

## Sermons of Nicholas of Cusa

Translated by Thomas Izbicki and Peter Casarella

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## Sermon 1 – “In the beginning was the Word”<sup>1</sup>

DRAFT TRANSLATION BY THOMAS IZBICKI

*In the beginning was the Word* [John 1:1].

Since, my reverend bishop of Trier<sup>2</sup> and other beloved in Christ, nothing of outstanding eloquence in explaining texts ever occurred to me, the most inept of all, even in the least affairs, there can be no doubt, in the mystery of an ineffable festival, all the limbs of the body not only tremble before it but, with a constrained spirit, all the powers of the soul are struck with terror of rejection at the approach of a sacrament both wondrous and marvelous. Who, then, may dare to explicate the name of such an infinite, immense and inconceivable supreme God, which is not known even to the angels? *Who shall declare His generation* [Is. 53:8], that of the only-begotten Word? *Every one that toucheth the mount*, which is so high as to be imperceivable, *shall be stoned* [Ex. 19:12-13]. If our intellectual eyes turn to those things which are most apparent about Its nature, like bats to the light, what do we see if we study Its nature and Its secrets with a curious scrutiny? It is clear that we profit little of nothing. What if we know the nature of spiritual substances, of the heavens and of the stars, the order of the virtues? We profit even less.

Since, however, the designer, orderer, ruler, preserver and creator, infinite in His simplicity, spirituality, clarity and perfection, exceeds all things created, it is manifest that human intellect is unable to rise to the perfection of such an excellent light, not least by its intrinsic vision, remaining truly inwardly blind by its own nature.

And, since these things are so, no one will wonder why the holy and most learned Augustine, writing about the prologue of this most holy gospel,<sup>3</sup> and other orthodox catholic men, even the lights of theology, consequently have been terrified to attempt explanation of our theme, so that, as far as they can, they add little to the words of the gospel by way of introduction. As much as the sense of this gospel is high, so speculation about it is the more perilous, since the feeble intellect cannot help itself by running to and fro. The virgin mystic John, by a special privilege, drawing these secrets at the Last Supper from that divine, most sacred breast [Jn. 13:23], soaring like an eagle,<sup>4</sup> wrote these words, which you hear in the reading of the entire gospel.

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<sup>1</sup> The edition dates this sermon to December 25, 1430, possibly at Koblenz; but it also suggests an earlier version was delivered in 1428 somewhere in the diocese of Trier.

<sup>2</sup> If the earlier date is accepted, this is a reference to Otto von Ziegenhain, who died in 1430; if the later date, then Ulrich von Manderscheid is meant.

<sup>3</sup> *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus*, PL 35:1377-78.

<sup>4</sup> The eagle was John's symbol as evangelist.

And, because the sacraments of so high a Truth are concluded with these words,<sup>5</sup> so that neither heaven, nor earth, nor all the globe, even if they last a thousand thousand years, could not comprehend, how necessary is it for us poor sinners devoutly to pray this All Powerful One, from Whom all things are and without Whom nothing would be [Jn. 1:3], that He should shed so much light on us from this gospel that, with the help of His mercy, it should suffice for our salvation.

Let us greet, therefore, the bearer of the Word by concluding with the joyous salutation of the Nativity of the Only Begotten [Lk. 1:28], so that, at the urging of His most pious mother, the sweetest infant Son should illuminate us, by saying with a devout mind, “Hail, Mary etc.”

Principal theme.

First part: On the names of God.

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God* etc. [John 1:1].

I protest that, if I should err in anything, speaking improperly against the truth, I submit myself and what I say in this sermon, and all that I have done, to correction by the catholic faith and the sacrosanct Roman church.<sup>6</sup>

God, depending on no one, because the origin of all good and perfection, virtue and truth, *by Him all things were made* [Jn. 1:3], must Himself be the supreme good [1 Cor. 8:6]. The supreme good, however, has nothing like it in its supremacy, since it would lose entirely the reason for its supremacy. Wherefore, God is unique and, consequently, most simple. Nothing precedes the supreme good. The parts, however, precede the whole; and their union depends on the power of a higher power. It follows, thus, that the supreme good alone is most perfect, unique and most simple, whose property it is, because supreme, to depend on no one; therefore, God alone properly is one.

Wherefore, among the other Hebrew names, God is called “Yahweh,” that is, “Who is”; according to others, “I am who I am.” He, however, is divine, because He is supreme, must exist by Himself and because of Himself. And, since nothing is His cause -- that would imply that something was before He was, therefore, He exists eternally and unchangeably and was present in every beginning.

Already it is clear that nothing is lacking to the most perfect, unique, most simple divine being, because it exists most perfectly, and that nothing is present except what concords with the supreme good. For it is obvious that supreme being, supreme in duration or eternity, supreme virtue, supreme majesty, supreme glory, supreme justice, supreme truth, are one simple God, outside Whom is nothing supreme and nothing infinite. Wherefore, neither is the world eternal; nor is there anything else of infinite power or virtue. This God remains thus, so immense as to be unnameable, inexpressible and fully unknowable by all creatures.

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<sup>5</sup> For centuries, the mass concluded with this “last gospel.”

<sup>6</sup> The manuscript has reduced this formula to *etc.*

He is named with diverse human names in diverse tongues of diverse nations, although His name is unique, supreme, infinite, ineffable and unknown.

The created intellect, ascending to understand such virtue of supreme good, finds Him alone, the most just provider. Among the Jews, they called Him “El.” Finding Him the foreseeing lord of all things, they called Him, “Adonai”;<sup>7</sup> finding Him most powerful, they called Him, “Jah”; finding Him most merciful, they called Him, “Sabaoth,” “Schaddai” etc. And, according to the tradition of the Hebrews, there are eight such names.<sup>8</sup>

There is, nevertheless, one most holy name, whose interpretation human intellect cannot understand, given by God, which is the Tetragrammaton, that is, the four letters, which is ineffable, that is, inconceivable by the intellect; nor is it spoken aloud among the Jews except once a year after a fast, which is pronounced “Jehovah.” And where this name is written in the Bible of the Hebrews, there we have “Lord” etc. Likewise, this is the most holy and most divine name, because it signifies God, not according to some particular extrinsic virtue, like the others, but according to omnipotence and intrinsic qualities, without respect to those outside.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, Rabbi Moses, in his book *A Guide for the Perplexed*,<sup>10</sup> says that all divine names are derived from divine works, except the Tetragrammaton, which is appropriate to the most high creator, which signifies the divine essence with its intrinsic properties; and it is the deepest mystery. And by it, as some of the ancients say, are effected all those things which we call magical operations, which have no apparent reason.<sup>11</sup>

And, in those books which Adam and his son Abel are said to have written, and in some book ascribed to Solomon and called *Sepher Raziel*,<sup>12</sup> it is found by what means the ancients thought all wisdom, as much of superiors as of inferiors, was contained in this name and infinite other divine names. Today, however, these books have been destroyed, because they were spurned and condemned by those who -- justly -- did not understand the language of the writings.

Likewise, the Greeks have diverse names for the one God, for example “Ischyros” because of power, “Kyrios” because of domination; and, properly, He is called “Theos.” Likewise, in Latin, “Deus” is derived from “Theos”; and, in Tartar, He is called “Birtengers,” that is, “the one god;” and, in German, “ein Got.”

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<sup>7</sup> *Glo. ord.* 6.1703.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* 4.725-26.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* 6.1698.

<sup>10</sup> cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1 q. 13 a. 9 & a. 11 q. 1.

<sup>11</sup> *Glo. ord.* 6.1702.

<sup>12</sup> *Liber Razielis*, Vat. Reg. lat. 1300, f. 137r-v. The origins of this work are discussed in the edition in the notes to p. 6 ll. 16-24.

that is, “the one good.” Thus, in the language of the Slavs, “Boeg”; and, in Turkish and Arabic,<sup>13</sup> “Olla Whachera,” that is, “the great, just god”; and in Aramaic<sup>14</sup> and Indic, “Esgi Abhir,” that is, “creator of all.”<sup>15</sup> Thus one God is assigned names thus and so according to diverse nations, although He is one in all and throughout all things.

This God of supreme vigor, however, having nothing imperfect, small or minute in His essence, abhors any necessity of ease. Otherwise, God would be supremely at ease; and so supreme felicity would be indolence and ease, which is impossible. And, since it is true that it is impossible to find ease in the divine essence, it follows that it exists as supreme activity.

In every supreme act, however, three attributes are found of necessity, since nothing occurs in the doer, but doable is distinguished from the doer; and a third thing arises from the doer and the doable, which is the done. There are three correlative persons in the divine essence, wherefore we call God triune. God, then, is deifying, begetting, justifying, loving, with other infinite perfections, Whom we call the Father. God is deifiable, begettable, justifiable, lovable etc.; and this we call the Son, proceeding from the Father. And, afterwards, we have the deification of the deifying and the deifiable, that is, of the Father and the Son, and the justification, begotten and the love of lover and lovable and we call this the Holy Spirit, proceeding from both.<sup>16</sup>

The human intellect learns firm and indubitable faith in this immense, ineffable and inconceivable divine Trinity by these aforesaid reasons; and it bolsters itself with the authority of those things which have been spoken by the divine Spirit.

In the Old Testament, then, according to the Hebrew truth, the sacrament of this most simple Trinity is manifested very often. At the beginning, then, Holy Writ says, *In the beginning God created* [Gen. 1:1]; and, in the last chapter of Joshua [24:19], *You will not be able to serve the Lord: for He is a holy God;* and, in Jeremiah [23:36],<sup>24</sup> *You have perverted the words of the living God, of the Lord of hosts our God;* and in the Psalm [49:1], *The God of gods, the Lord, hath spoken*, which is in Hebrew, “El Elohim Jehovah,” that is, because the works of the Trinity are undivided. Three persons, one God, created the universe etc.<sup>17</sup>

The Jews, however, wishing to deny the truth, say that, by the Trinity, which is expressed in their books, three properties of God ought to be understood, that is, divine wisdom, goodness and power, by which properties they say all things were created. And this argument Nicholas of Lyra destroyed in a certain book

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<sup>13</sup> Literally, *Sarracenia*.

<sup>14</sup> Literally, *caldea*.

<sup>15</sup> *Glo. ord.* 6.1703.

<sup>16</sup> This is the Latin view of the procession of the Holy Spirit.

<sup>17</sup> *Glo. ord.* 6.1698.

*Against the Jews*, showing by means of many authorities the Trinity in the Old Testament.<sup>18</sup> Even I, when disputing, have found wise Jews possible to lead to belief in the Trinity. But that the Son, in the divine Trinity, is incarnate, on which they are obdurate, they wish to hear neither reasons nor prophecies.

There are other holy documents of this undoubted, most holy Trinity, which I will pass over now for the sake of brevity.

Second part: On the nativity in God and the creation of man

Now we ascend to understanding the holy gospel, *In the beginning was the Word*.

This Word we call the Son in things divine. And, in Greek, it is said, *In archi henu tu logos*. Such a Word is understood not as sensible but as intellectual. When, then, in the essence of God there is, of necessity, God who understands or conceives of Himself, called God the Father, as well as His Word or His own begotten Son, begotten of the Father through eternity. And He was *in the beginning*, before all time, in that eternity or in that supreme beginning, that is, in God the Father, this most holy Word, proceeding from the Father, from His substance and nature, since Jehovah, God the Father, said to the Lord Jehovah, that is, God the Son, *sit thou at My right hand* etc. His is *the principality in the day of thy strength* etc. *From the womb*, that is, of God's own substance, *before the day star*, in the beginning of the created world,<sup>19</sup> *I begot Thee* [Ps. 109:1-3].<sup>20</sup> This the Aramaic truth has more clearly,<sup>21</sup> saying, *The speech of God begot the Word*. According to Gregory in the 23rd part of the *Moralia*,<sup>22</sup> “God, however, spoke only once, since He has no other word than the Only begotten. God spoke, then; and He has not repeated Himself. God, however, spoke the Word, because no time coincides with God, neither the past, nor the future.”

Lactantius Firmianus says,<sup>23</sup> “God comprehends the One proceeding from His mouth, a vocal spirit, whom He conceived, not in a womb but in His mind, by some unthinkable virtue and power of His mind in His image, which He energized with His own sense and wisdom.” Wherefore, he says about Ps. [44:2],<sup>24</sup> “*My heart hath uttered a good word: I speak my to the king*, witnessing, that is, no work of God to be known, except only to the Son, who is the Word of God, and Who must reign perpetually.” “Even better, the Greeks

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<sup>18</sup> *Glo. ord.* 6.1698-702.

<sup>19</sup> Reading *creati* for *creatura*.

<sup>20</sup> cf. *Glo. ord.* 3.1296-98.

<sup>21</sup> *Glo. ord.* 3.1296.

<sup>22</sup> PL 76.272.

<sup>23</sup> CSEL 19/1.297.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.* 298-99.

say 'logos', which we call 'word' or 'speech'; 'logos', then, signifies speech and reason, because He is the voice and wisdom of God."<sup>25</sup>

“Who could proclaim worthily that ineffable nativity, which was born from eternity and is born coeternal; what was begotten from the ages is begotten so that it is not subsequent to the begetter.”<sup>26</sup> “This word, then,” according to Basil,<sup>27</sup> “*was in the beginning* [Jn. 1:2] and is neither human nor angelic, but is the internal utterance of God.” This is the Son of God, as in distinction 5 of the first book of the *Sentences*;<sup>28</sup> and He is, together with the Father, one wisdom and substance. “As the Father, so the Son.”<sup>29</sup>

Oh wondrous nativity, where the begetter gives to the begotten His essence and nature, perfection, virtue, glory, infinity and omnipotence! The Son is “consubstantial with the Father,”<sup>30</sup> because three persons, one God. Whatever belongs to God belongs to all the persons equally. Although “the Father is other, the Son, other, the Spirit, other,”<sup>31</sup> the Father, nevertheless, is not of another essence; nor is the Father something else, the Son something else, the Spirit, something else, because there is one essence, coequal glory and eternal majesty of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

When, therefore, the Son is jointly in the Father by essence, therefore, it is said, according to Origen,<sup>32</sup> “*And the Word was with God*, because there was not from the beginning,” at which the Word was, any separation of the Word and God begetting the Word. Wherefore, nothing was less in the Son than in the Father, because God is “God from God, light from light.”<sup>33</sup>

The supreme Truth revealed this indescribable generation to some extent, if not with full light, at least, nevertheless, with some glimmer among those living in the shades of paganism, as many examples are written down in the book of Lactantius Firmianus in the chapter, On false wisdom.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid. 300.

<sup>26</sup> PL 76.272.

<sup>27</sup> *Glo. ord.* 5.1007.

<sup>28</sup> Petrus Lombardus, *Sententiae*, pp. 44-45, 50-51: I, d. 5.

<sup>29</sup> *Symbolum “Quicumque”*.

<sup>30</sup> *Symbolum Niceanum*.

<sup>31</sup> *Symbolum “Quicumque”*.

<sup>32</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Catena aurea* (Turin, 1938), 2:359.

<sup>33</sup> *Symbolum Niceanum*.

<sup>34</sup> CSEL 19/1.274-397.

A certain Hermes Trismegistes says,<sup>35</sup> “In that book which is called *Logos gelios*, that is, perfect speech, these words were used, 'kyros ke ton panton politis on theou kalei' etc., that is: the lord and maker of all, whom we seem to call god, acted as god” etc. And it follows, “Because he made the first, sole and one, he seems good and most full of all good. He never rejoiced or loved more than at his birth.”

Similarly,<sup>36</sup> “the Erithyrean Sibyl, at the beginning of her song, predicted the son of god, the leader and ruler of all, saying *panto profton ktistin* etc., that is, the nourisher and founder of all, who bestowed the sweet spirit upon all and made god the leader of all” etc. And another sibyl,<sup>37</sup> “This should be known: know your god, who is the son of god.”

“This ineffable son, Hermes calls the cause of this cause, the will to good, which is proclaimed God, whose name cannot be spoken by the mouth of man. Afterwards Hermes spoke to his son: This, then, oh son, is a certain secret speech of wisdom from the sole Lord of all, the good foreseeing all, to speak of whom is beyond man” etc.<sup>38</sup>

“Zeno calls the *logos* or the word of the disposer of nature and the artisan of the universe, whom he calls fate, the necessity of things and the soul of Jove, that is, by that custom by which men are accustomed to accept Jove for God. But words matter nothing when the opinion coincides with truth. It is then, the spirit of God, which he called the spirit of Jove. For Trismegistes, who found out nearly the entire truth, I know not how, often described the virtue and majesty of the word.” “And another Sibyl, “Doing all with the word” etc.<sup>39</sup>

Augustine says in book 7 of the *Confessions*<sup>40</sup> that he found among the beginning of the Platonists the beginning of our gospel, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God* etc. [John 1:1].

And it follows, *All things were made by Him* [Jn. 1:3]. All things, then, depend on the beginning. The uncreated will, omnipotent, one and equal, of infinite power, just as it wishes, perfected everything [Ps. 134:6]. But, because the speech or word of the willing and speaking Father is the Son, so by this Word everything was made. *For He spoke and they were made: He commanded and they were created* [Ps. 32:9]. *He said: Be light made. And light was made* [Gen. 1:3]. *By the word of the Lord the heavens were established* [Ps. 32:6]. Wherefore, in Psalm [49:1] is said, *The God of gods, the Lord hath spoken: and He*

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<sup>35</sup> CSEL 19/1.286-88.

<sup>36</sup> CSEL 19/1.290.

<sup>37</sup> CSEL 19/1.292-93.

<sup>38</sup> CSEL 19/1.300.

<sup>39</sup> CSEL 19/1.331.

<sup>40</sup> CSEL 33.154.

*hath called the earth.* The psalmist said this,<sup>41</sup> “*el Elohim, Jehovah, spoke, showing the work of the Trinity, Elohim with Jehovah showing the earth to have been created by God the Son.*” The unmeasurable supreme Good, wishing not only to generate internally from eternity, multiplied, then, creating in time and outside Itself Its good. But the best God could not express Himself eternally in the image of another, since He could not create all, not to any other end except to liken all to the highest, which is Himself. Wherefore, everything was *made by Him* in the image of divinity and to resemble God.

The way in which everything flows from God's own being, however, would be lengthy and impossible for me to relate. But, so that we may understand a little, let us take up the saying of the bishop of Lincoln in his book *On the first form*,<sup>42</sup> that is that, as far as the artifact flows from the mind of the artisan, so that, just as, by imagining, God, the supreme artisan had in mind from eternity everything which was, is and will be, and, according to His will, by omnipotence, brought into being the temporal without intermediary or extrinsic command. Omnipotence, then, requires the aid of no one. Rightly, an artisan, conceiving in his mind the form of a house or a chest, by his will, wishes to produce it in fact; but, since potential is not converted into fact within him by his unaided will (as in omnipotent God), he needs many means, like wood, an ax etc., to realize the preconceived form. Such means are not necessary to God. Every form, then flows from the form of God, every being from the divine Being, every good from the divine Good and every truth from the divine Truth. And such a flow we call creation.

And, because the one God is triune, three types of creature flow from God: spiritual, corporeal and mixed. The spiritual ones are the angels and intelligences; the corporeal are vegetative, sensate and elemental; the mixed nature, as if it proceeds from both, is man.

And, because the Trinity is in Unity, it follows that there is a trinity in spiritual nature, that is, three orders; and any order enfolds a trinity. There are nine choirs of angels. Thus the image of the Trinity in the celestial corporeal nature consists of the elemental, the sensate and the vegetative; and so, in a mixed nature. It is most beautiful, however, to contemplate the orders of beings and those monarchies by means of which the most-wise made *all the things that He had made* [Gen. 1:31]. And through these contemplations St. Dionysius ascended to the hierarchies.<sup>43</sup>

But, because the Trinity is in unity, each created thing bears in itself, in its being, the image of the Trinity. From this it follows that it has being, virtue and operation; from this, it is composed out of potential, object and act; from this, it is composed out of innate correlatives.<sup>44</sup> Thus, then, divine Goodness is from the Father, who causes good, the Son, who is good, and the Holy Spirit, who acts well. This overflowing goodness bears in itself this vestige of the Trinity, so that no created good can be without causing good,

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<sup>41</sup> *Glo. ord.* 6.1698-99.

<sup>42</sup> Robert Grosseteste, *De unica forma omnium*, ed. L. Baur, BPhMA 9 (1912): 109-11.

<sup>43</sup> Pg 3.120-24.

<sup>44</sup> *Symbolum* “*Quicumque*”.

being good and acting well. Thus any vestiges of love, being, truth and all other good qualities has flowed out of God.

Oh, if any contemplative should ascend here, what sweet speculations he would find! Truly, no infidel, no proud man, miser, lecher or anyone involved in other sordid sins can grasp this sweetness. Nor is anyone so hard that, if he enters upon this way of contemplation, he would not be satisfied. Someone says here: God created everything according to Himself, so that every creature should have its best end.<sup>45</sup> God, however, created man last, so that the fulfillment and perfection of creatures should be accomplished. The perfection of man, however, is in God. And thus every creature is ordered by man toward God.

Wherefore, the God of ineffable piety created man last and decked him with gifts, free will and reason, so that he should understand through reason his origin and his Maker, and should love Him through free will, so that he should raise up the good origins given him by God naturally and ordered toward God, and through his virtues multiply obedience and charity morally. God *put man in the midst of paradise* [Gen. 2:15]; He placed the most clean soul in a body most apt to earthly things, flexible and obedient. He gave him the power of all paradise, of the entire body, so that he could use all the corporal and spiritual senses. He taught that he should not eat from the tree placed in the midst of paradise [Gen. 2:16-17, 19], that is, lest he should abuse reason by free will and lose sight of his origins by pride in the earth, turning downward what was planted to grow up in obedience.

Afterward, then, through the envy of the devil, that first parent, that is Adam, seduced by vain hope, became blind; and thus, without the Word, “nothing” was made, that is, sin. Sin then has no existence, although it bears a semblance of the Trinity and of good. Immediately after sin, after losing sight of his origins, as an exile and a pilgrim, he was driven out of paradise [Gen. 3:23-24], since rebellion against the soul had arisen in the body. All derived from Adam by propagation contract and are contaminated, however, by this root of sin, because of the stain on human nature contracted by the first parents.

Oh the most perfidious envy of the dust, by which death entered the world [Wisd. 2:24]!<sup>46</sup> Oh, how great a sin, that would have cut off all Adam's posterity from their end, unless the Savior mercifully came to their aid!

Part 3: On the cause of the Incarnation, which is explicated by means of pious discord among the divine attributes.

Now, venerable brothers, the true mystery of God contained in this one passage, *Without Him was made nothing* [Jn. 1:3], reveals the cause why God was made man.

I never will reveal more briefly than here the cause of a certain pious discord antedating the saving decision about the Incarnation of the Word of God. Man was created and ordered toward health and the best end. Sin diverted him; justice condemned him to punishment. *Mercy and truth have met each other* [Ps. 84:11].

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<sup>45</sup> This sentence is in the margin in the manuscript at the Cusanus Hospital.

<sup>46</sup> This sentence is in the margin in the manuscript at the Cusanus Hospital.

And this pious war was waged before the most holy Trinity, which is called “Elohim,” that is, “the gods or judges,”<sup>47</sup> between God and man. The divinity was accuser; man, the accused; the crime, treason; God's lawyers, truth and justice; man's, peace and mercy [Ps. 84:12].

Truth cited against man the magnitude of the crime, saying most wicked man had blasphemed the honorable estate and divinity of divine majesty, because he thought God a liar and the devil truthful. God, the Truth, said, *In what day soever thou shalt eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt die the death* [Gen. 2:17]. The devil, the liar, whispered, *You shall not die the death* [Gen. 4]. Adam belittled the One who affirmed the truth, and he believed the one who lied. He believed more the devil, who promised, in a lie, *God doth know that in what day you shall eat of the tree, you shall be like Him* [Gen. 3:5].

“Oh God, have you not hated the worker of iniquity? And so you condemn all who spoke lies [Ps. 5:7]! And these are outside your kingdom, the dogs, the poisoners, the shameless, the killers, those who serve idols, and all who love and live lies [Rev. 22:15]. And, because Adam committed the crime of treason, this sentence was imposed on his posterity, because you are a God *jealous, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children* [Exod. 20:5].

Likewise, truth next cited the sentence of God, saying, “Lord, you said, *God is not a man, that He should lie, nor as the son of man, that He should be changed* [Num. 23:19].<sup>76</sup> Lord, You said, *In what day soever* etc. Man became a liar. He shall die eternally.”

Mercy, on the contrary, defending man, striving to lessen sin by the magnificence of good, said, “It does not befit supreme Good to lose man. God, You created man for Yourself; and this, Your work, God, would be vain, empty and imperfect. Nor would You, God, achieve the end which You assigned him out of your goodness. The citation of truth pertained to the angels, who, with no one impelling them, sinned and fell. Man, however, deceived by the argument and impelled by the cleverness of Satan, deluded, should have a remedy. *O Lord, wilt Thou be angry forever* [Ps. 78:5]? *Remember, I beseech You, what my substance is: for hast thou made all the children of men in vain?* [Ps. 88:48].

“Truth said, Lord, that you, than whom nothing is more true, cannot be a liar. Remember, therefore, that you should fulfill *The oath, which you swore to Abraham* [Lk. 1:73], that is, *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed* [Gen. 22:18]. *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, because he hath visited and wrought the redemption of his people* [Lk. 1:68]. You will keep your promise, Lord; and David will not be frustrated [Ps. 131:11]. You will not profane your covenant, and the words which proceed from Your lips You will not make void. You said, Lord, *If, however, his children forsake My law etc., I will visit their iniquities with a rod...But My mercy I will not take away from him: nor will I suffer My truth to fail.* And, therefore, *I will keep My mercy for him* [Ps. 88:35, 31, 33-34, 29].

“This your decree, Lord, which is out of piety, shall remain unwavering. Your promise, God, by which you have predestined them to be made conformable to the image of your Son, shall stand [Rom. 8:29]. You have made a covenant with your elect, *I have sworn to David My servant...I will build up a throne for him unto generation and generation* etc., and *I will build up* [Ps. 88:4-5]. Lord, you spoke through Jeremiah,

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<sup>47</sup> Petrus Lombardus, *Sententiae*, pp. 25-26: I, D. 1 c. 4.

in the 18th chapter [7-8], *I will suddenly speak against a nation, and against a kingdom, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy it. If that nation against which I have spoken, shall repent of their evil, I also will repent of the evil that I thought to do to them.* The human race has repented. *How long wilt Thou forget [Ps. 12:1]?*

Justice said, arguing his sin against man, how man's sin outraged truth, rebelled against mercy, inflicted violence on peace, held justice in contempt. Truth then argued that man should be saved, predestined by mercy, so that he should be made like to the image of the Son of God [Rom. 8:29]. Justice offered merit by grace in the present; peace, the prize of glory in the future.<sup>48</sup>

Justice said, "You believed a lie, Adam! See, not only does man die; but he is poured out like water. He should not even receive mercy without doing penance, Lord. But Adam blasphemed, instead of doing penance; he undertook violence instead of confession. Then, when God walked in the breeze after mid-day, He called Adam to penance, saying, *Who hath told thee that thou wast naked, but that thou hast eaten* etc. *Adam said: The woman Thou gavest me to be my companion, gave me of the tree, and I did eat* [Gen. 3:8, 10-12], as if he say, 'The guilt should be imputed to You, Who gave me a wife' etc. Wherefore, the just Lord *hath loved justice* etc. [Ps. 10:8], *Thou hast commanded* etc. [Ps. 118:138]. Therefore, Lord, judge him according to the multitude of his impiety; and expel him, since he has offended You, Lord [Ps. 5:11]."

Piety, however, seeing no arguments could be presented against truth and justice, resorted to pleas. For the reconciliation of man she cited the double honor of godhead, piety and honesty. Pleading, she cited the honor of piety, saying, "*For Thy own sake, incline, O God, Thy ear, and hear: open Thy eyes, and see our desolation* [Dan. 9:17-18]. Show, Lord, that you have not forgotten to show mercy, lest they should say, that God is cruel and merciless. It would detract from the honor of Your piety, for Your own sake, Lord, Whose property it is to have mercy and always to spare."<sup>49</sup>

Likewise, she cited the piety of honor, saying, "You swore to grant the land of the promise, that is, glory, to our fathers [Jer. 32:22]. Grant this, therefore; otherwise, the demons and the Egyptians will detract from Your power. And they say this in the 14th chapter of Numbers [13, 16], where Moses prayed, 'I beg You, lest the Egyptians dare to say that He could not bring them into the land of the promise; consequently, He killed them in the desert' etc. Therefore, let there be peace in your strength, Lord, to the honor of your piety [Ps. 121:7]."<sup>50</sup>

After these arguments on either side had been heard, *there was silence in heaven, as it were for half an hour* [Rev. 8:1], because one hour is the sum of all time. Half an hour is the time before the Incarnation; the other half, the time after it. In the 18th chapter of Wisdom [14], *While all things were in quiet silence, and the night was in the midst of her course* etc., that is, like half an hour from the sin of man to Christ, in which

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<sup>48</sup> *Missale Romanum*, Orationes diversae n. 2, A cunctis.

<sup>49</sup> *Missale Romanum*, Oratio post litanias omnium sanctorum.

<sup>50</sup> *Glo. ord.* 4.791.

silence was held, the agreement of truth and mercy, peace and justice [Ps. 84:11-12], man and God was made.

Then it was decided, in the secret place of divine counsel, how the quarrel between God and man could be made up. It was decided between *those who give testimony in heaven, the Father, the word and the Holy Ghost* [1 Jn. 5:7], and planned to which of Them should be committed the judgment between mercy and truth, justice and peace, God and man.

The Father was suspect, because *Thou art mighty, O Lord, and Thy truth is round about Thee* [Ps. 88:9]; even justice is of His household, because He is just and has loved justice [Ps. 10:8].<sup>107</sup> The Holy Spirit also was suspect, because He inclined to the party of mercy and peace; this was known, then, because *the spirit of wisdom is sweet and benevolent* [Wisd. 1:6].

By consent of the parties, it was proclaimed, God, *Give to the king Thy judgment...and to the king's son Thy justice* [Ps. 71:2]! And it was decided that *the Father of mercies* [2 Cor. 1:3] should give all judgment to the Son [Jn. 5:22], because he could not be suspect, because, although He is God, nevertheless, *His eyes look upon the poor man* [Ps. 10:5]. *He shall reprove with equity for the meek of the earth* [Is. 11:4]. And this is the Son of God, whom John saw in Revelation, sitting upon a seat of judgment, having a rainbow of reconciliation around it [Rev. 4:3], because, in the 9th chapter of Genesis [13], *I will set My bow in the clouds of heaven, and it shall be the sign of a covenant between Me and you.*

After the merits of the case had been discussed, a definitive sentence was promulgated, so that, according to the argument of piety, man would be saved, and so that the sentence of the Creator should be inviolate, *one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not* [Jn. 11:50]. One man, and no other, would die, because it was said *In what day* etc. [Gen. 2:17].

But the death of which man could satisfy this sentence? *Among them that are born of women* [Mt. 11:11], then, no one was found worthy. Because an angel cannot redeem, but only a man, how, therefore, entrapped in misery, corrupted by guilt, save? To redeem is to recover lost innocence and glory for a just an fitting price. If, therefore, neither an angel or a man [Ps. 48:8], or any inferior creature, is worthy, God alone is worthy. And so, it was necessary that God should become man, God because of the arguments of piety, man because of the sentence of the Creator. Thus, *Mercy and truth have met each other* [Ps. 84:11], since they met in one grace of agreement, so that man should be liberated by mercy and should satisfy the sentence of the Creator, because of justice.

Justice, however, wished that the one who had sinned should give satisfaction and should do so in so far he had sinned. Man had wished to be God. So he sinned as much as if he were God. Therefore, a God-Man should give satisfaction.<sup>51</sup> And, because man wished to be as wise as God, and the Son is the wisdom of the Father, therefore, it was fitting that not the Father, nor the Holy Spirit, but the Son of the Father should give satisfaction. And so the Son of God, because of justice, should become a son of man because of peace.

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<sup>51</sup> cf. Anselm, *Cur Deus homo*, I c. 5 (p. 52) & II c. 6 (p. 101).

Ascend here to contemplating the goodness of this divine judge, who, so that He should grant peace, imposed such a sentence, since it was necessary that He should empty Himself and take on the form of a slave [Phil. 2:7]. Oh the infinite piety of the Father, because *He spared not even His own Son* etc. [Rom. 8:32].

Here the son of the supreme king, when the execution of His sentence in the midst of the world, at the mid hour of time, after night had passed, pleased His wisdom, caused His advent to be announced and predicted to every nation, since the savior of the world will come [Is. 62:11; Zach. 9:9; Jn. 4:42; 1 Jn. 4:14], the giver of life, the regenerator and the illuminator. But *The darkness did not comprehend it* [Jn. 1:5]. They awaited Him, sitting *in darkness and in the shadow of death* [Ps. 106:10], crying, “Lord, break the heavens [Is. 64:1]! “Come, Lord; and do not delay! Break the bonds of the people!”<sup>52</sup> “Come, liberate us, Lord, God of virtue!”<sup>53</sup> “Remember your good will! Visit us with your salvation!”<sup>54</sup>

Holy men and prophets are found giving testimony of His advent: some, of the place, Bethlehem; others, of His wondrous conception, *Behold a virgin shall be with child* etc. [Is. 7:14]; others, of His glorious nativity, *A child is born to us, and a son is given to us* etc. [Is. 9:6]; others, of the precise time, *Seventy weeks are shortened* by the Lord upon His people etc. [Dan. 9:24].

In Psalm [84:12], *Truth is sprung out of the earth*, that is, God, who is Truth, took on a terrestrial body, so that He should reveal the way of truth to earthly men.<sup>55</sup> Let the heavens rejoice [Ps. 95:11]. Let the clouds drop justice as dew; let the earth be opened and bud forth a savior [Is. 45:8]. And Daniel, See the heavens in the clouds; and the son of man coming etc. [Dan. 7:13].

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<sup>52</sup> *Breviarium Romanum*, Ordinarium tempus adventus, Vers. ad nonam.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, Vers. ad tertiam.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, Vers. ad sextam.

<sup>55</sup> *Glo. ord.* 3.1097.

### Sermon 3 “Do this”<sup>56</sup>

DRAFT TRANSLATION BY THOMAS IZBICKI

*Do this for a commemoration of Me* [Lk. 22:19]. In the Clementines, c. *Si dominum in sanctis suis* [Clem. 3.16.un].

Honorable men! Most dear brothers in Christ! Now the time of devotion impends, in which, even if we fail at another time, anyone should return to the heart [Is. 46:8] and think of his salvation with a heart inflamed by charity in diligent meditation.

Plea: I, however, most simply, with all despised pretense of eloquence, although most inept in science and life, will strive to incite you to the ways of salutary meditation with despised arguments, as far as I can, so that, in my meditation, which I have decided to express in words, the fire of some spiritual affection may inflame you; and so the soul may glow vitally with the joy of divine love at this most sacred time of the Passion. For that reason, most dear ones, I have employed the doctrine of Urban <III>, *De reliquiis et veneratione sanctorum*, c. *Si Dominum* [Clem. 3.16.un], who used this text, *Do this for a commemoration of Me*, in the statement of his intent of praising the most holy sacrament.<sup>57</sup>

Epilogue about three things: We ecclesiastics ought to meditate with supreme effort about three things, especially in this time, that is about the memory of the most bitter Passion of the Savior, about the health-giving sacrament of the Eucharist, given and giving to us most piously this day as a testament, and, third, about the confection of the same sacrament with its four causes, efficient, material, formal and final. All these things are shown in the aforesaid words of Christ the Savior.

Cause of the theme: And because He loved them *He loved [them] to the end* [Jn. 13:1], and it is manifest, according to the doctors, that the supreme priesthood, as far as the confection of this most holy sacrament, was given to the apostles through these words, out of love, on the night of the supreme meal,<sup>58</sup> at the supreme banquet of love. He did this, than which He could do or give no more for the satisfaction of our souls. Therefore, I rightly direct this theme to you priests, who are the successors of the apostles in this consecrating power.

Subsidiary prayer: Truly, although nothing is from us, as far as it is from us [2 Cor. 3:5], since God *made us, and not we ourselves* [Ps. 99:3], and *all our power...by the spirit of His mouth* [Ps. 32:6], nevertheless, in this so excellent, divine, supreme spiritual material the more <help> we must ask from the Lord about that through which we can do the last. With a sincere heart, the virgin mother of the Word Incarnate, Mary, the advocate and mover of our prayers, must be placated with devout prayer, so that, when I open my mouth,

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<sup>56</sup> Delivered on Holy Thursday, March 29, 1431, somewhere in the diocese of Trier.

<sup>57</sup> Urban’s bull establishing the date for the feast of Corpus Christi was quoted in a decree of the Council of Vienne.

<sup>58</sup> *Breviarium Romanum*, In festo Corporis Christi, Hymn. ad Vesp. “Pange lingua”.

it may be filled with the spirit of Wisdom, so that your hearts may be inflamed obediently by hearing with the ear.

Part 1: Something is said as a preface concerning the creation and fall of man, and concerning the end of the Incarnation of the Son of God.

Concerning the Trinity: The Lord God of infinite goodness, when, from eternity, in His essence, far from leisure and torpor, bestowed good on the one capable of receiving good, loved the lovable and understood the intelligible, had bestowing good, loving and understanding in the unity of <His> essence. This most simple Trinity is most united unity. It is easy for anyone living to believe this, since, if God is good, without leisure in His essence, doing good here, Whom we call the Father; and there is in the same essence the relative term, that is the Good, capable of receiving good, Whom we call the Son; and the bestowing of good and loving of both, which we call the Holy Spirit.<sup>59</sup>

It pleased His overflowing goodness to bestow and create outside His essence; and so He created a triple nature, entirely spiritual, entirely corporeal and mixed. The entirely spiritual, so that I may pass over it briefly, partly, of its own freedom of choice, stood in humble and charitable subjection; partly it fell through its pride, rebellion and blasphemy. He created man, however, although mixed out of body and spirit, in the image and likeness [Gen. 1:26] of His most holy Trinity and essence. He provided for him Actually, with the pleasantness of Paradise, and He filled him inwardly most perfectly with full knowledge of things. He gave him intellect, will and memory like the angels; bodily senses like the brute beasts. And, since man flowed forth here from the supreme Good as <his> beginning, so He armed him for the supreme end, *Alpha and Omega* [Rev. 1:8], with reason, through which he could subject the senses with the will through which he might enter upon loving in God, with memory through which he might stand firm stably. He gave the force of appetite and desire by which he might rise through delight and affection to charity. He gave irascible force through which he might repel indignantly with hope and daring those things contrary to God and His beloved.<sup>60</sup>

*And God saw all the things that He had made, and they were very good* [Gen. 1:31], the best things from the Best,<sup>61</sup> because they were good, great, true, by the goodness of God, made out of nothing in the likeness of their principle. Sorrow, pain etc. are only in man conditionally, potentially, but are put into action by sin. There was one unity, one concord among all these forces. The senses obey will and reason. This very concord is called by the saints the original justice which God bestowed on Adam.<sup>62</sup>

The case of man: Those first parents, although of little weight, perverting the created order tending toward God, separating themselves from God by prevaricating about a naturally imperial precept, transgressors of

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<sup>59</sup> cf. Raymundus Lullus, *Ars mystica theologiae et philosophiae*, in *Raymundi Lulli opera latina*, op. 154, p. 290.

<sup>60</sup> cf. Gerardus Groete, *De spiritualibus ascensionibus*, c. 2.

<sup>61</sup> cf. Ps. Dionysius, *De divinis nominibus*, PG 3.716.

<sup>62</sup> cf. Groete, *De spiritualibus ascensionibus*, c. 3.

a most just mandate, fell by eating the apple under the penalty tied to the mandate; note *in what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death* [Gen. 2:17] -- not just they but the entire human race, which was concealed in them by some productive or seminal principle. And, as Bernard<sup>63</sup> says, "We fell together into the mire and over the stumbling stone; wherefore, we too were polluted, damaged and broken by the crime, wounded gravely" in all forces and powers well-disposed in the soul. Having lost original justice by this case and the just judgment of God, those forces and affections of the soul, fallen from their <original> state, were diminished and disordered, almost destroyed; but they bear themselves in a contrary way.

Do we need to argue today that sensuality, the desirous and irascible force, is contrary to the will? And, although the will cannot be contrary to reason, nevertheless, frequently it acts against reason. All these forces are prone to evil [Gen. 8:21], prone to illicit desiring. Reason has been made blind and erring; often it takes false for true, involves itself in the curious and useless. The carnal will more often loves carnal than spiritual things. The desirous force is prone to concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes and carnal pleasures; the irascible, once disordered, is prone to pride of life and worldly glory.<sup>64</sup> Hope does not hope in God, but in riches and in one's own merits. We are saddened by loss of riches, by the world's despite. We are angry with a brother.

See how all mankind has fallen into discord away from the way of rectitude through the loss of original justice! Man drew from this disproportion of powers and aversion, through bad actions, a certain dampness and viscosity in the desires and powers of the soul, which remains bound to lower things by an almost glutinous lubriciousness; and, like the prodigal son, he dwelt in a far region, using up all his substance in fornication [Lk. 15:13-15]. Dwelling very far from God, he made himself a keeper of pigs, serving the devil, keeping his precepts. And so, man came to the region of dissimulation very far from God, nor could he return.<sup>65</sup>

The cause of the Incarnation: God, seeing that man could not come to the end of salvation because he resists justice, and when, because of the sentence, Adam and Eve, with their posterity, were not strong enough to raise themselves from eternal death -- nothing bestows life on itself; but, just as every creature is from God, and so lives from God, created man would not be restored to life if not promoted to the semblance of the angels, in whom there is no sin. This could not be done without entire satisfaction preceding, which has to be, so that something is offered to God that is not due <to Him> and surpasses all that is not God. To sin is to dishonor God, which man ought not to do, even if all which is not God should perish. Certainly reason and immutable truth require that whoever sins should return to God, because honor denied something greater than that, since they should not have dishonored Him. Human nature alone does

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<sup>63</sup> cf. Bernardus Claraevallensis, *Sermo In coena Domini*, in *Opera*, ed. J. Leclercq and H. M. Rochais (Roma, 1957-), vol. 5, p. 69.

<sup>64</sup> cf. Bernardus Claraevallensis, *De diversis*, Sermo 45, PL 183.667, 669, citing 1 Jn. 2:16.

<sup>65</sup> cf. Augustinus, *Confessiones*, VII, c. 10, CSEL 33.157.

not have this, nor could it reach the end and the kingdom without satisfaction.<sup>66</sup> Here the goodness and love of God, which is of such efficacy that it unites the lover to the beloved, in the midst of time, according to some in the midst of the world, *when all things were in quiet silence* [Wis. 18:14], to the middle creature, that is man, so that thus the common unit of all creatures should come to be, He made God descend “for our salvation”,<sup>67</sup> so that every creature should be exalted by the union of God and man and come to his end. Here Christ Jesus, the Word Incarnate, took upon Himself the declared sentence of death, so that He could alienate us from death “by dying our death.”<sup>68</sup>

Cause of immolation: And, because the offense was infinite, the stain infinite, the crime of treason committed against God infinite, it was necessary, according to the precept of Leviticus 9[:7], that here Christ, the supreme pontiff, should go up to the altar and offer “a pure offering”<sup>69</sup> and one pleasing, worthy, so that he should make satisfaction with such an infinite act. And only one “pure offering” could be found, that is Christ Jesus. Wherefore, He offered Himself for us, because He wished to [Heb. 9:14; Is. 53:7]. Augustine wants to say in *De Trinitate* c. 12.<sup>70</sup> “He is the one true mediator, reconciling us to God by the sacrifice of peace. So that He might remain one with Him to whom He was offered,” that is the Father, “He made Himself one with those for whom He made offering; He is the same one who made the offering.”

And He left a memorial of this His sacrifice in this sacrament, so that, in so far as He took away original sin etc. So exceptional Love left after Himself priests and instituted this sacrament, so that they could offer the same body of Christ and the same sacrifice for the actual sins of the people, as is touched upon below. Thus, He wished to leave us this sacrifice which He offered on the altar of the cross. And, once Christ Himself, the priest, and the sacrifice which He offered are one here, so priests act as one in the offering of this sacrifice, since, in the sacrifice, He left the sacrament in the form of food, because there is no greater union than that of food and fed. Augustine heard,<sup>71</sup> “I am the food of the grown etc. Nor will you change Me into you, just like the food of your flesh; but I will change you into Me.” And, in this mode, the priests are *gods* through this change and *sons of the Most High* [Ps. 81:6]. These things will be touched upon further below in another part.

Part 2: The theme of the sermon is expounded.

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<sup>66</sup> cf. Anselmus Cantuariensis, *Cur Deus homo*, I, c. 11, in *Opera*, ed. F. S. Schmitt (Edinburgh, 1946-61), vol. 2, pp. 68-69, 86-89.

<sup>67</sup> *Symbolum Nicaeanum*.

<sup>68</sup> *Missale Romanum*, Praefatio temporis paschalis.

<sup>69</sup> *Missale Romanum*, Canon missae.

<sup>70</sup> *De Trinitate*, IV, c. 14, PL 42.901.

<sup>71</sup> cf. Augustinus, *Confessiones*, VII, c. 10, CSEL 33.157.

a) Concerning the memory of the Passion.

Now let us elevate the mind here to contemplating the mystery of the Passion and of sacrifice. We have heard, well beloved, since our first parents were *corrupt, and...abominable* in their iniquities, and, therefore, there was no one who did good up to this our Lord Jesus Christ [Rom. 3:12]. In Him, because deity exalted humanity to the highest grade through the hypostatic union, and, as a consequence, every creature is united by man to God; and the created world came to its end through the one Son of God become incarnate, the Word made flesh. Humanity united to deity ought to weigh out the greatest honor to God. And, on account of God, Christ voluntarily offered himself with greatest humility on the altar of the cross.

Contemplate here the Christian soul, the soul resuscitated from leaden death, the soul redeemed from wretched servitude by the blood of God. Arouse your mind; remember your resuscitation, redemption and liberation. Accept teaching and the way of honoring God. Whoever takes up his cross [Matt. 16:24], following the way of Christ, is united as if to Christ. Unless one ascends through this mediator, he will not come to his end. *Whosoever...shall humble himself shall be exalted* [Matt. 23:12]; and whoever strives to hold onto his life will lose it [Jn. 12:25]. In this life one does not come to this end except through perfect charity in which the one Christ lives and dies [Phil. 1:21]. To adhere to Him and to put all hope in Him is good [Ps. 7:28]. He is the life of the living, the hope of the dying, the health of all hoping in Him. Do not forget that Christ Himself died that you might have a heritage in the eternal fatherland, which is seeing Christ, God and man, without enigma, *face to face*.

Oh how great was this love, which made God descend and man ascend in unity of substance! Oh how great this love of God and man, so that it could take away the sorrows of every mundane tribulation apart from every fault; and then, raised up from Earth, with hands extended on the cross, so that all things are drawn [Jn. 12:32], the priest, the king of kings, the true shepherd of souls, offered His soul and life for the sheep! Oh Lord, *How sweet are Thy words to my palate! more than honey to my mouth* [Ps. 118:103]. You say, *If any man thirst for grace and love* [Jn. 7:37], if he wishes to enter through the gate, if he wishes to have anything, let him ask and receive freely [Matt. 7:8; Lk. 11:10; Jn. 15:7]. I am the unfailing fountain. *I am the door* [Jn. 10:9]. *I am the way, and the truth, and the life* [Jn. 14:6].” Act so that my soul may taste the sweetness of Your most bitter Passion!

Lord, are you not the light of lights? In Your light we will see so great a light of glory [Ps. 35:10]. How have You been obscured, Sun of Justice [Mal. 4:2], shining like gold, because of me. Lord, You who are the life of the living, how has the finest color been changed [Lam. 4:1], made *a worm, and no man, and the outcast of the people* [Ps. 21:7]. Lord, are you not the true Samaritan [Lk. 10:33-34], who cleanses our wounds? And only the one You cleanse if healthy. How, then, have You been made despised and infirm, that *from the soul of the foot unto the top of the head, there is no soundness therein* [Is. 1:6].

Oh sweetness and piety, when You could not take hold of the human intellect, You opened Your side to me, so that I might enter You! I know, Lord, that nowhere except there, where flowed blood and water [Jn. 19:43], the medicines, antidotes and sacraments of human salvation, is safe. Oh You Who are the spotless

Lamb,<sup>72</sup> led as a victim, give me an inflamed desire to go up to the altar of the cross and to wash my robe in the blood of the Lamb [Rev. 7:14]. Lord, *my soul melted* [Cant. 5:6], when I remember what You, the beloved, said on the cross, “The mystery of the Passion *is consummated* [Jn. 19:30].” *I languish with love* [Cant. 5:8]. My soul begins to thirst for you [Ps. 41:3] in so many ways etc.

Oh foundation of all humility, I see that life is *not in rioting and drunkenness* [Rom. 13:13] but in the cross and in putting on the Crucified [Rom. 13:14]. Whatever is sought elsewhere is not found there. You did not take on an angelic nature, which lacks a body, so that You might lend aid to all creatures through the humanity assumed <by You>.<sup>73</sup> Your humanity is the stairway by which a creature climbs to God.<sup>74</sup> There is no proportion between the finite and the infinite,<sup>75</sup> but there is a symbolic concordance between Your humanity and creatures. We ascend to You, therefore, through Your love. We are transformed into You and thus by You. As Your humanity is united to God, so we are united. And in You, our head, by our ascent through charity and Your descent we are united by Your infinite piety and grace. Thus Paul says to the Hebrews that all things are because of You and in You [Heb. 2:10], nothing from us as far as from us, because from nothing; but all things are through You [2 Co. 3:5]. To You, God, was given *power...in heaven and in earth* [Matt. 28:18], because God, man and victor over death. Wherefore, as far as we have fallen through Adam's fault, You, most powerful, would restore us. So through Your death *we have passed...to life* [1 Jn. 3:14]. So the priest transubstantiates bread into Your body on the altar.

Who could enumerate the magnitude of the pain? The more robust Your noble and sensible body the more it could suffer extrinsically; intrinsically, spiritually, by suffering together with human nature generally, with your mother, with the saints, who suffered with you, with all human pains of all future men. Because You knew and because You loved all equally, You had all pains in Yourself. And, just so You wished to die by such a painful death, having as much of sorrow as the death of every man past and future.<sup>76</sup>

Ascend here to many pains which <He had> from knowledge of future things, from what He knew, that many would be damned notwithstanding His Passion, and that many offenses even of Christians, heresies, sects etc., wars, tribulations etc. *Who will give water to my head, and a fountain of tears to my eyes?* [Jer. 9:1], so that he may suffer with You, Christ, Who did so with me etc.

b) Concerning the institution of the sacrament of the Eucharist.

*Do this* etc.

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<sup>72</sup> cf. *Breviarium Romanum*, In coena Domini, Resp. post lect. VII Matut.

<sup>73</sup> cf. Bonaventura, *In sent.*, III, d. 2, a. 1, q. 2 (3.40).

<sup>74</sup> cf. Innocentius III, *De sanctis*, Sermo 14, PL 217.522.

<sup>75</sup> cf. Aristoteles, *De caelo*, 1,52.

<sup>76</sup> cf. Bonaventura, *In Sent.*, III, d. 16, a. 1 q. 2 (3.348-49).

In the institution of this sacrament of the Eucharist, which is “the sacrament of good grace”,<sup>77</sup> of divine love and ours, in which God displayed His maximum love for us and has inflamed our feeling of love toward Him especially, Christ said, *Do this* etc.

God gave to the Word Incarnate, our restorative beginning, strength and wisdom sufficient; and, according to this, “He gave us the sacraments. Therefore, in bestowing the medicines for illnesses and the charisms of graces, He not only instituted the sacrament which can beget us in the being of grace, baptism, and the one which augments the begotten, confirmation, but even that which nourishes those begotten and augmented, the sacrament of the Eucharist. Accordingly, all these sacraments were given to all who came to the faith. Since, however, our nourishment, as far as gratuitous being, is attended in any one of the faithful by the conservation of devotion for God, of love of neighbor, of love between them, devotion is shown to God by the offering of a sacrifice; love of neighbor, by communion in one sacrament; love between them, by the consumption of the victim. Here Christ, our restored beginning, gave this sacrament as a sign of offering, a sacrament of communion and the viaticum of refectio.

“And, because the most-wise restorative beginning, therefore, arranged to display the sacrifice, sacrament and viaticum, according to what would befit the time of revealed grace, the condition of the way and our capacity.

“And, because the time of revealed grace requires now a pure and full oblation, and none is such except that which was offered on the cross, that is the body and blood of Christ, therefore, it is necessary in this sacrament not just to signify but truly to contain the body of Christ as the offering due at this time. Similarly, the sacrament in the time of grace should not just signify communion and love, but should inflame to mutual charity, and especially to unite the members to the unity of the head, by Whom, by the force of diffuse, uniting and transforming love, He infuses in us mutual love. Here, in this sacrament, is contained the one body of Christ and immaculate flesh, so that, diffusing Himself to us, uniting us together and transforming us into Him by the most ardent charity, through which He offered Himself for us and gave Himself to us; and He will exist with us even to the end of the world.”<sup>78</sup>

c) Concerning the confection of the sacrament of the Eucharist and its four causes.

“Concerning this sacrament”, as a devout doctor says,<sup>79</sup> “these things must be said, that in this sacrament the true body and true blood of Christ are not just signified; but truly they even are contained under the two species, that is bread and wine, although as one sacrament, not two. This, however, is after consecration by a priest, which is done in the repetition of the vocal form instituted by the Lord over the bread, that is *This is My body* [1 Cor. 11:24], and over the wine, *This chalice is* etc. [1 Cor. 11:25]. These words having been pronounced by the priest with the intention of confecting, both elements are transubstantiated, as far as substance, into the body and blood of Christ Jesus, with the sensible species remaining, in each of which

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<sup>77</sup> Petrus Lombardus, *Sent.* IV, d. 8 (p. 787).

<sup>78</sup> Bonaventura, *Breviloquium*, VI, c. 9 (5.274).

<sup>79</sup> loc. cit. (5.273-74).

the whole Christ is contained totally, not in a circumscribed manner but sacramentally. In this He is given to us as food, whoever receives which worthily, eating not just sacramentally but even spiritually, by faith and charity, is incorporated more closely into the mystical body of Christ; and he is fed and purified in himself. Whoever approaches unworthily, not recognizing the body of Christ, eats and drinks a judgment on himself.”

Therefore, however, in the species of bread and wine, “because it does not befit the condition of life to see Christ openly because of the veil of enigma and the merit of faith, nor does it befit the flesh of Christ to endure teeth, because cruelty and the immortality of His body” after the Resurrection, “therefore, it was necessary that the body of Christ be handed over veiled with most holy symbols and fitting and expressive similitudes. And nothing” is more congruous “for signifying the unity of the body of Christ” than wheaten bread from many “most clean grains” and wine from grapes and “grape seeds. Therefore, He ought to be exhibited under these species more than others.”<sup>80</sup>

Wherefore, according to Saint Cyprian in some letter,<sup>81</sup> Christ is “the grain of wheat”, which, “cast upon the earth, yielded much fruit.” Bread, however, is not made out of many grains alone but out of flour and water. Water, however, signifies the people, as John says in the Apocalypse [19:6], *many waters*, many people. Here the union of the true grain and water in the unity of wheaten bread is the material of the sacrament.<sup>82</sup> For this reason water also is added to the wine in the chalice, because Christ, *the true vine* [Jn. 15:1], wishes us to be united by this sacrament. Here the wisdom of God took bread and mixed wine Prov. 9:12].<sup>83</sup>

This feeling is vital, however, because “the word of life is the nourishing of the soul. Thus spiritual nourishment in the flesh is the Word Incarnate, that is the flesh of the Word, which is the common and healing food, which, although it is one, nevertheless, heals all by itself. Because, therefore, there is no other spiritual food to give common healing than the true body of Christ, therefore, truly it is necessary for Him to be in this sacrament, offering this perfection of sacrifice, of the unitive sacrament and nourishing viaticum, which should be from the time of the New Testament and revealed grace and the truth of Christ.”<sup>84</sup>

And “because the” true “body of Christ cannot be divided into parts, therefore, where the body is, both the soul and God are one, most simple sacrament; and thus the whole body is under the whole species just as if under some part of it, whether it is whole or divided. And through this it is not circumscribed there, so that, occupying a place, as if having a site, so that perceivable by some corporeal human sense, but bearing every sense, so that faith has a place and merit. And, according to this, so that it is not deprived, the accidents have every operation which they had before, although they are without a subject, since they have

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<sup>80</sup> loc. cit. (5.274).

<sup>81</sup> cf. Cyprianus, Ep. 63, cc. 13 & 12, CSEL 3/2.711-12, 711; cf. CIC 1.1314-15: D. 2 c. 2.

<sup>82</sup> cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* III q. 74 a. 1.

<sup>83</sup> cf. *Breviarium Romanum*, In festo Corporis Christi, Ant. ad Laudes.

<sup>84</sup> cf. Bonaventura, *Breviloquium*, III, c. 9 (5.274).

within themselves the body of Christ; this means that they endure in their natural properties and are worthy of being eaten.”<sup>85</sup>

And so four things are necessary for this sacrament: that the consecrator be a priest; that there be fitting material, that is bread and wine; third, the intention of consecrating is required; fourth, the form of the words. A special or general intention always is required; attention is paid - the consecrator sins if it is absent from carelessness or negligence, <but it is> not always <required>. (Likewise, if <he fails> because of illness.) Also, not only the intention of consecrating but even that of the Institutor, wherefore, the priest does not transubstantiate all the loaves in the marketplace by uttering the words with the intention <of consecrating>. Although he could consecrate so many hosts that they would suffice for the whole world, nevertheless, when the intention of the Institutor is treated with mockery or folly, he could not do thus. In the form of the words, the word *enim* should not be omitted, because it comes from the due form, although it is not necessary.<sup>86</sup>

Thus, the necessary materials is wheaten bread and wine. The wheaten bread ought not to be leavened; and the wine should be mixed with water, because the Institutor used them. Christ was without the leaven of sin; and water, because it signifies the Church, is joined with wine, that is Christ, by charity. Nevertheless, the water ought to be overcome by the wine; otherwise, the consecration is impeded, because, when we are converted to Christ, we are changed into Him -- and not the reverse.<sup>87</sup>

In the sacrament of the Eucharist, the species of bread and wine are very much the sacrament, the mystical body of Christ, very much the thing itself, the true body of Christ, the thing itself and the sacrament, the thing of the first and the sacrament of the second.<sup>88</sup>

The figure of the sacrament: In the offering of Melchizedek [Gen. 14:18] according to the exterior form and feeding, which feeding there precedes as a figure, just as it is in fact. Likewise, in the manna, where the effect of grace is signified [Exod. 16:14-18]. Likewise, in the paschal lamb, which signified liberation from Egyptian servitude, just as this sacrament <confers> liberation from the devil [Exod. 12:3-12].<sup>89</sup>

“Likewise, in many sacrifices, concerning which one reads in Leviticus, in which the offering of the Passion of Christ is signified, where there are the offering for reconciliation and the victim for satisfaction for our

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<sup>85</sup> loc. cit. (5.274-75).

<sup>86</sup> cf. Hugo Argentinensis, *Compendium*, VI, c. 12 (34.210). The form of consecration reads, *Hoc est enim corpus meum*.

<sup>87</sup> cf. loc. cit. (34.210-11).

<sup>88</sup> cf. loc. cit. (34.211).

<sup>89</sup> Hugo Argentinensis, *Compendium*, VI, c. 12 (34.211).

sins and the holocaust as far as the wounding of His whole body. It would take a long time to explicate all of these; but see Guilelmus Parisiensis, *De fide et legibus*.<sup>90</sup>

“The figure of the blood of Christ was wine to designate feeding -- Canticles, The king *brought me* [Cant. 2:4] etc.; water <to designate> cleansing -- 'I saw water flowing forth'; blood to signify redemption -- Hebrews 4 [9:22], *Without shedding of blood there is no remission*.”<sup>91</sup>

From these the dignity of the sacrament, which was instituted by Christ, prefigured in the law and before the law, foretold by the prophets -- *Men ate the bread of angels* etc. [Ps. 77:25], observed by the apostles, coming together as one etc. [1 Cor. 11:20], is apparent. Especially, however, the excellence of the sacrament is <apparent> because God, who excels all, is there, the soul, which excels all animals, is there, the body preceding all bodies is there. In Christ the most noble things in heaven and earth are united.<sup>92</sup>

### PRAYER

Concerning the wonders of the sacrament of the Eucharist.

Now, while our mind is elevated to ruminating a bit to wondering at the delights of the most sacred sacrament, let us say:

Oh Lord, how great is the sweetness of the goodness of Yourself, who wish that we should proclaim your death [1 Cor. 11:26] daily in the eating of your life! What more could You say to man, dead through eating <the apple> than <that he should attain> life by eating! Oh food of life, nailed to the cross, who can understand this immense gift with the mind, so that You, the most high, most pious, most noble, bestow yourself as food! It exceeds the entire plenitude of immensity and mode of love when the gift is the same as the giver.<sup>93</sup> What other nation is so great that it thus has its gods near to it [Deut. 4:7], as You, the true God, are near to us under some other form in Your own substance? Oh, “food which truly nourishes, feeds and greatly fathers not just the flesh but the soul, not the belly but the mind.”<sup>94</sup>

“Oh most noble memorial, commending to the inmost entrails, binding firmly to the soul and serving diligently in the womb of the heart....In which commemoration some delights, joy and tears, are present to

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<sup>90</sup> Guilelmus Parisiensis, *De fide et legibus*, tr. De legibus, cc. 8-10 (Paris 1674), I, 38-42.

<sup>91</sup> Hugo Argentinensis, *Compendium*, VI, c. 12 (34.212), quoting *Breviarium Romanum*, Ant. temp. Pasch. ad aspersum populi.

<sup>92</sup> cf. Hugo Argentinensis, *Compendium*, VI, c. 13 (34.212).

<sup>93</sup> See above n. 3.

<sup>94</sup> See above n. 3.

us. We weep devoutly rejoicing! For the heart suffused with vast joy lets drop sweets through dropping tears.”<sup>95</sup>

When I raise myself, Lord, to such a lofty consideration, I know the light of my intellect can see nothing; but You are the one Who can do all. The curious inquire about causes, reasons and signs; I approach You through faith.

What wonder that, in such a sudden extension of words, transubstantiation is effected? Is not a certain seed suddenly by heat turned into living animals which are called silkworms? Is not the serpent charmed by words and stops up its ears, so that it does not hear the voice of the charmer, lest, having heard the words, it should yield of necessity? Are You not, God, the one Who made all things with a single word?<sup>96</sup> *He spoke and they were made* [Ps. 32:9]. Was not Lot's wife turned into a lump or statue of salt [Gen. 19:26] by a glance? Do not certain fountains turn wood to stone and iron to copper? Who wonders at Your power? Does not our stomach, in its nature, change bread and wine to flesh and blood? Does not the glassblower produce glass from grains of sand? Does not fire flash immediately from striking a flint?

What is to be wondered at that You, God and man, not contracted with every quantity when You hung on the cross, are in the sacrament? Is not the stork etc.? Does not the eye of the little bird see the largest mountain etc.? Is there not great strength in the tiny grains of mustard, the potential for a large tree?<sup>97</sup> Was not Elijah, a large man, able to place individual limbs over those of the dead boy [3 Kings 17:21]?

What should be wondered about this, that the species are beyond nature without a subject? Is not adamant etc.? The figure, that the sacrament should be given to us veiled under species, is that of Jacob disguised as Esau, wherefore, Isaac was deceived [Gen. 27:1-22]? Thus all senses are deceived, sight, taste, truth etc. But Isaac did not fail in <his hearing, because he knew the voice, which comes from the interior. Thus faith does not fail.

What should be wondered at about this, that sacramentally the body and blood are entirely in different places? Is not one word uttered by me and understood equally perfectly by many? I know that God is everywhere, although man is in one place? What is to be wondered at if the middle mode between God and man is not everywhere and not only in one place but in many? Does not one definition of species equally cover many individuals? Is not the Word entire from eternity and to eternity with the Father, and yet is descended entire into the virgin's womb? And does one whole being, both <God and man> come in the flesh so that men may eat Him; yet He remains entire with the Father to feed the angels?

Nor should I wonder that all is in my part of the host when it is divided. Is it not similar with a mirror, which reflects one figure; and, even if it is broken, the fragments similarly reflect the entire whole? Is not

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<sup>95</sup> See above n. 3.

<sup>96</sup> cf. Innocentius III, *De sacramento altaris*, IV, c. 7, PL 217.859.

<sup>97</sup> cf. Ps. Thomas Aquinas, *De sacramento eucharistiae*, ed. Fretté (28.243-50).

any part <the whole> in homogeneous things, for example with water, part of which is like the whole? Did not whoever collected more of the manna which fell in the dessert have no more than another; and does not he who had less have no less [Exod. 16:14-18]? Is not the soul as large in a small man as in a big one, and is not all in the whole and in each of its parts?

It is less to be wondered that, although it is eaten daily, nevertheless, it is not diminished, because the glorified, incorruptible after the Resurrection, does not see corruption, because it is not changed into the nature of another being; but, spiritually taking <the body> into itself, it is changed by the excess and love of the mind. If many lamps are lighted by one candle, nevertheless, is not the light of the candle undiminished? Rather it should be considered about this that the mystical body of Christ, that is the Church, with its head, Christ the bridegroom, is diminished by not eating. By proper eating a man is made a member of this body, and thus he is increased by eating -- *Know you not that you bodies are the members of Christ?* Here the one not eating worthily adds to the mystical body of the devil, just as knowledge shared is increased -- *we may in all things grow up in Him who is the head, even Christ* [Eph. 4:15]. Does not water flow daily from a fountain; and, nevertheless, it is not diminished. Why wonder about the fountain of the Savior?

What is to be wondered about this, that the sacrament is offered for the salvation of some but harms others at the judgment? Does not the bee extract honey and the spider venom from the same flower, and is not the medicine of one the death of another? Does not the sun dissolve ice and freeze mud at the same time?

I doubt nothing, Lord. Grant that I may attain the life You promise through this sacrament. Oh Lord, if this life, which is the concord of soul and body, full of miseries before death, brief and of no comparison to the coming age, is love, how much better to be with You, who are eternal life! Oh <happy> those who approach this sacrament worthily, because they drink from the fount of life! Woe <to those who approach> unworthily, because they drink death [1 Cor. 11:29] from the fount of life!

I see, Lord, that this miserable life, full of tears with its joy, deceives all men with riches and pleasures. When I think of losing You, eternal life, to have a transitory windfall, I groan; and I tremble entirely. This life is ordered toward You. Whoever abuses this does not come to You. Oh what a fallacy this is, that the greatest part of mankind serves You falsely. Oh priest, think of your life; think of your power; think of the words and works; think of the nobility of the office.

## Sermon 8 “A great sign appeared in heaven”<sup>98</sup>

DRAFT TRANSLATION BY THOMAS IZBICKI

*A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head.*[Rev. 12:6.]

Although from the beginning and origin of the world God made great signs and prodigies on the earth, today, nevertheless when the queen of the world, the most blessed virgin Mary, passed out of this worthless world to glory, exalted from exile to the fatherland, from labor to rest, and from humble poverty in a wondrous mode and received at the throne of the eternal kingdom, *a great sign appeared in heaven* with a most excellent and stupendous garland. The sign <was> reverential for the angels, because “the daughters” of supernal Zion “saw and declared her most blessed, and the queens praised her”;<sup>99</sup> indeed *all the rich men of the people* adored her[ Luke 10:18].

<But it was> a sign of sorrow to the demons, for today, according to the figure in the book of Kings, the Philistines, who are interpreted as those falling down from drink, that is the devils, who once were drunk with pride, fell like *a thunderbolt from heaven*, hearing that the ark of the covenant had come to the camp of Israel, struck with terror, groaned, saying, *Woe to us* [1 Sam. 4:6-8]. <It is> a sign of confidence for men. Already, then, we can have confidence in approaching closer to her throne of grace[ [cf. Heb. 4:16.], since she is the mother of mercy,<sup>100</sup> the mediatrix between Christ and the sinner appointed by God, in so far as Christ, her son, <is mediator> between God and man.<sup>101</sup>

And, because He is blessed among all, “she is exalted above all choirs”, *eternally beautiful*[Cant. 4:7]; what is more, she is great and full of every grace and glory, so that all things created under heaven, should they turn it on <their> tongues, are not worthy to expound her praises in the least.<sup>102</sup> Therefore, so that we may be worthy to apprehend something of our measurement, let us invoke the same <virgin> with a pious mind for our salvation etc.

*A great sign etc.*

At this time, we see the whole world disposed to war. Here my sermon will be about war. The words of the theme usually are expounded concerning the blessed virgin Mary and her glorification,<sup>103</sup> and

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<sup>98</sup> The edition places this sermon at Koblenz on August 15, 1431.

<sup>99</sup> *Breviarium Romanum*, Resp. 3 Matut. In festo assumptionis B. M. V., Cant. 6:8.

<sup>100</sup> *Breviarium Romanum*, Ant. “Salve regina”.

<sup>101</sup> cf. Bonaventura, *In sent.*, III d. 3 a. 1 q. 2 (3,67a).

<sup>102</sup> Eckbertus Schoenangensis, *Ad beatam virginem deiparem sermo panagyricus*, PL 184:1013 (included among the works of Bernard).

<sup>103</sup> Glo. ord. ad Rev. 12:1 (VI 1573-75).

concerning God's holy Church and its foundation; therefore, according to <this> double exposition, I will say two things in turn. First, <I will speak> of the blessed virgin's war against the world and of her struggle -- *the life of man <is> a struggle on earth* [Job. 7:1] -- and of the victory and the reward. Second <I will speak> of the war of the entire Church Militant for her spouse, after Whose triumph she follows to the fatherland, where she is united triumphantly perpetually with <her> spouse the triumphantor.

Part 1: Concerning the war of Mary against the world, and of her victory and reward.

a) The new Jerusalem is compared to Mary.

For the first point, I take up the gospel Jesus *entered <Bethany>* etc.[ Luke 10:38-42]. This gospel, although it was written about the two sisters, Martha and Mary, through whom two ways of life are signified, nevertheless, because the evangelists relate nothing about the glorification of the virgin Mary, fits the virgin Mary best mystically as far as hosting the Lord and His double life, active and contemplative, because, beyond all male and female saints, *she has chosen the better part* [Luke 10:42]; therefore, in this high feast, this gospel is understood in <its> mystical sense according to excellence and merit in life, superabundant grace and the reward of the fatherland, which is indicated in the gospel.

Indeed, from the beginning of the world, when straying man was expelled from the city of paradise into this exile, eternal Wisdom, wishing to lead him back to His holy city, thought first to choose a city on earth in which He might dwell [cf. Baruch 3:9-38]. So that He might instruct men for spiritual wars and that He, their captain, might lead the exiles back to His holy city with a strong hand through <His> own blood, He sought for a long time a city fit for His dwelling. And He did not find a fit dwelling until He saw *the holy city, the new Jerusalem, descending from heaven like a bride bedecked for her husband* [Rev. 21:2], that is most blessed Mary, celestially ornamented and reinforced with every virtue.

*When, therefore, the fullness of time for salvation had come* [Gal. 4:4], He entered into this singular castle, chosen above all others, small in humility, great with immensity of virtues and graces, one of such magnitude that the surveyor angel scarcely could describe its magnitude within measure<sup>104</sup> to the holy Ezechiel [40:5-16].

Oh, if someone could describe for us worthily the gates, moat, walls, towers, forts, ramparts, homes and palaces of this city! Then we could see how beautiful and graceful, how strong and well-fortified this city of Jerusalem is.

God beheld twelve foundation stones of this city [cf. Rev. 21:19], that is twelve grades of humility.<sup>105</sup> He beheld a very deep moat, that is humility. *Let is be done unto me according to your word* [Luke 1:38]. He beheld the wall, that is impregnable chastity, which excludes all inordinate concupiscence. He beheld the outworks [cf. Is. 26:1], that is temperance; the forts, that is sobriety and modesty; the tower, that is fortitude,

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<sup>104</sup> Literally, *ad normam*.

<sup>105</sup> cf. Bernardus, *De gradibus humilitatis*, ed. Leclercq-Rochais 3.16-37.

through which he terrible to all adversaries and well-fortified against all adversities. The ramparts were magnanimity, patience, equanimity, magnificence, perseverance.

By the courtyards, through which He walks, we understand justice, wherefore *who walks in justice* etc. [Is. 33:15]. Through justice she walks rightly before God and neighbor. By the consistory we understand prudence. By the gate, faith, through which the king of glory enters [cf. Ps. 24:7-10]. Elizabeth said, *Blessed <are you> who believed* etc. [Luke 1:45]. By the bedchamber we understand hope. *In peace in itself* etc., *since you <act> singularly in hope*.<sup>106</sup> By the dining room we understand charity, where the soul of Mary and the Lord Himself are refreshed with the fruits of the Spirit. By the houses we understand the powers of the soul.

The name of the castle <is> *Bethany*, which is understood as the house of obedience, the house of the gift of God and the house pleasing to the Lord.<sup>107</sup> For which reason Bethany is called antonomastically etc.<sup>108</sup> According to Anselm,<sup>109</sup> some think it was Magdala, which is interpreted as stony tower.

Or thus: for a long time He sought a fit habitation; and He found it only in the predestined time of salvation. Then He saw *the holy city, new Jerusalem* etc.; and in that new, bedecked city He saw *a bride decked for her husband*. And <Christ> “was sent from the citadel of the Father”.<sup>110</sup>

That new city, however, was wondrous, strong with deepest moats, having on one side, on the left, a valley descending to the world and, on the right, the most-high mountain of the supernal city of paradise. At the foot of this mountain this city or castle was placed, having a thicket and rocks toward the valley and water flowing before the gate. The valley, however, was spacious and ample, discontinuous, full of diversity, unstable with wailing and the strong winds of misery. And there was in another part of the valley a pit sloping down to Hell; and daily many fell into it heedlessly. The descent to the pit seemed delightful. Those dwelling in the valley were lured into descending toward the pit of the abyss with many pleasure and delights; and, when they had tasted a little of what scarcely was delightful, thinking to stay put, they fell and were lost forever.

All the valley tended to the pit. There was no certain way up from the valley except the road through the desert and the rocks to the castle which Solomon had built there [1 Kings 7:1-10, 10:1-3]. There was, however, a very strong, inviolable, high wall which girded the castle. And it had an outwork with many ramparts and seven gates, the outmost of which was of lead, the second of tin, the third of iron, the fourth of copper, the fifth of orichalcum, the sixth of silver, the seventh of gold; and each had its guardians. And

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<sup>106</sup> Unidentified.

<sup>107</sup> Lk. 10:38-42 does not name the town, but see Jn. 11:1. Hieronymus, *Liber interp. Hebr. nom.* Lag. 62, CCSL 72.138.

<sup>108</sup> cf. Isidorus Hispalensis, *Etymologiae* 1 c. 37.

<sup>109</sup> Anselmus aep. Cantuariensis, *Homiliae et exhortationes*, hom. 9, PL 158:646.

<sup>110</sup> *Breviarium Romanum*, Feria VI in passione Domini, Cantus in adoratione sanctae crucis peragendi.

after the seventh gate there were four steps through which one ascended to the courtyard of the castle. These four, however, were of precious stones; and the steps were guarded. And on each step the ones who were admitted were marked and ornamented with fitting armor, so that they were worthy to ascend to the palace and <its> courtyard. The courtyard was paved, however, with diverse gems and elevated on seven columns, because <it is> the house of wisdom, which *she set up seven columns* [Prov. 9:1]. There was a standard raised up over each column in the courtyard, and there was the most high standard of the cross in the midst of the courtyard. There were two bridges between the courtyard and the way of ascent to the city of paradise; and one came by way of the bridges to the way which led up to the city placed on the mountain of the eternal paradise; and there was no other way.

By means of this way of charity Jesus descended to the castle, that is to Bethany, that is to the house of obedience and the gift of God, pleasing to God. And this Bethany was in the midst of the courtyard under the standard of the cross, a structure built of marvelous pavement, ornamented with all precious stones, established on columns and with metal gates, in the midst of the standards; and this Bethany was the virgin Mary, *all beautiful, chosen like the sun* [Cant. 6:9].

b) By the example of the sisters Mary and Martha is illustrated how contemplation and the active life are related.

In this Bethany two sisters, gifted by God with the same soul and supernatural forces, were created, that is Martha and Magdalene, that is practical, active force and contemplative force. The first <was> Martha, that is the same as “summoning” or “stimulating” in Hebrew and almost “giving” in Syriac.<sup>111</sup> The active power has to summon all of the powers subject to it, even the bodily ones, so that they may conform themselves in good acts; but, indeed, <it> often must stimulate them, that is when these inferior powers obey <their> proper inclination with a certain murmuring and sorrow subject to reason. But it has to give in works of mercy, which love of God and neighbor demands. Mary Magdalene, however, is interpreted as “illuminated tower”.<sup>112</sup> It is, then, the high illumination of the contemplative life given by God.

Martha, by the exercise of good works, has to remove all vices, if she finds any, and has to see to the acts of the moral virtues, by which anyone is well ordered both toward himself and <his> neighbor.<sup>113</sup>

The second “laden? with the coals of all cares, setting aside cares, turns to see the face of her Creator” according to blessed Gregory.<sup>114</sup> Her care is, as the same <Gregory> says, “to hold onto love of God and neighbor with <her> entire mind and to cleave to <her> sole desire for knowledge”. To her belongs the contemplation of divine truth, which undoubtedly is the end of all human life. Secondarily, to her belongs

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<sup>111</sup> Hieronymus, *Liber interp. Hebr. nom.* Lag. 65, CCSL 72.141.

<sup>112</sup> op. cit. Lag. 62, ed.cit. p. 137, Lag. 74, p. 152.

<sup>113</sup> cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, II<sup>a</sup> II<sup>ae</sup> q. 181 a. 1.

<sup>114</sup> Gregorius, *In Ezechielem*, II hom. 2, cited in *ibid* II<sup>a</sup> II<sup>ae</sup> q. 180 a. 1.

contemplation of divine works, so that, through them, we may be led to the contemplation of God, in so far as the invisible things of God are perceived through those things which were done <by Him>.”<sup>115</sup>

“The woman Martha”, however, “received Him into her home”, that is through most devout force. Mary received Jesus, offering Him an undefiled spirit,<sup>116</sup> so that He might be fed in it by her sacred affections, might indeed be delighted, since *His delight is with the sons of men* [Prov. 8:31],<sup>116</sup> showing, however, a virginal womb, so that He might be incarnated in it.

But the other sister, Mary, sat *near the feet of the Lord, heard His utterance* [Luke 10:38], that is Mary was most excellent through contemplative force, attending? to divine contemplation, keeping all which she heard outwardly from the Lord Jesus or drawing upon <these things> inwardly, conferring *in her heart* [Luke 2:51].

In these words, three things are touched upon, which are required for contemplation, quiet, *because she sat*, and it ought not only to be exterior but even interior quiet from the passions and the straying of phantasms. The mind should be tranquil; wherefore, it is said, *Be still and see that I am God* [Ps. 45:11], *He has made His place in peace* [Ps. 75:3], “the soul becomes wise in keeping quiet”.<sup>117</sup> Second, contemplation ought to occur at the feet of the Lord, that is from the sacrosanct humanity by which He touched things terrestrial. From them one must ascend to contemplating divinity,<sup>118</sup> which, as Paul witnesses, is the head of Christ [cf. 1 Cor. 11:3]. By the right we understand divine goodness; and by the left, divine magnificence, just as it governs sensible and corporeal creatures in this inferior world. And thus one must begin contemplating from things terrestrial. Third, one should hear the Lord's utterance, that is the one contemplating ought not to begin from his own senses but rather from divinely revealed faith. There are many things to which infirm and anxious reason cannot attain, which it only can believe by faith, as if revealed by word of mouth.

*Martha, however, was busy ministering* [Luke 10:40], that is Mary did much and enough, frequently ministering to the Lord. First, she ministered to the Holy Spirit when she was 14 years old, <providing> most pure blood of her own substance, whence It could fabricate a most worthy body for <Jesus>. He gestated for nine months in the womb and in <her> most chaste entrails,<sup>119</sup> although *the king rested? thus to dine* [Cant. 1:11], He fed on virginal blood and received due increase, until He came forth *like the groom from His chamber* [Ps. 46:8].

Wherefore, a fruitful virgin nursed a whimpering child, the food of angels, the bread of heaven broken for us; and she refreshed the thirsty child with her impoverished self. She dressed the ornament of the blessed,

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid. II<sup>a</sup> II<sup>ac</sup> q. 180 a. 4, citing Rom. 1:20.

<sup>116</sup> Bernardus, *In assumptione B. M. V. sermo 2*, ed.cit. 5.237.

<sup>117</sup> Nicolaus de Lyra, *Postilla ad Luc. 10:42* in Glo. ord. (V 837).

<sup>118</sup> Ps. Bonaventura, *De s. Maria Magdalena sermo 1*, Opera 9.556.

<sup>119</sup> cf. Ludolphus de Saxonia, *Vita Jesu Christi*, pars 1 c. 61, ed. Rigollot-Bolard, p. 268; Iacobus de Voragine, *Legenda aurea*, c. 119, De assumptione s. Mariae virginis, ed. Graesse, pp. 504-05.

Who suffered the cold, with His swaddling cloths; she cheered with consolations the joy of all the saints when He wept and sorrowed. The strength of God, made weak for us, she carried in her arms; she bore God, the king of all the earth [cf. Ps. 46:8] on the flight into Egypt, when He bore the persecution of the tyrant Herod, until, when Herod died, He returned. Here, through all the space of the life in which the Lord Jesus *was seen on earth and conversed with men* [Baruch 3:38], He did not desert <His> pious mother, rather, weeping with the weeping, rejoicing with the rejoicing, suffering with the suffering, ministering as far as she could to the One in need, she followed Him even to the shameful instrument of the cross; nor did she depart until the closing of the tomb divided the living from the dead.

Who can recount worthily all the things which the most blessed virgin did in the active life, both before the conception and after the Resurrection, until today she was assumed to glory.

She stood, however, in this active life showing herself benevolent and prompt to serve; *and she said, "Lord, is it of no concern to you that my sister leaves me to minister alone?"* [Luke 10:40-41]. And she might have said, "to You, whom no creature is sufficient to serve fully, Who have made all things yourself [cf. Prov. 16:4], so that all serve You [cf. Ps. 118:91]. I, Lord, often am harassed in ministering through the active life, because my sister, whom I see at leisure, leave me alone; and, because my sister sweetly enjoys leisure, while I see to these things. I am harassed in my activity. *Tell her, therefore, to help me* [Luke 10:40." And she might have said, "The activity of the soul is inclined more to administration than it wishes to turn to the contemplation of divine secrets. Therefore, activity desires the soul to be occupied entirely with ministering."

But the Lord quickly pacified the loving complaint, because He said, *Martha, Martha* [Luke 10:41], -- He said this twice, because the works of mercy are double, spiritual and corporal -- *you are solicitous and harassed about many things!* [Luke 10:42]. You do something well, but you are harassed. Your work has harassment tied to it. *Only one is necessary*, that is the end of all the things about which you are harassed. And of this one your sister Mary chose to take hold; she chose to contemplate that one and to bear fruit by cleaving <to it>. For which reason *Mary has chosen the better part*, that is the contemplative life. She is content with the one best, most delectable, necessary, most sufficient, most final good, *which part will not be taken from her*. The contemplative life begins here; it is perfected, however, in the future,<sup>120</sup> enduring forever. Your harassed life, however, which is not concerned with the one thing necessary but concerned with many transitory things, will be taken away.

And, because this contemplative life is called best, because <it is> principally about the best object and secondarily about its works, so that the wisdom and goodness of God may shine forth in them, its exercise <is> by the nobler power, that is the intellect; and so it perfects man according to the more noble part.<sup>121</sup> It is perfected, however, in the eternal fatherland, because there *face to face* [1 Cor. 13:12]. *the God of gods will be seen in Zion* [Ps. 83:8]. In that fatherland there is no one wanting, wretched or poor, either by inquietude of strife; wherefore, the exercise of the active life is not there.

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<sup>120</sup> Glo. Ord. ad Luc. 10:42 (V 837).

<sup>121</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa* II<sup>a</sup> II<sup>ae</sup> q. 182 a. 1.

And, although, simply speaking, the contemplative life is better than the active one, nevertheless, according to what touches on the living of the active life is better and sometimes must be chosen because of what is necessary for the present life, just as wine, simply speaking, is a better drink than water but sometimes water is preferred. Wherefore, “Gregory says, Whoever desires to hold the citadel of contemplation needs first to prove himself on the field of action”, teaching, preaching, doing works of mercy etc. Thus, where works are done with greater charity than one contemplates, no one doubts that the works are better, because charity is the measure of merit.<sup>122</sup> As far, however, as the goodness of <their> objects, contemplation always is better, even when activity may be of greater merit, nevertheless, the act of contemplation is of no less perfection because of this.<sup>123</sup>

c) Concerning the active life and the contemplative life, what they are.

*Mary, therefore, has chosen the better part and placed the moon under her feet, that is the active life, and dressed herself with the sun of justice [cf. Mal. 4:2] through the contemplative life, and so she appeared in heaven so dressed and with twelve gleaming stars.*

Here one must regard <first> the active and the contemplative life of Mary, second her death, third the glory of paradise. One must speak of <her> genealogy, the disposition of <her> body and <her> graces on the feast of <her> nativity;<sup>124</sup> now <one must speak> for a while of the active life, devotion and contemplation.

The active life is persisting studiously in just labors and, before anything, *to keep one's self unstained by this world* [Jas. 1:27], to keep mind, hand, tongue and the other members of the body from every stain of fault of the tempter or to restrain <one's self> and to be subject to perpetual divine service, therefore, to provide for the needs of <one's> neighbor through the works of mercy.

The blessed virgin Mary had this life in the fullest, because <she was> immune from the beginning from all sin; *the Most High has established His tabernacle* [Ps. 45:5]. As is manifest, “She exercised the works of mercy in the fullest for all pilgrims. The works of mercy have grades, from greater charity, because of greater need or greater worth and need, from greater effort freely made, or from greater necessity and lesser abundance. All these things were in the glorious virgin in the fullest, in whom the greatest charity toward all creatures especially gave to the needy, because no one among the pilgrims <was> more needy than Jesus Christ. She gave to the most-worthy of the poor, because no one <is> a more worthy beggar than God. A great work of mercy may be done to the poor layman, a greater one to a poor cleric, a greater one to a poor religious one even greater to a poor bishop, the greatest to a beggar pope; therefore, it was an immeasurable work which she did for the most-poor God.

“She made the greatest effort of mercy, because she gave for us poor captives God the Son as a ransom, rations for the hungry, a reward to the laborers, medicine to the ailing; and with Him she gave the kingdom

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<sup>122</sup> See above n. 114.

<sup>123</sup> Alanus de Insulis, *De arte seu articulis catholicae fidei*, I prop. 72, PL 210.658.

<sup>124</sup> September 8.

of heaven. She did not do works of mercy to her most poor and pilgrim Son from abundance but of necessity. Of her own blood she made *a coat of many colors*, hosted <Him> in her womb; of her own body she fed and nursed <Him>.”<sup>125</sup>

And these things suffice concerning the active life.

Of the contemplative life. When someone <is> taught by long exercise of good acts, instructed by the sweetness of divine prayers, accustomed to the repeated compunction of tears, empty of all affairs of the world, it is this which teaches <him> to strain for the joy of perpetual beatitude, which will be perceived in the future life; he begins desiring ardently to taste <it> in advance in the present and even, as is the divine command to mortals, occasionally to be elevated sublimely in excess of mind.

No one can have thing life; nevertheless, without it, if someone does not neglect to do the good things which he can do, according to Gregory,<sup>126</sup> he can come to glory. The contemplative <life>, however, belongs to quiet minds; the active, to an unquiet one, according to Gregory in <book> six of the *Moralia*.<sup>127</sup>

Whoever wishes to ascend to the contemplative life should, according to Saint Bernard,<sup>128</sup> make frequent and pure confession with tears, setting aside whatever is in him of the secular life, carnal affliction, with contrition of heart. And, when impurity has been driven out, wondrous meditation on God will raise him up! And scrutiny of the chaste truth, pure prayer, jubilant praise and burning desire for God.

Hugh,<sup>129</sup> on the third chapter of the *De hierarchia caelesti*, <says that> it is necessary for the contemplative life first to be purified, then illuminated and then perfected and consummated; and the closer one approaches divinity, the more truly one contemplates.

Gregory<sup>130</sup> <says that> among the delights of the heart and body this belongs, <that> bodily <joys>, when they are not experienced, arouse a grave desire for themselves; once had and consumed, they are sated and cause disgust. Spiritual joys are not had with disgust; once had, they inflame and cause hunger. (And, because Mary always had these delights, she always hungered and was inflamed more and more etc.) Spiritual joys, once had, cannot be bitter; the taste of them could not be ignored. Can whoever is strong in loving ignore this? Wherefore, *taste and see!* Whoever first tastes a little while after this begins to see, because the taste pleases etc.

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<sup>125</sup> Ps. Albertus Magnus, *Mariale*, ed. Borgnet, *Opera* 37.96, citing Gen. 37:3.

<sup>126</sup> Gregorius I, *In Ezechielem*, I hom. 3, PL 76.809.

<sup>127</sup> Gregorius I, *Moralia*, VI c. 37, PL 75.761. Both of these passages from Gregory are cited in Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*. II<sup>a</sup> II<sup>ae</sup> q. 182 a. 4.

<sup>128</sup> Unidentified.

<sup>129</sup> Cf. Hugo de S. Victore, *In cael. hier.* IV, PL 175.998.

<sup>130</sup> Gregorius I, *XL hom. in evang.*, hom. 36, PL 76.1266, citing Ps. 33:9.

d) What things prepare for contemplation, and concerning its steps.

There are six preparations for the contemplative life:<sup>131</sup> exercise in the active one, solitude afterwards, likewise, humility of mind, purity of heart -- *Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God* [Mt. 5:8]. “The supreme good”, according to Augustine,<sup>132</sup> “is perceived only by the most purified minds.” It is necessary that the eye which aspires to clarity be greatly purified and strong. The fifth is fervor of charity; the sixth is stability of mind.

There are other things which elevate to contemplation: consideration of creatures in praising the Creator, Who created *all things in number, weight and measure* [Wis. 11:21]. There are certain rays of divinity in a variety of forms etc.,<sup>133</sup> and evidences of the Creator shine forth in the creatures etc. According to Paul [Rom. 1:20], *The things invisible are understood through those things which have been made.*

According to Hugh,<sup>134</sup> the power of God is apprehended through the immensity of the creatures. Beauty shows wisdom; utility, goodness. Immensity is touched on in multitude and magnitude; beauty, in site, motion, species and quality; utility, in the pleasing, apt, commodious and necessary. The sensible word, then, is like a book written by the finger of God [cf. Ezech. 2:9], Rev. 5:1]. And in this way beginners contemplate; but the perfect, like the blessed virgin, nonetheless, persist in the contemplation of the Creator.

The Creator is praised through the creatures, just as the artisan through the artifact; and just as the beauty of the creature draws man away from God through love of it, so he is returned to the Creator with <these> modes of understanding, <according to> Isidore, *De summo bono*.<sup>135</sup> As far as promotion of contemplation, it is knowledge of one's self. Bernard <says>,<sup>136</sup> “As far as I advance in knowledge of myself, so much I approach” closer “to God... According to the interior man” there are “three things in the mind”, which are the image of God, as far as natural properties, that is “memory, intellect and will”. And this image of the Trinity through sin “falls from the power, wisdom and purity of the supreme Trinity into a fetid trinity, that is infirmity, blindness and uncleanness” etc.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Cf. Guilelmus Peraldus, *Summa virtutum*, tr. 4, De donis, pars 10 (1/1.357-59).

<sup>132</sup> Augustinus, *De Trinitate*, I c. 2, PL 42.822.

<sup>133</sup> Cf. Bernardus, *Super Cant.*, Sermo 31, ed. Leclerq-Rochais I.221.

<sup>134</sup> Hugo de S. Victore, *Eruditionis didascalica*, VII c. 1, PL 176.811.

<sup>135</sup> Isidorus Hispalensis, *De summo bono*, I c. 4, PL 83.543.

<sup>136</sup> Ps. Bernardus, *Meditationes*, c. 1, PL 184.485.

<sup>137</sup> Bernardus, *De diversis*, Sermo 45, ed. Leclerq-Rochais 6/1.487, 485.

According to Bernard,<sup>138</sup> memory was in the image of the Father; intellect, of the Father; will resembles the Holy Spirit, which is love. Man is recalled by memory, understood by intellect, embraced by will.

Do you wish to seek the things invisible through the visible, created ones? Nowhere better than in the image of God, that is in yourself! To know yourself, however, requires the effort of work, meditation and prayer.<sup>139</sup> How can one who does not know how to enter into himself strive to rise above himself in contemplation? Let us choose the interior things and spurn the others. When we order all our thought and works, we erect the Church of God in us.<sup>140</sup>

Then you will hear the spouse of your soul saying, *Arise, hasten, my friend, my sister!* [Cant. 1:20] *Open to me, my sister!* [Cant. 5:2]. And then, when you open <your> heart to him, all things outside of your desire will be dead to you; and <your> entire soul will be suspended in that supreme sweetness which it begins to taste. Then the soul, “trampling on cares, burns to see the face of its Creator”.<sup>141</sup> The fire of tribulation and compunction first, so that all impurity is burned away, ascends in the heart, so that all things are new etc. [cf. 2 Cor. 5:17].

Then internal lightning begins to flicker in the heart.<sup>142</sup> Regularly, the soul is elevated above itself [cf. Lament. 3:28] and sees, as if from afar, a new earth and a bright mansion, one similar to which it does not recall ever having seen. Seeing <this> it wonders much; it accuses past times of their ignorance. It wonders how it lay prostrate in the mire, and again it ascends higher etc.

All things mundane are set aside, and thoughts of the world are fully dead. And always the light dawns by the grace of the Savior to His elect -- more to him by whom the exterior senses are restrained from illicit things and focus themselves on the One. A man, in meditation on the drift away from God in sin, drifts back, <like> a certain ladder of ascent and descent, on which a thousand advantages are placed.<sup>143</sup>

Make here a ladder on which man is the end of creatures because of a double nature, spiritual and corporeal united, the image of God; and ascend in yourself on it through the elemental, vegetative, sensitive, rational, and then by the heavens and the angels to God.<sup>144</sup>

And then the soul wishes to apprehend God and glory; and it cannot in this life, <except> *as in a mirror* [1 Cor. 13:12]. Nevertheless, it has a foretaste through grace. Mary, of greatest grace, had a foretaste of the

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<sup>138</sup> Ps. Bernardus, *Meditationes*, c. 1, PL 184.485.

<sup>139</sup> Cf. Ricardus de S. Victore, *Beniamin minor*, PL 196.55-56.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid c. 84, Pl 196.59-60.

<sup>141</sup> See above n. 136.

<sup>142</sup> Cf. Ricardus, *Beniamin minor*, V c. 4, PL 196.174.

<sup>143</sup> Cf. Ramundus Lullus, *Liber de ascensu et descensu intellectus*, Palmae, 1744, pp. 1-381.

<sup>144</sup> Cf. Bonaventura, *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, c. 1, *Opera* 5.297.

sweetness of glory in this life, not as a simple pilgrim, according to Albert.<sup>145</sup> The pilgrim extrapolates infinite beauty from beautiful things, infinite delight from delightful things, infinite light from light, infinite sweetness from the sweet; nevertheless, all things which the pilgrim imagines and sees after the manner of man with the intellect, nonetheless, are far from the supernal glory of the Deity, according to Bernard,<sup>146</sup> “as far as faith from truth, time from eternity”.

Gregory <says> about this in the *Moralia*,<sup>147</sup> “*Why do you not disperse, so that I may swallow saliva? etc.* [Job 7:19]. The mind, a belly, desired to swallow the saliva of contemplation descending from the head of divinity [cf. 1 Cor. 11:3]; and it could not, because *the body makes the soul worse*[Wis. 9:15]. Therefore, it cannot adhere to the light for long unless in rapture; and it cannot for long. The saliva flows well from the head into the mouth with a certain sweetness, but it does not satisfy the mind of the belly in the present life etc. -- but it is perceived from afar [cf. Is. 33:17]. It neither is seen entirely nor not seen entirely.” According to Gregory, it is seen through images, not through its nature.<sup>148</sup>

The contemplatives who are elevated to a grade nearer to God to see Him, the world dies <to them> and God lives in them.<sup>149</sup> Whoever lives in the world does not see God. Whoever, however, dies to the world sees God in a certain way by faith and burning desire.<sup>150</sup> Then all things are wearisome, vain to this mind; and only purity pleases. They keep the mind in humility, lest they lose contemplation through elation.

Contemplation of God the three and one, and of the properties of God and the equality of attributes etc., of the power of God, how it created all things, and how in it and through it all things were created and are [cf. Rom. 11:36], and how it is everywhere and nowhere, and how it sees to all things, gives being to all things and conserves all things etc., <is> higher.

And, concerning the supercelestial order, the celestial and the elemental, and concerning the amorous beginnings holding the universe together through concord etc.

And how the infinite God remains unknowable by us and ineffable, although He is known through the “because He is” here and “as He is” in the fatherland, nowhere, nonetheless, through the “what He is”. That, what God is, surpasses the intellect of creatures. The ineffable is not named when we saw essence and goodness. It is above all this according to Dionysius *De divinis nominibus*.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Ps. Albertus Magnus, *Mariale*, q. 48, ed. Borgnet, 37.93-94.

<sup>146</sup> Actually, Guilelmus de S. Theodorici, *Epist. ad fratres de Monte Dei*, II c. 3, PL 184.349.

<sup>147</sup> Gregorius I, *Moralia*, VIII c. 30, PL 75.822-33.

<sup>148</sup> Gregorius I, *Moralia*, XVIII c. 54, Pl 75.92.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid col. 93.

<sup>150</sup> Cf. Augustinus, *De Genesi ad litteram*, XII c. 27, CSEL 28/1.422.

<sup>151</sup> Ps. Dionysius, *De divinis nominibus*, c. 1 & 3, c. 8 & 2; PG 3.593, 697, 892.

Today the exterior sense of man is fed in the humanity of Christ; the interior, in the deity. Therefore, God was made man, so that He might beatify man, so that all should *find pasture, whether coming out or going in*.<sup>152</sup>

In three ways the quality of contemplation is varied.<sup>153</sup> First, in the mind's expansion. After vices have been excluded from the chamber of the heart, love of God enters accompanied by the virtues. *If anyone loves me* etc., and *I and my Father* etc. [John 14:23]. And the fervid heart of God's love expands the heart. And <God> is felt to be present with the soul; and it seems to be thus spiritually, according to Bernard,<sup>154</sup> because the intellect is the eye etc.

Then follows the second step, raising up the mind, desiring to see Him by Whom it is visited and consoled most sweetly. And, raised up so, "it begins to sigh very much in the arms of the Beloved, so that it adheres to Him not just delectably but also tenaciously, as if abstracted by some force from the sense and memory of all things visible, so that" it almost loses itself, according to that <text> of Canticles, *I sleep, and my heart keeps watch* [Cant. 5:2]. And it is similar to one beginning to sleep, who, nevertheless, still senses those things which are done around him in some way; but before nodding of he does not react. "Thus, love of God, present with intelligence, inebriates the mind and fastens it, abstracted from exterior things, to its God."<sup>155</sup> And when more vehement love and more lucid intelligence take the mind so much more validly from itself, so that, at last, it gives up all things which are below God and persists as if in some sort of coruscating light, *because the body makes the soul worse, and terrestrial habitation takes away the sense of one thinking of many things* [Wis. 9:15].

Sense, then, by itself scarcely can think tenuously; raised up by the impulse of supernal light, it can understand many more things at the same time, as it is raised on high above itself. But the corruption of the terrestrial body and the occupations of this life pull down the soul<sup>156</sup> and recall it to itself,<sup>157</sup> so that, weeping with the apostle, it cries out, *Who will deliver me, an unhappy man, from the body of death?* [Rom. 9:24]. Steadfastly, the contemplative soul falls back to inferior things and is fed by the memory of these things which it sweetly saw.

Thus, devout men appropriate something from the surrounding light furtively and tenuously; and they return to their shadows sighing, according to Saint Gregory etc.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Ps. Augustinus, *De spiritu et anima*, c. 9, PL 40.785, citing Jn. 10:9.

<sup>153</sup> Cf. Ricardus, *Beniamin minor*, V c. 2 & c. 5, Pl 196.169, 174.

<sup>154</sup> Actually, Guilelmus de S. Theodorico, *Tractatus de caritate*, c. 3, PL 184.592.

<sup>155</sup> See above n. 154.

<sup>156</sup> Using the variant *anima* instead of *animas*.

<sup>157</sup> Cf. Gregorius I, *In Ezechielem*, II hom. 2, PL 76.947.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid*, PL 76.955.

And, in this grade diverse species of devotion manifest themselves, that is jubilation, inebriation of the spirit, tears and spiritual delight.<sup>159</sup> Afterwards <the soul> comes to alienation of mind, that is the third grade of contemplation, first out of magnitude of devotion, then out of magnitude of wonder, then out of magnitude of exaltation, so that the mind of a man does not understand itself; but, elevated above itself, it passes on to alienation. The flame which sprang up beyond human means melts the mind like wax, so that often it is alienated in a stupor of supernal sweetness. And in alienation of mind he is led into an excess of joy. And, as long as we do not sense these things in us, we love less, since they vanish from this fervent desire etc.<sup>160</sup>

And, above all men, no doubt, the most blessed virgin Mary, who surpasses all riches [cf. Prov. 31:29], ascended to the third grade of contemplation. Wherefore, the Beloved says of this His friend in Canticles, *Who is this who comes up through the desert?* etc. [Cant. 3:6]. And, *Who is this who advances like the breaking dawn?* etc. [Cant. 6:9]. And *Who is this who ascends from the desert overflowing with delights, supported by the beloved* etc. [Cant. 8:5].

Few men ascend to the these grades of contemplation, although God is near to all, because the mind is distracted by cares; and, befogged by memory with phantasms, it does not return to itself, because beset with desires. Wherefore, it does not return to itself by the desire for internal? salvation. Man, therefore, falls and does not return. Nor could he return, since the returning stairway had been broken by Adam, until Christ, the restorer, came. Therefore, it is necessary to be brought back by Christ etc.<sup>161</sup>

e) Concerning the Assumption and the eternal reward of Mary.

Therefore, now she is, in some manner, borne away and assumed into heaven and exalted above all the choirs of heaven,<sup>162</sup> as must be said today, because *she appeared in heaven* [Rev. 12:1].

Now, having exhausted every way of contemplation, contemplation of the most blessed virgin Mary, who surpassed all these modes, remains ineffably for me, a sinner, because she treads on all things corruptible and on the moon itself [cf. Rev. 12:1]. And she was entirely clad with the clarity of the sun of justice [cf. Mal. 4:2], so that she persisted unfailingly in the light of contemplation in the highest mode, in rapture and excess of mind, according to the highest mode of theophany and deification, because, crowned with twelve stars, <she has> likewise twelve privileges above all pure men and creatures.

And first, according to history, in what time she was assumed and how; and, because <she was assumed> to glory, what is glory -- and even to what grade of glory. In the sixteenth year after the Ascension of

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<sup>159</sup> David de Augusta, *De exterioris et interioris hominis compositione*, III c. 64, p. 347.

<sup>160</sup> Cf. Ricardus, *Beniamin minor*, V c. 5, PL 196.174.

<sup>161</sup> Cf. Bonaventura, *Itinerarium*, c. 4, *Opera* 5.306.

<sup>162</sup> Cf. *Breviarium Romanum*, Resp. 1 Matut. In festo assumptionis B. V. M.

Christ, as is the opinion of the doctors, that is in the sixty third year of age of the glorious virgin, she was assumed.<sup>163</sup>

And, according to Albertus Magnus, in the book *De laude virginis*,<sup>164</sup> and other doctors, five privileges concurred in her death. First, she foresaw death; because Saint Martin and many other saints had this from God,<sup>165</sup> therefore, the virgin Mary from youth etc. Second, Christ led His mother away when she was summoned, because, in Chronicles [1 Chron. 15:1-25], David led the Ark to its home *with timbrel and song* etc. Third, she was separated from the pain of death, because, as is read in the Prologue on John,<sup>166</sup> then “prayer having been offered, he was laid to rest with the fathers, as much separated from the pain of death as from corruption of flesh; therefore, *a fortiori* the same thing happened to the mother of God. She already had suffered most grievously under the cross, when the sword, which is regarded as the equivalent of martyrdom, pierced her heart [cf. Luke 2:35]. After martyrdom, however, there is no sorrow. She even desired to be dissolved [cf. Phil. 1:23]., like Paul etc. Here most fervent charity drew <her> up so high that the soul was separated from the body, and <her> death was without pain. She died through love. Fourth, she rose up at once. Fifth, she was assumed at once, body and soul, although there were many doubts about this among the ancients.<sup>167</sup>

But, in Saint Gregory's collect for today's feast,<sup>168</sup> “Nevertheless, nor could she be held down by the bonds of death” etc. “Bonds of death”, that is return to dust according to Albert;<sup>169</sup> therefore, she rose at once. The Ark of the Covenant was built of *sechen wood* [Deut. 10:3], which wood never is gnawed by worms.<sup>170</sup> *Rise, Lord, to your resting place, you and the Ark of your sanctification* [Ps. 131:8], that is the virgin Mary etc.

The doctors think, from a certain saying of Dionysius, *De divinis nominibus*,<sup>171</sup> <that> his master Hierotheus, James and Peter were present at Mary's death and offered a sermon afterwards; and Hierotheus

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<sup>163</sup> Cf. *Revelationes S. Birgittae*, VII c. 27, ed. Wessen, p. 549.

<sup>164</sup> Cf. Ps. Albertus, *Mariale*, qq. 129-32, ed. Borgnet, 37.181-85.

<sup>165</sup> Cf. Sulpicius Severus, *Epistola 3*, CSEL 1.147 (Martin); Iacobus de Voragine, *Legenda aurea*, c. 9, pp. 61-62 (John the Evangelist) & p. 89 (Peter).

<sup>166</sup> *Prologus in evangelium secundum Iohannem*, Glo. Ord. (V 1003-04).

<sup>167</sup> C. Balic, *Testimonia de assumptione B. M. V.*, vol. 1 (Roma, 1948), p. 104.

<sup>168</sup> *Sacramentum Gregorianum*, In assumptione s. Mariae virginis, ed. Deshusses, *Le Sacramentaire Gregorianum*, vol. 1 (Freiburg, 1971), pp. 262-63.

<sup>169</sup> Langdorf in *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie* 60 (1947): 349-52.

<sup>170</sup> Cf. Hieronymus, *In Ioel*, 3:18, CSEL 76.207.

<sup>171</sup> Ps. Dionysius, *De divinis nominibus*, cc. 3 & 2, PG 3.681.

was rapt.<sup>172</sup> From the testimony of this Dionysius it was proven by Gregory, Augustine and Bernard <that> Mary was assumed to glory body and soul.<sup>173</sup>

It seems to me, however, that except for Christ, no man rose before the general resurrection, as I explained<sup>174</sup> elsewhere.<sup>175</sup> Whether, however, <her> soul returned to the body on the same day on which she died or on the third, according to what is read in the apocrypha,<sup>176</sup> or on the fourth, that is September 24, as in the revelations of blessed Elizabeth,<sup>177</sup> or on the fifteenth, as Saint Bridget of Sweden says was revealed to her, where she even asserts that the virgin Mary told her that she lived 25 years after Christ, or, as some say,<sup>178</sup> that she only was rapt by contemplation but the soul did not leave the body a portion of <its> qualities was sapped and corrupted, and consequently <she was> truly dead, and so through contemplation of life she came to contemplation of the fatherland, we piously doubt. God knows etc. I say that she was dead and buried; her tomb is seen today in the valley of Josephat.<sup>179</sup>

The most blessed virgin Mary obtained the prize of eternal life. Bernard,<sup>180</sup> in his tract *De miseria hominis*, speaks thus, “The prize is to see God, to live with God, to be in God, Who will be *all in all*, to have God, Who is the supreme good. There is supreme felicity, supreme delight, true liberty, perfect charity, eternal security and secure eternity; there is true joy, full knowledge and all blessedness and beauty, perennial life, rest and sweet concord. Thus, he in whose conscience sin will not be found will be blessed by God. He will see Him at will, will have <Him> at pleasure, will enjoy <Him> with delight. He will watch for eternity, will shine forth in truth, will rejoice in goodness. So, he will have an eternity of chiding, likewise a faculty of knowing and security in resting. Thus, he will be a citizen of the holy city, whose citizens are the angels.

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<sup>172</sup> Thomas Gallus, *Paraphrasis in c. 3 De divinis nominibus* in Dionysius Carthusienensis, *Opera* 16 (Tournai, 1902), p. 102.

<sup>173</sup> Ps. Augustinus, *De assumptione B. M. V.*, cc. 5-7, PL 40.1145-47.

<sup>174</sup> Literally, *causam tetigi*.

<sup>175</sup> *De docta ignorantia*, III c. 8, h I, p. 143.

<sup>176</sup> *De transitu B. M. V.*, ed. Tischendorf, *Apocalypae apocryphae* (Leipzig, 1866), pp. 225-16; Ps. Melito, *De transitu B. M. V.*, c. 17, ed. cit., p. 135.

<sup>177</sup> Elizabeth de Schönau, *Visiones*, II c. 31, ed. Roth, *Die Visionen der hl. Elisabeth und die Schriften der Äbte Ekbert und Emecho von Schönau*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Berlin, 1886), p. 54.

<sup>178</sup> *Revelationes s. Birgitae*, VI c. 62, p. 496.

<sup>179</sup> Cf. Henricus de Hassia, *Sermo de assumptione virginis*, Cod. Lat. Bibl. Nat. Vind. 4873, fol. 64rb-65va, citing 1 Cor. 15:28.

<sup>180</sup> Ps. Bernardus, *Meditationes*, c. 4, PL 184:492-93.

“Oh celestial city, secure mansion, fatherland containing all that delights, populace without murmur, quiet inhabitants, men having no want! Oh *what glorious things are said of you, city of God! Just like the habitation of those who rejoice in you* [Ps. 87:3]. All who rejoice in you, whose beautiful aspect and handsome face etc. In it the intellect is clarified, and affection is purified for knowing and having the truth. And this <is> entire good for man, to know and love the Creator. We will have time to see *how sweet is the Lord* [Ps. 34:8] and how great <is> the multitude of His sweetness etc. [1 Peter 2:3].

Many other things can be said about this glorious fatherland; and they rise by steps from the lovable, modest? and sweet good of this world to it. And they will be in that proportion, just like <that> of the infinite to the finite etc. Nor can the human tongue express nor the mind conceive the least delight in the fatherland.<sup>181</sup> And, although, according to the essential prize, there is no difference between all in the fatherland, since the fruition of the divine essence is common to all, nevertheless, a gradation exists among the saints according to their merits.

Glory consists in the clear cognition of the intellect and in the most-sweet love of disposition. The light of glory is a certain quantity of the mind, disposing and elevating <it> above the limits of its nature, so that it easily can see God.<sup>182</sup> Rightly, perhaps, just as the eye of the raven ought to regard the sun, it should strengthen its nature with a fortifying disposition, not, however, with another species than the light of the sun, since the sun would be sufficient for representing its light to it; so the God of infinite light falls upon all the blessed spirits. And, in so far as this light is given by God to a more intense degree, the more clearly God is seen. And understand thus the gradations in the fatherland! However, this light of glory follows grace and merit etc.<sup>183</sup>

But, because the mother of the Lord was of maximum and best merit among all the saints of both sexes, here she has the greatest prize eternally. Therefore, she was seen in heaven by a wondrous sign with meritorious works of the active life, because of *the moon under her feet*; with the contemplative <life>, which is perfected in the fatherland, because <she is> *clothed with the sun*, and with most singular privileges, because <there was> *on her head a crown of twelve stars*.

She was privileged with the first privilege against evil, because not only did she never sin but because she could not sin. She was privileged for good, first as a corporeal condition in herself, because <she was> a virgin mother, before God as mother of God, before <her> neighbor as virgin of virgins. As far as the intellectual condition of the soul, she was ignorant of nothing; <as far as> the affective <condition>, since she had purity before God in the highest; before <her> neighbor, <since she was> mother of all. But in act, in herself, she merited by any act; before <her> neighbor, by way of example, she is “star of the sea”; by way of aid, “gate of heaven”. If passion <is considered>, then she is the communication of passion. But,

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<sup>181</sup> Cf. Bonaventura, *Breviloquium*, pars 7 c. 7, *Opera* 5.288-89.

<sup>182</sup> Nicolaus de Lyra, *Postilla* ad Ps. 35:10 in *Glo. Ord.* (III 701).

<sup>183</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, I q. 12 aa. 5-6.

if the privilege pertains to the reward, thus, as to that, <her> exaltation is above all creatures, as to the name “queen of mercy”.

And these are the fourteen privileges of Mary: first, she never sinned; second, she could not sin; and these privileges are reduced to supreme purity under God. And so, with the remaining twelve.<sup>184</sup>

Since, therefore, she is thus privileged, therefore, <she is> *full of grace* [Luke 1:28]. She had, thus, all general and special graces of all creatures. She has the graces by which a creature was empty. Her grace was such that a mere creature was not capable of more, for she contained all uncreated grace in herself. She is like an aqueduct of graces, because she receives and gives -- *I have departed from paradise like an aqueduct* [Eccli.24:41]. She was *the wondrous vessel* [Eccli. 43:2], because she contained more than herself in herself; virgin mother of God, you enclosed in your womb Him Whom the whole world could <not> contain” etc.,<sup>185</sup> the wondrous vessel which contained the wine of godhead and the water of humanity at the same time without confusion in the mixture of natures or properties, the wondrous closed vessel receiving in herself and pouring out all things. The virgin Mary was the *fountain* full of grace and flowing *with many waters* [Esther 11:10], that is the price of redemption, the water of ablution, the bread of refectio, the medicine of curing, the arms of overcoming, the price of repayment.<sup>186</sup>

Wherefore, she is exalted now by merit above all the choirs of angels. *The throne of the mother of the king is placed* next to the throne of the king [1 Kings 2:19]. Augustine<sup>187</sup> <says that> the lady of the angels <is> higher than heaven; Jerome,<sup>188</sup> “This is the admirable day on which she merited to be exalted over the choirs of angels, where Christ entered for us, a priest forever; and she, glorious, raised to a throne in the kingdom, was seated next after Christ.... It is believed, then, that our Savior of all, as far as it is given to be understood, hurried forward all festive and seated her with joy with Him on the throne, because He taught, Honor the mother!” etc.

And, according to Albert,<sup>189</sup> because the mother of God, because queen of heaven, because spouse, because most beloved by God above all creatures, she obtained a place between God and creatures.

How the most blessed virgin Mary had the properties of all the angelic orders and hierarchies would take us long to say.<sup>190</sup> No doubt the virgin Mary obtained all the halos of martyrs, virgins and preachers through

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<sup>184</sup> Cf. Ps. Albertus, *Mariale*, qq. 133-42, 146-47, 151-53, ed. Borgnet 37.187-202, 207-09, 210-11, 220-39.

<sup>185</sup> *Missale Romanum*, Graduale in festo nativitatibus B. M. V.

<sup>186</sup> Ps. Albertus, *Mariale*, q. 164, ed. Borgnet 37.240-41.

<sup>187</sup> Actually, Ambrosius Autpertus, *Sermo 208*, PL 39.2131.

<sup>188</sup> Actually, Paschasius Radbertus, *Epistola “Cogitis me”*, ed. Ripberger, pp. 74-75, 80.

<sup>189</sup> Ps. Albertus, *Mariale*, q. 151, ed. Borgnet 37.221-22.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid* qq. 152-61, pp. 223-34.

the greatest works of intellect, memory and will, by a triple victory over the world, the flesh and the devil etc.<sup>191</sup>

Christian, contemplate here the mother of God, how, after long weariness of the present life, after numerous sighs for her Son, for Whose love she long wished and for <Whose> presence face to face she burned, when she already had sent many holy souls to glory and commiserated with them <and> with other supernatural holy ones [the angels], <she said>, *I adjure you, daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, declare it, for I languish with love* [Cant. 5:8]; at last, when she had completed the task which the Son had given her, she was heeded. Then the Son came with all the celestial court and led her to the fatherland etc.

“I saw a *splendid dove ascending above the rivers of water* with an inestimable *odor in her vestments*; and, just like *the day of spring*, roses surrounded her” etc.<sup>192</sup> The queen then entered from the right in a gilded vestment etc. [cf. Ps. 44:10].

And the ark, which was hidden under hides [cf. 2 Kings 7:2], when heaven was opened, *the ark of the covenant was seen in its temple* [Rev. 11:19], the ark gilded inside and out, *in which was a golden urn* [Exod. 25:10-11],<sup>186</sup> that is Christ, having manna in it, that is the word of God.

Oh how great is the joy given today to all the saints! Who, I ask, can express it?

The voice of the Father is heard, “Hear, *daughter; and see; and incline your ear! And forget your people and your father's house* [Ps. 44:11], and come!” The voice of the Son, “*Arise, hasten, my mother, my friend, my dove my beautiful one; and come!*” [Cant. 2:10]. The voice of the Holy Spirit, “Come, my chosen one, my temple, habitation, shrine; and I will place my throne in you!” All the heavenly court, “Come, our queen; come, mother; come, lady, because the king has desired your beauty!” [cf. Ps. 44:12].

The virgin responds most humbly, *I come to do Your will, God* etc. [Ps. 39:8-9].

All the celestial spirits cry in jubilee, *Who is this who advances* etc. [Cant. 6:9].

Others could respond, “This virgin is *from the root of Jesse* [Is. 11:1], the one expected by the patriarchs, the message of the prophets etc.” They escort this *queen of Sheba, very much perfumed* [1 Kings 10:10], into Jerusalem. *Myrrh, incense and cassia* [Ps. 44:9] perfume her vesture. They say, one to another, “*Who is this who ascends from the desert of this world, like a column of smoke from the aromas of myrrh and incense?*” [Cant. 3:6]. To which all can respond, “This is *the enclosed garden, the sealed fountain* etc.” [Cant. 4:12].

When she came to the first hierarchy, they said, “It is no fitting that you remain with us, virgin; you are much more beautiful than we. Your beauty and your comeliness; proceed prosperously!” Those living in the second hierarchy said, “Most beautiful form among the children of men, proceed!” [cf. Ps. 44:3 & 5]. And in the third hierarchy they said, “Queen of heaven, lady of the earth, *proceed and reign* over us!” [cf.

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<sup>191</sup> Ibid qq. 78-80, pp. 134-37.

<sup>192</sup> *Breviarium Romanum*, Resp. post lect. Matut. In festo assumptionis, citing Cant. 5:12 & 4:11; Eccli. 50:8.

Ps. 44:5]. You are more beautiful than the sun; you find first place above every disposition compared to the light of the stars etc.”

Mary thought most humbly, “Oh what is this greeting?” [cf. Luke 1:40]. These individuals replied, “Because of truth and justice et. *You have loved justice* etc. [Cant. 4:5 & 8].

Then she came to the king, Who said, *Come, my beloved, my mother; come from Lebanon. Come to be crowned* [Cant. 4:8]. And then, *the queen was placed at the right hand* [Ps. 44:10]; and she was adored by every creature with the adoration of homage,<sup>193</sup> that is of the most excellent servitude which can be displayed to a creature.

Nevertheless, she did not come to glory equal with Christ's, which is infinite, conferrable on no creature. Wherefore, according to the theme, this is *the great sign*, a woman in the most excellent grade of glory, *clothed with the sun*, has the moon under her feet, that is all the citizens living in glory, because, just as the moon is illuminated by the sun, so the saints <are illuminated> by the light of glory in the fatherland. And she has a crown of twelve stars, that is a crown above all crowns, because of the twelve singular privileges acquired in the fatherland; or, just as gold, stones and other things are born from the twelve signs of the stars <the zodiac> and <their> influence, so other saints are said to have crowns of gold and stones; <but> she is crowned with the cause of gold and stones, that is with the twelve signs.

This is that Esther who today is taken in to Ahasuerus, who is understood as beatitude,<sup>194</sup> *clad in regal garments*, having *the diadem of the kingdom on her head* [Esther 5:1].

And these things < suffice > for the first part.

Part 2: Concerning the Church Militant, how it follows <its> leader, Christ, to the celestial citadel.

a) Concerning the ascent of the Church Militant.

In another way, the aforesaid words can be expounded concerning the Church, which is the woman illuminated by Christ, the sun of justice [cf. Mal. 4:2]; at the same time, it is clothed with faith formed by charity and adorned with every spiritual charism, treading the mutable world like *the moon under the feet*, that is with its affections,<sup>195</sup> *having on <her> head*, that is in origin, the twelve apostles, marked with *twelve stars* shining the darkened world.

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<sup>193</sup> Literally, *hyperduliae*.

<sup>194</sup> Hieronymus, *Liber interp. Hebr. nom.*, Lag. 56, SCSL, 72.129.

<sup>195</sup> Nicolaus de Lyra, *Postilla ad Eph. 6:15* in Glo. ord. (VI 568).

And, this woman lives in the castle, <whose> name is Bethany, where dwell the sisters Martha and Mary, so that, at last, <having entered> Bethany with captives taken in war, she may acquire in victory Jerusalem, situated on the mountain.

Christ, as has been said, Whose *going forth from highest heaven* [Ps. 18:7], entered Bethany, that is the virgin Mary, and cried in the valley by Bethany, *The kingdom of heaven suffers violence* [Mt. 11:12]. Arise! Take arms and shield, and come to help <it>! *Do not wish to love the world nor those things which are of the world!* [1 John 2:15]. Abstain from all the works of the devil, *who is a liar* [John 8:44] and seduces you into the eternal fire of the great furnace and of the deep pit! Watch, because you do not know when the hour is coming! [cf. Mt. 25:13]. Come to me here in the Church's camp, *and your faces will not be confounded!* [Ps. 33:6]. *Come to me, you who desire me* [Eccli. 24:26]; and I will grant riches! Hear the *words of life* [John 6:69], because *I am the way, the truth and the life!* [John 14:6]. *All flesh <is> straw* etc.! [Eccli. 14:18]. *Do not fear those who kill* etc.! [Mt. 10:28]. Be strong! *Come all who are burdened!* [Mt. 11:28]. *If you thirst* etc.! [John 7:37].

Here one must begin <turning away> from the world and the world's deceptions, from sin and turning away from God, from glory not eternal and the most bitter pains of hell, <even> away from the glory and beauty of the celestial Jerusalem and its infinite sweetness, the most pleasant society of God, the glorious virgin and the saints and the means of coming to the fatherland; and by <this> victory, they ought to arrive <there>.

And, first, what is necessary is cleansing from sins by turning away from sins and conversion to God, bemoaning that you have offended such a good, pious Creator,<sup>196</sup> And then you begin to go through the desert of penance toward the camp of the Church, forming in yourself a concept, which the Good Whom you offended so gives to you, and what evils you have done against Him. Then, arising to confession, you come *with weeping and tears* to the water supply of the camp.<sup>197</sup> Third, by making satisfaction, you will be in the ditches, in which, by labors, you come to the gate;<sup>198</sup> and you will be a little time in ascent and descent of the ditch, thinking of the fear of God on account of the pains of hell, clinging to past sins of commission. And receive the most just judgements of God in <your> soul.<sup>199</sup>

Then think immediately of death, and think that you already are dead. Hold before you the image of death. Think where you will go; think of the tremendous Last Judgement and the pains of hell. Then you will climb out of the ditch of the camp,<sup>200</sup> and you will begin to see the walls a little through hope of pardon.<sup>201</sup> And love will begin to be generated, when you think what good things God has given you and what He has

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<sup>196</sup> Gerardus Zutphen, *De spirit. asc.*, c. 12, ed. Mathieu, p. 60.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid c. 13, pp. 62-66, citing 2 Mach. 11:6.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid c. 14, p. 66.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid cc. 16-17, pp. 74-78.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid c. 19, pp. 80-88.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid c. 22, p.p. 100-04.

prepared, and to what the merciful God has called you, so that you will come. And, when you begin to see that celestial Jerusalem from afar, you will be inflamed more in pursuing your approach and ascent to the glory of paradise.<sup>202</sup>

Then you will think again of the benefits of God, which He gave you, contrition and pain about things committed, and love, through which you can enter into the city, because, without that money, no one is admitted.<sup>203</sup> And to this, so that love may increase and purge your soul and be inflamed, you will see the city prepared for you; and you will think over the life of Christ, His cross and death for you, and that He always stands calling and awaiting you.

And then, before the gate of the camp, by reading, meditation and prayer you will nourish your ascent.<sup>204</sup>

b) Concerning the gates and steps of the ascent.

And, when thus you come to the first gate of lead, you will display humility; before the gate there stand three men, who will examine you. And, if they find you a man <of humility>, one will give you one bit of advice without which you cannot ascend, concerning<sup>205</sup> strenuousness, severity and benignity. Strenuousness disposes the soul to doing good works vigilantly, confidently and elegantly, against negligence. Severity makes it apt for love of asperity, poverty and lowliness, restraining all concupiscence. Benignity disposes <it> to benevolence, tolerance and internal joy, excluding wickedness.<sup>206</sup>

These are the first three arms. When you have despoiled yourself of all sin by the preceding contrition and penitence, as if you arrived naked before the outworks, then you will be clad and armed by these three, dressing you with the hood of strenuousness on your head, dressing you with the rough vestment, girding your body with severity, and <covering> your feet with the shoes of benignity.

After you are armed thus, go to the first gate of lead, which is that of humility; it is necessary that one reaching the camp should contemn <his> own excellent. And lead is the most humble and incorruptible metal, in which dead bodies repose etc.

And this gate has three steps: first, when a man contemns himself; second, when he does not despise others who contemn him. The third step is when he desires that he should be contemned. And they are called the

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid c. 25, pp. 114-16.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid c. 26, p. 116.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid c. 43, pp. 218-20.

<sup>205</sup> Literally, *quae sunt*.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid c. 50, pp. 260-62.

steps of trust, because only in humility is trust.<sup>207</sup> And, on the third step, you will be equipped even to the knees with arms of lead, by means of which you can resist pride.

You will arrive at the second gate of tin, which is the gate of patience. Patience is compared to tin, which melts quickly in fire; it remains most patiently ductile. And it makes sounding and strong the metals with which it is mixed, so that they sustain all adversities. It has three steps, that is the double step of martyrdom, with and without bloodshed, and the step of peace; and one is armed above the knees even to the buttocks. After this follows the gate of silence and taciturnity; and it is composed very well of iron, which is not ductile, fusible or malleable without great heat.<sup>208</sup> And it has three steps, those of beginners, those becoming proficient and those perfected. Although silence is a virtue with many uses, nevertheless, it is especially ordered toward purity and chastity. There one is armed to the thighs.

There follows the fourth gate, which is that of obedience, which is made of red copper, which is assimilated well to anything, because it is fusible and ductile and holds alien tinctures in itself easily. And it is <thus> with gold and silver, as in orichalcum, although it is subject to its superiors,<sup>209</sup> just as obedience subjects itself to the will of a superior in things licit and honest. And it is a copper belt which binds the arms strongly to the thighs. And, similarly, it has three steps, of those beginning, those becoming proficient and those perfected.<sup>210</sup>

There follows after this contempt of riches; and this is a gate of orichalcum. Orichalcum rightly “is opposed to avarice”,<sup>211</sup> because it appears beautiful and noble; and, nevertheless, it is of little price. And all beauty which is in orichalcum comes from the earth, which is called *calamia*. And this gate has three steps, those of those beginning, those becoming proficient and those perfected. The beginners do not desire other things, and they are not content with their own things. Those becoming proficient need only things necessary; but those perfected condemn all riches and choose poverty, just like the religious.<sup>212</sup>

And, just as rapacity of goods and avarice are exercised by hands and arms, so the hands are ornamented with gauntlets of orichalcum; and even the arms are stained lest they be impeded inordinately by the mud of riches. It is not fitting for a knight to thresh wheat; nor is it fitting that he who is armed militantly and virtuously immerse himself in the mire.

There follows this the sixth gate of silver, which is that of sobriety. And it is silvered and well compared to silver, because it is a clean metal, noble and lucid. It does not decay; and <it is> ductile, just like sobriety

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<sup>207</sup> Ibid c. 63, pp. 330-32.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid c. 59, pp. 298-302.

<sup>209</sup> David de Augusta, *De exterioris et interioris hominis compositione*, III c. 42, p. 261.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid III c. 43, pp. 265-68.

<sup>211</sup> Gerardus Zutphan., *De spirit. asc.*, c.58, pp. 296-98.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid c. 44, pp. 266-68.

etc. And it has three steps, that is the step of quality, the step of quantity and that of mode. And, therefore, there are placed on the necks of those entering in this gate torques, which enclose the neck and restrain the throat.<sup>213</sup>

And after this follows the last, golden gate, which is the gate of chastity.<sup>214</sup> And it is well compared to gold, which is extracted from the earth with greatest difficulty. It is most beautiful, shining, incorruptible, noble and most clean. Thus, chastity is extracted with difficulty from those inhabiting our earth, because of concupiscence in the flesh; and, when it has been extracted, it never suffers stain and always remains beautiful and noble etc. And it has three steps, that is: the first is abstinence from carnal copulation with the intent of so remaining and denying consent to all illicit acts; the second step, mortification of the flesh, so that it is subjected to the spirit; the third step, castigation of the flesh, so that it does not feel concupiscence.<sup>215</sup> And then he is crowned with a round crown of gold, small and refined, as a sign of victory.

When you are armed thus, you will come to the four steps of the palace,<sup>216</sup> which are the four cardinal virtues. The first step is that of prudence, which probes all things, good and bad, past, present and future, choosing the good, spurning the bad; therefore, <you> are armed with a bow to defend yourself from afar. The second step is that of temperance, which exceeds the law of moderation in nothing; and it gives a shield, commonly called a buckler, to resist the darts of desire for the world, the flesh and the devil. The third step is that of fortitude; and it arms <you> with steel covering the upper arm. Just as that part receives on itself fearlessly the blows of the adversary, so fortitude bravely bears adversities and only fears dishonor. The fourth step is that of justice and belts a sword on <your> thigh to give each his due. And justice rightly belts on the sword, because it is signified by the sword. From the mouth of the one sitting on the throne a sword proceeded etc. cf. Rev. 1:16]. *Belt on the sword* etc. [Ps. 44:4]]. The sword justly defends and cuts justly. It receives on itself the blows of fortitude; it guards temperately; and it defends prudently in the ring.

Each step is of a triple combination of precious stones, of marble, jasper and topaz, because virtue <is> either political or purgative of the soul. Virtues are called political in so far as they rule human life; purgative, in so far as they vanquish vice; souls, purified in so far as the possessor of virtues quiets the vanquished vices.<sup>217</sup>

When thus and thus you ascend, you arrive at a bedecked plaza, which is called perseverance. And this plaza or square is built on seven columns [cf. Prov. 9:1], which are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, ruling the Church against the seven mortal sins. There is the column of the fear of the Lord against pride, of piety against envy, of knowledge against wrath, because wrath is a type of insanity, of fortitude against sloth, of

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<sup>213</sup> Ibid c. 56, pp. 280, 286.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid c. 57, p. 288.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid c. 57, pp. 290-95.

<sup>216</sup> Hugo Argent., *Comp. theo. verit.*, V cc. 35 & 37-38, ed. Bornet, 34.180-81, 183-84.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid. V c. 16, p. 165.

counsel against avarice, of the intellect against gluttony, of wisdom against lust.<sup>218</sup> These seven columns are in this palace, seven good spirits who rule the Church Militant [cf. Rev. 4:5]; and the others <are> the evil spirits which rule *the church of the wicked* [Ps. 25:5].

And then you enter between the seven standards erected over the columns, which are the seven beatitudes, according to a distinction of steps.<sup>219</sup> Because, according to <their> essence they are eight, therefore, in the midst is the eighth, the standard of the cross, at which you arrive. The first standard is black. It is poverty of spirit [cf. Mt. 5:3-10] against concupiscence; and it is mortification of the spirit. The second is blue, and it is mildness and gentleness. The third standard is yellow, and it is mourning. The fourth is what is commonly called gray; and it is fasting. The fifth is green, and it is mercy. The sixth is white, and it is the color of purity. The sixth is red, and it is the color of peace. The cross in the midst is the color of blood, and it is endurance of persecution for the sake of justice.

With all these standards the celestial fatherland situated on the mountain is achieved.

c) Concerning entrance into the heavenly Jerusalem.

The twelve tribes of Israel have twelve rulers. This holy congregation has a supreme pontiff in <its> midst with the standard of the cross, and the twelve apostles with trumpets sounding the word of God. And this diocese gathers with Eucharius, Valerius and Maternus, with Paulinus, Maximinus and other shepherds<sup>220</sup> under the standard of the cross.

And the whole army begins to advance toward Mount Zion. Because they are not now fully armed, at the first bridge the pontiff gives a shield to those advancing; and this is *the shield of faith* [Eph. 6:16], and it is fitting for a bridge, because by faith one passes over the depths and abysses, just as perilous water is crossed by a bridge. At the second bridge, when one already begins to see with the eye the supercelestial fatherland displaying splendor, the pontiff gives each a helmet [cf. Eph. 6:17] against despair, so that he might hope for victory. When one already begins to be closer to the mountain and reaches the ascending road, He arms those approaching with armor, without which they cannot be safe in any way; and this is the *breastplate* [Eph. 6:14] or armor of charity, outwardly of steel, *since charity endures all things* [1 Cor. 13:7] inwardly, however, or iron, so that one is most tenacious. True charity suffers all things because of the beloved, and it adheres unendingly with a very strong bond.

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid V c. 38, p. 184.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid V cc. 48-53, 55, pp. 189-91.

<sup>220</sup> Early bishops of Trier.

In this way of charity the standard bearer ascends on high; and His mother, the mother of mercy, follows Him -- and all the holy spirits. They penetrate the stars even to the city. In the camp the guardian angels cry, *Who is this who comes from Edom with garments dyed in Bosra?* [Is. 63:1]. He says, *I am the way, the truth and the life* [John 14:6]; and “I am the living victim” [cf. Eph. 5:2] who offered Himself to His Father. And, “I have redeemed the captives, my brother exiles. *Open the gates* [Judith 13:13], so that where the minister is, there the Father <will be>!” And immediately the gates of the city of Jerusalem are opened. And the celestial army will cry, “You have come, desired one, light and health;<sup>221</sup> *Holy, holy, holy!*” [Is. 6:3]. And one <will cry> to another, “Oh how beautiful [cf. Num. 24:5 & Wis. 4:1] <is> this assembly. See 144,000 from the twelve tribes [Rev. 7:4]. Behold infinite persons *marked with the blood of the lamb!* [Rev. 7:14].

All will enter with power; and the voice of the voice of the Father will be heard, “Come blessed; receive the mansions prepared for you from the beginning!” [cf. John 14:20]. Whoever ascends will be fervent and alight with the fire of charity. He will receive satiation of desire, the place of the habitation of glory [cf. Is. 63:15], where, like thirst and hunger for burning charity, he will be fed on vision and the fruition of life immortal; and he will live forever.

To which most blessed glory may the standard bearer, the supreme pontiff, <who is> blessed forever, lead us through victory.

#### ADDITION

In the world’s valley the prince of the world has his temple, in which are the documents, diabolical semblances and perverse doctrines, where the diabolical office is celebrated; the diabolical mass, commonly called *velen*, <is celebrated> with tables, dice, blasphemies, deceits, deception. There are found deceptions of some sort for every state of life etc. Take in hand the painted horse, on which the pope sits, which the emperor leads;<sup>283</sup> all states care for this horse, all merchants, clerics, officials, citizens, women etc.

The devil's temple has seven gates, the seven vices,<sup>222</sup> in the wall. The highest and most common gate is that of pride, multiply ornamented according to the multiple species of pride and vain glory. It has four posts, according to the four species of pride, and twelve steps, according to its twelve grades. The other great gate, toward the south, is that of avarice, multiply ornamented because of its many daughters, having an idol above it, because it is compared to an idol. The third gate, toward the east, is that of lust, multiply ornamented, having seven posts, according to its seven daughters, and seven steps, by which one climbs to lust. Between the gate of pride, which is in the north, and the gate of avarice, which is in the west, <is> one almost as large, which is envy; and it is less than the gate of pride but like it, because of its daughters.

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<sup>221</sup> *Ordo in die sanctae Pashae*, Cant. triumphale, “Cum rex gloriae”, ed. Andrieu, *Les ordines Romani*, 5.300.

<sup>222</sup> Or seven deadly sins. See, among others, Gregorius I, *Moralia*, XXXI c. 45, PL 76.621; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa II<sup>a</sup> II<sup>ae</sup> q. 153 a. 5*; Guilelmus Peraldus, *Summa de vitiis*, tr. 7, De invidia, pars 1, 1/2.278, tr. 8, De ira, pars 1, c. 1, 1/2.283.

And, on the other side of that of pride, toward that of lust, is the gate of wrath. After this is the gate of gluttony, very near the gate of lust. Near the gate of avarice is that of sloth. Through these gates the world enters into the devil's service.

## Sermon 12 “You seek Jesus”<sup>223</sup>

DRAFT TRANSLATION BY THOMAS IZBICKI

You seek Jesus of Nazareth, Who was crucified. He is risen, He is not here. Mark in the last chapter and in today's gospel [Mk. 16:6]. Yesterday, and part of the day before,<sup>224</sup> pious mother Church lamented her dead Spouse;<sup>225</sup> her harp was turned to mourning and her song to the voice of weeping [Job 30:31]. Today, however, those devout women, having come still weeping to seek the place where He was laid to anoint His crucified corpse, heard from the angel, because they sought Jesus of Nazareth, the Crucified, that He had risen and was not in that place [Mk. 16:5-6]. And sorrow was turned to joy, because the Beloved had come back to life; the lost was found [Jn. 16:20].

O the holy women, who <were> so solicitous that early in the morning, when the sabbath was past [Mk. 16:2, 1] - because it was not permissible on the sabbath - immediately upon being given the opportunity, <led> lovingly by formed faith in Christ and simply raised up by love <of Him>, at the testimony of the angel - knowing Jesus, the son of Mary, <is> the Savior, because at His name everything in heaven, on earth and Under the earth bends a knee [Phil. 2:10], and neither is there salvation in any other [Acts 4:12] - sought while most downcast, Him Who once was crucified between thieves [Matt. 27:38].

O you blessed women, who first merited to hear that the Savior had risen! What was this other than to know the end of the Incarnation? Just as the virgin Mary, taught by the word of the angel, first knew the Word Incarnate, so these women merited first to hear from the angel the end of the entire Incarnation, which is the Resurrection, that through it human nature has become apt for the glory of beatitude, which the Word Incarnate principally intended in His becoming man.

Then they could say, "The Lord has risen indeed! Alleluia!"<sup>226</sup>

O immense story, that the life of our crucified Beloved has flowered again!<sup>227</sup> This is the day which the Lord hath made: let us be glad and rejoice therein [Ps. 118:24]!

Wherefore, so that, having sought today the victorious Crucified and not found <Him> on earth, we may be fed with spiritual joy together with these women, let us raise the sweet sounding voice of the heart in angelic salutation,<sup>228</sup> so that, by saying <it>, we, having mortified the flesh, may proclaim the Resurrection

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<sup>223</sup> Delivered on Easter, April 20, 1432 at Koblenz.

<sup>224</sup> Literally *nudius tertius*.

<sup>225</sup> Hymn "Pia mater plangit ecclesia"; see Chevalier, *Repertorium hymnologicum* no. 14905.

<sup>226</sup> *Breviarium Romanum*, In ritu elevationis crucis in dom. Resurrectionis, Versus post ablatum velamen; cf. Luke 24:34.

<sup>227</sup> *Breviarium Romanum*, Graduale post Psalmos in dom. Resurrectionis.

<sup>228</sup> The *Ave Maria*, with which Cusanus and his contemporaries opened sermons.

along with the mother once afflicted with most sad compassion by the death of <her> Son <but> now consoled, because <she is> the mother of all consolation etc.

We will say three things in order. First, how Christ was sought by these women; and here the gospel will be cited for this, for the common folk, that to seek Jesus is to seek Him crucified. Second, about the Resurrection, and here especially <it will be cited> for the learned, concerning the gifts of the glorified body and the mystical resurrection of those crucified with Him. Third, that Christ is not found alive on earth [Job 28:13], how, that is, life was not in the terrestrial soul as long as the body of Christ was dead; He remained in the earth or behind the stone, when He rose alive by the resumption of the soul -- and that for the contemplatives.

Part 1: Concerning seeking Jesus crucified.

a) Why the Son of God was subjected to a most bitter death. Concerning the first: Because the motive of the first sin was an appetite for power<sup>229</sup> in its very excellence -- because the devil said, You shall be as Gods [Gen. 3:5] -- and the vice, curiosity in the understanding of truth<sup>230</sup> -- wherefore he added, knowing good and evil, two things followed from this transgression of <God's> command, that is eating from the forbidden tree. Because of that sin God was made man to save all of us who are descended from Adam the transgressor; this fault had such a great Redeemer.<sup>231</sup> Wherefore, although the human race could be liberated by the infinite and eternal God by a simple command of the eternal and infinite will, which nothing can resist;<sup>232</sup> nevertheless, it pleased His infinite goodness to descend "for our sake and our salvation,"<sup>233</sup> "because there was no other mode as fitting for the repairer, reparable, repaired."<sup>234</sup> And, so that He might show <Himself> in this to be inseparable patience, inestimable charity, He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross [Phil. 2:8], which was the most bitter and most shameful of all deaths.<sup>235</sup>

And so, for our salvation, "He suffered a most general passion not only as far as human nature but as far as all the principal members of the body. And, as far as every power of the soul, although nothing can be suffered as far as divine nature, He suffered a most bitter passion because He not only suffered like one suffering from wounds but He even suffered along with <us> like one suffering for our offenses. He suffered a most ignominious passion because of the shameful use of a cross and association with thieves,

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<sup>229</sup> Augustinus, *De peccatorum meritis et remissione*, II, c. 19, PL 44.170.

<sup>230</sup> cf. Guilelmus Peraldus, *Summa vitorum*, tr. 6, De superstitia, c. 7 (1/2.2021).

<sup>231</sup> cf. *Missale Romanum*, Praeconium "Exultet".

<sup>232</sup> cf. Bonaventura, *In Sent.*, III, d. 20 a. un. q. 6 arg. 1 (3.430).

<sup>233</sup> *Symbolum Nicaeanum*.

<sup>234</sup> Hugo Argentinensis, *Compendium*, IV, c. 6 (34.127).

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, c. 19 (34.142).

with whom He was selected <to die>. He suffered a murderous passion by the separation of the soul from the body, although not from the union of both with divinity".<sup>236</sup>

The beginning of our restoration restored us except for our freedom of will. Wherefore, He has invited us with a most efficacious example to arrive at the summit of virtue through <His> example of bearing death, even a most punishing death, because of justice and obedience. What, therefore, could incite us more than such benignity of the Son of the most high God, who, intervening not for our merits but for our many demerits, hath laid down His life for us [1 Jn. 3:16]! And it is shown the more that He sustained pains and humiliations for us. By this we are invited to love and imitate Him.

He even restored us by offering a satisfactory satisfaction for the honor of God, repaying God due honor. Honor was taken away from God by pride and disobedience with respect to the act which the man was forbidden; it is restored by humiliation and obedience in the act to which Christ, as far as God equal to the Father, was in no way bound, in so far as an innocent man in no way is worthy of death. When He emptied Himself...becoming obedient unto death [Phil. 2:7-8]; He repaid God what He had not stolen, offering a pleasing sacrifice to placate God perfectly.<sup>237</sup>

And, third, He restored <man> despite the order of every regime by the most convenient remedy of curing contraries with contraries. "The man sinned by acting proudly, because he wished to be wise like God, lusting after the apple of delight; <he was> raised up in presumption, killing the human race, taking away immortality. Here, first, God <became> man; second, He suffered on the wood of the cross a most general passion because of the general infection, <undoing> lust with most bitter passion, presumption with a most ignominious passion.

Because even the generality of corruption killed every part of the body and every power of the soul, here, even so, Christ suffered in the higher part, reason, by which God is loved most fully; and He suffered most fully so that nature <might be restored> because of the conjunction <of the superior> with the inferior, because Christ was a pilgrim and an entire man.

The pain of the flesh was the more intense because of the equality of completion and <His> vivacity; and, in the mind, because of highest love of God and supreme love of neighbor. And, although the soul was separated from the body, He, nevertheless, remained united to divinity in both. He was not, nevertheless, a man for three days. And He suffered so that death could be swallowed up in victory in the death of Christ [1 Cor. 15:54]; "Dying He destroyed our death, and rising He restored <our> life."<sup>238</sup>

So that, however, we can know Whom those most devout women sought, that is Jesus...Who was crucified, I have offered these things at the start.

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<sup>236</sup> Bonaventura, *Breviloquium*, pars 4, c. 9 (5.249), citing Luke 22:37.

<sup>237</sup> cf. loc. cit. (5.249-50).

<sup>238</sup> *Missale Romanum*, Praefatio pro tempore paschali.

b) Concerning the descent of the soul of Jesus to Hell and how He rose from the dead.

Now to the gospel according to history. After Jesus Christ died, because He thirsted for the redemption of all who would be incorporated into Him through faith, the soul of Christ immediately "descended into Hell";<sup>239</sup> the divinity was united to that soul. And so Christ descended to Hell and remained in the tomb, because divinity remained inseparably united to the body. And so He descended to the fathers, so that He might reform Hell, because He is the Lord of Hell, and led it captive.

O immense joy! What do you believe the saints detained in Hell cried? Nothing other than, "You, the Desired One, Whom we have awaited in the shadows, have come!"<sup>240</sup> O death of death, you have enlivened us with the glory of beatitude! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord [Matt. 21:9].

How great then were the joyful pronouncements of the prophets, because they saw the salvation of God [Is. 40:3; Lk. 3:6]. How great the joy of the patriarchs, because they perceived themselves to have been saved and all the nations to be blessed by their seed [Gen. 22:18]. This joy, although it was in Hell, did not extend to the lower part of Hell, in which there was not nor will be redemption,<sup>241</sup> nor to the place of those who died in original sin, because, after this life, grace was given to none who had not followed it here. And those who were in Purgatory rejoiced over their salvation; and, as is the opinion of the forefathers,<sup>242</sup> they were led with those who were in Limbo, who were not suffering according to Augustine in *De Genesi ad literam*.<sup>243</sup>

While the soul of Christ was with the fathers, who then attained full blessedness, <His> body remained in the tomb.

There was, on the day of burial, Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary sitting over against the sepulchre [Matt. 27:61], that is, according to Lyra, the mother of Joseph.<sup>244</sup> The women, however, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought sweet herbs on the day of death or after evening on the sabbath, when the sabbath had passed, because it was not permitted on the sabbath, so that, coming after the sabbath had passed, they might anoint Jesus [Mk. 16:1].<sup>245</sup> And, coming in the morning, they gathered

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<sup>239</sup> *Symbolum apostolorum*.

<sup>240</sup> *Ordo in die Paschae*, Canticum "Cum rex gloriae"; ed. Andrieu, *Les ordines Romani* (5.300).

<sup>241</sup> *Breviarium Romanum*, Resp. post lect. VII matut. in Commemoratione omnium fidelium defunctorum.

<sup>242</sup> See, among others, Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, III, q. 52, a. 8.

<sup>243</sup> c. XXII, CSEL 28/1.428-29.

<sup>244</sup> Nicolaus de Lyra, Postill to Math. 27:56 (5.462).

<sup>245</sup> cf. Nicolaus de Lyra, loc. cit.

to fulfill <their> purpose, <and> because the place was not beneath the walls,<sup>246</sup> before they reached the place of burial, the sun had begun to rise.<sup>247</sup>

But Mary Magdalene, according to the gospel of JOn, cometh early, when it was yet dark [Jn. 20:1], and found the stone already rolled back [Lk. 24:2]; and she ran and told Simon and JOn etc. And it was not recorded there that she saw an angel then [Jn. 20:1-2]. According to Matthew, however, Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, when the sabbath had passed, bought sweet herbs in the evening anoint Jesus. And, after that evening, before the first light of day, Christ rose. And they came to the monument, according to Saint Jerome,<sup>248</sup> when the sun began to shine, and there was a great earthquake etc.; and an angel of the Lord descended etc. [Matt. 28:2]. And, according to Luke, on that sabbath, those women who had come from Galilee with Christ came, when it was just becoming light, carrying perfumes which they had prepared; and they found the stone rolled back, and two men standing in shining garments etc. [Lk. 24:1-2, 4; Math. 27:55]. According to the gospel of JOn [Jn. 20:10-12], after the disciples had left the monument to their own places, Mary Magdalene remained without, weeping. Now as she was weeping, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre. And she saw two angels in white, sitting etc.

All of these things are mysteries:

First, Mary Magdalene, cometh early, when it was yet dark. Second, when she came with the other Mary, she came and found the angel. The other Mary may have been Mary <the wife of> Cleophas, who remained with her at the foot of the cross, or Mary <the mother> of Joseph, who, according to Lyra,<sup>249</sup> sat by the tomb. In that case, she came at dawn, according to Saint Jerome, as the *Historia scholastica* relates etc.<sup>250</sup> And, meanwhile, Peter and JOn, that is the Church of the gentiles and the synagogue, according to the homily of Saint Gregory, <came>;<sup>251</sup> and <the Church, signified by Peter>, entered the monument before the synagogue, signified by JOn, and then JOn after that [Jn. 20:4-6], because there will be, at last, one shepherd and one flock [Jn. 10:16].

And, while Mary Magdalene and <Mary> Cleophas -- or Mary of Joseph -- were outside [Jn. 20:11], an angel...descended from heaven, ... and sat [Mt. 28:2] at the right side [Mk. 16:5].

After Mary first, in the dark, had found the monument empty, she had recourse in her sorrow to the Old and New Testaments, to the Church and the synagogue.<sup>252</sup> And, because she found that Christ had to suffer

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<sup>246</sup> Nicolaus de Lyra, Postill to Luke 24:1.

<sup>247</sup> Ord. glo. to Mark 16:2 (5.655).

<sup>248</sup> ep. 120, CSEL 55.481.

<sup>249</sup> Postill at Mark 15:40 & 47.

<sup>250</sup> Petrus Comestor, *Historia scholastica*, in *Evang.*, c. 185, PL 196.1636.

<sup>251</sup> Gregorius I, *Hom. in evang.*, hom. 22, PL 76.1175.

<sup>252</sup> The translation omits *vel Joseph*.

and rise thus, she accepted a companion, who had seen Christ die, that is Mary Cleophas, sister of the glorious virgin Mary;<sup>253</sup> and she remained in meditation on the death of her beloved. And, so that she might reflect on all the bitterness of <His> death in full, she had a companion and witness, who could incite her as much about the pains of the Crucified as about the suffering of the mother and the compassion of the Son.

While those two most holy women were there, a divine light concerning the Resurrection descended into their hearts through the angel. And, on account of their sadness, to console their hearts, he said, Fear not [Mt. 28:5]: "Whom do you seek, Christians?" etc.<sup>254</sup>

When, however, Mary Cleophas, who already had received consolation from having seen the angel who had consoled them, soon went her way and told Mary Salome, who was a sister of the mother, and Mary James, who even then were preparing perfumes; and so they went to console the most sorrowful mother of Christ.<sup>255</sup>

And, when the three gathered so had been encouraged, they went to the Lord's tomb and saw an angel dressed in a white stole sitting at the right side; and they were stunned. He said, "Be not afrighted; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, Who was crucified. He is risen, He is not here, behold the place where they laid Him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee; there you shall see Him, as He told you." But they, going out, fled from the sepulchre [Mk. 16:6-8], because fear seized them. Those other women fled.

Mary <Magdalene>, however, who had come before dawn, did not fear; but she stayed and wept. Now as she was weeping, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre. And she saw two angels in white, sitting, one at the head, and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been laid. They said to her, "Woman, why weepest thou?" She saith to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord; and I know not where they have laid Him." While she said this, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing; and she knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith to her, "Woman, why weepest thus?" She, thinking it was the gardener, saith to him, "Sir, if thou hast taken Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." Jesus saith to her, "Mary." She, turning, saith to Him, "Rabboni." etc. [Jn. 20:11-16].

c) A dialogue with Mary Magdalene concerning seeking Jesus and His Resurrection is composed.

So that, however, we may understand the sweetness of the mystery a bit and may arouse ourselves, at this dawn of the supreme festival, let us speak to Mary Magdalene, full of sorrow, charity and compassion, and say, "Tell us, Mary, why you and Mary of Joseph have placed yourselves over against the sepulchre? [Mt. 27:61]"

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<sup>253</sup> Glo. ord. to JOn 20:2 (5.1311).

<sup>254</sup> cf. *Liturgia paschalis in visitatione sepulchri secundum Librum ordinarium ecclesiae Trevirensis*, ed. Kurzeja, p. 492.

<sup>255</sup> The translation omits *sororem matris sue*.

Mary, "I do not wish to desert the treasure of my heart, whom I always have loved much, whom the perfidious stole away; I do not wish to desert <Him> in death. I sit, therefore, the most miserable of women, most sadly afflicted, so that I might at least look upon the place where they laid my beloved. I am not permitted to approach nearer; therefore, I sit over against the sepulchre. I desire at least to be fed from afar by the most-sad fragrance<sup>256</sup> of my Savior, which I am not strong enough to approach nearer.

"I, the most unfortunate of all, could not live then, because I saw the heart of my beloved, in which my soul resided, pierced by a lance [Jn. 19:34]. How, then, has such a fortitude of spirit survived in me? I would have laid myself down on the earth so that the remaining spirit of life could be taken away from me and buried with <my> Beloved, Whose body I was forbidden to approach, to Whom I chose to bind myself inseparably.

But my Beloved already was resting in peace by the time the sabbath had come, not dead in my heart but rather alive, because, on account of me and seeing me, the dead man said, "Arise, make haste, my love [Cant. 2:10]. You see, since the place of My burial is walled round with guards [Mt. 27:65-66], you wait in vain; A garden enclosed [Cant. 4:12]. Do not despair! You will not lose me."

And I said, "O what a consolation, Lord! Because I see You, the fount of life, the Lord, signed and sealed with a great stone, I believe that no one will take you away from here. I will go, therefore, so that, before I am prohibited on account of the sabbath, I may prepare unguents and wash <Your> most holy body with tears; and then<sup>257</sup> I will anoint <You> dead, just as once when You were alive [Lk. 7:37-38].

"O fountain of life [Prov. 13:14], grant me that I may find some life-giving antidote to give to Your body, because I, a wretch, was the occasion of your death in some way in <my> first anointing <of You> when Judas was moved by the act to betray You [Mt. 26:7-16; Jn. 12:3-6]. What more unhappily could befall me, one who merited to be saved by You most benignly in that hour in which You, on my account, were given over to death by Judas in a treacherous way. You, Who alone can do all things, grant that I may find an unguent contrary to this, so that You, the life of the living, may be vivified.

"I part from You, sweet Jesus, with this mind. I depart, I say, from the body, not the soul, with which I lie buried with You. I depart, I say, quickly, so that the guards, who, since they see no one, even though ordered to abide, march away. And then I will return quickly."

"Tell, Mary, what did you do in the meantime?"

"Truly, I gathered an antidote of spikenard, redolent of true love, in the clear alabaster vase of my heart [Jn. 12:3; Mt. 26:6; Mk. 14:3]; and I closed it with a strong seal [Cant. 8:6], lest it should expire. But within it spread more strongly in a continuous whirl of sweet-smelling smoke throughout the holy sabbath - so that I might be enclosed in the tomb of my buried Beloved; so that, if an opportunity of approaching should be given to me, I might quickly open my very hot antidote and pour it immediately on <his> wounded body;

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<sup>256</sup> The translation follows the variant reading *fragrantia*, rather than the edition's *flagrantia*.

<sup>257</sup> The translation reads *nunc* as *tunc*.

so that I might embrace the dead body with my entire living one; so that the spirit of life, the immortal soul of my Beloved, should be excited to return and revivify the body perfumed, cleansed, warmed by the embrace of my body and washed with tears.

"For which reason, when the sabbath was past [Mk. 16:1], I ran as quickly as I could. I did not sleep, but always my heart kept watch [Cant. 5:2]. Only a woman, not the soldiers assigned to watch, I did not fear; nor did I dread Calvary, a horrid place, full of the bodies of the dead, in the dark of night. But, when it was yet dark [Jn. 20:1], I came to the monument with the perfumes.

When I had come to the monument, I said within myself, 'O what a happy day if I could accomplish my purpose, that my spouse could lie in my arms [Cant. 2:7]! What would I say when I approached? Truly, I would address Him with David and the prophets. Then anyone who came would hear what the ancients cried, with a clamor from heaven to earth, I beseech thee, Lord, send whom thou wilt [Exod. 4:13]!"

"What? If the Word was made flesh [Jn. 1:14] for the salvation of the people, and -- at the cry, prayer and clamor of the sons of Adam -- "descended from heaven,"<sup>258</sup> I hope it will be possible for me to exhort Him by sweetest prayers and most devout tears, since He who loved me already has spent enough time in Hell, to console them and save, with supreme beatitude, those who already have followed Him that the soul united to the deity may return to the body united to the deity.

"I hope that this will be much easier for the deity, to Whom it was united already, than the Incarnation, although nothing is impossible for the divinity, or even difficult.

"I recall how He spoke through the prophet, I will extol Thee, o Lord, for Thou hath upheld me [Ps. 29:2], even at the end, in which truly He spoke of Your Resurrection. And I say, 'Arise, my glory arise; arise, psalter and harp [Ps. 107:3]. Take away the spoils from Hell quickly [Is. 8:1] and arise, light of my eyes [Ps. 37:11]! And, if You died because of me, Lord, and do not deign to hear, heed Your mother and brothers; and arise because of their wailing and misery!

"Who can doubt what was written of You, I will arise early [Ps. 56:9 & 107:3]. Hasten, then, so that I may arouse You, so that You may come forth, according to the prophecy of Hosea [6:3], prepared as the morning light.

"But I, most wretched, since I already have decided to convey many things to Your ears through lament to arouse Your piety and power, so that Who permits the youth of the eagle to be renewed, Who rouses the lion's cub with a breath and gives life to the phoenix from burnt cinders, like the potter makes a new one from the shards of a broken vase, like Jonah who came forth unharmed from the belly of the whale, like the grain of wheat which fell to the earth and bore fruit, like the stag which raises its horn, like Sampson who

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<sup>258</sup> *Symbolum Nicaeanum*.

bore away the gates and like Joseph freed from prison, whom the lord of Egypt made vizier,<sup>259</sup> meanwhile, I waited and saw the stone rolled away."<sup>260</sup>

"Who then could experience similar pain, denied all hope, because I believed my Beloved had been moved by traitors? I found him not...whom my soul loveth [Cant. 3:1]. I said, 'O most wretched of women, although it still is dark, nevertheless, you came too late, because those have taken away my Lord [Jn. 20:13] have come already! O wretched vigilance! Why were you away from the buried Treasure, Whom another now has dug up and taken away from you?'

"And, while I spoke these things with no little wailing, I understood that I could not proceed, because my Christ, taken away in that hour, could not be found by me, since I was seeking unworthily. There were in me then shadows of disbelief in the Resurrection, nor did the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments satisfy me fully.

"But I ran right to Peter, prince of the apostles and of the Church, who loved Christ more than the others, who might be able to lend me aid in seeking. I also approached JOn, whom Christ loved with a singular love, since Christ might have opened to Him the Scriptures in the feast of the Old Testament, so that I might find my Beloved with his aid. They ran right away, and JOn was younger than Peter. Peter entered first, and John after him. They saw what I said was true. Although there were many most apparent texts, as much in the Old as the New Testaments, that it was necessary for Him to rise, nonetheless, they did not yet understand [Jn. 20:2-9].

"And, when they had returned to their lodgings [Jn. 20:10], I, Mary Magdalene, remained; and, meanwhile, Mary Cleophas, who had stood at the foot of the cross with the mother of the Lord [Jn. 19:25], arrived, so that she might illuminate me above the congregation of the others, according to the etymology of the name.<sup>261</sup> And behold it became light; and the rising dawn was seen, with the light shining, so that the shadows might be driven from my heart. A great earthquake preceded [Mt. 28:2]. It was not easy to illuminate such a dark, enclosed space, unless the closed things were opened and cleared away and the outstanding impediments to the light were removed by a great motion.

"Although remaining near the human nature of Christ, I burned amorously for a long time; nevertheless, I did not apprehend the mysteries of such a divinity no longer in my dark earth. And so, there was a great earthquake [Mt. 28:2] in the heavy earth of my intellect, so that it would be split and broken up for the illumination which the Beloved had prepared for me. And, when there was an earthquake in me from memory of Christ's most bitter Passion, which we, just as we will see even at the end, began to examine, standing cordially together, behold an angel of the Lord, whose face was like lightning and <his> vestment like snow, descended from heaven and rolled back the stone, terrifying the guards, so that they fell down

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<sup>259</sup> The edition has *tonsus*.

<sup>260</sup> Hugo Argentinensis, *Compendium*, IV, c. 23 (34.148), citing Ps. 102:5, Jer. 18:4, Jon. 2:11, Jn. 12:24-25, Judg. 16:3, Gen. 45:8.

<sup>261</sup> cf. Hieronymus, *Liber interp. Hebr. nom.*, Lag. 14, CCSL 72.26. The translation omits *vel Joseph*.

as if dead, sat on the stone and said to us, 'Do not fear! I know Whom you seek, Jesus, Who was crucified for man's salvation, Whose memory you already have. He has risen etc.' [Mt. 28:2-6]."

While the angel was speaking to the women, other women came, Mary Salome and Mary James etc., as above. When, however, Mary had remained alone, after all the others had gone, the sun being now risen [Mk. 16:2], she entered the tomb and wept greatly etc.

"When you, Mary, looked in and saw the place where your Beloved was laid [Jn. 19:41], tells us what you said."

Mary: "I said, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me [Mt. 27:46; Ps. 21:2] at the end? I never deserted You. I wished to die with You, and You did not wish it. Grant, Lord, that I die in Your tomb, so that I may find myself here, where You were laid, forever. I look about, Lord; and there is none to comfort me [Lament. 1:21]. I do not ask for angels, Lord, but for You, the creator of the angels. Why should you send creatures to console me, when I seek and love You alone? It cannot be that You love those who love You. How do you love, Lord, if You afflict me so? I do not seek beautiful spirits and ministers, but the Lord. This is not consolation, Lord!"

Now there were two angels with her. And note well, first, how she was alone, that is when Mary hastened alone in the darkness, she did not see the angel; second, when she stood with Mary Cleophas in memory of the Passion and the affection of love, she saw the angel. When, however, she sought with intellect, affection, memory and all powers, then she found two angels with the women, according to Luke, come from Galilee [Lk. 23:55]. And she alone saw those two angels in the tomb, when she inclined so amorously, sought so diligently with all sight any traces of the Beloved.

And the angels said to her, Whom seekest thus [Jn. 20:15]? "Already we know that you seek Jesus, the Savior. Do you not <seek> that Nazarene, once beautiful and handsome beyond the sons of men [Ps. 14:3], Whom the Jews vilely dragged away yesterday to veil His luminous face and eyes [Mt. 26:67; Lk. 22:67], through which the ray of divine wisdom shone, as if He were a robber and a thief [Jn. 10:1], cutting the holy face injuriously with blows [Mk. 14:65], crowning the King of Glory with thorns and mocking with genuflections [Mk. 15:17-19], binding His most noble hands with chains, like a thief [Mk. 15:11; Mt. 27:30]? He was taken most vilely and bound, befouled by spit in the gracious face and foulness by the worst of the Jews, purple-cheeked from blows and the effusion of tears [Is. 53:5], looking like a leper [Is. 53:4], and His five senses, sight, hearing, taste, touch, smell, afflicted most ignominiously, scourged, condemned between thieves [Is. 53:12]. Mary, do you seek Him, Who <suffered>, before a most bitter death on the cross, with every type of torment, interior and exterior, by compassion for His blessed mother and for all sustaining pains for Him in the future etc., dead, Whose innumerable pains no one living could tell, which He sustained in soul, mind and body, Who, after His deposition from the cross, buried here, rested for three days?"

Mary: "I seek and seek Him, my soul and my life, wounded and dead; and I never find Him [Cant. 3:1-2]. They have taken away my Lord; and I know not where they have laid Him [Jn. 20:13], despite looking all around etc. [Is. 63:5]"

"O Mary, when you looked back at the one you thought the gardener, you said, in the Syrian tongue, 'Sir, if thou hast taken Him hence etc.' [Jn. 20:15]. Whom did you think Him <to be>?"

Mary: "I, a wretch, thought everyone living would not know and see my very great needs and sorrows etc."

"When, however, He said to you, 'Woman, why weepst thou etc.', where were your ears that you did not know your Lord?"

Mary: "Its sound was different from what my Lord's had been, because He was very different, a mortal according to humanity, having suffered much; nor did <my> immense desire permit that I pay heed, unless when it pleased <the Lord>. Therefore, I said, 'If thou hast taken Him hence etc.'"

"And when He said to you, 'Mary,' why did you know <Him>?"

Mary: "Then my beloved shone the light of consolation and grace upon me, so that I, a blind woman, might see, understand and attend that He who named me knew me; and then I considered the One who spoke. Then suddenly He illuminated me with His ray, so that I might see the One Whom I had been seeking. I had believed, while seeking, when I could not find <Him>. He had permitted desire to be inflamed, so that I might seek more zealously and find with greater pleasure.

"I failed in understanding the earth, because it was necessary, by divine ordinance, that the Word Incarnate, my Lord, should die for the salvation of the human race, descend to Hell for its restoration and rise, according to the Scriptures, with a glorified and incorruptible body,<sup>262</sup> so that He should beatify in the glory the redeemed, rescue body and soul the redeemed, whom He preceded as high priest, penetrating the heavens [Heb. 4:14]."

"O Mary, how great a joy <was it> for you then?" etc.

Mary: "Truly immense, when I found my immortal Life more fully, over Whom death no longer had dominion [Rom. 6:9]; when I saw the most victorious triumphator over death and hell, <my> only desire in the glorified body with four gifts. Then I said, rightly, 'This is the day which the Lord hath made etc.' [Ps. 117:24]. On that day full restoration of human nature was made etc.

"O sweet apostolic mandate! The Lord commanded me to tell the apostles. O what a grace He conferred on me that I first should announce this excellent joy to them, so that I might cause Alleluia to be sung to the Lord through all the streets of Jerusalem [Tob. 13:22]!"

"He did not command me to tell the most glorious virgin mother. Without a doubt, she, as the only one buried in faith with Christ, had risen as well. She, who had adhered to the Son inseparably in death [Lk. 1:45] with firm faith and clear intellect, <did> so in the Resurrection; and so she knew. Nor was any other messenger than the Son worthy to intimate this joy <to her>.<sup>263</sup>

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<sup>262</sup> cf. *Symbolum Nicaeanum*.

<sup>263</sup> cf. Ludolphus de Saxonia, *Vita Iesu Christi*, pars 2, c. 70 (p. 700).

"I proclaimed <this>; I went to and fro. I preached things seen; I opened the Scriptures. Why thus? But the hard hearts of the disciples hesitated, so that posterity would have greater faith in the Resurrection [Mk. 16:14]. Nevertheless, so that a more certain manifestation should occur at the time, He manifested Himself five times on the day of the Resurrection: to Mary Magdalene, to the women, to Peter, to those going to Emmaus, to the disciples behind closed doors; and, from the day of the Resurrection even to the Ascension, He appeared five times etc."<sup>264</sup>

Part 2: Concerning the gifts of Christ's glorious body.

Second, something must be said about the glorified body of Christ and its gifts. Since Christ truly was dead and truly rose, between the middle of the night on the Lord's day and dawn, according to the opinion of Saint Thomas,<sup>265</sup> to make the Scriptures, which vary agree, as in the Ecclesiastical History,<sup>266</sup> then what <His> body was like when, after the Resurrection, the glory of the soul began to stream in the body,<sup>267</sup> so that it became glorious with four gifts, that is impassibility, subtlety, agility and charity.<sup>268</sup> Concerning these things Paul says [1 Cor. 15:42-44], speaking of someone's holy body, the body sown by death in corruption, shall rise in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour, it shall rise in glory. It is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power. It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body, understanding by incorruption impassability, by glory clarity, by strength agility, by a spiritual body subtlety.

And, because we hope that the Lord will refashion the bodies of our humility to be like to the clarity of His body [Phil. 3:20-21], so that, since He who is the firstfruits of them that sleep [1 Cor. 15:20] today took on a glorious body, we will receive <a glorified body> someday, therefore, it is delectable to know these things.

Part 3: Concerning the Resurrection of Christ and how life must be sought by the spiritual and sacramental eating of this paschal lamb.

Third, one must see how, because He is risen, He is not here [Mk. 16:6], Christ crucified, rising from the dead, is not found on earth [Jn. 28:13], and that, therefore, anyone seeking the One Who rose from the dead must, if he seeks to find Him, first must carry the cross [Mt. 16:4; Mk. 8:34; Lk. 9:23, 14:27], mortifying himself with Christ, walking the way of the patience, humility and charity, exercising the active life in the works of mercy and, after that, by contemplating in the tomb, resting with the Christ, and, after rising with Him, no longer knowing things terrestrial but things celestial, where Christ is according to Paul [Col. 3:1-2, 12-14].

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<sup>264</sup> cf. Hugo Argentinensis, *Compendium*, IV, c. 23 (34.148), citing Jn. 20:11-29 & 21:1-23, Lk. 24:34-53, Mt. 28:16-20, Mk. 16:14-19, Acts 1:9-12.

<sup>265</sup> cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, III, q. 53, a. 2.

<sup>266</sup> cf. Petrus Comestor, *Historia scholastica*, in *Evang.*, c. 185, PL 198.163-68.

<sup>267</sup> cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, III, q. 54, a. 2.

<sup>268</sup> cf. Hugo Argentinensis, *Compendium*, VII, cc. 27-28 (34.256-58).

If we want to be members of Christ [1 Cor. 6:15], Who now is immortal, it is necessary to be without sin, so that we may be and live [Acts 17:28]. We will die because of sin, and we are destined to be immortal members of <Christ>. If we often fall into deadly sin, we must rise this day with Christ; and life must be sought by spiritual and sacramental eating of the paschal lamb in the rites.<sup>269</sup>

And, as Christ, risen from the dead, sits in the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life [Rom. 6:4], having removed from mortal man the corruptible garment, let us put on a new one [Col. 3:9-10]; and having put on the armor of light to repel the darkness [Rom. 13:12], especially on this day, on which the Lord is said especially to have made [Ps. 117:24], because it is victorious, triumphal, favorable, joyous, liberal and rewarding.

Sharing spiritual joy with the angels, whose seats are restored,<sup>270</sup> led with the fathers from the bonds of Hell, playing harps well [Ps. 150:5], let us exalt and be joyful [Ps. 117:24], especially as we know how to taste ardently the things celestial and they have a sweet savor to our interior taste; and let us walk in the new life, having rejected the old way of life [Rom. 6:4; Eph. 4:21-22].

Christ, however, rose powerfully,<sup>271</sup> because He was not revived by another living creature, just as the boy <was revived> by Elijah [1 Kings 17:22-23], or another dead man, as with the bones of Elisha [2 Kings 13:20-21], but, just as He had on the cross the power of yielding up His soul, so <He had the power> of receiving <it back> [Jn. 10:18]. And so He raised Himself on the third day.

Nor did He open the tomb of the seals placed by the guards on the stone, which was placed to close the tomb [Mt. 27:66], in order <to do> this; but He leapt as <He had> supernaturally from the womb of <His> mother, sealed with charity, that is powerfully, not weakly, freeing the body from servitude etc. [1 Cor. 9:27].

Second, He showed that He truly had risen, <first of all><sup>272</sup> by means of sight, See My hands and feet [Lk. 24:39]. And the clarity of the glorified body, although it was ten times brighter than the sun, did not do harm to the eye, as the sun would, but perfected <it>. Second, by means of touch, Handle, and see [loc. cit.]. Third, through taste, because He ate with the disciples [Lk. 24:41-43], although the food eaten and swallowed was not converted into the nature of the body but turned into vapor, as water evaporates.<sup>273</sup> So our spiritual resurrection should be proven by sight, as we contemplate God and His benefits mentally with a pure heart [Mt. 5:8]; by touch, as we are united to Him intimately by the bonds of charity; by taste, as we savor with pleasure the divine sweetness by devotion of mind.

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<sup>269</sup> Literally *dispositis*.

<sup>270</sup> Petrus Lombardus, *Sententiae*, II, d. 1, c. 5.

<sup>271</sup> Jacobus de Voragine, *Legenda aurea*, c. 54 (52), ed. Graesse, p. 236.

<sup>272</sup> The subdivisions of this section are not indicated clearly in the text.

<sup>273</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *In Sent.*, III, d. 21, q. 2, a. 4.

Third, Christ rose evidently. It is evident from the display of scars [Jn. 20:39-40], which, although a glorified body should not have <them>, He wished to retain, so that He might show forth the triumph of victory forever and so that, by displaying the wounds, He might please the Father on our behalf -- 1 John 2[:1], we have an advocate with the Father, third, that He might demonstrate His liberality and the magnitude of <His> love.<sup>274</sup>

He had hands pierced to designate His liberality; and He invites <us> to ask, Ask, and it shall be given you [Mt. 7:7]; feet transfixes with one nail to signify the union of friendship, just as friends are attached by the nail of love.<sup>275</sup> He had a side opened [Jn. 19:34], so that we might drink wisdom from His heart, in whom are hid all the treasures of knowledge and wisdom [Col. 2:3].

Likewise, He retained the scars so that He might confute the reprobate at the judgment, saying, "See the wound inflicted for you and by you! See the side opened, and you did not enter!"<sup>276</sup>

Thus it befits someone to rise evidently with Christ, complete with stigmata, so that he can say with the apostle, I bear the marks of the Lord Jesus in my body [Gal. 6:17].

The words of the theme even can be applied to those seeking Christ crucified, the immolated paschal lamb, today sacramentally, because, through commemoration of the Crucifixion, the spotless Lamb [1 Pet. 1:19; Is. 53:7] must be sought and eaten with the leaven of sincerity and truth [1 Cor. 5:8] by those rising with Him by adhering to things celestial. And our paschal lamb is prefigured by the paschal lamb of the Jews [Exod. 12:46], which had to be eaten by the faithful, unanimous in the house of the Lord, which is holy Church.<sup>277</sup>

Concerning the institution of the blessed sacrament, <look> in the sermon concerning the Lord's Supper,<sup>278</sup> for the restorative beginning left us medicines and sacraments through which He regenerates us, as in baptism, confirms and augments the baptized<sup>279</sup> in confirmation, nourishes the confirmed with the eucharist. But such nourishment is offered for free to conserve devotion to God, which is shown in the offering of a sacrifice; and love of neighbor, through communion in the one sacrament, delectation within himself by the refectio of the viaticum.

These are in this sacrament, as far as concerns the time of grace, according to our state of life and capacity. As far as the time, the offering ought to be pure and full; and nothing is <in it> except what was offered on the cross. Here Christ is not just in the sacrament in a significative way, but truly. Nor should it only

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<sup>274</sup> cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, III, q. 54, a. 4.

<sup>275</sup> Ps. Bonaventura, *Meditationes in vita Christi*, c. 78 (12.606).

<sup>276</sup> cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, III, q. 54, a. 4.

<sup>277</sup> Glo. ord. to Exod. 12:46 (1.608).

<sup>278</sup> See Nicholas of Cusa, Sermon III.

<sup>279</sup> Literally *genitos*.

signify love and communion, but inflame to mutual charity and, especially, unite members to the unity of the head, from Whom, through the diffusion, unity and transforming force of love, mutual love flows into us. Here in this sacrament the one body of Christ, the immaculate flesh, is contained, so that it diffuses to us, uniting us to each other and transforming <us> into Him by most burning charity, through which He offers Himself to us, reconciles <us> and stays with us even to the end of the world.

It does not befit <our> state of life to see openly, because of the veil of enigma and the merit of faith; nor does it befit the flesh of Christ to suffer from teeth, because of the horror of cruelty and the immortality of the body after the Resurrection. Therefore, the gift is veiled with most sacred symbols and fitting and expressive similitudes, that is under wheaten bread out of many grains and wine from grapes etc.<sup>280</sup>

Concerning the sacrament, this must be held etc. See in that sermon about the Lord's supper.

The whole Christ is contained totally under the same species after consecration, not in a circumscribed manner but sacramentally.<sup>281</sup> And it must be known that, if the sacerdotal order and the intention of the one consecrating with the proper utterance of words over the proper materials agree,<sup>282</sup> then the true Christ, body, soul and God, <is present>, because indivisible, the whole under some part, bearing every sense, so that faith may have merit. And, so that <it> may not be taken away, the accidents have every operation as before etc.<sup>283</sup>

One must not approach to receive the sacrament alone, because whoever approaches thus, eateth...judgement to himself [1 Cor. 11:29]; but to the reality of the sacrament, that is the spiritual eating by faith and charity<sup>284</sup> and the reality and the sacrament, that is the mystical body of Christ. The reality of the sacrament is the true body of Christ, which body is grasped by spiritual eating.<sup>285</sup>

And, because, as long as a man is in the flesh, there is a need for vital refection, which can feed the entire man, which is the Word Incarnate alone. The Word of Life is the refection of the spirit; the Word Incarnate, the refection of man etc.<sup>286</sup> It is necessary to eat spiritually daily and to be nourished amorously with this sweet vital refection, in which is the way, and the truth, and the life [Jn. 14:6]. One cannot have life otherwise, except that he lives through this spiritual food.

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<sup>280</sup> cf. Bonaventura, *Breviloquium*, pars 6, c. 9 (5.274-75).

<sup>281</sup> cf. loc. cit. (5.273).

<sup>282</sup> Hugo Argentinensis, *Compendium*, VI, c.12 (34.210).

<sup>283</sup> cf. Bonaventura, *Breviloquium*, pars 6, c. 9 (5.274-75).

<sup>284</sup> cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, III, q. 60, a. 3.

<sup>285</sup> cf. Petrus Lombardus, *Sententiae*, IV, d. 9, cc. 1-2.

<sup>286</sup> Bonaventura, *Breviloquium*, pars 6, c. 9 (5.273-74).

And this is not with the leaven of...wickedness etc., but with the leaven of sincerity and truth [1 Cor. 5:8], through spiritual teeth, that is intellect, memory and affection, with which this food is chewed and swallowed sweetly, so that a man is digested with Christ, because He is food of the grown, Who converts the one eating worthily into Himself.<sup>287</sup> All, however, who ought to be incorporated into Christ need to live without mortal <sins>, although sacramental reception takes away venial ones.<sup>288</sup>

Through the spiritual one must ascend to the sacramental, so that one already incorporated into Christ is nourished and grows.

How, however, a man is made Christlike spiritually by the contemplation of His divinity with pure and sincere formed faith, I will pass over in this way. Second, through remembrance of His Passion, as in the example of Mary Magdalene, a man ought to build himself up. And then from wondrous charity, which Christ shows to us in this sacrament, with which He, about to pass from the world [Jn. 13:1], left Himself as food in a wondrous manner, the most wondrous of all His miracles.

And a man ought to elevate himself by pure faith, despite all the curious, who seek examples and signs etc. [Mt. 12:38-39]. Whatever we cannot understand and digest by thinking we ought to burn, according to the precept [Exod. 12:10], that is burn with the fire of the Holy Spirit, and believe amorously.

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<sup>287</sup> Augustinus, *Confessiones*, VII, c. 10, CSEL 33.157.

<sup>288</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, III, q. 79, a. 4.

It is to be contemplated, <first,> how "the substance of bread is converted" into the body of Christ,<sup>289</sup> so that a man thus is transformed into God by the efficacy of divine love; second, that the accidents do not subsist by the strength of the natural subject,<sup>290</sup> from which you elicit that your will ought to depend in all things on the divine will, through which it subsists thus; third, that, just as the accidents indicate bread and yet it is not, because the transubstantiated substance is so transformed by the vehemence of the affection of love, just as the only appearance <in Christ> is that of a man with the appearance of the deity.

One must contemplate, when approaching the table, that the one approaching worthily should know that he will receive life from the immortal, glorified body of Christ a vital grace from the soul and a vital glory from the deity united to body and soul.

And the one approaching to eat this lamb, so that he collected in his vessel a gomer of manna, needs, according to the mandate in Exodus [16:32-34], to have a new vessel totally cleansed from old things, in which there is no stain. And then you will find all that is delicious [Wisd. 16:20] in this most sweet bread. It even has medicine etc. And the lamb ought to be eaten, according to the mandate, with girded loins, with the intention of avoiding evil desires and with shed feet, with a heart prepared to run the way of God's mandates, having armored the feet, lest we are harmed by a stone or thorns, the troubles of this world under our feet, having a staff in the hand for divine aid, not entrusting ourselves to our own presumption, and eating a sauce of bitter herbs, recollecting with bitter penance the Passion of the Lord.<sup>291</sup> And we should eat quickly, with great desire, fervor and sensible devotion, if we can. Otherwise, our intention of not sinning

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<sup>289</sup> cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, III, q. 75, a. 5.

<sup>290</sup> *ibid.* III, q. 77, a. 1.

<sup>291</sup> cf. Hugo Argentinensis, *Compendium*, VI, c. 16 (34.215), citing Exod. 12:11, Ps. 118:32 & 90:12, Mt. 4:6.

### Sermon 13 “And the temple of God was opened in heaven”<sup>292</sup>

DRAFT TRANSLATION BY THOMAS IZBICKI

*And the temple of God was opened in heaven: and the ark of His testament was seen in His temple, and there were lightnings and voices, and an earthquake, and great hail. And a great sign appeared in heaven: A woman clothed in the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars* [Rev. 11:19-12:1]. These words are expounded literally as concerning mother Church in general and, in particular, of the foremost member of the Church, that is the glorious Virgin Mary.

As far as the first, general exposition, the text is expounded that *the temple of God*, that is Christ, in whom is the habitation of divinity, *was opened in heaven*, that is, manifested throughout the world at the time of the Nativity. And even then this temple was opened on the altar of the cross, when *one of the soldiers with a spear opened His side* [Jn. 19:34], so that from the side of the sleeping second Adam was formed Eve, holy mother Church, because this holy mother Church was formed from the blood of redemption and the water of regeneration from His side.

And then, when the temple had been opened, *the ark of His testament was seen*, that holy mother Church, which is like Noah's ark, saving all living beings. And it is *the ark of His testament*, containing the tablets of the law, manna and Aaron's rod [Heb. 9:3-4], that is containing the law, the sacraments and the power-giving keys. The rod signifies power, the priesthood of Aaron. In the Church, therefore, there is priestly power, like the rod in the ark. Whoever is not under the rod of Aaron is not in the ark of the Church. *And then there were lightnings* of good examples from the splendor of the honest lives of the holy martyrs of the early Church, and *voices* of thunder of divine praise and of lofty preaching and *earthquakes* of fear and contrition and *great hail* of severe correction.

Or expand the text as pertaining to the persecution of the Church, in which manner, after *the temple...was opened* and *the ark...was seen*, a great persecution against the ark, made up of diverse woods [Gen. 6:14-15], that is of Christ's faithful, followed, that is by the imposition of all sorts of penalties, signified by *lightnings, and voices, and an earthquake, and great hail*.

And, nonetheless, *a great sign appeared in heaven*, the catholic faith of the universal Church, because it was formed like a pious and compassionate *woman*, bearing great fruit, *clothed in the sun* of justice, not withstanding these tribulations, and treading on *the moon* of earthly instability, having *on her head a crown* of victory, wreathed with the twelve luminous, fixed, incorruptible stars of the articles of faith.<sup>293</sup>

Or understand by head the beginning of the early Church and by the moon, which is under the feet, the present age of the Church. First, she was crowned with the twelve stars of the twelve Apostles; and it

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<sup>292</sup> On the feast of the Assumption, August 15, 1432, at Koblenz.

<sup>293</sup> Some manuscripts of the Apostles' Creed divide the text into twelve statements, ascribing one to each of the twelve Apostles, including Matthias.

was on the head. And from this, that the Church, at the beginning, had a crowned head, understand that it signifies the pristine state of the early Church; and by the feet on the moon, the present state of the Church.

If we consider the anatomy of the head, we will find that “every sense and the nerves receive their origin” there, that is they transmit sensation and motion to the inferior members.<sup>294</sup> It has seven apertures, the instruments of the senses; it has clean, hard lines and a full pith of brains,<sup>295</sup> lean cheeks and clean hair. It has seven virtues like these instruments, the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, as supports against the vices; hard lines of most firm constancy; much pith of mildness and clemency; cheeks lacking carnality and lasciviousness; the clean exterior hair of honest living; the nerves of friendship; and, the senses of discretion.

All captains and princes, who are heads, ought to be like that, because, granted that the head ought outwardly to display firmness, like the hard lines of the head, internally, nevertheless, it has a pith of piety and clemency. In it ought to be a sense of sagacity, discretion and prudence etc.

These, then, are the things signified by the ark, which was *overlaid...within and without* [Ex. 37:1] and contained the tablets of the law. Behold justice and prudence!, the staff of correction and the manna of sweetness and compassion.

In this age, the Church is like *the moon under her feet*. The feet are affections; and, like feet, they always are on the earth. Affection is terrestrial and upon the moon, which is near the earth. Alas! The Church today, therefore, is in the depths; like a foot, of little dignity. Although it has the same life in it which the whole body has and is enlivened by the same spirit, nevertheless, it is not dressed with the sun of justice and prudence and with clarity of life, but with the leather of bestiality and ignorance, involving itself with the mud of cupidity and lasciviousness, adhering to the Earth by avarice and incontinence, trusting to the moon etc.

From the nature of the moon, and its instability, its influence and its vulnerability to the sun and to eclipse etc.,

one can learn how our sins are opposed to God etc. If we wish, therefore, to serve and reform in the ark and the Church, we, who are feet, ought to walk in the way of equity and justice, and receive the influx of motion and sensation from those who are above us and who have excelled in sanctity; and it is fitting that we direct the lunar soul to conjunction with the sun, so that, having attained that conjunction, the soul may be moved even into the full moon of eternal glory.

And, again, because we must walk *circumspectly*, therefore, we must see *how you walk* [Eph. 5:15]. There are not always signs left by others to follow, like the ape which closed his eyes because the thief

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<sup>294</sup> Isidorus Hispalensis, *Etymologiae*, xi, c. 1, n. 25.

<sup>295</sup> Gray matter.

closed his and so lost his coins;<sup>296</sup> but the good roads must be sought, lest one who believes he will stand upright should fall. “Man, you see etc. Fortune gives various ways etc.”<sup>297</sup> *I have run the way of Thy commandments* [Ps. 118:32] and of obedience; and the power-giving key of the Church is not to be spurned, even when its use is unjust, because obedience is meritorious to you and punishable for the one commanding unjustly. If the cause which a superior brings against you is unjust, you will merit all the more by obeying him. And consider your days. You will find you have sinned<sup>298</sup> as well, so that you merit punishment; and understand that your sins deserve it.<sup>299</sup> Therefore, consider the good of obedience; and do not despise your superior.

Understand the example of patience and obedience set by Christ, who was *obedient... even unto death* [Phil. 2:8]. He always taught obedience, *On the chair of Moses* etc. [Mt. 23:2-3]. A curse descended on the human race because of its disobedience. *Cursed is the earth in thy work* [Gen. 3:17]. Christ blessed Simon, when he was obedient, *Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona* [Mt. 16:17]. Do not, therefore, be disobedient, because obedience yields great gain with little effort.

The Church is like a merchant who goes about and always adds to his profit.<sup>300</sup> He, nevertheless, must rest, like a rider who rests and then proceeds again, *To my company of horsemen...have I likened thee*,<sup>301</sup> *O my love* [Cant. 1:8]. And God rested among the obedient. Christ entered Bethany, that is, “the house of obedience etc.”<sup>302</sup> Where obedience dwells, there is the love of God. The love of God makes a man pliable; and obedience, like melted wax. And note this: If you wish to know in whom God's love can be found, look at his obedience, because *obedience is better than sacrifices* [1 Kings 15:22].

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<sup>296</sup> This fable is not found in Aesop.

<sup>297</sup> Walther, *Proverbia* no. 33592.

<sup>298</sup> Reading *deliquisse* as *delinquisse*.

<sup>299</sup> Literally, *pro causa*.

<sup>300</sup> This is a loose paraphrase of the passage in Prov. 31:20 about the goodwife.

<sup>301</sup> Reading *equitatui* as *equitani*

<sup>302</sup> CCSL 72.135.

## Sermon 17 “Glory to God in the highest”

DRAFT TRANSLATION BY THOMAS IZBICKI

*Glory to God in the highest* (Luke 2:14)<sup>303</sup>

Glory etc. Accordingly, one must think principally of the temporal Nativity of the eternal Word of God; and, two things must be seen about this, that is the cause of the Incarnation and the means.

Part 1: On the cause of the Incarnation.

About the cause, first, one must consider that man was created from the beginning to these ends, that is so that he should serve and obey God; second, that he may come through this to the eternal kingdom.

And the man was given the precept that he should not eat of the tree of knowledge, lest he should die the death [cf. Gen. 2:17]. Man sinned. There was a disputation because <of this>. Justice and truth argued against man, and mercy and peace argued for the defense.

First, justice argued against man, because *God is a just judge* (Ps. 7:12), and so it was decreed that <Man> should die the death. Wherefore etc.

For man, mercy argued how the same justice had created man for health and often had promulgated, because of debility, a law of mercy, an eternal human seed, so that he should receive mercy.

Truth argued to the contrary; peace replied etc. And, after <this> reply, which is found elsewhere, peace cited the piety of the Lord, the Creator, that, from the beginning, predestined His Church as <His> bride and planted for her a paradise, decorated <it> variously and placed <there> a *tree in <its> midst, <together with> the tree of the knowledge of good and evil* (Gen. 3:15). He consecrated a great sacrament in paradise in the perpetual union of Adam and Eve as a figure of the Church and the Savior.

And <peace> cited how the Church existed from the beginning, from Adam, who prefigured Christ, and from the bone and flesh of Adam, that is predestined Church of Christ; and in this greatest sacrament, according to Paul <in the epistle> to the Ephesians [cf. Eph. 1:3], <are> signed as the sons of adoption and coheirs of Christ, the first born, the true king and eternal heir.

And <she cited> how variously <and> in many ways from that <time God> had spoken through the fathers, the prophets, in shadows, figures and signs, and how all Scripture is found expressing this one truth of the Savior, the Son and heir, head and firstborn of all creatures in various ways, and agreeing by degrees and harmonized with all things which flowed from the Creator through the Son, all of which refer to Him in such an absolutely wondrous way.

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<sup>303</sup> This sermon has been dated 1432 or 1435, and it employs themes used in Sermon 1. It may have been delivered in Koblenz.

And <she cited> that angelic and human rational creatures are united in the unity of the body for their ultimate salvation, according to Ambrose<sup>304</sup> and others. Wherefore, the work of all things, especially the peaceful ones, out of love of God, by which loved He ordered all things created to Himself, is like a health-bringing doctor, lest all of those things <in Scripture>, which Paul especially most exuberantly expressed <in the Epistle> to the Ephesians [cf. Eph. 1:35], should have been written vainly, emptily.

The Holy Trinity considered these arguments; and that eternal truth permitted itself to be vanquished by mercy and peace, so that, after thought had been taken about the means of satisfying divine justice, man, who had sinned, should be liberated.

And, because not an angel but man had sinned against the infinite and eternal God in this, that he did not believe God but the devil -- he wished to be equal to God, not believing but knowing, a means of satisfaction by finite and limited man for such a crime of treason, which transmitted the original condemnation to posterity, could not be found. A sentence was handed down that the Lord of infinite piety, justice, truth, mercy and peace, the Creator, the Word of God should assume human flesh, should descend from heaven, should assume humanity, make satisfaction and, having pacified justice, should lead man back to <his> fatherland.

And this is that most holy solemnity of that most wondrous unity.

Part 2: How the eternal Word was born in time.

Let us see briefly in what order such a nativity occurred. And it must be known that it was double, that is in the Virgin and from the Virgin.

Of the first, it must be said, *Man is born in her, and the Most High Himself founded her* (Ps. 86:5), when, with the power of the Most High overshadowing <her> and the Holy Spirit intervening,<sup>8</sup> *The Word was made flesh* (Jn. 1:14), not merely converted into flesh or the reverse, nor confused with flesh in some sort of mixture, nor made flesh by assuming flesh in unity of substance, nor animal flesh without a rational soul, as different heretics have thought individually, but *The Word was made flesh*, that is “Perfect man, subsisting from a rational soul,”<sup>305</sup> in two natures and one person, not, however, in one nature,<sup>306</sup> nor in two persons, just as some heretics have said.

Thus, however, the Word assumed flesh, that is humanity. “Flesh” then, means “man”, as at *All flesh <is> grass* (Is. 40:6) and at *To you all flesh shall come* (Ps. 64:3). Wherefore, I add, not as in others in time, <but> *The Word was made flesh* “from the most pure blood” of virgin flesh,<sup>307</sup> “perfect man from rational soul and human flesh”.<sup>12</sup> According to the prophecy of Jeremiah [31:22], the Virgin surrounded

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<sup>304</sup> Ambrosius, *Epistola 16*, CSEL 82.120-21.

<sup>305</sup> Cf. *Symbolum “Quicumque vult”*.

<sup>306</sup> Cf. Leo I, *Epistola ad Jubaianum ep. Coensem*, c. 3.

<sup>307</sup> Cf. Johannes Damascenus, *De fide orthpodoxa*, c. 46, ed. Burgtaert.

<Him>. I add, perfect man from soul and body; in others things, <he would> not <be> so, unless with and increasing and growing body.

Oh what perfection and virility in the beginning of conception! Because He was complete as far as spirit and the superior part of the soul, seeing already with beatific vision that divine essence and all things present, past and future shining in the divine Word, then that most holy soul, elevated only to God, thinking most attentively thoughts of peace, full of the aptitudes of all virtues, graces and knowledge, <has> in Himself all treasures of knowledge and wisdom.<sup>308</sup>

But, as far as the lower part of the soul, that is sensuality, He was made like us and is found with aptitudes as a man [cf. Phil. 2:7], so that He could weep and be sad with us, drinking of the torrent of the penitential present [cf. Ps. 109:7 with the Ordinary Gloss]; and He learned from these things what He would suffer to suffer all things with His brothers, just as is written <in the epistle> to the Hebrews [cf. Heb. 5:8, 2:17].<sup>17</sup>

These things must be thought: How *He sanctified <this> tabernacle* (Ps. 45:5), that is the blessed Virgin, most richly, and filled <it> with grace beyond telling and with joy. *Exalt, and <this> dwelling* (Is. 12:6). Think how she was the mother of God and man. (Against the heretics etc.)

There are not two substances in Christ, but one substance. And the hypostatic union of human nature and divine in Christ is such that the human substance is united to the divine nature with the two natures remaining distinct in the unity of divine substance. The humanity of Christ, then, is not a person or a substance, or a man properly speaking, although it is a pure creature, because “man” is the name of a person. The person either is a substance of itself and subsists so that none is like a part of the whole; or it is as a form to a subject; or it supports itself on another possessing substance by some force, supplementing its substantiveness and personhood.<sup>309</sup> This, briefly, is that it does not support itself on anything, supporting itself on an alien substance.

Of these three ways, two are found in natural things; and the third, in Christ alone. Every person, then, is a substance; and not the reverse. A rational substance is called “a person, as if sounding by itself”.<sup>310</sup> In the third way, the human nature in Christ, although it remains, nevertheless, is united so intimately with the Word that it could not obtain a reason for substantiveness; but it transfers all such substantiveness to the divinity.

And, because the Word, assuming His humanity, did not lose personhood, here the Word properly is not said to have assumed the man, since He did not assume the substance of man but humanity. And, if, when the Word is found to have assumed “man”, “man” should be understood as human nature, which was

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<sup>308</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, III q. I aa. 1-2 & 9-11, q. 9 aa. 1-3.

<sup>309</sup> Cf. Henricus de Oyta, *Quaestiones sententiarum*, q. 12 a. 2, Munich clm 17468, fol. 204vb; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, III q. 9 a. 3.

<sup>310</sup> Bonaventura, *In sententias*, III d. 10 a. 2 q. 2, *Opera* 3.228.

assumed in Christ from the beginning and never existed by itself. It was, therefore, a unique substance and one person in Christ; and divine and human nature <remained> unconfused, the Word <born> before all ages and today in time etc.

Christ is not composed of Word and man, because then, since no whole is one of its parts, the Word of God, which is Christ, as we find in today's gospel of John, would not be Deity nor God; and, for the same reason, not man. Nor would Christ be from eternity, but rather “recent God”;<sup>311</sup> nor would such a substance be believed to be from eternity. Nor does it matter that it is written, “Just like rational souls and flesh” etc.,<sup>312</sup> because even similitude is not expressed, but it wishes that the human person exists in a double nature, flesh and soul, so the person of Christ exists in a twin substance, divinity and humanity.<sup>313</sup>

Nevertheless, it should be conceded that Christ is composed of body and soul. The man is similar in species to us, who are composed thus. But this denomination belongs to the divine substance only by communication of idioms, that is by reason of union with human nature. For this holy union is so wondrous, profound and intimate that the divine nature remaining in Christ communicates the substance and usurps to itself every denomination or every idiom that belongs to the human nature assumed, by reason of the substance or the person, just as there are “to be a man,” “to be the son of man,” just as there are “actions, passions and motions,” which, with concrete human nature, just as <that nature> was born to be substance”.<sup>314</sup> In reverse, <these> denominations and idioms, which belong to the divine substance, by reason of the same union in the same man, who is God, are announced by truest faith.

Nevertheless, the divine and human idioms are not present in the same mode in Christ; for divine <idioms> are said of Him *per se* and simply but the human ones, not *per se* but *secundum quid*, that is by reason of human nature.<sup>315</sup> Whence it follows that Christ is not said to be compounded of a rational soul and flesh in the same mode -- His blessed humanity; Christ is said to be compounded by reason of communication of idioms *secundum quid*; and humanity, *per se*.

Here apply those wondrous utterance, which faith asserts, that is that the immortal dies; the invisible is seen on earth; that God, who does not change, is wearied by the journey [cf. Jn. 4:6]. The impassible is crucified, and the begotten from eternity is born today etc. And similarly, that corporeal man is everywhere; the temporal is eternal; the infirm, omnipotent etc. Indeed, such a union is beyond wonder, so that we say Christ, the Son of God, descended to Hell, when He died;<sup>316</sup> and it was not true to say that he was many

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<sup>311</sup> Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, III q. 16 a. 2.

<sup>312</sup> *Symbolum “Quicumque vult”*.

<sup>313</sup> Cf. Petrus Lombardus, *Sententiae*, III d. 7 cc. 102, p. 586.

<sup>314</sup> Cf. Henricus de Oyta, *Quaestiones sententiarum*, fol. 173vb.

<sup>315</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, III q. 16 aa. 4 & 8.

<sup>316</sup> *Symbolum apostolorum*.

according to the separation of soul from body, because the union of the divine Word with body and soul never was dissolved. Indeed, Christ, for the same reason, lay in the tomb and descended to Hell.

And then Christ ruled everywhere in heaven and on earth, according to <His> divine nature.

This is a union beyond wonder, which no one apprehends except by faith, that, because Adam strove to apprehend by knowing, <consequently> he fell. But now these most profound divine mysteries, hidden in God through the ages [cf. Col. 1:26], now revealed at the end of the ages, are entirely intelligible; <they are> not, nevertheless, incredible, since his *testimonies have been very credible* [Ps. 86:6].

First, he declared them in writings to the peoples and princes, that is <the words> of the just and the patriarchs, in figures, enigmas and various pronouncements *of the saints, who are from the ages* [Luke 1:10]. All these things He revealed to us by the evangelists, apostles and doctors, and *the pastors*, whom He found and set *as watchmen over the flock* [Luke 2:8], so that they might see these wondrous things in Bethlehem etc.

Now it is learned from these things that Christ was the least of men who ever were, because, from the instant of conception, He was perfect man;<sup>317</sup> and He was longer in the womb than any man, and received more nourishment from <His> mother than others did, that He was there longer and began to be increased from a lesser quantity.<sup>318</sup> And thus He was joined to <His> mother more closely<sup>319</sup> than all others, because He originated so by consubstantiality, more of which Christ had from Mary.

Likewise, so much joy passed in return from the Savior to Mary etc.

Christ did not bring down from heaven into the Virgin's womb a body, as the heretic Mani said.<sup>319</sup> Nor did the Word assume only flesh without a rational soul, as Arius said; nor only a sensitive soul without intellect, as Appolonius said. Let the heretic Nestorius, who said <there are> two persons in Christ, be silent! And similarly, Eutyches, who likewise said one nature, just like one person!<sup>320</sup>

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<sup>317</sup> Cf. Henricus de Oyta, *Quaestiones sententiarum*, III, Alençon 144, fol. 114va.

<sup>318</sup> Cf. Robertus Holcot, *Super libros sapientiae*, c. 7 lect. 89 A-B, Hagenaus, 1494.

<sup>319</sup> Cf. Gennadius, *De ecclesiasticis dogmatibus*, c. 2, Pl 58.981.

<sup>320</sup> cf. Thomas Aquinas, *In sententias* III d. 2 q. 3 a. 3 & d. 5 q. 1 a. 3.

## Sermon 20: “His Name is Jesus”<sup>321</sup>

TRANSLATION BY PETER CASARELLA

First let us pray so that his name shall be sanctified in us, so that we shall succeed in giving praise to his name by the intercession of the Virgin Mary, mother blessed among women, who bore the Word for us, whose name is eternal.

There are three things which makes this feast today great, 1) the octave of the nativity in the collect and in Leviticus 23:2) the circumcision of the boy in Luke 2 and Genesis 17:3) and the pronouncement of the name in the gospel. The first part [of this sermon] deals with the “name,” the second with “his,” i.e. what pertains to the one circumcised, and the third “Jesus.”

Concerning the first part we speak about the threefold name in terms of a threefold birth. At the entrance of the first Mass we say in Hebrew “Yehova says...” In the second entrance we say: “Today the light will shine above us since the Lord is born to us and he is called wonderful, God, prince of peace...” In the third we say, “A boy is born...”<sup>322</sup>

A sermon defining his name will be short, since he is “wonderful” but also unspeakable and unknown to us. A sermon which attempts to fashion (*figurare*) the infinite name “Word” or “Son” will be long. A sermon which attempts to express the name of Savior will be very long since it is the name of an activity.

The first ineffable name of the deity is only grasped negatively. The second name of the Creator is made manifest in creatures and shown diversely and extensively (*late*) by their likenesses. The third name is treated most extensively (*latissime*) through the grace of the incarnation. We can therefore say

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<sup>321</sup> Preached by Nicholas of Cusa at the feast of the circumcision of Jesus in Koblenz on January 1, 1440, less than six weeks before the completion of Book III of *De docta ignorantia*. Although Nicholas is reputed to have been a powerful preacher, what survives in the manuscripts he preserved are his notes for the sermons. Sermon 20, for example, lacks oratorical style and seems excessively bound for a sermon to lengthy quotations from learned works of theology. We know that Nicholas often preached in the local dialect and that he often departed from his notes while preaching; see Rudolf Haubst, “Quo modo Nicolaus ipse Sermones suos perscripserit et collegerit,” in h XVI/0, XXIX-XXXV; H. Schnarr, “Nikolaus von Kues als Prediger in Trier,” in *Zugänge zu Nikolaus von Kues: Festschrift zum 25-jährigen Bestehen der Cusanus-Gesellschaft*, ed. Helmut Gestrich (Bernkastel-Kues, 1986), pp. 120-131.

<sup>322</sup> These entrance hymns follow the first three days of the Feast of the Nativity. I would like to acknowledge my debt to the late Rudolf Haubst and M. Bodewig, whose critical edition in h XVI, *Sermones* I, was invaluable in the preparation of this translation. I would also like to thank my research assistant, Stephanie Brennan, who helped to compile the notes to this translation.

with Dionysius and what is attributed by him to Bartholomew the apostle in *The Mystical Theology*<sup>323</sup> that the sermon concerning the name of God is the holiest and shortest, the sermon concerning the creator is wide-spread (*latum*) and the sermon concerning the Renewer is most widely known (*latissimum*).

A name is said by denoting [since] “words are signs of things which are in the soul.”<sup>324</sup> We only understand what derives from sensible things. God cannot be reached in this manner.

We ascend to God by a threefold path according to Dionysius: [first,] from the visible things just mentioned as they are caused,<sup>325</sup> and this, according to Augustine, by manifold proof (either since nothing produced itself or since it is necessary to proceed from movable to immovable, from imperfect to perfect, from good to best...); second, through eminence so that we understand eminently in the cause that which completed its causation when it was caused; third, by negation so that we negate by the eminence of the cause the deficient element we find in the thing caused.

### **First Part: Concerning names which are attributed to God through eminence and negation.**

As for the true name which is supposed to point out to us “what God is,” Dionysius says that God is unnameable and unspeakable since he is not understood. This alone we have from Anselm: “God is greater than can be thought.”<sup>326</sup> But this “greater” is unnameable if it is not comprehensible. Wherefore, it is not the best name of God but “beyond the best.”<sup>327</sup> Accordingly, since we know more about what God is than what he is not, God is more unnameable than nameable.

Nor is the name “unnameable” the proper name signifying God with an appropriate quality since it signifies what God is not...<sup>328</sup> But among all names the proper one is the Tetragrammaton...Likewise with “the name which is above every name” (Phil. 2:9) just as he is not “good” but “beyond good” and not nameable but “beyond nameable.” Thus the name of God encompasses everything nameable just as God's

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<sup>323</sup> *The Mystical Theology* I,3 (PG 3:1000B-C): “He says that the Word of God is vast and minuscule, that the Gospel is wide-ranging and yet restricted.”

<sup>324</sup> Aristotle, *On Interpretation*, c.1, 16a 13-14; Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q.13 a.1.

<sup>325</sup> *The Divine Names* I,3 (PG 3:589B).

<sup>326</sup> *Proslogion*, chap. 14.

<sup>327</sup> “Non est optimus sed superoptimus.” The term “superoptimus” can be found in Eriugena’s translation of the term *hyperagathon*, which is found in the Second Letter to Gaius. Cf. *Dionysiaca*, ed. Philippe Chevallier (Paris/Bruges, 1937), p. 608.

<sup>328</sup> *The Mystical Theology* V (PG 3:1048B).

being is everything. The name is eternal and infinite. This name of his is not the “eternal name” or “infinite name” but absolutely name, “Hasem,” (Lev. 24:11) which we cannot name absolutely “as it is.”

But we can name it since it is contracted or particularly adequate to some property in God since he is eternal, infinite...The name through which every name is a name and which is the essence of every name is the name of God...In the name “Jehovah” there is the secret of his ineffability since it cannot be translated according to Jerome and Rabbi Moses [Maimonides].<sup>329</sup> This name designates God according to his omnipotence.

With the name Tetragrammaton, of the four letters, the ancients placed every secret. And the Jews have the book Cabala concerning the power of this name. The Jews do not read this name except but once prior to fasting. And they reverently guard the books in which the name is inscribed. They do not meditate over a holy book where this name is not found. Jerome says that this name always had its ancient characters removed from the bibles of the Hebrews.<sup>330</sup> The ineffable name Tetragrammaton is not a “name” since it does not signify substance with appropriate or common quality nor is it a verb with tense signifying by mood, nor a pronoun nor participle, nor a part of speech but everything at once.

## **Second Part: Concerning the names adequate to God as causes with respect to caused and concerning fire as a distinguished metaphor for God.**

“Light will radiate above us since he is born among us and will be called Lord.” (Is. 9:2) There are many names which are adequate to God as causes with respect to caused like “Creator,” “Enlightener,” “Savior,” “Life-giver,” ...[There are] names which are adequate to God by analogy (*proportionaliter*) since they are found perfected in creatures, such as “good,” “bold,” “thinking,” ... and otherwise in a like fashion such as “angel of great counsel,”<sup>331</sup> “lion,” “rock,” “consuming fire,” ...[There are] names which are adequate to God through negation such as “immortal” and “invisible” and others in the chapter “We believe firmly.” (1 Tim. 1)

Every name bears either perfection or imperfection.<sup>332</sup> If perfection, then either 1) that which is not found in creatures--and these are properly adequate to God, such as omnipotent or eternal--or 2) those

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<sup>329</sup> Jerome, *Commentary on Ezekiel*, chap. 6 no.3 (CCSL 75, 63); Moses Maimonides, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, Part I chap. 61.

<sup>330</sup> Jerome, *Epistle 25* (CSEL 54, 219).

<sup>331</sup> “*Angelus magni consilii.*” Cf. Is. 9:5-6. A more familiar English translation of this messianic term is “Wonder- (or Wonderful) Counselor,” as found in the New American Bible and New Revised Standard Version respectively.

<sup>332</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q.13 a.3.

which are found in creatures in an indeterminate mode such as understanding and are less properly adequate to God or 3) in creatures and in a determinate mode and least properly adequate to God (except metaphorically) such as lion or lamb.

According to the first way, we have the divine names: Jah, Adonai, El, Elohim, Vaheie, Schaddai, Sabaoth, and other names from Solomon's Book of Exorcisms.<sup>333</sup> Concerning other names of the Greeks, likewise “esgi abhir” of the Indices (Hindus?).<sup>334</sup> According to the second way, we have “theos” from “theo,” “I see” or “I run;” “Deus,” “Got” from “good,” “boeg,” “tengri,” and others according to diverse languages: logos, ratio, verbum...And besides, as Ambrose says, God created diverse things so that his power could be expressed in diversity.<sup>335</sup> And there are also diverse languages so that one ineffable name can be expressed in diverse modes. According to the third way, he is called lion, lamb, light, consuming fire, and the light in which there are no shadows.

Let us examine the *Hierarchy* for the sake of our instruction concerning the metaphor “fire” according to Dionysius. Dionysius says in chapter 15 of the *Angelic Hierarchy* that among all corporeal things fire represents God's image most closely.<sup>336</sup>

1. In itself fire is invisible, for it cannot be seen except when something is lit. So is God.
2. It is “in all things,” i.e., invisibly; nevertheless it is sown through all things corporeal just as God is in all things invisibly.
3. It “passes through all things undiluted.” Just as God is not mixed together with other things, [fire] is also essentially undiluted. So too is God.
4. It is set apart from all elements of nature by its nobility, of place by its loftiness, of action by its effectiveness.
5. It is “altogether clear” by itself and in each of its parts. Thus God is “light,” and there are not any shadows in him. (1 John 1:5)

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<sup>333</sup> *Sermo* I, #12 (h XVI/1, 5). According to the Heidelberg edition, it is not known whether Nicholas has taken these terms from a Jewish source, from a dispute with the Jews, or from the study of the Hebrew Bible itself; see h XVI/1, 4, note on #3, 7-14.

<sup>334</sup> *Sermo* I, #5 (h XVI/1, 6) for this and what follows. According to Nicholas, *esgi abhir* is a Semitic term referring to “creator of the universe.”

<sup>335</sup> Ambrose, *De fide* II, Prologue, no. 2 (PL 16, 559-560).

<sup>336</sup> These quotations from Robert Grosseteste's Commentary on *The Celestial Hierarchy* 15,2 (PG 3:329A). Cusanus inaccurately refers to a non-existent chapter 16 of *The Celestial Hierarchy*.

6. Although it is light in itself, it is still “not known” by the senses. Likewise, fire is in potency in a flint-stone...
7. Since it “cannot be detained” [e.g. in matter], it is “invisible.”
8. It “overpowers all things.” God is “a consuming fire.” (Deut. 4:24)
9. All things receive fire and through its measure even turn ignite things back into fire...
10. Fire “surrenders” to all things which can be heated, illuminated, and ignited. Thus God [surrenders] to a corporeal, sensible, and intellectual nature.
11. It is “the source of renewal” of all things. They grow and flourish through a unifying warmth...; through nourishment, growth...; through circulation; like a deer...<sup>337</sup>
12. Moving around in a circle, it spreads beams of light out in different directions.
13. It is “incomprehensible,” for it is comprehended through its own mind. There is no material substance which can grasp it since it is “everything everywhere...”
14. Since fire is “undiluted” in itself, it “makes distinctions” and differentiates all things just as God distinguishes all things.
15. It is “borne upward” and always lofty.
16. It “advances intensely,” i. e., swiftly unless slowed down... “Swiftly runs his word,” “reaching from end [to end].” (Ps. 147:15, Wis. 8:1) 17. “Ever mobile” in its selfsameness, as we see in the heavenly bodies, showing inner activity in the deity...<sup>338</sup>
18. It “moves other things.” Fire is the power which causes all motion. Thus God “sets all things in motion.”<sup>339</sup>
19. “Though incomprehensible,” fire “can comprehend” since it converts other things into itself but is itself unchanging. Thus the unity of the personal Word assumes human nature into his person, and God makes souls blessed.

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<sup>337</sup> The sermon notes are disjointed. The text of Grosseteste, from which he is excerpting, mentions an eagle and a deer as examples of animals who can be nursed back to health through the activity of “life-giving heat.”

<sup>338</sup> In other words, the celestial fires of the angels “move” spiritually (not spatially) and thereby show us something of the perfect, infinite motion of an unchanging God.

<sup>339</sup> Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy*, III, Met. 9 (CCSL 94, 51).

20. Everything capable of motion needs fire in order to move, but fire needs nothing. In this it displays a figure of God, who “has no need of our good things.”<sup>340</sup>

21. Fire “can grow from within itself,” just like number in enumerated things and light in illuminated things, and its potency does not come to an end. God is without limits.

22. It is “invisibly present in all things,” not as in an other (as light in the eye of a blind man) but present as light in the eye of someone who can see and benefit from the activity of seeing...Thus God invisibly “moves all things in all things.” (1 Cor. 12:6)

23. It surrenders most abundantly to all things and remains undiminished just like knowledge...

24. “If neglected,” fire appears “not to exist.” But with friction it is revealed suddenly then becomes incomprehensible...Fire is called “neglected” when we do not act to draw it forth [from potency to act]. It is suddenly revealed by the friction of iron with a stone. And if it were left alone without natural tinder, it would vanish incomprehensibly. Likewise, the fool says in his heart “There is no God.” (Ps. 53:1) Repenting in his heart, he may draw near to the goodness that is his own. And if he neglects to lay hold of his own tinder of virtues and virtuous actions, perseverance..., then it will escape.

Thus, this argument (*ratio ista*) makes sense of fire and, apparently, how reasoning itself (*ratio*) is higher than fire and its ground (*ratio*).

### **Third Part: Concerning the names signifying the Son in assumed humanity as Savior and concerning his circumcision.**

The third [entrance hymn]: “A child is born among us, and a Son is given to us, whose empire is above his earth, and his name will be called the “Wonder Counselor.”<sup>341</sup>

And the gospel calls the name “Wonder Counselor” “Savior” or “Jesus.” John in the Apocalypse, chap. 19, says to our proposition concerning the circumcision: “He wore a cloak that had been dipped in blood, and his name will be Word of God.” (19:13)

Isidore [of Seville] in his Etymologies, Bk. VII, chap. 10 says concerning the names appropriate to the Son in his assumed humanity: “He is called “christ,” that is “anointed with oil” or “Messias” since He

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<sup>340</sup> Ps. 15:2 according to the Vulgate.

<sup>341</sup> *Roman Missal*, Introduction to the Third Mass on Christmas Day.

is [anointed] above his fellow [kings].<sup>342</sup> He is called “Jesus,” “Sother,” and “Salvator” in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.<sup>343</sup>

He is called “Emmanuel,” i.e. “God with us.” Thus Matthew says “Emmanuel.” (1:23) He is called “the only Son” (John 1:18) and first born (Rom. 8:29). He is called “beginning, middle, and end.” He is called “way, truth, and life.” (John 14:6)

But turning back to the text of the gospel, he is called “Jesus” or “Issus” according to the Greeks or “Hessus” according to the Arabs, “Jhesus” according to the Hebrews or “Jhesua,”... Since he saved his people, he is called “Savior.” But in the gospel, according to which he was circumcised on the eighth day, he was given the name “Jesus,” i.e. “Savior”<sup>344</sup> (Matt. 1:21).

The eighth day is a new day and a day of renewal. After the eighth day [there is renewal] through the circumcision with a sharp stone of the firmness of Christ's faith (since he was the rock), and on the eighth day of the resurrection [there is a renewal] from the destruction of the world, all worldly things are postponed to search for the deity through the path of negation, as Dionysius says.<sup>345</sup> Then the savior appears, who did not rest for the seven days which measure all time and every circular revolution.

For on the first day his name alleviated sins, he was gracious towards our sins on account of his holy name. On the second day, he warded someone who knew [him] off from the devil: “Protect him who knows my name.” (Ps. 91:14) On the third day he freed from evil: “Help us, God, our salutary one, and free [us] because of the glory of your name.”<sup>346</sup>

On the fourth day he gave his spirit: “Holy Spirit, who the Father sent in my name.” (John 14:26) “Through him on the fifth day, he multiplied virtues: “Because of your name, you lead me back.” (Ps. 31:4) On the sixth day, he worked signs: “In my name he expelled demons.” (Mark 16:17)

After these seven days, Christ saves the perishable of this world eternally on the eighth day of the resurrection. “Whoever invokes his name will be saved.” (Acts 2:21)

Knowing that this salvation is fitting, he regards eternal salvation before all else. Nevertheless he also saves from infirmity, as in Mark 6: “Whoever touches him, he shall be saved” (6:56) or from misfortune

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<sup>342</sup> Hebrews 1:9.

<sup>343</sup> Cusanus' citation appears to be incorrect. Cf. Isidore of Seville, *Etymologies*, Book VII chap. 2, no. 7.

<sup>344</sup> Isidore of Seville, *Etymologies*, Book VII chap. 2, no. 8.

<sup>345</sup> Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Mystical Theology* V (PG 3:1045D).

<sup>346</sup> Ps. 79:9: “Help us, O God our savior, because of the glory of your name...”

and storms as in Matt. 8: “Save us; we are perishing.” (8:25) or from every corruption as in Phil. 4: “We are waiting for a savior.” (3:20)

All the prophets proclaim him and Paul says concerning the name of the Savior: “In the name of Jesus every knee on earth, in the heavens, and in the underworld shall bend.” (Phil. 2:10)

For he is called Savior by his power to save and from eternity since he is God. By his character, [the name] was pronounced by an angel. By his act of salvation, [the name] is pronounced today by Joseph in the circumcision. [His name] was ordained, consecrated and named by a divine mouth from eternity, desired by the Fathers and prophets, prefigured in Joshua, announced by the angel, proclaimed by the blessed Virgin, pronounced on the eighth day by Joseph, spread abroad by the angels, preached by the apostles, warmly praised by the confessors, foretasted as “oil poured out” by the holy virgins, and venerated by the faithful. The name of Christ is universal but proper to Jesus--Christ's: of grace; Jesus': of glory.

This name is above every other name, nor is there another name below the heavens. According to Bernard [of Clairvaux], he is “honey in the mouth, song in the ear, and a glad cry in the heart.”<sup>347</sup> “He shines like oil preached. He pastures like oil at rest. He allures and anoints like oil beckoned forth.”<sup>348</sup> According to Peter of Ravenna: “He gave his sight to the blind, his hearing to the deaf, his step to the lame, his life to the dead, and he avoided the devil...”<sup>349</sup>

Anselm: “Jesus is the sweet name, the delectable name, the name comforting the sinner, and the name of blessed hope. Therefore, Jesus, be my Jesus!”<sup>350</sup>

As for a stain, he possesses cleansing power; as for fault (*culpa*) sanctifying power; as for guilt (*reatus*) justifying power. All these things are remitted through the name of Jesus. “You are absolved. You are sanctified. You are justified.” (1 Cor. 6:11)

Jesus said, “Whatever you ask the Father, he will give you in my name.” (John 16:23) Hence all petitions of the Church conclude with his name.

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<sup>347</sup> This quotation, frequently attributed to Bernard in the Middle Ages, is taken from the so-called *jubilus* composed by an unknown author of the twelfth or thirteenth century; see Peter R. Biasotto, *The History of the Development of Devotion to the Holy Name* (St. Bonaventure, New York, 1943), pp. 28-29; Loman McAodha, “The Holy Name in the Preaching of St. Bernardine of Siena,” *Franciscan Studies* 29 (1969): 42.

<sup>348</sup> Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermon* 15, no.5.6 (PL 183, 846-847): “Lucet ut oleum praedicatum, pascit recogitatum, lenit et ungit invocatum.”

<sup>349</sup> Peter of Ravenna, *Sermo* CXLIV (PL 52, 586B-C).

<sup>350</sup> Anselm of Canterbury, *Meditation* II (PL 158, 724-725).

Now let us reflect on this story, whatever has occurred today and what must be done for us, so that every act of Christ is our instruction. Because of the love which would redeem us, Christ was circumcised today and is made the groom of blood for the Church. Through his name he shows himself to us.

We must first ponder the extraordinary humility of the incarnation and of his observance of the law (for he committed no sin). For example, for our sake as an infant the law-maker God does not reject the penalty of circumcision so that we may learn to submit to the obedience of the law and not to permit ourselves anything out of the presumption of innocence....

Today he began to pour blood for us; therefore, it is the first day of the year for us Christians. On the second in prayer. On the third in flagellation. On the fourth in coronation. On the fifth in crucifixion. On the sixth in the opening of his side.

On the seventh day he rested. On the eighth he came back to life. On the eighth day of the nativity, he got the name with the pouring of blood. Likewise after seven days of penal transformation, he got for our sake on the eighth day a name of victory with glorification....

The custom of changing one's name had taken place in Abraham (Abram) and Sarai (Sara).

Christ is circumcised since he comes from the race of Abraham, to whom a promise in return was made; second, so that he could conform himself to the Fathers; third, so that he would make the good law acceptable; fourth, so that he would commend the virtue of obedience and humility; fifth, so that he would undergo the law which he gave; sixth, so that he was made under the law as those who were under the law were redeemed; seventh, so that he would suffer from infancy for our sake; eighth, so that he would display the truth of flesh; ninth, so that he would praise chastity and would bring concupiscence to an end; tenth, “Christ [is] the end of the law. Through him justice comes to all who believe...” (Rom. 10:4)

Whoever bears Christ newly in himself seeks to circumcise his soul today, for his soul desires to follow or transform into Christ. Saint Bernard: “Let there be no one reprehensible in an outer habit or action or word, and let one's thoughts is be holy, affection pure, and intention upright.”<sup>351</sup>

We must be circumcised in the heart from harmful and unclean thoughts, from false and foolhardy judges, from unjust intentions so that we shall be terrified before God to change our hearts, because we shall be ashamed to speak in front of men. Our tongue must be circumcised of words which are disgraceful, defamatory, deceitful, hateful, superfluous. In things of the flesh, we must be circumcised from what is forbidden, illicit, sensuous, superfluous, and also from every temptation...

Circumcision brings about little [if it proceeds] from one part and not another. Pope Pius said: “Fasting brings about nothing if the mind and the tongue do not abstain from what is forbidden.”<sup>352</sup> Likewise Bede said these things: “He who is also circumcised with a true circumcision if he stops up his ears, he will hear blood, will close his eyes lest he not see evil, [more examples of vice] ....The Apostle commends circumcision of the zealous heart.<sup>353</sup> The principle matter in circumcision is to cut off the sins which abound in man through penance: “Unless it takes place in the soul, it is the daughter of perdition. For if a male is uncircumcised, that is, if the flesh of his foreskin has not been cut away, he will perish.” (Gen. 17:14)

But eight things must precede this circumcision: conversion of the sinner to God, recognition, contrition, confession, hatred of sin, satisfaction, circumspection. Then follows the justification of the impious one.

“There are three circumcisions: one is the sacrament, which is in the flesh. The other two are the realities signified by the sacrament, i.e. the circumcision from sin which occurs daily in the soul and also the circumcision from the penalty of sin, which occurs in the resurrection.”<sup>354</sup>

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<sup>351</sup> *Sancti Bernardi Opera, De diversis, Sermon XXXII*, ed. J. Le Clerq and H. Rochais (Rome, 1970), p. 219.

<sup>352</sup> Pseudo-Pius, *Epistle I*, chap. 2 (PG 5:1122).

<sup>353</sup> Bede, *Exposition I on the Gospel of Luke* (CCSL 120:60-61).

<sup>354</sup> According to h XVI, 315, this is a quotation from Ludolf of Saxony's *Life of Jesus Christ*, Pt. I, chap. 10.

## Sermon 21

*Entering the house.*<sup>355</sup>

Note: Portions of this sermon are comparable to the early chapters of Book 1 of *De concordantia catholica*. Some sentences are incomplete in the Latin text.

*Entering the house, they found the boy with Mary, his mother; and, falling down, they adored him* [Mt. 2:11].

First, how the Magi entered the house etc., as here, according to the story with those things attached to it. And, because *the house* is understood as the Church Militant – *You know how you ought to conduct yourself in the House of the Lord* [1 Tim. 3:15], and *Wisdom has built herself a house* [Prov. 9:1] – and the Church Triumphant – *In my Father’s house are many mansions* [Jn. 14:2], *Blessed are those who dwell in your house, Lord* [Ps. 83:5] and *I love the beauty of your house* [Ps. 25:8]; and *the house* is understood as the church built by hands – *My house shall be called a house of prayer* [Is. 56:7], and *Come, let us go up to the house of the mountain of the Lord and the house of the God of Jacob* [Is. 2:3]. Therefore, in the second place, something must be said about the Church, because is the feast of the Church. And, because *the house* is the faithful soul – *Sanctify before your house* [Ps. 92:5], and *He is a son of this house, which house we are* [Heb. 3:6], therefore, in the third place, something must be said about this house, and how we should enter our house, so that we might find *the boy with Mary, his mother*, and how, *falling down*, we should adore.

<Part 1: How the Magi entered the house>.<sup>356</sup>

<Part 2: Concerning the Church as a union of the rational spirits with Christ, the head; and how we should enter it>.

(a) In the Church Militant, whose end is the Triumphant one, we must make the pilgrimage in the unity of obedience.

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<sup>355</sup> Epiphany 1439 or 1440, possibly at Koblenz.

<sup>356</sup> Omitted in the manuscripts.

Entering the Church, which they entered through faith, they found the boy etc., for “the Church is the congregation of the faithful”.<sup>357</sup> It is true that the Church Militant is the congregation of the faithful, where there is the union of Christians to their head by faith; for the truth is learned there only by mirror image and enigma [cf. 1 Cor. 13:12].

In the Church Triumphant, however, where Christ is seen *face to face* etc. [1 Cor. 13:12], faith ceases. Therefore, the Church is the union of rational spirits to their head, Christ.<sup>358</sup>

And, therefore, we must note how every creature is obliged by our God to believe and obey of itself, purely and simply, without any presumption, like infallible wisdom and to adhere to the teacher peacefully through obedience and to pursue its end. And since that eternal *wisdom has built itself a house* in the rational creature, in which it delights to dwell centrally, then that rational creatures can taste the refectation of that super-celestial wisdom, that bread and wine [cf. Prov. 9:5], through adhesion to that creating wisdom.

However, this is done through that unity of obedience and charity, through which those rational creatures are one with Christ, and through him with God the Father, just as the son is one with the Father etc. [cf. Jn. 17:11-12]. And this very wisdom, when it is perpetual and infallible in the fatherland, is called the Church Triumphant; while still on earth, a pilgrim, oppressed by many storms and perils of separation, it is called the Church Militant. If it is in the middle way, it is called the Church Sleeping.<sup>359</sup> Therefore, Ambrose<sup>360</sup> elegantly shows, in Epistle 13 to Timaeus, how great is this connection of all spirits with Christ in the fatherland.

The Church Triumphant, however, which already has left the boundaries of this pilgrimage, first is composed of the obedient angels, connected with the eternal Word, cut off from the presumptuous, apostate and disobedient ones, who wish to be like the Most High. Among those angels there is a

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<sup>357</sup> Ordinary Gloss to C. 7 q. 3 c. 3 in Gratian's *Decretum*.

<sup>358</sup> Bonaventura, *Hexameron*, collation 1, *Opera*, 5.329.

<sup>359</sup> The Church Suffering in Purgatory.

<sup>360</sup> Ambrosius, Ep. 16, CSEL 82.116, 118, 120-121.

wondrous order like the image of it in the Trinity, so that there are three orders in the image of the Trinity. In each one there are three choirs. The highest is in the image of the Father, enlightening etc. Therefore, this congregation of those like God is united very intrinsically to God according to their grades.<sup>361</sup>

And, unlike those blessed spirits, other rational human spirits go to the place of the expelled demons, so that even *the church of the wicked* [Ps. 25:5] exists in the opposite way without order in the upheaval of demons, with Lucifer as their head, to whom also the presumptuous and rebellious unbelieving human spirits [cf. 1 Pet. 3:19-20] descend for perpetual dwelling.

There are, however, in the middle the two churches, those Militant and Sleeping, which have not yet reached the goal. And the Sleeping one, exalted over the Militant because of certitude, although it is like a pilgrim, already is united with the other, so that it is aided by its prayers; it is, nevertheless, much nearer to the Triumphant by certitude of eternal victory over death. The Militant one, however, is gathered from men, some of whom come by way of death immediately to the Church Triumphant; others, to the church of the lost wicked; others, to the Church Sleeping, undergoing purgation.<sup>362</sup>

The promise of passing over to the eternal kingdom, to union with the triumphant souls, is made to the Church Militant, which is called “the immaculate spouse” [cf. Eph. 5:27], if it perfects the way of pilgrimage through obedience, as Paul witnessed in Ephesians [cf. Eph. 4:27-6:20]. This is the Church, our mother, which the Word of God and the Wisdom of the Father espoused from the beginning.<sup>363</sup> It was prefigured in Paradise, when Eve was created from Adam’s side; matrimony was instituted with the subsequent command to obey [cf. Gen. 2:21-24]. For just as, like Jerome says, Eve was drawn out of Adam’s side, the Church, signified by Eve, is drawn out of Christ, Who espoused her just like Adam did.<sup>364</sup>

Since, however, a man acted with presumption against obedience, the second Adam, that is Christ, came; and he washed away this stain, contracted through disobedience, with his blood, so that man

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<sup>361</sup> Ps. Dionysius, *De caelesti hierarchia*, cc. 6-9, *Dionysiaca* 830-916.

<sup>362</sup> *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 527-528, decree of union with the Greeks.

<sup>363</sup> Cf. Ambrosius in Ps. 118:1, CSEL 62.7.

<sup>364</sup> Hieronymus, Ep. 123, CSEL 56,84.

might merit passing to the celestial company, to the Church Triumphant, the immaculate spouse etc. [cf. Rom. 5:9; 1 Cor. 15:45; Rev. 1:5].

(b) The Church Militant is ordered after the example of the hierarchy of the Triumphant one.

Now, however, the Church Militant is wondrously ordered after the example of the angelic <hierarchy>, which Dionysius treats in *Concerning the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*.<sup>365</sup> For there is a hierarchical order etc.; <Leo><sup>366</sup> IX against the presumption of Michael etc.

Now, however, just as in the human body, so in this there are spirit, soul and body. Just as in the celestial <hierarchy>, God, the angels and men, <in the Church Militant> there are the sacraments, illuminating and purifying, and the faithful people, which is purified.

Likewise, how the wondrous is the hierarchy in the sacraments with respect to the sacrament of sacraments [the eucharist].<sup>367</sup> For, just as God communicates himself *face to face* in the fatherland, so here under species. And here, how, just as the sacraments are like the Church Triumphant, so whatever bears the image of the Trinity, because it is so great a sacrament, is such a thing itself [*res*] and both thing and the sign [*sacramentum*].<sup>368</sup>

The order of the priesthood is marked by the sacrament, that is orders, for the higher divine things. And in this priesthood there is a hierarchy from the supreme pontiff even to the laity.<sup>369</sup> For there are some of a superior order, some of an inferior one, some of a middle one. In each there are three orders, just as among the angels. And they have their sacraments, the priesthood as the soul, the people as the body. Gregory Nazianzen<sup>370</sup> says at the beginning of the Apologetic *Oration*, the priesthood, in the

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<sup>365</sup> Cf. Ps. Dionysius, *De ecclesiastica hierarchia*, cc. 1, 5, 6; *Dionysiaca* 1072-1092, 1313-1330, 1377-1408.

<sup>366</sup> The manuscripts say “Gregorius”; cf. Leo IX, *Epistola ad Michaellem Constantinopolitanum patriarcham*; c. 37, PL 143.767.

<sup>367</sup> Cf. Ps. Dionysius, *De ecclesiastica hierarchia*, c. 3; *Dionysiaca* 161-162.

<sup>368</sup> This distinction seems to originate with Augustinus, *In Johannis evangelium*, tr. 26 c. 6, CCSL 36.267-268.

<sup>369</sup> Cf. Ps. Dionysius, *De ecclesiastica hierarchia*, cc. 5-6; *Dionysiaca* 1313-1330. 1377-14082.

<sup>370</sup> Cf. Gregorius Nazianzenus, *Oratio 2, Apologetica*, tr. Rufinus, c. 2, CSEL 46.8-9.

body of the Church, exercises an office, that of the soul in the body; so it befits them to illuminate, vivify, rule. To illuminate just like reason etc., because *the light of the world* and *the salt of the earth* [Mt. 5:14 & 13]. Cyprian, *Concerning the Gambler*.<sup>371</sup>

There is, nevertheless, in the first choir of pontiffs a hierarchy, because in one episcopate diffused throughout the world, on account of unity, there is a difference with the concord of many in one as Cyprian says to Novatian, Jerome against Jovinian.<sup>372</sup> And note that, of necessity, there is a first, greatest pontiff who has on earth the power of the supreme hierarchy, like the supreme ministry, that is the supreme angel in heaven. He exercises, however, all the priesthood as *a legation from Christ* [2 Cor. 5:20], because [Christ] said, *Just as the life-giving Father sent me, so I send you* [ Jn. 5:58, 20:21], just as the angels are the messengers of God etc.<sup>373</sup>

Consequently, that priesthood is considered in two ways, as to orders, which it has for the rule of the Church as is necessary, or as to union, because the soul rules and unites the body.

As to the first, there are hierarchic orders up to the pontificate; as to the second, they are for union, so that there is unity. In the Church there is a regular dispensing power, that of jurisdiction. As this priestly power has one see, just so it has one episcopate etc. And in that see there is a hierarchic order as far as those presiding over it. There should be noted a saying of Optatus of Milevis about the angel who presides over the see.<sup>374</sup> And the see of Peter has Peter's promise of truth [cf. Lk. 22:32], as Augustine, Alypius and Fortunatus say to Generosus etc.<sup>375</sup> And there it is noted how there is no power of binding and loosing except by adhering to the Apostolic see, how one is not enrolled in the Church except by adhering to the Apostolic See.

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<sup>371</sup> Cf. Ps. Cyprianus, *De aleatoribus*, c. 2, CSEL 3/3.91.

<sup>372</sup> Cyprianus, Ep. 55, CSEL 3/2.642, cited in Gratian's *Decretum* C. 7 q. 1 c. 6; Hieronymus, *Adversus Jovinianum*, I, PL 23.258.

<sup>373</sup> Cf. Isidorus Hispalensis, *Etymologiae*, VII c. 5.

<sup>374</sup> Cf. Optatus Milevitanus, *De schismate Donatistarum adversus Parmenianum*, II, c. 2, CSEL 26.36.

<sup>375</sup> Augustinus, Ep. 53, cited in Gratian's *Decretum* C. 24 q. 1 c. 33.

Likewise, how all bishops are like the soul of the people by common consent, and how parishioners are in the parish priest, and the parish priest in the bishop, and the bishop in the pope, and, through the pope in Peter, who is the cornerstone and foundation of the Church in Christ, who is *the rock* etc. [Mt. 16:18].<sup>376</sup>

Likewise, how consequently the hierarchy is in the faithful from the supreme pontiff even to the farmers. And concerning the threefold order of kings etc. Likewise, the threefold regime: monarchy, aristocracy and polity, and even stewardship, and concerning their contraries.<sup>377</sup> Likewise, concerning the hierarchy in each person in himself; concerning the spirit, the soul and the body etc.<sup>378</sup>

This is a different disposition in a wondrous connection – [Gratian’s *Decretum*] D. 89 [c. 7].<sup>379</sup>

And how there is one Church from Abel the just, even to the last man.<sup>380</sup> And how today the Church is washed in the Jordan, and how the gentiles enter it today, and how it is the ship of the ark of Noah, outside of which there is no salvation, and how it suffers from the waves but is not sunk, because the faith of Peter will not perish.<sup>381</sup>

One enters it by faith. It is necessary that anyone be washed by the sacrament of baptism or by the essence of the sacrament when necessity prevents performance of the rite.<sup>382</sup> And thus through faith he adheres to Christ, who was baptized today. It is necessary that he be signed with the sign of the supreme

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<sup>376</sup> This a form of the doctrine of explication Petri found in Cusanus’ letter to Rodrigo Sánchez de Arévalo.

<sup>377</sup> This distinction of regimes is drawn from the works of Aristotle.

<sup>378</sup> Cf. Augustinus, *De fide et symbolo*, c. 10, CSEL 41.281.

<sup>379</sup> The manuscripts say “D. 83”.

<sup>380</sup> Cf. Gregorius I, *XL hom. in evang.*, hom. 19, PL 76.1154.

<sup>381</sup> Cf. *Breviarium Romanum*, Antiphona ad Benedictus in laudibus Epiphaniae Domini; Mt. 2:1-2; Extravagantes communes 1.8.1 c. *Unam sanctam*; there are differing versions of the saying, *Navis Petri non mergitur*.

<sup>382</sup> Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, III q. 66 aa, 1, 11-12, q. 67 a. 7.

captain.<sup>383</sup> The Church is an army. It has to be faithful, victorious and loyal,<sup>384</sup> so that he may have a place with the captain, God and the Lamb [Rev. 14:4], when he conquers; and he has to be obedient, etc.

Likewise, how the espousal of the head with anyone's soul occurs, as if the king of the Germans espoused the queen of France with the condition that all the kingdom of France became subject to him, and then it wished to bring him over and be united to him. And so that to which the soul is obligated is not difficult or impossible. And if he subjects the body to himself and subjects himself to the Spirit, then he will find *the boy with Mary* etc.

You should have in mind, among other things, to declare how God communicated ruling power to the rational spirit; likewise, how the acts of the rectors, even of the wicked ones, have efficacy from the Holy Spirit as far as receiving etc.; likewise, concerning the laws and rules of the Church etc.

Part 3: Concerning entering into oneself and serving Him with faith in humility.

Third, one must see how one ought to enter into oneself, so that he may find *the boy with Mary* etc.

It must be said steadfastly that the faithful soul is espoused by the head of the Church under this condition, so that it remains faithful and so that the body is subject to it and remains in servitude [cf. 1 Cor. 9:27]. Otherwise, it could not enter into the tabernacle of the Lord and adore etc. [cf. Ps. 131:7]. By fidelity we ought to understand lest the soul be adulterous and seek other lovers than her spouse. The soul, however, seeks other lovers when she turns herself by choice to a creature; and, the more she adheres to a creature, the less [she adheres] to God.

This adhesion to a creature, however, is double, that is either because it seeks something of divinity in a creature and embraces it in the creature like divinity<sup>385</sup>— and that is idolatry; or it seeks in that creature some healthy as if from a creature, and then either the calculation of means concurs with

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<sup>383</sup> Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, III q. 72 aa. 5, 8, 11.

<sup>384</sup> Literally, *non traditorem*.

<sup>385</sup> Literally *tale*.

this, as in physicians and certain astrologers, and it does not consequently recede from God, or it does not concur, as in physical ties; then, because the calculation of means fails and the devil often mixes himself into these things, from which the Christian must abstain. Therefore, [see] Deuteronomy<sup>386</sup> 13[:1-5] on this.

Sometimes someone, like a blasphemer, attributing to God what does not befit him or denying him that which befits him, or usurping what belongs to God, does not out of pure malice.<sup>387</sup> And sometimes someone bears himself in his heart, from the devil's usurpation, with frequent fear of having offended God, just as fear breeds terrible things in dark places in the heart. Sometimes the devil speaks blasphemy through a man, and that does not poison him entirely. Therefore, the despised should expel such thoughts and labors etc.<sup>388</sup> Blasphemy with the mouth is when someone speaks outrageous words against God, and names members which should not be named.<sup>389</sup>

And it is a very great sin, because of the wicked intention of wounding God with the tongue etc. Neither the Jews nor the heretics have such an intention, because they think they do well etc. It is very great, because the lesser man is inclined to this sin, which is against the best, the most noble. Therefore, Thomas<sup>390</sup> holds that it is a greater sin than homicide, because it is against the first precept of the first table [of the Commandments].

Because to curse a father and mother is punishable by death [cf. Mt. 5:22], therefore, a blasphemer is worthy of corporal and spiritual death. God is despised -- *Concerning heretics* [c.] *Vergentis*.<sup>391</sup> Cursing the king is worthy of death – Codex *No one is to curse the emperor* l. i [Cod. 9.7.1]. Similarly, it is the same penalty to curse the saints – in the Authentic *Let no one indulge himself against* [Novella 72 c. 1], because of union with God. This is the greatest ingratitude.

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<sup>386</sup> The manuscripts say “Exodus”.

<sup>387</sup> Cf. Guillelmus Peraldus, *Summa vitiorum*, tr. 9, De peccato linguae, pars 2, c. 1 (1/2, 304).

<sup>388</sup> Ibid (308).

<sup>389</sup> Ibid (304).

<sup>390</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, II<sup>a</sup> II<sup>ae</sup> q. 13 a. 3.

<sup>391</sup> *Decretals of Gregory IX* 5.7.10.

One distinguishes between God's sons and the devil's. It is the language of hell.<sup>392</sup> Therefore, the hearers ought to stop up their ears etc. And then the worst of men, whom all men curse, is known. Therefore, he is punished corporally, spiritually and eternally.<sup>393</sup>

Examples of punishment:<sup>394</sup> in the boy whom Saint Gregory;<sup>395</sup> and the knight etc.; and the one who blasphemed the eye of Blessed Mary etc (see elsewhere); about the arrow;<sup>396</sup> of the coin of Count Hugo, etc.

Therefore, such persons, although they seem to be in the Church, nevertheless, because they are not faithful, are not members of Church's Church but of the devil's. Therefore, although all in mortal sin do not keep faith with God, nevertheless, the more are infidels before God the more they offend him.

It is necessary, therefore, that the one wishing to be in the Church should enter it and keep faith with humility [cf. 1 Tim. 4:7].<sup>397</sup> Second, it is necessary that he should subject the body to the soul., so that sense may be under reason; and he does this if he enters into himself by knowledge of himself. When the liars depart, then they return to the heart; and so there is no better art, nor anything more healthy, than to know oneself.<sup>398</sup>

When a man places himself before himself and regards his vileness, he knows his miseries and the plagues of sin, so that he may mourn. He regards the vanity of present things, so that he may condemn them. [He regards] the benefits of God, so that he may be grateful; His mercy, so that he may hope; his

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<sup>392</sup> Peraldus, *Summa vitiorum*, [307-308].

<sup>393</sup> *Decretals of Gregory IX* 5.26.2.

<sup>394</sup> See also the exempla in Sermon XVIII.

<sup>395</sup> Peraldus, *Summa vitiorum*, [305], cites Gregorius I, *Dialogus* IV c. 18.

<sup>396</sup> Stephanus de Borbone, *De diversis materiis praedicabilibus*, pars 4, De dono fortitudinis, tit. 9, de la Marche, *Anecdotes historiques*, 341-342.

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<sup>398</sup> Cf. *De spiritu et anima*, c. 41, PL 40.816-817.

justice, so that he may fear; the uncertainty of any end, so that he may be solicitous about himself and always prepared to give an accounting for himself.<sup>399</sup> And so the one who at first was alienated from God and himself says, *My heart forsakes me* [Ps. 39:11]; having returned at last through entry into himself, *Your servant finds his heart* [2 Samuel 7:27].

We find ourselves, however, despoiled by gratuitous things, wounded by natural ones, blinded by reason, bent by the will, befouled by memory; and we say, when we see these things more profoundly, “I have sinned beyond the number of the sands” etc.<sup>400</sup> And then the text of Wisdom applies [Wisd. 8:16], *Entering into the house, I rest with that wisdom*, that is our Jesus. For he is the very light; he dwells in us through faith [cg. Eph. 3:17]. And when we hear what is spoken to us etc. – Isaiah 30[:15], *In silence and hope will be our strength*, for then there is no loquacity etc. Humiliation follows etc.

And after a man has entered into himself, he finds *the boy with Mary* in the temple, that is the Church, in the desert, that is in the place of penitence, in the house of the ordered conscience, in the manger, that is through humility.

Truly he who enters into himself finds God, as is said in *Concerning the Spirit and Soul*, c. 20.<sup>401</sup> Then he comes to life, when he is fashioned by love, thus found in himself. Therefore, it is necessary to depart from everything sensible and everything imaginable and everything intelligible and return to himself centrally, so that he may attain his only desire for the supremely desirable.

And when you find the boy thus, you approach him, adore him as a servant does his master, a needy mendicant, infirm, by the humble prostration of the mind, by bare affection, *with the magnitude of the mind and with sighing of the heart* [Ps. 37:9], in simplicity and sincerity [2 Cor. 1:12]. And you will set forth all your possessions with trust and commit yourself to him. And you will exclaim to him, *Your will be done* etc. [Lk. 1:38]. Then you will attain your ultimate desire.

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<sup>399</sup> Ibid, c. 31, col. 800.

<sup>400</sup> *Breviarium Romanum*, Resp. 1 feria IV infra hebdomada I post Octavam Pentecostes.

<sup>401</sup> Cf. *De spiritu et anima*, c. 14, col. 791.

In this foretaste of future life, nevertheless, you understand how sweet are the kisses exchanged by you with Mary and her son – as you have elsewhere etc.<sup>402</sup>

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<sup>402</sup> Two more sermons by Cusanus on the same text follow.

## Sermon 22 “The day of sanctification”<sup>403</sup>

DRAFT TRANSLATION BY THOMAS IZBICKI

Theme

“The day of sanctification has shone on us; come, nations, adore the Lord.”<sup>404</sup>

Holy mother Church, the spotless bride of the supreme king,<sup>405</sup> in the jubilee of the symphony of supreme joy on today's feast, breaks out into this song of joy, “The day of sanctification” etc.

*The captive daughter of Zion* [Is. 52:2], sitting for many years in the shadows of deprivation of intellectual life and foreseeing many stellar rays in the prophets [Ps. 106:10], who prefigured such a day, who foretold by word and work the future great day of the spirit, that very daughter of Zion [Lam. 2:13], that is the soul most desirous of understanding the intelligible life,<sup>406</sup> has been consoled very often. Many days have elapsed; but the shadows of these things, which have been illuminated gradually with a clearer light, nevertheless, were corruptible.

Today, however, the substantial Day, sanctified in Itself, which Itself is incomparable sanctity, has shone on all men, past and present. It has shone, I say, without any darkness and, unlike any stars, driving all darkness far away; for this is the true Sun Himself in His primordial clarity, indeed not “in” that light, but Himself that infinite Light,<sup>407</sup> invisible to the sensible eye, in which there is no darkness [1 Jn. 1:5]. He has shone “on us,” so that a way to the end may be manifested more fully to us, so that every fallacy has been routed by the Truth, so that death can be slain more fully by life;<sup>408</sup> and this is shown most simply without multiplicity, because that Light is *the way, and the truth, and the life* [Jn. 14:6].

For this reason, because the Bridegroom, who *hath set His tabernacle in the sun* [Ps. 18:6], long expected most avidly by us with every desire, “has shone” today on the bride, the daughter of Zion [Is. 1:8, 37:22, 52:2; Lam. 2:1, 2:13], here He must arise and not sleep [Eph. 5:14; Rom. 13:11], but, with the arrival of supreme love and its internal motion, must come to the bride with sweet smells, which are the most devout prayers of the saints [Rev. 5:8].

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<sup>403</sup> The edition places this sermon at Trier on Christmas day 1440.

<sup>404</sup> *Missale Romanum*, Gradual of the third mass on Christmas day.

<sup>405</sup> cf. Augustinus, *In evangelium Iohannis*, tr. 35, CCSL 36.318.

<sup>406</sup> cf. Glo. ord. to Lam. 2:13.

<sup>407</sup> Reading *lux* for *dux*.

<sup>408</sup> cf. Augustinus, *In evangelium Iohannis*, tr. 34, CCSL 36.312.

Come, therefore, you who are prepared in Christ for this race, who are gathered here for this reason, and adore Him, so that, in our devotion, He may be received thus! And, so that He may descend on us like a dew of consolation in the utterance of speech about Him and, work His will<sup>409</sup> in me, let us approach with confidence the mother bearing this light, so that she may make the Son favorable toward us with her prayer, saying, with a pious mind, “Hail, Mary” etc.

### Introduction

There are three nativities of the Son of God, Whose feast we celebrate today: the eternal nativity, which lay concealed in the depth of intelligence, which midnight mass signifies, which is touched on in “The day of sanctification”; the nativity by which *the Word was made flesh* [Jn. 1:14], which the mass at dawn evokes, which is touched on in “has shone on us”; and the third, by which we are born in the very plenitude of His light by a devout approach to Him, as the solemn mass shows that this nativity occurred for our salvation, which is touched on in the theme of this sermon at “come, let us adore.”

I have decided to touch on these parts briefly. And the first will be concerned with the eternal generation of the Son -- for the more informed, so that the gospel of John is opened for them somewhat in its first part. The second, for the common folks, will be about the temporal nativity, so that the part of the gospel speaking of it is noted. The third part will be for the contemplatives, so that the last part of the gospel, *He gave them power* etc. [Jn. 1:12], is noted.

#### Part 1: On the eternal nativity of the Son of God

a) God, as absolute unity, enfolds even opposites and surpasses all our names.

For the first part, it must be known that God is not touched by reason, nor by imagination, nor by sense. He even surpasses every sense and reason, and He is touched only by faith.<sup>410</sup> *If you will not believe, you shall not understand*, Isaiah [7:9] says. Therefore, we believe Him to be God one and three, who, nevertheless, is comprehended neither as unity nor as trinity.

All nations confess the God of all, *of Whom are all things* [1 Cor. 8:6], to be best; and this even the gentiles do not deny. For, since nothing can bring itself into existence, since it would have to be before it was, which reason does not admit, it is necessary to derive from one eternal First.<sup>411</sup> This first principle, however, we call God, Who cannot be understood not to be. For He is Truth, which does not wish to be understood not to be; for He is Truth, the object of the intellect. God can be understood either to be or not to be. Since the former is affirmed as true, God is affirmed to be. God, who is seen to be, of necessity, from every contradictory, is above every opposition and contradiction.

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<sup>409</sup> Literally, *per ipsum*.

<sup>410</sup> Proclus, *In Platonis theologiam*; cf. Haubst, MFCG 1 (1961): 34.

<sup>411</sup> cf. Augustinus, *De Trinitate*, I c. 1 nr. 1, CCSL 50.28.

When, therefore, you wish to ascend to investigating the nature of God, you see you fall short, of necessity, because you can help yourself neither by names nor by reasons in the investigation of the infinity of that which surpasses every opposition and precedes as the most-simple eternity and the maximum cause. God, then, is not something which has an opposite; but He is above every opposite through infinity, as is the doctrine of the truer theologians.<sup>412</sup>

When, therefore, you consider that God is the supreme Good, seeking Him by way of reason, you assert His truth, justice, piety; and you remove from Him their opposites. And, when you consider God thus, a certain multiplicity and otherness occurs in you, because justice in itself is not truth, nor truth piety; and so, of the rest. Whence you see these names “Truth,” “Justice,” “Light” not to equal God, since they express differences, multiplicity, opposition and reason, all of which cannot equal the most simple, infinite First. But you say it is most true that these names do not positively equal God,<sup>413</sup> who cannot be the one and not the other, since He is *all in all* [1 Cor. 12:6]. Therefore, you find the theology of negation more true, since God, Who is all, is not something among them, but is the most simple beginning,<sup>414</sup> enfolding all by His infinity, since thus He is Justice, Truth, Peace and the rest, which things signify perfection in heaven and on earth.<sup>415</sup>

All things, however, in so far as they are, are one.<sup>416</sup> If, therefore, all things participate in the unity which is called entity, in which intelligence, reason and sensible things participate differently<sup>417</sup> in differing degrees, it is manifest that unity more befits God, who is absolute Entity or “the form of being,”<sup>418</sup> by which all things which exist, rather than something else. Unity, therefore, pertains to God, to Whom no plurality is opposed, but infinite Unity, Which enfolds all, Which is good in Itself, because the diffusion of formal entity is understood apart from immersion.<sup>419</sup> And in this the Scriptures *I am Who am* [Exod. 3:14], *God is one* [Deut. 6:4] etc. are opened.

When, however, we consider God as contracted Being, we see manifestly that it befits God more to be named as more contracted, more virtuous and more enfolded being, rather than as some inferior

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<sup>412</sup> Ps. Dionysius, *De mystica theologia*, 1.5.2, PG 3.1000.

<sup>413</sup> Ps. Dionysius, *De divinis nominibus*, PG 3.596.

<sup>414</sup> Ps. Dionysius, *De caelesti hierarchia*, c. 2 §. 3, PG 3.758-59.

<sup>415</sup> Theodoricus Carnotensis, *Lectiones de Trinitate*, II nr. 59, p. 174.

<sup>416</sup> Boethius, *In Porphyrium*, I, CSEL 48.162.

<sup>417</sup> Proclus, *In Platonis theologiam*; Haubst, art. cit., p. 34.

<sup>418</sup> Theodoricus Carnotensis, *Tractatus de sex dierum operibus*, nr. 31, p. 569.

<sup>419</sup> Eckhart, *In sapientiam*, 7.27, Latin. W., II, nn. 149-51, pp. 486-88.

thing.<sup>420</sup> Wherefore, the names Spirit, Intelligence, Reason, Justice, Truth and those which escape every sense in His simplicity are used rather than fire, water, air etc.

Consider, therefore, the abstract unity which is being, by which He enfolds all those things, since nothing can be outside of it. By what means could anything be understood to be outside being? Nor is there non-being or nothing outside of that being. Non-being, therefore, is that most simple being in infinite unity. Outside that being neither being nor non-being could be understood to be.<sup>421</sup> But in that most simple being there is nothing of otherness or multiplicity, because unity is infinite. Wherefore, all things which can be said or not said, understood or not understood, are in that very infinity, both those things which are and those which are not, enfolding and surrounding.<sup>422</sup>

Now you see, if you raise yourself up by most subtle intellect, how God is not understood, because every opposition is understood, because every opposition is surpassed by the infinite; how that Being, which is the infinite form of being, is the beginning of all things which are, the middle and the end.<sup>423</sup> And, because It is the beginning, It is eternal, before all; because, the middle, It is in all; and, because, the end, It is that to which all things tend.<sup>424</sup>

You see how God is neither everywhere of nowhere, since everywhere and nowhere are opposed,<sup>425</sup> which does not befit God; but God is above them, since in Him everywhere and nowhere are enfolded and not opposed. Wherefore, He is everywhere as if nowhere and nowhere, as if everywhere, just as even in its similitude the substantial form of the thing is everywhere and nowhere in the thing itself. The form precedes every accident; and it is simple, here all in all, and in every part. And the exemplar is in the form of a man, that is as far as the body etc.<sup>426</sup>

And so we see how God is everywhere by essence, even because His being is <His> essence, power, truth etc.; but He is not received equally by all, just as the members of a body do not receive the soul equally. And, because of this, the soul does not work the same in all members etc.<sup>427</sup>

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<sup>420</sup> Accepting the alternative reading *contractiorem, virtuosiore et maiorem complicantem quam inferiorem*.

<sup>421</sup> Eckhart, *Sermo 41*, Lat. W., nr. 416, p. 351.

<sup>422</sup> cf. Iohannes Scotus Eriugena, *De divis. nat.*, I nr. 72, ed. Sheldon-Williams, p. 206.

<sup>423</sup> Proclus, *Comment. in Parm.*; Haubst, art. cit., p. 28.

<sup>424</sup> Ps. Dionysius, *De divinis nominibus*, c. 5 §. 8, PG 3.824.

<sup>425</sup> Proclus, *Elem. theol. prop.*, 98, ed. Dodds, p. 86.

<sup>426</sup> cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, I q. 76 a. 8.

<sup>427</sup> Petrus Lombardus, *Sententiae*, I d. 37 cc. 1-5; Grottaferrata, vol. 1, pp. 263-70.

b) The way creatures ascend to God as Unity, Equality and Connection is shown; and the Trinity in God is declared through these “mathematical names.”

Concerning the Trinity, however, it is necessary that you advance by this road, because there is no trinity which befits God which is opposed to simplicity or unity. But it is necessary that you understand the Trinity most abstractly and in the most elevated way above every rational trinity, as a trinity is not constituted from one and another, or from one multiplied several times, but that Trinity exists in unity,<sup>428</sup> indeed it is Unity itself, so that it is not a “trinity,” but Three-One, just as unity is One-Three.<sup>429</sup>

And you do not look at the nature of a name, because you find nothing of infinite truth in the nature of a name. Names are imposed by comparison and reason; and they do not befit the most simple, infinite, unproportional, most simple <God>. And it is not possible for us men to approach the Trinity by any sign, figure or utterance.<sup>430</sup> It is most true, then, that God is one; and it is most true that God is trine. And these are not two truths, because there is not one truth of Unity and another of Trinity; but thus it is one as three, and the opposite.

And because we attribute all names to God in comparison to creatures, it follows that, as we aid ourselves with creatures, we ascend to the Trinity. There is nothing we do not receive. We see in anything what is “one thing, discrete and connected”;<sup>431</sup> these things are found to be in essence every being. And that unity means lack of division, discrete existence and connection. If, therefore, we find that Being in every participating being, we see contracted unity, in which things participate, not to be unless it is trine.

Thus we say some things of God by inference and abstractly. Infinite unity, then, is true, because He is Unity, Which is indivisible in itself; and He is discrete Infinity, which is the equality of all being; and He is infinite Connection.<sup>432</sup> Through this, then, that God is infinite Unity; from It everything is one and undivided from Itself.

Through this, that is infinite equality, then <God> enfolds the discrete existence of all things. For that a thing is thus, and not thus or thus, it has from reason or infinite discrete Existence, which is infinite Equality, through which a thing has a discrete existence, beneath which it would not be, and<sup>433</sup> above which it is not. And from this discrete existence, therefore, there is a diversity in things by our reckoning; and among no things <is> there a precise equality. But infinite Equality, which is infinite Reason, enfolds all

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<sup>428</sup> cf. Theodoricus Carnotensis, *Glossa de Trinitate*, pp. 262-63, 307.

<sup>429</sup> Isidorus Hispalensis, *Etymologiae*, VII c. 4 nr. 1.

<sup>430</sup> Theodoricus Carnotensis, *Comment. de Trinitate*, II, p. 73.

<sup>431</sup> Augustinus, *De diversis quaest. LXXXIII*, q. 18, CCSL 44A.23.

<sup>432</sup> Theodoricus Carnotensis, *Comment. Victo.*, nr. 1, p. 498.

<sup>433</sup> Reading *et for nec*.

discrete diversities in Its simplicity. Consequent upon this, that is infinite connection, all things have some connection to one another. Wherefore, from the unity which is in all things, and from a discrete equality, there originates and proceeds a nexus of all things; and here the nexus is the origin of everything.

In such a manner we arise, in some way, from knowledge of contracted unity, which is not in act without a trinity, to absolute Unity, although we cannot ascend to knowledge of infinity through those things which are visible or tangible, since in absolute Infinity -- not considering that Infinity, Beginning and Cause except in itself -- we can find nothing other than absolute Infinity.

Many things can be said here, by means of which all things created lead us to knowledge of the Trinity, through “being, power and work,” according to Dionysius,<sup>434</sup> and, according to Augustine, “means, species and order.”<sup>435</sup> And this saying of Augustine can be understood in the same way. Thus “measure, number and weight”<sup>436</sup> can be drawn to this <conclusion>; likewise “unity, truth and goodness” can be drawn to these <conclusions>.<sup>437</sup> These are the three fingers by which God weighs the mass of the earth.

How elevated intelligence, however, touches anything of this is seen elsewhere. But now it suffices for us to know that, if we wish to understand the beginning of all things, then we should see every rational intelligence to be enclosed by multitude and magnitude. Reason, then, grasps nothing outside of multitude and magnitude. It sees, however, that the first beginning ought to be most simple of necessity, otherwise it would not be “first.” And, because the multitude has unity for a beginning, it is one of necessity.<sup>438</sup> And, because magnitude is not without trinity, as we see in the contracted magnitude of a corporeal mass -- since there is no body unless <it is> long, wide and deep; and the beginning of a polygonal figure is a triangle, before which a figure is not possible -- here, of necessity, reason finds that the first principle of all things ought to be one and three, in composite but most simple, since it is the beginning of all things, the meter and the measure.<sup>439</sup>

These things have to be said elsewhere, how, that is, in every created thing<sup>440</sup> multitude is in magnitude and vice versa; or simplicity, in composition and vice versa; or unity, in trinity and vice versa.<sup>441</sup>

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<sup>434</sup> cf. Ps. Dionysius, *De caelesti hierarchia*, c. 11, PG 3.284.

<sup>435</sup> cf. Augustinus, *De civitate Dei*, V c. 11, CCSL 47.142.

<sup>436</sup> Ibid. V c. 11, CCSL 47.41-42.

<sup>437</sup> Augustinus, *De vera religione*, c. 11 & c. 55, CCSL 32.201, 230-31.

<sup>438</sup> Proclus, *In Platonis theologiam* in Haubst, art. cit., p. 34.

<sup>439</sup> Boethius, *De instit. arith.* (Leipzig, 1867), II c. 6 (p. 92), II c. 4 (p. 88), c. 19 (p. 104).

<sup>440</sup> Ignoring *quo modo* repeated in ed.

<sup>441</sup> *De coniecturis*, I cc. 4-9.

What these things show us, as in a vestige, that we ought to think beyond every opposition, by what means infinite unity is in Trinity and vice versa.

Now, however, as to this, so that we can proceed to eternal generation, we ought to know how Saint Augustine declared the Trinity through mathematical names, from eternity, because “unity precedes all otherness,” which is not without duality; therefore, eternal Unity <precedes>.<sup>442</sup> Likewise, inequality is posterior to equality, from which it falls away, since “all inequality is reduced to equality”; and inequality cannot be without otherness. Equality, therefore, precedes otherness, wherefore <it is> eternal.<sup>443</sup> Connection is prior to division, because connection <arises> from unity; division, from otherness; wherefore etc.<sup>444</sup>

Our <predecessors> wished Unity to mean the Father; Equality, the Son; Connection, the Holy Spirit -- from some conformity, as we better approach the generation <of the Son> and the procession <of the Holy Spirit>,<sup>445</sup> although their names more properly are “That, the Same, Identity” etc.<sup>446</sup>

Now let us speak of the eternal generation of the Son. For generation is the multiplication of one nature or the repetition of unity, as in the Father and the Son, which is found in the caduces.<sup>447</sup> Generation in divine things is one repetition of unity, that is unity once.<sup>448</sup> If you would repeat <it> twice or thrice, another would be procreated, as a second or third. Unity repeated once, therefore, does not beget unless <it begets> equality; and this cannot be understood as anything other than that unity begets unity, which generation is eternal. And thus procession is unity and repetition of unity, or unity and equality of that unity. Connection, then, proceeds of necessity from Unity and Equality, and It cannot proceed from another etc.<sup>449</sup>

c) Concerning other analogies (splendor, word, art, reason, concept, form), which elevate us by similitude to knowledge of eternal generation.

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<sup>442</sup> Augustinus, *De doctrina Christiana*, I c. 5, CCSL 32.9.

<sup>443</sup> cf. Theodoricus Carnotensis, *Tractatus de sex dierum operibus*, pp. 568, 570-74.

<sup>444</sup> cf. Idem, *Lectiones de Trinitate*, p. 142.

<sup>445</sup> cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, I q. 39 a. 8.

<sup>446</sup> cf. Theodoricus Carnotensis, *Comment. Victo.*, pp. 507-08.

<sup>447</sup> Idem, *Comment. de Trinitate*, II, pp. 77-78.

<sup>448</sup> Ibid., III, pp. 90-91.

<sup>449</sup> Idem, *Comment. Victo.*, nr. 85, p. 497.

The doctors have many examples which elevate us to knowledge of eternal generation: that of splendor, which is generated from fire, and heat, which <is generated> from both,<sup>450</sup> that of light, as Hilary says,<sup>451</sup> by means of which light is kindled from light, and splendor <is kindled> from both; of mind, by means of which mind generates a word similar to itself, that is a concept of itself, and from these proceeds will, or love.<sup>452</sup>

Wherefore, many convert themselves to the Word, as the gospel tells us [Jn. 1:1-14]. The Word is similitude of this intellect, in which the intellect enfolds the intelligible. Wherefore, the Apostle seems to say that the Son, in things divine, is this mental word of the Father, that is It is divine Wisdom, Art or Reason [1 Jn. 1:1-2]. For, since all things were made by God the Father in the Word of Reason and Wisdom, just as this has no doubt, so neither does it doubt <that> Reason, Word or eternal Wisdom are infinite art.<sup>453</sup> Therefore, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word <was> with God, and the Word <was> God* [Jn. 1:1]. If, therefore, Reason, intellectual Word or Wisdom was in the beginning, it is manifest that It was from eternity, because *The same <was> in the beginning* [Jn. 1:2].<sup>454</sup> *In the beginning* means from eternity.

And, if It was Reason, whose reason was it? And It cannot be <anyone's>, unless <that> of the eternal Beginning, in which It always was. Wherefore, Reason was *in the beginning*; and It was *with God*, because <it was> in the eternity of the Beginning, which is God the Father. And It *was God*, because <It is> eternal Art and infinite Reason. And the Words cannot be less than God, since It is one eternity and infinity. By this infinite reason, therefore, all things were created.

Contemplate here how all things are equal<sup>455</sup> in infinite Art; and the most simple, infinite Reason is the reason of all things. All diversities, then, are enfolded in the unity of infinite Reason. And, just as nothing <human> is found thus equal to One, so that it could be more equal through the infinite, and there is only one infinite Equality of all things, so that neither can a reason be given through something about all things created; as Solomon says, there is no reason for all the works of God [Eccl. 8:17].

Consider here how the Word is every art, form and reason. Refer to the similitude of our art, which is in us,<sup>456</sup> how, in the word of the mind, which is art, all <that is> crafted is enfolded, and how our art, in its simplicity, enfolds the things crafted above time and division. And all things crafted enfold the art. See

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<sup>450</sup> Quodvultdeus, *De symbolo*, c. 9, CCSL 60.346.

<sup>451</sup> Hilarius, *De Trinitate*, c. 29, CCSL 62.296-97.

<sup>452</sup> Petrus Lombardus, *Sententiae*, I d. 3 c. 3, I.75-76.

<sup>453</sup> Henricus de Hassia, *De verbo incarnato*.

<sup>454</sup> cf. Glo. ord. to Jn. 1:1.

<sup>455</sup> Literally, *aequalitas*.

<sup>456</sup> cf. Augustinus, *De Trinitate*, c. 15, CCSL 50A.499-500.

how the Church is enfolded simply in the art of the individual Architect; and how the Church, which is unfolded by art, falls into multitude, division and temporality. And this art is contracted one way or another by one sort of material or another.<sup>457</sup>

So, similarly, consider about the divine Art that, just as our art imposes on the material accidental forms, which are similitudes of natural ones, which it presupposes, so the divine Art, because it is infinite, produces all things which are, according to the one and most simple Art. Therefore, the form of everything existing depends on that infinite form of eternal Art, just as the thing crafted <derives> from the art.<sup>458</sup>

You, however, should consider how the art, as much as it is higher and more perfect, enfolds the more in itself the inferior arts, just as the art of the goldsmith enfolds the art of the painter, the sculptor, the founder etc.; wherefore, <it is> more noble, because its simplicity is more unique<sup>459</sup> and more virtuous.<sup>460</sup> Infinite art, however, is, of necessity, most virtuous and powerful.

Consider, then, how the artisan produces various things from one art; and, as to many things, the art is much more powerful and greater, so the divine art is inexhaustible.<sup>461</sup>

Consider, then, how the artisan produces the artifact, because first it makes the concept in the art, then it implements it, so that the execution proceeds from the conceiver and conceived; or the will proceeds from the intellect and the art of concept. So, it proceeds in the same way in God, because God the Father conceives; and the effect proceeds. And this is the Trinity. One reads in Genesis [1] how <God> *created* then *saw*. Wherefore, good proceeds from these things; <wherefore> *they were very good* [Gen. 1:31].

The artisan proceeds similarly. And, as the artifact is related to the ordaining art, so the creature <is related> to the Creator. Something of the artisan, then, is seen in the artifact; so, in the creature, something of the Creator <is seen>. We see, then, in the artifact the Trinity in Unity, just as in the creature. For the Ark had its beginning from the artisan, just as the whole world <has its> from God.<sup>462</sup> The Ark is one, discrete and connected.

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<sup>457</sup> cf. Theodoricus Carnotensis, *Abbrev. Monac. de Trinitate*, II, pp. 348-49.

<sup>458</sup> cf. Bonaventura, *In Hexameron Visio* 2, coll. 5, ed. Delorme, BSF 8 (1934): 143; Theodoricus Carnotensis, *Abbrev. Monac. de Hebd.*, nr. 22-49, pp. 409-13.

<sup>459</sup> Literally, *unio*.

<sup>460</sup> cf. *Liber de causis*, prop. 16 (17), ed. Pattin, pp. 171-72.

<sup>461</sup> Literally, *inevacuabilis*.

<sup>462</sup> cf. Eckhart, *Expositio sancti evangelii secundum Iohannem*, 1:1-3, Lat. W., 3, p. 8.

And consider well here how the universe, is it is considered in pure unity, then is God, because the Word <is> the archetype of the world,<sup>463</sup> because then nothing is outside It etc.<sup>464</sup>

God is the unity of all, and a way is found in anything. For whatever part of the Ark, if it is considered, thinking of its ground, then has unity; it has discretion as <its> ground. And it has connection, which proceeds from being and its discretion. It connects the Ark, then, to itself, to which it has proportion. And so of any stone of a tower; so of a hand or a foot of a man to the man; just so part of the universe to the whole.

And consider that, just as the art of the artifact concurs in all things, because the varied hewing of a stone in an assembled tower<sup>465</sup> depends on the same art, so all diverse things <depend> on the same art; and how the similitude of the art, the artisan and his concept and the form of the artifact, which, because of the material in which it is received, according to more and less, is similar to the concept, but never precisely equal, so the forms of things are images of the divine art etc.<sup>466</sup>

And now the first part has been explicated, which has the generation of the Word; and how, according to the gospel, *All things were made by Him: and without Him was made nothing that was made* [Jn. 1:3]; and how *all things* are in Him, that Art, which is Life, whose image all things living bear [Rom. 11:36]; and how that *life was the light of men* [Jn. 1:4], because Life is Reason and Wisdom, from Which every reason and wisdom <derives> [Jn. 1:4]; and how He is *the light shineth in the darkness* of ignorance, and *the darkness did not comprehend it* [Jn. 1:5].

Part 2: Concerning Christ as He is man, born in time.

*God indeed was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself* [2 Cor. 5:19].

Here is *the bread...which etc. giveth life to the world* [Jn. 6:33].

In the second place, we promised to add <something> concerning the Incarnation of Christ; for the introduction of this part, I judge we must remember how “the day....has shone on us,” for *God created man* etc. [Gen. 1:27].

One must note here how the Incarnation of Christ was necessary for our salvation. God created all things through Him, and not maximally and most perfectly, unless all things <were made> for Him. But how <can> those things be united to Him [Prov. 16:4], since there is no proportion between finite and

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<sup>463</sup> Reading *mundus* as *mundi*.

<sup>464</sup> Ps. Scotus Eriugena in *Saeculi noni auctores in Boethii consolatione Philosophiae*, ed. Silk (1935), pp. 155-56.

<sup>465</sup> Literally, *conexionis turris*.

<sup>466</sup> Theodoricus Carnotensis, *Comment. de Trinitate*, II, p. 73.

infinite.<sup>467</sup> All things, therefore, are in the end, in God, through Christ. For, unless God assumed human nature, since it is in itself a medium enfolding other things, the whole universe neither <would be> perfect, nor even exist.<sup>468</sup>

See here how, among created natures, man enfolds by all-encompassing power<sup>469</sup> of reason, <both> spiritual and corporeal.<sup>470</sup> And here, even as if the end of the ensemble<sup>471</sup> of beings, man was created so that all things would find in Him <something> like <their> end.

And it was not possible for all created nature to be drawn to the divinity except in man, who was created with glory and honor little less than the angels and above every animal and work from the hand of God [Ps. 8:6-7; Heb. 2:7]. And, therefore, the spirit of man, who enfolds in himself the natures of all things, does not rest quiet in anything created; but it aspires above itself and does not find <that> in which it is satisfied, except immortality, which is eternal life and wisdom.<sup>472</sup>

And since here man, who ought to be the end of all things, <does not find> either quiet or a Sabbath [Exod. 31:15], there cannot be a supreme creature, which enfolds in itself in its perfection all things, unless God, in Whom all is quiet, <is united in it> hypostatically. Because He is everything which is desired, here it was necessary that God should become man, so that all things thus should come to <their> end.<sup>473</sup>

For which reason one must know that, although we cannot consider differences with our eyes and sensible considerations except for temporal distances, so that it seems <that> Christ, as far as He is man, was born in time after Abraham; nevertheless, as far as <He is> God, who is above all time, the Christ is the beginning and head of every creature [Col. 1:18], as He said, *Before Abraham was made, I am* [Jn. 8:58]. And Paul writes <the same> to the Ephesians and the Colossians [Eph. 1:22 & 5:33; Col. 1:18 & 2:10]. Wherefore, <He is> the beginning of the living, the dead and the entire Church, Triumphant and Militant [Eph. 1:22]. Christ was seen by us conversing here on earth temporally, just as He was born temporally of the Virgin on this very day [Baruch 3:38].

Here, therefore, one must note that Christ the Lord in this, that He is joined to the maximum absolute above every creature, because a greater cannot be given in which infinite Power is complete and

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<sup>467</sup> cf. Boethius, *De consolazione Philosophiae*, II pros. 7, CCSL 94.33.

<sup>468</sup> cf. Eckhart, *In sapientiam* 6:8, Lat. W. 2, p. 403.

<sup>469</sup> Literally, *universalitatis*.

<sup>470</sup> Augustinus, *De civitate Dei*, XII c. 22, CCSL 48.380.

<sup>471</sup> Literally, *universitatis*.

<sup>472</sup> Augustinus, *Confessiones*, I c. 1, CCSL 27.1.

<sup>473</sup> Raymundus Lullus, *De praedicatione*, d. 1 pt. 3/1, 3, Cod. Cus. 118, fol. 51ra.

perfect in itself, then God is the Art or infinite Form of all things which are.<sup>474</sup> In so far, however, as <He is> maximum man, then the man is most perfect, than whom a more perfect cannot be given.

And, since human nature itself, in itself, is most high, so, since nothing higher can be found which could be joined more nearly to the divine infinite, then, in so far as what <is> most perfect and most high in the nature of humanity, by this even <we are> most united to the divinity. But the nature of humanity, since it is a creature, never can pass by ascent into divinity; nor <can> the divine <pass> by descent into humanity. Therefore, here is unity of natures with <their> distinction remaining.

And, because the caused or created, if it passed to maximality through union, than which there is no greater possibility, of necessity it cannot subsist in itself hypostatically, here human nature subsists in the divine, like a body in a soul, in its own mode, as Athanasius says,<sup>475</sup> although this example is not precise. And this first of all.

Second, one must consider here how the human nature in Christ Jesus, exalted to the divinity, is the perfection of all and especially of our human nature. For in this, that it attained the highest grade of human nature, than which nothing is greater, then it enfolds all nature; and every aspect of nature is united to Him in turn.<sup>476</sup>

We see how one art enfolds all. What, if every art is in one man, and every perfection and all wisdom and reason is present? Does His perfection enfold all? If that man now remains in that human nature, does not that humanity, which is one, remain in all? There is no other humanity of Christ than that of man, past, present and future; indeed, it is the same, and not other.<sup>477</sup> And so we see how our nature, which is not other from Christ, is most perfect in Christ.

And note here that Christ coincides with human nature itself, through which all men are men. And here He is the equal “meter and measure” of all men; in Him are all men, as in the head and prince of all; without difference they are in the unity of Christ, where there is neither Jew nor Gentile, nor man nor woman, but *Christ Himself <is> all in all* [Col. 3:11].

Because of this, Christ is near to anyone, indeed much nearer than <any> fleshly father or brother, since He is that substantial intimacy with anyone. And here all our defects are made up in Him, Who is our plenitude and perfection [Eph. 1:23]. In Him we are justified; in Him we are saved; in Him we live and move [Gal. 2:17; Rom. 5:10; Acts 17:28].

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<sup>474</sup> Raymundus Lullus, *Ars mistica theol. et philo.*, Cod. Cus. 83, fol. 94v in E. Colomer, *Nikolaus von Kues und Raymund Lull aus Handschriften der Kueser Bibliothek* (Berlin, 1961), pp. 132-33.

<sup>475</sup> *Symbolum “Quicumque”*.

<sup>476</sup> cf. Bonaventura, *In Sent.*, III d. 1 a. 7 q. 3, vol. 3, p. 23b.

<sup>477</sup> Iohannes Scotus Eriugenna, *De divis. nat.*, I, ed. Sheldon-Williams, p. 146.

And you know that here you can see the admirable promise which we follow in Christ, and the salvation of the cross, beyond wonder, since the humanity of Christ, elevated to that maximum, so that it is united to the divine nature, is the most true and most perfect humanity of all men. The man who adheres to Christ, therefore, adheres to his own humanity, so that He is one with Christ, just as Christ <is> with God [1 Cor. 6:17]. Because of this, whoever adheres to Christ and is united not to another but in his own humanity, which is <that> of Christ, satisfies the debt, is justified, vivified, because his own humanity, which is one in him and in Christ, is united to God the Word. O greatest mystery [Eph. 1:9]!

See here how human nature in Christ puts on immortality by union to the Word. See here the argument: If Christ rose, therefore, we also [1 Cor. 15:12-22]. See here the error of all who expect salvation without Christ. See here how those who believe in the resurrection and deny Christ err and contradict themselves, as <do> the pagans and the Jews.<sup>478</sup> See here how *Christ <is> all in all* [Col. 3:11]. And <see> how that most high epistle to Paul to the Ephesians is understood concerning the Church Triumphant, and it is most true [Eph. 1:22-23]. See here your consoler in all your needs [2 Cor. 1:4], and <they are> infinite.

See <that> He is the light which “has shone on us.” How has He shone, however? For, although He is *a hidden God* [Is. 45:15], He reveals Himself. Thus, while the mental Word is hidden from you, for this, so that He is revealed to you, He takes a voice; and, under a voice, which is His sign, the hidden Mind is made apparent, so that the hidden eternal Word assumed flesh, so that He would be visible. He did works, which no one other than God can do; and so He comes to dwell with men. Therefore, we will see another thing and believe another thing, because God is made apparent in the flesh [Jn. 1:15],<sup>479</sup> just as a voice is heard, the sense understands.<sup>480</sup>

Christ preached and illuminated. It pertains to a doctor to illuminate with the voice, and he communicates light to the disciple without diminution of his light. So Christ “has shone on us,” so that He could make us participants in His wisdom.

See how great are the mysteries in the words of Christ, which the voices, in which that eternal Wisdom makes plain to us <the Truth>. But to this, that voices are heard, it is necessary to add <that> it is necessary to approach through faith and devotion. And then we are illuminated, and we participate in His plenitude.

Here <are> a few things about the Blessed Virgin.<sup>481</sup>

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<sup>478</sup> Glo. ord. to 1 Cor. 15:126.

<sup>479</sup> Bonaventura, *In Sent.* I d. 27 pars 2a. un. q. 4 (I, 488-89).

<sup>480</sup> cf. Augustinus, *De Trinitate*, c. 11, CCSL 50A.486.

<sup>481</sup> Here Cusanus seems to be abridging his text.

And now we see how he who converts himself to Christ with a whole heart through faith, ceases to be who he was and is born again in Christ [Jn. 3:3-5], so that not he but Christ is in him, here is, in Christ, the son of God [Gal. 2:20]; he is deified. He follows ultimate perfection.

And so understand the gospel, that it is necessary for the one who wishes to be born again in Christ, since *in Him before the foundation of the world* [Eph. 1:4], we are called to an eternal inheritance [1 Pet. 1:3-4].<sup>482</sup> For this follows, which we believe, since *the Word was made flesh* [Jn. 1:14]. If the Son assumed humanity in divine things, it is manifest <that> you, a man, can be raised to divine sonship through Christ dwelling in you.<sup>483</sup>

### Part 3: Of spiritual nativity in Christ.

If, therefore, in the third part, you wish to be reborn in Christ, the Son of God, it is necessary for you to ascend and come to this sun, you, who are a Gentile in subtlety of human reasoning. It is necessary for you to come devoutly through election, through which you choose Christ alone in simplicity and purity of soul. It is necessary that you set aside all spiritual presumption. It is necessary that you imbue everything with piety and make your heart sweet. And when you are alight with the fire of charity and seek God with unanimity and peace, together with Peter, to whom God first revealed the mystery, and with most devout prayer [Acts 1:14; Mt. 16:17].

And consider here that, just as *the head of Christ is God* [1 Cor. 11:3], so *Christ is the head of the Church* [Eph. 5:23]. How God is related to Christ, because deity is like the soul, and humanity, like the body, so Christ is related to the Church; He is like the soul, and the Church, like the body. It is necessary for you, therefore, to be in the unity of the body, just as you are in unity with the spirit of Jesus through Him;<sup>484</sup> and note this!

See how the soul is not a member of your body unless it is united with the body and the soul is in a member as the member is in it. If you wish that Christ would live in you, move nobly. Arise like a noble member, and act so that you will enter more strongly into Christ! And this must be noted in a more singular manner.

### NOTE

Note this secret, that “the day of sanctification” is that day of which Genesis [2:3] says, *And He blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it*. For is God read to have made other days and to have worked doing things on them; but neither is it read that God worked on the seventh day, nor to have made the seventh day, but to have sanctified it, because He ceased on it from all work and rested [Gen. 2:2-3].

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<sup>482</sup> cf. Glo. ord. to 1 Pet. 1:3-4.

<sup>483</sup> Augustinus, *Sermo 128*, PL 39.1998.

<sup>484</sup> Cyprianus, Ep. 55, c. 24, CSEL 3/?2, p. 642.

Consider, therefore, well and subtly how that day is light or eternal wisdom. All things exist in grades, participating through six grades of participation in that light, so that the days are named for their participation. “The day of sanctification,” however, is the day which does not participate in the light of wisdom under the expectation of a higher grade, but it is itself the highest grade of wisdom, in which every work of God rests. And note this in a most singular manner, because “the day of sanctification” is here.

## Sermon 57<sup>485</sup>

DRAFT TRANSLATION BY THOMAS IZBICKI

*Stay [in the city] until you are clothed with power from on high*, from the last chapter of Luke [Lk. 24:49]. We could not be suitable for spiritual movement unless we are clothed with power from on high. None of us [can do this] unless, walking in the Spirit, as the doctor of the gentiles [Paul] says, *Walk in the Spirit* [Gal. 5:1].

For, since we have no abiding city in this world [cf. Heb. 13:14]; but we are pilgrims, therefore, toward something to which our pilgrimage tends. If, therefore, our motion has no end in itself, but in quiet, the movement of our pilgrimage seeks an end in peace and quiet. Since peace and quiet are the goals of our movement, there will not be that peace in time, since time is not the end of movement, but it coincides with movement like measure with measurement. Peace, therefore, is thus the end of time just as it is the end of motion. We tend, therefore, in our pilgrimage, by which we travel on pilgrimage as human beings acting by reason, to stable and eternal peace. We do not walk toward this, if we proceed by way of the desires of the flesh, because the end of this movement is great instability and corruption. Hence it remains, when there is the movement of reason within us, that we must walk in the way of the desire of the spirit, since our spirit tends toward the eternal and immortal through the desire contained in itself. `

And since this most sacred festival of the descent of the Holy Spirit into the church wants us to walk in most holy desire of the Spirit, in a certain burning fervor, with this as our work, that *We may stay until we are clothed with power from on high*, then to excite our spirit so that it will be clothed with power, it is expedient to reduce to memory what was done in the sending of the Holy Spirit with its way. Then it is expedient, as far as it is given to us, to inquire what is this *power from on high* and third (!) how will we be clothed. First, today; second, tomorrow; third, on the third day. Let us pray that we will be given a good and right spirit, which is restored in our hearts with the glorious Virgin, whom we greet, interceding, [as we say, “Hail, Mary”].

### Part One

Concerning the healthful deeds accomplished by sending the Holy Spirit: The history of those things which were done on the day of Pentecost drawn and declared from chapter 14 of John.

*Stay*. Going forward, let us begin the history of the case from the gospel. When Christ expounded to His disciples after the Supper concerning the kingdom of God, that Christ Himself had come to proclaim many secrets, and, as far as was the capacity of the disciples, He manifested Himself,

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<sup>485</sup> Preached at Mainz June 5, 1446.

considering that they could not have the Spirit before His glorification, as is derived from John 14[:26, 28]. He introduced them to the expectation of the Spirit, saying, that they should believe how He is in the Father and the Father in Him [Jn. 14:10], from Their works, because the Father remaining in Him, does works and speaks, and that, therefore, they will come to the manifestation of the Father through Him, and that He would manifest Himself in them, if they observed His commandments, because then they would love Him and, through this, they would grasp the Holy Spirit, Which, on His request, would be given to them by the Father. This Spirit so exists that they cannot grasp It, because It is the Spirit of Truth [Jn. 14:17], Which the world neither knows or sees, and that the Apostles, having faith and love, can know It, because It will remain in them, then, having the Spirit, they will know how He is in the Father and the Father in Him, because they will understand His manifestation. To this *Judas, not the Iscariot*, said, *Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us and not to the world?* He replied, *If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word* [Jn. 14:22-23]. *Stay here, therefore ....*

Therefore, when one heeds the last sentence of the gospel, even to the words, *Arise, let us go* [Jn. 14:31], one must consider how Christ had the command of the Father to show Himself as obedient even to death, and so that the prompting of His Spirit should be manifest, He arose and had the Apostles rise with Him so that they would go with Him and experience His love. And, at the end, so that they would walk with His Spirit, He said many things to them, that is, how they are in Him and He in them, and that they would bring forth good fruit, giving the example of the branches and the vine [Jn. 15:5].

Christ proclaimed this to the Apostles concerning the commandment of the Father before His passion and concerning the mission and works of the Holy Spirit. And He expounded to them in this sermon how there were clean so that they could understand the Spirit by walking in It and remaining in It, because they are cleansed by the Spirit of the Word. Their ears were not cleansed by words, nor by anything bodily; but they were offended. However, the shadow of ignorance is taken away by the intellectual Spirit; and so, the Spirit enters and cleanses.

He says, however, “You, however, considering that you have been cleansed by the word you have heard, pure in the spirit, since you should be in me so that you will be in the spirit in me as *I am in the Father*. I cannot be in Him otherwise. Because the Father is spirit. I cannot be in the Spirit otherwise than spiritually. Thus, for you to be in [the Spirit] as I am in the Father it is necessary for you to be in Me spiritually. Then you will bear much spiritual fruit, and whatever you ask Me when in the Spirit, because, as through me you are in the Father, you are one spirit with Him. Since your spirit is in me in the Spirit, only love can do this”.

A certain unitive power is in the spirit through which it can transform itself into desire. This is the ambulatory power of the spirit through which power it proceeds to what spiritually is beyond time and without change, which chooses that it be quiet in the beloved. Just as the corporeal element is borne to quiet by its weight, so the spirit if borne by love, as Augustine says in chapter 13 of the *Confessions*, “If, therefore,” Christ says, “you will have peace in Me, Who is the Word of God, and in no other, be in Me truly, without feigned amorous desire”.

The words “If you remain in me”, you will care nothing for the world and all its adversities, because you do not love the things of this world, when you are being quiet in My Spirit, and just as the world persecuted me thus and so My Spirit in you. The world could not love you opposed to the witness you bear in My Spirit, just as I did, because it is evil and placed in the malignant. You will be against the world in this spirit, and the world will persecute you. The Spirit Paraclete, Which will come to you, will bear witness about me. *You who were with Me from the beginning will bear witness* [Jn. 15:27]. And, because of this witness, *They will drive you out of synagogues* [Jn. 16:2-3], believing such *servility will please God*, and this *because they did not know me, the Word of God, nor the Father*.

For this reason, Jesus began to explain now why He said this first, because now He was to depart from them and return to Him Who had sent Him. And when the disciples were saddened by this, He added that He would tell them the truth, because it was expedient that He depart. Otherwise, the Paraclete would not come [Jn. 16:7]. After the corporeal and sensible presence was withdrawn from them and by

death and suffering went from the world to the Father from Whom He had come into the world, then He would send the Spirit into them. Comforted by It, they will convict the world and fix themselves upon God. Since they could not bear many secrets, which he still had to tell them for lack of the Spirit, they should await with great avidity that Spirit, Which is the Spirit of Truth, Which them would teach them all truth. What things It will hear It will say [cf. Jn. 16:13-15]. By It then, since It is the Spirit of the Father, the Father will speak to them and tell them the future and enlighten them about it, saying, *Because It will receive it from Me and tell you. Whatever things the Father has are mine.*

After He had comforted them in the coming sorrow of their persecutions, how that would be converted into joy for them, and that their sorrow in which they would leave this world would be similar to the sorrow a woman suffers at the time of childbirth and then has joy, *because a son is born into the world* [Jn.16:21], they should gaze at Him since He is the victor over the world, and that they should be confident that they will be victors in this. Having offered a prayer for the glorification of the Son glorifying the Father, and for those who would believe in Him [cf. Jn. 17:20], and having commissioned the Apostles, whom He sent into the world, as He was sent by the living Father to manifest the Father's name and the kingdom of heaven, He offered Himself as a victim for the salvation of all and died on the cross. Christ showed by the resurrection and His appearances how the Spirit lives incorruptibly within men and how the disciples should beg for the Spirit from the Father.

Then He rose and showed Himself to be alive with many proofs how it was fitting and expedient for those wishing to come to Him. Thus, He prepared the hearts of the Apostles and disciples for the reception of the Holy Spirit by means of various appearances. For they saw, as Luke says [Acts 1:3], with various proofs that He was alive, and that this life was not in a mortal body and occupying a material place, because He opened closed gates for them. Therefore, they were led by those appearances to be ready to grasp the life of the Spirit in themselves, Which was able to enliven the corruptible body with His life and then raising the body from corruption and death imbue it with His incorruptible life and, therefore, attain participation in the nature of His body so that thus it is subtle, agile, gleaming and spiritual nature, despite the nature of the body. From this they easily can subject that body to being very obedient to His every command, and, the Spirit, by the weight of love in the Spirit, Which is God, leads in the way that the Spirit, Which is absolute life, enlivening Itself with true and eternal life and the body by It, so that thus it is the heir and the son, and he who sees Him sees the Father [cf. Jn. 12:45]. And so, they began to convert themselves to spiritual contemplation and understanding the words of Christ, which they had not grasped before.

Then, through another parable, they understood Christ to be life, so that He is the vine, to be the vine, so that He has branches, and they they are in the only-begotten Son by the spirit of adoption, which is participation in the life of the Son of God, which they can attain through charity.

Therefore, when thus they were elevated to spiritual understanding, nor even the presence of the glorified body could impede how they could burn with the desire for the Paraclete, Jesus was assumed

away from their eyes, sitting at the right hand of the power of the Father.<sup>486</sup> When He was to be assumed, He commanded they should not depart from Jerusalem but to await the promise of the Father, which they had heard from His mouth [cf. Acts 1:4], since He said that, after a few days, It would come. The Apostles then were together with mother Mary in prayer [Acts 1:14], so that the fervor of devotion should be increased in expectation of the desired gift. Languishing in prayer with love continually and perseveringly for ten days they waited, knowing that the Father would give a good spirit from heaven in response to those who asked, Luke 11[:13]. Since, therefore, *the days of Pentecost were completed* etc., as in Acts 2[:1], and in the reading [for the feast].

## Part Two

From the gospel of John 14, he elicited thirteen theological instructions, concerning the coincidence of many aspects in the New Testament.

*Stay until* etc. First, it must be noted from the gospel that wonderful instruction is given to us by means of which the spirit of intelligence should walk over all opposition. And indeed, we have how loving God coincides with being loved by God. *Whoever loves Me, is loved by the Father* [Jn. 14:21], and immediately after, “Whoever is loved by the Father also is loved by the Son”. Here loving and being loved coincide. Christ explained this theology in many places, how He is in the Father and the Father in Him, and the disciples in Him and He in the disciples. And from James, *Approach God, and He will approach you* [Js. 4:8]. The Apostles John explains this in his first canonical epistle, *God is love, and he who abides in love in God, and God abides in him* [1 Jn. 4:16]. This is the theology of Paul in the fourth chapter of Galatians [Gal. 4:9], *Now, however, when you know God, that is, you are known by God*. Behold how knowing coincides with being known! Thus, he says elsewhere, in Corinthians [1 Cor. 14:38], that the one ignoring will be ignored, wishing to say that ignoring coincides with being ignored, as with knowing and being known. Thus, he says in chapter eight of Romans [?] that to be in the Spirit is for the Spirit to dwell in them. Whoever, therefore, is in the Spirit, the Spirit is in Him. Whoever walks in the Spirit, the Spirit walks in Him. Whoever lives in the Spirit, the Spirit – and not the flesh, which *lusts against the Spirit* [Gal. 5:17] -- lives in him.

Christ immediately explained another theology to us, that, He will manifest to the one Who loves Him, on which Paul touches. That must be noted to take away doubt, because, if the one who is ignorant will be ignored, ad God cannot be known in this world, because, as Christ says that the world does not see Him, nor knows Him, how then does one come to grasping the

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<sup>486</sup> This is an augmented excerpt from the Gloria in the mass.

understanding of felicity, which is eternal life, since that consists in knowing God, according to John 17[:2-3]. Next, did not Christ say, *Do not fear, little flock. It pleased My Father to give you the kingdom* [Lk.12:32]. On account of this, the doctor of the Gentiles says in chapter 8 of 1st Corinthians [1 Cor. 8:2-3], *If someone thinks he knows, he does not yet know what he should know. If, however, he loves God, he will be known by Him*. Behold how love requires perfect faith, since he does not ignore what he loves. Here then is Christian theology, that “faith formed by charity” is knowledge which coincides with being known.

This theology brings in for us another, that is, coincidence of opposite in God, because, if someone loves God, he is loved by God, as in our gospel, *If he loves God, he will be known by God*, as Paul says. Therefore, to love and know are the same in God. If, therefore, he loves God, all good will follow. He will be enlivened by God, pacified, glorified, and so of all things, which can be attributed to God, since in God all things are one with love.

This I think to be Christ’s doctrine, to love according to the potential of the spirit. One can love according to his nature above this temporal, transitory world stable and eternal things, that is, truth and the virtues. Therefore, Christ wishes us to come to apprehension of felicity and remedy our every defect in Him, by love of life, according to the fact that we participate in it intellectually, so that thus nothing will be lacking to us., although His *little flock* and are entirely insufficient on our own, so that we can comprehend with His mediation the end of our desires.

Twelve other profound observations on the theme of the love between God and man are noted, mutually explaining themselves.

The second, it must be noted, as the gospel says, *If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him* [Jn. 16:23]. It is apparent that the kingdom of God is this, “God will come to man and make *His dwelling with him*”, because this is to come to God present everywhere by way of presentation and knowledge. In that knowledge is the joyful and eternal life of the intellect, as in John 17[:3]. Nor is this other than, by the rule of coincidence, that man comes to God and makes his dwelling there, as Jesus says in John 14[:3] He goes to prepare them as place where he can receive them, and Christ also says of these dwellings, *In My Father’s house there are many dwellings* [Jn. 14:2].

But, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians [4:20], *The kingdom of God lies not in words but in power*. Therefore, the kingdom is not given on account of words, because it is not in words but because word serves power. The power of words is the lifegiving Spirit, and words are the letter of the law. The lifegiving Spirit, however, is God, Who is *spirit, love and life*. All Christ’s words, therefore, is *the word of life*, as Peter says in John 6[:69]. Therefore, to observe Christ’s words are to love God. Otherwise, the words of Christ are not observed unless by someone who, serving the served, is loved by God. Therefore, delight includes being delight, as there is a coincidence of love with being loved.

Oh, wondrous dogma, that only by delight we serve God the Father! The Master, seeing us remove from the Father, how grace made what it is impossible to us of ourselves possible graciously, therefore, made it possible by grace for us by love alone in the liberty of the Spirit. For there is no love except that we serve God in the liberty of the Spirit. What is this service? Certainly, that service is beyond the coincidence of opposites. To love thus then is service that is not service but the liberty found in 1 Corinthians 7<sup>487</sup>. To serve thus is to reign. Thus, the loving servant is a friend by whom all things were noted. They are then citizens and domestics of God serving thus.

Oh, wondrous reward of this service of love! For the lover is united to the beloved, as much as he loves. If you give yourself freely to His love in the whole power of the Spirit, the more you belong to the beloved, because He is love. If, therefore, there is such a reward, the more there is love. Your love is the measure of the reward of love, as Christ says in Luke 7[:46], *She has been forgiven much, because she has loved much. The one who is forgiven less loves less*. Indeed, your love is life itself or your reward, because *God is love* and absolutely the giver of rewards. Thus, your love, although it is not God, because it is not absolute but yours, is, nevertheless, a reward, not absolute but yours. Thus, your love is your life, because it is participation in absolute love and life, so that, according to your ascent in love, will be the descent of love to you. This is love transforming lovers, as Dionysius says.

Third, it must be noted how love of God is coming to and remaining in God. And so, coming to God coincides with remaining in Him. But coming is said to be by love, because we come to Him by love. As it says elsewhere, there were coming to Him all those who were burdened to be refreshed [cf. Matt. 11:28]. If we paupers come to Him on account of this, weeping, sad, weak, completion and plenty come to us. Coming to God is to acquire the end of desires. By the theology of coincidence of opposites, we understand this to be God, Who is everywhere through essence, coming to us to come to Him. Nor is it other than life coming to us to coming to life. Since His coming to us is our coming to Him, our loving spirit is a temple of the beloved God, His highest heaven, His beloved quiet, heaven and the peace of the loving spirit.

Fourth, it must be noted that the power of all Christ's words is the love which is *the fulness of the law* [Rom. 13:10], as the Apostle says and as was said above. Here, *Whoever does not love My words does not follow them* [Jn. 14:24]. *Whoever offends in one thing is guilty of all*, as James says [Js. 2:10]. Whoever does not love does not observe Christ's words are spirit and power. Paul, explaining this more widely, says that no work could be alive in the Spirit if it is not done out of love, 1 Corinthians 13[2-3:].

Fifth, it must be noted how He said the words were not His but His Who Sent Him. For in this gospel He twice says the word and words were His, because they are His words as if one sent, and they are not His because He was sent, Whoever is an Apostle and messenger, when he fulfills the will of the one who sent him, he says words which are those of a legate. They are not his, because they are

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<sup>487</sup> Possibly 1 Cor. 10:29.

proceedings from the command of the one who delegated to him and express the will of the one delegating in these things. Because a legate brings them they are the words of the one for whom he brings them. More rightly words brought are called those of the one sending him. As the Son is the Son of the Father, so the words of the messages are those of the one sending the message

Sixth, it must be noted where He says, *I have spoken to you while remaining with you* [Jn. 14:25]. Since this part explains to us how He spoke the words which can be spoken by one remaining among men in this world. These words which are expressed thus cannot instruct one not having the Spirit, how the Father and He make a dwelling with those who love. Just as a dwelling among men in this world cannot prefigure the dwelling of citizens of heaven, because it has not entered into the heart of a man what God has prepared for those who love Him, thus there is no speech which men speak here, it must be understood as about God and the glory of the blessed, because sensible speech concerning spiritual glory is not understood without the Spirit, just as if someone from Rome were to speak the Roman tongue in Germany and to Germans. That then would not be grasped without an interpreter or without the spirit of intelligence intervening and opening it up. And here is added, *The Paraclete, however*, etc. [Jn. 14:26].

Seventh, it must be noted that the Paraclete is the Consoler, because, when our spirit is groaning and burning, as it understands and grasps the things presented to us under sensible signs, then it is consoled, when it is snatched up above by withdrawal from sensible signs into the absolute, as it thus attains. This, however, is through the sending of the Holy Spirit, the Consoler, Which is our teacher and master and the interpreter of words as a legate, as if It is the same as the Word or Christ to depart from our presence, that is, to approach the power or spirit above all presence of this world, since the Spirit of the Word is not the spirit of this world, but of heaven, which the world cannot grasp [cf. Jn. 21:25]. This is for Christ to go from us according to the present state of this world, which is for us to approach Him according to the spirit of another world. This is to send the Spirit of the Father and the Word or Son, which is for us to put on *the power from on high*, from the last chapter of Luke [24:49].

Therefore, since the will of the Father is the spirit or power of the Word, that is, the Spirit of both persons, it is the Spirit, therefore, that descends from the lover and loveable, as it is in the essence of love the loving Father, the loveable Son and the love of both, the Holy Spirit.

Eighth, it must be noted how Christ said, *Peace I leave with you* etc. [Jn. 14:27]. When Christ was about to depart from them, He left them peace as his testament, and He gave them peace, *I give it not as the world gives it* [Jn. 14:27], as the peace of Christ *exceeds all sense* [Phil. 4:7], because it is not according to the sensible world, but it is quiet which the spirit has in adversity, which can descend to this world. The Apostles had this peace from a gift of Christ, they bore all prosperity and adversity equally with spiritual joy, by means of which *abundance*

*and penury*, health and sickness, death and life were the same, as Paul witnesses about himself [Phil. 4:12]. Oh, how great is the peace of Christ, where the world can inflict no trouble.

Ninth, it must be noted at, *Let not your heart be troubled* etc. [Jn. 14:1]. After Christ made His testament and said He would depart, He saw the disciples were disturbed before the coming of the Paraclete and Consoler, they were not capable without the Spirit of that gift of the Father of Christ, and they could be disturbed. Therefore, He says, I go and will come to you [Jn. 14:3]. For going from them to the Father, Who is spirit, He will come to them in the Spirit. Therefore, if they well understood this well, they are not to be disturbed. If they love Him, they will rejoice, because is greater than Him. The lover has joy from the goodness of the beloved, as John the Baptist says, the bridegroom's friends have full joy, because they heard and see the joy of the bridegroom, see chapter 3 of John [v. 29]. And so, the joy of all Christians, the friends of Christ, is full in the joy of the spouse of the Church and our head, as that to which the *one greater among those born of women* [Mt. 11:11], that is, John the Baptist, witnessed. And Christ, in chapter 15 v. 11] of John said, *I have spoken this to you so that My joy may be in you and your joy be complete*. And Paul seems to explain this in Ephesians and Colossians, since our joy is hidden in the joy of Christ and our life in Christ's. Hence, we attain felicity in Him.

Tenth, note *The Father is greater than Me* [Jn. 14:28]. For, as far as Christ is in this world, then He came forth from the Father. As far as He left the world, He returned to the Father. The Father is in the Son, and the Son in the Father. For "Like Father, like Son". Indeed, He did not come forth from the Father but is in the Father. To go forth from the Father is to take on a legation in the world and assume those things that are appropriate to a legation, so that He could appear in the world. The equality of the Father assumed delegation and a convenient form. Thus, He humbled himself by taking on the form of a delegate [cf. Phil. 2:7]. Having fulfilled the mission of His delegation and humility, He returned where He was to equality with the Father. And so, this text is understood thus: equality, if we contemplate equality having taken on a mission and completed it. Having completed His mission, He returned to the glory He had from the foundation of the world, as is read in John 17[:24].

Eleventh, one must note at *Now I tell you before it happens, so that you will believe* [Jn. 13:19], that Christ, seeking our salvation in every credible way, moved with sensible experiments to buttress the faith of the immature Apostles whom He chose. Similarly, one reads in John 16[:30], *Now we know that you know everything. We believe this because You are from God*. For unless the simple and immature grasped by sensible experiment that Christ had the Spirit, because He knew all things from all times, to Whom the future was known just like the present, they would not have believed His admirable and very simple teaching, that by love one can attain immortal life and the spirit of another world by faith. This world is subject to and yields to the knowledge that is foolishness to this world [cf. 1 Cor. 3:19]. Christ emptied out by simplicity the prudence of this world, which presumptuously dares to aspire to life by itself in its fatuity. And, on account of this He chose the simple not those endowed with such prudence, which resists the simplicity of faith, since the simple may be capable of faith and whose work it was to be led by sensible experiment to the foundation of faith in them. This is the cause of the call of the simple expressed by Paul near the conclusion of the first letter to the

Corinthians. And Christ says, “Unless you will be like a child” etc. [cf. Mt. 18:3], in whom the spirit is obedient, simple and teachable. They are *the teachable ones of God* etc. [Jn. 6:45]. When Christ was exalted in the Spirit, He said, *I praise you, Father in heaven, because you have hidden them from the wise and prudent and revealed them to children*, Luke 19[:21].

Twelfth, one must note at, *The prince of this world came to Me and found nothing in Me* [Jn. 14:30], that the spirit of Christ and of all Christians, that is, the Spirit of Christ living in them, is the Spirit Which is free and not subject to *the prince of this world*, who is the spirit of the desires of the flesh. Just as the spirit of Christ *overcomes the world*, [1 Jn. 5:4], so all those having His Spirit, receive authority over the powers of darkness and this world, which give way as if vanquished.

Thirteenth, one must note *So that the world may know* etc. [Jn. 14:31], so that thus we may know the God Who must be loved according to the mandate to follow His commandments even unto death, then our head by walking in the love of the Father and following His commandments willingly, rose and made others rise as His witnesses, and He proceeded to the place of the Passion.

How the Holy Spirit must be awaited with prayer and contemplation.

Consequently, let us note briefly how, as is written in the first chapter of Acts, the Apostles with Mary and the other women and the seventy disciples *were unanimous in persevering in prayer and contemplation* [Acts 1:13-14], because they waited to be endued with power from on high, so that we may put on power from on high. Let us act so that, if we wish to be endued with power from on high, we may be moved to preparing and purging, by removing animality, because *a man like an animal does not obey* etc. [1 Cor. 2:14]. It is necessary for anyone who wishes to be renewed by a right spirit to expel pigs and unclean spirits.

The psalmist says, *Create a clean heart* etc. [Ps. 50:12]. Next it is necessary for the heart to adorn itself with various pictures of holy meditations. Likewise, to invite Him by persistence in prayer, as the Apostles did. They prayed for others, Acts 8[:15]. Having been invited, the Spirit comes. *I asked, and understanding was given to me. I called on God, and the spirit of wisdom came to me* [Ws. 7:7], and on the third, not the last days. You have the fellowship of Mary and the Apostles, on whom you can call for aid. Note here why the saints assembled in prayer, because the Spirit descended on those who assembled. Likewise, it is necessary for you to serve Him rather than the world, the Spirit rather than the belly.

The Apostles were fasting then. Isaiah 42[:1-2], *Behold My servant, whom I uphold. My chosen one is agreeable to me. I gave My Spirit to him*. Just as John the Baptist served before his birth. On this account, *The boy ... was comforted by the Spirit* [Lk. 1:80]. Likewise, a bed was to be prepared for him, Isaiah [!]. He will rest in humility and quiet.

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## Sermon 240

*Praising, I will call upon the Lord; and I will be saved from my enemies* [Ps. 14:4].

At Novacella on Saint Bartholomew's Day [August 24] 1456 at a procession for victory over the Turks.

*Praising, I will call upon the Lord; and I will be saved from my enemies*, originally at 2 Kings [2 Sam. 22:4] and in Psalm 17, I will love.

*David, on the day in which the Lord freed him from the hands of all his enemies and from the hands of Saul*, sang the song, *The Lord [is] my rock and my strength* etc. [2 Sam. 22:1-2]. These things are read in the said chapter 22, in which are found the words, *Praising, I will call upon the Lord* etc.

David prefigures Christ, because he was anointed by God like Him Who pleased God above all others. Christ suffered many persecutions in His mystical body, especially that most cruel Mehmed the Turk,<sup>488</sup> a contemner of our Christ's cross. Many Saracens derive from the faith of Christ, because a beastly man cannot understand the things that are from the spirit of God. The law of Christ is the law of the spirit, which speaks of charity or the love of the spirit, by which love our spirit, which is bound to God, is fed and vivified with unutterable and immortal joy. Because a beastly man does not conceive of a pleasant life except like an animal and sensually, the devil, wishing subtly to corrupt the gospel, brought forth the false prophet Mohammed, like one ill-informed about the gospel and scripture, to give a beastly understanding, which is pleasing to a beastly man.

Thus, he praised Christ and the gospel; but he imposed a false understanding, promising a paradise of delight according to the flesh and bodily pleasures. Since the cross of Christ is the ultimate testimony of the spiritual understanding of the gospel, that is that sensual life does nothing for the life of the spirit and gives death, because to die bodily to gain the truth of the spirit of life is to pass from inevitable death to eternal life, and this from the merit of Christ on the cross, therefore, the devil seems to have persuaded men of the doctrine of Mohammed, so that from it would come the head of malice, the son of perdition, who set himself up as the enemy of Christ's cross.

God permitted the persecutor of the cross to reign until he had seized that great city of Constantinople, full of churches. For those inhabitants had departed schismatically from the unity of the catholic faith concerning the procession of the Holy Spirit;<sup>489</sup> and, finally, they did not observe the promise made at the Florentine synod<sup>490</sup> to secure help against the Turk. They had come falsely to the end that they would attain only a temporal good. Therefore, afterward they showed that they wished to deceive the Roman church; because there were many who wished to remain in the accepted unity, they pretended that they had given up heresy.

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<sup>488</sup> Mehmed II (1432-1481).

<sup>489</sup> The West said the Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son, not from the Father alone.

<sup>490</sup> The Council of Ferrara-Florence.

Therefore, God permitted two things to be done, so that hat those deceitful schismatics were corrected by the action of the city, and the good who were expelled aroused the warmth of the Christians. Thus, it happened that the Turk proudly dominates in the city of Constantinople, which was built by the Christian Constantine, so that the deceivers should see themselves deceived; and the Roman pontiff should receive into his soul the honor of the cross to be defended by arms.

The Turk posited in his soul that he wished to extend that victory even to old Rome and all the borders of Christendom. A report came to us of the intention of that tyrant that no one could resist his power. The longsuffering God permitted this business until it should come to desperation, so that all our power should fear the coming of that great Turk, whose army is estimated at 500,000 armed men. He has made warlike devices, bombardment machines never heard of, which not even the strongest walls could resist. He did not care to announce that he wished to seize Belgrade, a well-fortified city and the key to the kingdom of Hungary, and from it that whole very-powerful kingdom and other places in Christendom. It was preached to the people that they should prepare themselves for that occurring. Ardor was aroused, but fear seized all our princes. The Turk came, threw down the walls of that town. There seemed to be no hope of resisting.

After all human despair, a few poor crusaders met and cried out to the Lord, Who declared themselves faithful servants by the sign of the cross. With Janos Hunyadi, a most Christian warrior, present, on the day of Saint Mary Magdalene [July 22, 1456], the cross of Christ vanquished the enemy. Shamelessly, the Turk fled by night with his forces, leaving to Christ machines and bombards of unheard of magnitude and very many, so that his arms should be kept by Christ away from persecution.

This is the day of good news, on which we received many letters about this miraculous victory. For that reason, we came to praise God, Who renewed in a wondrous way the memory of the cross. He made it a scourge with which to arouse the sleepy and call on Him, Who has shown Himself a faithful protector, when we have recourse to Him with all faith, knowing that undoubtedly we will be saved if with a whole heart we commend ourselves to His protection.

We say, therefore, according to the theme, a few things about prayer, that is, how we should pray in order to be saved. David, delivered from persecution, says, *Praising, I will call*. There we should consider first that supplication should contain two things, that is, praise of God in the first place, in the second contrition of the soul in the sense [of it], in the third notice of the petition which we should offer to the king of all. For [John] Climacus [in the *Scala Paradisi*] says to a certain brother that this was revealed by an angel. He posits that this was the prototype of this perfect prayer, so that we should pray like a culprit begs a judge, that he might be merciful.

First, we should note it is not prayer unless it proceeds from the mind. Those lacking intellect do not pray. Therefore, the affect of desire fills the sensible voice; and the mind shows itself to desire very much what flows from the heart. Whoever prays, therefore, should understand what he prays. Prayer is alive where pure intellect, which is the word of the mind, is present. As it is called mind from remembering, it is that without which no concept is formed. You conceive, having life in memory; how you produce the concept. Affect then is exhaled from memory, the word and desire as a concept.

Therefore, the spirit of desire is expressed in prayer in signs, words and things sensed. To break forth into voice is the show the exuberance of desire. That affect of our spirit penetrates the heavens and strikes the ears of God.

It is necessary that he who wishes to beseech [God] should direct [attention] very attentively to how prayer exceeds all things created because of our intellectual spirit. It incites itself like fire, which multiplies its virtue because of motion. If you consider rightly, nature, the movement of the heavens and every creature gives way to prayer. Elijah prayed [3 Kings 17:1-18:46]. It did not rain, and [the ground] was sterile. He prayed, and it rained. The earth was made fertile. He prayed; and fire, the natural motion of which is from above, descended from heaven etc. Did not even the sun cease from its ordinary motion of account of prayer [Joshua 10:12-13]? Therefore, prayer has a certain omnipotence, not from our spirit, but from the spirit, which is conceived in our spirit from the motion of the fire of desire.

But how is that spirit conceived in us? Truly in the way in which life is conceived in an embryo. An embryo can live. If it was created, in an ordered disposition, the spirit of rational life is infused. There is in our spirit a certain potential to conceive the divine spirit in it, if at least our spirit is disposed in an ordered way.

There is no concept in the spirit without faith. What we do not believe we spurn and cast away. Faith, therefore, precedes what could follow from God, that which you requested. Think that you do not doubt that all things are possible to God, and that He gives all good things abundantly. You ask and receive.

It is necessary that you be capable of [receiving] the gift. You ask for light, and you do not dispel the density of darkness. You ask for chastity, and you do not to abandon goods and incentives. You ask for mercy, and you are not merciful; but you have a hard heart against [your] neighbor. You ask for temporal goods, but you do not have responsibility to dispenses them rightly. You ask for honors, but you do not have poverty of spirit, that you do not have the honor of ministering to many toward salvation.

The capacity of your spirit for the spirit of God, which is charity, which is to be received, consists in conformity. Likeness connects. Like seeks like. Love of you wish to be loved. If you desire the spirit of truth, you should hate falsehood, because unlikeness divides. Contraries repel contraries. If you desire the spirit of cleanness, you must hate luxury. If you desire the spirit of mercy, you must hate avarice. If you desire the spirit of humility, you must hate pride. If you desire the spirit of piety and mildness, you must hate anger. And so your spirit will become capable of receiving a good spirit, when all that is adverse to the good you should not just not love [what is contrary to it], but abhor [it].

The theme says, *Praising, I will call upon*. If you praise that, display what you think. If you praise chastity, show what you seek, praising it in action. Then you will show [it], when you denounce and abhor its contrary. Fly from what belongs to luxury in word and work, showing that you have a clean heart.

Prepare, therefore, a receptacle with fear of God; and seek perseveringly, because God will restore a right spirit in your inmost entrails [cf. Ps. 50:12]. The inward man has entrails just like the

outward. The entrails of a man are moved by compassion out of natural love and closeness of one nature similar to another, just as maternal entrails are for a child and fraternal to a brother. Therefore, the movement of piety in a rational soul is above nature, when pity does not proceed from flesh and blood, but from charity founded on reason. Therefore, love of God and neighbor shows in God that the pious, mild and humble spirit is the Holy Spirit's dwelling. Therefore, whoever has that spirit has all things for which he asks in himself, because he has omnipotent treasure. He prays rightly and cannot not succeed. Whoever prays with the spirit of God Who dwells in him prays, invokes, is admonished and seeks.

The theme says, *Praising, I will call upon the Lord*. This, therefore, is only if the Lord, powerful and mighty [cf. Ps. 23:8], is invoked in every necessity. For He alone is able to fulfill every desire. He gave the desire and wished to be moved to being asked. In His hand is the treasure of desire and all the ends of the earth. Nothing can resist Him. Whoever invokes the aid of the Lord alone with undoubted faith will not be confounded. He will be saved from every adversity of all his enemies, visible and invisible, because the Lord Himself is the defender and creator of things visible and invisible.

Faith, however, captivated the Lord. Faithfulness pleases lords, because there can be no dominion without it. There can be no domination except by loving faithfulness; and to love to such a degree that one judges it never possible to reward enough. The more one extols it, the more its praises are increased and principate shines forth. Therefore, the Lord does not desert His faithful. Faith, however, wishes that, the more one values the Lord, the more he is faithful. Whoever, therefore, has faith that the Lord he serves is the emperor of life and death, shows himself faithful including even to death. Such a one merits having his desires heard, because he is faithful. Firm and formed faith<sup>491</sup> gives perseverance. For one who does not doubt that the Lord will give does not cease asking. Therefore, one who strikes [God's ears], as if violent, because [he has] great faith asks for all things with perseverance.

These things should be remembered for a time so that, with faith and remembrance, we should strike [God's ears] and cry out to the Lord so that He will not desert us at an opportune time, but will show us, with divine aid, His mercy and to those whom we send signed with the cross, so that with the enemy of our salvation vanquished, He may send [them] back safe, to His eternal glory.

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<sup>491</sup> Faith formed by charity.

## Sermon 248

*They will rule peoples* [Wisd. 3:8].

At Brixen on the feast of Saints Simon and Jude, apostles, [October 28,] 1456.<sup>492</sup>

*They will rule peoples, and the Lord will reign over them forever*, in Wisdom 3 and in the office of the mass for Apostles.<sup>493</sup>

I say that crusaders *will rule peoples*, the army of the Turk. That army was gathered from many peoples, from Tartars, Saracens and renegade Christians. *and the Lord*, that is, Christ crucified, *will reign* through the crusaders *forever*. Any power opposing them will be exterminated; it is necessary that all things will be subject to Him. His Father, our God, will give Him all kingdoms. However, He does not yet have possession to the ends of the earth [cf. Ps. 2:8]. However, He will have [it] before the end of the world.

Let us keep before us the lesson from which we drew the theme; and we will see who the victors are, who will be crowned.

*The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and the torment of death does not touch them* [Wisd. 3:1]. Note, first, the text, how the virtue which is justice is making them just; and He will snatch souls from contact with the torment of death, because *The souls of the just are in the hand of God*. Just by justice; one is not just unless by justice. Apart from justice it is not possible to be just, just as there is no white apart from whiteness. Therefore, justice is the hand of God, for the soul of the just person is in justice, and this is *in* [His] *hand* or in God's power.

One is absolute justice, which saves all the just. One is *the hand of the Omnipotent* [2 Mcc. 6:26], preserving all the just in immortality. For what is the hand of God except immortality? The just soul, therefore, inhabits immortality. *The just live forever* [Wisd. 5:16], because *the torment of death* [cannot] *touch them*. O such splendid virtue, which preserves the soul from all corruption.

Therefore, all mortal sin is contrary to justice. Justice is life. As long as the soul is in the body, the body does not decay. Justice is in the soul like life in the body.

When there is something which should be done, then it is [to be done] justly. If someone builds a house by doing all things which are included in the rationale of the house, the house is said to have been built rightly and justly. Therefore, the rational soul is called just when it has done what is right, that is, because reason lives in it and it does not decline from reason on account of any terrible things.

There is strength in justice and the contrary, for justice includes all virtues in itself. There is no virtue unless justice defines it as virtue. Justice said says it should be made strong in the sharpness of war.

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<sup>492</sup> One manuscript adds, "when there was the first procession ordered by Pope Callixtus III against the Turks".

<sup>493</sup> Actually, found in the vigil of Simon and Jude.

Therefore, strength has from justice that it is virtue. So continence, mercy and the other virtues. All virtues are immortal, because *justice*, in which and through which all are, *is immortal* [Wisd. 1:15].

We say that justice is giving anyone what is his [cf. Inst. 1.1]. God gives all things when there is justice, the goodness and being of which is the same as His justice. Just as from Him, because He is good, [it is] diffusive of His nature, so from Him, because the just gives being to individuals, He grants all things in justice.

Justice in number, weight and measure is heeded. Intellectual justice is living scales. Only a human being finds by intellect in the middle of the scales the just weights and measures of things. The intellect, therefore, is the judge or living scales.

If we heed the place or site of things, we will wonder at the divine scales or justice, which gives anyone his place. That the earth is heavy and ire light, so it is out of justice. Therefore, the earth is quieted in this that [it is] earth, because it has this from justice; and [this is] so of other creatures. Therefore, justice quiets. When there are contentions, justice ends them, because nothing can be desired more by reason beyond justice due to him.

The rational soul is rational because of justice, just as the earth is earth because of justice. Absolute distributive justice, which grants form and consequence to form. It grants liberty to reason.

It is just that intellectual substance is free. Therefore, just as there is weight in everything created, so lightness in fire leads to an ethereal place. And so, when a creature is considered by its weight, it claims for itself a place of quiet because of due justice, so intellectual nature has weight, through which its mobile liberty is led consequently to quiet. This weight is the love of the ethereals; and it is nothing other than the love of justice, which is eternal. Whoever, therefore, prefers the eternal to things temporal and the incorruptible to things corruptible is moved to weigh the intellectual in the place of quiet, that is, immortality.

God, because He is justice itself, is a place of quiet and immortality. He is said to inhabit mortality, because He is thus just and is justice itself.

It is not for the just, crucified, to suffer because of justice, which it gives for the just to be. The soul which knows what is just, so can conform itself to justice more and more. Therefore, only intellectual substance can be increased without limit. Just as art increases itself with assiduity of work – the art is increased in doing the work – so the intellect has its intellectual justice, which is expanded continuously by just exertions.

What is just is that God, Who is truth, must be believed. Thus, *the just man lives by faith* [Rom. 1:17]. Therefore, the soul becomes more just by means of faith; and this when the work of faith is done. Because justice thus dictates, it increases in immortality.

Justice dictates that one must believe the Son of God and that no teaching can lead the soul to quiet, unless what is from God. Therefore, this is obvious, that justice in us is the weight of intellectual

nature; and through it we arrive at faith, so that we are justified by means of faith, that is, we are justified with faith mediating, that is, so that original justice may increase by just exertions.

Just as there is in the son of a craftsman [his] art in potential, and that cannot be put into action unless by his light who has the art in action, so original justice cannot put itself into action unless by the light of a master, who has the art of justice. Therefore, Christ, Who had the art of justice - indeed was that art, came so that they would recognize Him to have and be the art of justice, They could accept Him as master. They could increase even unto the sonship of God and the grasping of immortality or absolute justice. Absolute justice is the place of quiet for all of the just. The hand of God or the preserving power of life is the place of the souls of the just.

Consider well the human soul, composed of its four elements. The soul is spiritual. Its elements are spiritual, for we express the human soul to be a certain spiritual force, stretching forth its four-fold motion that is, desiring, irritable, rational and free or voluntary. Because the soul has an intellectual nature, therefore, it strives to direct those four motions intellectually, modifying the impetus of such a motion intellectually. Modification of the desiring motion is called temperance; and the modification of the irritable motion is called fortitude. The modification of the rational motion is called prudence, and the modification of the motion of free will is called justice.

Therefore, the intellect is like a living font of paradise, from which four rivers flow [cf. Gen. 2:10-11, 13-14]. It assigns a way lest those four rivers, which flow from it to water paradise or a human being, lest they overflow or rather do the opposite by excess. The first river, representing prudence, is Phison. Prudence finds a way. Gion is temperance, which guards the way. Euphrates is justice; and Tigris is strength, which guards.

Heed how prudence is the charioteer of the virtues. It says, "I have found the way". Temperance says, "I wished this" and keeps [the way]. Justice, that which temperance keeps so, distributes for itself and the others. Strength defends, for many adversities arise to the way thus distributed; and strength is the means of defending the way.

The river Phison or prudence is discretion in knowledge of good and evil. It is a deep river, long and wide. Its depth is memory of things past; the width of understanding of things present; length is providence for the future.

The river Gion or temperance similarly has three [aspects] things concerning lusts, that is, strictness, which is sobriety in taste; frugidity, which is chastity in touch; slowness, which is modesty in gesture.

The Euphrates or justice is the habit of giving each his own [cf. Inst. 1.1], and it has three [aspects]. Because the river is sweet, it is natural justice; the river is bright, justice from law; and it stays between the banks out of custom. We say that justice considers superiors, equals and inferiors.

The Tigris or strength is resistance to dangers, and it has three [aspects]. The foundation is stone, that is, it has trust in resisting the turbulence of the waves; it is patience in sustaining; and swiftness in continuing.

Our soul seems enlivened by a ray of divine light. Therefore, ray, because of the vigor of light, which is in it, purifies, illuminates, conciliates, strengthens. In purifying it has the way of temperance; in illuminating, of prudence; in reconciling, of justice; and in strengthening, of strength.

The virtues, which respond to their proper elements, seem to be in the soul: temperance to the dryness of earth; prudence to the perspicacity of water with bravery; justice to the subtlety of air with softness; strength or constancy to the vigor of fire in action.

It seems that the rational soul or intellect is after the first cause and before what was caused, as if both caused and cause. Thus, the first cause might cause that in its neighbor with the similitude conferring on itself the nobility of the cause. Therefore, from itself it exerts the material cause, since it put on itself the habit of temperance, and the formal one by taking on the habit of prudence; and the final one in the habit of justice and the efficient in the habit of strength.

Note how simplicity of soul is such that any virtue is in any other. For when the soul takes on the habit of temperance then that of the other virtues, for there is no temperance without prudence, justice and strength.

Note besides how all the virtues do not suffice for felicity unless infused virtue, that is, charity, is present. For just as prudence is the form of human virtues, so charity forms the virtues, so that they are formed by the divine form, which alone is acceptable to God. Therefore, justice which is not formed by charity is not true and living justice, but rather is a deficient image.

Only the truth is permanent. Therefore, the one who puts on true and living justice obtains immortality, for true virtue is divine and immortal and provides immortal life. For the being of true justice done not depend on the just or the subject, as the being of whiteness [does] on a white subject. Therefore, the soul does not die with the death of a just person, that is the subject of justice. However, when a white [subject] is destroyed, the whiteness dependent on the subject is destroyed. The rational spirit does not die with a deane person, who does not depend on the subject, but the contrary.

Behold the soul, because it is capable of true and perpetual justice, or because subject to divine justice, therefore, is perpetual. Therefore, so that God, Who is the just judge and is justice itself, created the natural intellect, which alone is capable of justice. It should be the subject of perpetual justice, so that it is capable of justice in reward and condemnation, therefore, intellectual nature, which is rewarded, is rewarded with the eternal influx of divine justice. What is damned is punished with eternal condemnation by justice.

Note how incongruously the soul is said to be in the body. Rather the body should be said to be in the soul. Our text very well says that *the just seemed to die in the eyes of fools* [Wisd. 2:3]. They think justice ceased to be in the dead just person. Note, as Paul says, that *we in the same image are transformed*

*as if by the Spirit of the Lord* [2 Cor. 3:18]. Thus, we are conformed to virtue so that, under the influence of the spirit of the Lord or of charity, which informs or vivifies justice, the habit of which we bear. We increase in His justice and immortality with the continuous influx, always taking it on, as if justice always is in His splendor, elevating the soul habituated in these things, just as one always flows an object, his resemblance, into a mirror. It is continuously generated in the mirror; and the ray of the sun is continuously generated, so that the splendor of solar light is formed in it, therefore, the virtues are called flowers and fruit, as is written, *My flowers, the fruit of honor and honesty* etc. [Wisd. 24:23]. Just as the Son is begotten today and eternally in divine things, as He bears Himself to the Father like splendor to light and *the figure of His substance* [Heb. 1:3], as the apostle says.

Consequently, note in the text, where it says how the just, when they suffered torment before men, their full hope was of immortality. We read that the Maccabees and others had this faith, that those who die for the faith attain immortality. This justice by some divine instinct effected in the faithful that those who fight for it might have the hope of immortality. For how could one who died for it be denied by justice the prize. Nor is it there a prize where it is not understood; nor did it understand without being and living. Therefore, it is impossible for the faithful person hoping for immortality not to be rewarded by justice, the one who suffers from it even to death. The *hope* of the just [stands] *firm*; but that of the impious will perish [cf. 2 Cor. 1:7; Wisd. 3:11].

Next, note how suffering for justice is because of a better disposition. For gold, that is of higher value when more pure and good, or more noble, is assayed with fire by a master. The more pure the more desirable. Whoever chooses to be loved by God, patiently undergoes [this] assay, knowing he will be made more desirable. *Whom God loves, He corrects* [Prov. 3:12]. Therefore, every faithful, just person, when the fire of tribulation comes, knows one's self to be loved by justice, which is God. The resemblance of this to burnt offerings, which are entirely consumed by fire, therefore, is more acceptable to God than any other offering, portions of which are burned.

[The text] adds how *the just*, because *they shine forth* etc. [Mt. 13:43].

These things have been said quickly about this.

## Sermon 280

DRAFT TRANSLATION BY THOMAS IZBICKI

1457 on the Monday after Misericordia Domini Sunday<sup>494</sup> at Brixen in the synod.

Brothers, the reading from the holy gospel provides fitting nourishment to this holy synod, so that there is no need to seek elsewhere the sustenance by which we, who are led by Christ the shepherd are led and are directed in the art of feeding, by means of which we feed the sheep entrusted to us. Christ said, I am the good shepherd [Jn. 10:11]. Very often you have heeded nature, which is fed by wisdom, on account of its incorruptible capacity for wisdom. Intellectual nature, which alone is apt to be fed by wisdom, never can be reduced to nothing.

And so that we may enter the wide and rich pasture of feeding, where we may find abundant grass, let us heed how Christ, after the healing of the man born blind, said, for judgment I am come into this world; that they who see not, may see; and those who see, may become blind [Jn. 9:39]. The word of God illuminates ignorant and blind minds which recognize their blindness and desire to be illuminated by Christ, who is the light. But those who presume that they have the light of intelligence He blinds, because sin remains in them. For presumption does not let them approach so that they might be illuminated, when they think themselves to be those who see. And since the Pharisees and the shepherds of others, presuming themselves to be those who see, strive to lead others by the light of their own intelligence, Christ adds that such men are those who lead [others] astray, because they do not enter through the door. He uses the example of a shepherd of sheep, who enters the fold by the door; thieves and robbers, however, climb in elsewhere [Jn. 10:1-2].

He explains how the shepherd is known, that is, because his voice is known to the sheep; and they obey and follow Him [Jn. 10:4]. They flee the stranger, because they do not know his voice [Jn. 10:5]. After this, He reveals Himself to be the door through which shepherds enter, and how those who do not enter through Him are thieves and robbers [Jn. 10:7-8]. Then He says that He is the door of the sheep, Who did not come like other shepherds, whose goal is - in short - that they might kill and lose the sheep, but that they might live abundantly [Jn. 10:9-10].

Therefore, He spoke thus, I am the door. By Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved: and he shall go in, and go out, and shall find pastures. The thief cometh not, but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly [Jn. 10:9-10]. Therefore, we have, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah [3:15], Christiform shepherds feeding with knowledge and doctrine; and that, therefore, we shepherds, if we seek to feed the sheep entrusted to us, should lead them into the pasture of Sacred Scripture, and this through the gate which is Christ. For the true entry is through Christ, of Whom the Scriptures speak.

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<sup>494</sup> Second Sunday after Easter. The synod was held on May 2, 1457.

That which feeds the soul in the field of Scripture, the word of God, is contained beneath the letter. Just as the invisible food of sheep, through which alone sensate life is fed, is contained beneath different herbs, so the Spirit lies concealed beneath various writings, feeding the mind. Wherefore, spiritual food, life-giving and illuminating, is not found except by means of Christ, Who is the living door, opening Himself to the one who knocks and closing to the presumptuous man.

And note how the rational mind which subjects itself to Christ knows the voice and, by means of the voice, the word hidden in the voice, and follows Him. The sweetness of the word of God, which comes by means of thought, is such to the mind which subjects itself to Christ through faith that it follows no one except Him. And whoever speaks other words, his voice is alien and unknown to it; and it flees from him. When Christ questioned Peter and the other apostles whether they wished to leave, he replied, To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life [Jn. 6:69]. He, who believed Christ to be the Son of the Living God [Mt. 16:16], knew the voice and, in the voice, the word, and that the word was the word of eternal life; and he could not leave.

If, therefore, we wish to save those whose care we have received, we must lead them through the door. Robbers and thieves teach them to enter elsewhere, so that they are lost. For whoever spurns Christ's doctrine is seduced from the way of truth and life.

Behold that he alone will be saved who enters through the door, that is, Christ, Who is the way and the life [Jn. 14:6]. If you seek the door to life, it is He. If you seek the food of life, it is He. Who, however, is that Christ? Truly it is He Who is the giver of spiritual life, because [He is] truth, and wisdom, and the light of reason, illuminating every man; and He comes so that they might live and live more abundantly, just as the son now comes so that trees and animals may live. And, more properly, He comes to infuse His strength, like trees, which, in the winter, are without life and, nevertheless, are not inwardly dead, now they live and more abundantly, and they live more abundantly even to bear fruit.

Christ, the sun of justice with the light of intelligence and the heat of charity, in Whom [is] God's strength, comes to us thus. And He shows Himself [to be] the gate of paradise, that is, of the Sacred Scriptures. For, if by means of Christ you enter the house of intelligence, scrutinizing the Scriptures, you find Him, the food of life, in all of them. If you go through the door, explaining and expounding the Scriptures, you find food. In the Old Testament you enter through Christ. From Old Testament you go out into the New Testament through Christ.

Now consider in another way how Christ is the door in which, as in a door, going in and coming out coincide. The door, then, is to be entered and exited at the same time. Christ is the door through which every creature goes forth into being, because He is the principle of things, through which all things were made, and without which nothing exists [Jn. 1:3]. And He is the door through which all things return to their cause or principle, as if to their beginning. He is at once the door of creation and of salvation, or of flowing out and flowing back.

Christ is the way by means of which every creature flows into being, so that it may be what it is. And Christ Himself, is the end of creation, because creation ends and is perfected in Him. And, when one meditates attentively upon how He is the way, by means of which - of necessity - every creature completes the cycle

of flowing back, and it returns by entering into the first cause, and thus is the end of flowing back, thus one sees Him to be the means of flowing out and flowing back, that He is the beginning and the end. \*(Such men always find food for nourishment.)\*

Therefore, if Christ is known, all things are known in Him. If Christ is grasped, all things are grasped in Him. It belongs to us, therefore, to preach Christ, so that He may be known, because salvation and life consist in His name or in knowledge <of Him>. Nor is there any name or knowledge except intellectual nature, which lives by knowledge. Wherefore Christ is that truth which is sought so that He may be grasped by the entire intellect. When this is grasped, the ultimate among desires is grasped. And that joy from apprehending the truth is eternal life.

One of the simple might say, "How should we preach Christ so that He may be known when He says that no one knows the Son except the Father and no one knows the Father except the Son [Mt. 11:27]?"

I reply that we should preach Him through the door of humanity, so that we may lead our subjects to knowledge of Him. That knowledge is that faith in us, which suffices for us for salvation. For God the Father, even if He can be known only by the Son - no one knows the Father as Father except the Son and no one knows the Son as Son except the Father, nevertheless, the Father and the Son are known by the revelation of faith. If we come to grasp the Son of God through faith, He reveals the Father to us. For this we have the door of humanity, because, when we have inspected what Christ the man did, we find divine power beyond every man in the man, on account of which things we believe Him, in so far as He said that He was the Son of God and the one sent by the Father. He produced these most efficacious and most efficacious testimonies, so that no one who uses reason can waver in this.

We tell the people, therefore, how Christ comes, born of the Virgin, what miracles He worked, what He taught, what He promised, how He died so that He might bear witness by Himself to the truth. Preach how He rose from the dead, how He appeared after the Resurrection and how those to whom He appeared received the Holy Spirit, comforted by Whom, they bore witness to the Resurrection even unto death, and not only they alone but infinite others too. By means of these we arrive even at the truth, that is, that He was both man and the Son of God, and that He must be obeyed and believed as God's Son.

Thereafter we turn to evangelization, doctrine and the commands of God's own Son, and how He opened the Scriptures, because He showed Himself to be the one of Whom the Scriptures speak, and how, by receiving Him through faith formed by obeying His doctrine and commands, and by looking to Him, like to the exemplar of our life, we should hope to be comforted by Him and to possess beatitude with Him. And so Christ must be preached, as we have said. Then, if the Son of God is believed, reason concludes that He is to be believed and that, as He taught, He is to be obeyed, and that His life is the form of those straining toward eternal life.

Next you might say, "How will I preach to the people that Christ is the way or the door to paradise or to the kingdom of delights?"

You might say, "Christ is the way or the door to immortality. For Christ was humble, mild, truthful, just, merciful, obedient and loving the Father and obeying His commands even to death," and so on of the

individual virtues. However, He calls Himself the way Who had those most high and immortal virtues. When, therefore, we call Christ the way to immortality, we should understand that whoever adheres to the way of the virtues imitates and follows Christ and enters with Him the kingdom of immortality.

If, therefore, you are resolved to follow the way to justice or another virtue, you understand clearly. For it is enough to say, "I am the gate," or the way. And if He said, "I am justice," or truth, or humility, or that particular virtues which leads to the food of life, repeat what the prophet says, All Your ways are truth, and, elsewhere, All Your ways are mercy and truth. And, in Apocalypse 15[:3], Just and true are Thy ways. Those are the eternal ways, because they are the ways of those who do not fail. Wherefore, whoever has true justice has life, which is Christ, unto salvation; and so of all the virtues, since Christ, Who is the way, is all virtue or true strength, enfolding all virtues in Himself.

Christ says, But the hireling, and he that is not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and flieth: and the wolf catcheth, and scattereth the sheep [Jn. 10:12]. Manifestly, this fits in with experience, how few shepherds there are today and how many hirelings, because, when the foe comes, just like those who look after their own interests, almost all flee. But, if they were shepherds, then they would treat the sheep not like another's but like their own.

A shepherd is less likely to flee from the sheep than a father from his children or a mother from the babe from her womb. The shepherd should be more bound to the Christians entrusted to him, so that he might serve them, than is a parent. How much zeal our Shepherd displayed Who said that He would not lose any of those entrusted to Him [Jn. 10:28].

Now, brothers, not only are many of those who bear the name shepherd hirelings, acting as if the sheep did not belong to them, but they are ravening wolves. They do not feed, but they devour. They carry off whatever they can, even from those who should live as their subjects; and, as far as they can, they, who should feed them, deprive them of life. I say, "spiritually," for those whom they should feed them with the word and doctrine, they destroy with their bad life and example, and with flattery and favors. That, brothers, is more horrible than that, as a favor to many, they absolve many of grave sins, not rebuking but stroking, excusing, having assigned a small - or no - penance, so that they might gain favor and lucre. Certainly they rend souls so that they might devour earthly things.

Let us note, brothers, what is the proportion of the shepherd to the flock. Certainly it is that of a man to a sheep. There should be such discretion and wisdom in the shepherd that he stands out from his subjects like a man from herd animals. The diligence of a shepherd of sheep, who is a guardian, physician and leader, teaches what wakefulness, what continual attention, what circumspection is required to be a good shepherd of souls.

Therefore, is not God, Who feeds substantially, the one Who gives their food to the beasts. Thus the shepherd of souls leads the flock so that it may come to the inner parts of the desert, where it may be fed upon the word of God. (I will pass over many things which anyone easily can learn from these things.)

Consequently, we are taught Who is the good shepherd. Thus Christ says, I am the good shepherd; and I know Mine, and Mine know Me. As the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father [Jn. 10:14-15].

Certainly there is only one good shepherd, Who is the Wisdom of God the Father, so that He err not, and is man, so that He might judge from His infirmity how to feed frail mankind.

Christ is the shepherd of the shepherds. He is the law and the light of the shepherds. He is the way of feeding and the life, which is the end of feeding; and He is the enduring truth [Jn. 14:6]. He holds the primacy in all things.

But the lord and master thus was the humble servant of all. So any servant performs even the ultimate service, that is, washing the feet, the lowest part of a man. There is no good shepherd except the One in Whom supreme humility coincides with supreme rule, and mercy with supreme justice, and discipline and correction with His supreme clemency, and so of the rest, so that every virtue, which is the coincidence of opposites, is in Him - and equality of being, so that all might have His form Who conforms Himself to all things, so that He might draw all things to His equality.

Let us heed how Christ, first and before all, calls Himself the good shepherd and says that He knows His sheep. He alone, Who is the shepherd, Who is the giver of life, knows for whom the kingdom is prepared from the beginning [Mt. 25:34], and who are the predestined. And they know Him as the shepherd, because they hear the word of God. Other shepherds do not know in truth as Christ does, but by means of conjecture; and the more they exert themselves to know, the more they are Christiform.

Therefore, knowledge reveals the good shepherd. A physician needs to know the one subject to his care. It is necessary for a shepherd to know his sheep, so that they may know how to be fed. Not by vague public knowledge and conjecture but by true and secret knowledge, that is, as the Father knows the Son. And this knowledge entails knowledge of the sheep, that is, of those who are bound to know the shepherd as sons know their father.

Coincidence must be considered in pastoral knowledge. Just as in that order of the divine principate, which is called hierarchy, ascent of the subject coincides with the descent of the principate, from this coincidence comes the means of connection in which it subsists, even as in knowledge. For the sheep knowing the shepherd as shepherd is the shepherd knowing his subjects as subjects. If the shepherd knows how to feed paternally, they know how to be fed by the shepherd filially.

## Sermon 291

At S. Giovanni in Laterano, February 23, 1459

DRAFT TRANSLATION BY THOMAS IZBICKI

You heard, brothers, Pius II, our holy and supreme pontiff, has committed to us a visitation of the leading church of this city. It so pleased his holiness, whom we are required to obey even in things impossible to us at least with a gesture and with every demonstration of effort. Following holy custom, we begin with a gospel passage from the divine office already performed, by means of which we will show with what care the Church of the Lord of Hosts is built, why the tenants are cast out and to whom cultivation is committed.

First we draw out from the text that God is depicted as a paterfamilias Who planted a vineyard and leased it to tenants to cultivate [Matthew 21:33]. Let us heed what is the way to ascend from the paterfamilias to the Creator, from the image to the exemplar. Many paternities coincide in a single paterfamilias. For he is a father because the begetter of a son; he is a father because he has responsibility for everyone and because he is the ruler and elder to whom all honor is due. Every paternity which is found in heaven and on earth is from God the Father. We are instructed by Jesus, the Son of God, that He is the Father Whom the Jews call God. This God, therefore, Who is the Father, is that absolute paternity. Therefore, every perfect paterfamilias who exists has this from God the Father of Fathers, Therefore, God has a Son Who shares His nature, the heir of all things [Hebrews 1:2]. He has a special household and providential care of and rule over all. To Him all honor is due. Whoever denies God has a Son Who shares His divine nature and, nevertheless, believes He has care of all, professes that the paterfamilias is of lesser perfection than is found in the world, and that the One Who grants paternity lacks the perfection that He gives to others.

He says, Who planted a vineyard. Consider how the one who planted the vineyard conducted himself in planting it. Planting presupposes having vines. How, therefore, did the first person plant the first vineyard? Surely planting is an act of the intellect. Brutes do not plant. Therefore, he plants by intellect and for an end. The planting of the first intellect is creation, of which the prophet says [Ps. 93:9], Shall He Who shaped the ear not hear, or He Who formed the eye not see? Therefore, what the first intellect shaped or created He did not receive from another, but He had within Himself that He the ability to plant. Therefore, He planted from Himself, not from another. Just as the wise man, teaching his disciples, receives from himself what he plants in another, so the first intellect, Who has in Himself as cause and beginning everything that may be fashioned and is the intelligible world or eternal, receives from Himself or from eternity what He planted in the sensible or temporal world.

Just as the intellect of a mathematician has in itself an intellectual circle, which he implants or shapes on a sensible subject, but that intellectual circle is not the circle but the intellect. If the circle could be seen, should be seen as equally the maximum and the minimum circle, not that there might be two circles that can be drawn, but [the intellectual circle] is previous to every duality of circles that can be drawn. Therefore, the intellect, which is the beginning of all circles that can be drawn, is not some circle but all circles that can be drawn, so that the circles that exist have from it the exemplary cause of all of them.

Therefore, if it should be named according to its copies or images, it should be called equally maximum and minimum, since it is the equal exemplar and precise measure. When a mathematician draws a circle on bronze, he implants the intellectual on the sensible material. And when he makes another circle, larger or smaller, he simply copies the same intellectual circle which, with respect to all things that can be drawn, is simple, equally maximal and minimal. Thus the first intellect plants every creature. Concerning this you can read more widely elsewhere.<sup>495</sup>

But why does the Master speak of planting a vineyard? I say, “Because He wished to teach about the cause of creation.” For just as a paterfamilias plants to gather fruit, and there is fruit, because it arises for his fellowship, so the Creator. The vine, which is the end and perfection of the planting, is consumed in the fellowship of the paterfamilias or intellectual nature, when it is converted into blood and is given life by the intellectual soul, which rejoices from this and is made glad, because it senses the wine was converted within its fellowship. So the first intellect plants intellectual nature so that its perfection may pass into the fellowship of His divinity.

The Master adds how the paterfamilias surrounded the vineyard with a fence for its external protection, that it could protect this noble planting, to keep it safe from disruption by beasts. And He dug in it a wine cellar [Matthew 21:33], that is, for separation from things terrestrial, and an expression of the innate nobility which is celestial nature, having as its center of an upward motion, such as we experience in the evaporation of wine. Therefore, the spirit of ethereal nature, which descends from above, formed by the rays of the Sun, we experience hidden in the grapes and more nearly in the moistness squeezed out.

The tower, however, is the interior protection of the planted vineyard. And so the Master applies this simile more closely to make a point for His hearers. He wished the vineyard to be understood as the royal city of Jerusalem, surrounded with a wall, with the temple and the citadel, within which He planted noble vines, chosen intellectual natures worshipping God, of which many prophets speak. And He leased the vineyard to tenants, cultivators of the divine field, that is, priests, and went away [Matthew 21:33], that is, by absenting himself from sensible thought. This Zion, where the God of Gods is seen, is very far from the sensible Mount Zion, the terrestrial Jerusalem. Or you might expound it otherwise according to Saint Ambrose,<sup>496</sup> who speaks in a homily not about knowledge but about love. Nevertheless, it is the same thing at the root.

There follows, When, however, the time of harvest approached, he sent his servants to the tenants etc. [Matthew 21: 34]. We can understand the tenants to be those hirelings of whom Christ speaks elsewhere. He spoke of them concerning the agreement for the payment of wages for care of the vineyard [Matthew 20:1-16]. Those servants who are of God’s household are the saints, preachers and prophets who are sent to gather the fruit, who, instead of gathering it, are persecuted and killed. Of them Christ says, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets [Luke 13:34]. And there follows, Once again he sent many other servants after the first, and they treated them in the same way [Matthew 21:35-36]. And so you have two requests.

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<sup>495</sup> See *Idiota de sapientia* II and *De venatione sapientiae* c. 7.

<sup>496</sup> *Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam*, at Luke 9:12; CCSL 14,339.

Luke [20:10-12] says three times before the sending of the son. Mark [12:2-5] says many times. Matthew says he sent many servants the first and second times together, and the rest on a third mission, because three is a perfect number.

There follows, At last he sent his son to them, saying, They will respect my son [Matthew 21:37]. Therefore, you know that no one will come after Christ. He is the One Who was sent last, after all others, not as a servant or more servants, but the One Who excels at once all others who are in the household, because He is the Son. All those who suffered at the hands of the tenants before Christ, and those who seem to have care of the vineyard suffered, we the servants of God suffer along with them. But the [tenants] did not spare the Son, Whom they killed, throwing Him out of the vineyard, just like the heir, as Paul clearly attests, writing to the Hebrews that Christ, the Son of God, was crucified outside the gates of Jerusalem [Hebrews 6:6].

Three evangelists seem to differ in this parable as far as the things that follow. Augustine, in the book Concerning the Concord of the Evangelists,<sup>497</sup> brings them into concord. But let Christ add to the question what the master did etc., He will bring the bad men to a bad end and let out the vineyard to other tenants, who will bring him fruit etc. [Matthew 21:40].

Here then is a prophecy about the Church, propagated among the gentiles, the synagogue having been banished. Of this some said, as Luke says, Far be it [Luke 20:16], that is, that the Son should be thrown out of the vineyard. They understood Christ to have spoken of them. Christ replied to this, Have you never read, “The stone the builders rejected” etc. [Matthew 21:42]. If this is said, it is necessary, according to the Scriptures, for the rock, of which Paul said, the rock, however, is Christ [1 Corinthians 10:4], to be rejected; and after this He will be the cornerstone [Matthew 21:42], joining together both walls, those of the Jews and the gentiles. Heed the Master elucidating the Scriptures which are about Him.

And He adds, “Therefore I tell you that the kingdom will be taken away from you” [Matthew 21:43]. For, as Matthew and Luke say, He added that Whoever falls over this stone will be broken; when it falls on anyone, it will crush him [Matthew 21:44; Luke 20:18], as if to say that Christ the judge will destroy the wicked, and the kingdom will be taken away from them. Because He is the rejected stone that cannot be put down, the more He is vilified the more He will be exalted. Therefore, so all who strive to kill Him and deprive Him of the Father’s heritage will perish, just like a potter’s vessel which either falls on a stone or on which a stone falls [cf. Isaiah 30:14]. In whatever way this happens, not the stone but the vessel will be broken, sundered, fragmented and crushed. Since Justice is condemned, He condemns; when He is summoned, He expunges. Christ is Justice. Therefore, the kingdom of Christ, Who is Justice, is incorruptible and eternal. The vineyard or kingdom of Christ, Who is the King of Justice [Hebrews 7:2], is given to a people that will yield the fruit of the kingdom [Matthew 21:43], that is, justice. Where the true justice of Christ reigns, there immortality and incorruptibility reign.

These things so suffice, as we know, for us who are no of the Lord’s vineyard but of that of the tenants, who receive a lease under a certain agreement to be paid in fruit, by either weight or measure. If we do not

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<sup>497</sup> *De concordantia evangelistarum* II c. 70; CSEL 43.237-241.

pay and make light of those who warn us, even casting out the Word of God and, as far as is in us, crucifying Him again, we will be cast out by Him Whom we cast out and be lost and deprived of the honor of the royal priesthood, and be broken and crushed.

## Sermon 292

At S. Maria Maggiore, March 6, 1459, “Laetare Sunday”

DRAFT TRANSLATION BY THOMAS IZBICKI

Just as recently, when we held a synod, you heard the mandate given to me to make a visitation, so now I appear and begin with an opening address. Nothing more efficacious can be taken up than the gospel written for our instruction. We read in the seventh chapter of John, the gospel for today’s mass, About the middle of the feast day Jesus went into the temple and taught [v. 14].

We are taught to ascend in the midst of a feast day to go up to the temple, that is, the place of contemplation or prayer. Festivals, therefore, are reminders to go up to the temple. Since many were gathered then, Jesus taught there. Note that Jesus taught God’s word. Although it is not stated whom He taught, nevertheless, it is enough to understand that He taught those going up to the temple, that is, those who sought avidly to go up to the place designated by God for things divine. These are the ones who are teachable and avid to receive divine and celestial teachings which no one could teach better than the celestial Master, Who is superior to all. Jesus taught. What could He, Jesus or the Savior, have taught except salvation? What could the One Who is mild teach except mildness? What could the One Who is humble of heart teach except profound humility? What could the One Who is truth teach except the understanding of all the Scriptures? What could the One Who is life and resurrection teach except life?

And the Jews wondered, saying, How does He know letters when He has not studied? [John 7:15]. It was wondered at and unheard of then that someone knew the Scriptures Who did not study letters. You have here at text saying that Christ knew all things naturally, things that other men scarcely attain ordinarily by study. In this alone Christ can be known, that is, in the excellence of all men. For all that all men using their intellect scarcely can know what Christ was in act. Men can know tongues, one more than another; Christ, however, is the living speech [Hebrews 4:2] or word of God [John 1:1]. Men can be learned; Christ is living wisdom. Men can live a rational life; Christ is rational life itself. Men can put on immortality; Christ is immortal power itself. Men can put on incorruptibility; Christ is incorruptibility itself. Men can rise from the dead, but Christ is the resurrection [John 11:25]. And [this is] so of every perfection men can acquire, since it is true that Christ is every perfection in act.

And you know that no one is so perfect that he could not be more perfect; and, therefore, the perfection of all men, since it can be more or less, is not proportionate to the perfection of Christ. He is the highest than whom no one can be greater or higher. He is the maximum than which nothing can be greater. He is all things indeed, since He enfolds all things in His maximumness in act all things that are possible, more or less, to the recipients. Therefore, by that maximumness or fullness every possibility of perfection is guided and perfected.

And note this, that is, we have a concrete possibility of perfection according to which we can conduct ourselves so that we may be more perfect; but we cannot conduct ourselves from potency to act. Nothing in potency can put itself into act, since potency is put into act by an act, just as something hot in potency is

put into act by an act, that is, something can be heated by fire to being hot in act. The summit of perfection of a disciple, however, is that he may be like his master. The summit of intellectual nature is that one is conformed to the Word or divine intellect. Neither, therefore, can a master except the Word of God lead our intellectual nature to its highest perfection. No man, therefore, can be happy unless conformed to the spirit of Christ.

Heed how the text says that the Jews said, How does He know letters when He has not studied? Knowledge of letters comes from skill and nature. For, if skill is lacking, they are ignored; and, if wits are lacking, they are not learned. In Christ, Who is the speech and omnipotent skill through Whom God made the world, therefore, skill and nature are seen to coincide. Therefore, He knew all things because He is skill itself and the understanding of things knowable. The Jews would not have wondered if they had believed Christ to be the living Word and the speech of all things that can be put into speech. Just as, if someone thought a certain writing to be alive with intellectual life, it would not be wondered at if the writing understood itself without a teacher, when it claimed that it is the living intellectual speech of itself.

Jesus answered them and said, My teaching is not Mine, but His Who sent Me [John 7:16]. If He said, “You may wonder how I know letters and have doctrine which cannot be had except by having and teaching. But what if I were sent to you? Then My doctrine would not be Mine but that of the One Who sent Me.” And note how Christ said to the apostles, It will not be you who speak, but the spirit of My Father [Matthew 10:20]. Thus, therefore, sent by the One by means of Whom He speaks, the Omnipotent One does not need to acquire the art by study, so that He can speak on His own. Thus He removed wonder. If one said, “God, sending Me, speaks through Me, His emissary,” God the Creator, Who is spirit, speaks through the intellect or wisdom. Christ is called the right hand of the Father. Thus the hand is the limb by means of which humankind does all things. So the intellect is related to the soul, because it is its hand. It does all things through the intellect. So God does by means of His wisdom, Who is Christ.

And note how He says, My teaching is not mine. If he said, “Thus Mine is not Mine, because I am sent, just as one sent is both his own and not his own, since he acts not on his own, but for the one who sends him.” Christ, therefore, wished to show Himself sent by God, Who, the Jews did not deny, knows all things. For without his own effort no one knows enough so that he could teach, as they said; and thus exception is allowed only in a legate, who does not teach his own doctrine but that of the one who sends him, for whom he speaks. Therefore, it is necessary for me to be sent and for my teaching to be that of the one who sends me. Just as the teaching of the Son is His and not His, but that of the Father, because, as the Son, all that He has is His Father’s. This is understood if sonship is understood to be the Son. Then this is a great revelation of divinity, that is, that the begetting by means of which God the Father begets the Son is to be understood so that He confers supreme power on Him. Then, sending out of His entire essence and nature, He sends the One sent. Therefore, He is called the Son, because He has the rational being and shared essence of the One Who sends Him.

Then Christ shows the One Who sends Him to be God, and He shows this in no other way than by experience, which is the teacher of all things.<sup>498</sup> And He says, If you wish to do My will, learn from My teaching whether it is from God, or whether I speak on My own behalf [John 7:17]. Note the individual things which the Word simply and clearly advances to show He is the Word of God. If you wish to do His will [John 7:16], that is, “of the One Who sent Me,” He proposes that it should be entirely thus, “by receiving the doctrine that I teach.” He presupposed that one would know from the doctrine whether it was from God. This doctrine is of such efficacy that it has light in itself, manifesting itself to one who receives it. He would know, therefore, whether it is from God, or whether I speak for myself as a private individual and not one sent by God. Thus the Jews, who already had received God’s commandments, received them through Moses, who was sent by God, could quickly understand Christ’s teaching was from God, since Christ came to fulfill the law.

He adds how this can be, He who speaks for himself seeks his own glory [John 7:18]. He seeks his own advantage and makes his own self the purpose of his teaching. Whoever seeks the glory of the One Who sends him, he is truthful and there is no injustice in him [John 7:18]. Since His every teaching was only for the glory and manifestation of God the Father and the perfection of the teaching of Moses and the prophets, He could only be judged true and just. The legate who gives the one who sends him all honor and fulfills his commission is truthful and just. There is no injustice in him, unless the command of the one who sends him is unjust, since he usurps nothing and fails in nothing while doing his duty. All this tends to show that the Father Who sent Jesus commissioned Him to save at every time by displaying the works of mercy, even on the Sabbath. And Christ wished to show in His cure of a man on the Sabbath [John 7:10] that He was not a transgressor of the Sabbath, because God commissioned Him thus.

There follows, Did not Moses give you the law, and none of you follows it? [John 7:19}, as is said below. There follows, Why do you seek to kill me? [John 7:20], that is, as if I did not observe the law about the Sabbath? It is ordained that such a transgressor be stoned. But Christ, Who wished to die, took care at first to avoid all occasions of offense, so that He might die unjustly and voluntarily for the salvation of all. The crowd answered and said, “You have a demon. Who wishes to kill you?” [John 7:20], as if He might be acting now not by divine act, but rather by the ten thousand artifices of a lying spirit. Nevertheless, they did not seek to kill Him on account of this. They said this on account of fear of the people, for which reason they did not then dare to seek His death.

Jesus replied and said, “I did one work and all of you marvel” [John 7:21]. He spoke of the man whom He had cured on the Sabbath by the pool near the Sheep Gate, concerning which see above in [John] chapter 5[1-13]. Therefore, Moses gave you circumcision – not because it is from Moses but from the fathers – and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath [John 7:22]. Circumcision originated with the fathers or the patriarchs. Then Moses, who gave the law about the Sabbath, gave it. But the law about the Sabbath does not prejudice that about circumcision, which was commanded to be done on the eighth day after the birth, which could be the Sabbath.

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<sup>498</sup> Walther, *Proverbia*, II/1, p. 1081, 21B.

If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, why are you angry with Me, Who healed a man on the Sabbath, for not obeying the law of the Sabbath? [John 7:23]. God's law or that of nature, which preceded circumcision, wishes that we do unto others, what we would wish be done to us [Matthew 7:12], was not loosed by the fathers of circumcision, but rather confirmed by them, just as circumcision was by Moses. Therefore, the law of the Sabbath does not prejudice God's law, which is the eternal law. And no one should be ignorant that he should obey that law. But Christ acted according to the second precept of the One Who sent Him to fulfill this eternal law by cleansing a whole man on the Sabbath. Therefore, etc.

Pay heed that not without the greatest mystery mention may be made here of the law of circumcision, the law of the Sabbath and the healing of the whole man. Circumcision and the Sabbath contain treaties and pacts, and the healing of the whole man was not done by the laws etc. Nor did the sacraments of the treaty and pacts [do this], but it was done by Christ, Who alone cured the whole man. And [He did] this on the Sabbath, because the Sabbath was instituted so that Christ, the son of the Sabbath [Matthew 12:8], could heal the whole man on the Sabbath. Note the whole man, [healed] not in the soul or body only, but in both.

Do not judge according to appearance, but judge a just judgment [John 7:24]. One who looks at the appearance and surface or the outward part judges according to appearance. But He Who looks not to the letter but to the intention judges a just judgment. Intention is the word and nature of the law. We teach here that Christ revealed the interior or the spirit of the letter because He was the Word that lay hidden in the Scriptures. Thus, therefore, Christ, if He judged according to human appearance, would not know even that; but it is necessary that He should pay attention to the interior shown by doctrine and works, so that He might see the essence, the virtue of this. And as he understands God Himself to be hidden under humanity, so this is [true] of the law as far as the surface and words, and as far as the hidden word of life.

Some from Jerusalem said, "Is this not the man whom the Jews wish to kill? And behold He speaks openly" [John 7:26], because they cannot contradict Him with the light of truth. Do they truly not know that this is the Christ? How do they know this? Because, if they knew, they also did not know. Christ cannot be known. But we know whence He is. The Christ, however, when He comes, no one knows whence He is [John 7:27]. Below, in the next chapter [John 8:14], Christ replies, saying, I know whence I come and where I go. You, however, do not know whence I come. For, even if they knew this appearance, nevertheless, they did not render in this a just judgment, according to His invisible nature.

Therefore, Christ cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, "You know Me and when I come" [John 7:28], that is, judging according to the flesh, as in the next chapter below [John 8:15]. And I did not come on My own, but I am sent, as I showed above from your very words, that is, that I teach and have not learned letters. Behold He shows God alone to be true and unknown by the Jews from among whom He originally came. Therefore, once again He concludes that it is not opposed to Him, since He is the Christ, although He may be known according to the flesh.

"I know Him" [John 7:29]. "Only the Son knows the Father. And if I were to tell you, that I do not know Him, I would be like you, a liar" [John 8:55]. See that the Jews were liars, adhering to the outward aspect of the letter; and liars are made like them. The devil, however, is the father of lies. All liars change into

the likeness of the devil. No one can be true unless by speaking the truth in a true mission sent by Him, when he speaks the words of the One Who sends him. But Know Him, since I am from Him, and He sent Me [John 7:29]. Behold the conclusion that Jesus truly has a mission by His very essence. Thus Paul says God has sent His Son [Galatians 4:4].

Therefore, they sought to arrest Him, and no one could lay a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. Many of the crowd, however, believed in Him [John 7:30-31]. I understand the hour as when the consummation came. For Christ first had to show two things, that is, that He was the Son of God, the Son of Man, and that He would undertake a voluntary death on account of our salvation. He shows the first by His speech and such true works that no one could attribute to another than to God, He shows the second, that He is without sin, condemnable by no justice, but overflowing on account of obedience for our salvation. And yet these things were not shown sufficiently, since the hour had not yet come for passing over to death.

That the Son of God should be believed, therefore, necessarily had to be shown because this faith gives certitude of doctrine and of the future promises, which are above nature. Since [these promises] are such that they do not seem possible, it was necessary that Christ teach them with infallible authority. No one doubts God to be truthful in His every word, whatever He says, but whether someone speaks the words of God can be doubted on account of false apostles and prophets. But whoever shows by his words not only that he is a truthful prophet of God but also of the Son, with the full power of God the Father, thus makes firm the credibility of His teaching.

He shows the one who considers this, second, that necessarily, when Christ teaches as the Son of God and His legate, that God's sonship could be acquired by those who are without sin and obey God voluntarily even to the most shameful death, the reward for which death can only be eternal life, something than which nothing can be better, so that this is that life which he understands himself to need. How can the just God give less to His faithful one according to all the faith than immortal life as a reward?

It is necessary that Christ show it in Himself, because the Son of God would be without sin and obedient to the Father voluntarily, even to the death of the cross [Philippians 2:8], and so be reported to have had a glorious resurrection from the dead and to have entered glory, so that every faithful person should be a participant in His death and His resurrection. That faithful person, however, who wishes by consummated will to obey even to death conformably to Christ, has already passed into participation in the death of Christ, even if he does not happen to suffer sensible martyrdom, as is certain of Saint Martin and other confessors. And similarly concerning consummated hate, on account of which someone commits homicide. And consummated concupiscence of the heart, of account of which he has committed adultery, as I recall having said, Christ teaching me, elsewhere.

These things from the passage of the gospel of John the Evangelist are especially shown clearly to be found by the one who heeds these [words]. These things briefly said from the gospel suffice to begin a sermon.

## Sermon 293

At Monte Oliveto, Trinity Sunday, July 5, 1463 [\*Partial translation]

### DRAFT TRANSLATION BY THOMAS IZBICKI

The sermon of the most reverend lord father in Christ Lord Nicholas of Germany, cardinal of San Pietro in Vincoli, when he clothed a youth at this monastery. The beginning of the prologue.

<Prologue by the copyist>

So what is said in the psalm, *My words will not pass away* [Mt. 24:35], may be fulfilled well for the welfare of our order, so that well-instructed persons wishing to enter our order may attain an increase of wisdom and intellect and, therefore, of fervor and devotion, it seemed good and useful to me to write down what is inscribed below in a book lest the fallible memory of men should incur injury from this if we only received such an admonition orally.

The end of the prologue. The sermon of the most reverend lord the lord cardinal Nicholas given to a certain novice before he clothed him begins.

<Sermon>

Therefore, it is known to all that the most reverend father in Christ and lord, lord Nicholas, most worthy cardinal by the grace of the holy Roman church of God and the apostolic see of the title of San Pietro in Vincoli, came to this our monastery of Monte Oliveto on the third day of July 1463. He was received with great devotion by the father general and all the other monks present here. He, with the two bishops accompanying him and his entire household, was then at the same monastery. He conducted himself quite laudably. For they presented themselves humbly, devoutly, honestly and modestly, and, as if they were monks, observed the divine offices and silence, so that all the monks

marveled; and they fasted on the days on which ember days occurred. And the most reverend lord cardinal celebrated mass every day, even when he arrived and when he left us.

Therefore, when, on the day of the most holy Trinity, which occurred on the fifth day of July 1463, when, out of his reverend kindness, he acquiesced to the prayers of that monks that he should celebrate the most important mass, and since he would sit, garbed in vestments fitting for such a solemnity on a seat prepared for him before the great altar, he was exhorted in this way to deliver a sermon:

“What does this youth who kneels before us request?” A monk, on whom this task was imposed, said, “Most reverend lord, he is a student who comes from Bologna and chooses to be made a monk. Therefore, he begs your most reverend paternity to deign to give him the habit of novices.”

The lord cardinal said, “What do you say, son?” That youth replied, “Lord, I ask, request and beg to be clothed with the holy habit of novices of Monte Oliveto, although I am unworthy. But I hope so to act by the grace of God and with the supporting prayers of these fathers to be made worthy.”

To him the lord cardinal said, “I wonder rather and further am astonished that you ask such a thing if you know and understand what you ask. And if you do not know nor understand, I wonder too how you ask what you do not know. And, because we are ignorant in what spirit you ask, whether you are led by a good spirit, which is evident only to God, ‘who is the examiner of hearts,’ as in c. *Novit, de iudiciis* [X 2.1.13], but because I think you ask what you have not knowing in which way – if you knew, perhaps you would not ask – and it is not proper that you be ignorant of this, therefore, I ask you

to unfold, expound and open what your petition means. When you understand it, perhaps you will desist from such a desire, nor ask boldly and fervently.

“Hear and understand well what your petition means; and afterwards, when you understand, you will answer me if you wish to pursue what you ask. You ask, if I understand well, that the habit of novices of the monks of Monte Oliveto be given to you, because you decided to be made a monk and a monk of Monte Oliveto. It is necessary, therefore, before all things, if you wish to be made a monk, to know what the name “monk” means, so that you can be made what you say and what you are called, lest you use a false name, lest you be a hypocrite and have only the name of holiness and are not holy. Indeed, it is better to be a monk and holy in fact and not to be said to be or be called these things and not be them in fact and in truth.

“Why, therefore, do you request such a habit when you will not be made better or more holy by it, since ‘the habit does not make the monk,’ [Walther 10534a], but life and precious and praise worthy conduct, as in c. *Porrectum, de regularibus* [X 3.31.13]? And you know that the habit, if you assume it, will impose no small burden on you, because it is necessary that anyone should strive to be what he is said to be and is called, and he should do what his name means. Anyone will be judged according to his name, that is, the name of his office. For the pope, who is called “the father of fathers,” and bishop, that is, “the one over all,” and priest, that is, “the one who shows others the way,” and Christian, from Christ – and thus, concluding briefly, everyone should imitate the significance of their name and the word for their office and have care in their deeds to act according to it, following the words of Cicero, in the first book of *De officiis* [I c. 2 ¶ 7],

who says, “Everything which receives its arrangement from something should act according to its motive and definition.”

That most Christian emperor [Justinian], having imitated this practice, when he wished to treat of justice and law in the first book of his Institutes [Inst. 1.1], put first, “What is right?” Similarly, the jurisconsult, treating testaments, shows at the first law, “What is a testament?” [Inst. 2.10]. We, moved by their example, treating the monastic life, wish to put first, “What is a monk?”

“I say to you, son, you who wish to be made a monk: You should know what a monk is. “Monk,” according to C. 16 q. 1 c. 1, comes from *monos*, that is, “alone,” and *chus*. And, therefore, a monk should be alone so that he better be free and pray to God; and she should be used to solitude, so that he can be quiet more

freely, intent on the contemplation of things celestial and the fellowship of the angels and be given over to the divine office.

“Just as we have in the lives of the fathers what the holy fathers and ancient monks did, and just as we know about our glorious father Benedict, who remained alone and apart from crowds of men and did what is written in the book of the prophet Jeremiah, *Let him sit alone and in silence* [Lam. 3:28], and raise himself above himself, because the Lord God comes more quickly and gladly to the mind and soul which is quiet apart from tumult, according to the words of the prophet Hosea in chapter 2[:16], *I will lead her into the desert and speak to her heart*. And many other things can be brought up and cited about this matter, which we find in the Old and New Testaments, and conclusively, that a monk should be solitary and said, because, as is said in c. *Monachus* [C. 16 q. 1 c.4], the duty of weeping is given to him.

“A monk should weep principally for three reasons, although there are many others. First, he should weep for his sins, past, present and future, daily and inevitably, because, *For in many things, we all offend* [Js. 3:2], so that they are released, according to the text, *Every night I flood my bed with weeping; I drench my couch with my tears* [Ps. 6:7]. Second, he should weep – not just a monk but any faithful Christian, according to the words of the gospel of Matthew c. 5[:5], *Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted*. Those who mourn and do penance at present will rejoice and be glad in the future in supreme felicity. Third, a monk should weep on account of great charity and love, which he should have for his creator, of whom he is deprived in this present vale of tears<sup>499</sup> and this exile on account of the fall of our first parents.

Therefore, the sad monk – and indeed any faithful soul - should say with the psalmist, *My tears are my food day and night, as they say to me day after day, ‘Where is your God’* [Ps. 41.4]. And he says elsewhere, *My soul refuses comfort*, that is, worldly consolation; and he adds afterwards, *When I remember God, I am delighted* [Ps. 74:3-4]. Therefore, a monk should be sad about earthly things, which he holds in contempt and vomits up. And so, he should not seek joy from these things, but *My spirit rejoices in God my Savior* [Lk. 1:47].

“But, granted that you act thus, it does not suffice for you, because you simply asked for not just the habit of a monk but added “of Monte Oliveto.” But, because you wish and ask to be made a monk of Monte Oliveto, I think it necessary to understand what this Mount of Olives is.

“Pay heed diligently. We read in the gospels, in Matthew 26[:36] and Mark 14[:27] that the place to which the Lord Jesus was accustomed to withdraw for pray is called the estate and villa of Gethsemane. But the evangelist Luke in chapter 22[:39] of his gospel calls the aforesaid place the *Mount of Olives*. John, however, in his gospel calls this place the *garden* of the Mount of Olives, as is found in chapter 18[1] of his gospel. And so, we have three names for this Monte Oliveto. In note that it is called the Mount of the Olive Grove and not the Mountain of the Olive Grove. Although there might be three mountains united, nevertheless, one is mentioned, not many. Although there are three names, nevertheless, there is one thing, one essence and one substance.”

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<sup>499</sup> A reference to the hymn *Salve regina*.

Then the most reverend lord cardinal turned his face toward the abbot general and the other monks who were assisting. He said, “Oh my fathers and brothers, consider that today is the glorious solemnity of the most holy Trinity, of which we say there is one divinity, one majesty, one essence, although there are three persons, the father, the Word and the Holy Spirit. And if we were not prevented by shortness of time, I would say to you with pleasure something about such a solemnity to its praise and your gratification, because it is the best matter for such an understanding.

“But since we are to celebrate the solemnities of the mass and make a procession on account of the imminent war with the Turks, for the present, having passed over such material, let us return to our purpose and see what this Mount of Olives, which truly is fat and precious mountain *God has* chosen ... were *He will dwell* [Ps. 67:17], signifies. And although this mountain may have three names, nevertheless, it is one thing. Therefore, there is no reason to fuss about this, as is found in c. *Non omitti, de verborum significatione* [X 5.40.7].

\*\*\*I speak of this Mount of Olives. I consider three little mountains, and only one has the cross upon it. The others do not. Two, on the right and the left, have an olive tree. So, it seems to me, if I have preached well. One is at the entrance of this place, at the citadel [*arx*] of the cross; the other in the chapter house. In the monastery I also saw the standard of the holy cross set up on a mountain, three [hills] and one [cross], with flourishing green olive leaves around it; and all of these things signify something, indicate and convey it. But first I say that I understand by this that our fathers, the ancient establishers and founders of this holy religious order, were holy men, full of the Holy Spirit and endowed with great prudence, given by God great intelligence and illuminated, since they knew such high mysteries.

But, leaving all these things aside, let us say about the holy cross, which it is necessary for you, dearest son, to take up if you want to be a son of Monte Oliveto, that it was set up on a mountain. You should act according to the text, *Whoever wishes to come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me* [Mt. 16:24]. So says the Lord upon the Mount of Olives in Luke 9[:23]. Since, therefore, you are a youth, do you not fear to bear the cross and almost die? Indeed, it will be necessary to die to the world and, being born again as if for God, because no one can enter into the kingdom of heaven unless he is born again, according to the words [addressed] to Nicodemus in John 3[:24] and elsewhere, *Unless a grain of wheat falls, it will be dead on the earth; it will not bear fruit*, John 12[:24]. And, therefore, you should kill your soul, if you love it, by denying yourself and bearing the cross.

If you want to be at Monte Oliveto, first you should become a good olive tree, which, standing by the cross, has ever-green leaves; and they never will fall from it, even in winter time. So, you should be a good olive tree, although you are a wild olive; but, according to the declaration of the blessed Ambrose in Luke 18[:35], where he treats of

Zachaeus, now you should be grafted onto a good olive tree. If you, up to now, were an unfruitful tree and fit to be food for brute animals, now you should convert and be grafted, so that you bear the fruit of the olive tree with the fatness of devotion, always having the greenness of unflinching fervor, and so you will be fit to be transferred to Monte Oliveto.\*\*\*

And so that you will be ever green in the fervor of devotion, you should consider how our Lord Jesus Christ persevered in prayer on the Mount of Olives in fervor of devotion with the fatness of prayer. Although, when the time of His Passion was near to Him, according to the humanity of His flesh put into agony on account of the image of the most harsh death He had to suffer with the good purpose of always fulfilling the will of the Father, He sweated blood [Luke 22:39-44], He, while He suffered much, never failed or fled. Rather He offered Himself courageously, saying, Whom do you seek, as you find in John 18[:14].

So, you should always be ready and disposed to do the will of your Father, Who is in heaven [Phil. 2:8], even if He wills to crucify you. For *It was necessary for us by many tribulations and sufferings to enter the kingdom of heaven*, as is said in Acts 14[21]. Therefore, if you regard and consider these fathers and brothers well clad and sustained by the revenues of possessions almost without labor, you might say in your heart, “Behold I too will act thus and pass my life with them and be quiet with them,” you will err, son; and you will very much lead yourself astray and rather deceive yourself by meditating on such things, because the wise man says [Sir, 2:1], *Son, approaching the service of God, prepare your soul for temptation*. Note that he said *for temptation* and not for rest. All the saints suffered many torments, so that, secure, they might come to the palm of martyrdom. We cannot explicate this with a few words. But it is our error, since the Blessed Augustine says in a sermon about martyrs, “We wish to rejoice with the saints, but we do not wish to sustain the tribulations of the world with them.”<sup>500</sup>

Therefore, son, see how, if you wish to fulfill your request in every way and follow your desire after you have understood at least in some part what your petition means. Many other things should be said now, but these suffice for the present moment.

You will answer me, therefore, what you resolve and if you wish now to think better. Perhaps, since you are young, you have not thought well. If you lack the virtues of which I spoke and have only a pretext of virtue and sanctity, afterwards you will not have the prize and the crown which are given to good monks. Indeed, I have said nothing of that prize and the ineffable glory of the saints, because I presume you are well informed and instructed, since I see you so animated, fervent and devoted to undertaking such burdens, as can be understood from your words.

Nevertheless, I am not certain that you understand what I said to you if you say to me, “Lord, I understand enough what you said and know and confess myself not to have at present – am not able to attain at present – such virtues and the meaning of such words, that is, ‘monk of Monte Oliveto,’ but I hope to act like one who enters on the study of divine and mundane letters, or one or one who professes the mechanical arts, who attains not suddenly and quickly the perfection of the subject or science or other art which he desires to learn, but little by little and day by day pursues it, so I intend to progress from virtue to virtue after this beginning and assumption of the holy habit, pursuit by labor, using all my powers, the study of the new man who conquers all things [Eph. 2:15, 4:24], to profess and strove day and night according to my ability, until at length, with God’s help, I will attain opportunely the aforesaid virtues and others which are necessary for the status of monk.”

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<sup>500</sup> Ps. Augustine, Sermon 223 n. 1, CCSL 104, p. 882.

And I will respond to you, dearest son, that this pleases me sufficiently, and I praise your purpose and very much commend your request. But now hear the few things that remain. If you wish entirely to climb up the Mount of Olives, it is necessary that you act just as our Lord Jesus Christ did. He, when He wished to climb the Mount of Olives, took Peter, James and John; nor did He go alone. But He prayed alone a small space apart from them. And they, remaining apart from Him, immediately fell asleep. Therefore, afterwards He raised them, saying, Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak, as you find in Matthew 26[:41].

\*\*\*So, you, striving to climb the Mount of Olives, have with you the aforesaid apostles Peter, James and John; and in no way should you climb the mountain without them. I say first you have Peter, who is the chief of all the apostles, who is interpreted as “obedient.” And you should be obedient and always obey in all things what your holy rule says, so that you never rashly overlook anything. Indeed, I tell you rather that, if you do some good work that is contained in the rule of Saint Augustine or Saint Francis that is against the rule of Saint Benedict, you do badly, although that work may be good in itself. Nor would you be obedient, and so you would not have Peter with you.

Therefore, strive always to observe your holy rule, that is, that of the Blessed Benedict, and especially because it is quite praiseworthy and proven and distinguished in the church of God. That rule pleases me very much, and it seems very commendable from the testimony of Blessed Pope Gregory in the second book of the Dialogues.<sup>501</sup> Therefore, son, strive to observe it well. You do very well if you do, as the Psalmist says, that is, I am made your beast of burden [Ps. 72:23]. For a beast of burden, when a burden is placed on it, stays quiet, does not speak, does not judge whether what is loaded onto it is grain or chaff, wood or stones. It bears the load patiently, neither complaining nor murmuring about the quantity or quality of the burden, even if it is undivided; but it bears it patiently, as much as it can and as far as its strength permits.

And you always should obey your superiors, because of the obedience that is imposed upon you by God. He says as you find in Luke 10[:16], *Whoever hears you hears Me*. Therefore, never resist them, unless something that is imposed upon you to do is against the faith or against God or God’s commands. That, nevertheless, is not to be believed, because those prelates are bound to give an accounting for that which they impose by obedience. You, however, will be free to give an accounting for the works which you did under obedience. Therefore, obey promptly, surely and without delay. Know that, for the rest, you will be deprived of your will; and it will not be permitted to you to wish or not wish, as is found in the next to the last and last chapters of *De sepulturis* [VI. 3.12.4 & 5]. And these things will suffice concerning Peter, that is, obedience.

It is necessary, as I said, that you have James together with Peter. James is interpreted as “supplanter,” by which is understood holy poverty and voluntary contempt for the riches of the world, by which the world and all that is in it are trampled. In this way the poor supplant the rich, that is, those who seek to become rich, and even more those who rejoice in this world. The voluntary poor are more joyful than the rich, because the rich are always anxious on account of acquiring those riches or keeping what they have

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<sup>501</sup> II c. 36.

acquired. The poor, however, are quiet of mind, As though having nothing and yet possessing all things, as the apostles says in Second Corinthians 6[:10].

Similarly, it is necessary that you have John with Peter and James, because it is required that you have chastity with obedience and poverty. This is how John, who was a virgin, is interpreted. For certainly you have to observe chastity not just for a time but continuously and even unto death inclusively, since you are being made a temple of God. The apostle says, Whoever violates the temple of God, God will ruin him, 1 Cor. 3[:17].

And you know that those three vows of obedience, poverty and chastity are so tied to one another that the pope, who can do all things, cannot dispense from them. For he can dispense so that one who is not a monk can return to the world, but he cannot dispense so that one can be a monk without obedience, poverty and chastity, as is said in c. *Cum ad monasterium, De statu monachorum* [X 3.35.6].

Therefore, if any \*\*\*