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Contents

The New Church is not Catholic	1
The Importance of Catholic Education and Customs in the Home	6
God Created Men not Sins.....	12
A Chance to Live	16
Sister Agnes' Favorites	22
Franciscan Saints	23
THE PRUDENT CHRISTIAN	26

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In essentia - Unitas. In dubio - Libertas.
In omnibus - Caritas.

The New Church is not Catholic

Bishop Giles, OFM

Periodically, we must address the problems with the Novus Ordo. This is not a very pleasant topic for us to discuss, and, perhaps, we have been a little remiss in this area. In our opinion, the Novus Ordo, has for many years, been proven to be a counterfeit Catholic Church. We have been reminded that there are many who are too young to remember what has taken place, as well as we tend to forget, what is not refreshed in our memories from time to time. Hence, we return to this tired topic once again.

We have previously written about the dangers of superstitions. (February 2017 Seraph). In that article, mention was made that we are forbidden to participate in non-Catholic worship. Non-Catholic worship is false worship. The Protestant religions have denied one or more truths of the Catholic Church, and have, therefore, a false god or a false worship. They may very well use the same terminology as the Catholic Church, but they have given a different meaning to the words. The meaning that they

give to the words supports their particular heresy, and denies the true doctrine and, therefore, denies the true God.

To say “amen” to the various prayers and services is to agree with and join with these prayers and services. The word “amen” means “so be it.” It is a sign of acceptance, and willingness to make this prayer our own. To say “amen” to the prayers and ceremonies of non-Catholics is to agree with them and make their prayers and ceremonies our own. It is to agree with heresy and make the heresy ours as well. As such, every Catholic is forbidden to join in prayer or services with non-Catholics.

Moral Theology tells us that permission to attend weddings and funerals may be permitted by pastors for serious reasons. On these occasions, the person involved is instructed that they may not participate in any religious ceremonies. They are there for purely social reasons and not religious reasons.

If we can understand the seriousness of the idolatry of Protestant religions, then it should be even more deeply impressed upon us the gravity of participating in non-Christian worship. All religions that have rejected Jesus Christ are idolatrous, and displeasing to God. The Jews and Mohammedans have rejected Jesus Christ. Even if they allow Him the title of prophet, they reject Him as God and the Messiah/Savior. These religions are, therefore, false religions that do not worship God and are displeasing to God. If they do not worship God, then who do they worship? Some worship creation, or man; but the majority worship Lucifer. We may even conclude that those who worship nature/creation/man are, in fact, worshipers of demons.

To pray or worship with non-Christians and to say “amen” to their prayers and worship, is to worship demons with them. Those who repeatedly and consistently do this are considered to have abandoned the true Faith. This is a direct sin against the First Commandment of God – “Thou shall not have strange gods before Me.” It is surprising to us that so many

do not see or understand this simple principle. This teaching and practice of the True Catholic Church can be found in the simplest of Catechism, as well as in basic text books of Moral Theology and Canon Law.

While we may not know the culpability of every individual in any given sect; because only God knows how ignorant, deceived or incompetent they truly are; it is logical and fair to judge the entire body by its head. We thus assume that every one of Anglican persuasion believes and practices as the head of this church did or does. They believe and follow King Henry VIII in his schism, heresy, and apostasy. The Lutherans may be fairly and logically assumed to believe all that the heretic Luther believed. Those who come under the religious denomination of “Jews” must be assumed to have rejected Jesus Christ and, therefore, have rejected God. All Muslims must be taken to have, likewise, rejected the true God when they have rejected the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

As we consider the Novus Ordo, we must look to its head/leader to determine the beliefs

and practices of its members or body. The recognized and acknowledged head of the Novus Ordo is Jorge Bergoglio (aka “Pope Francis”). If we can show that this man is not Catholic, then we may attribute the same to the entire body of which he is the head. There is a simple theological principle which says that: “to deny one doctrine of the Church is to deny them all.” If we can show that Bergoglio has denied at least one doctrine, then we have established that he is not Catholic, and we must logically conclude that the entire body of which he is the head is likewise not Catholic. We are aware that there are private sins of heads that are not contracted by the entire body, but when we see open, public, and continuous/consistent heresies in the head of a body, we must assume that this is the accepted and approved teaching/practice of the entire body.

Bergoglio has consistently and continuously embraced, acknowledged, and prayed with non-Catholics / non-Christians in their churches, synagogues, and mosques. He has united his “amen” to their false worship and idolatry. As of the time of this writing, a simple “Google”

APRIL 2017

search on the internet of: “Pope Francis prays with Jews” returns 443,000 hits in 0.60 seconds. A similar search of “Pope Francis prays with Muslims” returns 1,730,000 hits in 0.62 seconds. We can see by this, that his false beliefs and practices are public teaching and knowledge. As such, he cannot be deemed a Catholic. Likewise, the entire body of which he is the head, the Novus Ordo, is deemed not Catholic.

This argument seems very simple and direct, yet we are amazed at how many refuse to see or accept it. They want to belong to a church that can change its mind and doctrines to suit the times and circumstances. However, such a church cannot be one with Christ, or one with God; because God is eternal and cannot change. The true Church is consistent in teaching and holding to the truth. Her doctrines cannot change. The worship that Jesus Christ has established through His Church cannot change. The worship of Muslims and Jews is opposed to the manner of worship given us by God. Therefore, by association, the worship of the Novus Ordo, is condemned.

Based on this argument alone, (There are many other aspects that coalesce to prove the same thing.) we must humbly, but boldly, proclaim that the Novus Ordo church and religion is not Catholic. We object to the term: “Novus Ordo Catholic” just as strongly as we object to the term: “Anglican Catholic.” These, as well as others, are separations from the Catholic Church and are no longer part of the body of the Catholic Church, as such it is incorrect to use the term “Catholic” as an adjective to describe them.

The preponderance of evidence tells us that Bergoglio, and his church, are no longer just “suspect of scandal, heresy, and schism” but are actually and culpably guilty of these. All who are Catholic must not participate or partake of their false worship in any way. Any similarities to the Catholic Church, or use of Catholic terminology or practices, does not negate the schism they have made from the Catholic Church. They have made a clear, definite, and irrevocable break from Catholic doctrine, practice, and worship. There is no hope for this false

church, the only hope is for the individuals within this false church. This false church, as well as all the others, has nothing to offer mankind in the way of Salvation.

The priests and bishops (if there are any valid ones left) of this false church have no authority or jurisdiction in the Catholic Church. Their teachings and rulings have no bearing or consequences to true Catholics. Once again, we remind our readers that the Novus Ordo is a complete and irrevocable break from the true Roman Catholic Church. They have as much power or authority over true Catholics as Anglican ministers do – absolutely none. We make these statements, not based on hatred or malice, but rather, due to love for the Truth and our duty to teach It. We wish we were wrong in this, but reason and Faith, based upon the consistent teachings (doctrine) of the Catholic Church, does not allow for it. They may possess the property and other material things that once belonged to the Catholic Church, but they do not possess the Catholic Faith, and as such, are not Catholic.



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The Importance of Catholic Education and Customs in the Home

Brother Anthony, O.F.M

There are three general vocations to which all men are called: the married life, the single life, and the religious, or priestly life. In a child's formative years the main vocation that parents need to be concerned with is the one which is universal, that is, being a child of God. If this is neglected it may not only cost the child's particular vocation, but it could ultimately cost his salvation. It is very important for Catholic parents to make sure that their children are well grounded in their faith. This is a solemn duty which should be properly performed.

The first thing that children should learn to develop is a constant prayer life. Prayer is the child's chance to talk to God. It should be explained that God is their Creator and that He is everywhere. His love for all His creatures should be explained and the fact that He wants us to pray to Him should be recognized. If these things are explained, then the idea of talking to God will not seem strange or be compared with

talking to an imaginary friend. Children should learn how to say the "Our Father", the "Hail Mary", the "Glory Be", and the "Guardian Angel Prayer" as early as possible because these are the foundation that all other prayers are built upon. The good habit of faithfully saying the Morning Prayers with acts of faith, hope, and charity; and Night Prayers with a simple examination of conscience should also be formed.

Spiritual reading, especially the lives of the saints, should be encouraged. There should be a time set aside for spiritual reading each night or at least a few nights a week. The saints are the children's friends and role models. They give children an ideal to strive for – pleasing and loving God. They should then pray to their patron saints asking for their help at all times.

We have learned in our catechism that there are three things we must do to get to Heaven. They are to know, to love, and to serve God. There is a reason why they are given in this order. It

is simply that you cannot serve (faithfully) someone whom you do not love, and you cannot love someone whom you do not know. You have to make sure that your children learn their catechism and that you go over it with them. This should not be a taxing ordeal, but an enjoyable experience, which all of you take delight in. The material covered should not be foreign to you; take the time and learn it yourself. Refreshing yourself on the fundamentals of the faith will be beneficial for you as well.

When is the proper time to begin teaching children their catechism? When this question is asked most people understand catechism in the formal sense, which is, going over text in a catechism book. Although taken in the informal sense it refers to those lessons in prayer, self-discipline, piety, and love of Christ. This should begin as soon as the children are capable of understanding them to a certain degree. Most importantly, they should learn to love their Faith. A prominent American bishop, Bishop Moriarty, once observed: “Place a well-catechized Christian in the backwoods of America, or in the frozen regions of the North,

and without the sacraments or sacrifice (the Sacrifice of the Mass), or any of the external help of religion, he can save his soul. Place a man in the very capital of Christianity (Rome), let him live in the very house of God ...without knowledge of the Christian doctrine everything else that religion offers will be useless.” (*Allocutions, pp. 12 and 110*) There is an old saying in pedagogy (the science of child education): “The best guarantee of normal maturity is a normal childhood.” (“*The Normal Mind: The Wholesome Personality*” by *William H. Burnham*) This is also true in the spiritual sense for the best guarantee of having a faithful and devout Catholic adult is for the child to have a normal Catholic childhood.

This leads us to another point, that is, the importance of establishing religious customs in the home. Adding customs to children’s catechism and prayer will help them to understand that there is so much more to the Catholic Faith than simply going to Mass on Sunday morning. Many Catholic customs that are adopted depend upon a family’s ethnic background, but there are some general customs which have flourished worldwide

throughout the entire Church. Here are a few examples of such customs:

The Blessing of Children – This custom may seem strange and possibly uncalled for by some, who believe that only the priest or bishop may bless. While the priest blesses various things officially in the name of the Church, the father of a family may and should bless his children. We have examples of this in the Old Testament when Isaac blessed his son, Jacob (Gen, 27: 23) and when Jacob, before his death, blessed the sons of Joseph (Gen. 48). It is also related in the life of the Little Flower, St. Therese of Lisieux, that her father would bless her and her sisters, often by making a simple sign of the cross with his thumb on their foreheads. This is only one form. The father may choose different ways, such as simply saying a prayer (such as the Our Father) while the children stand before him. Or, he may put his hand on their heads while they kneel before him. There is also no specific time when this has to be done, but it may be a good practice to do this whenever the children leave the house. This not only confers God's blessings, but also it helps

to keep fresh in the children's minds that God is always present and always watching over them.

The Sign of the Cross – This is so common among Catholics that most might not be aware that it is, in fact, a custom. The Sign of the Cross before and after our prayers is a powerful profession of our faith in the Triune God and in our Redemption by Christ's sacrifice on the Cross. Children should learn early on that they should not make it hurriedly, but at a reasonable pace and with much thought and attention. They should also learn to not be afraid to make the Sign of the Cross while they are in public. Our Lord wants them to be a light on top of a mountain shining forth His love and mercy to the whole world.

Giving the Child a Saint's Name
– This is a very ancient custom within the Church and it should not be overlooked. Consider that in this world a person's name is his most valuable possession because this is how he is identified to the world and to himself. The day a child is baptized is the most important day in his life because this is the day when he becomes a child of God. To name the child after a

saint creates a special bond, or a connection, between him and his patron. Children should be taught to emulate their patron saint's virtues, considering them as role models. They should pray to them daily for their help and intercession with God.

Keeping silence on Good-Friday

– The *Apostolic Constitutions* (written in the fourth century) called Good-Friday “a day of mourning and not of festive joy.” It is a custom on Good-Friday that families maintain a general silence throughout the day. This silence should be especially observed between 12pm and 3pm because it was during this time that Our Lord hung upon the Cross. In addition to silence, no television, internet, or any amusements of any kind should be engaged in. This day should be taken up with meditating on the sufferings of Our Lord. It should be explained to children and, in as far as they are able, they should come to understand the great price Our Redeemer paid for our sins. The reading of the Passion According to St. John would be most appropriate.

Finally, parents should pray often that their children embrace that specific vocation to which

God has called them. Side by side with forming good prayer habits, diligently learning the Catechism, and performing the various customs, parents must talk to their children about the various types of vocations. The seriousness of this cannot be overstressed, especially if their children have a calling to a religious vocation. Remember you cannot love what you do not know! If your children do not know anything about the religious life, you must begin to inform them. You should not try to pressure the children into a vocation, that would be wrong, but you should gently explain to them the various ways by which a person may serve God. You do not have to talk about it all the time, but perhaps a few times a year keeping the possibility in the children's minds. Perhaps when you come together to say your family rosary make the special intention for religious vocations. The only way that your children will be truly happy in this life is if they do God's will. Giving your children as complete an education in the faith as possible will help them to become true imitators of Christ. The immortal words of His Holiness Pope Pius XI are

just as fitting today as they ever were: “*The great, and wouldn’t it be too much to say, the sole, purpose of Catholic education is simply this – the development of other Christ’s. Christ came not to teach us the way to die, merely; but to teach us the way to live. That is a platitude, of course; but the educated Catholic is merely a man who has learned how to live. And there is no way of Christian living except in imitation of Christ, the Son of God, and the most perfect of men ...*” (Pope Pius XI’s Encyclical Letter *Divini Illius Magistri*)



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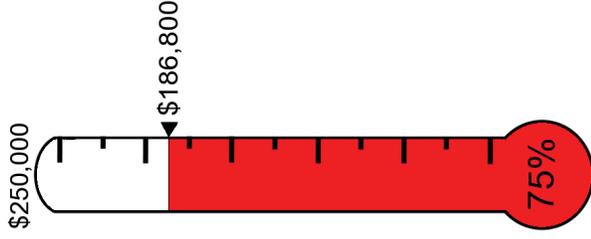
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+Bishop Giles OFM

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View of future Sanctuary (Dec 2016)

God Created Men not Sins

Bishop Giles, OFM

The popular acceptance and promotion of same-sex unions (homosexuality) presents us with many current, but not new problems. This scourge of mankind dates back to the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. The condemnation of this sin does not automatically condemn a person to Hell, there is always (in this life) opportunity for repentance and penance. The condemnation of adultery and fornication does not preclude the chance for a person to turn around. These are mortal, and therefore, damnable sins, but God in His mercy, gives us the opportunity, in this life, to return to Him.

We consider these sins against purity in much the same light. We do not consider that God made anyone an adulterer. That would be blasphemy. In the same way, God did not make anyone a homosexual. These are sins and perversions of the precious gift of reproduction that God has endowed us with. Natural law, biological science, human reason, and the Divine Law; all indicate to us that the proper use of our reproductive

parts is that of reproduction. God has united with the use of these faculties certain pleasures as a reward, or perhaps enticement, for us to cooperate with Him in populating the Kingdom of Heaven.

It is repulsive to nature, reason, and faith to seek pleasure for itself and simultaneously reject the consequences of our actions. For example, the gluttonous epicureans – that eat so that they can experience the pleasure of eating, but then induce vomiting so that they empty their stomachs and avoid the consequences of eating – are rightly considered as unnatural, sick, and sinful. This principle can similarly be applied to the pleasure connected to the use/abuse of our sexual organs. Among the various abuses of our sexual organs we can enumerate: self-abuse (masturbation); mutual self-abuse (masturbation with another); viewing and/or fantasizing of pornography; fornication (sexual relations between unmarried people); adultery (sexual relations between married people that are not married to each other); and

homosexuality (sexual relations between members of the same sex).

Each of these perversions, as well as all the variations of these, entails the pursuit of pleasure concomitant (simultaneous) to the rejection of the primary purpose of the associated actions. This is the perversion that has brought forth in our days the evils of: the preponderance of pornography; the degradation of women and children; the effeminacy of men; the common acceptance of “artificial birth control;” fornication; the evils of divorce and remarriage (adultery); as well as the murder of children (abortion and infanticide). We find the origin of these sins, or the common thread connecting them, to be in impurity. The only viable cure for these sins of impurity is in the aid of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the sacraments.

It is astonishing how many will accept and even proclaim that God has made the homosexual that way. This, as we mentioned above, is blasphemy. Then, we are asked, if God did not make them this way, why are they this way? This sin takes hold of them

in the same way that any other sin takes hold of us. We give in to temptation. Once we give into the temptation, we experience a physical pleasure and desire to repeat the pleasurable experience, and before long it is like an addiction. It becomes an evil habit of sin. The habitual sinner often commits the same sinful action over and over through habit – even after it ceases to please. He becomes a slave to his passion. Those who give into the temptation of using pornography experience pleasure and return to this pleasure over and over again, even after it causes self-disgust and/or self-loathing. Those who give into fornication and adultery, likewise, become possessed by their passion for the pursuit of pleasure. The same applies to homosexuals. Somewhere along the line, the homosexual experiences sexual pleasure with the same sex. Historically, this was often initiated and brought about by an older person. Today it appears that temptations are made by the human “idols” (actors, actresses, sports stars, etc.) constantly put before us in the media and entertainment. The dissolute lives of others, constantly held up before us,

leads to the temptation to imitate them in their perversities. The first experience opens the door to successive ones, which forms a habit.

We should avoid declaring someone who experiences temptations in this manner to be homosexual; just as we should avoid declaring someone an adulterer because he/she is tempted in this area. We are too quick to put a label on people; then, once they have the label, they accept it and start to live up to the label put upon them. The fallen human reason concludes that because people say this about me, or think this about me; then I might as well go ahead and do or become what they say and/or think. Once locked into this label and life; it becomes ever increasingly difficult to repent and break off these sins. We can help by not allowing this label. It seems more psychologically correct to say: “you are tempted to homosexuality;” rather than to say: “you are a homosexual.” Our perceptions of what we are are harder to change than what we are tempted to become.

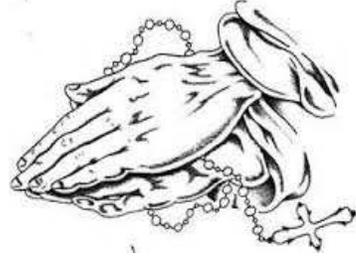
The principle or root cause of this sin is explained to us by

Saint Paul in his letter to the Romans. In there, he tells us that men are permitted to fall into this sin because they have turned away from God and have given into idolatry. Because they turned away from the true God and true worship, they are in the darkness of sin – without the grace of God. God has not so much abandoned them, as they have abandoned Him. Without the true God and true worship, they become subject to the perversions of their fallen natures – aided and abetted by devils, and now, societies.

It is not God Who has made them this way, the blame is to be laid upon their falling away from the true worship of God. In the darkness of sin, they have no weapons to resist these temptations. To truly help those who have fallen into this (as well as every other sin), we must first lead or entice them to enter or return to the true Church, the true Faith, the true worship, and the true God. As with all the sins of impurity, our greatest and safest course in returning to God is through His most holy and pure Mother Mary. We must not abandon those who have fallen (even though they have

abandoned God), but must with God seek their return to Him as He does. We should admonish the sinner, as well as pray for him. We should do whatever is in our power to remove the occasion of sin from ourselves as well as from our loved ones who have fallen into this cesspool of perversions. The situation appears ever more hopeless day by day – let us not abandon hope, but rather, work and pray with ever greater urgency. While

there is life, there remains hope. Don't give up, but fight the good fight to our last breath here on earth.



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A Chance to Live

Monsignor John P. Carroll-Abbing

II

FLASHBACK (Continued)

After four years of my uninterrupted stay in Italy, I was happy to be going home to Ireland.

Accustomed as I had been for so long a time to the harsh exigencies of war and to the sacrifices that war imposes upon those who live away from the battlefield, this trip offered a new vista of life to me.

The Avenida de Liberdate in Lisbon stretched before me in all its cosmopolitan splendor, breathing an unconscious, free joyousness. I met no one on the wide boulevards, if not men, women, and children on whose faces happiness and a belief in life was still clearly written. There were no seas of uniforms, no mourning wives and mothers as I had met everywhere in Italy, where the very air was pregnant with tortured thoughts. Life was natural and easy. People came and went, laughing, chatting, their zest for gaiety springing spontaneously from a sense of security.

The whole spectacle gave me a

feeling of peace and well-being and yet it often brought back to my mind the vision of horror in so many other places, the anguish, the ruin. Lisbon was an island in a sea of blood and tears.

I found myself in this part of the world at a time when Italy was slowly being crushed under the wheels of war. Day by day in that unfortunate land the unmistakable signs of the crumbling Axis grew and increased.

Once again I saw Dublin, my mother, my relatives, my friends, but even this did not succeed in wiping out of my mind the thought of Rome. My state of mind became gloomier the day I was told of the bombardment of the Basilica of San Lorenzo. Event piled upon event in the Italian peninsula and among them the fall of the Fascist regime on July 25, 1943.

I had made plans not to return to Rome until the end of September. The doctors there had told me I needed a prolonged rest. The headlong sweep of events in Italy, however, and particularly the landing of American troops in

Sicily made me change my mind and return immediately.

My mother faced the news of my decision with calm serenity, although my absence, she realized, was to be a lengthy one.

On August 11, the day I landed in Italy, I became aware of the tension in the faces of the people I met, of a sort of expectancy in the atmosphere. Danger was not a mere chimera of a fanciful imagination. It was real. Some looked forward to a solution, others feared it. In the continuous seesawing of ideas, rumors were whispered, suppositions aired and then came the fateful date of September 8, when Italy signed the Allied armistice.

There was unbridled joy for a moment, but this joy was quickly shattered by the bad news seeping into the capital and by the reality of horror which in the space of a few hours showed its tragic countenance.

The announcement of the armistice signified for most of the people of Rome a return to normality, the end of terror, of privations, of air raids. It meant peace and more abundant food for their children. All these hopes soon vanished.

On the night of September 8 and during the early hours of September 9, we heard the first distant rumblings of cannon shots. Optimistic souls attributed the sounds to the order given for the demolition of coastal defenses.

“They are tearing down the forts,” was heard all around.

No one thought of the German attacks against the Italian positions which the Italian Army had set up for the defense of the capital. One rumor said that the British had landed at Ostia and would be in the capital within a few hours. Few seemed to realize the whole truth. The armistice had caught everyone, leaders, soldiers and citizens utterly unprepared. Few visualized that Rome would have, and soon, a number of battles to wage. The Germans, furious at the turn of events, attacked the city from within and without; traitors did their nefarious work wherever and whenever they found fertile soil; the Allies made plans to take the city sooner or later.

“Peace! Peace!”

The word was on everybody’s lips and war was drawing inexorably closer, ready to sweep everything into its deadly fury. Within a few hours, Rome was to undergo

inconceivable sufferings in the ferocity of a conflict we were to know only too well as the maimed and the wounded poured into the hospital in a never-ending stream.

That night most of the medical staff had gone home to snatch a few hour's rest. The preceding night they had waited vainly till dawn for the war casualties that might have come, but had not arrived.

Those of us who were left sat around waiting. It was late and I was about to retire to my room. An unusual tremor shook the building. Alarmed and tense, we rushed to the doors.

An armored tank had slid to a stop with screaming brakes. A young officer leaped out and gestured dazedly toward the seat of the car. We found his companion bleeding and unconscious.

He was the first. Others followed in quick succession. Tanks, trucks, ambulances stopped long enough to disgorge their mangled cargoes, and off they dashed, only to return with more ... more...

And more fatigue, more horror. It was the old story repeating itself, operations and death, the old evidence of a useless hatred.

The wounded gave us news that kept getting worse and worse. The Germans had reached the Tre Fontane ... only three miles from the center of the city. ... They are at the Gate of San Paolo ... they are coming closer. Some even said that they were in one of the squares of the capital.

About midnight I went out with a friend. We were anxious to find out how matters really stood.

During the day, Rome had been a ghost city. It had all the appearance of a city struck by an epidemic. Stores were barred, panic was in the sudden rush of an ambulance and was in the complete absence of the traditional carts. Panic also in the faces of the few pedestrians scuttling here and there in search of a hiding place from they knew not what.

In normal times, Rome differs from the rest of the capitals of the world. At nine o'clock at night her streets are usually deserted. She seems to be disdainful of so-called night life. Toward midnight she comes alive for a moment. Theaters and concert halls open their doors and fill the streets. That night we saw no one.

As we approached the Piazza Venezia we did catch sight of a man, but at the sound of our motorcycle,

he fled down one of the streets that flank the palace and disappeared.

In the vast square I saw a number of armored cars, but no drivers sat at the throttles. Silence, nothing but silence, broken now and then by the roar of a cannon or cut by the sharp ack-ack of a machine gun. I could not help comparing the place, so still in the white moonlight, with the picture of the teeming thousands that a short time before I had seen gathered under a certain window. ...

The machine guns were coming nearer. The Piazza Venezia is not very far from the San Paolo Gate where the battle was in its final stages. The regular soldiers who formed part of the Italian defenders were about to abandon the gate after stiff resistance. In the confusion brought about by order and counter-order, some thought that Rome would surrender. Others spoke of making the capital an open city.

The San Paolo Gate cuts an immense square in two. Outside the walls at one side of the gate stands the pyramid of Caius Cassius. On the other side a road runs toward Ostia. Here the soldiers had fought, but they had not been alone. Men, women, and children even had

joined in the fray. Armed with guns, knives, rifles taken from the dead and wounded, hand grenades and with bare hands, they gave a good account of themselves.

In the Via Ostiense at the end of the battle, I had proof of the heroism of mere children. Two boys lay dead, their hands still clutching the incendiary bombs they had been ready to hurl at the powerful German tanks. Not far from them I spied two others, their pitiful small bodies riddled with bullets. All the clothing worn by one of them consisted of an old coat in shreds, bloody, and a pair of dirty trousers. He was covered with wounds and bruises. He lay on his side, face blown to bits, but brown curls dragging in the mud of the curb, in his fingers a piece of torn leather belt. A few steps farther, on the same curbstone, sat four boys whispering, planning I knew not what. I spoke to two others crouching behind a broken wall and tried to persuade them to go home. They looked at me as if they did not understand the words I said, but as I walked away, I saw them disappear in the shadows.

I returned to the hospital. There among the new casualties I found a young carabinier, who had just been brought into the ward. He

was about eighteen, his boyish looks contrasting strangely with the uniform he wore. So young to be a defender of the law! Upon examining him, the doctor found only a small wound. I heard that the internal mischief done by one bullet had made the boy's case hopeless. At his bedside stood an older member of the same corps, the lad's superior officer, unashamed tears streaming down furrowed cheeks, his brown rugged hand holding on tight to the younger smoother one.

His eyes questioned me. I made him understand the seriousness of the case. It was pitiful to see the anguish on the old carabiniere's face, a man who had no doubt seen many horrors and untold evil.

The atmosphere of the room weighed heavy with the tragedy of the hospital bed. The boy lay as if sleeping. I leaned over him and barely heard the words he was trying to say. They held so much and they have lingered in my mind in the years since that day.

“Life plays strange tricks, Father ... only a short time ago, she was so happy ... my mother I mean ... she thought of me so safe in the city ... I was so far from Russia or Africa. That's where my brothers are ... and now ...”

I gave him the last sacraments and they took him away to the operating table in a first attempt to save his life. The sight of that boy lying so still, his life in the balance, perhaps about to close as he stood on the threshold of maturity, brought to my mind several lines from one of Matthew Arnold's poems:

*Like some rich hyacinth which by
the scythe of an unskilled gardener
has been cut, mowing the garden
grass-plots near its bed, and lies,
a fragrant tower of purple bloom ...*
(Sohrab and Rustum)

and my heart was heavy with the thought of all this splendid youth so wastefully destroyed.

In direct contact as they were with the painful incidents taking place around them, the maimed and the crippled soldiers in the hospital suffered intensely. The nagging thought that their sacrifices had been in vain added to their physical sufferings.

The man who dies from injuries incurred while saving the life of a child from a burning building dies with a feeling of exaltation that he has given his life for that of another. The maimed soldier who has lost his legs or his arms on the field of battle can find courage in knowing

that he has helped in the defense of his country.

But the maimed and the crippled of this war saw all their beliefs, their hopes, their trust die on that fateful September 8. The allies of yesterday were the enemies of today, and vice versa the enemies of yesterday had suddenly become allies. They heard of Italians helping the Germans, of other Italians fighting against them for the liberation of Italy. The ensuing confusion in their minds was great. Their spiritual anguish, bitter.

One day I stopped at a bedside. The boy who lay there looked at me and said nothing.

“Son, you are sad ...”

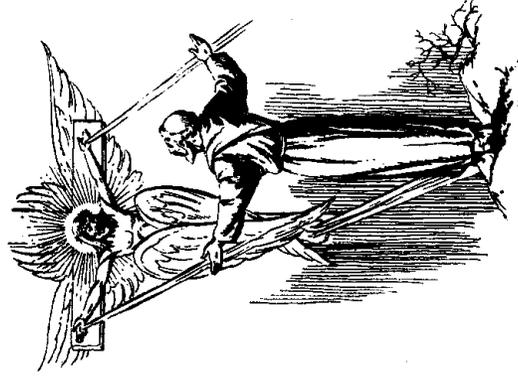
He nodded.

“Life is full of questions, son, so full that they can be explained only through the message in the life of Our Lord. He has invited us to follow Him, but in that invitation there is no promise of material happiness in this life. He has taught us that the cross must be borne, sufferings, injustice. God permits this, for He respects the freedom He granted to men. We can choose a life of selfish interests or believe in what He taught and choose spiritual values. We can be thus steadfast in

adversity and unafraid and prove our loyalty and the sincerity of our love for Him. One thing God never does permit and that is the absence of the possibility of doing what is right and gaining life eternal.”

“But it has all been so useless, Father.”

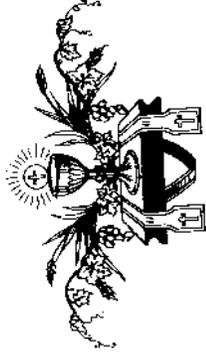
“If you are trying to say to me that the sacrifice you made has not given victory to your country, I agree with you. However, you have done your duty, as you were made to understand your duty. You have carried your cross. This should be your feeling of success. God will give endless value to your pain, and bring forth for you as well as for your dear land a day of redemption.”



Sister Agnes' Favorites

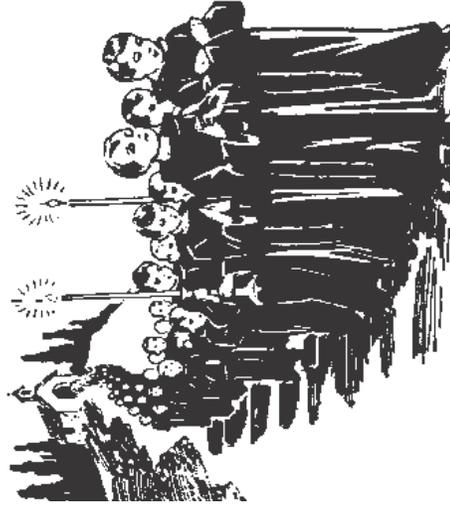
To-day

Lord, for to-morrow and its needs
I do not pray;
Keep me, my God from stain of sin
Just for to-day.
Let me both diligently work
And duly pray;
Let me be kind in word and deed
Just for to-day.
Let me be slow to do my will,
Prompt to obey;
Help me to mortify my flesh,
Let me no wrong or idle word,
Unthinking, say;
Set Thou a seal upon my lips,
Just for to-day.



Let me in season, Lord, be grave,
In season, gay;
Let me be faithful to Thy grace
Just for to-day.
And if to-day my tide of life
Should ebb away,
Give me Thy sacraments divine,
Sweet Lord, to-day,
In purgatory's cleansing fires
Brief be my stay;
O bid me, if to-day I die,
Go home to-day.
So, for to-morrow and its needs,
I do not pray;
But keep me, guide me, love me,
Lord,
Just for to-day.





Franciscan Saints

APRIL 20

THE SERVANT OF GOD
THEODORIC LOET

Martyr, First Order

Father Theodoric was guardian of the Franciscan friary of Emmerich on the lower Rhine at the time when the Calvinist heresy from neighboring Holland was constantly gathering about itself new adherents. In accordance with his duty, Father Theodoric warned the faithful, and pointed out the folly and ungodliness of the heresy. In consequence, he was hated by the heretics.

In the year 1571, upon his return from Rome, whither he had traveled on business associated with his order, he was accused of having negotiated with the pope for the betrayal of his country. In the following year, the heretics, who were themselves traitors, delivered the neighboring town of Zutphen from the rightful domination of the king of Spain into the hands of the Dutch, and a heretic was set up as governor.

The heretics forcibly dragged Father Theodoric before the governor in order to have him condemned as a traitor to his country. Since the good Father could not admit anything of the sort, but frankly professed his Catholic faith, the governor at first had glowing plates applied to the soles of his feet. Then he was divested of his clothing and put to the rack with such force that all his limbs were wrenched from their joints. Burning torches were held to his sides, and seething fat was poured into the wounds. During all this dreadful torture, Father Theodoric raised his eyes and his heart to heaven, and answered not a word to all the raillery and contempt which was heaped upon him. Finally, he was beheaded and quartered; the four parts were placed at the four cardinal points on the gates

APRIL 2017

of the town. This happened on the twentieth of April in the year 1572.

CONCERNING CHRISTIAN HOPE

1. “In silence and in hope shall your strength be” (Is. 30:15). We see these words of the prophet fulfilled in our glorious martyr. We, too, must at times seek our strength in silence and in Christian hope. Against accusations which arise from obdurate malice set up in authority, there is no better answer than the one which our Blessed Saviour gave before Caiaphas: “But Jesus held his peace” (Matth. 26:63). Still, while the lips are silent, the heart should raise itself to God with that assured hope which the brothers of the Machabees uttered before King Antiochus: “Thou, indeed, O most wicked man, destroyest us out of this present life: but the King of the world will raise us up, who die for His laws, in the resurrection of eternal life.” When one of the brothers was ordered to show his tongue so they could tear it out, he said: “These I have from heaven, but for the law of God I now despise them, because I hope to receive them again from Him” (2 Mach. 7:9,11). We, too,

will receive something a hundred times better for all that we have sacrificed and offered up here below for God. Should not this hope make every sacrifice easy?

2. Consider that Christian hope must be our strength and consolation in all the affairs of life. Does the knowledge of your sins by which you have so often and so grievously offended God weigh you down, then trust in the Blood of Christ, which has been shed for you. In bitter sorrow and fervent love take your refuge in the Crucified and listen to our Lord, who says: “If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow” (Is. 1:18). If you suffer want in material things, if sickness and tribulation come over you, if you fear that you will not get to heaven, then pour out your heart before our Lord and say confidently with the Psalmist: “My hope is in God. These two things have I heard, that power belongeth to God, and mercy to Thee, O Lord” (Ps. 61:8, 12).

3. Consider that we must cooperate with the gift of Christian hope. Without cooperation, we should be presuming on the Divine Mercy. He who does not want to leave off from sin cannot expect forgiveness. “God is not

mocked” (Gal. 6:7). He who indulges in sloth cannot expect God to give him bread, because the Word of God says: “If any man will not work, neither let him eat” (Thess. 3:10). And he who does not observe the commandments of God and will not resign himself to the will of God will not get to heaven through prayer. “Not everyone that saith to me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father, who is in heaven” (Matth. 7:21). A martyr like blessed Theodoric, who made

the sacrifice of his life to God, can confidently trust in Him. Let us frequently unite ourselves with the sacrifice of Christ in Holy Mass; that will put zest into our sacrifice for God and strengthen our hope.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

(Secret, Tuesday of Passion Week)

We bring before Thee, O Lord, victims to be immolated, which we pray may bring us temporal consolation; that we may not despair of the eternal promise. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



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APRIL 2017

THE PRUDENT CHRISTIAN

OR,

CONSIDERATIONS ON
THE IMPORTANCE, AND
HAPPINESS, OF ATTENDING
TO THE CARE OF OUR
SALVATION.

BY THE REV. J. FLETCHER, D.D.

“Give me understanding, and I
shall live.” — PSALM cxix.

1834.



CONSIDERATION XI. ON JUDGMENT.

This world is a figure, that passes rapidly away; and which, soon, will, in our regard, vanish, and be no more. Our lives flit away, like the visions of a dream, awaiting, but for a few moments, that eventful morning, which will break, and dissolve our slumbers. However, — such, meanwhile, is our imprudence, — we run on our little, brief career in heedless inattention, and indifference; — lost, some of us, in dissipation; some, immersed in vice; some, wholly absorbed in the solicitudes of worldly business, — nearly all of us forgetful alike of God; of ourselves; and of our salvation.

26

Such as this is the too general state of mankind at the present day, — men, everywhere, living on, just as if they had little or nothing to fear beyond the boundaries of the grave; and ungratefully abusing that mercy, which calls them to repentance, and invites them to future happiness.

I. It is one of our great misfortunes, that we grossly misconceive the nature of the Divine Mercy. Because God is silent under the provocations, which we offer Him; — because He does not visit us with immediate punishment; — because He still causes the sun to shed its rays upon us; and the rains, and the dews, to give

abundance to our fields, — we, hence, foolishly imagine, that His goodness is all patience; and His forbearance, mercy: and that therefore, notwithstanding all our negligence, and sins, we may still look forward with confidence to the certainty of forgiveness. Ah, it is indeed true, that God is patient, — patient even to a degree, that is astonishing. Yes; but then it is, also, alike equally true, that this very patience of His is an awfully frightful thing. God is patient, and silent, for a time. He waits, because we are always in His hands. But, it is precisely because His patience is abused, that He becomes most angry. His very mercy is now changed into indignation; and He converts into darts of fire those same graces, which He had once presented to us as the instruments of our happiness. So that, in reality, the patience itself of God, — if we still continue to abuse it, — will prove, in our regard, the very source of our heaviest punishment.

It is, therefore, in order to awaken in our minds a strong sense of the necessity of spending well the little interval of our earthly career; and of living always in a state of humble fear, that the wisdom of God, among a variety of other expedients, has particularly pointed out to us,

as one of the fittest subjects for our consideration, the striking circumstances of the Last Judgment, — of that solemn assize, when all mankind assembled together shall appear before the tribunal of His justice. To impress this great event deeply upon our hearts, the Scriptures describe it to us in the most striking colors; and with perhaps more detail; than any other occurrence, related in those sacred pages, — representing to us the signs, and appalling horrors, that are to precede it; the magnificence, and splendors, that are to attend it; and the final, and everlasting, results, that are to follow its dreadful close. These, indeed, are narratives, that are familiar to us. But, perhaps, — because we consider the great occasion as now remote, — they have, hitherto, made little or no impression upon our minds. More prudent, for the time to come, let us make them, — in compliance with the divine suggestions, — the frequent subjects of our serious consideration.

II. At the period, then, when the series of ages shall have passed away; when the mysteries of religion are, all, accomplished; when the number of the elect is completed, — then shall begin the grand triumph of Jesus over His enemies; — His conquests

over sin, and death, shall be proclaimed; and His empire be established for ever, — the immortal empire of His mercy over the good; the everlasting dominion of His justice over the wicked.

The prodigies, and horrors, which are appointed, and prepared, to usher in this great occasion, are such, — so striking, and terrific, — that, did we only reflect upon them, — they could not fail to awaken our sensibility, and excite our fears. They are the dreadful expressions of God's justice, omnipotence, and indignation. At His voice, we read, all nature is thrown into a state of disorder, trouble, and consternation, — the signs, and preludes, of the general destruction. Earthquakes shake the globe to its deepest foundations. Its rocks, and mountains melt away, like wax. The sea bursts with fury from its wanted shores; the lakes break away from their accustomed boundaries; and the rivers forsake their beds. The sun becomes dark as blood; and the moon, — as a pall, — black as sackcloth. Hurlled by the Divine anger from their respective spheres, they fall upon the earth, and at once destroy it. Such as these, we read in the sacred Scriptures, are the forerunners of that dreadful tragedy, in which we must, all,

and each of us, one day, bear a part.

III. During the interval of these frightful scenes, — whilst all on the earth is, everywhere, terror, and consternation, — men hiding themselves in the rocks, and caverns; calling upon the mountains to fall upon them, conceal them from the face of an avenging God, — whilst such as this is the state of things; and such the feelings of trembling mortals, — behold, suddenly, amid the confusion, a voice is heard, — a voice, far louder than any peals of the loudest thunder. Its echoes rebound through every part, and recess of the universe, — from east to west, — penetrating into the lowest caverns of the earth; into the deepest abysses of the sea; and into the silence of the grave, — proclaiming, everywhere, the solemn command, "*Arise, ye dead.*"

And behold, in the twinkling of an eye, — by a miracle of the Divine Omnipotence, like that of the first creation; — by a prodigy, similar to that, which first called all nature into existence, — the bones, and the dust, of the whole race of Adam are, once more, reanimated; and awake into life again. The entire body of mankind, from the earliest dawn of creation until this fatal

hour, are, in a moment, clothed in the same flesh, and arrayed in the same members, which they wore, during the course of their mortal career on earth. This stupendous act completed; — the graves giving up their captives; and the sea, and the abysses their victims, — instantly, the dread summons is issued for all to attend the great assize; and to stand before the tribunal of the Judge: — **“Arise, ye dead, and COME TO JUDGMENT.”**

IV. See, then, He now comes, — the great, and tremendous, Judge. He comes, not as He did at Bethlehem, a feeble, and weeping, infant: — not as He did at Calvary, an insulted, and suffering, martyr, — He comes, the supreme Lord of heaven, and earth, seated on a car of fire; and environed with clouds of glory. He comes, attended by legions of angels; and by all the bright hosts of heaven. And oh! He comes, too, accompanied by the ministers of His justice; and by armies of avenging executioners. In short, He comes, — the once meek, and humble, Jesus, — surrounded now with all the attributes, and ensigns, of majesty, that can awaken awe; and with every appendage, and mark, of justice, that can excite terror in the hearts of His trembling creatures. He

takes His seat upon the dreadful tribunal. The judgment begins, and the books are opened, — those frightful records, in which is contained the entire history of the life of each, and every, individual of the human race, from the first to the last; and from the highest to the lowest.

Majestic, and terrible, as are these preludes, and preparations, still, it is not they, after all, that are nearly so much calculated to distress our feelings as the trial itself, which follows. It is this, that principally interests us, and that fills the hearts even of the most virtuous with alarm. For, now begins the painful, piercing, interrogatory. A strict account is demanded, in what way we have spent the whole portion, — each year, and even each day, — of our lives. “I allowed you,” the great Judge will say, “twenty, forty, sixty, years of time; and, during those intervals, I, moreover, offered you My graces; and a thousand opportunities of securing your salvation. And what use have you made of these mercies? Have you employed them, as I had required, in the faithful observance of my law, — in the assiduous cultivation of piety, and religion?” It is thus, that we shall, each of us, be questioned, concerning the whole order of our former stewardship. An account will be demanded of

our actions, and even of the very motives, which dictated them; — of our words, — not only of such as were dissolute, and profane, but even of such as were merely idle, and unprofitable; — of our affections, — sounding the very bottom of our hearts, and revealing those base desires, those guilty feelings, which so often regulated the plans, and debased the character, of our conduct; — of our thoughts, — of all those impure ideas, and shameful conceptions, which we either permitted to live in our hearts, or allowed carelessly to play in our imaginations. We shall even be questioned respecting our virtues themselves: for, even these are, not uniquely, rendered defective, either from the languor, and tepidity, of our hearts, or from the errors, and partiality, of our self-love. But, above all, we shall be examined, respecting our love. “Have you loved Me,” — the Judge will ask, — “your Saviour, your Benefactor, and your God? Have you loved Me; and been grateful for My benefits?” Such as these will be the questions; and such the scrutiny, which we shall, each of us, undergo, on this trying, and painful, occasion.

In this life, sin easily contrives to conceal its deformity and its shame. Some commit it secretly in the shades of darkness; —

some palliate it by the artful excuses of their weaknesses or their passions; — some perpetrate it under the mask of piety itself, fighting against God under His own standard; and combating religion under the pretence of defending it; — whilst some even triumph in their guilt, insultingly vain in the very horrors of their excesses. It is, therefore, in order to confound all these, that the great assize is, in part, convened, — that, thus, the baseness of their guilt may be exposed; their excuses, be convicted; their hypocrisy, unmasked; and their insolence, confounded. And oh! how sensible now are all these unhappy beings of their past disorders, and imprudence! They experience all the horrors of the deepest confusion. They are overwhelmed with terror and despair. Without one glimpse of hope; or one source of refuge, they would now deem it an unspeakable consolation, if the mountains would fall upon them, and hide them, forever, in their lowest, darkest, abysses.

V. The investigation finished, — what now remains is to pronounce the final sentence, — that unchangeable decree, which is to fix forever the doom of the sinner, and the lot of the elect. Wherefore turning towards the former, — anger naming in His

countenance; and indignation expressed in every attitude, — the great Judge, in a voice of thunder, addresses them thus: — “Disobedient, and ungrateful, creatures, you have disregarded My commands; neglected My invitations; and despised My threats. For you, and in order to gain your love, I had done everything, that My tenderness could suggest, or My wisdom dictate. I had even shed My Blood, and sacrificed My life itself. In return for all this, the only thing I asked of you was your love: and this you have obstinately refused to give Me. Instead of giving it to Me; and of returning love for love, you have devoted your hearts to sin; and your affections to empty trifles. Hence, therefore, the justice of My displeasure. You are no longer My people; nor am I any longer your God. Go, then, guilty, and ungrateful, as you are, — go far away from Me, forever, into those fires, which I have prepared for the devil, and his rebel angels; ‘*Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.*’”

In vain would any language attempt to describe the feelings, — the grief, the horror, and despair, — of these wretched beings. Not even can any imagination conceive them. The circumstances, however, which,

beyond every other, increases the agony of their distress, is the reflection, that, had they so pleased, they might, even easily, have been saved; that, with the adoption of a little prudence, they might have escaped all the miseries of their present situation. Above all, they sensibly feel this, when they now see before them their once tender, and amiable, Saviour; — when they read upon His forehead the kind titles of “*Lover, Father, Friend,*” — when they behold His cross, to which His love for them had nailed Him; and the wounds, which He still displays even in this state of His radiant glory. At this sight, feeling how well they should, and how easily they might have loved Him, — but would not, — at this sight, they experience all the horror of their past ingratitude; the detestation of their former folly; and the justice of their present condemnation. Wherefore, — the above sentence pronounced, — hell opens wide the jaws of its bottomless abysses; and swallows down the miserable victims, — there in bitterness, and rage; in weeping, and gnashing of teeth, to burn, to suffer, and lament, forever, and forever.

VI. How very different from all this is the situation of those happy beings, who, during

their mortal career, had proved faithful to their God! To these this day is truly a day of triumph. Wherefore, turning away from the wretched victims of His wrath, the Sovereign Judge, — His countenance now beaming with love, — thus addresses Himself to this small, but blessed, band, — “*Come,*” He says to them, “*ye beloved of My Father, — come, and take possession of that kingdom, which has been prepared for you, from the foundation of the world.*” You have suffered and wept, with Me. You have loved Me; and observed My laws. Come, therefore, now; and receive from Me the rewards of your fidelity.” And behold, in the sight of the whole court of heaven, and of the entire assemblage of human creatures, He crowns them with the wreaths of victory; places on their heads the diadems of glory; clothes them in the bright robes of immortality; and invites them to come and share with him forever the delights of His heavenly kingdom. At once, the gates of the eternal mansions are thrown open: and conducted by Him, — their Saviour, and their God, — amid the welcomes, and congratulations, of the angelic choirs; amid songs of triumph, and hymns of exultation, they are ushered into the abodes of the everlasting Sion.

Wherefore, witnessing these scenes; and knowing, that we must, one day, bear a part in the solemn spectacle, let us, hence, consider the important circumstances well; — too happy, if by thinking upon them now, we can prepare for ourselves a favorable sentence, on the great occasion. Let us, then, for this purpose, endeavor, each day, to keep our accounts in readiness; because each day is but given to us, in reality, to prepare the important record. Let us often reflect, what, from the tenor of our present conduct, we have reason to think, — to hope, or to fear, — may be the nature of our future sentence. Let us, too, in order to imprint upon our minds a salutary fear of sin, — the only thing, that can render our sentence rigid, — let us make it our practice to meditate often upon the instructive lessons of the last assize. Let us bid our imaginations represent to us its prodigies, and its terrors; its glories, and its miseries. Let us place ourselves at the bar of the tremendous tribunal, at which our eternal lot is to be decided. And from the footstool of that throne, let us attentively contemplate the vanity of all human things; and the emptiness of those pleasures, which pass away with time.

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