed will come to torment us.
My children, if you saw a man prepare a great pile of wood, heaping up
sticks one upon another, and when you asked him what he was doing, he were
to answer you, "I am preparing the fire that is to burn me," what would you
think?
And if you saw this same man set fire to the pile, and when it was lighted
throw himself upon it, what would you say? This is what we do when we commit sin.
It
is not God who casts us into Hell; we cast ourselves into it by our sins. The
lost souls will say, "I have lost God, my soul, and Heaven; it is through my
fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault!" He will raise himself
out of the fire only to fall back into it. He will always feel the desire of
rising because he was created for God, the greatest, the highest of beings, the
Most High . . . as a bird shut up in a room flies to the ceiling, and falls down
again, the justice of God is the ceiling which keeps down the lost.
There is no need to prove the existence of Hell. Our Lord Himself speaks of
it, when He relates the history of the wicked rich man who cried out, "Lazarus!
Lazarus!" We know very well that there is a Hell, but we live as if there were
not; we sell our souls for a few pieces of money. We put off our conversion till
the hour of death; but who can assure us that we shall have time or strength at
that formidable moment, which has been feared by all the saints -- when Hell
will gather itself up for a last assault upon us, seeing that it is the decisive
moment? There are many people who lose the faith, and never see Hell till they enter it. The Sacraments are administered to them; but ask them if they have committed such a sin, and they will answer you, "Oh! settle that as you please."

Some people offend the good God every moment; their heart is an anthill of sins: it is like a spoilt piece of meat, half-eaten by worms. . . . No, indeed; if sinners were to think of eternity -- of that terrible forever -- they would be converted instantly.

CHAPTER 15: Catechism on Pride

PRIDE IS that accursed sin which drove the angels out of paradise, and hurled them into Hell. This sin began with the world. See, my children, we sin by pride in many ways. A person may be proud in his clothes, in his language, in his gestures, even in his manner of walking. Some persons, when they are in the streets, walk along proudly, and seem to say to the people they meet, "Look how tall, how upright I am, how well I walk!" Others, when they have done any good action, are never tired of talking of it; and if they fail in anything, they are miserable because they think people will have a bad opinion of them . . . others are sorry to be seen with the poor, if they meet with anybody of consequence; they are always seeking the company of the rich . . . if by chance, they are noticed by the great people of the world, they boast and are vain of it. Others take pride in speaking. If they go to see rich people, they consider what they are going to say, they study fine language; and if they make a mistake of a word, they are very much vexed, because they are afraid of being laughed at. But, my children, with a humble person it is not so . . . whether he is laughed at or esteemed, or praised, or blamed, whether he is honoured or despised, whether people pay attention to him or pass him by, it is all the same to him.

My children, there are again people who give great alms, that they may be well thought of -- that will not do. These people will reap no fruit from their good works. On the contrary, their alms will turn into sins. We put pride into everything like salt. We like to see that our good works are known. If our virtues are seen, we are pleased; if our faults are perceived, we are sad. I remark that in a great many people; if one says anything to them, it disturbs them, it annoys them. The saints were not like that -- they were vexed if their virtues were known, and pleased that their imperfections should be seen. A proud person thinks everything he does is well done; he wants to domineer over all those who have to do with him; he is always right, he always thinks his own opinion better than that of others. That will not do! A humble and well-taught person, if he is asked his opinion, gives it at once, and then lets others speak. Whether they are right, or whether they are wrong, he says nothing more.

When St. Aloysius Gonzaga was a student, he never sought to excuse himself when he was reproached with anything; he said what he thought, and troubled
himself no further about what others might think; if he was wrong, he was wrong; if he was right, he said to himself, "I have certainly been wrong some other time." My children, the saints were so completely dead to themselves, that they cared very little whether others agreed with them. People in the world say, "Oh, the saints were simpletons!" Yes, they were simpletons in worldly things; but in the things of God they were very wise. They understood nothing about worldly matters, to be sure, because they thought them of so little importance, that they paid no attention to them.

CHAPTER 16: Catechism on Impurity

THAT WE MAY understand how horrible and detestable is this sin, which the demons make us commit, but which they do not commit themselves, we must consider what a Christian is. A Christian, created in the image of God, redeemed by the Blood of a God! a Christian, the child of God, the brother of a God, the heir of a God! a Christian, whose body is the temple of the Holy Spirit; that is what sin dishonors. We are created to reign one day in Heaven, and if we have the misfortune to commit this sin, we become the den of the devils. Our Lord said that nothing impure should enter into His kingdom. Indeed, how could a soul that has rolled itself in this filth go to appear before so pure and so holy a God? We are all like little mirrors, in which God contemplates Himself. How can you expect that God should recognize His likeness in an impure soul? There are some souls so dead, so rotten, that they lie in their defilement without perceiving it, and can no longer clear themselves from it; everything leads them to evil, everything reminds them of evil, even the most holy things; they always have these abominations before their eyes; like the unclean animal that is accustomed to live in filth, that is happy in it, that rolls itself and goes to sleep in it, that grunts in the mud; these persons are an object of horror in the eyes of God and of the holy angels. See, my children, Our Lord was crowned with thorns to expiate our sins of pride; but for this accursed sin, He was scourged and torn to pieces, since He said Himself that after his flagellation all His bones might be counted. O my children, if there were not some pure souls here and there, to make amends to the good God, and disarm His justice, you would see how we should be punished! For now, this crime is so common in the world, that it is enough to make one tremble. One may say, my children, that Hell vomits forth its abominations upon the earth, as the chimneys of the steam engine vomit forth
smoke. The devil does all he can to defile our soul, and yet our soul is everything. . . our body is only a heap of corruption: go to the cemetery to see what you love, when you love your body. As I have often told you, there is nothing so vile as the impure soul. There was once a saint, who had asked the good God to show him one; and he saw that poor soul like a dead beast that has been dragged through the streets in the hot sun for a week.

By only looking at a person, we know if he is pure. His eyes have an air of candour and modesty which leads you to the good God. Some people, on the contrary, look quite inflamed with passion. . . Satan places himself in their eyes to make others fall and to lead them to evil. Those who have lost their purity are like a piece of cloth stained with oil; you may wash it and dry it, and the stain always appears again: so it requires a miracle to cleanse the impure soul.

CHAPTER 17: Catechism on Confession

MY CHILDREN, as soon as ever you have a little spot upon your soul, you must do like a person who has a fine globe of glass, which he keeps very carefully. If this globe has a little dust on it, he wipes it with a sponge the moment he perceives it, and there is the globe clear and brilliant. In the same way, as soon as you perceive a little stain on your soul, take some holy water with respect, do one of those good works to which the remission of venial sins is attached -- an alms, a genuflection to the Blessed Sacrament, hearing a Mass.

My children, it is like a person who has a slight illness; he need not go and see a doctor, he may cure himself without. If he has a headache, he need only go to bed; if he is hungry, he has only to eat. But if it is a serious illness, if it is a dangerous wound, he must have the doctor; after the doctor come the remedies. In the same way, when we have fallen into any grievous sin, we must have recourse to the doctor, that is the priest; and to the remedy, that is confession.

My children, we cannot comprehend the goodness of God towards us in instituting this great Sacrament of Penance. If we had had a favor to ask of Our Lord, we should never have thought of asking Him that. But He foresaw our frailty and our inconstancy in well-doing, and His love induced Him to do what we should not have dared to ask. If one said to those poor lost souls that have been so long in Hell, "We are going to place a priest at the gate of Hell: all those who wish to confess have only to go out," do you think, my children, that a single one would remain? The most guilty would not be afraid of telling their sins, nor even of telling them before all the world. Oh, how soon Hell would be a desert, and how Heaven would be peopled! Well, we have the time and the means, which those poor lost souls have not. And I am quite sure that those wretched ones say in Hell, "O accursed priest! if I had never known you, I would not be so guilty!"

It is a beautiful thought, my children, that we have a Sacrament which heals the wounds of our soul! But we must receive it with good dispositions.
Otherwise we make new wounds upon the old ones. What would you say of a man covered with wounds who is advised to go to the hospital to show himself to the surgeon? The surgeon cures him by giving him remedies. But, behold! this man takes his knife, gives himself great blows with it and makes himself worse than he was before. Well, that is what you often do after leaving the confessional. My children, some people make bad confessions without taking any notice of it. These persons say, "I do not know what is the matter with me" . . . They are tormented, and they do not know why. They have not that agility which makes one go straight to the good God; they have something heavy and weary about them which fatigues them. My children, that is because of sins that remain, often even venial sins, for which one has some affection. There are some people who, indeed, tell everything, but they have no repentance; and they go at once to Holy Communion. Thus the Blood of Our Lord is profaned! They go to the Holy Table with a sort of weariness. They say, "Yet, I accused myself of all my sins. . . I do not know what is the matter with me." There is an unworthy Communion, and they were hardly aware of it!

My children, some people again profane the Sacraments in another manner. They have concealed mortal sins for ten years, for twenty years. They are always uneasy; their sin is always present to their mind; they are always thinking of confessing it, and always putting it off; it is a Hell. When these people feel this, they will ask to make a general confession, and they will tell their sins as if they had just committed them: they will not confess that they have hidden them during ten years -- twenty years. That is a bad confession! They ought to say, besides, that they had given up the practice of their religion, that they no longer felt the pleasure they had formerly in serving the good God.

My children, we run the risk again of profaning the Sacrament if we seize the moment when there is a noise round the confessional to tell the sins quickly which give us most pain. We quiet ourselves by saying, "I accused myself properly; so much the worse if the confessor did not hear." So much the worse for you who acted cunningly! At other times we speak quickly, profiting by the moment when the priest is not very attentive to get over the great sins. Take a house which has been for a long time very dirty and neglected -- it is in vain to sweep out, there will always be a nasty smell. It is the same with our soul after confession; it requires tears to purify it. My children, we must ask earnestly for repentance. After confession, we must plant a thorn in our heart, and never lose sight of our sins. We must do as the angel did to St. Francis of Assisi; he fixed in him five darts, which never came out again.

CHAPTER 18: Catechism on Suffering
WHETHER WE will or not, we must suffer. There are some who suffer like
the
good thief, and others like the bad thief. They both suffered equally. But one
knew how to make his sufferings meritorious, he accepted them in the spirit of
reparation, and turning towards Jesus crucified, he received from His mouth
these beautiful words: "This day you shall be with Me in Paradise." The
other, on the contrary, cried out, uttered curses and blasphemies, and
expired in the most frightful despair. There are two ways of suffering -- to
suffer with love, and to suffer without love. The saints suffered everything
with joy, patience, and perseverance, because they loved. As for us, we suffer
with anger, vexation, and weariness, because we do not love. If we loved God,
we
would love crosses, we would wish for them, we would take pleasure in them. .
. . We would be happy to be able to suffer for the love of Him who lovingly
suffered for us. Of what do we complain? Alas! the poor infidels, who have not
the happiness of knowing God and His infinite loveliness, have the same
crosses
that we have; but they have not the same consolations. You say it is hard? No,
it is easy, it is consoling, it is sweet; it is happiness. Only we must love
while we suffer, and suffer while we love.
On the Way of the Cross, you see, my children, only the first step is
painful. Our greatest cross is the fear of crosses. . . . We have not the
courage to carry our cross, and we are very much mistaken; for, whatever we
do,
the cross holds us tight -- we cannot escape from it. What, then, have we to
lose? Why not love our crosses and make use of them to take us to Heaven?
But,
on the contrary, most men turn their backs upon crosses, and fly before them.
The more they run, the more the cross pursues them, the more it strikes and
 crushes them with burdens. . . . If you were wise, you would go to meet it like
St. Andrew, who said, when he saw the cross prepared for him and raised up
into
the air, "Hail O good cross! O admirable cross! O desirable cross! receive me
into your arms, withdraw me from among men, and restore me to my Master,
who
redeemed me through you."
Listen attentively to this, my children: He who goes to meet the cross,
goes in the opposite direction to crosses; he meets them, perhaps, but he is
pleased to meet them; he loves them; he carries them courageously. They unite
him to Our Lord; they purify him; they detach him from this world; they
remove
all obstacles from his heart; they help him to pass through life, as a bridge
helps us to pass over water. . . . Look at the saints; when they were not
persecuted, they persecuted themselves. A good religious complained one day
to
Our Lord that he was persecuted. He said, "O Lord, what have I done to be
treated thus?" Our Lord answered him, "And I, what had I done when I was led
to Calvary?" Then the religious understood; he wept, he asked pardon, and dared not complain any more. Worldly people are miserable when they have crosses, and good Christians are miserable when they have none. The Christian lives in the midst of crosses, as the fish lives in the sea.

Look at St. Catherine; she has two crowns, that of purity and that of martyrdom: how happy she is, that dear little saint, to have chosen to suffer rather than to consent to sin! There was once a religious who loved suffering so much that he had fastened the rope from a well round his body; this cord had rubbed off the skin, and had by degrees buried itself in the flesh, out of which worms came. His brethren asked that he should be sent out of the community. He went away happy and pleased, to hide himself in a rocky cavern. But the same night the Superior heard Our Lord saying to him: "You have lost the treasure of your house." Then they went to fetch back this good saint, and they wanted to see from whence these worms came. The Superior had the cord taken off, which was done by turning back the flesh. At last he got well.

Very near this, in a neighbouring parish, there was a little boy in bed, covered with sores, very ill, and very miserable; I said to him, "My poor little child, you are suffering very much!" He answered me, "No, sir; today I do not feel the pain I had yesterday, and tomorrow I shall not suffer from the pain I have now: 'You would like to get well?' "No; I was naughty before I was ill, and I might be so again. I am very well as I am." We do not understand that, because we are too earthly. Children in whom the Holy Spirit dwells put us to shame.

If the good God sends us crosses, we resist, we complain, we murmur; we are so averse to whatever contradicts us, that we want to be always in a box of cotton: but we ought to be put into a box of thorns. It is by the Cross that we go to Heaven. Illnesses, temptations, troubles, are so many crosses which take us to Heaven. All this will soon be over. . . . Look at the saints, who have arrived there before us. . . . The good God does not require of us the martyrdom of the body; He requires only the martyrdom of the heart, and of the will. . . . Our Lord is our model; let us take up our cross, and follow Him. Let us do like the soldiers of Napoleon. They had to cross a bridge under the fire of grapeshot; no one dared to pass it. Napoleon took the banner, marched over first, and they all followed. Let us do the same; let us follow Our Lord, who has gone before us.

A soldier was telling me one day that during a battle he had marched for half an hour over dead bodies; there was hardly space to tread upon; the ground
was all dyed with blood. Thus on the road of life we must walk over crosses and troubles to reach our true country. The cross is the ladder to Heaven. . . . How consoling it is to suffer under the eyes of God, and to be able to say in the evening, at our examination of conscience: "Come, my soul! you have had today two or three hours of resemblance to Jesus Christ. You have been scourged, crowned with thorns, crucified with Him!" Oh what a treasure for the hour of death! How sweet it is to die, when we have lived on the cross! We ought to run after crosses as the miser runs after money. . . . Nothing but crosses will reassure us at the Day of Judgment. When that day shall come, we shall be happy in our misfortunes, proud of our humiliations, and rich in our sacrifices! If someone said to you, "I would like to become rich; what must I do?" you would answer him, "You must labor: ' Well, in order to get to Heaven, we must suffer. Our Lord shows us the way in the person of Simon the Cyrenian; He calls His friends to carry His Cross after Him. The good God wishes us never to lose sight of the Cross, therefore it is placed everywhere; by the roadside, on the heights, in the public squares -- in order that at the sight of it we may say, "See how God has loved us!" The Cross embraces the world; it is planted at the four corners of the world; there is a share of it for all. Crosses are on the road to Heaven like a fine bridge of stone over a river, by which to pass it. Christians who do not suffer pass this river by a frail bridge, a bridge of wire, always ready to give way under their feet.

He who does not love the Cross may indeed be saved, but with great difficulty: he will be a little star in the firmament. He who shall have suffered and fought for his God will shine like a beautiful sun. Crosses, transformed by the flames of love, are like a bundle of thorns thrown into the fire, and reduced by the fire to ashes. The thorns are hard, but the ashes are soft. Oh, how much sweetness do souls experience that are all for God in suffering! It is like a mixture into which one puts a great deal of oil: the vinegar remains vinegar; but the oil corrects its bitterness, and it can scarcely be perceived.

If you put fine grapes into the wine press, there will come out a delicious juice: our soul, in the wine press of the Cross, gives out a juice that nourishes and strengthens it. When we have no crosses, we are arid: if we bear them with resignation, we feel a joy, a happiness, a sweetness! . . . it is the beginning of Heaven. The good God, the Blessed Virgin, the angels, and the saints, surround us; they are by our side, and see us. The passage to the other life of the good Christian tried by affliction, is like that of a person being carried on a bed of roses. Thorns give out a perfume, and the Cross breathes forth sweetness. But we must squeeze the thorns in our hands, and press the Cross to our heart, that they may give out the juice they contain.

The Cross gave peace to the world; and it must bring peace to our hearts. All our miseries come from not loving it. The fear of crosses increases them. A cross carried simply, and without those returns of self-love which exaggerate
troubles, is no longer a cross. Peaceable suffering is no longer suffering. We complain of suffering! We should have much more reason to complain of not suffering, since nothing makes us more like Our Lord than carrying His Cross. Oh, what a beautiful union of the soul with Our Lord Jesus Christ by the love and the virtue of His Cross! I do not understand how a Christian can dislike the Cross, and fly from it! Does he not at the same time fly from Him who has deigned to be fastened to it, and to die for us?

Contradictions bring us to the foot of the Cross, and the Cross to the gate of Heaven. That we may get there, we must be trodden upon, we must be set at naught, despised, crushed. . . . There are no happy people in this world but those who enjoy calmness of mind in the midst of the troubles of life: they taste the joys of the children of God. . . . All pains are sweet when we suffer in union with Our Lord. . . . To suffer! what does it signify? It is only a moment. If we could go and pass a week in Heaven, we would understand the value of this moment of suffering. We would find no cross heavy enough, no trial bitter enough. . . . The Cross is the gift that God makes to His friends.

How beautiful it is to offer ourselves every morning in sacrifice to the good God, and to accept everything in expiation of our sins! We must ask for the love of crosses; then they become sweet.

I tried it for four or five years. I was well calumniated, well contradicted, well knocked about. Oh, I had crosses indeed! I had almost more than I could carry! Then I took to asking for love of crosses, and I was happy. I said to myself, truly there is no happiness but in this! We must never think from whence crosses come: they come from God. It is always God who gives us this way of proving our love to Him.

CHAPTER 19: Catechism on Hope

MY CHILDREN, we are going to speak of hope: that is what makes the happiness of man on earth. Some people in this world hope too much, and others do not hope enough. Some say, "I am going to commit this sin again. It will not cost me more to confess four than three." It is like a child saying to his father, "I am going to give you four blows; it will cost me no more than to give you one: I shall only have to ask your pardon."

That is the way men behave towards the good God. They say, "This year I shall amuse myself again; I shall go to dances and to the alehouse, and next year I will be converted. The good God will be sure to receive me, when I choose to return to Him. He is not so cruel as the priests tell us." No, the good God is not cruel, but He is just. Do you think He will adapt Himself in everything to your will? Do you think that He will embrace you, after you have despised Him all your life? Oh no, indeed! There is a certain measure of grace and of sin after which God withdraws Himself. What would you say of a father who would
treat a good child, and one not so good, in the same manner? You would say
that father is not just. Well! God would not be just if He made no difference
between those who serve Him and those who offend Him. My children, there is
so
little faith now in the world that people either hope too much, or they despair.
Some say, "I have done too much evil; the good God cannot pardon me": My
children, this is a great blasphemy; it is putting a limit to the mercy of God,
which has no limit -- it is infinite. You may have done evil enough to lose the
souls of a whole parish, and if you confess, if you are sorry for having done
this evil, and resolve not to do it again, the good God will have pardoned you.
A priest was once preaching on hope, and on the mercy of the good God. He
reassured others, but he himself despaired. After the sermon, a young man
presented himself, saying, "Father, I am come to confess to you." The priest
answered, "I am willing to hear your confession." The other recounted his
sins, after which he added, "Father, I have done much evil; I am lost!" "What
do
you say, my friend! We must never despair." The young man rose, saying,
"Father, you wish me not to despair, and what do you do?" This was a ray of
light; the priest, all astonishment, drove away that thought of despair, became
a religious and a great saint. . . . The good God had sent him an angel under
the form of a young man, to show him that we must never despair. The good
God
is
as prompt to grant us pardon when we ask it of Him as a mother is to snatch
her
child out of the fire.
CHAPTER 20: Catechism on the Cardinal Virtues
PRUDENCE SHOWS us what is most pleasing to God, and most useful to the
salvation of our soul. We must always choose the most perfect. Two good
works
present themselves to be done, one in favour of a person we love, the other in
favour of a person who has done us some harm; well, we must give the
preference
to the latter. There is no merit in doing good, when a natural feeling leads us
to do it. A lady, wishing to have a widow to live with her to take care of,
asked St. Athanasius to find her one among the poor. Afterwards, meeting the
Bishop, she reproached him that he had treated her ill, because this person
was
too good, and gave her nothing to do by which she could gain Heaven; and she
begged him to give her another. The saint chose the worst he could find; of a
cross, grumbling temper, never satisfied with what was done for her. This is the
way we must act, for there is no great merit in doing good to one who values
it,
who thanks us and is grateful.
There are some persons who think they are never treated well enough; they
seem as if they had a right to everything. They are never pleased with what is
done for them: they repay everybody with ingratitude. . . . Well! those are the people to whom we should do good by preference. We must be prudent in all our actions, and seek not our own taste, but what is most pleasing to the good God. Suppose you have a franc that you intend to give for a Mass; you see a poor family in distress, in want of bread: it is better to give your money to these wretched people, because the Holy Sacrifice will still be offered; the priest will not fail to say Holy Mass; while these poor people may die of hunger. . . . You would wish to pray to the good God, to pass your whole day in the church; but you think it would be very useful to work for some poor people that you know, who are in great need; that is much more pleasing to God than your day passed before the holy tabernacle.

Temperance is another cardinal virtue: we can be temperate in the use of our imagination, by not letting it gallop as fast as it would wish; we can be temperate with our eyes, temperate with our mouth -- some people constantly have something sweet and pleasant in their mouth; we can be temperate with our ears, not allowing them to listen to useless songs and conversation; temperate in smelling -- some people perfume themselves to such a degree as to make those about them sick; temperate with the hands -- some people are always washing them when it is hot, and handling things that are soft to the touch. . . . In short, we can practice temperance with our whole body, this poor machine, by not letting it run away like a horse without bit or bridle, but checking it and keeping it down. Some people lie buried there, in their beds; they are glad not to sleep, that they may the better feel how comfortable they are. The saints were not like that. I do not know how we are ever to get where they are. . . . Well! if we are saved, we shall stay infinitely long in Purgatory, while they will fly straight to Heaven to see the good God.

That great saint, St. Charles Borromeo, had in his apartment a fine cardinal's bed, which everybody saw; but, besides that, there was one which nobody could see, made of bundles of wood; and that was the one he made use of. He never warmed himself; when people came to see him, they remarked that he placed himself so as not to feel the fire. That is what the saints were like. They lived for Heaven, and not for earth; they were all heavenly; and as for us, we are all earthly. Oh, how I like those little mortifications that are seen by nobody, such as rising a quarter of an hour sooner, rising for a little while in the night to pray! but some people think of nothing but sleeping. There was once a solitary who had built himself a royal palace in the trunk of an oak tree; he had placed thorns inside of it, and he had fastened three stones over his head, so that when he raised himself or turned over he might feel the stones or the thorns. And we, we think of nothing but finding good beds, that we may sleep at
our ease.

We may refrain from warming ourselves; if we are sitting uncomfortably, we need not try to place ourselves better; if we are walking in our garden, we may deprive ourselves of some fruit that we should like; in preparing the food, we need not eat the little bits that offer themselves; we may deprive ourselves of seeing something pretty, which attracts our eyes, especially in the streets of great towns. There is a gentleman who sometimes comes here. He wears two pairs of spectacles, that he may see nothing. . . . But some heads are always in motion, some eyes are always looking about. . . . When we are going along the streets, let us fix our eyes on Our Lord carrying His Cross before us; on the Blessed Virgin, who is looking at us; on our guardian angel, who is by our side. How beautiful is this interior life! It unites us with the good God. . . . Therefore, when the devil sees a soul that is seeking to attain to it, he tries to turn him aside from it by filling his imagination with a thousand fancies. A good Christian does not listen to that; he goes always forward in perfection, like a fish plunging into the depths of the sea. . . . As for us, Alas! we drag ourselves along like a leech in the mud.

There were two saints in the desert who had sewed thorns into all their clothes; and we seek for nothing but comfort! Yet we wish to go to Heaven, but with all our luxuries, without having any annoyance; that is not the way the saints acted. They sought every way of mortifying themselves, and in the midst of all their privations they tasted infinite sweetness. How happy are those who love the good God! They do not lose a single opportunity of doing good; misers employ all the means in their power to increase their treasure; they do the same for the riches of Heaven -- they are always heaping up. We shall be surprised at the Day of Judgment to see souls so rich!

PART II: EXPLANATIONS AND EXHORTATIONSPART
Sixteen Exhortations of the Holy Cure of Ars
CHAPTER 1: On Salvation
THE HAPPINESS of man on earth, my children, is to be very good; those who are very good bless the good God, they love Him, they glorify Him, and do all their works with joy and love, because they know that we are in this world for no other end than to serve and love the good God.

Look at bad Christians; they do everything with trouble and disgust; and why, my children? because they do not love the good God, because their soul is not pure, and their hopes are no longer in Heaven, but on earth. Their heart is an impure source which poisons all their actions, and prevents them from rising to God; so they come to die without having thought of death, destitute of good works for Heaven, and loaded with crimes for Hell: this is the way they are lost forever, my children. People say it is too much trouble to save one's soul; but, my children, is it not trouble to acquire glory or fortune? Do you stay in
bed when you have to go and plough, or mow, or reap? No. Well, then, why should
you be more idle when you have to lay up an immense fortune which will never perish -- when you have to strive for eternal glory?

See, my children, if we really wish to be saved we must determine, once for all, to labor in earnest for our salvation; our soul is like a garden in which the weeds are ever ready to choke the good plants and flowers that have been sown in it. If the gardener who has charge of this garden neglects it, if he is not continually using the spade and the hoe, the flowers and plants will soon disappear. Thus, my children, do the virtues with which God has been pleased to adorn our soul disappear under our vices if we neglect to cultivate them. As a vigilant gardener labours from morning till night to destroy the weeds in his garden, and to ornament it with flowers, so let us labor every day to uproot the vices of our soul and to adorn it with virtues. See, my children, a gardener never lets the weeds take root, because he knows that then he would never be able to destroy them. Neither let us allow our vices to take root, or we shall not be able to conquer them.

One day, an anchorite being in a forest with a companion, showed him four cypresses to be pulled up one after the other; the young man, who did not very well know why he told him to do this, took hold of the first tree, which was quite small, and pulled it up with one hand without trouble; the second, which was a little bigger and had some roots, made him pull harder, but yet he pulled it up with one hand; the third, being still bigger, offered so much resistance, that he was obliged to take both hands and to use all his strength; the fourth, which was grown into a tree, had such deep roots, that he exhausted himself in vain efforts. The saint then said to him, "With a little vigilance and mortification, we succeed in repressing our passions, and we triumph over them when they are only springing up; but when they have taken deep root, nothing is more difficult; the thing is even impossible without a miracle."

Let us not reckon on a miracle of Providence, my children; let us not put off till the end of our life the care that we ought daily to take of our soul; let us labor while there is yet time -- later it will no longer be within our power; let us lay our hands to the work; let us watch over ourselves; above all, let us pray to the good God -- with His assistance we shall always have power over our passions. Man sins, my children; but if he has not in this first moment lost the faith, he runs, he hastens, he flies, to seek a remedy for his ill; he cannot soon enough find the tribunal of penance, where he can recover his happiness. That is the way we should conduct ourselves if we were good Christians. Yes, my children, we could not remain one moment under the empire of the devil; we should be ashamed of being his slaves. A good Christian watches continually, sword in hand. The devil can do nothing against him, for he
resists him like a warrior in full armour; he does not fear him, because he has rejected from his heart all that is impure. Bad Christians are idle and lazy, and stand hanging their heads; and you see how they give way at the first assault: the devil does what he pleases with them; he presents pleasures to them, he makes them taste pleasure, and then, to drown the cries of their conscience, he whispers to them in a gentle voice, "You will sin no more." And when the occasion presents itself, they fall again, and more easily than the first time. If they go to confession he makes them ashamed, they speak only in half-words, they lower their voice, they explain away their sins, and, what is more miserable, they perhaps conceal some. The good Christian, on the contrary, groans and weeps over his sins, and reaches the tribunal of Penance already half justified.

CHAPTER 2: On Death

A DAY WILL come, perhaps it is not far off, when we must bid goodbye to life, goodbye to the world, goodbye to our relations, goodbye to our friends. When shall we return, my children? Never. We appear upon this earth, we disappear, and we return no more; our poor body, that we take such care of, goes away into dust, and our soul, all trembling, goes to appear before the good God. When we quit this world, where we shall appear no more, when our last breath of life escapes, and we say our last goodbye, we shall wish to have passed our life in solitude, in the depths of a desert, far from the world and its pleasures. We have these examples of repentance before our eyes every day, my children, and we remain always the same. We pass our life gaily, without ever troubling ourselves about eternity. By our indifference to the service of the good God, one would think we were never going to die. See, my children, some people pass their whole life without thinking of death. It comes, and behold! they have nothing; faith, hope, and love, all are already dead within them. When death shall come upon us, of what use will three-quarters of our life have been to us? With what are we occupied the greatest part of our time? Are we thinking of the good God, of our salvation, of our soul? O my children! what folly is the world! We come into it, we go out of it, without knowing why. The good God places us in it to serve Him, to see if we will love Him and be faithful to His law; and after this short moment of trial, He promises us a recompense. Is it not just that He should reward the faithful servant and punish the wicked one? Should the Trappist, who has passed his
life
in lamenting and weeping over his sins, be treated the same as the bad
Christian, who has lived in abundance in the midst of all the enjoyments of
life? No; certainly not. We are on earth not to enjoy its pleasures, but to
labor for our salvation.
Let us prepare ourselves for death; we have not a minute to lose: it will
come upon us at the moment when we least expect it; it will take us by
surprise.
Look at the saints, my children, who were pure; they were always trembling,
they
pined away with fear; and we, who so often offend the good God -- we have no
fears. Life is given us that we may learn to die well, and we never think of it.
We occupy ourselves with everything else. The idea of it often occurs to us,
and
we always reject it; we put it off to the last moment. O my children! this last
moment, how much it is to be feared! Yet the good God does not wish us to
despair; He shows us the good thief, touched with repentance, dying near Him
on
the cross; but he is the only one; and then see, he dies near the good God. Can
we hope to be near Him at our last moment -- we who have been far from Him
all
our
life? What have we done to deserve that favor? A great deal of evil, and no
good.
There was once a good Trappist Father, who was trembling all over at
perceiving the approach of death. Someone said to him, "Father, of what then
are
you afraid?" "Of the judgment of God," he said. "Ah! if you dread the
judgment -- you who have done so much penance, you who love God so much,
who
have been so long preparing for death -- what will become of me?" See, my
children,
to die well we must live well; to live well, we must seriously examine
ourselves:
every evening think over what we have done during the day; at the end of each
week review what we have done during the week; at the end of each month
review
what we have done during the month; at the end of the year, what we have
done
during the year. By this means, my children, we cannot fail to correct
ourselves, and to become fervent Christians in a short time. Then, when death
comes, we are quite ready; we are happy to go to Heaven.
CHAPTER 3: On the Last Judgment
OUR CATECHISM tells us, my children, that all men will undergo a
particular
judgment on the day of their death. No sooner shall we have breathed our last
sigh than our soul, without leaving the place where it has expired, will be
presented before the tribunal of God. Wherever we may die, God is there to exercise His justice. The good God, my children, has measured out our years, and of those years that He has resolved to leave us on this earth, He has marked out one which shall be our last; one day which we shall not see succeeded by other days; one hour after which there will be for us no more time. What distance is there between that moment and this -- the space of an instant. Life, my children, is a smoke, a light vapor; it disappears more quickly than a bird that darts through the air, or a ship that sails on the sea, and leaves no trace of its course!

When shall we die? Alas! will it be in a year, in a month? Perhaps tomorrow, perhaps today! May not that happen to us which happens to so many others? It may be that at a moment when you are thinking of nothing but amusing yourself, you may be summoned to the judgment of God, like the impious Balthasar. What will then be the astonishment of that soul entering on its eternity? Surprised, bewildered, separated thenceforth from its relations and friends, and, as it were, surrounded with Divine light, it will find in its Creator no longer a merciful Father, but an inflexible Judge. Imagine to yourselves, my children, a soul at its departure from this life. It is going to appear before the tribunal of its Judge, alone with God; there is Heaven on one side, Hell on the other. What object presents itself before it? The picture of its whole life! All its thoughts, all its words, all its actions, are examined. This examination will be terrible, my children, because nothing is hidden from God. His infinite wisdom knows our most inmost thoughts; it penetrates to the bottom of our hearts, and lays open their innermost folds. In vain sinners avoid the light of day that they may sin more freely; they spare themselves a little shame in the eyes of men, but it will be of no advantage to them at the day of judgment; God will make light the darkness under cover of which they thought to sin with impunity. The Holy Spirit, my children, says that we shall be examined on our words, our thoughts, our actions; we shall be examined even on the good we ought to have done, and have not done, on the sins of others of which we have been the cause. Alas! so many thoughts to which we abandon ourselves -- to which the mind gives itself up; how many in one day! in a week! in a month! in a year! How many in the whole course of our life! Not one of this infinite number will escape the knowledge of our Judge. The proud man must give an account of all his thoughts of presumption, of vanity, of ambition; the impure one of all his evil thoughts, and of the criminal desires with which he has fed his imagination. Those young people who are incessantly occupied with their dress, who are seeking to please, to
distinguish themselves, to attract attention and praise, and who dare not make themselves known in the tribunal of Penance, will they be able still to hide themselves at the day of the judgment of God? No, no! They will appear there such as they have been during their life, before Him who makes known all that is most secret in the heart of man.

We shall give an account, my children, of our using the name of God in vain, of our curses. God hears our slanders, our calumnies, our loose conversations, our worldly and licentious songs; He hears also the discourse of the impious. This is not all, my children; God will also examine our actions. He will bring to light all our unfaithfulness in His service, our forgetfulness of His Commandments, our transgression of His law, the profanation of His churches, the attachment to the world, the ill-regulated love of pleasure and of the perishable goods of earth. All, my children, will be unveiled; those thefts, that injustice, that usury, that intemperance, that anger, those disputes, that tyranny, that revenge, those criminal liberties, those abominations that cannot be named without blushing....

CHAPTER 4: On Sin

Sin is a thought, a word, an action, contrary to the law of God.

By sin, my children, we rebel against the good God, we despise His justice, we tread under foot His blessings. From being children of God, we become the executioner and assassin of our soul, the offspring of Hell, the horror of Heaven, the murderer of Jesus Christ, the capital enemy of the good God. O my children! if we thought of this, if we reflected on the injury which sin offers to the good God, we would hold it in abhorrence, we would be unable to commit it; but we never think of it, we like to live at our ease, we slumber in sin. If the good God sends us remorse, we quickly stifle it, by thinking that we have done no harm to anybody, that God is good, and that He did not place us on the earth to make us suffer.

Indeed, my children, the good God did not place us on the earth to suffer and endure, but to work out our salvation. See, He wills that we should work today and tomorrow; and after that, an eternity of joy, of happiness, awaits us in Heaven. . . . O my children! how ungrateful we are! The good God calls us to Himself; He wishes to make us happy forever, and we are deaf to His word, we will not share His happiness; He enjoins us to love Him, and we give our heart to the devil. . . . The good God commands all nature as its Master; He makes the winds and the storms obey Him; the angels tremble at His adorable will: man alone dares to resist Him. See, God forbids us that action, that criminal pleasure, that revenge, that injustice; no matter, we are bent upon satisfying ourselves; we had rather renounce the happiness of Heaven, than deprive ourselves of a moment's pleasure, or give up a sinful habit, or change our life. What are we, then, that we dare thus to resist God? Dust and ashes, which He
could annihilate with a single look. . . .

By sin, my children, we despise the good God. We renew His Death and Passion; we do as much evil as all the Jews together did, in fastening Him to the Cross. Therefore, my children, if we were to ask those who work without necessity on Sunday: "What are you doing there?" and they were to answer truly, they would say, "We are crucifying the good God." Ask the idle, the gluttonous, the immodest, what they do every day. If they answer you according to what they are really doing, they will say, "We are crucifying the good God." O my children! it is very ungrateful to offend a God who has never done us any harm; but is it not the height of ingratitude to offend a God who has done us nothing but good?

It is He who created us, who watches over us. He holds us in His hands; if He chose, He could cast us into the nothingness out of which He took us. He has given us His Son, to redeem us from the slavery of the devil; He Himself gave Him up to death that He might restore us to life; He has adopted us as His children, and ceases not to lavish His graces upon us. Notwithstanding all this, what use do we make of our mind, of our memory, of our health, of those limbs which He gave us to serve Him with? We employ them, perhaps, in committing crimes.

The good God, my children, has given us eyes to enlighten us, to see Heaven, and we use them to look at criminal and dangerous objects; He has given us a tongue to praise Him, and to express our thoughts, and we make it an instrument of iniquity -- we swear, we blaspheme, we speak ill of our neighbour, we slander him; we abuse the supernatural graces, we stifle the salutary remorse by which God would convert us. . . . we reject the inspirations of our good guardian angel. We despise good thoughts, we neglect prayer and the Sacraments.

What account do we make even of the Word of God? Do we not listen to it with disgust? How miserable we are! How much we are to be pitied! We employ the time that the good God has given us for our salvation, in losing our souls. We make war upon Him with the means He has given us to serve Him; we turn His own gifts against Him! Let us cast our eyes, my children, upon Jesus fastened to the Cross, and let us say to ourselves, "This is what it has cost my Savior to repair the injury my sins have done to God."

A God coming down to the earth to be the victim of our sins! A God suffering, a God dying, a God enduring every torment, because He has put on the semblance of sin, and has chosen to bear the weight of our iniquities! Ah, my
children! at the sight of that Cross, let us conceive once for all the malice of sin, and the abhorrence in which we should hold it. . . . Let us enter into ourselves, and see what we ought to do to repair our past sins; let us implore the clemency of the good God, and let us all together say to Him, from the bottom of our heart, "O Lord, who are here crucified for us, have mercy upon us! You comest down from Heaven to cure souls of sin; cure us, we beseech You; cause our souls to be purified by approaching the tribunal of penance; yes, O God! make us look upon sin as the greatest of all evils, and by our zeal in avoiding it, and in repairing those we have had the misfortune to commit, let us one day attain to the happiness of the saints."

CHAPTER 5: On Temptations
WE ARE all inclined to sin, my children; we are idle, greedy, sensual, given to the pleasures of the flesh. We want to know everything, to learn everything, to see everything; we must watch over our mind, over our heart, and over our senses, for these are the gates by which the devil penetrates. See, he prowls round us incessantly; his only occupation in this world is to seek companions for himself. All our life he will lay snares for us, he will try to make us yield to temptations; we must, on our side, do all we can to defeat and resist him. We can do nothing by ourselves, my children; but we can do everything with the help of the good God; let us pray Him to deliver us from this enemy of our salvation, or to give strength to fight against him. With the Name of Jesus we shall overthrow the demons; we shall put them to flight. With this Name, if they sometimes dare to attack us, our battles will be victories, and our victories will be crowns for Heaven, all brilliant with precious stones. See, my children, the good God refuses nothing to those who pray to Him from the bottom of their heart. St. Teresa, being one day in prayer, and desiring to see the good God, Jesus Christ showed to the eyes of her soul His Divine hands; then, another day, when she was again in prayer, He showed her His face. Lastly, some days after, He showed her the whole of His Sacred Humanity.

The good God who granted the desire of St. Teresa will also grant our prayers. If we ask of Him the grace to resist temptations, He will grant it to us; for He wishes to save us all, He shed His Blood for us all, He died for us all, He is waiting for us all in Heaven. We are two or three hundred here: shall we all be saved, shall we all go to Heaven? Alas! my children, we know nothing about it; but I tremble when I see so many souls lost in these days. See, they fall into Hell as the leaves fall from the trees at the approach of winter. We shall fall like the rest, my children, if we do not avoid temptations, if, when we cannot avoid them, we do not fight generously, with the help of the good God -- if we do not invoke His Name during the strife, like St. Antony in the desert.
This saint having retired into an old sepulchre, the devil came to attack him; he tried at first to terrify him with a horrible noise; he even beat him so cruelly that he left him half dead and covered with wounds. "Well," said St. Antony, "here I am, ready to fight again; no, you shall not be able to separate me from Jesus Christ, my Lord and my God." The spirits of darkness redoubled their efforts, and uttered frightful cries. St. Antony remained unmoved, because he put all his confidence in God. After the example of this saint, my children, let us be always ready for the combat; let us put our confidence in God; let us fast and pray; and the devil will not be able to separate us from Jesus Christ, either in this world or the next.

CHAPTER 6: On Pride

Pride is an untrue opinion of ourselves, an untrue idea of what we are not. THE PROUD MAN is always disparaging himself, that people may praise him the more. The more the proud man lowers himself, the more he seeks to raise his miserable nothingness. He relates what he has done, and what he has not done; he feeds his imagination with what has been said in praise of him, and seeks by all possible means for more; he is never satisfied with praise. See, my children, if you only show some little displeasure against a man given up to self-love, he gets angry, and accuses you of ignorance or injustice towards him. . . . My children, we are in reality only what we are in the eyes of God, and nothing more. Is it not quite clear and evident that we are nothing, that we can do nothing, that we are very miserable? Can we lose sight of our sins, and cease to humble ourselves?

If we were to consider well what we are, humility would be easy to us, and the demon of pride would no longer have any room in our heart. See, our days are like grass -- like the grass which now flourishes in the meadows, and will presently be withered; like an ear of corn which is fresh only for a moment, and is parched by the sun. In fact, my children, today we are full of life, full of health; and tomorrow, death will perhaps come to reap us and mow us down, as you reap your corn and mow your meadows. . . . Whatever appears vigorous, whatever shines, whatever is beautiful, is of short duration. . . . The glory of this world, youth, honours, riches, all pass away quickly, as quickly as the flower of grass, as the flower of the field. . . . Let us reflect that so we shall one day be reduced to dust; that we shall be thrown into the fire like dry grass, if we do not fear the good God.

Good Christians know this very well, my children; therefore they do not occupy themselves with their body; they despise the affairs of this world; they
consider only their soul and how to unite it to God. Can we be proud in the face of the examples of lowliness, of humiliations, that Our Lord has given us, and is still giving us every day? Jesus Christ came upon earth, became incarnate, was born poor, lived in poverty, died on a cross, between two thieves. . . . He instituted an admirable Sacrament, in which He communicates Himself to us under the Eucharistic veil; and in this Sacrament He undergoes the most extraordinary humiliations. Residing continually in our tabernacles, He is deserted, misunderstood by ungrateful men; and yet He continues to love us, to serve us in the Sacrament of the Altar.

O my children! what an example of humiliation does the good Jesus give us! Behold Him on the Cross to which our sins have fastened Him; behold Him: He calls us, and says to us, "Come to Me, and learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart." How well the saints understood this invitation, my children! Therefore, they all sought humiliations and sufferings. After their example, then, let us not be afraid of being humbled and despised. St. John of God, at the beginning of his conversion, pretended that he was crazy, ran about the streets, and was followed by the populace, who threw stones at him; he always came in covered with mud and with blood. He was shut up as a madman; the most violent remedies were employed to cure him of his pretended illness; and he bore it all in the spirit of penance, and in expiation of his past sins. The good God, my children, does not require of us extraordinary things. He wills that we should be gentle, humble, and modest; then we shall always be pleasing to Him; we shall be like little children; and He will grant us the grace to come to Him and to enjoy the happiness of the saints.

CHAPTER 7: On Avarice

Avarice is an inordinate love of the goods of this world.

YES, MY CHILDREN, it is an ill-regulated love, a fatal love, which makes us forget the good God, prayer, the Sacraments, that we may love the goods of this world -- gold and silver and lands. The avaricious man is like a pig, which seeks its food in the mud, without caring where it comes from. Stooping towards the earth, he thinks of nothing but the earth; he no longer looks towards Heaven, his happiness is no longer there. The avaricious man does no good till after his death. See, how greedily he gathers up wealth, how anxiously he keeps it, how afflicted he is if he loses it. In the midst of riches, he does not enjoy them; he is, as it were, plunged in a river, and is dying of thirst; lying on a heap of corn, he is dying of hunger; he has everything, my children, and dares not touch anything; his gold is a sacred thing to him, he makes it his divinity, he adores it. . . .

O my children! how many there are in these days who are idolators! how
many
there are who think more of making a fortune than of serving the good God!
They
steal, they defraud, they go to law with their neighbour; they do not even
respect the laws of God. They work on Sundays and holydays: nothing escapes
their greedy and rapacious hands. Good Christians, my children, do not think
of their body, which must end in corruption; they think only of their soul,
which is immortal. While they are on the earth, they occupy themselves with
their soul alone. So you see how assiduous they are at the Offices of the
Church, with what fervour they pray before the good God, how they sanctify
Sunday, how recollected they are at holy Mass, how happy they are! The days,
the
months, the years are nothing to them; they pass them in loving the good God,
with their eyes fixed on their eternity. . . .

Seeing us so indifferent to our salvation, and so occupied in gathering up
a little mud, would not anyone say that we were never to die? Indeed, my
children, we are like people who, during the summer, should make an ample
provision of gourds, of melons, for a long journey; after the winter, what
would
remain of it? Nothing. In the same way, my children, what remains to the
avaricious man of all his wealth when death comes upon him unawares? A poor
covering, a few planks, and the despair of not being able to carry his gold away
with him. Misers generally die in this sort of despair, and pay eternally to the
devil for their insatiable thirst for riches. Misers, my children, are sometimes
punished even in this world.

Once St. Hilarion, followed by a great number of his disciples, going to
visit the monasteries under his rule, came to the abode of an avaricious
solitary. On their approach, they found watchers in all parts of the vineyard,
who threw stones and clods of earth at them to prevent their touching the
grapes. This miser was well punished, for he gathered that year much fewer
grapes than usual, and his wine turned into vinegar. Another solitary, named
Sabbas, begged him, on the contrary, to come into his vineyard, and eat the
fruit. St. Hilarion blessed it, and sent in to it his religious, to the number
of three thousand, who all satisfied their hunger; and twenty days after, the
vineyard yielded three hundred measures of wine, instead of the usual
quantity
of ten. Let us follow the example of Sabbas, and be disinterested; the good God
will bless us, and after having blessed us in this world, He will also reward us
in the other.

CHAPTER 8: On Lust
Lust is the love of the pleasures that are contrary to purity.
NO SINS, my children, ruin and destroy a soul so quickly as this shameful
sin; it snatches us out of the hands of the good God and hurls us like a stone
into an abyss of mire and corruption. Once plunged in this mire, we cannot get
out, we make a deeper hole in it every day, we sink lower and lower. Then we
lose the faith, we laugh at the truths of religion, we no longer see Heaven, we
do not fear Hell. O my children! how much are they to be pitied who give way to this passion! How wretched they are! Their soul, which was so beautiful, which attracted the eyes of the good God, over which He leaned as one leans over a perfumed rose, has become like a rotten carcass, of which the pestilential odor rises even to His throne. . . .

See, my children! Jesus Christ endured patiently, among His Apostles, men who were proud, ambitious, greedy -- even one who betrayed Him; but He could not bear the least stain of impurity in any of them; it is of all vices that which He has most in abhorrence: "My Spirit does not dwell in you," the Lord says, "if you are nothing but flesh and corruption." God gives up the impure to all the wicked inclinations of his heart. He lets him wallow, like the vile swine, in the mire, and does not even let him smell its offensive exhalations. . . . The immodest man is odious to everyone, and is not aware of it. God has set the mark of disgrace on his forehead, and he is not ashamed; he has a face of brass and a heart of bronze; it is in vain you talk to him of honour, of virtue; he is full of arrogance and pride. The eternal truths, death, judgment, Paradise, Hell -- nothing terrifies him, nothing can move him. So, my children, of all sins, that of impurity is the most difficult to eradicate. Other sins forge for us chains of iron, but this one makes them of bull's hide, which can be neither broken nor torn; it is a fire, a furnace, which consumes even to the most advanced old age. See those two infamous old men who attempted the purity of the chaste Susannah; they had kept the fire of their youth even till they were decrepit. When the body is worn out with debauchery, when they can no longer satisfy their passions, they supply the place of it, oh, shame! by infamous desires and memories. With one foot in the grave, they still speak the language of passion, till their last breath; they die as they have lived, impenitent; for what penance can be done by the impure, what sacrifice can be imposed on himself at his death, who during his life has always given way to his passions? Can one at the last moment expect a good confession, a good Communion, from him who has concealed one of these shameful sins, perhaps, from his earliest youth -- who has heaped sacrilege on sacrilege? Will the tongue, which has been silent up to this day, be unloosed at the last moment? No, no, my children; God has abandoned him; many sheets of lead already weigh upon him; he will add another, and it will be the last . . .

CHAPTER 9: On Envy

Envy is a sadness which we feel on account of the good that happens to our neighbour.

ENVY, my children, follows pride; whoever is envious is proud. See, envy comes to us from Hell; the devils having sinned through pride, sinned also
through envy, envying our glory, our happiness. Why do we envy the happiness
and the goods of others? Because we are proud; we should like to be the sole possessors of talents, riches, of the esteem and love of all the world! We hate our equals, because they are our equals; our inferiors, from the fear that they may equal us; our superiors, because they are above us. In the same way, my children, that the devil after his fall felt, and still feels, extreme anger at seeing us the heirs of the glory of the good God, so the envious man feels sadness at seeing the spiritual and temporal prosperity of his neighbour.

We walk, my children, in the footsteps of the devil; like him, we are vexed at good, and rejoice at evil. If our neighbour loses anything, if his affairs go wrong, if he is humbled, if he is unfortunate, we are joyful... we triumph! The devil, too, is full of joy and triumph when we fall, when he can make us fall as low as himself. What does he gain by it? Nothing. Shall we be richer, because our neighbour is poorer? Shall we be greater, because he is less? Shall we be happier, because he is more unhappy? O my children! how much we are to be pitied for being like this! St. Cyprian said that other evils had limits, but that envy had none. In fact, my children, the envious man invents all sorts of wickedness; he has recourse to evil speaking, to calumny, to cunning, in order to blacken his neighbour; he repeats what he knows, and what he does not know he invents, he exaggerates...

Through the envy of the devil, death entered into the world; and also through envy we kill our neighbour; by dint of malice, of falsehood, we make him lose his reputation, his place... Good Christians, my children, do not do so; they envy no one; they love their neighbour; they rejoice at the good that happens to him, and they weep with him if any misfortune comes upon him. How happy should we be if we were good Christians. Ah! my children, let us, then, be good Christians and we shall no more envy the good fortune of our neighbour; we shall never speak evil of him; we shall enjoy a sweet peace; our soul will be calm; we shall find paradise on earth.

CHAPTER 10: On Gluttony

Gluttony is an inordinate love of eating and drinking.

WE ARE GLUTTONOUS, my children, when we take food in excess, more than is required for the support of our poor body; when we drink beyond what is necessary, so as even to lose our senses and our reason... Oh, how shameful is this vice! How it degrades us! See, it puts us below the brutes: the animals never drink more than to satisfy their thirst: they content themselves with eating enough; and we, when we have satisfied our appetite, when our body can bear no more, we still have recourse to all sorts of little delicacies; we take
wine and liquors to excess! Is it not pitiful? We can no longer keep upon our legs; we fall, we roll into the ditch and into the mud, we become the laughing stock of everyone, even the sport of little children....

If death were to surprise us in this state, my children, we should not have time to recollect ourselves; we should fall in that state into the hands of the good God. What a misfortune, my children! How would our soul be surprised! How would it be astonished! We would shudder with horror at seeing the lost who are in Hell.... Do not let us be led by our appetite; we shall ruin our health, we shall lose our soul.... See, my children, intemperance and debauchery are the support of doctors; that lets them live, and gives them a great deal of practice.... We hear every day, such a one was drunk, and falling down he broke his leg; another, passing a river on a plank, fell into the water and was drowned.... Intemperance and drunkenness are the companions of the wicked rich man.... A moment of pleasure in this world will cost us very dear in the other. There they will be tormented by a raging hunger and a devouring thirst; they will not even have a drop of water to refresh themselves; their tongue and their body will be consumed by the flames for a whole eternity....

O my children! we do not think about it; and yet that will not fail to happen to some amongst us, perhaps even before the end of the year! St. Paul said that those who give themselves to excess in eating and drinking shall not possess the kingdom of God. Let us reflect on these words! Look at the saints: they pass their life in penance, and we would pass ours in the midst of enjoyments and pleasures. St. Elizabeth, Queen of Portugal, fasted all Advent, and also from St. John Baptist's day to the Assumption. Soon after, she began another Lent, which lasted till the feast of St. Michael. She lived upon bread and water only on Fridays and Saturdays, and on the vigils of the feasts of the Blessed Virgin and of the Apostles. They say that St. Bernard drank oil for wine. St. Isidore never ate without shedding tears! If we were good Christians, we should do as the saints have done.

We should gain a great deal for Heaven at our meals; we should deprive ourselves of many little things which, without being hurtful to our body, would be very pleasing to the good God; but we choose rather to satisfy our taste than to please God; we drown, we stifle our soul in wine and food. My children, God will not say to us at the Day of Judgment, "Give Me an account of your body"; but, "Give Me an account of your soul; what have you done with it?".... What shall we answer Him? Do we take as much care of our soul as of our body? O my children! let us no longer live for the pleasure of eating; let us live as the saints have done; let us mortify ourselves as they were mortified. The saints never indulged themselves in the pleasures of banqueting. Their pleasure was to feed on Jesus Christ! Let us follow their footsteps on this earth, and we shall
CHAPTER 11: On Anger

Anger is an emotion of the soul, which leads us violently to repel whatever hurts or displeases us.

THIS EMOTION, my children, comes from the devil: it shows that we are in his hands; that he is the master of our heart; that he holds all the strings of it, and makes us dance as he pleases. See, a person who puts himself in a passion is like a puppet; he knows neither what he says, nor what he does; the devil guides him entirely. He strikes right and left; his hair stands up like the bristles of a hedgehog; his eyes start out of his head -- he is a scorpion, a furious lion. . . . Why do we, my children, put ourselves into such a state? Is it not pitiable? It is, I tell you, because we do not love the good God. Our heart is given up to the demon of pride, who is angry when he thinks himself despised; to the demon of avarice, who is irritated when he suffers any loss; to the demon of luxury, who is indignant when his pleasures are interfered with. . . . How unhappy we are, my children, thus to be the sport of demons? They do whatever they please with us; they suggest to us evil-speaking, calumny, hatred, vengeance: they even drive us so far as to put our neighbor to death. See, Cain killed his brother Abel out of jealousy; Saul wished to take away the life of David; Theodosius caused the massacre of the inhabitants of Thessalonica, to revenge a personal affront. . . . If we do not put our neighbour to death, we are angry with him, we curse him, we give him to the devil, we wish for his death, we wish for our own. In our fury, we blaspheme the holy Name of God, we accuse His Providence. . . . What fury, what impiety! And what is still more deplorable, my children, we are carried to these excesses for a trifle, for a word, for the least injustice! Where is our faith! Where is our reason? We say in excuse that it is anger that makes us swear; but one sin cannot excuse another sin. The good God equally condemns anger, and the excesses that are its consequences. . . . How we sadden our guardian angel! He is always there at our side to send us good thoughts, and he sees us do nothing but evil. . . . If we did like St. Remigius, we should never be angry. See, this saint, being questioned by a Father of the desert how he managed to be always in an even temper, replied, "I often consider that my guardian angel is always by my side, who assists me in all my needs, who tells me what I ought to do and what I ought to say, and who writes down, after each of my actions, the way in which I have done it."

Philip II, King of Spain, having passed several hours of the night in writing a long letter to the Pope, gave it to his secretary to fold up and seal. He, being half asleep, made a mistake; when he meant to put sand on the
letter,
he took the ink bottle and covered all the paper with ink. While he was ashamed
and inconsolable, the king said, quite calmly, "No very great harm is done;
there is another sheet of paper"; and he took it, and employed the rest of the
night in writing a second letter, without showing the least displeasure with his
secretary.
CHAPTER 12: On Sloth
Sloth is a kind of cowardice and disgust, which makes us neglect and omit
our duties, rather than to deny our own will and our appetites.
ALAS, MY CHILDREN, how many slothful people there are on this earth: how
many are cowardly, how many are indolent in the service of the good God! We
neglect, we omit our duties of piety, just as easily as we should take a glass
of wine. We will not deny our disordered appetites; we will not put ourselves
to any inconvenience. Everything wearies, everything disgusts the slothful man.
Prayer,
the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, which do so much good to pious souls, are a torture to him. He is weary and dissatisfied in church, at the foot of the altar, in the presence of the good God. At first he feels only dislike and indifference towards everything that is commanded by religion. Soon after, you can no longer speak to him either of Confession or Communion; he has no time to think of those things.
O my children! how miserable we are in losing, in this way, the time that we might so usefully employ in gaining Heaven, in preparing ourselves for eternity! How many moments are lost in doing nothing, or in doing wrong, in listening to the suggestions of the devil, in obeying him! Does not that make us tremble? If one of the lost had only a day or an hour to spend for his salvation, to what profit would he turn it! What haste he would make to save his soul, to reconcile himself with the good God! And we, my children, who have days and years to think of our salvation, to save our souls -- we remain there with our arms crossed, like that man spoken of in the Gospel. We neglect, we lose our souls. When death shall come, what shall we have to present to Our Lord? Ah! my children, hear how the good God threatens the idle: "Every tree that brings not forth good fruit shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire." "Take that unprofitable servant, and cast him out into the exterior darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
Idleness is the mother of all vices. Look at the idle; they think of
nothing but eating, drinking, and sleeping. They are no longer men, but stupid beasts, giving up to all their passions; they drag themselves through the mire truly like swine. They are filthy, both within and without. They feed their soul only upon impure thoughts and desires. They never open their mouth but to slander their neighbour, or to speak immodest words. Their eyes, their ears, are open only to criminal objects. . . . O my children! that we may resist idleness, let us imitate the saints. Let us watch continually over ourselves; like them, let us be very zealous in fulfilling all our duties; let the devil never find us doing nothing, lest we should yield to temptation. Let us prepare ourselves for a good death, for eternity. Let us not lose our time in lukewarmness, in negligence, in our habitual infidelities. Death is advancing: tomorrow we must, perhaps, quit our relations, our friends. Let us make haste to merit the reward promised in Paradise to the faithful servant in the Gospel!

CHAPTER 13: On Grace

CAN WE, of our own strength, avoid sin, and practice virtue? No, my children, we can do nothing without the grace of God: that is an article of faith; Jesus Christ Himself taught it to us. See, the Church thinks, and all the saints have thought with her, that grace is absolutely necessary to us, and that without it we can neither believe, nor hope, nor love, nor do penance for our sins. St. Paul, whose piety was not counterfeit, assures us, on his part, that we cannot of ourselves even pronounce the name of Jesus in a manner that can gain merit for Heaven. As the earth can produce nothing unless it is fertilised by the sun, so we can do no good without the grace of the good God. Grace, my children, is a supernatural assistance which leads us to good; for example, there is a sinner who goes into a church and hears an instruction: the preacher speaks of Hell, of the severity of the judgments of God; he feels himself interiorly urged to be converted; this interior impulse is what is called grace. See, my children, it is the good God taking that sinner by the hand, and wishing to teach him to walk. We are like little children: we do not know how to walk on the road to Heaven; we stagger, we fall, unless the hand of the good God is always ready to support us. O my children! how good is the good God! If we would think of all that He has done, of all that He still does every day for us, we would not be able to offend Him -- we would love Him with all our heart; but we do not think of it, that is the reason. . . . The angels sin, and are cast into Hell. Man sins, and God promises him a Deliverer. What have we done to deserve this favor? What have we done to deserve to be born in the Catholic religion, while so many souls are every day lost in other religions? What have we done to deserve to be baptised, while so many little children in France, as well as in China and America, die without Baptism? What have we done to deserve the pardon
of all the sins that we commit after the age of reason, while so many are
denied of the Sacrament of Penance?
O my children! St. Augustine says, and it is very true, that God seeks in
us what deserves that He should abandon us, and finds it; and He seeks what
would make us worthy of His gifts, and finds nothing, because, in fact, there is
nothing in us -- we are nothing but ashes and sin. All our merit, my children,
consists in cooperating with grace. See, my children, a beautiful flower has no
beauty nor brilliance without the sun; for during the night it is all withered
and drooping. When the sun rises in the morning, it suddenly revives and
expands. It is the same with our soul, in regard to Jesus Christ, the true Sun
of justice; it has no interior beauty but through sanctifying grace. In order to
receive this grace, my children, our soul must turn to the good God by a
sincere
conversion: we must open our hearts to Him by an act of faith and love. As the
sun alone cannot make a flower expand if it is already dead, so the grace of the
good God cannot bring us back to life if we will not abandon sin.
God speaks to us, without ceasing, by His good inspirations; He sends us
good thoughts, good desires. In youth, in old age, in all the misfortunes of
life, He exhorts us to receive His grace, and what use do we make of His
warnings? At this moment, even, are we cooperating rightly with grace? Are we
not shutting the door of our heart against it? Consider that the good God will
one day call you to account for what you have heard today; woe to you, if you
stifle the cry that is rising from the depths of your conscience! We are in
prosperity, we live in the midst of pleasures, all puffed up with pride; our
heart is of ice towards the good God. It is a ball of copper, which the waters
of grace cannot penetrate; it is a tree which receives the gentle dew, and bears
no more fruit. . . . Let us be on our guard, my children; let us take care not
to be unfaithful to grace. The good God leaves us free to choose life or death;
if we choose death, we shall be cast into the fire, and we must burn forever
with the devils. Let us ask pardon of God for having up to now abused the
graces
He has given us, and let us humbly pray Him to grant us more.
CHAPTER 14: On Prayer
OUR CATECHISM teaches us, my children, that prayer is an elevation, an
application of our mind and of our heart to God, to make known to Him our
wants
and to ask for His assistance. We do not see the good God, my children, but He
sees us, He hears us, He wills that we should raise towards Him what is most
noble in us -- our mind and our heart. When we pray with attention, with
humility
of mind and of heart, we quit the earth, we rise to Heaven, we penetrate into
the Bosom of God, we go and converse with the angels and the saints. It was by
prayer that the saints reached Heaven: and by prayer we too shall reach it.
Yes, my children, prayer is the source of all graces, the mother of all virtues,
the efficacious and universal way by which God wills that we should come to
Him.
He says to us: "Ask, and you shall receive." None but God could make such promises and keep them. See, the good God does not say to us, "Ask such and such a thing, and I will grant it;" but He says in general: "If you ask the Father anything in My name, He will give it you." O my children! ought not this promise to fill us with confidence, and to make us pray fervently all the days of our poor life? Ought we not to be ashamed of our idleness, of our indifference to prayer, when our Divine Saviour, the Dispenser of all graces, has given us such touching examples of it? For you know that the Gospel tells us He prayed often, and even passed the night in prayer. Are we as just, as holy, as this Divine Saviour? Have we no graces to ask for? Let us enter into ourselves; let us consider. Do not the continual needs of our soul and of our body warn us to have recourse to Him who alone can supply them? How many enemies to vanquish -- the devil, the world, and ourselves. How many bad habits to overcome, how many passions to subdue, how many sins to efface! In so frightful a situation, what remains to us, my children? The armour of the saints: prayer, that necessary virtue, indispensable to good as well as to bad Christians. . . .

Within the reach of the ignorant as well as the learned, enjoined to the simple and to the enlightened, it is the virtue of all mankind; it is the science of all the faithful! Everyone on the earth who has a heart, everyone who has the use of reason ought to love and pray to God; to have recourse to Him when He is irritated; to thank Him when He confers favours; to humble themselves when He strikes.

See, my children, we are poor people who have been taught to beg spiritually, and we do not beg. We are sick people, to whom a cure has been promised, and we do not ask for it. The good God does not require of us fine prayers, but prayers which come from the bottom of our heart.

St. Ignatius was once travelling with several of his companions; they each carried on their shoulders a little bag, containing what was most necessary for them on the journey. A good Christian, seeing that they were fatigued, was interiorly excited to relieve them; he asked them as a favour to let him help them to carry their burdens. They yielded to his entreaties. When they had arrived at the inn, this man who had followed them, seeing that the Fathers knelt down at a little distance from each other to pray, knelt down also. When the Fathers rose again, they were astonished to see that this man had remained prostrate all the time they were praying: they expressed to him their surprise, and asked him what he had been doing. His answer edified them very much, for he said: "I did nothing but say, Those who pray so devoutly are saints: I am their beast of burden: O Lord! I have the intention of doing what they do: I say to You whatever they say." These were afterwards his ordinary words, and he arrived by means of this at a sublime degree of prayer. Thus, my children,
you see that there is no one who cannot pray -- and pray at all times, and in all places; by night or by day; amid the most severe labours, or in repose; in the country, at home, in travelling. The good God is everywhere ready to hear your prayers, provided you address them to Him with faith and humility.

CHAPTER 15: On the Love of God

"If you love Me, keep My Commandments."

NOTHING IS so common among Christians as to say, "O my God; I love You," and nothing more rare, perhaps, than the love of the good God. Satisfied with making outward acts of love, in which our poor heart often has no share, merely to say with the mouth, "O my God! I love You!" Oh, no! where is the sinner who does not sometimes use this language?

To love the good God is not only to feel from time to time some emotions of tenderness towards God; this sensible devotion is not always in our own power.

To love the good God is not to be faithful in fulfilling part of our duties and to neglect the rest. The good God will have no division: "You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, and with your whole soul, and with your whole strength." This shows the strength of the Commandment to love God. To love God with our whole heart is to prefer Him to everything, so as to be ready to lose all our possessions, our honor, our life, rather than offend this good Master.

To love God with our whole heart is to love nothing that is incompatible with the love of God; it is to love nothing that can share our heart with the good God: it is to renounce all our passions, all our ill-regulated desires. Is it thus, my children, that we love the good God?

To love the good God with our whole mind is to make the sacrifice to Him of our knowledge and our reason, and to believe all that He has taught. To love the good God with our whole mind is to think of Him often, and to make it our principal study to know Him well. To love the good God with our whole strength is to employ our possessions, our health, and our talents, in serving Him and glorifying Him. It is to refer all our actions to Him, as our last end. Once more, is it thus that we love the good God? Judging by this invariable rule, how few Christians truly love God!

Do those bad Christians love the good God, who are the slaves of their passions? Do those worldly persons love the good God, who seek only to gratify their body and to please the world? Is God loved by the miser, who sacrifices Him for a vile gain? Is He loved by that pleasure seeker, who abandons himself to vices the most opposite to divine love? Is He loved by that man who thinks of nothing but wine and partying? Is He loved by that other man, who cherishes an
aversion to his neighbor, and will not forgive him? Is He loved by that young
girl, who loves nothing but pleasures, and thinks of nothing but indulgence
and
vanity? No, no, my children, none of these persons love the good God; for we
must love Him with a love of preference, with an active love!
If we would rather offend the good God than deprive ourselves of a passing
satisfaction, than renounce those guilty associations, those shameful passions,
we
do not love the good God with a love of preference, since we love our
pleasures,
our passions, better than the good God Himself. Let us go down into our own
souls; let us question our hearts, my children, and see if we do not love some
creature more than the good God. We are permitted to love our relations, our
possessions, our health, our reputation; but this love must be subordinate to
the love we should have for God, so that we may be ready to make the sacrifice
of it if He should require it....
Can you suppose that you are in these dispositions -- you who look upon
mortal sin as a trifle, who keep it quietly on your conscience for months, for
years, though you know that you are in a state most displeasing to the good
God?
Can you suppose that you love the good God -- you who make no efforts to
correct yourselves; you who will deprive
yourselves of nothing; you who offend the Creator every time that you find
opportunity? Yes, my children, what the miser loves with his whole heart is
money; what the drunkard loves with his whole heart is drink; what the
libertine
loves with his whole heart is the object of his passion. You, young girls, you
who had rather offend God than give up your finery and your vanities, you say
that you love God; say rather that you love yourselves.
No, no, my children; it is not thus that the good God is to be loved, for
we must love Him not only with a love of preference, but also with an active
love. "Love," says St. Augustine, "cannot remain without the constant action of
the soul: Non potest vacare amor in anima amantis. Yes," says this great saint,
"seek for a love that does not manifest itself in works, and you will find none."
What! could it be, O my God, that Your love alone should be barren, and that
the Divine fire, which ought to enkindle the whole world, should be without
activity and without strength?
When you love a person, you show him the more or less affection according
as the ardor of your love for him is more or less great. See, my children, what
the saints were like, who were all filled with the love of the good God:
nothing cost them too much; they joyfully made the greatest sacrifices; they
distributed their goods to the poor, rendered services to their enemies, led a
hard and penitential life; tore themselves from the pleasures of the world, from
the conveniences of life, to bury themselves alive in solitude; they hastened to
torments and to death, as people hasten to a feast. Such were the effects which
the love of the good God produced in the saints; such ought it to produce in us. But, my children, we are not penetrated with the love of God; we do not love the good God. Can anyone say, indeed, that he loves the good God, who is so easily frightened, and who is repulsed by the least difficulty? Alas! what would have become of us if Jesus Christ had loved us only as we love Him? But, no. Triumphant over the agonies of the Cross, the bitterness of death, the shame of the most ignominious tortures, nothing costs Him too dearly when He has to prove that He loves us. That is our only model. If our love is active, it will manifest itself by the works which are the effects of love, because the love of the good God is not only a love of preference, but a pious affection, a love of obedience, which makes us practice His Commandments; an active love, which makes us fulfil all the duties of a good Christian. Such is the love, my children, which God requires from us, to which He is greatly entitled, which He has purchased by so many benefits heaped upon us by His death for us upon the Cross. What happiness, my children, to love the good God! There is no joy, no happiness, no peace, in the heart of those who do not love the good God on earth. We desire Heaven, we aspire to it; but, that we may be sure to attain to it, let us begin to love the good God here below, in order to be able to love Him, to possess Him eternally in His holy Paradise.

CHAPTER 16: On Paradise
"Blessed, O Lord, are those who dwell in Your house: they shall praise You for ever and ever."

To DWELL in the house of the good God, to enjoy the presence of the good God, to be happy with the happiness of the good God -- oh, what happiness, my children! Who can understand all the joy and consolation with which the saints are inebriated in Paradise? St. Paul, who was taken up into the third heaven, tells us that there are things above which he cannot reveal to us, and which we cannot comprehend.... Indeed, my children, we can never form a true idea of Heaven till we shall be there. It is a hidden treasure, an abundance of secret sweetness, a plenitude of joy, which may be felt, but which our poor tongue cannot explain. What can we imagine greater? The good God Himself will be our recompense: Ego merces tua magna nimis -- I am your reward exceeding great. O God! the happiness You promise us is such that the eyes of man cannot see it, his ears cannot hear it, nor his heart conceive it.

Yes, my children, the happiness of Heaven is incomprehensible; it is the last effort of the good God, who wishes to reward us. God, being admirable in all His works, will be so too when He recompenses the good Christians who have made all their happiness consist in the possession of Heaven. This possession contains all good, and excludes all evil; sin being far from Heaven, all the pains and miseries which are the consequences of sin are also banished from it.

No more death! The good God will be in us the Principle of everlasting life. No
more sickness, no more sadness, no more pains, no more grief. You who are afflicted, rejoice! Your fears and your weeping will not extend beyond the grave. . . . The good God will Himself wipe away your tears! Rejoice, O you whom the world persecutes! your sorrows will soon be over, and for a moment of tribulation, you will have in Heaven an immense weight of glory. Rejoice! for you possess all good things in one -- the source of all good, the good God Himself.

Can anyone be unhappy when he is with the good God; when he is happy with the happiness of the good God, of the good God Himself; when he sees the good God as he sees himself? As St. Paul says, my children, we shall see God face to face, because then there will be no veil between Him and us. We shall possess Him without uneasiness, for we shall no longer fear to lose Him. We shall love Him with an uninterrupted and undivided love, because He alone will occupy our whole heart. We shall enjoy Him without weariness, because we shall discover in Him ever new perfections; and in proportion as we penetrate into that immense abyss of wisdom, of goodness, of mercy, of justice, of grandeur, and of holiness, we shall plunge ourselves in it with fresh eagerness. If an interior consolation, if a grace from the good God, gives us so much pleasure in this world that it diminishes our troubles, that it helps us to bear our crosses, that it gives to so many martyrs strength to suffer the most cruel torments -- what will be the happiness of Heaven, where consolations and delights are given, not drop by drop, but by torrents!

Let us represent to ourselves, my children, an everlasting day always new, a day always serene, always calm; the most delicious, the most perfect society. What joy, what happiness, if we could possess on earth, only for a few minutes, the angels, the Blessed Virgin, Jesus Christ! In Heaven we shall eternally see, not only the Blessed Virgin and Jesus Christ, we shall see the good God Himself!

We shall see Him no longer through the darkness of faith, but in the light of day, in all His Majesty! What happiness thus to see the good God! The angels have contemplated Him since the beginning of the world, and they are not satiated; it would be the greatest misfortune to them to be deprived of Him for a single moment. The possession of Heaven, my children, can never weary us; we possess the good God, the Author of all perfections. See, the more we possess God, the more He pleases; the more we know Him, the more attractions and charms we find in the knowledge of Him. We shall always see Him and shall always desire to see Him; we shall always taste the pleasure there is in enjoying the good God, and we shall never be satiated with it. The blessed will be enveloped in the Divine Immensity, they will revel in delights and be all surrounded with
them, and, as it were, inebriated. Such is the happiness which the good God destines for us.

We can all, my children, acquire this happiness. The good God wills the salvation of the whole world; He has merited Heaven for us by His death, and by the effusion of all His Blood. What a happiness to be able to say, "Jesus Christ died for me; He has opened Heaven for me; it is my inheritance... Jesus has prepared a place for me; it only depends on me to go and occupy it. Vado vobis parare locum -- I go to prepare a place for you. The good God has given us faith, and with this virtue we can attain to eternal life. For, though the good God wills the salvation of all men, He particularly wills that of the Christians who believe in Him: Qui credit, habeat vitam aeternam -- He that believs has life everlasting. Let us, then, thank the good God, my children; let us rejoice -- our names are written in Heaven, like those of the Apostles. Yes, they are written in the Book of Life: if we choose, they will be there forever, since we have the means of reaching Heaven.

The happiness of Heaven, my children, is easy to acquire; the good God has furnished us with so many means of doing it! See, there is not a single creature which does not furnish us with the means of attaining to the good God; if any of them become an obstacle, it is only by our abuse of them. The goods and the miseries of this life, even the chastisements made use of by the good God to punish our infidelities, serve to our salvation. The good God, as St. Paul says, makes all things turn to the good of His elect; even our very faults may be useful to us; even bad examples and temptations. Job was saved in the midst of an idolatrous people. All the saints have been tempted. If these things are, in the hands of God, an assistance in reaching Heaven, what will happen if we have recourse to the Sacraments, to that never-failing source of all good, to that fountain of grace supplied by the good God Himself! It was easy for the disciples of Jesus to be saved, having the Divine Saviour constantly with them. Is it more difficult for us to secure our salvation, having Him constantly with us? They were happy in obtaining whatever they wished for, whatever they chose; are we less so? We possess Jesus Christ in the Eucharist; He is continually with us, He is ready to grant us whatever we ask, He is waiting for us; we have only to ask. O my children! the poor know how to express their wants to the rich; we have only our indifference, then, to accuse, if assistance and graces are lacking to us. If an ambitious or a covetous man had as ample means of enriching himself, would he hesitate a moment, would he let so favorable an opportunity escape? Alas! we do everything for this world, and nothing for the other! What labor, what trouble, what cares, what sorrows, in order to gather up a little
fortune! See, my children, of what use are our perishable goods? Solomon, the greatest, the richest, the most fortunate of kings, said, in the height of the most brilliant fortune: "I have seen all things that are done under the sun; and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit." And these are the goods to acquire which we labor so much, while we never think of the goods of Heaven! How shameful for us not to labor to acquire it, and to neglect so many means of reaching it! If the fig tree was cast into the fire for not having profited by the care that had been taken to render it fertile; if the unprofitable servant was reproved for having hidden the talent that he had received, what fate awaits us, who have so often abused the aids which might have taken us to Heaven? If we have abused the graces that the good God has given us, let us make haste to repair the past by great fidelity, and let us endeavour to acquire merits worthy of eternal life.

FOUR - SQUARE
OR
THE CARDINAL VIRTUES, BY
JOSEPH RICKABY, S.J,

1908,
New York

Joseph John Rickaby (1845–1932) was an English Jesuit; then far more real and non heretical than now, priest and philosopher.

He was born in 1845 in Everingham, York. He received his education at Stonyhurst College, and was ordained in 1877, one of the so-called Stonyhurst Philosophers, along with Richard F. Clarke, Herbert Lucas, and his own brother, John Rickaby. a significant group for neo-scholasticism in England. At the time he was at St Beuno's, he was on friendly terms with Gerard Manley Hopkins; they were ordained on the same day.
He was affiliated with Clarke's Hall in Worcester College, Oxford. He would deliver conferences to Catholic undergraduates of Oxford and Cambridge. His work is quoted by Charles E. Raven in Science, Religion, and The Future (1943, p. 9).

THE CARDINAL VIRTUES

1. VIRTUE IN GENERAL
There are infused virtues and acquired virtues. These addresses deal with the latter, with the acquired virtues. Of infused virtues we shall have something to say at the end. A virtue is a habit of doing right; a habit of doing wrong is called a vice. A habit is a made thing, made by the free human acts of the individual. It results of acts whereof he is master, to do or not to do, and he chooses to do them. No one is born with habits. A young child consequently has neither vices nor virtues. But it has propensities both virtuous and vicious. These propensities are partly common to all men, partly peculiar to individuals, depending in the latter case on the bodily nature inherited from parents and ancestors according to what is called the law of heredity. Habits and acts answer to one another; but a person may do an act, good or evil, without having yet formed the corresponding habit, be it of virtue or vice. Clearly, a man may get drunk without being an habitual drunkard, or give an alms before he has mastered the virtue of liberality. Otherwise no virtue could ever be acquired; for the act must precede the habit, and the habit of virtue, or of vice, is the gradual result of a series of virtuous, or vicious, acts. But, done without habit, an act is done fitfully, irregularly, with difficulty and uncertainty and much imperfection.

2. THE CARDINAL VIRTUES
The best way to understand a habit, and thereby to understand what a virtue is, is to consider what we understand by skill. Skill is a habit of proficiency in some art. Skill comes by practice. We are not born skilful, we are born clumsy creatures; but this native clumsiness adheres to some natures more than to others. We are born with predispositions which may be turned into skill by practice. Practice presupposes power; you can not practise running unless nature has gifted you with the use of your legs. Skill, therefore, and virtue, and every habit, presupposes power. Habit is the determinant of
power, not the maker of it. The skill of a trained singer is a habit. The voice is there from the first; the most accomplished vocalist was once a squalling baby; if the baby had had no lungs and vocal chords to squall with, never could the singer’s voice have been trained to melody. Every habit is in some power, and perfects that power to act equally, surely, readily, to good effect. A strong man, seizing a billiard cue for the first time, may make a cannon and pocket the balls; but he will not do that again. Only a practised and skilful player ever makes a break at billiards. The unskilful player, till his skill begins to come, makes only occasional flukes. Nor will a man who has not acquired the virtue of meekness succeed in keeping his temper, when provoked at all hours from Monday to Saturday. His is not the skill so to command himself. That skill is the virtue, which he has not yet got.

The sum of a person’s habits is called his character. Education is the foundation of character. Education is chiefly of the young, because young natures are in all things more plastic. Older people are "set," as in bone and muscle, so likewise in habits. Nevertheless, habits go on growing, to a greater or less degree, throughout life; thus education itself becomes a lifelong process. Whatever we do consciously and willingly, we are apt to do it again; that aptitude goes to build up habit. And not only what we do, but what we wilfully omit to do, when there is occasion for doing it, goes to make habit also a habit, that is to say, of omitting. The immediate author of all a person’s habits is the person himself, for habits come of personal acts, of which he is the doer. Every man thus makes his own character, we must add, out of preexistent materials, which he did not make, and under the influence of a surrounding atmosphere of circumstances, which he has not created. Still, though influenced and conditioned, he is not absolutely controlled by present circumstance and pre-existent fact; he acts for himself, and his acts make him the manner of man that he becomes. Hence it is possible, indeed, it not uncommonly happens, for a youth to be educated in one way by his parents and
guardians, and meanwhile to be educating himself in a diametrically opposite direction. His masters put him to study; if he did study, he would grow studious and, possibly, learned; as it is, he "cuts" his lessons day by day, and is forming to himself the character, one degree worse than that of an ignoramus, the character of a misologus, hater of books and learning. Or worse still, he has to be much in chapel, for so his companions are; he hears many prayers recited, he not unfrequently goes to the Sacraments as those about him do; but because he inwardly repines at all these things, and has little or no heart in him, the virtue called religion, whereby we worship God, is not being formed in him at all, but rather the contrary vice of impiety; and so he will prove himself, when he goes out his own master, impious and irreligious, for thereunto is he self-educated.

Once acquired, a habit is not necessarily kept. An inanimate thing may be kept indefinitely, but a habit, particularly a good habit, requires the food and exercise of frequent acts, as occasion arises; if such occasions are missed, and the acts called for are not elicited, the habit droops and goes near to dying. A habit enables us to do a thing easily. At the same time it would appear that acts which we have learnt to perform very easily go very little, if any, way to ward strengthening the habit. A swimmer who could almost swim the Channel is not much improved by taking a few quiet strokes in a bath. Nor does a very meek man grow particularly in meekness by enduring the shrill cry of the newsboy in the street. A habit grows, on ground wherever it is not yet perfectly formed, by our doing that which we have not yet got thoroughly into the way of doing. Virtue is strengthened only by being exercised under trying circumstances. Virtue grows strong in conflict, and is enfeebled by ease. No one needs to be told that bad habits are easier to form than good ones. A bad habit comes of a succession of bad acts; and to do a bad act, commonly, we have not to exert ourselves, but simply
to let ourselves go. It is so easy to be wicked that one wonders how anyone could ever be vain of it; yet some people are. A bad habit is otherwise called a vice. A bad act is a sin. The sin passes, though its guilt (or liability before God) does not pass; the vice remains. Nay, when the sin, that is, the guilt of the sin, is taken away by penance, the vice, or evil habit, is not taken away. The vice does not put us out of grace or favor with God; only sin does that. Nevertheless the vice comes of sin, done in the past; and predisposes us to sin in the future. A pardoned sinner, one who has made a good confession, if he has committed the same sin many times over, must expect a hard struggle with the vice, or evil habit, thence resultant, still remaining in his soul. Often he will sin again and again in consequence. The only thing for him is to repent again and again, and to repent promptly. Repentance gradually will destroy not only the sin but also the vice. Not only will he be par

VIRTUE IN GENERAL

doned the repeated acts, but the habit will be cured. One of the commonest temptations of the young and inexperienced is the thought: "There's no use trying, I cannot be good!" But you must be good, or you will lose your soul. You must swim out of this abyss of evil, or you will be drowned there and die for ever. And with God's grace, and your own good will, and God's Sacraments, you can swim out of it.

Strictly speaking, it is not the same thing to do a good act and to do an act of virtue. To do an act of virtue, I must have the virtue in my soul; but virtues (we are speaking now of the "acquired virtues") are not in the soul to start with; we start with doing good acts laboriously, fitfully, with effort and attention that does not always succeed, as we learn to play a game; gradually the good habit is formed, the virtue, or skill in doing good, is acquired; and thenceforth good acts are elicited with fair ease and regularity, acts which are at once good acts and acts of virtue, this or that virtue according to the nature of the act. An act of virtue is always done on principle, from a proper motive, not on blind, unreasoning impulse, not under mere stress of passion, very often, indeed, in the very teeth of an impulse of
passion. Still, when it can be got to work in the right direction, passion lends force to virtue and is a valuable adjunct to virtuous action. It is the office of the selective eye of reason to set passion to work in the right direction. The passions are something like the elephants that used to be employed in the ancient battles. Often in rage and terror those beasts would break from all control, and trample upon the men who had brought them into the field; at other times they did good service against the enemy, mostly, I imagine, by frightening people who knew no better, as the Romans were frightened at first sight of what they called the "Lucanian ox." It is very well to act under passion, if you are sure you are going the right way and are not going too far. From all that has been said it will appear that it is not enough for man to have powers; he must further acquire habits, residing in and perfecting his several powers, else he will use his powers to no good effect. Some powers, indeed, in man, do not need perfecting by habit; these are the organic and animal powers, such as circulation, respiration, digestion; these powers need no education. But all the five senses fall under the discipline of habit, as taste in a cook, hearing in a musician, touch in a pianist or a surgeon. It is not enough for a gymnast to be strong, he must acquire muscular habits of skill by dint of practice. Even walking is a habit, an acquired thing. Articulate speech is a habit founded upon that power which in a baby comes out in squalling. A baby that could not squall could never speak. There are habits in the intellect, habits of knowledge, got by study. These habits of intellect, sense, and muscle, make for the physical perfection of a man, not for his moral perfection. In other words, they perfect him toward certain particular ends, not toward the last end and final reason for human existence. In front of that final end these habits may be misdirected and abused, and are daily and continually abused. We see knowledge, skill, art and science put to the vilest uses. These habits, therefore, are not commonly called virtues. Virtue, as St. Augustine says (De lib. arbit. I, c. 18, n. 50) is "something that
none can put to ill purpose. "Put it to ill purposes, and it ceases to be virtue; thus what would be an act of liberality is not an act of that virtue if it be done, not for the proper motive of the virtue, but out of sheer ostentation. You may abuse any other habit or skill, you can not abuse a virtue.

Mere knowledge and intellectual appreciation of the right thing to do is not virtue. Thus they were foolish philosophers who defined fortitude, "an understanding of the things that are to be feared and the things that are not to be feared." A virtue is a guarantee for the performance of the act corresponding, when occasion arises. But such knowledge is scarce any guarantee at all. The hour of danger paralyzes the knowledge in the man who has never been exercised in the act to face danger. He knows that it is foolish, even shameful, to get into a fright and fly; yet away he runs and all his philosophy with him. Virtue, indeed, supposes knowledge; it is not mere routine behavior, mere knack and rule of thumb: it is a habit acquired by practice of acting up to one's knowledge. Virtue in this resembles other habits. Skill, too, is something more than knowledge. For example, there are certain rubrics to be observed by a priest at Mass. They are comprised in quite a few pages; you might know the little book by heart, but you would blunder dreadfully if you had never practised. Nor could one ever operate as a surgeon who had simply read books on surgery. So for virtue you must understand and appreciate and keep well in your mind's eye the motives for virtuous conduct; but further you must put your hand to the work; try, and fail; blunder, and begin again; do the virtuous thing in a lame and imperfect way, with effort and difficulty, overcoming yourself to do it. In time the act will grow easy, the habit will have been acquired.

A virtue acquired is a guarantee of the corresponding act of virtue being forthcoming when called for. Not, however, an absolutely unfailing guarantee. The meekest of men has his meekness ruffled by sudden gusts of unreasonable anger. The prudence of the most prudent deserts him at times; he is taken off his guard, and behaves not altogether wisely. Stoics and other ancient
philosophers expected too much of human virtue, thinking that it
should never fail to act. The mere fact of man
having an animal
body, liable to perturbations from within and without, is enough
to threaten always and sometimes to upset, the perfect equilibrium
of his virtue. For this and other reasons, as we shall see later,
natural virtue needs to be eked out by the grace of God.

II. THE CARDINAL VIRTUES

We speak of a "cardinal of the Holy Roman Church" and of the "principal of the college." Both words have originally the same meaning. Cardinal is from cardo, a hinge. The college may be said to hinge upon its principal; and again a cardinal was originally and is to this day the principal priest of some parish-church in Rome. The cardinal virtues, then, are the principal virtues and that in two ways. Either they are taken as the main virtues, to which all other virtues approximate and can be ultimately reduced, or they are taken for the chief component elements of every virtue whatsoever. In the latter sense they are spoken of as integral parts of virtue, their union going to make up virtue in its entirety. We will consider them in this latter sense first.

We owe the enumeration of the cardinal virtues, not to the Hebrew Scriptures, but to the Greek philosophers. Prudence, temperance, fortitude, justice, were already enumerated at Athens as far back as B.C. 400. The root idea of justice is the rendering to every man of his own. But what is a man's own? That may be said to be determined by law. Let every man have what the law allows him. Justice, therefore, is conformity to law. But the law may be said to prescribe all virtues. The saying is debatable, but it is not worth while debating it here. Every virtue, therefore, is conformable to law, and in practising any virtue a man is observing the law, and is, therefore, just. Hence in Scripture the "just" or "righteous" man is the law-abiding man; the virtuous man simply the "good man," in contrast with the sinner, who is a law breaker. Again, virtue moves a man to do good steadily, regularly and
constantly, even in face of difficulties. But constancy under
difficulties belongs to fortitude. There is, therefore, an element of
fortitude in
every virtue, by the mere fact of virtue being a habit.
Once more, every virtue is a habit of doing things in moderation,
holding on to the golden mean, neither overdoing the thing nor
underdoing it, but doing exactly what is fit and proper under the
circumstances. Such is the
great Aristotelian doctrine, that all
virtue lies in a mean between two vicious extremes.
Liberality, for
instance, observes the mean between prodigality and stinginess;
fortitude between rashness and cowardice; humility between
haughtiness and meanness of spirit. But moderation is the equiva
lent of temperance, which is thus shown to be an essential element
in
every virtue. It is not easy to discern the golden mean, e. g. t in
government between remissness and over-indulgence, when to
punish and when to condone, when to forbid and when to allow
Such discernment is the part of prudence. Prudence is the eye of
every virtue. No virtue goes blind. Thus, to be virtuous in any
department is to be at once prudent, just, courageous and temperate.
More
usually, however, the four cardinal virtues are taken as
four distinct virtues and main heads of virtue, under which the
other virtues are severally enumerated. Under prudence come
prudence in own affairs and prudence in the affairs of others
whom one has to
govern. Justice includes justice distributive (of
rewards), vindictive (punishing), and commutative (enforcing con
tracts); it is further taken to include the virtues of religion, obedi
ence, truthfulness, liberality and gratitude. Under fortitude come
magnanimity, patience and perseverance. Temperance includes
abstinence (in food), sobriety (in drink), chastity, also modesty,
humility, meekness, clemency. The theological virtues are distinct
from the cardinal, and are not considered here, as being not "ac
quired" but "infused."
THE CARDINAL VIRTUES
Every habit, as we have seen, resides in some faculty or power.
The habit does not make the
power, any more than the school
master makes the child. It
presupposes it as a thing given; then
taking it in hand it disciplines and trains it and teaches it to act to
good purpose; whereas, away from the good habit engendered in
it by training, the power would have acted fitfully and at random.
Virtue being a habit, it is possible to assign for every virtue the power
in which it resides and which it
perfects. We shall find the four car
dinal virtues
residing in the powers of the human soul. All these
several
powers want virtues to train them and guide them to orderly
behaviour.
You sometimes hear
people, who know no better, saying that
all virtue is in the will. That is a mistake. Virtue is the disci
pline of the soul. It is not enough for the will alone to be disci
plined, the subordinates must be disciplined as well as the chief,
else
you have no ready and regular action. Not only must the
rider be skilled in horsemanship, but the horse also must be broken
in. Virtue, therefore, resides even in appetite. It is put there
(under God) by reason, and consists in the appetite s being habitu
ally broken in to the obedience of reason. That habitual state is
the result of
many acts of conflict, in which reason has subdued
appetite, as a trainer subdues a wild young horse. Plato expresses
it in these terms: "The driver (reason), laying himself back, tugs
with all his might at bit and bridle in the teeth of the wanton horse,
embruing in blood his foul-mouthed tongue and jaws, forcing him
back on his haunches till his
legs and hindquarters almost touch
the ground, and putting him to pain." Plato thought, and thought
rightly, that the discipline of the lower appetites, otherwise known
as the virtue of temperance, is not established without strong and
repeated efforts on the part of reason, or the rational appetite, that
12 THE CARDINAL VIRTUES
is, the will, to enforce obedience to its commands. It may be added
that the obedience of appetite to reason is never quite complete.
Temperance is like a sovereign insecurely seated on his throne, and
needing, when rebellion waxes high, to call in the aid of a superior
power. The habit will not work automatically: it is not selfsufficient.
Justice regulates our dealings with other persons. Fortitude and
temperance work within the self, and secure order at home. As
for prudence, there is no department of human action which pru
dence should not
pervade. Therefore, it has been said: "Temperance and fortitude in the home department; justice for foreign affairs; with prudence for premier." The question has been asked whether the virtues are separable one from another, whether, for instance, one can be courageous without being temperate, or exercise liberality while neglecting religion? If the four cardinal virtues are taken, not as distinct virtues, but as common elements of all virtue, it is clear that they can not be separated. In all virtue discretion (prudence), rectitude (justice), moderation (temperance), and firmness (fortitude) are inseparably conjoined. The question can be raised only when the virtues are considered as distinct from one another. One cardinal virtue is not another, e. g., justice is not fortitude, that we allow. May not in the same person one of these virtues flourish in the absence of one or more of the other three? Does not plain experience evince that the sailor is brave, but not temperate; and that many a man is temperate, and just to fellowmen, but not just to God in that he wholly discards the virtue of religion? In answer to this somewhat intricate question we must distinguish between a virtue and the good acts which that virtue is apt to elicit. Those acts, as we have seen, may be done in the absence of the virtue: a man may show liberality once in a while without having the virtue of liberality. Much more may he do acts of liberality here and there, without having some other virtue, as temperance or religion. A man of no religion may subscribe handsomely to a hospital it may be, I allow, out of the virtue of liberality, but his mere subscription is no certain argument of that virtue. The act may be motived by ostentation or human respect and fear of public opinion; or he may give out of a certain native predisposition to fling his money about, a predisposition which makes excellent material for virtue, but is not of itself the virtue of liberality before it has been trained according to reason. What seems to be virtue may be a mere chance combination of good nature with happy cir
cumstances. What seems to be virtue may keep up the semblance only because it has never been tried by temptation. It may be a keeping up of appearance out of love of respectability and desire to make one’s way in society; and that is not virtue. Still I would not deny that a man may have one virtue and not another liberality, for instance, and not religion provided his lack of that second virtue be due wholly or chiefly to ignorance, misapprehension, weakness and frailty. But if a man casts any one virtue which carries duties in its train casts it out wilfully and against his conscience I should gravely doubt his possession of any other virtue. How ever much he did the acts, I should doubt whether they were motivated by the motive of the virtue. A man who spurns conscience upon one ground is not likely to be really conscientious upon another. Henry VIII affected zeal for religion and for the sanctity of marriage. His loose and dissolute life gave the lie to his zeal. What shall we say of Louis XIV? We must be cautious in judging of individuals. But this we may observe in general. Virtues are like the timbers of a roof. Dry rot, set in on one beam, does not at once bring the whole roof down. Nor does the decay of one particular virtue work the immediate ruin of a man’s whole moral character and destroy all his other virtues, the gradual growth of years of well-doing. They may remain some considerable time uninjured. But evil spreads, and things move from bad to worse. By doing our duty we do acts, from which acts virtues are apt to result. Nor is a sinner condemned precisely for his vices, but for those sinful acts which have engendered vices in his soul. We are not bound to do all good acts possible, else there would be no difference between counsel and commandment. Good acts indeed are often inconsistent one with another. It is good to marry, good to receive holy orders; but you can not do both. In every good man, grown up, there will be found the cardinal virtues, but not every subordinate virtue which ranks under those general heads. Some virtues he may not have been in a position to practise. You can not practise clemency if you have no authority to punish; nor munifi
cence if you are not a rich man. Some virtues grow out of acts which are
rarely practicable or obligatory magnanimity, for example, which is the maintenance of a proper attitude of mind in reference to high honors. Some virtues are as the garments of the soul, covering its nakedness and its shame; others are as jewelry; now no one is obliged to wear jewelry.
The ancient Greeks, who first made out the list of cardinal virtues, also enumerated four corresponding goods of man. They were health, strength, beauty, and what we may call a competence, or a competent position in society. Fortitude and temperance evidently answer to strength and beauty respectively: they are spiritual strength and beauty. The drunkard, or the unchaste youth, is morally and spiritually ugly, though he perceive it not: higher powers perceive it. The Greeks said: "Vice is unknown to itself/"

THE CARDINAL VIRTUES

Prudence is the being of sound mind and sound judgment in matters of primary importance. Prudence takes "a healthy view" of the general situation. Justice is the moral attribute that fits us to be members of human society; for no society, not even that of thieves, could hold together, were the members all unjust to one another. In this, justice is like a "competence," which means a place in the social organism, with associates and friends to converse with, and sufficient pecuniary substances to maintain the position honorably.

Or we may put the relation in this way. Prudence is the safe guard of health; fortitude keeps up strength; temperance, which includes chastity, is the defender of beauty; while justice prevents a man abusing his worldly wealth and position. So that, without the cardinal virtues, health, strength, beauty and social competence, may prove a curse rather than a blessing to the owner. And the same of all other corporal and material advantages.

III. PRUDENCE

Prudence is right reason applied to practice in view of the final end of life. Prudence is apt to give advice on points that appertain to the whole life of man and his last end; while in any given art there is the office of advising on points that appertain to the proper end of the said art. Hence some persons, as being apt to give ad
vice on matters of war or seamanship, are called prudent commanders, or prudent navigators, but not prudent absolutely; but they alone are prudent absolutely who give good advice for the main conduct of life.

An imprudent person is one who goes the wrong way about getting what he wants, and in consequence does not get what he wants. He has no practical discernment of the bearing of given means on a given end. That is exactly what prudence does discern. Prudence is concerned with means to ends, not with ends in themselves. Prudence supposes the end, and that a good end, namely, as has been said, the final end of human life, which is in fact man's chief good.

To take means cunningly to a bad end is not the virtue of prudence; it is called in Scriptural language the prudence of the flesh. St. Paul says: The prudence of the flesh is death (Rom. viii, 6); and the author of Proverbs warns us: There is no prudence against the Lord (Prov. xxi, 30). The most imprudent thing for man is to do anything that involves the loss of his soul, though by it he gain kingdoms. Hence the instruction with which a Retreat usually opens, on the end and purpose for which man was created, is really a lesson in prudence.

Prudence may be called an intellectual virtue, inasmuch as it has its seat in the understanding: but inasmuch as it directs the understanding to a practical purpose, it is a moral virtue. Art also resides in the understanding, and directs it to a practical purpose; but art is concerned with production, prudence with conduct or behaviour. Prudence, then, is not mere speculation. He who sees the right way to take, but takes it not, can not be called a prudent person. He may be a philosopher, or a critic, but he is not prudent. Nor does prudence merely lay down general principles, but it directs their application to a particular case: for prudence is a practical virtue, and all practise is in particulars. In that it is like conscience. In fact, prudence may be called a well-enlightened conscience, in so far as conscience has to do with the future. None of the other three cardinal virtues can work without pru
dence. Prudence must enlighten them in their action, pointing out the measure of temperance, the bounds of fortitude, the path of justice, everywhere indicating the golden mean, which other virtues aim at, but which prudence alone discerns. Without prudence virtue would go ablerding and aslumbering in the dark; true virtue walks with eyes open, knowing what it is about, what it wants and why: now the open eye of virtue is prudence. On the other hand, prudence itself perishes in the absence of temperance, fortitude, and justice. For prudence is a guide only to a good end practically desired. But the soul unendowed with habits of temperance, for totude, and justice, readily fixes its desires on evil endson base and immoderate pleasures, on fraudulent gains, or hair-brained enterprises, or cowardly escapes; and in reference to all such ends, as we have seen, there is no prudence, though there may be considerable cunning.

There is imprudence in every sin, inasmuch as every sin is an aberration and a swerving from our last end. But the name of imprudence is specially reserved for sins more obviously characterized by recklessness, folly, and want of thought, such as many of the excesses of youth. It was a saying of the old philosophers that "passion mars the judgment of prudence." Indeed we need no philosophers to tell us that; it is matter of daily experience. Under excitement we lose our heads. This shows how prudence differs from mere knowledge, and from the critical faculty whereby we judge of the conduct of others. In their cooler moments men commonly discern well enough the ways of wisdom from the ways of folly, and coolly mark and stigmatize an acquaintance who is treading the latter path. A much rarer gift is the keeping of knowledge before our eyes in time of action, so as to judge rightly, and act rightly, and not be Dome away by a blind impulse. That habit of having your knowledge available in action is the virtue of prudence. In doing wrong a man does not act according to his knowledge, he looks the wrong way; like a perverse scholar, he raises his eyes from his book and cites his text incorrectly. The land is made desolate because there is none that thinketh in his heart
The matters in which a young man most needs the restraint of prudence are (i) the care of his health, (2) the use of his time, (3) the spending of his money, (4) the choice of his books, (5) the making of friends, (6) the giving away of his heart, affections and love, (7) the election of a state of life. There is such a thing as being what is called "hipped" (hypochondriacal), absurdly anxious about one’s health. This weakness in a young man is pitiful, hap pily also rare. Many a young man conducts himself, as the Greeks said, "like an immortal," as though nothing could possibly impair his strength, and disease were for him forever out of the question. Some are thus reckless in giving themselves to work, but far more in the pursuit of pleasure. Late hours, strong drink, excessive tobacco, mad excitement, are undermining their strength, shortening their days, storing disease in their system, while they heed it not. And worse things still are befalling their immortal souls. Prudence is flung to the winds, and every other virtue thrown after it. Many who avoid these grosser excesses overeat themselves; some neglect exercise, a neglect for which they must pay dearly in later life; some, an increasing number perhaps, overdo their exercise, put so much into muscle that the brain languishes and mental labour becomes impossible. And some overstrain heart and arteries. Bodily exercise profiteth but little, wrote St. Paul (I Tim. iv, 8), in an age and country of athletes. Ask yourself: "Am I going to be a professional?" "No; a lawyer, doctor, engineer." Then train accordingly. In middle age, to look no further, the training of an athlete will profit you little, if it has ousted all other training. Stif fening limbs and a stagnant mind make a sad contemplation for one’s fiftieth birthday. Even in this world the mind should outlive the body. One almost hesitates to preach prudence in the spending of money, lest one should seem to recommend avarice, that love of
money which the Apostle pronounces to be the root of all evil (I Tim. vi, 10). But avarice is not characteristic of youth. The not buying too many attractive things for yourself, the occasional going without something that you would like and might very well have, is an excellent formation in the way of prudence. More especially excellent is it if a poor neighbour and not yourself reaps the pecuniary profit of your saving. Almsgiving, in fact, is a practical method of hitting upon the golden mean between extravagance and miserliness. I once heard a dispute in a railway carriage as to the nature of charity, or almsgiving. One man would have it that charity consisted in giving away what you did not want.

20 THE CARDINAL VIRTUES
The other contended that the only true charity was giving away what you did want. At least there can be no doubt which of these two charities is more like the charity of Christ, who for us gave away His life-blood.

He has not a prudent care of his health who eats any and all things, and that without stint or measure. Not more prudent nay, even less prudent, erring in a graver matter is he who devours every book, magazine or paper that he finds at a railway book stall, or even in less reputable places. Surely it is a good rule neither to eat trash nor to read it. A well-fed man perhaps may venture on a little trashy food-stuff now and again; but what becomes of him whose staple diet is trash? Ask your doctor. And if a Catholic reads promiscuously socialist tracts, sickening love stories, sensational murders, divorce cases, blasphemies against the Bible or against the goodness of God, but never a book of devotion or of Catholic instruction, scarce even a Catholic newspaper except for politics, will he not soon become a spiritual dyspetic? The poison of all this bad nutriment gets into his blood: on the smallest irritation the sore breaks out, he dies to God and to His Church, and is a Catholic no longer. To warrant your reading a book it is not enough that everyone is talking about it. Books come and go like songs, nay, they do not stay so long. Who will be talking about this favorite flashy production this time next year? Read rather what promises to be of permanent value to heart and mind.
A venerable Vicar Apostolic was once dining at the table of a great lady. She asked him whether he had read a certain book, which was making a great stir at the time. He answered drily: "No, madam, I durst not." On the other side you will find people who dare not read Catholic books, nor listen to the reproaches of their own conscience. They think it imprudent to be very conscientious, or to hear a message from Rome.

When not coerced, a man is ruled by his first principles and by his friends. By an act of free will he may break away from either, when he thinks it worth his while to deliberate and make up his mind anew; but he will not ordinarily do so. It is matter, therefore, of the highest prudence what first principles, or maxims of conduct, we admit, and what friends we choose. We need eminently good principles and good friends. Destitute of principles, or having none but bad ones, a man is called "unprincipled." Destitute of friends, a man is "friendless"; he, too, is in a bad way, however rich and powerful he may otherwise be. If friendship be not exactly a virtue, at least it is a means to the better exercise of all the virtues; everything is done better by being done in concert. You should have friends, if you can find them. Friends are not to be found like blackberries, growing in every hedge. They have to be sought and picked with care; and in some forlorn situations good friends are not to be found at all: one has to fall back upon God alone, like Daniel among the lions. The first stage of friendship is acquaintanceship; it is often impossible, often undesirable, to pass beyond that stage. An acquaintance passes into a friend, when we not only know him but lead him, and in turn are led by him. I am not defining friendship, but this mutual leading and being led is at least part of its essence. He is not your friend, who will never alter his course one point at your suggestion. A pair of friends are not often of equal power. Usually, one on the whole leads, and the other on the whole is led, though under protest. It is a responsibility to lead; it is a risk to be led. Responsibility and risk should both be taken up with prudence. Therefore, be prudent in making friends. And what shall I say of prudence in making love? Not to make it to one who never can be your wife, or who, you are resolved, never shall be your wife, is a point...
of prudence and one or two other virtues besides. The Catholic Church dislikes mixed marriages; yet they often become a necessity. It is prudent to hold off from such necessity while you may, while the matter is only in its first stages; later on it will be too late. Antecedently to any definite engagement, a Catholic man should desire a Catholic wife; and this desire should be a true wish and preference. On this whole matter there is a homely proverb to bear in mind, "Marry in haste and repent at leisure." Yet prudence does not always hesitate and hold back. Cases occur in which it is the highest prudence to venture all. Cases occur in which it is a mistake to dwell on restraining considerations at a charity sermon, for example. It is prudent not to rely on one's own prudence exclusively. We must consult God in prayer, and that earnestly and at some length in important matters. We must take advice in novel situations and under difficulties and temptations never experienced before. Our blessed Saviour in the cruel surprises of His agony in the garden the surprise of human sin all laid at His door received in humility the comforting words of the angel, and thrice went to His disciples to seek support from them. He prayed and sought counsel. He condescended for our imitation. On the eve of conflict He was prudent.

IV. TEMPERANCE

Temperance is the virtue contrary to the two deadly sins of gluttony and lust. As against the former it represents abstinence, or moderation in solid food generally, and sobriety, which is moderation in the particular matter of intoxicating drinks. In a scientific treatment of this virtue we must not be led away by newspaper association. Temperance is not the exclusive appanage of temperance societies and teetotalers. Temperance does not mean total abstinence, and abstinence is quite independent of Fridays and flesh meat. Temperance is the sum of the three subordinate virtues of abstinence, sobriety and chastity. Temperance is a habit residing in the sensitive appetite, when that appetite has come to be "broken in" by frequent acts of
selfrestraint. For these acts we have occasion every day; so that every day we should be growing in temperance. If we are failing to do that we must be growing into the habits which make the contrary vices: gluttony, drunkenness and lust. Appetite unrestrained easily carries man to the extreme of excess. Here, then, is the good of temperance. It is solely a restraining, not an impelling virtue. Against the extreme of too little, appetite is its own guardian. Against the extreme of too much appetite is restrained by the habit of temperance, gradually brought to reside in it, formed and planted there, by repeated acts of reason and will, forcing appetite back into due bounds, till at last appetite of itself, like a tamed beast, is more or less apt not to exceed the just limit. Then the man is said to be "temperate." It may be asked how it is that temperance seems sometimes to push men into an extreme, not merely restraining appetite, but refusing it altogether. Thus the total abstainer refuses the craving for strong drink entirely; he never will gratify it. The priest and the religious renounce even the lawful indulgences of the married state. We reply by the enunciation of a principle which the old sixteenth-century Protestantism stupidly repudiated that besides commandment there is counsel, and that not every act morally praiseworthy is also obligatory. Where duty ends generosity begins. Not every virtue lies between two vicious extremes immediately conterminous with itself, but sometimes there is a further virtue intervening between that virtue and the vicious extreme. Thus between justice and the vicious extreme of profligacy there intervenes the further virtue of liberality. Liberality may be styled a more excellent justice, and virginity (in the present order of providence) a more excellent chastity. But observe, the main central virtue, as justice, is for all men to practise; the more excellent virtue, as liberality, is not for all, and in some cases it would be a mistake to attempt it. We say well, be just before you are generous. Further, the golden mean is not the same for all persons. Half a bottle of wine is not too much for some men to drink, for others it would be a sinful excess. For some
persons total abstinence from spirituous liquors is not a work of supererogation, it is a downright duty. They have lost the ability to drink in moderation; and their only way of remaining sober is by never touching alcohol in any shape. They may be likened to patients where doctors forbid them to touch fleshmeat. One mutton chop is too much for Henry, and one-half pint of beer is more than can be safely allowed to George. What looks like an extreme is sometimes no more than the golden mean of duty for this particular individual; sometimes it is a feat of generosity, still in the golden mean, for that mean is not a forever fixed point. But, as I have said, such generous outrunning of duty can not be inculcated indiscriminately in all cases. In some it would be downright folly, or even wickedness. Not all men and women are fit for the religious state. It is questionable whether total abstinence should be preached to all as a counsel, certainly not to all as a duty. We have no right to add an eleventh commandment. To say this much is not to deny that for many in their youth total abstinence is an excellent counsel; that for many grown men, never themselves the victims of drunken habits, but obliged to live in the society of free drinkers, total abstinence is a great preservative. The simple words, "I am a total abstainer," have kept many a man and many a youth out of a den of infamy. Still, be it remembered, total abstinence is not the sum and substance of all Christian virtue. Though hell be full of drunkards, still heaven is not the birthright of every total abstainer. It is a weakness of human nature to expect one virtue to do duty for all. As regards the vices opposite to temperance, an important distinction is to be drawn between him who sins by outbursts of passion and him whose very principles are corrupt. The former in doing evil acknowledges it to be evil, and is prone to repent of it afterwards; the latter has lost his belief in virtue and his admiration for it; he drinks in iniquity like water, with no after-qualms; he glories in his shame. The former is reclaimable, the latter is reprobate at least it takes a miracle of divine grace to reclaim
him: his intellect as well as his heart is vitiated: faith and works, fine feeling and sense of honour, all have gone by the board. No hard and fast line of division, however, can in every case be drawn between sinning from passion and sinning on principle; but cases of the one shade into cases of the other, and by frequent indulgence of passion principle is brought gradually to decay. 26 THE CARDINAL VIRTUES Sinning daily and not repenting, a man loses his good principles. But repenting daily, or frequently, he keeps them. The chief sins against temperance are drunkenness and impurity. The evil of drunkenness consists in voluntarily parting with your reason in such a way that under this induced privation of reason, and under the influence of the stimulant, you are likely to do acts contrary to reason and God's law. It is true that in the act of doing them you are not your own master: but in the renunciation of control over yourself, and submission to the blind control of liquor, you were your own master, and there and then in parting with your reason you sinned. You have let the tiger loose, you can not get him back to his cage; meanwhile you are responsible for his devastations. There is no crime of murder, or lust, or irreligion, that may not be committed in drunken fury. This holds good even of one solitary act of deliberate drunkenness: but when we come to consider the condition of the house and family of the habitual drunkard, the case comes out worse. Quite unnecessary here to describe the interior of a house where father drinks, or mother drinks, or both. Quite unnecessary to visit the home for inebriates, or the lunatic asylum. To whom is woe? to whose father is woe? to whom brawling? to whom pitfalls? to whom wounds without cause? to whom bloodshot eyes? Is it not to them that linger over their wine, and make a business of emptying cups? Look not on the wine when it is golden, when its colour gleameth in the glass; it goeth in pleasantly, but in the end it will sting like a serpent, and spread poison like an asp. Thine eyes shall see strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things; and thou shalt be as one who slumbers in the midst of the
sea, and as a steersman fallen asleep that has lost the helm. And thou shalt say, They have beaten me, but I had no pain, they hauled TEMPERANCE 27 me, but I felt it not; when shall I arise and find wine again? (Prov. xxiii, 29–35).

St. Thomas quaintly enumerates as "daughters," i.e., effects, of gluttony and drunkenness inept mirth, buffoonery, uncleanness, much talking, and dulness of mind for intellectual things. Had the saint seen much of the dwellings of drunkards, he might have enumerated more "daughters" and worse. Drunkenness is the disgrace of man, but it is the ruin of woman. Those poor creatures who infest our streets are nearly all of them victims of drink. They are either actually under its effects or are seeking money to get it. This, at least, is the case with the poor; of the well-to-do one had better not speak. If a woman of the humbler sort is safe from liquor, she is safe from shame and public misery. Any Catholic man who is sober, frugal, and industrious, has married a good wife, and approaches the Sacraments regularly, is fairly safe against the sin of impurity. But drink spoils all. More than worse sins, drunkenness preys upon the physical system, upon the nerves and brain; and through the interconnection of body and mind the physical disease carries with it an impotence of will, a thorough untrustworthiness under any solicitation or temptation, so that the one chance for so debilitated a subject is entire flight from every occasion of sin not an easy thing to realize as life ordinarily goes. Without being a religious, this person has come to need the graces and also the restrictions of religious life, simply to keep him in the path of the commandments. Still it must be confessed that, away from all abuse of alcohol, in many circumstances of age, temperament, employment and company, chastity is a most difficult virtue to practise. Quotidiana pugna, "a daily battle," says St. Augustine, and he adds, rara vie 28 THE CARDINAL VIRTUES toria, "seldom victorious." Seldom victorious, if we measure victory by the Christian standard, the standard of Christ Himself (Matt, v,
which requires chastity in every human act, seen or unseen, chastity in every word, chastity in every deliberate thought and desire. The world pronounces this an unattainable ideal and substitutes another of its own setting up, the standard of respectability. The standard may be formulated thus: "Do as you like, so long as you do it on the quiet, and do not upset the peace of families; there must be no scandals." This is a fair standard, if we are to be judged by the world only. But if, after the world has done with us and we with the world, we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the proper things of the body (or, as the Greek has it, the things incurred through the body), according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil (II Cor. v, 10) then it will be wise of us to live up to the law that is administered in that court wherein we shall be tried finally and sentenced irrevocably. We must not give in to the suggestion of the flesh and of the world, that this is an impossible law to observe. How do they know? Neither world nor flesh has ever made any serious effort to observe the law. We may repeat in a nobler arena the answer made by a British officer, when told that the capture of a certain position was impossible: "Impossible? why, I have got the order in my pocket." We have the command of God, and that can not be impossible with His grace. About grace, this is not the occasion to speak; let that topic stand over. Grace will never enable us to dispense with the measures dictated by natural prudence. These we will consider; and as the difficulty is undeniably great, and the danger serious, these precautions must be adopted in all earnestness. First, then, we must have a clear understanding of the lie of the law. That is so important that it shall be made the subject of our next address. For the moment I say: Keep your will habitually firmly bent on good, and confirm it by repeated acts. Keep your understanding active on topics in nocent, interesting, and elevating. Keep your imagination clean, so far as it lies under the dominion of your will. Keep your eyes from the curious study of objects unchaste and provocations of evil desire. You can not help seeing many such; you need not stare at them and con them over. Surely it is not your custom to
stare at every person you meet as though you were a backwoods man, and a fellowman were a novelty. You may see and not look hard, hear and not listen or show interest. You are master of your amusements, if not of your employment and work: where do you go to enjoy yourself? where do you spend your evenings? what theatre do you patronize? what music? Avoid artificial incentives to sin. Let no temptation take hold of you but such as is human, or part of the ordinary course of human nature; and God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able, but will make with temptation issue that you may be able to bear it (I Cor. x, 13). Aim at being too busy for temptation to settle on you; labour hard in your profession, have hobbies, take exercise, be manly and play out-of-door games. But remember be this said by way of warning, not of reprobation for the matter of purity, athletes have dangers all their own.

3o THE CARDINAL VIRTUES
V. HUMAN ACTS
Not everything that a man does is a human act. A perfect idiot does no human acts, nor a child that has not come to the use of reason, nor a man asleep or under an anesthetic. Things that we do mechanically, automatically, without thinking, have little of the human act about them. The beating of the heart is not a human act, nor digestion, nor respiration for the most part. "Human act," then, is a technical term; and a thorough understanding and bearing in mind of this technicality is a wonderful encouragement under temptation, and a great safeguard against scruples. A human act is an act of which a man is master, to do or not to do: it is an act of free will. It is an expression of self. It is a man's own act, not of other agents about him. It is not an organic process going on in his body: it is an output of his soul and spirit. Man is responsible to God for all his human acts, and to his fellowman for many of them: and for none but his own human acts is any man responsible.
What is not a human act can never be a sin. What is not a human act can never be an act of virtue, nor go towards the building up of a habit of virtue. Only through his own human act can a man ever come to the torment of hell-fire. When a man has sinned actually and grievously, some human act on his part is a necessary condition of divine forgiveness. No temptation, as such, is ever a human act on the part of the tempted. No temptation, therefore, whatever
feeling it involves, however vehement and protracted, is ever a sin. Sin is a human act of consent to temptation, a consent whereof the man was master to give or refuse it, a consent which is no blind vehemence of appetite, but an act discerned by the understanding and conscience for its value and significance before God, and so sanctioned by the free will.

In man's mind and body, then, a vast number of things go on which are not human acts. The soul, philosophers say, is a simple substance; but, then, they are speaking of the soul as separate from the body, in which condition we know about it wondrous little. In the body the soul is the *form* of a highly complex organism, and in its operations, if not in its substance, it becomes as complex as the body which it informs. That accounts for certain facts of pathology, which to-day are receiving much attention I mean the resolution, in nervous disease, of one personality into three or four seeming personalities at variance with one another. This disintegration may perhaps be accounted for as a fact of ordinary experience abnormally magnified and exaggerated by disease. All men have their moods, often conflicting moods. We hear people saying such things as this: "I feel quite a different man on Sunday from what I am on a weekday." When we feel good (the *Dr. Jekyll* of Stephenson's story), we have to dread the return of the *other fellow* (*Mr. Hyde*), who feels anything but good. Not unfrequently both Jekyll and Hyde, both the good and the bad man in us, seem to be present together, or in quick succession, and there arises a fierce conflict. Alas for the *simple substance* of the philosophers! There seem to be two men in one struggling for the mastery. This situation may readily pass into sin through the weakness of the will. Or the will may stand firm, and the temptation remain a temptation, and nothing more. In the latter case you have what Aristotle calls enkrateia and St. Thomas continentia. Where
there is
sin, but as yet no habit of sin, you have akrasia. Aristotle
says that akrasia is not wickedness, meaning that it is not a vice.
There is much on this
subject in the pages of St. Augustine. The
32 THE CARDINAL VIRTUES
classical
passage on it is Romans vii, 5 sq. What fact shall make
all the difference between temptation and sin? What remains to
mark the
unity of human nature under these divisions? If the man
falls physically into two parts, or becomes wholly other than the
man he
was, his responsibility ceases. The original man can not
be taxed with the doings of the man that has supplanted him, nor
of the
part that has asserted its independence and seceded from him.
But it is not true that the man does fall
physically into two parts, or
becomes wholly other than the man he was. Unity remains, and
the centre of
unity, government. The act of government, decisive
and authoritative, is the human act. That act emanates from one
only of the conflicting elements within the man, his will. It is an
act of
will, it comes of will, not of blind passion and sense. For the
nonce it is but ill obeyed: its voice is heard but in a narrow region,
while rebellion
rages all around; but the rebels will return to their
duty if the will remains firm.
Meanwhile its utterance suffices in the ethical order to render all
their proceedings nugatory and invalid racial, not personal; physi-
cal, not moral. Young and inexperienced souls are poorly alive to
these distinctions:
they little understand how narrow at times is the
circle of will-power, the theatre of responsibility. Finding so much
of their nature for the moment beyond their control, they draw the
blind and cowardly inference that all control is impossible. They
fancy that they have sinned, that they can not but sin, and seeking
no further to restrain themselves they actually do sin. Taking
temptation for sin, and finding no escape from temptation, they
accept sin as inevitable. Christians though they be, with the light
of Christian teaching at hand, and the strength of Christian Sacra-
ments within them, yet they go with the pagan multitude: having
their understandings darkened, through the ignorance that is in them, in despair they give themselves over to impurity, to the working of all uncleanness in unchecked lustful desire (Ephes. iv, 17–19, Greek text).

A number of small advantages gained, week by week, over an enemy in the field may, in the end, necessitate that enemy’s entire surrender. A great “turn-over” in trade is made by an accumulation of small gains, so small that the particular transaction which brought in each seemed hardly a gain at all. And so it is with the training of appetite. The will in particular conflicts can do little; it fights what look like drawn battles. But in the long run the power of good will shows itself. Appetite, so blustering and domineering, by a series of steady resistances is brought low and tamed. This tamed condition of appetite, as we have so often found occasion to say, is the virtue of temperance. A medical man once wrote: “No appetite is really so amenable to reason as the sexual propensities.” And generations of virtuous men have verified the observation. Here, as so often, a thing that is called hard is done or not done, according as people go the right or the wrong way about the doing of it. The right way to go about resisting temptation is to behave well out of temptation and stand fore-armed against its assaults. Many things that are not free at the time they come upon us are said to be free in causa, “free in their cause,” having been caused by some free act of ours, as a man may catch a fever by going into an infected room; if he knew what he was doing, his fever is “free in its cause,” not in its actual access. And this doctrine carries us in sight of cases that frequently occur and are hard to settle. Their settlement must be sought at proper sources as they occur. A few general principles alone can be laid down here. Although temptations are often “free in their cause,” yet we are not bound to avoid every cause that may bring on temptation. A rule like that would make life an intolerable burden. We have to consider whether the cause be naturally allied to the temptation, whether
it be of itself as it were the beginning of the sin. That would be a cogent reason for avoidance. Again, the likelihood of our yielding to the temptation or withstanding it must be reckoned with in each case. We should fly from what brings on a temptation to which we are pretty certain to yield. Again, consider whether the exciting cause be an action which would be pronounced a "queer thing to do" for a person in our position, or whether it be a thing which good men, our equals, ordinarily and laudably do. As a rule, apart from special proneness to sin, what is laudable and lawful in our equals is lawful also in us, temptation or no temptation. But we should not do "queer" things. This rule, not to do "queer" things, is a rule of high practical value. A cause "naturally allied to temptation" would be the prolonged and curious study of nude figures with which we had no professional concern; the reading of a book whose whole good was its badness; the looking on at a play the point of which was the continual covert suggestion of evil. On the other hand, service in a smart cavalry regiment has its temptations, yet they are not "naturally allied" to service, they are not part and parcel of it as such. Moreover, that service is entered by good men of your own standing, and none blames them for it. Some may foresee in the service certain temptations which, with their character, are pretty sure to be fatal. These we exhort to go elsewhere; or, if go to the army they must, we devise for them special spiritual aids and precautions. In the language of the Catechism this avoidance of temptations "free in their cause" is called the avoiding of "occasions of sin." Such occasions are distinguished as "remote" and "proximate." The latter only are bound to avoid, when we can; or to fortify ourselves against by special precautions, when we can not. The will is free, as is supposed in the very definition of a "human act." At the same time the will is weak. It is weak against any strong motive presented from without, except it be armed by a
strong habit of resistance, engendered by many acts of resistance, against such motive. Such a habit is a part of character. Character, then, which is something lasting, permanent, chronic, is a fortification against motive, impulsive, transient, acute. Any motive may be strong against an unformed character, that is, in the absence of character: but where character has been formed and exists, those motives alone are strong which fit the character. Those motives are strong which chime in with pre-existent habits. The issue of a battle, fought, say, on the second of February, depends immediately upon the skill of the commander and the valor of the soldiery that day. Remotely, however, and quite as effectively, it may depend upon some operations conducted the previous Christmas. The battle was half decided ere ever it was fought. So with human acts. Not in the fierce rush of temptation only, but in the quiet current of ordinary life, a man's fidelity is tried. Such as he is silently making himself, such he will come out, when proved. To live habitually up to a high standard of holiness is the sole way of making oneself safe against a sudden access of temptation. Therein lies the meaning of Our Lord's injunction: Watch, and what I say to you, I say to all, watch (Mark xiii, 35–37).

The reason why people sin so easily when they are tempted is because they are too easy-going in daily life and habitually aspire too low. Knowing that none is ever sent to hell except for great wickedness, they fancy they may safely indulge themselves in everything, great wickedness alone excepted. They forget that at times a great fight is needed to keep out of great wickedness. Temptation is sudden: the occasion for a great fight comes unexpectedly; and they are not ready. Many of us have lived through visitations of influenza. We are familiar with the process: influenza, pleuropneumonia, and then? Much depends on the violence of the attack, much on prompt retirement and careful nursing; ultimately all may turn on the vigour of the patient's constitution. Some constitutions seem bound to succumb to the first serious assault. Our character is our
spiritual constitution. It is not made for us, as the Owenites said: it is
daily being made and modified by us, by means
of our daily human acts. Countless tiny shell-fish build up a coral reef, or a chalk cliff; and countless acts make in time a character.
Little acts come and
go unnoticed; the result endures; and in the end we are surprised at its magnitude and permanence. Our daily acts, then, must be well done, excellently well done, at least with such excellence as is within our reach; in this daily excellence lies our eternal salvation. The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown up, it is greater than any herbs, and becometh a tree (Matt, xiii, 31, 32). And conversely, of the reign of Satan in the heart.

A strong character, for good or evil, is built up by the doing of many human acts. Weakness of character is the result of habitually neglecting to exercise the will, neglecting to energize and assert oneself, drifting down stream, passive when the current sets in to evil, listless even in lawful obedience when the stream happens to flow the right way. Self-assertion is not necessarily disobedience. The highest obedience is to assert yourself in the way commanded; to throw yourself, heart and soul, will and intelligence, into the work prescribed. St. Thomas says there may be sin in mere inaction, in simply not rising to the emergency when the hour has struck, without any positive determination not to rise. Inaction certainly prepares the way for sin, and for consent to all temptation. A good Christian is continually asserting himself, under God, against the world and the flesh and the devil. He is a man of many acts not so much of external, palpable, active achievements, "copy" for the newspaper correspondent, as of unregistered, ever-recurring determinations of thought and will to God.

VI. OF FORTITUDE

Like temperance, the virtue of fortitude also has its seat in the irrational appetite. That appetite sovereignly desires whatever makes for the maintenance of the animal nature in the individual and its propagation in the race, that is to say, eating and drinking and sexual
intercourse. Temperance curbs the craving for these things. On the other hand, the same appetite sovereignly shuns that which is the destruction of the animal nature, namely death. Fortitude curbs the fear of death. But as the Hebrew Psalm cxxxix has it, man is fearfully and wonderfully made. Here is a wonder in the constitution of humanity, and of animal nature generally; the irrational appetite does not in every respect fear death: in some respects it is only too prone to rush upon death recklessly. We must recall what we have laid down already, that the irrational appetite is two fold. There is the blind craving after the pleasurable; in that, the lowest portion of the irrational appetite, temperance has its seat. There is a higher, though still irrational portion; and this portion, oddly enough except in Greek, where Plato named it thumos has never had a distinctive name to itself in any language. St. Thomas called it the "irascible part." We are obliged to call it by such slang names as "pluck," "go," for lack of a proper terminology. Perhaps "rage" might be a suitable and decent name for this irrational portion. In the portion called rage (thumos) then there dwells the passion of impetuosity. There also dwells in the same portion the counter-passion of fear. Impetuosity urges one to rush on death; fear, to fly from it. Fortitude has for its office to curb and moderate both these passions, but especially the passion of fear. Fortitude is a mean between rashness (over-impetuosity) and cowardice (overfear), coming, however, nearer to the former than to the latter. Fortitude thus is a two-sided virtue, moderating two opposite tendencies; while temperance is one-sided, moderating desire alone. The man of fortitude, whom we will call the "brave man," is not "fearless," in the sense of being quite a stranger to fear. The man who has no fear in him at all is not brave, but foolhardy. The brave man is sensible to fear, but is not carried away by it. His mind subdues the fear, and braves the danger that nature shrinks from. Virtue, it may be observed, has not for its office to extirpate the passions, only to moderate them.
philosophers called Stoics enjoined the extirpation of the passions. Fear was never supposed to seize upon their "wise man," or "sage," nor anger, nor desire, nor any other passion or strong emotion; in all things their sage was calmly and sweetly reasonable, no more. It may readily be imagined that men would sin less if they were devoid of all passion. We must take human nature as we find it, and must make the best of our natural being. Passions are essential constituents of human nature as it comes under our experience. A being wholly devoid of passion would be something other than mortal man. Passions lead incidentally to much evil, but they also do good. To express the fact in a doggerel rhyme, "Passion nudges, Reason judges." An insult, for instance, rouses one to anger. Thereupon it is for my reason to judge how far the punishment of the offender would be a public good, and not (what is forbidden) a mere piece of private revenge. Passion renders some service as a stimulant; some service also as a corroborative, helping us on in a way that reason already approves; such is the working of great indignation. Somehow a man who seems wholly passionless and unemotional is scarcely a lovable man. He is scarcely human. Like loves like, and humanity loves its kind. Be it admitted then that the breast of the brave man is not wholly inaccessible to the passion of fear. Fortitude is not an intellectual conviction, as Plato thought: it is a habit resting upon the intellectual conviction that the physical evil of death is not the worst of evils; but, as Aristotle says, "there are things which a man should never allow himself to be forced into doing he should rather die." So the martyrs judged, when there was question of denying Christ. The highest act of fortitude is martyrdom. "Call a person a martyr," says St. Ambrose; "you need add no further praise." Establish the fact of martyrdom, and we may proceed to canonization without ulterior inquiry. 
"Agnis sepulcrum est Romulea in domot Fortis puellae, martyris inclytae"; "Agnès s tomb is in the house of Romulus, brave girl, glorious
martyr"; so the Christian poet Prudentius. I forget the rest of his eulogium, but really no more is needed. "Of all virtuous acts," writes St. Thomas, "martyrdom pre-eminently argues the perfection of charity; because a man proves himself to love a thing the more, the more lovable the thing that he despises for its sake, and the more hateful the thing he chooses to suffer rather than lose it. But of all the goods of the present life man loves life most, and contrariwise most hates death, especially a death attended with pain and bodily torments. And therefore, of human acts, martyrdom is the most perfect of its kind, as being the sign of fortitude.

41

of the greatest charity, according to the text: Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John xv, 13). In the natural order, the analogue of martyrdom is a soldier's death on the battle-field. Fortitude is shown wherever death is braved on right principle in a noble cause; and, in a less degree, wherever anything painful to bear is smilingly encountered. Before we commend a daring deed, or a feat of endurance, as an act of fortitude, we must have reason to think that it is done on the proper motive of the virtue, i. e., for conscience sake, and not on an inferior motive. It is not fortitude to venture life in what is manifestly a bad cause. It is not fortitude to stand your ground because mere human respect, or the threat of punishment, keeps you from running away. Mere stolidity and toughness of nerve and physical fibre is not fortitude, but a predisposition thereto. In this way men are predisposed to fortitude by living much in the open air, like those Germans of whom we read in Caesar that for thirteen years they had not gone under a roof. Knowledge that there is no real danger is not fortitude, nor professional skill bringing the danger for you almost to zero. Lastly, anger emboldens, but bold deeds done under mere impulse of anger are not acts of fortitude. If the angry man is to be accounted brave, we can hardly refuse the praise of fortitude even to the drunkard, for "mighty deeds are done by wine."
One would almost like to add a petition to the Litany, A timiditate bonorum, libera nos Domine: “from the timidity of good people, good Lord, deliver us.” The good are frequently at fault in the matter of the two virtues of fortitude and hope. A certain audacity lends itself to wickedness; the world is full of bold bad men. Timidity restrains from evil, as also does ill-health, the bridle of Theages, as Plato named it; but when the timorous, or sickly, person has entered on the ways of virtue, his timidity restrains him from going very far in that direction. He is no hero. That is one reason why good people are many, but saints are few. It takes immense courage to start a saint. That great saint and lion-hearted woman, St. Teresa, knowing this truth, declares that fortitude is more necessary than humility, in a beginner. A beginner has little to pride himself on, much to deter him. Many of us remain moral cowards all our lives, dreading pain, dreading trouble, dreading the opinion of men, uneasy in our relations with God, scrupulous, suspicious, narrow-minded, meticulous. A moral coward never gets far in sanctity himself, and keeps others back. “Lord, give me faith and fortitude,” was the prayer of a celebrated Oriental priest. Fortitude is shown in attack, in taking the offensive vigorously, but more in defence and endurance, for the latter is harder, being done more on principle, with less support from the passion of impetuosity; also it is more protracted. So much more difficult is it to endure that it is a rule in war, whenever you can, to exchange the more difficult for the easier, and convert your defence into an attack which is a good rule in controversy also. The fortitude of a soldier comes out under the hardships of campaigning quite as much as in the wild rush of battle. The difficulty of martyrdom is just this, that the martyr has to stand wholly on the defensive; nay, he does not even defend himself, he endures. His, therefore, is the sublimest fortitude of all. The transition, then, is easy from fortitude to patience, which is usually ranked under fortitude. The object-matter of patience is not death; a man is said to die not patiently, but bravely. The
OF FORTITUDE

43

Object—matter of patience is the pain and annoyance of living, not to be saddened and soured under the burden of life. No virtue is more practical, none of more daily use. To whatever destination a man is setting out, you may always advise him to take as part of his outfit a large store of patience. Those who have most to do with their fellow-men have most need of patience; and every man has need of patience with himself. There is the patience of the poor, which the Psalmist (Ps. ix, 19) assures us shall never be lost sight of by God; the patience of learner and teacher, of workman and employer (oh, that there were more of it!), and as every one knows, patience is sorely tried by sickness. Bishop Ullathorne, of Birmingham, has written a large book on "Christian Patience," perhaps the most successful of all his works. Patience is dearer to God than great exploits. Better is the patient man than the strong; and he that governs his temper than the stormer of cities (Prov. xvi, 32). Impatience is one of the last sins that perfect men thoroughly overcome. He is a good man, indeed, who is patient on his death-bed.

Patience and meekness differ in this, that meekness is a curb upon anger, whereas patience on the whole may be said rather to curb fear taking the shape of fretfulness. A strong man is usually good-natured. He feels himself equal to the daily burdens of life, and does not fret over them. He is not querulous, but he is hot tempered. He is prompt to beat down resistance, and to right his own and other people's wrongs; he does not pule and whine over them. People say he is impatient, he is really passionate and quick to anger he is lacking in meekness, not in power to bear. There is a spice of cowardliness in all genuine impatience. The impatient man thinks that more is being put upon him, or fears that more will be put upon him, than he is able to bear. His spirit is overcome by the prospect of evil, which condition of defeat is a special note of fear.
The object of fear, says St. Thomas, is something in the future, difficult and irresistible. A man is not afraid who thinks that he can bear what is being put upon him. And he is not impatient, either. An impatient man does ill in office he has not the courage of his position he lacks that fortitude which, like charity, beareth all things (I Cor. xiii); whereas a hot-tempered man, if he knows himself, may prove a capable ruler. What a hot-tempered man, who is also an able man, dislikes is slowness of execution, or bungling, or failure to perceive what is wanted, all which defects in his subordinates thwart his enterprises, and to his imagination look like wilful perversities and slights upon him, the commander. To his imagination, I say, for it is imagination rather than intellect that makes a man angry. His intellect is aware that these defects for the most part are natural rather than voluntary. But so an impatient man gets into a rage with a pen that will not write, a lock that will not open, which is an irrational rage, similar to that of the lower animals. This so-called impatience, however, is lack of meekness rather than of patience. It is called "impatience" perhaps because there is no handy word to express the contrary of meekness. But in all genuine impatience there is something of the cowardly, for patience ranks under fortitude. We may call patience a virtue-making virtue. Virtue comes of repetition of acts done with difficulty, weariness, and disappointment at one's own failures. The virtue is slow in coming; and when we think we have it, like other skill it fails us at an emergency. The notion then strikes us that we were not born to be virtuous, or cannot be virtuous as yet let the virtue come, if it will, in riper life. Such cowardice is to be checked by the thought that if the virtue be not forthcoming, there will set in instead the contrary vice, which, once it has become as a second nature, will be difficult to dislodge. Surely there should be a dash of heroism in every Christian character, heroism taking the form of patience and perseverance in well-doing. He that persevereth to the
end shall be saved (Matt, x, 22). In the list of those whose portion is the second death, along with the unbelieving and the abominable and evil livers there appear, heading the list, the cowardly (Apoc. xxi, 8). There is a saying in England among the common people, "It s dogged as does it." In a recent national crisis there was revived a watchword of the party that ultimately proved victorious in the great Civil War, "We will see this thing through." God may well expect the children of light to dare for salvation what the children of this world (Luke xvi, 8) dare and bear for temporal ends. To be in heaven is to be with the martyrs, which means the having led a life on earth not wholly unlike martyrdom. The spirit of martyrs, the spirit of fortitude (Isai. xi, 2), that gift of the Holy Ghost which is breathed into us in Confirmation, should abide permanently in every Christian heart. Without this readiness to dare to do right and to suffer for doing so, religion comes to be as a pastime, or a conventionality for Sundays.

46 THE CARDINAL VIRTUES

VII. OF JUSTICE

Of justice Aristotle says that "neither evening star nor morning star is so admirable," Justice is a habit residing in the will, and disposes the just man, in regard of other intelligent and rational beings about him, constantly and regularly to render to each his own. All justice is in relation to another. It is not by justice that a man governs himself, but by temperance and fortitude; for to govern oneself means to govern one s passions, and temperance and fortitude concern the passions. These virtuous habits, of course, are gained by acts of the will; and, when possessed, they are put into operation by the will. But not for that are they in the will. A habit is not put where it is unnecessary, and it is unnecessary where the power is competent of itself. Of itself the will as an intelligent power is apt to rule the body on intelligent principles. The difficulty is the appetite getting in the way; appetite, a blind power, bent on other than rational gratifications. Appetite then needs to be disciplined by virtue. When this discipline is perfect, there is
no longer any obstruction to the will's right management of the body. Analogically, the habit or skill of bowling at cricket is not in the will, but in the muscular mechanism. Every youth has will enough to be a good bowler, but the muscles need training, and the nervous currents directing in a particular way. It would be a sarcastic remark to make of your bowler that he showed much good will, that he meant well, that his intentions were good. Self-government is secured when fortitude and temperance are secured; then the will governs at home with ease. But foreign relations that is, relations with other selves involve many difficulties over and above the rebellion of our own passions; to overcome OF JUSTICE 47 these difficulties the will is strengthened by the virtue of justice. True, as we have seen, the virtues aid, and in a manner presuppose one another. Whoever is master of his own passions, is thereby immensely improved in all his dealings with his neighbours, the man who is master of his anger, for instance. A meek man will not strike in anger. A temperate woman will not steal to spend the money in drink. But though striking, stealing and other sins against justice are often committed under the promptings of passion, not all sins against justice are traceable to that source. Most great frauds were perpetrated under the prompting of avarice; now, avarice is not strictly a passion; it resides in the intelligence and imagination. Over and above the virtues that control passion, then, there is room and need for a further virtue, a virtue in the will, for the good conduct of foreign relations. Such is the virtue of justice. An anchorite, a perfect solitary, as was for long years St. Paul the first hermit, would have no need of justice, except in reference to his Creator, in which relation justice passes into religion. But the more you are mixed up with your fellowmen, the more you require to be just, and it is not easy to be just. Justice renders to every man his own. But what is his own? One answer not a sufficient and complete answer, but an answer that goes a certain way is, "What the law allows him, and will punish you for if you do not render it to him." Justice then is
obedience to law in all our relations with our fellowmen, and in
this sense we call it general, or legal justice. A just man is a laivabiding man;
and a court of justice is a law-enforcing court. The
law commands acts of all virtues, so far as is requisite for the gen-
eral good of the commqnwealth. Whoever thus practises legal
justice, is a good citizen. You can not yet call him a patriot citizen,
for a patriot will volunteer to do for his country s sake
48 THE CARDINAL VIRTUES
much more than the law exacts of him. Nor can
you be sure that
he is a good man, for a good man will do many acts and abstain
from
many, the omission or commission of which is not punishable
in the courts of the realm. He
may, for all you know, be another
Shylock, who will have his &quot;pound of flesh&quot; out of every debtor
bound to him by contract, regardless of &quot;equity&quot; (which is the
intention of the
legislator) and mercy (which is the attribute of
God). Again, a good man is good within and without, in heart
and in act; but your legally just man, so far as his justice is re-
ferred to the law of the state, is good in overt act only. De internis
non judicat praetor, the civil judge is not cognizant of purely
inward
dispositions.
For
legal justice to be any way commensurate with all goodness,
it must be referred to the law of God, natural (in the Command-
ments) and revealed (in Christ). In this way a drunkard is not
legally just, because he breaks the Sixth, or whatever Command-
ment we take to include all temperance; nor a Catholic who
neglects Sunday Mass, because he disregards the precept of Christ
to hear the Church (Matt, xviii, 17). On the other hand, for
their fulfilment of the law of God, the parents of the Baptist,
Zachary and Elizabeth, are pronounced legally just; they were
both just before God, walking in all the commandments of the Lord
without blame (Luke i, 6). When a sinner is pardoned he is said
to be
justified; that is, after having broken the law and failed in
legal justice, he is reinstated as though he had not broken it, in
the condition of the
just who have observed the law. Legal justice,
thus understood, includes the exercise of all the virtues, so far
as their acts are commanded by God. It is an ample virtue, or rather
the virtue of virtues, meaning an habitual avoidance of whatever displeases God, at least of all that offends Him mortally. It is a
OF JUSTICE
permanent practical horror of mortal sin. That is the primary and essential requisite for saving your soul. He is not in a state of salvation at all, he is on the road to hell, who does not possess in some degree this general virtue of legal justice. To speak in the words of the Psalm (cvi), he is not written with the just.

This general virtue, however, can not be that justice which counts for one of the four cardinal virtues; for it is inclusive of the other three. You can not divide in this way Maryland, America, New York and Connecticut. We must look for justice in some particular form, in which it shall be distinct from other virtues. So to distinguish it, let us return to our definition of justice. Justice we defined to be the habit of constantly and regularly rendering to other intelligent and rational beings about us each his own. The first of "intelligent and rational beings about us" is God; and God claims as his own; our entire obedience to His law; thus our every sin is a sin against justice in our relation with our Creator; and once more, justice becomes a universal virtue. We will deal with this difficulty when we come to the virtue of religion. For the present, not considering religion, nor the angels, whose rights we can not infringe, we will define justice in relation to those with whom we are visibly associated on earth. Justice then is the habit of rendering to our fellowmen each his own. Thus defined, justice is of two sorts, distributive and corrective, to follow the Aristotelian division. Distributive justice resides in the rulers of a commonwealth, and involves the awarding of rewards and punishments to the members of the commonwealth according to their several deserts. When The page killed the boar,
The peer had the gloire, 
5 THE CARDINAL VIRTUES 
that was an offense against distributive justice, unless we are to
suppose the page to be indistinguishable from his master. We
call it "favoritism"; when the worthy are passed over, and the less
worthy sought out and decorated. Favoritism is a violation of dis-
tributive justice. When it comes to the awarding of punishments,
distributive justice takes the name of retributive justice. And this
is a 
very common meaning of the term "justice." For this the
multitudes clamoured, rightly or wrongly, when they filled the pre-
cincts of the Palace of Whitehall in the days of Charles I, crying
"Justice! Justice!" for the head of Strafford. In this signification
an English or Irish gentleman signs himself J. P. (Justice of the
Peace).
Still we have not
yet reached the innermost core of the virtue
of
justice. If a deserving British officer is not knighted or made a
peer, he can not strictly be said to have been kept out of his
own, for peerage or knighthood never have been his. He had
a claim that the honour should be made his, and given him, which
claim is called by Roman lawyers a jus ad rem, a right to the thing;
but as the honour never became his, he had not in it a jus in re, a
right of ownership in the thing. His claim remaining unsatisfied,
the rulers of the State remain bound to attend to it; but they owe
him no restitution, for the simple reason that what a man never
has had can not be restored to him. We shall see
presently that
a violation of strict justice always involves restitution. Still less
can a
rogue unhanged complain that he has been wronged because
he has not come to his own a halter. He is little
likely to com
plain of that; and the maxim holds, volenti non fit injuria, no
wrong is done to a willing man. Distributive justice then, and re-
tributive justice, though it is part of the cardinal virtue, still is
not justice in the strictest sense of the term.
OF JUSTICE
51
To find that sense verified we must fall back
upon what Aristotle
calls corrective
justice, and Catholic divines generally commutative justice. The variation of terminology is due to a clerical error in a translation of Aristotle used in the thirteenth century. We will keep to the true Aristotelian phrase, corrective justice; and that we will subdivide at our own convenience into commutative and restitutive. In corrective justice, and its two species just enumerated, we shall find the genuine idea of justice. The office of corrective justice is to regulate and rectify men’s dealings with fellowmen, so that every man shall have what is properly his own, what is part or appanage of himself; shall keep it, or shall have it given back to him, if it has been wrongfully taken away. A man is wellnigh beyond instruction, who tells you that he does not know what his own means. However, we may point out to such a man that a thing may be his own in two ways: it may be his own legally, and it may be his own by right; and consequently it may be his own legally and by right, or legally, but not by right, or by right, but not legally. A thing is a man’s own legally when the courts of his country will support his possession of it. A thing is a man’s own by right when the civil courts ought to support him in possession of it, so far as the matter lies within their com-

*A thing is a man’s own by right, when the civil courts ought to support him in possession of it.* It may further be demanded why they ought.

I reply, first, because the thing is necessary to the man’s existence and individual well-being. Secondly, because it is needed to enable him to discharge his social function in the commonwealth. Thirdly, because he is established in that possession by the will of God. Something in the same way, a garden flower requires this or that to grow up as a flower at all. Secondly, it requires this or that in order, in its proper place, to contribute to the general beauty of the garden. Thirdly, the gardener wills it to have these particular advantages for its purposes above named. It must be added that many rights are vague and indeterminate by nature, and must be determined and particularly fixed by the civil law of the State. For further study of this difficult subject of rights the reader is referred to my Political and Moral Essays; Moral Philosophy.

52 THE CARDINAL VIRTUES
derence. The distinction between what the civil courts will and what they ought to support is founded on the assumption that not all law, nor all administration of law, is good; evil administration
is conceivable, and evil ought not to be; an assumption which any
and
every party readily enough makes, when itself has the misfor
tune to lose the
upper hand in the conduct of public affairs. What
is a man’s own makes a sort of circle about himself. When men
live “cheek by jowl,” as they must in human society, these circles
intersect; and it is important that they should intersect peaceably,
on a good mutual understanding, without violent collision and
fracture. This is secured by one neighbour resigning part of what
was his own in favour of another, on condition of the neighbour so
benefited making a reciprocal resignation. Hence a system of
voluntary exchange, formulated by the Roman lawyers as “I give
on condition that
you give,” “I do on condition that you do,
do ut des, facio ut facias. Over these voluntary exchanges com
mutative
justice presides. Commutative justice is justice in buy
ing and selling, justice in all relations of debtor and creditor, jus
tice between workman and
employer, justice in the fulfilment of
every valid contract. When your neighbour makes over to you
something of what was his own, something of his material sub
stance or something of his personal labour, he does so on the ex
press understanding that you make over something of your own
in return. The
carrying out of this is an act of the virtue of
justice, strictly so-called, namely, commutative justice. Your
neighbour, however, may, and frequently will, make over to you
something of his own without covenanting for a return on your
part; he is then said to give. Giving does not belong to justice
but to some further virtue, as liberality or charity. Unhap
pily, men will frequently take what is not given them. This is
OF JUSTICE
53
theft or robbery, according as it be done by stealth or with open
violence. Theft and robbery are punished in the criminal courts
of the land. To the action of those courts we have referred under
the head of retributive
justice. Such justice is dispensed on public,
not on private grounds; for the benefit of the commonwealth, not
for the satisfaction of the individual sufferer. It is no satisfac
tion to me that the man who has stolen
my cheese has got a fort
night in prison. I am not compensated by his imprisonment. I want my cheese back. In taking away mine without my consent the thief, all unconsciously, made a contract with me, what divines call "an involuntary contract." Quite involuntarily on my part, he became possessed of the cheese; that was the first half of the contract. The second half consists in his making restitution to me of the cheese, or of its equivalent, voluntarily, if he will (and such restitution is a constituent element in his repentance); but otherwise, if he will not, he must be forced involuntarily to restore. Presiding over these "involuntary contracts" is restitutive justice, also part of justice strictly so called. Whenever you sin against strict justice you are bound to restitution.

54 THE CARDINAL VIRTUES
VIII. JUSTICE AND CHARITY

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance to the animal body of the bony framework called the skeleton. Nevertheless a mere skeleton neither lives nor moves. To scientific thought our usual emblem of Death as a walking skeleton is a ludicrous absurdity. However shall bones double one upon the other otherwise than by the contraction of muscles? Justice is the solid skeleton of human society. No society can work without justice. But again, no society can work on principles of justice alone. The muscle, the covering flesh of human society, is charity. But charity, it will be said, is a theological virtue, supernatural and infused; and we are not treating of such virtues at present, only of natural virtues acquired by frequent acts, exercise and practice. Still we can not wholly ignore the supernatural. The supernatural is given us to be the guide of the natural, grace the motive power of nature; nature should not be destroyed, but should be subordinate to and commanded by grace, and execute the behests of the spirit. We are not ignoring the supernatural; nevertheless, for the present, we prescind from it. And that we do in this instance the more readily because there is such a thing as natural charity, friendship and friendliness between man and man, mutual good feeling and good will, sympathy, benevolence and kindness. Aristotle, the panegyrist of justice, was so alive to this fact that he wrote: "Where justice is, there is further need of friendship; but where friendship is, there is no need of justice." A man needs no justice
in his dealing with himself; he is tender enough of himself and
his own. But a friend is a sort of second self.

"Yes," you will say, "but I like my first self best." Not in all things, if you are a
true friend. A man will
give his very life for his friend. By
I mean here, not exactly friendship, for friends must be
few, but friendliness, as it were friend-like-ness, some approach to
friendship, extending in a greater or less degree to all the men
you have dealings with. Friendship and friendliness, or natural
charity, grow from a common stock, love. Man is happily prone,
under favourable conditions, to make man his fellow and love him.
An
English philosopher has said that the natural instinct of man
meeting man for the first time would be to regard him as a rival,
and either kill him or make a slave of him. So it might be, if man
grew up to man’s estate in perfect solitude, like pearls in separate
shells, as the said philosopher (Hobbes) was apt tacitly to assume
and
argue accordingly. But man is born of man and woman,
and
grows up among brothers and sisters and playmates; he
springs of love, and is reared in love not without admixture of
hatred and jealousy, for there is no pure good in this world. The
consequence of friendliness is that men are apt at times to give,
and not always to bargain; sometimes to act on charity, and not
insist upon justice. A friend sends a present of a haunch of venison
for
your wedding day. What an oddity you would take him for
if he served
you with a butcher’s bill next week! But, it may be
contended, he expects similar presents himself from you in sea
son. Not if he is rich, and you are poor. But at least he expects
gratitude, that is, some sort of return. But not a specific return.
Justice is always specific, keeps books, sends in accounts and bills,
this for that, the two being taken as equivalents in money value.
Gratitude
goes not into bills. Nevertheless, because friendship is
returned, and in a manner repaid by friendship, St. Thomas puts
down liberality, and gratitude, and “the friendliness that is called
affability,” as so many “potential” parts of justice; that is,
they
56 THE CARDINAL VIRTUES
rank under
justice, not strictly so called, but in a loose and wide
sense of the term, as having certain affinities with justice. My own!
my own! one thing that is my own is my heart to give away. Life
would not be worth
living without love. As the heart is given,
other
gifts will follow. Every gift is an abatement of strict justice.
Such is
charity.
Three
points our Saviour urges in the Gospel with especial in
sistence faith in His
person and mission, watchfulness for His
second coming, and charity, or love, for one another. And this
charity He would have to take the shape of abatement of the rights
which in strict
justice we have against one another. Shylock,
 clamouring for his pound of flesh, is an eminently anti-Christian
character. Christ has put this lesson into the Lord's Prayer:
Forgive us our trespasses, is, more literally, Forgive us our
debts as we forgive our debtors (Matt. vi. 12). And if any man
will
go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy
cloak also (Matt. v, 40). In St. Matthew (xviii, 21–35) is the
parable of the servant who owed his lord ten thousand talents, or
something like eight million dollars, an impossible sum to pay,
was released of the debt, and therefrom proceeded to throttle his
fellow-servant for a twenty-dollar debt; for which insistence on his
right for the twenty dollars were really due in strict justice his
lord handed the implacable creditor over to the torturers till he
paid the last farthing of his own huge liabilities, which he never
could meet for all
eternity. Certainly it is well at times to insist
upon one's just rights, but it is also well at times oftener, perhaps,
more than we think to abate them. The parable is the condemnation of
the hard man, who will never upon any consideration abate one
jot or tittle of what his neighbour in strict justice owes him. And
JUSTICE AND CHARITY
57
this applies not only to money, but to honour, precedence, deference,
and all things that men prize.
A hard bargain may be not merely uncharitable, but positively unjust. Such a bargain is that between employer and employee, when the former engrosses all the working strength of the latter, and pays him in return not enough to live upon "in frugal comfort," as Leo XIII teaches in his Encyclical of May, 1891, on the "Condition of Labour." On the other hand, the employer has a right to all that labour, care, attention, diligence and accuracy of work for which he pays a just wage a debt of justice often ignored by workmen. Justice suffers, and has its edges knocked off, where it is not covered by charity. In charity the employer will do more than he is legally bound for his employees. In charity they will on occasion do more than they are legally bound for him. When this notion of charity is spurned, and capital and labour behave as two independent, unfriendly powers, each jealous of the other, each striving to wring the utmost concession that the law will allow from the other, there must be acts of injustice done on both sides. The Lord's Prayer has much to tell us if we will think it over in remedy of the ills of life.

It should be understood that charity is not always optional, not always mere matter of counsel, but, like justice, charity also sometimes imposes an obligation under sin. You are bound under sin to help your neighbour when he is in distress and is unable to help himself out of it, while you being close at hand can help him without yourself falling into the like distress. Thus you would be bound under sin to take into your house, or otherwise provide for a beggar whom you found frozen at your door. You are bound to rescue a drowning man, if you can get him out without notable risk to your own life. Charity binds us in our neighbour's need in the absence of any special contract to stand by him. Where there is such special contract the obligation is no longer of charity, but of justice. The soldier has contracted, and is bound in justice, to
venture his life at the word of command in battle. The parish priest is bound in justice, even at the risk of infection, to administer the last Sacraments to a dying sinner in his parish; whereas a stranger priest passing that way would at most be bound only in charity, I am fain to add, he is not much of a priest if he stands on his points in such an occasion. You are also bound in justice to prevent your neighbour taking harm directly in consequence of your action. Thus, if you have even accidentally pushed a child into deep water, you are bound to get him out if you can; much more if you have done it on purpose. The difference between an obligation in justice and an obligation in charity is of great practical import in casuistry, inasmuch as a neglected obligation in justice involves reparation and restitution, where the matter admits of restitution, but no restitution is due for neglect of what you were bound to do in charity. Therefore, a sin against justice is called a peccatum caudatum, a sin with a tail, the tail being the burden of having to restore. As we have seen, restitution is the second half of the involuntary contract. How many sins, tail and all, how many deeds of wrong with the wrong never made good, must come under the final cognizance of the Sovereign Judge! It is no rare experience to encounter pious people who are strangely neglectful of their obligations in justice leave their tradesmen's bills unpaid, with the result that other customers, who do pay, pay for them also in the increased price fail to discharge duties which they are salaried to perform have young children under their wardship and custody, and take no pains even to know how they are going on. These omissions proceed from no deliberate contempt of justice; they may involve no grievous sin; thoughtlessness may be pleaded in palliation of them, but thoughtlessness is a fool's excuse. A healthy conscience is extremely sensitive to claims of neighbours, claims in decency and courtesy, claims in charity, and above all, claims in justice. Of one of the greatest of the saints, Scripture is satisfied with informing us truly that he was a just man. Justice is the backbone of charity. If you are in superiority, and find it not in your nature to be a very loving father to those under you, be at least just to them. The saying
is well known in England of the schoolboy who in boyish language described his headmaster as "a beast," then added on reflection, "but he is a just beast." The "just beast" became Archbishop of Canterbury, and in that high station well maintained his character for justice. As a man has a right to life, limb, and property, the violation of which right is a sin against justice and calls for restitution, so equally has he right to honour and respect and deferential treatment according to his rank from those about him, be they his equals or even his superiors. To browbeat a man, to address him in abusive or scornful language, and generally to insult him, is not merely uncharitable, it is downright injustice, and calls for restitution in the shape of an apology, howbeit the injured person, following our Lord's counsel, will often do well to waive his claim and forgive freely. Every individual man, likewise every corporate body, has a right also to character and reputation. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour is a commandment often forgotten when corporate bodies or societies come under discussion. Yet the members of such societies are more jealous of the reputation of the body than of their own individual good name. A man who does evil in public flings away his reputation; he has no character left to lose. A man who has done evil to his neighbour in secret, and is in a way to do more, also forfeits his reputation to the extent of such denunciation as is necessary for the prevention of his further injury or harming others. Under this exception a man has a right to a good character so long as he behaves well in public. To take such character away is a sin against justice. If the defamation be false, it is called "calumny"; where it is true it is "detraction." Both calumny and detraction call for restitution of good name; but where the story is true, obviously such restitution is hardly
possible. You can not mend broken glass. You must not lie to undo a wrong. Still less must you do a wrong by spreading lying reports detrimental to the character of another; those you are bound to contradict if you yourself are the author of them, in justice; if you are not the author, in charity. Altogether it may save much subsequent distress of mind to be always wary of one's words in speaking of the absent, particularly if they be persons whom you dislike.

Concerning vengeance, or revenge, I find that natural temperaments differ curiously on this point. Some are more prone to revenge an insult, others rather cry for vengeance on cruelty. The Christian is taught not to seek vengeance for a private wrong, as such. We may seek restitution, or compensation, but that is not vengeance. It is not vengeance, it is only the exaction of the fulfilment of (an involuntary) contract, if I compel him who has robbed me of property to the extent of five hundred dollars to pay me in a note to that amount. It would be vengeance were I to horsewhip him for it. That the law will not allow. In civilized countries the law has gradually by slow degrees assumed to itself the function of avenging wrong done by one private citizen to another. The law punishes wrong-doers on public grounds, by way of public example, as a deterrent. In that light I do well to bring the man who has injured me to public justice, not exactly because he has injured me (I forgive him that), but reipublicae causa, that he may not go on injuring others. This is the sense of the text, Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord (Deut. xxii, 35; Rom. xii, 19). The retribution meted out by the criminal law of the State is the vengeance of the Lord, whose minister the civil magistrate is. He beareth not the sword in vain, for he is God's minister, doing justice unto anger upon him that doth ill (Rom. xiii, 4).

An old writer has said: "It is praiseworthy to be patient under one's own
wrongs, but the height of impiety to dissemble injuries
done to God." We feel a
righteous indignation at injuries done to
the Church, but commonly we must forego vengeance; for in these
days no public authority is concerned to avenge such wrongs, and
we must not take the business into
private hands. Even under
injuries done to Himself Our Lord teaches us patience. His Apostles
were to be as sheep in the midst of wolves (Matt, x, 16). When
James and John would have called down fire from heaven
upon the
Samaritan town that shut its
gates to their Master, He restrained
them with the words, Ye know not of what spirit ye are
(Lukeix, 55).
62 THE CARDINAL VIRTUES
IX. THE VIRTUE OF RELIGION
The one Being with whom we have relation for everything that
we
are, upon whom all that is in us is dependent, who has rights
over us without limitation, and to whom we are bound in justice
by the most stringent and constraining ties, is God our Creator.
We owe Him in
justice, and He claims of us in strict right, the
perfect observance of His law; so that, as we have seen already,
every sin against the law of God is a violation of justice in the
divine regard, and perfect justice toward God would imply the
full observance of that law, and the exercise of all the virtues in
so far as enjoined by that law. One thing, however, God particu-
larly insists on: that is the recognition of this our absolute de-
pendence upon Him, and the signification of our sense of depend-
ence by a sensible and external sign. This recognition and sensible
signification of the same is called worship. Justice toward God is
all summed
up and specialized in the payment of religious worship.
Worship, indeed, is not the observance of the whole law of God;
but it is at least a recognition that we ought to observe it. Recog-
nition of the debt is the first
step to payment. The worship of God
then is the matter of a
special virtue of justice toward God, which
is called the virtue of
religion.
The word
religion comes from the Latin. The Romans themselves disputed about the derivation of the word. Some derived it from religens, a word opposed to negligent, both coming from lego (I pick up). The negligent man is he who picks up nothing; while the religious man is he who picks up again and again, a scrupulous, conscientious, careful man, answering to the prophet's prescription, to walk solicitously with thy God (Mich, vi, 8).

THE VIRTUE OF RELIGION 63
Others preferred the derivation from religare (to bind again), considering that religion binds men to God. Whichever explanation be right, both appeal to right principles. Religion is a recognition of the tie that binds us to God. Religion does make us careful to walk reverently and do obeisance in the presence of Majesty Divine. The irreligious man revels in a mistaken freedom; he is frequently a loose and reckless liver. So much for etymology. We have put the virtue of religion under justice. Some might wish it counted a theological virtue, as having relation immediately with God. Faith, no doubt, is exercised in the Christian exercise of religion, and hope, too; still religion can not be classified with faith, hope and charity, for this, among other reasons, that the theological virtues belong to the supernatural order, whereas religion is a virtue of the natural order. That is to say, faith (and say the like of hope and charity) refers us to God as known in Christ, and is exercised by us in our capacity of Christians, borne up by the grace of Christ; whereas religion refers us to God in Himself as God, and to God as our Creator and Lord, which He is even apart from the Incarnation, and is a virtue which, man as man, in the order of reason and natural propriety, is bound to exercise. Religion then is not a theological virtue, because it is a virtue proper to human nature as such. It may be added that God is known immediately by us on earth only through revelation; in the order of nature, away from revelation, He is known medially by process of reasoning. In the light of that mediate knowledge religion, as a natural virtue, worships Him. Worship, to be acceptable, must come from the heart. It should be the outpouring of a heart docile and submissive to God. Our Lord condemned the worship of the Pharisees and of the
Jewish priests, with their multitudinous observances, because their hearts were far from Him whom they honored with their lips. The worship of an insincere heart is called formalism. Formalism, to be sure, is an evil thing, but that does not make forms, rites and ceremonies in religious worship, evil things, any more than food becomes evil by the abuse of food turning to indigestion. Nor is it to any purpose to allege that rites and ceremonies are of no use to God. Of course they are of no use to God. The whole of creation put together is not of the slightest use to God. When we have done all that we are commanded to do, God bids us say we are unprofitable servants (Luke xvii, 10). God has nothing to gain by us. His aims are fixed wholly beyond the category of the useful. He looks for honour, quite a different thing from utility. He need not have created either men or angels; but having created them, He looks to their paying Him honour. But why not, to use a phrase once famous, "worship mostly of the silent sort"? Because we are men, and silence on matters that we are interested in is against our nature. What lover of country lanes in summer is silent in praise of flowers? Our work will not be mostly of the silent sort if we really care about religion. Besides, as philosophers are now discovering, religion originally springs out of the social side of human nature. Once found, God may be prayed to in solitude, but He is first found in company. In the order of nature you have first the congregation, then the priest and the altar, expressive of the common desire to adore some power above the community, to whom the community owes allegiance, the worship of whom paid by all in common is the cement of that society. In the primitive commonwealth there was one common worship. And to this day unity of worship is the ideal for a commonwealth, for lack of attainment of which ideal we citizens of modern states have many lamentable disputes about THE VIRTUE OF RELIGION education. Religion, then, is not a growth of solitude* but of society. It is a function of social man. But a social function can not "be carried on in silence. I have never attended a meeting of the Society
of Friends
;
but the members of that society, I understand, are few
and select. Their procedure can not make a rule for the many.
A man
may sing by himself, and he may pray by himself, and
should often do so. Nevertheless, nearly all great musical com-
positions involve the harmony of many voices and instruments j
and nearly all religions have their public ritual, even though it be
of the simplest, as in the case of Mohamedanism and Puritanism,
with regard to which it may be debated whether their religion or
their unreligiousness it is that has made their ritual so bald and
plain. Yet even the Mohamedan is publicly called to frequent
prayer; while the Puritan, though his chief interest lay in the ser-
mon, spent hours in congregational singing of psalms.
In the Psalms, sun, moon, stars and light, and all the irrational
creation, are invited to praise God. And so they do, simply by
being what they are, manifestations of God s power, wisdom and
goodness. But the starry heavens are all unconscious of the praise
that they render to God. Man is their mouthpiece. In his mind
their unconscious witness to their Creator
passes into consciousness.
Man is the high priest of the material creation. He raises inferior
things to the religious order. The lower animals he sacrifices to
God, or used to do, while God was pleased to accept such victims.
The
great sacrifice of the New Law is offered from the fruits of
the earth, the fruit of the vineyard and the cornfield. Man lays gold
and silver
plate and jewels, when he has them, upon the altar. He
enshrines the altar in an edifice so majestic and glorious, that even
when defaced and
profaned a king s palace looks mean and vulgar
by the side of it. These are the outward splendours of religion:
66 THE CARDINAL VIRTUES
thus matter worships God. But the most perfect work among
visible and material things is not any handiwork of man; it is a
work of God s own formation, the body of man. &quot;With my body
I thee
worship,&quot; says bridegroom to bride in the English marriage
service. &quot;With my body I thee worship,&quot; in the higher and strictly
religious sense of the word worship, every man should say to his
Creator. Bowings, genuflections, processions, choral singing,
"making a cheerful noise with psalms" all things that infidels rail at are part of the reasonable service (Rom. xii, i) that man pays with his body to God. I need not say how much this service is enhanced, when the body is what the body of a Christian ever should be, holy, well-pleasing to God, the living temple of the Holy Ghost, a member of Christ (Rom. ib.; I Cor. vi, 15, 19). The same men who object to bodily adoration and material adjuncts to religion also make light of Sacraments. The method of this bodily homage should never be left to individual caprice. No man has any business to be his own master of ceremonies. "Honour the Deity after the manner of your ancestors," was a maxim with the Greeks. It is a sound rule, wherever it does not involve idolatrous rites. Where God has not positively signified the rites and ceremonies, whereby He wishes to be worshiped, as He once did through Moses, and does now through the Catholic Church, the approved custom of the country supplies a rule from which the individual worshiper should not notably deviate. In dealing with religion we must never forget that there is such a thing as religious mania, and that religious emotion, uncontrolled, especially when it seizes upon a multitude, is apt to issue in practices which are not of the spirit of God, practices in flagrant violation of morality and His commandments. A wellordered public ritual checks these excesses.

THE VIRTUE OF RELIGION

67

Religion being a virtue, and virtue being a habit, and a habit being formed by repetition of acts, and that formation going on most readily when nature is most plastic, as it is in childhood and youth, it should be a main aim of the educator to form his charge to the virtue of religion. To that end they must pray regularly in private, and often take part not merely be lookers on, but take part in the public prayers and ceremonies of Holy Church. And here let us get rid of a delusion which our parliamentary orators on the education question seem often to labour under, the idea that religion is a "lesson," and may be classified as such with geography;
that it is forsooth one of the subjects of a timetable. It is nothing of
the kind. I grant you religious doctrine is a lesson; but religious
doctrine is not
religion, albeit religion can not stand without doc
trine. Men thoroughly irreligious have still been doctors in the
ology, masters of religious doctrine. Many boys love their re
ligion, and yet find the lesson in religious doctrine tedious. Religion
is a discipline of the whole man, not of the intellect only; it con
verts the whole being to the worship of God. Religion is instilled
by Sacraments, by Confession and Communion, by Mass, Rosary
and Benediction, by holy images and the company of religious peo
ple, not by Catechism alone. Place a boy in surroundings where
these things are not; you will not save his religion by giving him
Catechism to learn and the Bible to read for two hours a day. So
much for the acquirement of the virtue of religion, the first point
in the cycle of true education, indeed the one thing necessary to be
educated in at all.
Debts unpaid, and consequently due in justice to tradesmen and
others, trouble the conscience of a right-minded man. Some even
are found who will concern themselves to
pay the debts of their
predecessors, whose fortunes they have inherited. Thus good
Queen Mary impoverished herself in paying the debts of Henry
VIII and Edward VI. Religious duties neglected are debts un
paid to God. We are bound in justice to worship God at proper
intervals. The Church s
precept of Sunday Mass is no mere arbi
trary imposition. It determines for us a precept of natural law.
It fixes a limit beyond which we must not go without doing an act
of
religion. When Mass is out of our reach, the obligation still
rests
upon us at certain proper times to pray. We must pray with
sufficient frequency to be enabled to resist temptation, and tempta
tion for many of us is both frequent and strong. That is how it
comes to be unsafe to omit to
pray morning and evening. Hence
the tradition of morning and evening prayers.
Man is differentiated from the lower animals by sense of re
ligion and belief in God. Our dumb servants and pets have not
the least inkling of a God. They enter in some sort into our sorrows, never
into our prayers. One has but to observe their de
meanor in church or at
prayer time to see how utterly destitute they are of religious awe and reverence. You train them to keep quiet for the time, but so you could if you wanted the time for reading and looking over accounts. They are quiet simply out of complaisance to their human master. He stands to them in place of God. It is said that animals see ghosts; even if they did, that would not argue any apprehension of the divine. Consequently, when a man abandons all religion, he divests himself of a badge of humanity, and steps down into the order of brutes. A high and spiritual religion marks a high civilization. The decay of religion means the degradation of humanity. Of this fact the enemies of religion are continually furnishing evidence by the brutality of their language, and the brutality of their behavior. Homer said well of old, "All men need gods" (Odyssey III, 48). And David has said much better, My soul hath thirsted after the strong living God (Ps. x, 41).

TRUTHFULNESS, GRATITUDE, OBEDIENCE 69

X. TRUTHFULNESS, GRATITUDE, OBEDIENCE

"Because man is a social animal, one man naturally owes another that without which human society could not go on. But men could not live with one another, if they did not believe one another as declaring the truth to one another. And, therefore, the virtue of truthfulness in some way hinges upon the notion of a thing due"; (St. Thomas). Thus truthfulness comes to be classified under justice. Not that it is a part of justice strictly so-called. Ordinarily, the knowledge in my mind is not the property of my neighbour, it is not his by right; I am not legally bound to make it over to him; and if, when he asks for it, I deal out to him some thing else, something contrary even to that knowledge, I do not thereby do him, strictly, an injury and wrong, nor do I owe him afterwards any restitution. Thus if a person asks me my opinion on the Tariff Question, and I tell him that I am a Free Trader, whereas really I am a partisan of Tariff Reform, I tell an untruth,
lie, I commit a sin, but I have not exactly wronged my inquirer. I am not bound to write to him next day and avow my Protectionist sympathies, by way of restitution. A simple lie is not a sin against strict justice. Nay, a simple lie, whatever Protestants may think to the contrary, is never a mortal sin; you will not go to hell for that; but unless you repent and do penance, you will go to purgatory, for it. This is quite enough deterrent to a Catholic, conjoined with the fact of the sinfulness of the lie, for venial sin after all is sin;

and as Ecclesiasticus, xv, says: God hath not given permission to every man to sin. By a "simple lie," I mean, first, a lie which is not against religion and the honour of God, as is the lie when a Catholic denies his being a Catholic, which is a mortal sin; secondly, a lie which does no hurt to our neighbour in point of life, limb, property, or reputation. A lie which does serious hurt to a neighbour in any of those respects is a mortal sin against justice, and entails restitution. Somebody is said once to have walked into a shop where they sold sausages and laid six dead cats on the counter, with the words, "There are six of them; I'll bring you the remaining half-dozen to-morrow." This when the shop was full of customers. No doubt it was a joke, and no customer took it seriously. But seriously to imply by word or gesture, and make it believed, that a respectable poor butcher makes his sausages out of cats, would be more than a simple lie; it would be a lie edged with a barb of injustice, for which, as for any other strict injustice, restitution would be due.

However, we have not here to do with calumny, but simply with the habit of speaking or not speaking the truth, and we will confine our treatment of it, as the early moralists confined theirs, to the matter of speaking of one's self, one's own personal advantages and exploits. A child tells you of itself, and there are grown up people who will tell you of themselves, their doings, and their difficulties, with all the simplicity and effusiveness of a child. Their candour is charming, as being utterly removed from vanity. There is also an offensive and importunate way of forcing your past adventures,
or present views, upon your neighbour's notice. A really vain person does not usually speak openly at length, but drops little sagacious, even self-depreciatory hints, all calculated to heighten your opinion of the speaker, or force from you a compliment. Then there are those who are not vain, and seek not admiration for its own sake, but they are gainful and ambitious persons, greedy of emolument and advancement, and to this end they will lie down

TRUTHFULNESS, GRATITUDE, OBEYDENCE

right, cunningly, exaggerating their own value, and depreciating their neighbour's, with or without cause; detraction or calumny, neither comes amiss to them. This sort of people is odious before God and man. I hardly know any worse symptom of character than the habit of systematic lying for the furtherance of one's own ends. Henry VIII was a portentous liar and a typical bad man. A symptom is not necessarily in itself the worst element of the disease; the evil lies in what it points to. There are worse sins than lying; but steady, reckless lying for the purpose of getting on in life is an index to much deep-seated moral evil.

This pestilential type of liar must not be confounded with him whose statements are inexact through constitutional inaccuracy of mind; or, it may be, from exuberance of imagination and love of fun. The liar in jest, once his character is established, can not, I think, be called a liar at all; for when the mood is on him, and the matter is trivial enough to permit it, no one takes his exaggerations or comical stories seriously. He can not be said to affirm anything; consequently he does not lie. He only suggests matter of inquiry, should any one think it worth his while to follow the subject up. One sole stipulation must be made with him, that his jests be never malicious.

Lying is a mark of pride. Humility, as we shall see, is taking one's proper place in the eyes of God; pride is assuming a rank that one has no right to, and consequently a false rank. I will ascend above the height of the clouds; I will be like the Most High (Isaias xiv, 14). Such was the aspiration of the first proud creature, Lucifer. There was falsehood in his claim; such was not his place, yet he would have it that it was. He began with a lie; upon a lying pretext he rebelled; therefore, our Saviour calls him a liar and the father of
lies (John viii, 44). The proud man is pretentious and unreal
in his makeup. What he is by nature and by the grace of God
is not enough for him. He dotes upon an imaginary self. For
that product of his imagination he claims place and position in
the esteem of man, place and position beyond his proper due. His
whole policy is based upon a fiction. Fiction and falsehood he
loves; they are essential to the character that he plays. He dare
not be himself, and let other people take him for no more than
he is really worth. Pride is always founded upon a wrong view
of self and of the situation. As we are often
told, humility is
truth.
I can conceive this last proposition being denied. "No," it will be said, "both humility and pride are founded on untruth;
pride an untruth in the way of self-exaltation; humility an untruth in
the
way of self-depreciation. The humble man does not acknowl-
edge his own merits. What shocking things the saints have said
in the way of self-depreciation, but they are the worst of sinners,
that they deserve to lie at the feet of Judas in hell," etc. If I
plead on behalf of the saints that they at least believed what they
said, and therefore told no lie, I shall be met and I think justly
met with the
rejoinder, that the proud man also believes in his
own estimate of himself. I admit that he does. That is
just the
misery of his position. The arch liar lies to himself, and brings
himself to believe himself. That is what Plato calls "the lie in
the
soul," the worst of all lies. Satan, I presume, thus lies even
to himself. But though he believe in himself, not for that is his
lying pride excusable. There is such a thing as culpable selfdeception. As for
what seems to us the exaggerated language of
the saints, that is a matter admitting of much discussion. To
discuss it at length would carry us from our subject. The key to
the solution is this, that the saints see themselves, not in com
TRUTHFULNESS, GRATITUDE, OBEDIENCE 73
parison with their fellowmen, but as they stand confronted with
the ineffable holiness of God. Before that standard they are con
founded for their
very least defects; and having an eye (like the
publican in the Gospel) on their own misdoings and not (like the Pharisee) on the misdoings of their neighbours, they humble and abase themselves below all other men.

Another virtue, ranked under justice, and also in close connection with humility, is gratitude. I should advise anyone who was looking for an easy way up the mountain of holiness to try the path of gratitude, of perennial exuberant thankfulness to God, and to men as vehicles of the bounties of God. Every master loves a contented and grateful servant; so does the Best of Masters.

One hearty Deo gratias caroled in the sunny air of enjoyment, or better still, heaved out of the depths of tribulation, sends Satan away in disgust, for he is an eternal malcontent, and the Alleluia, the song of praise to God, is no music in his ear.

The grateful man has the humility to own himself not sufficient for himself, but needing the assistance of others; and when he gets it, he does not take it as payment of his dues, or as anything that he had a right to, but as altogether beyond his claims and deserts.

Obedience, if we take it to mean the fulfilment of a contract do ut facias, "I give you on condition of your doing for me," may come under justice strictly so called. If John has contracted with Andrew to do a piece of work under Andrew's direction for a money payment, he is bound in justice to do the work, as Andrew is similarly bound to pay him the money. Working under contract, however, is not the proper type of obedience. Obedience supposes superior and inferior, the latter fulfilling the former's command because this superior is the higher in the hierarchical order, and is in status the better man of the two. This idea of obedience is very repugnant to modern minds. Modern men very generally will not hear of status, only of contract. But let us turn to the Commandments. Let us hear the Church. The Church delivers to us the Fourth Commandment, which is the commandment of obedience, honour thy father and thy mother. The relation of parent and child is not one of contract, but of status. And it is the most fundamental of all human relations. Civil society is built
up out of families. Consequently the disintegration of the family is the disruption of the State. Anarchists and socialists know that well, and loathe the one as they repudiate the other. Parents, unskilful how to command, and children, scorning to obey, these are filling the world with socialists. A servant, or a workman, should be next thing to a son to his master or employer, and pay not merely the work and service contracted for under stipulation of wage, but likewise the "honour" that the Commandment speaks of, the deference and respect due from inferior to superior. One is laughed at for saying such a thing nowadays. That civil society is incurring the most serious peril from the decay of the oldfashioned virtues of reverence, obedience, purity, religion, no thoughtful man will deny. Honour thy father and thy mother that thou mayest be long-lived in the land (Exod. xx, 12). Conversely, a society in which authority is flouted, and obedience is taken for a badge of dishonour, may well be shortlived. One good thing provided by the State, serves as some check on this evil. The State keeps up an army and a navy; and in army and navy that obedience to command and that deference to superiors, which have not been learned in the family, nor probably at school either, as schools go, are learned at last in the ranks or on shipboard. When army and navy become mutinous, the hour for the State's overthrow has struck.

TRUTHFULNESS, GRATITUDE, OBEDIENCE 75
Obedience keeps a man in his hierarchical order in the society to which he belongs, domestic, civil or religious. True obedience is constitutional obedience. Nothing so unconstitutional as to disobey lawful authority commanding within its constitutional province. Slavery is unconstitutional, happily, in modern times. Tyranny is unconstitutional. Constitutional obedience is an honour to the man who pays it, no less than constitutional authority in competent hands is an honour to him who wields it. It is an honour, because it becomes him well and sits well on him as a proper fitting garment. It marks him for the right man in the right place. In the social hierarchy, duly constituted under God, all right places are
honorable
places. The whole is honorable, so are the parts.
Obedience is for the
young and for the poor, two classes of
souls who are cherished with
singular affection by the Most High.
But even the wealthy full-grown man has to obey. He must
obey the State, and he must obey the Church. The State, making
laws on behalf of
property and public decency, commands his ready
homage, except perhaps for the burden of taxation. But the
Church tries the obedience of the rich. Her fasts and abstinences
get in the way of their elegant dinners. Her marriage laws do not
suit their family arrangements. A rich man is more apt than a
poor man to cavil at the authoritative pronouncements of the Holy
See, partly because he is more highly educated and has leisure for
speculation; partly because his judgment, fed with flattery for
everybody listens and many applaud when the rich man speaks
proudly goes its own way, impatient of control. The most divine
of obediences is obedience to God’s Church.
At the Last
Day, as a holy man has said, mankind will be divided
on a simple principle. The obedient men will be ranged on one
side of the Judge, the disobedient on the other. Like will be
76 THE CARDINAL VIRTUES
assorted with like
;
some with the arch-rebel, whose banner they
have followed and whose motto
they have repeated, I will not
serve (Jerem. ii, 20); others shall be gathered to eternal rest in
His bosom, who was obedient even unto the death of the cross
(Phil, ii, 8).
MAGNANIMITY AND HUMILITY 77
XI. MAGNANIMITY AND HUMILITY
St. Thomas makes magnanimity and humility too distinct virtues;
the former he ranks under fortitude, the latter under temperance.
These divisions of virtues are not wholly arbitrary: one division is
more in accordance with the nature of things than another. Still
there is some room left for difference here as elsewhere in a matter
of classification. Much depends on the point of view from which
the matter is studied. Now the aim of these addresses is practise
rather than theory. In the conduct of those who are aiming at the
practice of the virtue, magnanimity readily passes into pride, while
the man who would be humble may become a sneak, a mean-spirited creature, from taking no account of magnanimity. We shall be more easily at once magnanimous and humble if we make of magnanimity and humility one two-sided virtue, a mean between two excesses, as fortitude itself is a two-sided virtue, checking two passions which go in two opposite ways, checking the passion of fear that it pass not into cowardice, checking again the passion of impetuosity lest it transgress into foolhardiness. The two-sided virtue of humble magnanimity and magnanimous humility may be called by the name of either of the constituents, as there is no one common name to include both. This arrangement will be found helpful in practise, and I flatter myself it is not so very deficient in point of theory.

Magnanimity, in common parlance, is taken to be a certain generosity in ignoring petty annoyances (which is rather longanimity), as also in forgetting and forgiving, not taking advantage of your enemy when you have him in your power. But the conception of magnanimity originally laid down by Aristotle, and afterwards adopted, or perhaps we should rather say adapted, by St. Thomas, embraces a much wider field. The matter of magnanimity is honor, which is also the matter of humility. The magnanimous man is defined to be "one who deems himself worthy of great honor, and is so worthy indeed," being a thoroughly good man, exalted in virtue, and therefore deserving also to be exalted in honor, which is the meed of virtue. Such a man accepts high honors as his due, makes little account of small compliments, and, conscious of his own real inner worth, is unmoved by affronts and ignominies put upon him by persons who do not understand him and are incapable of measuring his greatness. The mark of the magnanimous man is serenity. A certain portly habit of body, if nature has so endowed him, becomes him well. Aristotle says of him, apparently having some particular person in mind, that "his gait is slow, his voice deep, his utterance grave and leisurely." Those are separable accidents, to be sure, but where they are present they are expressions of character. The magnanimous man then is worth a great deal, and takes himself for all that he is worth. He has received God's spirit or something analogous in
the natural order to the
gift of the Holy Ghost that he may
know the
things that are given him of God (II Cor. ii, 12).
We must not conceive the
magnanimous man to be a god to him
self, wrapt up in the contemplation of his own excellences. Being
high in all virtue he is far from being wanting in the virtue of
religion. He glorifies God for whatever he has, and owns it all to
be the
gift of God. His high thoughts turn not about himself, but
about God. He is
lofty minded for what he discerns in God
primarily, and secondarily in himself by the sheer gift and grace
of God. And here we have the defence of the
magnanimous man
meeting a grave impeachment preferred against him. It has been
MAGNANIMITY AND HUMILITY 79
said of him that he is certainly not conscious of any ideal that he can
not reach not at all the man to confess that when we have done
all things we are still useless servants (Luke xvii, 10). This is
said with some apparent reference to a sermon of Newman, "Dis
courses to Mixed Congregations/ on &quot;The Religion of the Phari
see.&quot; The Pharisee is there presented as having an ideal and having
come
up to it, and consequently living in serene self-complacency.
By this argument the magnanimous man would be a self-righteous
Pharisee, far removed from the standard of Him who was meek and
humble of heart (Matt, xi, 29). The accusation may be leveled with
some justice against the pagan magnanimous man depicted in the
pages of Aristotle. Aristotle thought of man in relation to man,
not in relation to God, and described and classified his virtues ac
ordingly from a human, social standpoint. He saw no harm in a
man who was much the
superior of his fellows making the most of
that
superiority, and glorying in himself as of himself. St. Paul,
better taught of God, thought otherwise (II Cor. iii, 5). Every
ting good in man comes from God; and when it is all reckoned up,
human
goodness does not come to much in the sight of God. Shall
man be
justified in comparison with God? Lo, the stars are not
pure in his sight; how much more is man rottenness, and the son of
man a worm!
(Job xxv, 4–6). True magnanimity, that is to say, the magnanimity that parts not company with humility, but coalesces with it in the unity of one virtue, bears honours gracefully, and insult unflinchingly, from a consciousness of internal worth. This is our glory, says St. Paul, the testimony of our conscience (II Cor. i, 12). This internal worth, however, the magnanimous man refers to the source from whence it comes, and unto God he gives the glory. The secret of his marvelous virtue is his habit of practical discernment between the abyss of nothingness within himself and the high gifts, also within him, which come of the bounty of God. Magnanimity, and therefore also humility, imports grandeur and elevation of mind. The magnanimously humble man thinks a great deal of God, and not too much of man, whether of himself or of his neighbours. He is clear of the weakness of human respect. He is not afraid of men, least of all wicked men. In his sight the malignant is brought to nothing (Ps. xiv, 4). As Aristotle humorously puts it, he is not the man to bolt and run away, swinging his arms; He harbors in his heart a certain noble scorn for the impertinence of aggressive wickedness and the pomp and pride of evil powers. He takes a trifle for a trifle, and a fool for a fool. He is not easily excited. He will meddle only with big things, and with little things as they bear on big things. Altogether, the magnanimous man is a formidable antagonist to the powers of evil. When the official of a persecuting government said to St. Basil, I never met a man so unmanageable as you are, the saint replied, Perhaps you have never yet met with a Bishop; He is known in the Church as 5. Basilius Magnus, which may be rendered St. Basil the Magnanimous. Of humility the pagan world had little or no conception. They had not so much as a name for it. Christianity had to coin a Greek name, and to elevate the meaning of the Latin word humilitas, which signified originally baseness, meanness. The nearest pagan equivalent for humility was a virtue which they named modesty, or good form: it consisted in not taking airs and making yourself offensive by swaggering in company. This overlooking of humility was due to the imperfection of pagan ideas about God. The gods of the ancient world gave poor examples of morality: they were not holy
gods, but powerful beings who used their power to their own gratification. Walk before me and be perfect, as God said to Abraham (Gen. xvii, i), would have sounded a strange precept given by a pagan deity to pagan ears. Consequently the pagan was little in the habit of contrasting his own moral weaknesses with the transcendent holiness of the Supreme Being. Many a pagan must have thought that in point of moral goodness Jupiter and Apollo were not his superiors: they were materially better off than their worshiper, not holier. In fact the pagans regarded their gods much as the poor nowadays regard the rich. Humility is not in spired by an attitude of mind like that. The ground of humility is the utter inferiority of human nature to the divine, and man's dependence upon God for all that he has, even his very existence. "Humility," says St. Thomas, "seems principally to imply subjection to God: humility principally regards the reverence whereby man is subject to God." Humility then is the proper posture for every created mind to assume in presence of its Creator. To say that man is created to pay to God reverence and obedience, is to say that man is created to be humble. The first of the beatitudes, blessed are the poor in spirit (Matt, v, 3), is a blessing on the humble. The poor in spirit, says St. John Chrysostom, are the humble and contrite of heart; and he quotes for this explanation Isaias xxvi, 2: Upon whom shall I look but upon him that is poor and contrite of spirit, and trembleth at my words? The fear of the Lord, so continually extolled in the Old Testament, is nothing else than humility. Of the sinner whose foot is the foot of pride, it is said: The fear of the Lord is not before his eyes (Ps. xxxv, 2, 12).

Both humility and pride consist in habits of mind rather than in habits of external conduct. When it comes to outward behaviour, humility shows itself as obedience, pride as disobedience. Children in confession accuse themselves of "pride," meaning disobedience: thereby these little ones are good theologians. Inculcating humility St. Peter wrote: Be ye subject to every human creature for God's sake, whether to the king as excelling, or to governors as sent by him... fear God, honour the king (I Pet. ii, 13–17). How far men
generally are from honoring authorities in Church
and State for God’s sake;
how the fear of God is
ceasing to be
before the
eyes of men, is patent to every observer. Such is the
fruit of a godless education, which is truly an education in pride.
Humility, as we have seen, was not on the list of pagan virtues.
We are
l decrypting into paganism. It is more and more the way of the
world to put man in the place of God. Where this substitution
becomes complete, humility vanishes, and pride takes its place,
pride and disobedience and anarchy. Such is the way of Antichrist,
the man of sin, the wicked one, or more literally, the man of law
lessness
t
the lazyless
one, who is lifted up above all that is called
God, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself as if he zuere God
(II Thess. ii, 3, 4, 8). When God is put out of His
place as governor of human society, and man will hear but of man alone, when reverence is perished off the earth, and fear of super human
powers, and awe of a world to come, the ground is prepared
for socialism. Socialism will not be built four-square on the cardinal virtues;
it will not rest on Christ the Rock, but on the sand of
incoherent speeches, and violence, and blasphemy. When Socialism is set
up we may look for the rain and the Hoods, and the winds,
and the
great fall (Matt, vii, 26, 27).
Whatever man be in comparison with his fellowman, he is little
enough compared with God. This is motive for humility even for
the highest and holiest of creatures. We sinners on earth have the
further motive of our
sins, and not only our sins, but what is
almost more humiliating, our proneness to sin; and besides our
MAGNANIMITY AND HUMILITY
sinfulness, our ignorance. We know so little, we can know so little,
that school after school of philosophers have fallen into the plausible error of maintaining that the human mind has no hold whatever on truth as it really is, but wanders in an enchanted maze which it has constructed for itself. The Church has never countenanced that sceptical, idealist philosophy. Indeed the transition is easy from ignorance to omniscience. The position that man knows nothing of reality may be amplified into this, that there is no reality any where outside and away from human thought: then man's thought constitutes all that can be called reality, and man is as God, author of all, knowing all. The orthodox view, which is also the view taken by ordinary mankind, is that man does know a little truth, touching the world and its Creator; but for one thing that man knows there are a thousand things beyond his conjecture, known only to God, who knows all. Man, then, is very ignorant before God, in his present condition. The reward promised to his fidelity is the sight of God, which will be the dispelling of his ignorance, so far as ignorance can be dispelled from a finite mind. To aid man to this goal, God has been pleased to reveal to him sundry truths, some of which he could not have found out for himself at all while others he might have found, but could not have held with firm certainty. These are the truths of the Christian revelation, embodied in the Creed. So learning them, man is, as our Saviour says, quoting Isaias, taught of God (John vi, 45; Isai. xiv, 13). He is as a child in God's school, God's school being the Church. The first requisite in a pupil is docility. God expects man to lend a docile ear to His teaching as given in the Church. Unless ye become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Who soever shall humble himself as this child, he is the greater in the kingdom of heaven (Matt, xviii, 3, 4). This virtue whereby we receive the teaching of God in the Church is called faith. The faith of an intellectual man is a great abasement of his understanding before God, a great act of humility, in these days especially, when science is widening and criticism is so keen. Yet after all it is not science, not criticism, that makes the difficulty of faith, but the neglect of prayer. Prayer is essentially an act of reverence to God, and therefore of humility: it is a profession of our total dependence on Him, a confession of our own insufficiency and consequent need of Him: it is usually a confession of our sins besides
and an imploring of His pardon. Humility begets humility. The humility of prayer engenders and fosters the humility of faith. If a learned man loses his faith, it is not because of his learning as such, but because much study has left him prayerless. At the same time it must be confessed that study and mental acumen, as they remove many difficulties against faith the shallow cavillings of the half-educated so they raise other difficulties. As you mount the hill you see other hills, which from the valley you do not see. Therefore, as the high-strung, nervous organism needs much prayer to withstand sensual temptation, so the highly trained in intellect needs prayer and Sacraments in abundance to surmount what God detests even beyond sensuality, namely, intellectual pride. Through such pride fell Lucifer. The intellect that comes nearest the angels must have a care that it, too, imitate not the sin of the angels. A keen inquirer must ever remember that, unlike science, faith is no intuition of genius, no product of elaborate reasoning, but is ultimately an obedience to the voice of God speaking in the heart, which voice must be heard in all humility. The ear of the proud is deaf to that still, small voice. To the Pharisees, because of their pride, Our Saviour said: Ye shall seek me and not find me, and where I go ye can not come (John vii, 34).

MAGNANIMITY AND HUMILITY
Finally, I must repeat, humility, obedience, faith are ever highminded and noble hearted, because they bring one in touch with God. The author and finisher of our faith, who endured the Cross and despised the shame, and now sitteth at the right hand of the throne of God (Heb. xii, 2), He who was meek and humble of heart (Matt, xi, 29), is likewise the typical magnanimous man.

86 THE CARDINAL VIRTUES
XII. THE INFUSED VIRTUES
By nature we have capacities and predispositions towards virtue, which capacities and predispositions are by practice converted into habits; these habits are the "acquired virtues." Such "acquired virtues" have been our theme hitherto. Now we must note two further points about them. First, in many men they are very ill acquired. The habit of sobriety, of veracity, of honesty, of fortitude, in many
a subject is a crude, ill-baked thing; a little temptation breaks through it, and your teetotaler is taken up for drunkenness, your honest cashier is in prison for embezzlement. Human nature on the whole sadly needs to have its virtues reinforced. The "infused virtues," as we shall see, are a reinforcement to the "acquired."

Secondly, no amount of virtue acquired by mere effort of nature will ever take a man to heaven, or win for him any reward there. Heaven means the vision of God, and that vision is simply out of range of all creatures unaided strivings. The vision of God is not due either to the dignity or to the natural merits of any creature that God can possibly create, let alone man. It is a pure grace and gratuitous favour done to any creature who attains it. None but God Himself has a connatural right to see God. As the end to be attained is a grace, so the means to the attainment must consist of graces also. Such graces are the "infused virtues." No infused virtues, no heaven.

The infused virtues, of which I am about to treat, are faith, hope, and charity. Theologians complicate the matter by additions too subtle to be gone into here, and not very profitable for practice. These three virtues are infused in Baptism. Saying that, I do not mean to say that they can exist only in the baptized, but Baptism is the ordinary means of their infusion. Baptism, then, puts into the soul a power to believe in the word of God revealing, a power to hope in the promise of God proffering to man the vision of Himself in heaven, and a power to love God above all things as a child loves its father, for in Baptism we are made adopted children of God and heirs of heaven, neither of which things are we by nature, or merely by being men. It will be seen that an infused virtue is not so much a habit as a power. The three infused virtues bestowed in Baptism are as three new faculties. Man is not born with the faculty of mak
ing his way to heaven. It is given him when he is baptized. These new faculties, faculties of what St. Paul (Eph. iv, 24) calls the new man, created in Baptism, like other faculties, need exercise, else they perish of atrophy. The baptized child is disposed to believe, but he knows not what to believe until he learns his Catechism. He can not love an unknown God, nor hope for a heaven of which he has never been told. He has to be taught to make acts of faith, hope, and charity; and all his life long the oftener he elicits those acts with God's grace, the more robust do the infused virtues grow in him. By utter neglect of such acts he may become, not entirely, but in many respects, as though he had no infused virtues, as though he had never been baptized, he may become as the heathen and the publican (Matt, xviii, 17).

Young Christians generally, as might be expected, and not a few of longer standing, are strong in "infused virtues," but very weak in the "acquired virtues." They believe and hope abundantly, but as they too rarely exercise the acts, so neither have they acquired the habits of truthfulness, abstinence, sobriety, meekness, justice, obedience. This is no situation to acquiesce in. To acquiesce in it were to fall into the heresy called Antinomianism, which means faith without works.

88 THE CARDINAL VIRTUES
The Christian, being bound to keep the Commandments, is bound in many various ways and recurring occasions to be just, temperate, brave and prudent. Thus, if he is faithful to his obligations, he forms in himself, whether he think of it or not, the habits of the cardinal virtues. A child may be excused for not possessing those virtues; he has not yet had time to form the habits. But the absence of the said virtues in a grown man, who has truly come to man's estate, having a man's knowledge and a man's appreciation of the law, argues in him a culpable neglect of acts which in many contingencies must have been incumbent upon him as duties. Neither the "infused virtues" should exist in a grown man without the "acquired virtues," nor the "acquired virtues" without the "infused virtues"; neither faith
without works, nor works without faith. We notice in the epistles of SS. Paul, Peter and John, traces of a disposition on the part of some early Christians to scorn the "acquired virtues" in the exuberance of the felt graces of their Baptism. This mistaken neglect of the natural order the Apostles were at pains to correct. (See Romans xiii, 1–8; I Cor. v, 1–6, 9, 10; x, 1–12; Gal. v, 13–21; I Pet ii, 13–18; I John ii, 3–6.) This also seems to be the main scope of the epistle of St. James. The Christian is a man sublimated. He ceases not to be a man and should have the virtues of a man. Grace does not abolish ethics. The office of "infused virtues" is to foster and take command of "acquired virtues," and raise their acts to a higher order. When to the proper motive of an "acquired virtue" there is superadded the motive of an "infused virtue," the act thence resulting is said to be elicited by the acquired, or natural, virtue, and commanded by the supernatural, or infused virtue. As a rule, in a man leading a Christian life, all the acts elicited by his acquired virtues are commanded by his infused virtues. Thus if he prays, which is an act of THE INFUSED VIRTUES 89 religion, he is led to pray by motives of faith and hope in Christ. Martyrdom, elicited by fortitude, is commanded by charity. It is only by being commanded, at least habitually, by charity that the virtuous acts of man become meritorious of heaven. The "acquired virtues," as such, qualify for well-being on earth. The "infused virtues," and the "acquired" as commanded by the "infused," qualify for happiness in heaven. Further, as we have seen, the "infused virtues" fortify the "acquired." The "infused virtues" are the care of the Church; the "acquired virtues" are the care, although not the exclusive care, of the State, as such. I say as such, because a Christian State in concert with the Church will have some concern about the infused virtues. The State's direct care of virtue is limited to "overt acts" of the same. An "overt act" is defined "an act which externally manifests the dis
position of the mind. Virtues are as oil to the machinery of government. In so far as they are needed as an aid to government and social order, they are called "civil virtues." It must be confessed that the necessary standard of civil virtue is not very high. A man may be a good citizen, yet not a good man, still less a good Catholic. On the other hand, no State can get on without a certain measure of goodness and virtue among its people. Every government must trust some of its subjects; the ruler can not constrain everybody, nor oversee every official's doings, there must be some fortitude, some justice, some temperance and self-restraint away from the eye of the policeman. And besides, who shall police the police? Who shall answer for the fidelity of the soldiers? A State may become so morally rotten as scarcely to hold together as a State: then it perishes under the first strong arm raised against it either from without or from within. Both Church and State have a common interest in making the citizens virtuous up to a certain point. Beyond that point the Church will wish to raise them to a still higher virtue; but the State, if it be not a Christian State, is apt to hang back, to consider the Church importunate, meddlesome, punctilious and scrupulous, and even actually to thwart its efforts. There upon Church and State fall out. We see this in the matter of marriage laws, and above all in the education question. The State subsidized school refuses to have Christian Catholic morality and piety inculcated within its walls. It opens its doors only to "Biblical morality," whatever that may mean, or "simple ethics." Without insisting on the divine mission of the Church, which the heathen statesman will not admit, this practical consideration may be advanced to move even a heathen. Whatever ideal of conduct you put up, you may make up your mind that the multitude will fall short of it in practice. You must propose a high ideal to get the mass of mankind to be even moderately virtuous. Schoolmasters forget this, who will not have their charge made "too pious." Preachers forget
it, who are fond of expatiating on the topic how little after all Christ requires of a layman in the world, albeit surely the layman must be Christ’s disciple, and Christ’s condition of discipleship is to renounce all things (Luke xiv, 33). Now the Church’s ideal of virtue is a high ideal. The State’s ideal of virtue is a low one. Train men to the Christian standard, and you may reasonably expect them not to fall short of that human standard which must be attained for the decent well-being of civil society. He will stop far short of murder, who dreads violent hatred as a mortal sin for which he may lose his soul (Matt, v, 21–26). He will not commit adultery, who is taught to abhor a lustful glance (Matt, v, 27–30). He will not swear a false oath in court who boggles at an unnecessary one (Matt, v, 33–37). He who loves his enemy will not fail his friend, nor be an enemy of lawful government (Matt, v, 43–47). A man who seriously aims at perfection will not be a bad citizen (Matt, v, 48). But preach an easy and lax morality, just sufficient for State purposes, and what sort of practice can you expect? That which you get in sundry godless schools, where the State, thinking to subsidize education, is really subsidizing crime, and the coming socialism.

It remains to consider the motives of virtue. Why be virtuous at all? Like any other skill, virtue is acquired by training and self-denial. It is far easier to be vicious; and though vice itself be not pleasant, inasmuch as it makes a slave of a man, anyhow the acts that lead to vice are alluring enough. The Aristotelian motive for any virtuous act is its being the kalon, the right thing. Of this motive I desire to speak with all respect. I admit its potency. Hundreds of heroic deeds have been done with scarce any other motive than this, that it was the right thing to do. “Duty,” or “the right thing,” has exercised a marvelous sway over human hearts. It has been obeyed without its claims being questioned, or its title verified. Still, quite as often, it is flouted and disobeyed. Sceptics have analyzed
it, and some have found to their own satisfaction that duty is only
pleasure in disguise; whereupon many prefer pleasure undisguised.
Any strengthening of the motive of virtue is of the highest value to
mankind. Such
strength is afforded by the infused virtues of faith
and
charity. They propose, not an abstract kalon, but a personal
kalos, One who is all beautiful, all lovable, all holy, because, being
man, He is also God. The Christian aims at virtue for love of "the
right thing," to be sure, but still more for love and imitation of the
adorable
person of his Saviour, the living Head of that living Body
of which
every Christian is a member; by incorporation in which
he has
grace to do all works of virtue requisite for salvation, and
better than Melchisedech, who lived under the ancient dispensation,
9 2 THE CARDINAL VIRTUES
to be assimilated to the Son of God (Heb. vii, 3). Enthusiasm for
a
person is wanted to eke out the intellectual grasp of a principle.
Men will do for
persons what they will never do for principles. An
impersonal principle, whatever its philosophical merits, too often
leaves the heart cold. We want
personal enthusiasm to meet a
crisis, and principle to insure stability. To meet both these wants, the
Catholic Church holds
up in her one hand charity and the Sacra
ments, in her other faith and the Creed. The virtuous Christian is
characterized alike by clear knowledge of and steady adherence to
the principles of faith and reason, and by steady loyalty to the per
son of his Saviour.
The essential idea of virtue is that of firmness and steadiness.
Virtue is the corrective of
impulse. The man of mere impulse may
do
many good and generous deeds, still he is not a good man, for
the
proneness to do good has not been engrafted on to his nature.
This important psychological fact, that we are more inclined to act
in some given way for having acted in that way before, the fact
that having often acted in a certain way we arrive to a habit which
inclines so to act always, except under quite abnormal circum
stances, this fact is the generator of the whole economy of virtues and vices. Of itself, in the right order of nature, it is a provision to steady our wills in good; incidentally, and by abuse, it may fix the will in evil. As habits form, man approaches to the condition of an angel, either of a good angel or of a devil. One act is said to make a fixed habit in an angel; many acts are needed to fix the more volatile will of man. Nor is the fixture ever quite perfect. You are never quite sure that the virtuous man will elicit his virtuous act every time that the occasion calls for it. His will always remains in some measure indeterminate and free, and his consequent action uncertain. Free will in man never passes away into character. Thus plexus of habits, which is called character, never becomes the sole and adequate determinant of human conduct. Some room is always left for effort and free choice. But undoubtedly the growth of virtues and vices does abridge the freedom of the will for better or for worse. It anticipates in some measure that fixed determination of the will to good, which obtains in the blessed in heaven; or to evil, in the case of the lost. Nor is it any loss of perfection, nay, it is a higher freedom, to have your will bent immovably upon good, so immovably that temptation, however clamorous, offers you no real inducement to act upon it. There are outrageous sins to which any decent man is never really tempted. He is above solicitation in that direction. That man would not be far above the level of a wild beast, who had to exert all the moral energy of his will, time after time, to restrain himself from cutting your throat. Growth in virtue gradually raises man above all deliberate sins, almost as much as the common man is raised above murder. Indeliberate acts, "sins of surprise," as they are called, are an infirmity cleaving to man as long as he lives. They are not committed on principle. They are triumphs snatched by impulse from
principle when principle is caught napping. But for the avoidance even of
great sins the Christian, however perfect, must never rely
upon his own acquired virtues. He must watch and pray that he
enter not into temptation (Matt, xxvi, 41).