

Maria Valtorta

THE BOOK OF AZARIAH

Translated from the Italian
by David G. Murray

CENTRO EDITORIALE VALTORTIANO

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Original title: *Libro di Azaria*.
© 1972 by Tipografia Editrice M. Pisani.
© 1982 by Emilio Pisani.
© 1988 by Centro Editoriale Valtortiano srl.

Translation by David G. Murray.
©) 1993 by Centro Editoriale Valtortiano srl.,
Viale Piscicelli 89-91,
03036 Isola del Liri - Italy.

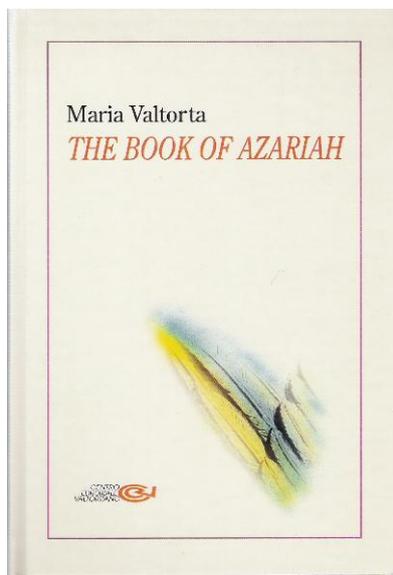
ISBN 88-7987-013-0

Film setting by
Centro Editoriale Valtortiano srl.

Printing and Binding by
Tipografia Editrice M. Pisani sas., Isola del Liri.

Cover design by Piero Luigi Albery.

Printed in Italy, 1993.



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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

The Book of Azariah represents a series of "dictations" which Maria Valtorta ascribed directly to her guardian angel. These inspired "lessons" (1946-1947) take as their starting point fifty-eight Masses found in the Roman Missal of the Catholic Church which reflect the liturgy prior to the reforms introduced in the wake of the Second Vatican Council.

In view of the genesis of the commentaries, Maria Valtorta initially termed this work *Angelical Masses*, adding the subtitle *Directions*. The first Italian edition (1972), however, adopted the name of her guardian angel, "Azariah," with its biblical precedent,¹ as the title for these meditations. For the present English-language version of the complete original the publisher has chosen to indicate after the title of each Mass the scriptural passages corresponding to that day's liturgy and include the text of the various prayers contained therein.²

Scriptural references identifying the sources of biblical quotations or clarifying allusions in the commentaries have been placed in the margins.

The Gospel passages forming part of these Masses, as Azariah himself explains, have not been commented upon since the Gospel has been broadly dealt with in the monumental life of Christ which Maria Valtorta was inspired to write.³

The Book of Azariah translates the ecstatic flame of heavenly love into human language with an intensity and fervor fully confirming its angelic origin. It resounds with limitless adoration of the Holy Trinity. Particularly addressed to those who, like Maria Valtorta, have been singularly called to be God's "spokesmen" in spite of the world's incomprehension, indifference, or outright opposition, the work is basically a prolonged exhortation to live out the Christian virtues-especially faith, hope, and charity-in the face of every tri-

¹ See Dn 3, especially Azariah's "song" glorifying and praising the Lord in the midst of the fiery furnace (24-25), a most vivid symbol of divine love as a sanctifying "flame."

² The liturgical texts have been taken from Dom Gaspar Lefebvre, O.S.B. and the Monks of St. Andrew's Abbey (eds.), *Saint Andrew Daily Missal* (Bruges, Belgium: Biblica, 1962).

³ Published in English under the title *The Poem of the Man-God*, this multi-volume work is based on extensive contemplations embracing virtually the entirety of Christ's earthly existence.

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al and challenge, in the certainty that by so doing those called will receive bountiful divine aid in the present and eternal glory in paradise.

The book is pervasively "Catholic," or *universal*, inasmuch as it unceasingly affirms and illuminates the mystical reality of the one Church founded by Christ-in its institutional, sacramental, and doctrinal concreteness-as the authentic embodiment of the Gospel legacy on earth and unfailing channel of supernatural grace for the whole of humanity. It offers abundant inspiration to those praying and laboring for the visible return of all Christians to their primordial unity in the Holy Spirit-with one Shepherd and one flock.

As with all of Maria Valtorta's writings, the themes of continuous prayer and the generous offering of suffering, as well as the spiritual importance of intimate identification with the Person of Christ and his Sacrifice, are paramount in this book. Ample instruction is devoted to humility, unreserved forgiveness of one's "enemies," and loving intercession on behalf of others as so many keys to reaching and possessing union with God. Other typically "Valtortian" notes are profound, creative awareness of God's Fatherhood and the unboundedly joyous, vigorous, and liberating discovery of what it means to be his "children."

Above all, *The Book of Azariah* is mystical speech-that is, the inspired articulation of God's Being-in-Love with man and man's being-in-Love with God-as mediated, in this instance, by an angel, and a guardian angel at that: the privileged witness to and participant in the enamored exchanges between Spirit and spirit, Divine Persons and human person.

In this burning language of mystical dialogue, words are brands which both wound and heal, revealing God to be at once supremely powerful and supremely tender, the consummate Romantic of eternal poetry.

The Book of Azariah has thus been written for true "lovers," present and future, and it is to be hoped that it will find its way into their hands-and into their hearts.

Rome, Easter 1993

David G. Murray

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ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF ABBREVIATIONS
FOR CITING THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

Ac	Acts	Lk	Luke
Am	Amos	Lm	Lamentations
Ba	Baruch	Lv	Leviticus
1 Ch	1 Chronicles	1 M	1 Maccabees
2 Ch	2 Chronicles	2 M	2 Maccabees
Cl	Colossians	Mi	Micah
1 Co	1 Corinthians	Mk	Mark
2 Co	2 Corinthians	MI	Malachi
Dn	Daniel	Mt	Matthew
Dt	Deuteronomy	Na	Nahum
Ek	Ezekiel	Nb	Numbers
Ep	Ephesians	Ne	Nehemiah
Er	Ezra	Ob	Obadiah
Es	Esther	1 P	1 Peter
Ex	Exodus	2 P	2 Peter
Ga	Galatians	Ph	Philippians
Gn	Genesis	Pin	Philemon
Ha	Habakkuk	Pr	Proverbs
He	Hebrews	Ps	Psalms
Hg	Haggai	Qo	Ecclesiastes/Qoheleth
Ho	Hosea	Rm	Romans
Is	Isaiah	Rt	Ruth
Jb	Job	Rv	Revelation
Jg	Judges	iS	1 Samuel
il	Joel	2S	2 Samuel
Jm	James	Sg	Song of Songs
in	John	Si	Ecclesiasticus/Ben Sira
1 in	1 John	Th	Tobit
2 in	2 John	1 Th	1 Thessalonians
3 Jn- 3 John		2 Th	2 Thessalonians
Jo	Jonah	1 Tm	1 Timothy
ir	Jeremiah	2 Tin	2 Timothy
Js	Joshua	Tt	Titus
it	Judith	WS	Wisdom
Ju	Jude	Zc	Zechariah
1 K	1 Kings	Zp	Zephaniah
2 K	2 Kings		

THE BOOK OF AZARIAH

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY

Introit: Ps 44(43):24-26, 2

Collect: You see, Lord, that we do not trust in anything that we do; grant in Your goodness that by the protection of the Doctor of the Gentiles we may be defended against all adversity. Through our Lord.

Epistle: 2 Co 11:19-33; 12:1-9

Gradual: Ps 83(82):19, 14

Tract: Ps 60(59):4, 6

Gospel: Lk 8:4-15

Offertory: Ps 17(16):5, 6-7

Secret: May the sacrifice offered to You, O Lord, give us life and protect us always. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 43(42):4

Postcommunion: We humbly entreat You, almighty God, that those whom You refresh with Your sacraments, may serve You worthily by a life which pleases You. Through our Lord.

February 24, 1946, 11 a.m.

St. Azariah says to me:

"Come, let us hear Holy Mass together. Today's liturgy, though addressed to all, is particularly addressed precisely to you, extraordinary instruments of God.

"While men sing on Earth and angels sing in Heaven, let us contemplate the teachings of today's Holy Mass, applying them to you in particular.

"Do you hear? 'O God, who see that we do not trust in any of our actions, propitiously grant that we may be defended in all adversities by the Doctor of the Gentiles.'

"That's it. Humility-one of the essential virtues in the extraordinary instruments, given to falling into the sin of pride over what they are more than anything else, confusing the Source with the outlet. A river ought not to be proud of and grateful to its outlet, but to its source, don't you think? Without the latter, inexhaustible in giving itself, the river would dry up, and there would be no outlet. The river should, then, acknowledge that it is the Source which ought to be praised and thanked.

"In the spirit of the just man-and especially in the extraordinary instrument-there must also be a recognition that he is an outlet, for God is his source. Therefore, never the pride of saying the demoniacal word 'I am,' always the cause of every evil. "Only God is. Only He can say, 'I am. I am through Myself.' All others are because He makes them be. The instruments are because he makes them such. *Through their own power they are nothing and would always be nothing.*

"Never to trust, then, in any of your actions is a prudent and holy habit.

"The actions of man, if carried out through his own capacity alone, would always be limited and imperfect to a maximum degree.

"Knowledge of the Law of God, Grace, the Sacraments, and the Sacramentals increase man's capacity to perform holy and just actions. The gratuitous gifts of God cause these actions to reach the extraordinary, surpassing the common faculties of the man and the believer, to attain powers above the ordinary. But man should not boast of them. *Receive them with a humble, obedient, and adoring soul, not demand them, not waste them by wanting to increase their volume with the rags offered by the father of lies and pride.* And he offers them with subtle art and a tempting smile. Oh, let the extraordinary instrument never place filthy, wretched tatters over the precious metal God has given him to make it appear more grandiose! Can you imagine a diamond which is small, but with most pure light, covered with a shell of simple glass. It will seem, and will be, larger. But the greenish glass, placed in layers and layers over the gem, will decrease its light, making it appear to be like that of common glass.

"Sincerity. To be what one is-and nothing more. You, soul that are entrusted to me, know how often the Tempter seduces, proposing that one play-act, add adornments to cause amazement, appear to be even more! *The greatest danger! Only one who is able to resist and be what God makes him, and nothing more, conserves the gift and remains an instrument.* With what trembling I have seen you tempted each time! And with what praise of glory I have blessed the Lord and thanked the Heavenly Court for having helped you to resist every time I have seen you emerge from the test, weary, suffering, but more mature, victorious!

"The angel of the Lord is like a gardener taking care of a precious plant. From its sprouting to maturity.... Ever watchful, trembling at winds, frosts, storms, parasites, and rodents. The angel recovers his complete angelical peace when he goes back up to heaven with the fruit picked from the branch, taken from the

Earth, with the soul that has been saved until the end. Then, with a joyful ardor, he goes to meet his brothers again and says, 'The soul of mine has been saved! It is with us in peace! Glory, glory, glory be to the Lord!'

"Humble recognition, then, always constant, of your 'nothingness' and continuously beseeching the blessed citizens of the Heavens that they grant you their aid. The Holy Communion of the Saints, invoked for the assistance of the militants, and especially by those who, on account of their particular condition, are more exposed, it is true, to the Eternal Sun, but also to the storms unleashed by Satan and the world. The storms hurl themselves upon the isolated peaks....

"The second lesson of today's liturgy, especially for you, extraordinary instruments, is in the words of Paul, Doctor of the Gentiles, who, 'snatched up to the third heaven.... heard mysterious words which it is not licit for man to utter.'

"You have not been snatched up to the third heaven, but you hear mysterious words, which are, however, given to you *that they may be given*. You are, then, far inferior to Paul. And yet: you hear the words of him who deserved to be snatched up so high that he perceived the secrets, the mysteries of God! He confesses that he has been cuffed by an angel of Satan and, justifying the Lord for having so permitted, illustrates the reasons motivated by goodness for which the Satanic assault was permitted: 'So that the grandeur of the revelations would not make me grow proud, I have been given a goad in the flesh, an angel of Satan to cuff me.' He acknowledges that he is still a man-that is, subject to the Satanic temptations. He does not say, J, who was in the third heaven, am an untouchable seraph.' No, he humbly says he is a man, encircled by Satan, and sees that this serves to keep him humble in spite of the grandeur of what he has received.

"And he teaches you the medicine to be freed: 'Three times I prayed to the Lord that it be removed from me.'

"It is good to say humbly, 'Lead me not into temptation, but save me from the Evil One'. The Most Holy Lord Jesus, the Innocent One, the Son of God, thus spoke. All the creatures who believe in God-Triune, Holy, Good, the Father of men-must say so. To want to act on one's own to reject Satan is not a good thing. It is presumption. Presumption is pride. Pride is cursed by God.

"Invoke, invoke the Blessed Lord, the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit; invoke the heavenly choirs of the saints and the angels.

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Against Satan's spite defenses are never sufficient. And they, the Blessed Trinity and all the inhabitants of the Heavens, ask only to help you in this ceaseless struggle between the infernal powers and the lower part, on the one hand, and the higher part and the heavenly Powers, on the other.

"And in support of your painful observations concerning your powerlessness to be left untouched by Satan, who out of wrath cuffs you-and he does so precisely because he cannot drag you where he would like to-hear the Lord's reply to the apostle disheartened over the cuffs of the Evil One: 'My grace is enough for you, for my power makes itself felt better in weakness.'

"One must not *think oneself capable* of everything, souls chosen for what is extraordinary. You have *heaven*. You must endure the Abyss presenting itself to you to terrorize you. But you know it now: *this is so that you will not* grow proud.

"In that way, knowing that you are *nothing-and with* the world knowing that you are *nothing and* seeing that you carry out higher ministries and, *according to* the doctrine of what you hear to give to others, you remodel yourselves in perfection-the power of God which comes to the aid of your weakness makes itself felt better (manifests itself better).'

"Courage, then, O dear souls that know of extraordinary gifts-turn them into grace and sanctification for yourselves! Sing with the apostle: 'I shall willingly glory in my infirmities, therefore, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.'

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit! Glory be to Jesus, through whom everything was made. Glory for all eternity for the wonderful works of God!"

And my Azariah, who has spoken to me with a marvelous sweetness, bids me farewell with a smile and grows silent....

2/25/46-On awakening at 7:25, for only in the morning have I found rest, St. Raphael is already present. As he was yesterday, in the moment of Communion, when he was there, together with Our Lord. This morning he is alone. But the first action of my senses and thought, on emerging from sleep, is the vision, contemplation, and greeting of the dear angel, who smiles at me and invites me to start my work without heeding the weariness exhausting me. And then he bids me farewell and departs....

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QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY

Introit: Ps 31(30):3-4, 2

Collect: Graciously hear our prayers, Lord, we entreat You; free us from the chains of sin and defend us against all adversity. Through our Lord.

Epistle: 1 Co 13:1-13

Gradual: Ps 77(76):15-16

Track Ps 100(99):1-2

Gospel: Lk 18:31-43

Offertory: Ps 119(118):12-13

Secret: May this offering, we entreat You, Lord, cleanse us from our sins and sanctify Your servants in body and soul, for a worthy celebration of this sacrifice. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 78(77):29-30

Postcommunion: Grant, we pray, almighty God, that we who have received this heavenly nourishment may be strengthened by it against all that may hurt us. Through our Lord.

Azariah says:

"Come, let us together comprehend today's liturgy. For, recall, soul of mine, that the Lord would always act this way if men, too, were to exclude you from what is the life of the Congregation of the saints on Earth. He would nourish you with his Word, which is Absolution and Communion, which is Chrism and Viaticum, which is everything for those who live in Him.

"Today as well I shall cause you to taste it-you, as a spokeswoman, because of this mission of yours. Listen to the Introit. Oh, in truth He is the rock and the refuge of those who love Him and is such even more for those who, because they are in his service in a special way, are subject, like a citadel and a royal palace where the King and the ones most faithful to Him dwell, to the assaults of the King's enemies-that is, of those whom sense, pride, and other failings render hostile to the Light. The waves of Satan and the carnal ones are always launched against the rocks of God. But hear, soul of mine, what these rocks are defended by: the Holy Name of God. By this name, which means love and salvation, He will be your defense and your guide and your comfort. With all your actions write his Most Holy Name upon your whole self and do not fear.

"Like a throng of lions and other beasts, the Evil One in his

Sunday, March 3, 1946

different manifestations will seek to battle against you and will go so far as to cuff you externally, like a raging breaker, and will then fall to pieces, for where God is, the Enemy cannot prevail. Write the Most Holy Name with all your actions. The Light of this name will guide you like the star that marks the way for the transmigrating flock and leads it to good pastures, better and better ones-that is, to those which are not just science and wisdom, prophecy, and material generosity, but charity, *true charity*, which is not to be confused with almsgiving, offered rudely; with the prophetic spirit, used with pride, to the point of leading the Lord to take it away; with an *only apparent* union with God, when it is really the egoism of the flesh and of the mind.

"Do you hear, do you hear? Prophecies will pass..., but charity will remain after the end of all things, be they human, material, or moral. Even faith and hope will come to an end when all that should be believed and hoped is fulfilled. But Charity will remain. Eternal, like God.

"Reflect, soul of mine! What you see and know strikes you as quite beautiful-so beautiful that you are left amazed. I could obtain for you an even vaster visual and auditory comprehension and range to increase your joy amidst the tribulations of your immolation. But it would always be a *relative* knowledge. In human things as well, you know that one cannot force a boiler, a gear, heat, and so on beyond a certain limit; otherwise the experiment will turn into destruction. In extraordinary things, too, one cannot obtain the maximum, *everything*, for man could not withstand a single moment of *complete knowledge* and *perfect vision off heaven with its divine Mysteries*. But then-when the soul is no longer compressed, limited, and childish in its capacities and, nourished by charity, when it has reached the perfect ageman's spirit will know the Unknowable: face to face.

"Oh! Hosannah to the beatific vision of the Triune God!

"Soul, soul of mine, after having adored in a transport of joy-I, seeing, and you, having a presentiment of the ineffable vision let us raise our heads and-I with jubilation over being the angel witnessing to God's prodigy, you with the humility which alone maintains the gift-sing, 'He has made us. We have not been made by ourselves. We are his people, the flock pastured by Him.'

"Don't you know that, with the splendor of joy, we, we, the angels of God, do nothing but say to ourselves, with joyful, per-

petual amazement, with endless gratitude, 'The Lord has made us! We are his heavenly people, the flock pastured by Him with Light and Charity'?

"And thus, thus it is for men, and more so for those among men whom God, having placed them as a bridge between Himself and mankind, has particularly made and pastures with special Light and Truth, to make them the sweet honey of eternal knowledge for others.

"Let us offer. I offer you; you offer yourself, together with Christ: the Victim offered for the salvation of all. Teach me to do your Will'. The humble prayer of the Great Victim. The humble prayer of the little victims, who are generous, but weak. Teach me to do your Will. Teach me to live; teach me to suffer; teach me to obey; teach me to die. First to myself, and then to all that could seduce me and resurrect the human ego. Teach me, so that 'the precepts of your mouth which I have repeated for everyone' may burst into flower, first of all in the pure field of my heart, and prosper and bear fruit of eternal life without birds, thorns, dandelion, couch grass, and passers-by destroying what You have sown in me.'

"You may be called granaries of the Lord, O spokeswoman. The mystical granaries to which whoever is hungry comes to take sustenance. Do you remember Joseph of Jacob? Foreseeing the famine, he had the superabundance of the harvests placed in the granaries, protecting these crops with supreme care against insects, rodents, and thieves, that always come rushing where there is harm to be done. When the seven years of famine came, the Egyptians did not die of hunger because Joseph's granaries were opened, and others, too, from other countries, came to collect grain where foresight had gathered it.

"How much famine for hungry souls now as well! *That's right-it will grow, and they will be hungrier and hungrier.* And the Lord is thus accumulating wheat in his granaries. To give it to whoever is hungry. But be vigilant, O granaries of God, so that insects, rodents, and thieves will not rummage in the treasure. Like watchful sentries, you must tirelessly gather in and preserve what the Lord pours into you for your nourishment so that people may say, 'They ate and were satiated *beyond measure*; the Lord granted them what they wished for and did not defraud them in their holy desires.'

"Yes, if the souls called to an extraordinary way are faithful,

God will do this for them. And they, like a fruitful plant, will grow and give the nourishment with which they are nourished, *loved not so much because it is a special gift as because it is a means to nourish, save, and sanctify their brothers and sisters*. Something which one who is nourished with God must have as a natural habit: Charity. The Charity which thanks God for the gift and shares that very gift with the have-nots, saying, 'Come, brothers and sisters! Come and eat! Let us taste the food of God together.'

"Let us bless the Lord! Respond: 'Thanks be to God.' Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

Introit.. Ps 91(9045-16, 1

Collect: You purify Your Church, Lord, every year by the observance of Lent; grant to Your household that what we strive to gain from You by our abstinence, we may put to use in our good works. Through our Lord.

Epistle: 2 Co 6:1-10

Gradual.. Ps 91(9041-12

Tract.. Ps 91(904-7, 11-16

Gospel: Mt 4:1-11

Offertory: Ps 91(90)A-5

Secret. Lord, we solemnly offer You this sacrifice at the beginning of Lent, entreating You that in abstaining from bodily nourishment, we may also keep ourselves from sinful pleasures. Through our Lord.

Communion.. Ps 91(90)A-5

Postcommunion: May this holy partaking of Your sacrament restore us, Lord, may it cleanse us from the defilements of the old man and bring us into the fellowship of Your saving mystery. Through our Lord.

Sunday, March 10, 1946

Azariah says:

"Soul of mine, our Mass. The Mass seen and considered through the 'voices,' through you. It begins with a truthful promise, like all that is of God: 'He will call upon Me, and I shall hear him. I shall free him and glorify him. I shall satisfy him with a long life.'

"It seems that a single God is speaking, don't you think? But our Most Holy God is Three, while remaining One. And each of the Most Holy Three has his special attributes, which are not lacking in the others, but which shine forth more particularly in One and, joined to Love, the common attribute, form the inconceivable and most perfect Perfection of Our Triune Lord God.

"And the Most Holy Three admire and complete one another, pouring forth the river of their three joined perfections upon their children, the saved, the instructed. And that is why the Father promises, 'He will call upon Me, and I shall hear him.' He is a father. Can a father be deaf to his child's cry for help? He cannot. And a most perfect Father can do so even less; *He absolutely cannot* be deaf to the children who call upon Him. He turns to the sinners who, on account of sorrow or repentance, remember

Him. How, then, can He fail to do so for those who love Him as faithful children?

"Soul of mine, with utter abandon lean on the love of the Father. Abandon is not an offense, as those who do not know God as we know Him may believe! Love is always reverent and respectful: all the more reverent and respectful, the wider it is; perfectly reverent and respectful when it is absolute. For it is the soul that loves. And the soul, once it has entered upon the way of the loving knowledge of God, is humble. Familiarity generates a lack of respect only in human loves, always weighed down by materiality. But in spiritual loves-I am speaking of *true loves*, not of the exalted, transitory, and superficial palpitations of sentimentalists-familiarity does not degenerate into a lack of respect. The soul leans on God, bowing its head at the feet of God, kneeling humbly, aware of the infinite distance which always lies between her little perfection and the infinite Perfection. She remains there, adoring, but with daughterly affection, until God says, 'No, not that way, like a slave. But on the knees, on the lap of the Father, O daughter whom I have created.' And you know that there is ecstasy until God takes leave of her and the soul goes back to love, in adoration, at His feet.

"The Son promises, 'I shall free him and glorify him.' By his infinite merits He frees his redeemed ones. For this reason He was the Christ. For this reason He left Heaven. For this reason He suffered and died. And, before going to the Passion, did He not ask for your sakes that the same glory the Father had given Him and He had transmitted to his disciples be given *to all those who would believe in Him so that they would be one with the Triune God?* Jesus, Our Most Holy Lord, is never untrue to his words. Those who live according to his teaching will therefore be glorified by Him, to whom all judgment has been given because He is God. For He is the Father's beloved Son; for He is the Obedient One, the Consoler of his Father, the Redeemer; for it is He who has given *everything*: union in Heaven with the Father and the peace of the Heavens by becoming incarnate, and Life by dying for man.

"The Holy Spirit promises, 'I shall satisfy him with a long life.' Can the spirit which has understood the Truth desire the indigence of prolonged days upon the Earth? No. And, then, what life is the Eternal Spirit speaking of? Of eternal life, given to those who have known how to love. For *to know how to love means to*

possess all knowledge, all right action, it means to save oneself, to sanctify oneself, to know; it means to be wise. And Love promises, 'To those who have known how to love I shall give a long life.' Oh, a life that has no end! A flow of ages and ages in a joy which does not change and does not cause weariness, which grows every moment, seems new, vaster, more lovely.... Our joy as angels.... Glory be to God!

"And here is the prophet, who says, 'He who rests in the aid of the Most High will live under the protection of the God of Heaven.' Do not fear. Trust in God, as both a creature and a spokeswoman. Heaven will protect you. Even if the whole world were to hurl itself against you to condemn you, can you believe that this will avail to influence the judgment of God? That judgment is not disturbed by human outcry. Remain steadfast in your obedience. God is more than everyone else. Serve Him, and He, even if you should be stricken with an anathema, vilified, and tortured, will pour his rivers of love upon you, and you will feel protected.

"And, in the way God has shown you, join in the Lenten abstinences. You suffer greatly over what is happening. And I count these sufferings of yours. And say, while suffering, 'Thy will be done.' Soul of mine, this is worth much more than fasts conducted clumsily, procuring only discomfort for the flesh. And suffer in peace. *On behalf of my Lord, I tell you that you are free from blame in what is occurring.* So be at peace. You have practiced obedience and prudence. Be at peace.

"Here are the words of Paul. He, too, was a voice from the moment God made him his own, an unwearying, heroic voice, and he is a master of the voices. Listen to this master, who speaks to those spreading the Word of God in a special way, though he speaks to the faithful in general. Moreover, shouldn't every Christian preach Christ and the true God, with the main goal of his instruction being to improve his education in Wisdom so as to be able to speak of it, and the main goal of his days to practice what he has learned in order to preach God and his Christ further, with all the acts of his virtuous life?

"Paul says, 'We exhort you not to receive the grace of God in vain.' My Lord has spoken to you on different occasions to form you for a good capacity to receive the extraordinary grace. He has told you that *where pride and disobedience entered, the gift would become apunishment.* He has shown you that if *it is a gift,*

it is also a yoke and obliges one to practice continuous virtue so as not to become a condemnation. He has said so: 'Of him to whom much is given much is asked.' Yes, to be able to say, 'I did not know' is denied to you. In knowing, therefore, you must be perfect according to your strength and realize that it constantly increases, for Wisdom fortifies the souls that receive it with humility.

"You are thinking, 'And if one receives the gift half-heartedly?' *If one acts that way, or, worse still, corrupts it with human or Satanic additions, then strength does not increase, but recedes, goes astray, and Wisdom withdraws after having condemned.*

"Receive, then, the grace of God actively, ever more actively. You must reach the point where *even a breath is regulated according to a good will to serve grace and make it fructify.* The Lord can demand this complete gift of yourself after 'He has heard you at the propitious time and on the day of salvation has come to your aid.'

"How, then, should you carry out this complete gift? Paul tells you: 'By not giving anyone a reason for scandal so that your ministry will not be reviled,' and in all things behave as an instrument of God, with great patience in tribulations, necessities, and distress. In whatever circumstance. The flagellations of malicious judgments are no less painful than those of scourges. And prohibitions are no less imprisoning than jails. And incomprehension or wicked interpretations, which deprive you of the comfort of being aided in your task, are no less painful than weariness, vigils, and fasts.

"But bear everything with purity, knowledge, longanimity, with gentleness, with the Holy Spirit, with unfeigned charity, with the word of truth, with the virtue of God, with the weapons of justice left and right, in the midst of glory, in the hours of glory as in the midst of ignominy, in the bitter hours, with a good and bad reputation.

"You know what you are. They can tell you what they like. They can accuse you of being seduced and a seductress, but you know that you are truthful. They can say to you, 'And who are you? A nobody. A nonentity.' And what is reputation among men? It suffices for you to be well-known in the Heavens. And what difference does it make if you have the appearance of a poor invalid? *There shines forth more brightly the power of God, who, going against natural laws, accomplishes the prodigy of a dying person sustaining exertions superior to the strength of one who is*

healthy for the glory of God, and living that way because God nourishes him with his Life so that he will serve Him as long as He wishes.

"Men can punish you. But death, *real* death, will not be given you, for you are *living out* the request of the 'Our Father' and do what God wants from you. You are melancholy, as the saints were, from Christ on, because of the wretchedness of men, but for yourself in mutual love you find the holy mirth of the spirit in peace.

"You will seem poor, in both material means and supernatural means, not being able to work and go to church. But you have treasures, accumulated more by your suffering than by everything else, and you have all in having God for your love and comfort. A poor woman who enriches many others with the treasures which God has opened to you and with the suffering you have asked for. A woman of means in possessing All. Sing, sing the psalm with me. I am the angel who is your guardian. Sing the Davidic psalm with me and do not fear, do not fear.

"Men are worse than the asp, the basilisk, the lion, and the dragon. Many men are quite close to the demons. But one who is with God and his angels should not fear.

"Make the words of the sublime Tempted One your own and reply to Satan, his servants, the world, and men, who would like to frighten you, mortify you, and separate you from your mission with threats or offers of immediate, tangible honors and benefits: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from God. Begone, O Satan! I serve the Lord God and no other.'

"Soul of mine, fear not. Proceed. The Glory of the Heavens will satisfy you for every holy desire and compensate you for every sorrow. Let us bless the Lord (Thanks be to God). Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Introit: Ps 25(24):6, 3, 22, 1-2

Collect: You see, Lord, that we are powerless of ourselves; be our defense in perils both from within and without that our bodies may be protected from all harm and our minds cleansed from evil thoughts. Through our Lord.

Epistle: 1 Th 4:1-7

Gradual: Ps 25(24):17-18

Tract: Ps 106(105):1-4

Gospel: Mt 17:1-9

Offertory: Ps 119(118):47, 48

Secret: Look mercifully, we pray, Lord, on these sacrifices; that they may be profitable both to our devotion and to our salvation. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 5:2-4

Postcommunion: We humbly entreat You, almighty God, that we who have been refreshed by Your sacraments may be enabled to serve You worthily and live in a manner pleasing to You. Through our Lord.

In Nomine Domini March 17, 1946

Beginning today, as the angel told me, before writing I shall start using the phrase "In Nomine Domini" as an invocation upon notebooks or letters and every action of mine. He told me to on Sunday, March 3, after the explanation of Holy Mass: "When this new mutilation is accomplished and you are no longer defended by anyone except God, for even the priest will no longer be able to aid and protect you, before writing letters or notebooks or carrying out any other writing or action, you shall invoke the words 'In Nomine Domini,' always including the sentence taught by Most Holy Jesus: 'Peace be with you.'"

Azariah says:

"Here I am, soul of mine, for our Holy Mass. The beautiful Mass of the 'voices.'

"I do not speak to you as a master, standing in front of you, but put my arm around your shoulders to make you feel that Heaven is with you and that all this peace inundating you is Heaven; it is Heaven, for you are the little obedient voice, and God loves you; He loves you so much-the more you are unloved by men, the more He loves you. Do you see who is with me? The three archangels. To bring you more and more Heaven. Joan of

France never had Michael with her so much as in the hour of martyrdom. We do not abandon the 'victims.' We draw close to them because we see Christ again in them and they are what we would like to be, out of love. They are holocausts.

"Look at the smile of my three brothers. They are ready to sing the praises of God with the two of us.

"Here is the Introit. It is a sweet, filial remembrance. But it is fearlessly stated that God cannot forget his beloved children for a single instant. It is like children's innocent words to their mothers: 'Do you love me? They know their mothers love them. But it is so sweet to hear a mother say that she loves you that the little one, already sure of the reply, asks the question several times a day.

"The children of God, to hear the sweet paternal reply being given, also say, 'Remember, O Lord Oh, the reply is already descending! I am bringing it to you. He, the Most High, says, 'Even before you remember to say to me, "Remember me," I remember you.' Yes, He remembers, in his mercy, limitless in time, in number, in power.

"He lets *his* enemies act. But not beyond a limit. I said 'his' enemies. It was not a mistake, soul of mine. *Whoever offends God's beloved creature offends God,- whoever tortures the creature offends God and is therefore his enemy. For God shines in his beloved ones, and whoever raises his hand against them raises it against the Most Holy Light.* I also said that God lets them act, but not beyond a limit. Soul of mine, you are about to touch it. Like a wall assailed by lunatics, every love, even if holy, is collapsing around you. Death or imposition or indifference leaves you bereft of company, and naked. Like Jesus on the cross. Oh, blessed are you, that no longer have anyone but the saints as your friends! Relatives, friends, sisters-your sisters!-companions, your companions! Do you see how poor and limited human loves are? Or death, about which there is nothing to be said but, 'Fiat!' Or the will of men and the proud, base incomprehension of men-that's what has left you alone.

"Little John,' you no longer have any but one woman² to give you that material care which you, crucified, cannot give your-

¹ *Little John* is the name given to Maria Valtorta because of her spiritual affinity with the Apostle and Evangelist John.

² An allusion to *Marta Dicitotti*.

self any more. And yet, with your words, with your words stated before my lesson, you show you are like old Tobit 'of the lineage of the saints,' one who 'awaits that life which God will give those who never lose their faith in the Lord.'

"Do you know that your words, joyful with the gladness of one who lives in the Lord, have been written in the book of Heaven? Persevere, soul of mine, and you will be free from all affliction and not be left disappointed, you that trust in the Lord.

"Let us pray to the Lord. Let us pray to Him together that evil may never prevail over your creaturely weakness, as a result of neither dejection nor pride, just as you have never desired; and may God, God alone, keep you pure for his glory.

"And now the three come from Heaven tell you-they who were present when the Apostle wrote to those in Th.essalonica and spoke, for the ages, to all the faithful-'the way in which' a little voice ought to 'behave so as to please God, so as to progress ever further.' Your guides are the angels of Heaven themselves and the Angel of angels, first of all-that is, the Most Holy Lord Jesus-those who have come to bring you the Lord's precepts to make you walk securely on the way of God. Never doubt this ever. And now they repeat to you, we repeat with the Apostle, that God wants you to sanctify yourself more and more and desires that no fornication should sting you.

"How many Satan will present you with, now that your earthly aid is taken away from you!² His appearance and clothing sent Satan away; his spirit put him to flight. For this reason you wanted him near you in your agonies. But Jesus was alone in Gethsemane. Alone in the Synedrium, alone in the Pretorium, alone on Calvary.... Soul, soul of mine, be like Christ. Struggle alone and overcome, in the Name of the Lord. Hell will not prevail if You *always* work for the glory of God.

"Say, 'No!' to the one who will want you to fornicate by thought, pride, judgment, the spirit. No, to the one who wants to make you judge the upper ecclesiastical hierarchies. No, to the one who wants to make you say that they have acted badly. No, to the one who would like you to become lukewarm in love for God, the Church, and prayer. No, to the one who will tempt you to seek human satisfactions. No, always no, to concupiscence. And

¹The quote, taken from the Vulgate, has been suppressed in recent editions of the Bible.

²Maria Valtorta notes that this is a reference to the transfer to Rome of her spiritual director, Fr. Mighorini, on March 21, 1946.

'Yes,' always yes, a yes similar to the purest star, to the heavenly song intoned to God, to his adorable will.

"Be the mistress of your body, which is a temple for the soul, where Christ lives, and, above all, be the mistress of your intellect, of its possible weaknesses, which Satan might stir up to overcome you. Never, for any reason, imitate the mountebanks of religion and mysticism with abuses and frauds. Be as transparent as a mountain spring. Give the thread or the river of words which God gives you, without taking in other waters to increase your yield and seduce. God inexorably applies justice to these frauds. He has chosen you not so you will profane yourself, but so that your gift will sanctify you. A *single word can save a heart*. And to save the hearts endowed with salvific goodwill God gives you a thousand and ten thousand words. And they will be fruitful because you sprinkle and fertilize them with your constantly increased tribulations.

"Let us celebrate the goodness of the Lord with nothing other than the perfect observance of his Law. This is the sacrifice of praise which God accepts from hearts, the one He wants to be *complete* from those to whom He has given everything, giving Himself as Love and Word. Always give me the joy of seeing you celebrate your sacrifice of praise, O soul that God has given me to watch over and whom I love with a great love....

"Soul that I have seen being transfigured-slowly, as befits human nature, but constantly, to the point that I, too, can say with the three Apostles: 'It is beautiful, O my Lord, to remain here, with this soul that your love has shaped, and the more You have shaped her, the more she has agreed to be shaped because of her love.' Maria, like soft dough in the hands of God, always, always let yourself be kneaded, without resistance, and refashioned increasingly in accordance with his most holy thought.

"Promise the Lord, together with your Azariah: 'I will meditate upon your precepts, so dear to me, and raise my hands to your commandments, which I love.' Indeed, only those who love meditate on and relish anew the words of Him whom they love, and in doing so they eliminate distances and melt in love. And only one who loves with true love reaches out to welcome what the Beloved commands, even if it is a burdensome and painful will for the creature, *but a will which is loved by the spirit* that sees and tastes as a joy everything which comes from Him who is the reason for its love.

"And love saves; it always saves. The Most Holy Lord therefore prayed that his followers would have the Holy Spirit-that is, Love-after his departure so that with his fire he would cleanse those who, without obstinate malice, would fall into imperfections, but with love would plunge into Love to receive therefrom absolution and peace and perfect, continuous, saving instruction. That which is given to you, soul of mine.

"Let us bless the Lord!"

"Thanks be to God."

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

Introit: Ps 25(24):15-16, 1-2

Collect: Listen, almighty God, to the prayers of the humble and stretch out the right hand of Your majesty to protect us. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Ep 5:1-9

Gradual: Ps 9:20, 4

Tract: Ps 123(12M):1-3

Gospel: Lk 11:14-28

Offertory: Ps 19(18):9, 10, 11, 12

Secret: Let this victim, we implore You, Lord, cleanse away our sins; and sanctify Your servants in body and soul, to celebrate this sacrifice. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 84(83):4-5

Postcommunion: In Your mercy, Lord, free us from all guilt and all danger, since You grant us a share in so great a mystery. Through our Lord,

March 24, 1946

You are waiting so expectantly, anxiously, to hear the angelical word, which is so sweet, clear, and comforting.¹

I must tell you, however, that since you went away, an angel-who I do not think is mine-has been constantly and visibly present to me. I tell you that he does not seem to be mine because, whereas Azariah usually shows himself to me by materializing in his beauty, as I described to you at the appropriate time, this one is completely spiritualized, in a very bright light that only a miracle of God allows me to gaze at steadily, and he has the incorporeal beauty of spiritual beings; nor does he use his feet to move, but the two lights of his wings, and everything in him is light: his face, his hands crossed over his chest, the extremely white, immaterial robe.... And I say, "hands, face, clothing" because we poor mortals can only express ourselves materially to state what we see. But this most beautiful spirit, who never leaves me and with whom my soul embarks upon continual loving conversations, has nothing but the incorporeal condensation of his spirit in the form of face, hands, and clothing to become present to my spiritual sight, and he is so reduced to the minimum necessary to attain this goal that to speak of his "face, hands, and robe" really amounts to using improper, very material language.

He appears to me, in short, as the Angel of Gethsemane, who "was light in the form of an angel"; he seems to be one of many I have seen

¹Maria Valtorta addresses these words to her spiritual director, Fr. Migliorini.

in the choirs of Paradise.... Oh, light, singing light in the boundless azure of Heaven ... ! It strikes me as one of those Christmas angels-for the shepherds-one of those in Compito,¹ in one of the last nights of my exile, who uplifted me to ecstasy with their flying overhead while singing unrepeatable harmonies

I do not know who it is. I know that his presence is my comfort. To me he is more than gentle moonlight to the solitary, lost traveler, and he gives me the assurance that I am not alone, but am in the best of company, with the best of guides, and on the best of ways, that of the angel of God, and on the way the angels follow: that of God. I do not know who it is. His presence fills me with joy, but he does not reveal himself. Yesterday Marta was away for six hours at Camaiole.... Well, *alone* in my room for three of the six hours, I was so happy with this angelical presence that I even received physical relief from it. I recollected myself in that meditation and contemplation which may virtually seem somnolence to outsiders and is instead a burning of the spirit, and I was joyful.... What peace ... !

But now Azariah shows himself and speaks. The luminous angel is not, then, Azariah-and I write.

Azariah says:

"With the humility of the younger brother before the older one, I come for our Holy Mass. And the Angel of the Seventy Weeks, the Comforter of Gethsemane, the most blessed archangel Gabriel, whom the Eternal grants you as a friend to comfort you-for he is the Archangel of joy, of the heavenly joys-will increase your power of comprehension with his light.

"He thus appears to you to give you a slight idea of his reality in the heavens. To the senses of the spirit-purified more and more by the ultimate trial-a new capacity to see is to be given. Believe, soul of mine, *that the more the creature becomes obedience and charity, the more the spirit evolves towards what its life will be in Paradise while awaiting the resurrection of bodies. The dullness and limitations upon all perfect, prompt obedience fall away, and the scales still restricting the spiritual faculties in their ulsiOn drop off, as if consumed by the flame of charity-for obedience is charity-and with great rejoicing the soul draws near to the knowledge of the life of the Heavens, of what is above: adoration, beatitude, peace, exultation of light....*

"Observe, soul of mine: if, *even inwardly, you had made a re-*

¹Compito is the locality where Maria Valtorta took refuge from April 24 to December 23, 1944, remaining away from Viareggio during the second world war.

bellious movement, performed a minimum act of disobedience, made a compromise—simply a compromise, one of those poor compromises even the best Christians are too often accustomed to—the limitations upon your creaturely power of vision, instead of becoming less weighty, would have become *heavier and denser*, like clouds that accumulate; they would have carried you away, like a vehicle that takes one somewhere else.... You realized the trap into which the Enemy wanted to make you fall to excite Heaven's disgust towards you. With deceitful reflections he wanted to make you disobey the order received to list the books you have *with sincerity*. There is nothing to be criticized in your books *or of such a nature as might give rise to talk among those not believing in the supernatural that you are aided culturally in your work*. (This, however, is what is really meant... 12/9/47). But he wanted to frighten you, saying this and that, to lead you ... to leave out *intentionally* some book or other.

"To forget is not a sin when it is a *real* lapse of the mind. But *to will to forget*, to carry out obedience as one believes it is humanly useful to do so, is *a sin*. Mental restrictions, reservations, to say, for example, 'I said I had no other books because at present I haven't any at home,' one of the subterfuges frequently used among Christians, like saying, for instance, 'I haven't seen,' only because one does not see at *that* moment, are not good things. They are lies. One must never lie even in nuances.

"The truth is not something blurry, vague like a little cloud in the sky.... It is a solid, square block of diamond, luminous, transparent, quite beautiful, but hard, unassailable by winds, rains, and fingers. And since the truth comes directly from what is most perfect on Earth—that is, from Heaven—even if man wants to destroy it and sometimes seems to succeed on the Earth, in reality the truth remains intact in its kingdom and sooner or later is known and recognized, along with the merits of the spirit that was faithful to the truth.

"The truth is so diamantine that, instead of being scratched, it scratches and breaks even the vitreous souls of the unfortunates who do not want to acknowledge it, who do not want to accept it, and, whether they are willing or unwilling, it writes its words, and these are a condemnation for the dead, the deaf, the spiritually blind, the indifferent, and the lukewarm, whom God rejects and vomits far from Himself; it writes its truth as '*being the truth*,' even if it is denied, on the poor, smoke-blackened, dusty window-

panes covered with useless cobwebs that think themselves better than diamonds only because they are set in an ornate frame....

"Observe, soul of mine, if you had accepted a mental restriction, one of those Satan proposed to you, and if you had omitted this book of your grandfather's because it might give offense to priests, this other one of your mother's because it was on the Index, that other one of yours because it speaks of God, to such a minimal extent that *it certainly cannot explain what you set down on paper*, and all of this to appear holy even in the books you keep as mementoes, as you keep the family portraits which you cannot contemplate, sick as you are, but which it would cause you sorrow to destroy because they are the face of your father, of your mother, of your grandparents.... you would have lied, and now *you would not merit* this peace you enjoy and would not see the glorious Gabriel. *You have merited more by this perfect obedience*, which to the superficial may seem to be something ridiculous, *than if you had said a thousand vocal prayers*.

"This is to tell you the value of the obedience which does not degrade itself with compromises. Always be heroic like this, and peace and light will ever increase in you.

"And now let us meditate upon our Holy Mass.

"Doesn't the Introit really seem to have been written for you, little voice? But, truthful in describing your current situation 'the snare set at your feet'-it is also truthful in describing your spiritual state: 'my eyes are always turned towards the Lord.'

"Yes, that's it! Always like that! The wickedness and incredulity of men-whom you must, however, always forgive with the words of Our Most Holy Lord Jesus: 'Father, forgive them, for they *do not know* what they are doing'-can set snares for you. But, where? At your feet, the lowest, most material part, standing in the midst of the filth of the ways of the world, for you are still in the world, as the Most Holy Lord Jesus was during his thirty-three years as the God-Man in Palestine. But they cannot set snares for your spirit, your contemplative vision, your charity, which, the more you realize that everything is vanity and transience here below, blazes and concentrates more and more upon the Most High and Holy Triune Lord.

"And so it is that you, with a snare at your feet, but with your spirit free, establish yourself in the Lord. 'Turn to me,' you cry. And He turns to you to such an extent that He gives you Himself.'

"I am poor and alone,' you cry. No. You are with his angels

and with Him, with Him, with Him! Alleluia! The soul of mine is with the Lord! Can there be a greater joy for a guardian angel? You are not, then, alone: you have the infinite friendships of Heaven. And you are not poor: you possess the wealth which cannot be stolen. Fear not. Your confidence in the Most Holy Father shall not be disappointed.

"And here, to give praise to God for his holy Archangel, let us interlace the Holy Mass of the Third Sunday of Lent with the luminous Mass of St. Gabriel.'

"Let us contemplate together our virtue as angels. What is it that makes us great? Our beauty? Our destiny? Our origin? No: our promptness in obedience at the sound of the words of God, at the flashing of his Most Holy Thought, *for a flash of beatific light is the sound we perceive*, not, indeed, the material voice of an uvula. And our light is lit with rejoicing on accepting that flash and further increases on carrying out its command. You know. If we did not obey, our light would go out, our beauty would cease, our destiny would change, and the origin would become our condemnation, as it was for Lucifer and the rebels. We, angels of the Lord, cannot boast of anything, not of beauty, destiny, or origin, for everything comes to us from God Most Holy. But on account of the creatures of the Creator who are men we can boast through service obedient to the Lord.

"The First-Born of men touched absolute perfection in being obedient until death' to do the Will of the Lord. What merits ^{Ph 2:8} would we have if, spiritual as we are, we were not to exercise virtues? Charity, humility, obedience, truth. Since we cannot experience carnal lust, nor must we have faith and hope—we who see the Most Holy Reality of God—and, superior to men because we are not weighed down by matter, we have no need to be temperant and strong, just, and prudent, for the contemplation of God itself makes us so. Oh! God pervades us! How good the Lord is, who lets Himself be contemplated and infuses Himself this way into his spirits! But He provides us with a way to offer Him honors with charity, humility, obedience, and truth.

"Let us bless the Lord! Let us, angels, and you, soul, bless the Lord with our whole selves!

"And you, soul of mine, beseech the Holy Archangel for perpetual protection. Love him, love him greatly, for he is the angel

¹In the Roman Missal of St. Pius V, St. Gabriel's feast day was March 24.

of happy announcements and sublime comforts.

"Let us repeat the first words of the Reading: *'Behold, Gabriel... flying quickly, touched me in the temple of the evening sacrifice.* He instructed me, spoke to me, and said, "Now I have come to teach you, to make you understand." Nothing more is necessary for the time being.

"He touched me in the temple of the evening sacrifice.' That's when Daniel was touched! *At the hour of the sacrifice, in the temple, and in the evening.* Your evening is approaching. But before it comes and precedes the dawn—for the evening is not the end, but the pre-announcement of the next day in the perfect continuity of the created elements, which obey God rather than men—you will be instructed by the archangel. And why such an honor? Because you are in the temple which mutual Charity between you and God has created, and at the hour of your final sacrifice. The sweetest one. The one which obtains the dismissal of Satan in the hours of the night.

"After the dark temptation, Our Holy Lord Jesus was consoled by Gabriel, and Satan disturbed Him no longer. Men remained to torture the Divine Dying One. But, what are men as compared to Satan? No matter how demonic, they are nothing in the power to torture in comparison to Satan. You know. But take heart! The evening sacrifice is made precisely to dismiss Satan, to impose upon him God's 'Enough!' and bring Divine Fortitude to his children offered in holocaust.

"Gabriel will speak to you of a tremendous secret and will give you an order that comes from God—a tremendous one, indeed not for you, but for those provoking Him, and they will be the words of instruction of him who bears the most sublime testaments and requires the highest forms of obedience.

"And now let us return to the Pauline epistle. But I shall respond later to your question, and you shall thus write the reply and also what I told you two Sundays ago about my silence on the Gospel.

"Why will St. Gabriel, and not I, give you an order and a secret? Because the lesser one should not speak where the greater is speaking. As regards both this secret and the explanations of the Gospel. The Lord Jesus, Supreme Master of all who are on Earth and in Heaven, instructs you on the latter, and I remain silent, listening, and have nothing to add where He has spoken.

"Paul delineates the whole program for Christians and, there-

fore, for the voices, who, out of gratitude alone to the Lord for the great gift granted by Him, *must be more perfect than others* and tend towards this *perfection* with the perfection of thought. Do you know what this '*perfection of thought*' is? It is to want to be perfect *not for the future glory which perfection will grant, but because of the filial love of one benefited in a superhuman way by the Father* and in a measure which only the Infinite can give.

"Here, then: 'Be imitators of God as beloved children.' Oh! Paul does not say to you, 'Imitate this or that saint!' He tells you, 'Imitate God in his perfections'. To imitate God! To make a continuous effort, therefore, to reach perfection. And to do so with charity, but also *with humility*; with faith, but also *with humility*; with hope, but also *with humility*.

"All of you know that notwithstanding every heroic effort You will always be incapable of possessing the Perfection of God. But do not get discouraged! The Most Holy Father knows, because He is perfect, that the creature cannot be like the Creator, and to comfort you, to justify your relative measure, proclaiming it with justice to be 'perfect for the creature,' He has set a limit for this measure: yours. He has said, 'with your whole selves.' 'With all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength,' states the immutable command until the end of the ages; and heretical and accursed is one who changes or alters it or replaces it with a human command for other forms of worship of ideas which are not of God, but are a mixture of hellish smoke and nellish venom with the smoke and venom of a wicked creature.

"When one loves with all one's heart, soul, and strength, one has, for oneself, *loved perfectly*. One has, therefore, imitated God, who is perfect in Good.

"Paul's second precept: 'Live in love as Christ has loved us and has given Himself to God for us in a holocaust as a sweetsmelling host.'

"Perfect love! The love of Jesus Christ, Son of God and Our Lord. Love which arrives at sacrifice. Love for one's neighbor which arrives at immolating oneself for one's neighbor. Love for God to the point of becoming the Immolated One on the altar of Reparation.

"Another precept: 'May they not only not be in you, but not even be mentioned among you'-among you, who must recall only the gifts, perfections, and teachings of God-Tornications, impurity of any kind, avarice.' You are no longer men. You are 'voices.'

"And the voice is not weighed down, but is a sound. Do not be weighed down by humanity. Do not pervert your destiny as 'voices' with obscenity, foolish discourse, and buffoonery. Remember that the symbolic gesture of the lips purified by fire taken from the altar has not been limited to the prophet. All those whom God chooses, the true, certain voices, have been purified before the mission by the fire of Divine Love. The palms of priests are holy because of the ordination received, and those hands should not touch anything impure or make impure gestures, for they must touch the Most Holy Body of Our Lord. But the lips which the Divine Word has consecrated, which by his order have repeated that Word, must keep themselves *sanctified*, with supreme respect, on account of what has proceeded from them. *And the* mind as well, the heart as well. You would otherwise become indecent and fornicators and lose your place on Earth and in Heaven. And you must not be miserly, but *prudent*, so that man will not profane, but let whoever is hungry take the gift of God.

"And be steadfast. Without acts of pride and without fears. Disregard the vain discourse of men if it is superficial, so as not to have to account for time wasted on sterile things; if it is aimed at frightening you or making you proud, or at denigrating and tending to diminish the work God is doing in you, let it not seduce you. The wrath of *God is upon the unbelieving*. Do not, therefore, associate with them, but reply to them, 'Once we, too, were darkness, but now we are light in the Lord. And we pray for you that you may become light.'

"No more than that, Maria. No more. And increasingly live as a daughter of the Light, for its fruit is everything that is good, just, and true. Nor can it *happen-you may* say this to the unbelieving and the rationalists- that *Beelzebub should serve God by providing holy words* for the conversion of hearts. (And yet it is suggested to me that it may be Beelzebub who is dictating... 12/9/47).

"Fly home, to the nest, O little turtledove of God, and stay in his Love. And there listen, for you need that defense so as to listen to what the Archangel is saying to you, and possess your peace in That Love."

And Azariah kneels down to listen to Gabriel, who, intensifying his light, greets me with the words "Ave Maria!" None other than Ave Maria. He then addresses a tremendous "Oh!" to me-it is really a tremendous word-and gives me an order. So condemn-

natory in its reasoning! But I shall take it with me to the tomb. "And it is much more tremendous," the Archangel says, "than the secret of Fatima, and ought not to be revealed, for men, even these for whom it has been uttered, do not deserve to *know it*." And then the Archangel, together with Azariah, who rises again from his genuflection, sings, "Let us bless the Lord." I respond, "Thanks be to God," as Azariah has taught me, and say with them, "Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit

... And now I also have the sorrowful weight of this tremendous knowledge....

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Introit: Is 66:10-11; Ps 122(121):1

Collect: Grant, we pray, almighty God, that we who suffer just punishment for our evil deeds, may be relieved by the consolation of Your grace.
Through our Lord.

Epistle: Ga 4:22-31

Gradual: Ps 122(121):1, 7

Tract: Ps 125(124):1-2

Gospel: Jn 6:1-15

Offertory: Ps 135(134):3, 6

Secret: Look mercifully, we pray, Lord, on these sacrifices; that they may be profitable both to our devotion and to our salvation. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 122(121):3-4

Postcommunion: Merciful God, grant us, we pray, that we may always celebrate with veneration and receive with faithful hearts these holy mysteries with which You continually regale us. Through our Lord.

March 31, 1946

Azariah says:

"Why, over what, should Jerusalem rejoice? Perhaps over her long life? Certainly not. But over being alive because of her union with Christ, who nourishes her with his gifts and adorns her with his saints. If she were not of a supernatural nature, she would not have these gifts and these saints and would perish, like everything that is born through the work of man, all that lasts for a relative time and then, through the attacks of enemies, grows weak and dies.

"But the earthly Jerusalem is not divided from the heavenly Jerusalem, and the citizens of the heavenly one are with the earthly Jerusalem to comfort her, aid her, and defend her from the malice of Evil dashing against her to demolish her, without success, moreover.

"But it is not only heavenly aid that maintains her. The Most Holy Lord Jesus has promised that nothing will prevail against her. This promise would suffice to defend her. For the promises of God are always active. But God, though sufficing unto Himself to accomplish any prodigy, does not deprive his children of the right to cooperate with the Father's concerns, the right to contribute to the prosperity of the Father's House.

"And the Church is the great abode of the Father, of God, on the Earth. It is no longer the vast Temple on the mountain of Jerusalem-vast, but nothing in comparison to the Earth, a *supernothing* as compared to Creation. This is no longer the current House of the Father, which has expanded its pavilions from one Pole to the other, to the east and to the west; and they are now scattered all over the Earth, and wherever the name of God and of Jesus the Savior is known, with love or with hatred. And wherever there is an altar to sanctify the continents, to assemble them in the holy sign. And wherever a Sacrifice is celebrated, not of rams or lambs, but of the Most Holy Flesh of the Divine Lamb, immolated to wash the door jambs and thresholds of the Earth, a place of exile, and make it already a little Heaven, so that exiled men may be less exiled from the eternal place for which God created them and may receive assistance and a stimulus from the joys they savor at the foot of an altar, at the Table of the supersubstantial Bread. In this way the Father's abode has expanded! The earthly Jerusalem has widened her walls and spread out her pacific armies and her teachers so that the Name which is above every other and before whose sound the children of God bend their knees, whatever their race, language, latitude, and custom may be, should become known everywhere.

"Well then, aren't these citizens of such a vast city those who, with their sacrifices and their prayers, also cooperate with the Father for that city's triumph over Hell and its followers? They are these citizens, too.

"Like the mystical waters which Ezekiel saw issuing from under the Temple gate-which at the outset are ankle-high above the ground, then swell to knee-level, and finally are high enough to submerge the full stature of a man-so are the merits of the saints on Earth. At the beginning of the Church there were few, for the citizens of the Church Militant were few in number, and they could push forward only a little to fecundate the and sands and bitter swamps. But afterwards, over centuries and centuries, through martyrs and virgins and confessors-both known and unknown on the Earth, though all are known to us in the Heavens-the waters have swelled. They have flowed into the initial river bed, arising on Golgotha, from the water trickling from a Heart torn beyond death, and have increased the most holy wave with their waves of merits. And the little torrent has become a great river, **ever greater, capable of pushing forward and penetrat-**

ing, with the imposing mass of its waters, even into the most remote deserts, the most pestilential swamps, and purifying them, and making the sands fertile, permitting the rise of fruit-bearing trees which do not experience any loss of leaves or sterility in fruit-good trees suitable for nourishing, healing, and legitimizing illegitimate sons, giving them the blessed Name which comes from the Founder of the Church: 'Christians of Rome, seat of the Papacy founded by Most Holy Jesus upon his Rock.'

"O blessed children of the earthly Jerusalem, this is what you have to rejoice over with Her who is your Mother and with God, who is your Father! Over being those who, by their fidelity and heroism, contribute to keeping the river of her purifying expansion powerful and making it active. And so the invitation of the Introit is not just a word, but a word of truth, already a reward, and the promise of a greater reward.

"The Eternal sees your works and your hearts. He numbers holy affections and sentiments. He sees you eager for the Mother's triumph, sad over the lovelessness and the blameworthy disregard of the children who, after having been *of* the House, go out *fi-om* the Father's House, or the painful-but not blameworthy, as is disregard-ignorance of those who still do not know the true God, and He makes you say, 'You that love the Church, rejoice with Her, be glad; you that were in sadness, exult and quench your thirst at the sources of her consolation, for you, who have an active love for Her, are entitled to suck at her breast while here, in Heaven, in the Celestial Jerusalem, your place at the banquet of the Lamb is already prepared, at the banquet of the eternal victors, which you have merited by your spiritual and material work on behalf of the Mother Church that is the Bride of the Word.'

"And if this is for all the faithful who pour the contribution of their holy works into the river of the Communion of the Saints, in a special measure it is for you, beloved 'voices,' who add the martyrdom of being 'voices' to the common works. The multiform martyrdom of supersensible watchfulness so as to be always prepared to *understand, distinguish, and combat. To understand the voices coming to you from Beyond the Earth. To distinguish them so as not to confuse the mendacious and quite seductive speech of Satan with the blunter, but more truthful speech of the good voices. To combat the pride which might insinuate itself behind the humility which says, 'God speaks to his handmaiden.'* Insinu-

ate itself in serpentine fashion, like Lucifer, from whom it has arisen, to whisper on the sly, '... for I have merited this.'

"Oh, what a martyrdom of *continuous vigilance, continuous obedience, and continuous effort* you must ever make, dear 'voices' whom God has blessed and crucified in this mission! And a martyrdom of painful contradictions from blind, haughty men who do not want to see God and admit that God can carry out this miracle of love. And a martyrdom of derision, curiosity, and unmerited punishments.

"And a martyrdom of seeing the inertia of the souls that do not rouse themselves even in the face of *these words which come from God*.

"And a martyrdom of *not* being able to go to the real 'poor,' the real 'hungry,' the real 'ignorant,' and say, 'Look, don't be poor, hungry, and ignorant any longer. Here there is treasure, there is wealth, there is wisdom. It comes from God. He gives it to you for your sorrows, for your doubts, for your solitude. Because He loves You. Because He has mercy on *all* men. Because He is a Father. Take and sanctify yourselves with the gift of God.'

"You are the imprisoned apostles, O 'spokesmen,' who cannot make the holy word known to men. The treasure you hold in your arms bears you to Heaven. But for *yourselves*. When, after having enjoyed the ecstasy of receiving it-to the point that your flesh shares in it, so violent is the most sweet, blazing hurricane which has fallen upon you, to strip you of all that is humanity and make you understand that humanity is fleeting wretchedness, while only what is eternal and spiritual has value, and thus carry you, aware, higher and higher into the spheres of charity and contemplation-when, after having enjoyed ecstasy, you lower your gaze from the Fire, from Wisdom, from Power to the poor humanity that gropes wretchedly, ignorantly, and thirstily along the ways of the Earth and Errors-and you *know* what would save this humanity and give it wisdom, wealth, life, and warmth, and you cannot give the treasure wherein many would find the Way, the Truth, and the Life, sought in vain, in vain elsewhere-then you suffer the martyrdom of charity towards God, not known and loved, and towards your neighbor, whom you see dying without *peace* and whom it is impossible for you to relieve, imprisoned as you are by a category of men whom charity obliges me not to classify, and the ignorant or hostile indifference of the other, vaster category: the very group of those need-

ing the Word and Knowledge who stretch out their hands to all the 'apples of Sodom' in *their* desert and find themselves emptyhanded. For those apples, like the ones in the desert of Judaea, are empty under their deceitful appearance. But they do not stretch out their hands to the trees of Life growing in the midst of the square in the Heavenly City and on the banks of the river of living water flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, as the angel John, apostle of the Lord, saw, which bear the twelve fruits and month after month yield these eternal fruits for the blessed citizens of the City of Holiness and sublime Joy.

"And then you weep like Christ and *with* Christ, saying his words on the hostile city, 'Oh, if you, too, were to recognize what is of service for your peace! But it is hidden from your eyes by the scale of your sins, and you do not want to remove this scale which blinds you and look at the Light!'

"But take comfort, O voices. You can rejoice. For it is said to you, 'You shall go into the house of the Lord.' Yes, you will go there if you persevere in the virtues as you are taught. Then, because of 'your actions,' which, after being human, have become holy, you will be able to 'breathe through the consolation of his Grace' and be blessed, for his Grace is blessedness.

"And now let us read St. Paul.

"Even the eternal Abraham has two types of children. Those of the slave and those of the free woman.

"Who is the eternal Abraham? Many might tell you this or that. I tell you to give the name of Abraham here to the Eternal, Father of an extraordinary and enduring multitude, descendants after descendants, until the end of the ages.

"The eternal Abraham has joined Himself to Humanity, *metaphorically speaking*, to beget children who have the Father's supernatural image and likeness and who should have had their mother's natural likeness, perfect as the Father and Creator of Humanity had given it to the first seeds of Humanity.

"In the usual proliferation of races, be they human or animal, we see that the somatic traits of a family become more marked when two close relations unite, begetting children that *strongly* fix, shall we say, their parents' characteristics among their kinsmen.

"Now, then, what perfection of divine likeness, ever capable of being increased, would have come into the children born of the **Father Creator and the Humanity created by Him!** A wonderful

likeness! But to possess it Humanity had to conserve its likeness to the Father intact. The perfect form was, however, disfigured by Lucifer, both on the exterior and in the depths, and the likeness did not grow, was not perfected, but, rather, had lapses, regressions, and different aspects in the children of God and of Humanity, so that from the womb which begot the angelical Abel, in whom the divine likeness was evident, the satanic Cain had already emerged, in whom Humanity's prostitution to the Seducer was evident. And it has always, always been like that through the ages. Even after the grafting of Christ it was on the degenerated plant of Humanity.

"Now, then, the eternal Abraham had two sons: one by the slave and one by the free woman. The two branches of Humanity. And the son of the slave-listen carefully-was born *according to the flesh*, while the one of the free woman was born by *virtue of the promise*-that is, *according to the spirit*.

"Do you think the allegory was for that time alone? No, it is a reality which perpetuates itself. In the children of the Creator, of the eternal Abraham-for *all* men are children of the Creator, as He is the Giver of life-there are still the two major branches. The one of those born of the spirit and the one of those born of the flesh.

"And these latter are enemies of the former and enemies of God and of the two Jerusalems, for they are not of the holy Religion and the holy Kingdom, but of Arabia-that is, of the pagan people, and even more, of the satanic one, which worships Satan, the flesh, the world, and the concupiscences instead of God, which follows the evil doctrines instead of the Religion of God, which becomes depraved and sinks down, down, down, ever lower, and from its lowness exhales stenches and hurls darts at the children of the spirit, to corrupt, wound, and torture them, to do harm-to harm, cause pain, cause death, and despoil the Father of his dearest children....

"Oh, profanation that penetrate everywhere and, as an instrument of war-and war it is, a satanic war to which men lend themselves to act as an instrument and army-you crush, demolish, submerge, and extinguish ... !

:But whom do you extinguish?

Those who have left empty places in their spirits, in their intellects, those who believe themselves complete because they are stuffed with formulas, preconceptions, and haughtiness and

do not know that this is *smoke* and *fog* which immediately yield to a whirlwind dispersing them and occupying those places-left empty by the dispersed formulas, preconceptions, acts of arrogance, rationalisms, egoisms, sectarianisms, and so on: in short, by *human* doctrines-with formulas, axioms, forms of haughtiness, and doctrines which are even more lethal: with satanic things. For it is Satan who works where there are places empty of God.

"Pray for these children of the new Hagar: of the Humanity which is a slave to Satan. And for you, for you, children of the free woman, born of the spirit, persecuted for this reason, but not eternally vanquished, for every persecution falls at the feet of God's barriers-and these barriers are the absolute possession by God of your heart, which recognizes God as its only Lord and serves Him alone, and the threshold of the hereafter-I say: Fear not.

"Fear not! Man and Satan may wound the flesh. But you know! The flesh is transitory. The spirit of the free is resistant to the satanic and human venoms and darts. Only if you were to wish, by your own free will, to become slaves, could they do you harm. Never, as long as you are the *'free ones'* of God.

"It is God Himself who removes your enemies from you and circumscribes their evil works. God: your Father. God, who, as the Scripture states, as the eternal Abraham drives out of his pavilions the children of Humanity, a slave to all that is not God which will go wandering, from punishment to punishment, across increasingly and deserts, because, being worse than Hagar, under the merited punishment it is not converted, but becomes more and more bestial, and does not weep, repenting, but blasphemes, moving further and further away from the wells of the water of Life.

"You are children of the free woman. Remember this, O Christians. You are 'children of the free woman' to the highest degree; remember this, O 'voices' whom Jesus Most Holy has also released from the slavery of human relativity and materiality by giving you supernatural sight and hearing to bring you to know the most secret truths, the most perfect doctrines, and *see* the Lord, know Him in a way no creature on Earth can surpass, and start with the joy which will be yours-and is already ours-the joy which will be yours when, after Time ceases for you, you are admitted into blessed Eternity.

"Cry out; cry out, You, too, that have been beside yourself since last night on account of the joy which comes to you from Heaven; cry out, 'I have rejoiced over what has been said to me!' And how joyfully I said it to you, little John of my Lord! Little, little John, whom my Lord has encircled with mountains to guard you and filled to the brim with peace and abundance! Praise your Lord! Let us praise Him together because 'He is good'; let us sing hymns to his Name, for it is 'sweet.' Let us bless Him, for everything which He has wanted to do He has done, in Heaven, on the Earth,' and in the hearts of his faithful children. Let us bless the Lord!"

"Thanks be to God!"

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit!"

PASSION SUNDAY

Introit: Ps 43(42):1-3

Collect: Look with mercy, almighty God, upon Your family; that by Your bounty it may be rightly directed in body and by Your protection it may be preserved in mind. Through our Lord.

Epistle: He 9:11-15

Gradual: Ps 143(142):9, 10; 18(17):48-49

Tract: Ps 129(128):1-4

Gospel: Jn 8:46-59

Offertory: Ps 111(110):1; 119(118):17, 107

Secret: May these offerings, Lord, loosen the bonds of our wickedness and win for us the treasure of Your mercy. Through our Lord.

Communion: 1 Co 11:24, 25

Postcommunion: Be present with us, Lord our God; and defend with Your unfailing help those whom Your mysteries have refreshed. Through our Lord.

April 7, 1946

He awakens me from a peaceful sleep in which I was dreaming I was in a meadow with short, tender, emerald grass, limited by a wall which was already high, but regarding which I myself-I don't know for what reason-was saying, "It should be raised higher," and specifying, "for defense"; and the wall in fact rose up to a height of at least five meters. Really insurmountable, as it was so smooth and lofty.... I saw only this large meadow, untrod by human feet, and this extremely high wall, and above, a sky packed with little stars which the advancing dawn rendered ever smaller and paler. And the one awakening me is my Lord, who calls me and touches my head. I open my eyes and say, "Here I

am, Lord. I was sleeping and I feel a bit confused on realizing that I have imitated Peter, James, and John, who slept a while too often during their Master's most solemn hours: on Tabor and in Gethsemane.

But Jesus smiles and says, "And I was awakening you, my sweet victim consuming yourself out of love for me. I have come to tell you that I am there, wherever creatures suffer their passion, and I speak to them, through the mouths of all the heavenly spirits, by the figures of the whole Liturgy, and by my Love, in addition, ever stronger and more present. For I know what the Passion is, in its antecedents and in its end. And I have infinite compassion for whoever suffers it out of love for me and for souls. I have experienced all your anguish, souls that are victims of the world and of love. Day by day, the more I disclose to you my three-year Passion as a misunderstood Master, as a mocked Voice, and as a persecuted Savior, you discover yourself, in your

measure as a creature. And like you are all those I have chosen for extraordinary service. But, as I set my gaze on the 'goal,' on the luminous, serene, glorious goal of my long and multiple suffering, and would say, 'I must go through this, which is painful, to reach that, which is glorious,' so you, to be able to proceed among the cruel brambles on your way, full of snakes, thorns, and snares, and proceed with your burden on your shoulders to reach your destination: the immolation which is also the attainment of your goal-that is, coredemption, you must always keep your eyes fixed on this 'goal,' on perfect charity for souls, which is accomplished through complete self-sacrifice. There is no greater love than that of one who gives his life for his brothers and friends. I said so and I did so. Maria, my dear, beloved Maria, my violet, who consume yourself for Me, your Love, and for your brothers and sisters, and who receive real reciprocation of love only from Me; my Consumed One, come, proceed.... Let us go together. The world and Satan may hate you, but only as far as the limit which I have set, lofty, insurmountable, like the wall seen by you in the dream. They are on that side, in their noisy, chaotic world, sullied with all the concupiscences, sown with all the most poisonous heresies ... ; you are on this side, in the desert of this meadow, which has nothing but serenity and simple poverty and flowers with grass free of corruptions. You and I have made this meadow together. I, with my words; you, with your acts of obedience. Do You see how big it is? What peace issues forth ... ! And, above, the serenity of the sky and the numberless stars that gaze at you and await you. They are your friends in Heaven, my beloved bride. My light makes them seem smaller and dimmer. But when I leave you, they take my place with their celestial light and comfort you. Proceed alone, but *never alone*. Until the end. And then, in a ray of starlight, from your Morning Star, you will be absorbed, soul consecrated by pain, Maria *consumed* for your *God and* for souls-and let this be what is to be written on your burial niche, O little martyr, this and nothing more concerning all that will remind men of you-you will be absorbed into the Place of eternal Peace, and from there you will radiate light upon men; light of love and light of truth will be the pages which you have obediently written to fix my Words on paper, and good men will remember you as a light. Good men ... ! In this, too, similar to Me, for my infinite Light was loved and received only by a few in my time. The others, darkness, did not want to receive Me and remained darkness. I bless you with all my dearest love for your comfort, for your comfort, for your comfort!"

I am left moved and blissful.... And I stay that way until my Azariah begins his explanation.

Azariah says:

"Come to our Holy Mass of the voices, to 'your' Holy Mass of those undergoing their passion. Speak and pray with Christ and

like Christ. Turn to the Father with the words of the Son which the Holy Spirit grants that I may explain.

"Be my judge, O God."

"Only the upright in heart can say this, in the intimacy of their consciences. For if it is easy to deceive men while invoking God as a witness-and we angels do not understand how they can do so without trembling with fear-that is, we understand it only by measuring how much Satan has made man decline: he is a creature of God, and Satan makes him satanic to the point of giving him strength to dare to invoke God without fear over his wicked actions-if it is easy to deceive men with this invocation, which is sacrilegious in certain mouths, it is not easy, it is not possible to do so when the conversation is intimate, having only one's guardian angel as a witness.

"Oh, the blameworthy and impenitent man dares not invoke God when he does not draw comfort from the proximity of his fellows! Even the one most given to crime, lying, and sacrilege, even one who, if the Most Holy Lord Jesus were to come back to the Earth, would be capable of nailing Him to the cross once again-for Satan would present Christ to him as a mere man and present killing a man as a trifle-even he, when he is alone with himself, before his own conscience and the infinite Mystery of God, dares not state impudently, 'Be my judge, O God.'"

"The guilty, from Adam and Eve on, are capable only of fleeing, or trying to flee, from the sight of God. Even he who denies that there is a God, if, by a sudden reflection, he has a flash of admission that God *may also exist*, does nothing but flee-to forget this Existence. And the murderer, the thief, the corruptor, and all the guilty do so, and they do so all the more the greater their guilt is, the more often it is repeated. On the contrary, they arrive at new sins so as to suffocate awareness with the pseudocertainty that God does not exist because He lets them act. Being able to kill, torture, steal, and usurp for them is proof that they are 'supermen,' the 'gods,' and no one is above them. In this motive of *wanting to tell themselves* that they are 'gods,' that God does not exist, and does not exist in conformity with Life, Judgment, and Punishment, that each is free to do what he feels is useful, at any cost, by any means, lies the explanation for the repeated and ever more serious sins of the *great* sinners.

"But they are unable to place themselves alone before the Alone, and they flee. Blameworthy, before the Judge, they are

unable to stand up and cry out, 'Be my judge, O God.' Although they deny Him and deride Him, they have the instinctive fear of Him-which a wild beast has of man when the latter bravely goes forward to meet it, with prompt boldness and defense-the beasts' instinctive, raging fear of their tamer, of whose punishment they are afraid and whose power they sense. They try to destroy the idea of God with a cunning swipe of their claw, but while sidestepping it. Too lofty, that Idea; too powerful, that God ... ! It reduces them to ashes; it crushes them like pygmies upon whom a block of marble falls, like worms under the giant's foot. And they flee.

"But the honest *can*; the honest can cry out, 'Be my judge, O God.' Honesty has many faces. It is not just material honesty concerning the materials which have a name: coins, weights, and measures, with respect to fruits, harvests, and the goods of others; it is not just moral honesty regarding moral aspects which have a name: people's good name, sincerity, friendship, respect for women and the position of others; but it is also spiritual honesty that is, truth in appearing what one really is spiritually, not an atom more.

"In your case, in the case of all of you, O extraordinary instruments, *it is precisely and principally this.*

"Spiritually dishonest, too, are those who are Catholic Christians only in appearance, but who, if it were possible to go back twenty centuries in time, would be perfect examples of pharisees-that is, only apparently respectful of God and his Law, and of that of the Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church, but who in reality, after leaving front stage and returning within their homes, their businesses or offices, or occupations, are real antiChristians, trampling upon all the articles and precepts of Christianity, beginning with that of the love for God, their relatives, their employees, and their neighbors. And they will be judged as dishonest ones and repaid according to their deceitful acts by the Judge who is merciful towards involuntary faults, but *inexorable towards calculated, impenitent acts of hypocrisy.*

"But you, 'voices,' extraordinary instruments, have to exercise certain acts of special honesty: *that of not adding anything to the treasure, that of not squandering the treasure, that of acknowledging that it is not your work, but the Work of God.*

"To remain always kneeling, with your arms outstretched to receive, to support the weight which is given to you and which you must hold upraised in a continuous offertory to the Most High,

from whom it comes. Remember: *what you receive should be offered to Him Who gives it to you*, just as, in the old Law, the sacrifices of what God had given were offered: lambs, rams, honeycombs, oil, sheaves of ears—all things which existed because He had created them, just as in the New Law sacrifices are offered. But with what? With the Body and Blood of the One whom the Father has given you: the Most Holy Lamb who takes away the sins of the world. He should be offered with the honors appropriate for something holy—that is, with pure hands, with spotless garment, on a precious cloth, on a precious paten.

"What are they? Your irreproachable life, your spirit, which day by day must become precious with virtue, on *your heart*, immolated with the Immolated One.

"Oh, blessed ones! Do not weep in your suffering! Do not weep, Maria, beloved to the Lord in your suffering! This is what makes you dear: your suffering.

"Listen: what has had value in the eyes of God? Your birth? Your culture? Social position? None of this. What were you, as long as you were just Maria of Giuseppe and Iside, educated as befitted the daughter of a well-to-do family? You were a common soul, as there are millions of them among practicing Catholics. On your altar there was only one ornament. Do you know what it was? Your love for Jesus in his Passion. The rest was neither more nor less than what the great mass of Catholics had. What was strictly necessary in order not to be great sinners.

"Then sorrow took you to the love of *sorrow*. Thanks to your relative love and God's infinite love for you, you have understood what the sorrow of God is and how He is consoled.... And you have become a host. And God has accepted you as a host.

"Suffering! *Your glory*.

"Beloved soul of mine, did you perhaps think that only the flesh was destined to be consumed? Did you push the possibilities of suffering to the moral sphere at most? No, Maria. When a fire envelops a house, it burns from the cellar to the rooftop, don't you think? The Fire of Heaven has descended upon you, not to punish you, but to absorb you into Himself. And it has taken all of you. And everything has turned into pain. Your Christ. See: even this beatific joy which is to hear our Most Holy Lord speak is pain.

"The superficial will say, 'A woman who is made joyful by union with God cannot undergo pain!' And did the Divine Incarnate Word not experience constant pain when He was Jesus of Naza-

reth? And yet, except for the hour of extreme severity and complete immolation, He was united to the Father and the Spirit!

"And did she who was Full of Grace, the Blameless One, not have pain as her companion in her life as an orphan, a wife, a mother, and Queen of the Apostles? And yet she did not deserve pain, as she was without fault, and she was united to God to the point of having Him as her Spouse and Son, as well as Father.

"Beloved soul of mine, do not weep! Rejoice at the fact that everything in you bears the chrism of pain so that it will conform you to Most Holy Jesus and Mary. And trust in the Lord. You can call Him and say, 'Be my Judge, O God!'

"How sweet it must be for you, O creatures of the Earth, to be able to say, 'Be my judge' to God your Father! These words are truly trustfully filial, this taking refuge in your God, whom you do not fear because a good conscience assures you that you have not offended Him and that you are placing yourselves under his powerful protection, which takes up your defense 'against the profane' and frees you 'from the iniquitous, deceitful man,' for God is your strength. How much humility, love, security, and peace there is in this filial recourse, which bears witness that you know you are a 'nothing' conscious of being loved and justified by the All!

"Why, of course! Don't cry. He, He, your Most Holy God, will radiate his Light and his Truth. Not only upon you. He does this so much that He speaks to you as a dearest disciple. But also upon the truth of your mission. You heard Him in the early hours of the day in his luminous promise: 'Good men will remember you as a light.' If they remember you as a light, it is a sign that you are in the Light. Those who are not good will not believe. Well then: it will serve to make you more like the Word, whom the darkness did not want to recognize.

"But why be concerned? Remember those words of Jesus: 'By their disbelief they accumulate the stones with which they will be lapidated.' Proceed on your way. Go straight to the mountain of God, to the eternal tabernacles of which the psalm speaks in the Introit.

"Let us pray: 'We ask you, O Almighty God, to look upon your family, that it may be governed in body and preserved in soul by your grace.' Through the merits of your blessed Word, who

¹The "*hour of extreme severity*" in which Jesus, as a Man, experienced abandonment by God.

became flesh and died for men.

"Your family"! All the faithful are the family of God. But in every family there are the favorites, those closest to the head of the family. In that of the faithful you are the favorites, victim souls, called to an extraordinary destiny. God will not disappoint the prayer, and as a Father He will preserve you, for, as Paul says, you are the chosen portion which Jesus has redeemed by his Sacrifice.

"Let us read Paul and meditate upon him. How did the Most Holy Lord Jesus Christ, having come as the pontiff of the future goods, enter once and for all into the Sanctuary?

"The great majority of the ancient Israelites-and what is doubly blameworthy, precisely in the cultivated majority-did not understand that Christ was the eternal Pontiff and what his Kingdom and eternal Pontificate would consist of. And they hated him out of the ungrounded fear-proceeding from an unnatural faith, degraded into materiality-that they would be despoiled of their prerogatives of power.

"But Jesus Christ did not have human aims. He did not reach out to the Tiara and the Crown. He reached out to gather together the children of his Father, disheartened, impoverished, debased, sick, wounded, and dispersed and to heal, instruct, guide, and reconsecrate them in their dignity as children of the Father. Accordingly, to obtain this, He did not use the common means and places, 'but by passing through a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made by the hand of man'-that is, making use of his Most Divine Nature and eternal, perfect Power to redeem the Sin, otherwise not redeemable, He reduced Himself to Man, forcing the Holy of Holies, which He was, into the mortal tent of the Flesh, to immolate Himself instead of the goats and calves and, by his Blood shed for the redemption of men, be able to enter into the eternal Sanctuary once and for all at the head of the redeemed.

"This is the means and the way by which you have been redeemed by Him whose supersacred epic concluding in the final cry on Golgotha the Church narrates in these days. It is this with which He has prepared your conscience for the purity that is necessary to receive his Words and your spirit for the works of life which He judges to be good for men. Without his Blood, without his Immolation fulfilled through the Holy Spirit-that is, through Love-neither on Earth nor in Heaven would you have been able to serve the living God.

"Because of what you cost Him, *do not be afraid of his love*. On account of the power of this love of his, which spurred Him to die to make you worthy to listen to Him and understand Him, harbor no doubts about his mercy. He, the eternal Pontiff, can well introduce those whom He chooses into the Sanctuary.

"The new covenant is this. *Not the will of men*, money, conspiracies, or friendships among social castes hating each other but backing each other to do harm to those who are alone and usurping, by embezzling, the place of those designated by God, *but God Himself chooses his instruments, and these who are called receive the eternal inheritance* through the promise of Jesus Christ, and through his immolation.

"Come on. Do not weep, host-soul. Or, rather, weep with Christ, who took on even the weakness and bitterness-unknown in Heaven-of weeping in human nature.

"You have seen Him shed tears and blood-and the first bloodred mask was placed upon his blessed Face by pain. The crown of thorns and the spray of scourging served only to maintain that mask upon the Visage which men no longer deserved to see in the perfection of its pacific beauty. Conform, conform to your Master. The Master of doctrine and the Master of immolation.

"He, too, crushed against the stone of Gethsemane, under the press of *all* the World's pain, of all the severity of Heaven, shed his final tears as a human creature. His flesh then moaned its last cry against the imminent agony: 'Lord, if it is possible, let this cup pass me by!'

'For those who are unable to believe that Jesus was truly Man and had Man's affection for life and loathing towards death, this cry is a response which says, 'He was truly Flesh.'

'But may my will not be done, but rather yours.' *For those who are unable to believe that Jesus was truly God and had God's perfections, this cry is a response which says, 'He was truly God.'*

'For those who are unable to believe that you can be the 'spokeswoman,' your living, your suffering, and your dying after having drunk all bitterness while saying, 'Thy will be done,' is the response which says that you are the 'spokeswoman,' the one God has taken for an inscrutable mystery which only in Heaven will be known, to make you an instrument for a work of great mercy.

"Weep with Him, with your Master, in pain: 'Free me from the furious peoples!' and profess, 'You alone can exalt and save me above my adversaries and the iniquitous who do not know You

and hate me on account of your Name, which shines in my actions.' "Weep with Him over your long dereliction: 'Many have tormented me since my youth.' Yes, you have come to Him through many struggles and torments and have been a martyr because of your faithfulness to his call. But 'they have not been able to overcome you,' for above every other voice you were following that of your Jesus.

"Now that you are at his feet and are the instrument, it is natural that the enemies of Truth should erect an edifice of calumny upon your shoulders to crush you beneath it. The 'other Christs,' though, have in common the Passion and the Crucifixion, but also the Resurrection. And if men shut the Voice of God in tombs, believing they are burying it forever, the forces of nature, obedient to God, shake off the useless enclosures, and the stones, the very stones, proclaim God the Victor in Himself and in his servants, opening out, allowing perfumes and light to emerge from their closed bowels, where the just man does not decompose, but rests to rise up stronger and more beautiful.

"In the meantime, while waiting for this hour, *strong in the sincerity Of your works, with your Master respond* to those who want to accuse or frighten you with doubts: 'Who among you can convict me *Of sin?*'

"And to anyone wishing to exalt you and thus bring about your ruin through pride, like the first ones by way of discouragement, *respond, I do not seek my glory. There is one who looks after it: my Father. The glory which I would give myself or which you give me is nothing. But that which God will give me with his eternal peace,* because of the honor I have given Him, *does exist.*

"And be at peace. You will have Life through his Word, through his Sacrament of Love, through his Sacrifice on the Cross, and through yours as a 'victim.'

"Let us bless the Lord."

"Thanks be to God."

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

All my afflictions come from the daily observation of how the Words which God has said to me *are in the hands Of everyone, propagated, altered, and used without any approval whatsoever.... How much, how much pain which comes to me from this disobeying Of such frank orders by Jesus ... !* Only God measures the breadth and depth of the torment which *the acts Of disobedience by others* occasion me.

But it is the time of the Passion....

PALM SUNDAY

Introit: Ps 22(21):20, 22, 2

Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, who willed that our Savior should take upon Him our flesh and suffer death on the cross, so that all mankind should follow the example of His humility; mercifully grant that we may both learn the lesson of His patience and be made partakers of His resurrection. Through the same Christ our Lord.

Epistle: Ph 2:5-11

Gradual: Ps 73(72):24, 1-3

Tract: Ps 22(21):2-9, 18, 19, 22, 24, 32

Gospel: Mt 26:36-75; 27:1-60

Offertory: Ps 69(68):21-22

Secret: Grant us, we pray, Lord, that the gifts now offered in the sight of Your majesty, may win for us the grace of true devotion and the reward of a happy eternity. Through our Lord.

Communion: Mt 26:42

Postcommunion: By the virtue of this mystery, Lord, may our sins be purged away and our rightful desires fulfilled. Through our Lord.

April 14, 1946

Azariah says:

"The reading which precedes the blessing of the palms is not part of the Holy Mass, but it is part of today's liturgy.

"One day, at the beginning of your instruction by the Most Holy Lord Jesus, He told you, 'In the pages of the Book, in the History of my People, the events of the future are concealed under figures and actions.'

"Generally, people apply the figure of today's palms to the seventy palms in the oasis of Elim. But my Lord grants that I may instruct you on the true figure of today's Reading.

"The people of Israel, after the holy times of the patriarchs, who could be compared to fertile lands rich in every good, had grown corrupt, becoming a 'sterile desert' where only rare oases, and even rarer fountains, demonstrated that not everything had died and, as a reminder of celestial mercy, attracted those who were lost-but possessed good will-around the solitary spirits of the Just Ones of Israel. The patriarchs, judges, and Prophets, the great kings of Israel, the Maccabees, Judith, Esther, Joel, Tobit, Nehemiah, and the saints-these are the palms and the fountains rising in solitary fashion in the midst of the desolate aridity of

the conscience of Israel, which was ungratefully drifting away from its Benefactor, forgetting his help.

"He who had given that formerly promised Land-whose rich beauty surpassed all hope of the patriarchs-to his People found his Land to be such. The Christ found it to be such when He descended to fulfill the second part of the great promises made to Abraham-that is, after having given him and his descendants the land seen in the vision and a posterity more numerous than the stars, the promise that he would be given the Messiah, born of the womb of a daughter of Abraham, to redeem the world.

"And the Christ gave the oasis with twelve fountains and seventy palms to the people languishing in the desert so that it would have refreshment and nourishment and camp in the oasis provided by the Savior.

"A true gift of Most Holy Jesus were the twelve apostles left to perpetuate Him in his magisterium and give souls the living water of the divine words, and the Food contained in the Sacraments. A true gift of Most Holy Jesus were the seventy-two disciples, who, as coworkers of the apostles, formed the initial core of the Apostolic Church along with them, the Oasis around which the multitudes of believers have become ever more numerous, the oasis which has spread out, fertilizing the soil, overcoming the desert, to the point of elevating its glorious palm trees in all points of the Earth. The restoring oasis, the saving oasis.

"See this truth in the first part of the reading on this moment of the Exodus and never be like the people that, when near the founts and palms of Elim, complained about this gift of Our Lord Jesus.

"The second figure: the Bread of Heaven. The Manna which man could not imagine or demand, which man could not give himself, but which the eternal Lord liberally gives his children so they will not die of hunger, the sweet-tasting, white Manna which is given in such measure that there will be enough for all who wish to feed upon it every day. And only rebellion against God's commandments, infractions of the Law make it change from holy, Life-giving Food into Corruption. Not through Itself, for It is incorrupted, incorrupting, and incorruptible, like Him whom not even death corrupted and who is That Itself, with his Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, as He was in his days on Earth. But it becomes corruption through being received in sin; for accursed is the one who feeds on It in the spirit of Judas, the enemy of

obedience and justice.

"Reflect on the words of God Most Holy: 'And thus may I test whether or not he walks according to my Law.' *Indeed, he who in feeding upon the Most Holy Eucharist-food which is not given to the angels themselves, but which Infinite Love gives to men does not sanctify himself, but remains as he was or regresses to a worse state shows that he is not walking according to the Law, for with his soul obstinately at fault, more or less seriously, he must take that Food, since such Food does not come to transform him.*

"Eucharist and good will-the Eucharist, God's love, and good will, man's love-when joined together can produce nothing but holiness. Good will clears the ground of what could make the Most Holy Seed sterile which germinates eternal Life. Good will places upon the altar what serves to consummate the holocaust-that is, what the Eucharistic fire can set aflame, burning the material man to ignite the spirit, purify it, and make it nimble as a flame tending towards Heaven, rising up with its gleams and its perfumes to Heaven to rejoin the Fire which has set it aflame: Fire with fire for the union of love.

"But when good will is lacking and disobedience is present-that is, a state of sin-what can the Eucharist do? Nothing more than the Manna could when gathered in a way contrary to the one commanded by God. It remains inert in its action and becomes harmful, in its effect, in whoever receives it. Nor I am I speaking just of the truly sacrilegious, but also of the lukewarm and the proud, who feed on it out of habit, virtually saying, 'It is we who show this condescension towards God, we who carry out this custom.'

"On the sixth day they must prepare what they have brought, and let it be double the amount they usually gathered day by day.'

"On the sixth day-that is, the eve of the Lord's Day (and every day of Holy Communion is the Lord's Day for the soul)-souls must prepare what they habitually possess: fervor, repentance, and resolutions, so as to go worthily and fruitfully to receive the Bread of Heaven. Blessed are those who do so. And blessed are those for whom every day is the eve of the Lord's Day, and in perpetual preparation for the wonderful, sanctifying, vital encounter their lives transpire. When they have arrived at the eve of the great day of their rest: death in the grace of God, they will hear themselves being comforted by the Priests of God, by the

voice of their heart and of the Guardian Angel, with these words: 'Tonight (death is the night) you will know that the Lord is the One who has led you out of the land of Egypt (that is, from the earthly life, which is exile and sorrow). And tomorrow morning (that is, having overcome death) you shall see the glory of the Lord': that is, Heaven, your dwelling-place as saints eternally.

"This is what the reading of the Blessing of the Palms ought to say to you. And now let us meditate on the Holy Mass.

"Supplicate with your true and perfect Master. You are truly cast, like metal liquefied by heat, in his form and take on the likeness of Him in his passion. Your humanity has melted in the heat of charity, the spirit has become soft in order to be remodeled, and hour by hour a sign of your beloved Jesus in his Passion is being impressed upon you. His desires are yours, his sorrows are yours, his moments of solitude, his bitter observations of what men are; his desolation on seeing Himself not understood, rejected, and mocked in that way is yours. And yours are his moans and his prayers to the Father.

"Holy Week, week of pain. But for having always given you his loveliest gems in this week, which is the perfection of his many weeks as a Man-nor does any of all the 1737 weeks which saw Him in the world equal this final one as a Man subject to pain be grateful to Him as you would be for the most beautiful proof of love. Do not wonder, 'What torture will this one bring me? What chalice will I drink between Thursday and Friday? What agony? What death? What discomfort? What betrayal?

"Do not ask yourself. Abandon yourself to your Father. One hour will be spared you: that of abandonment by God. You have already experienced it, when it was necessary to come to the aid of the souls led to despair and restore Heaven to them and restore them to Heaven, and *that torture is not lived through twice.*

"The Eternal and Holy Father will therefore reject no longer his little 'voice,' and you can cry to Him, certain of being heard: 'Oh! Lord, do not withhold your aid from me, come to my defense, free me from the lion's mouth, free me, who am so weak, from the buffalo's horns.'

"He has already heard one prayer of yours in these days. But persevere in that aim, for there is still a great deal to do for that soul. And there is even more to be done for you, who really see the horrendous mouth which would like to devour you opening wide over you and the threatening horns leveled at you of the

diabolical buffalo that would like to terrify you to blot out the work of God. Nor are you defended by the one who has the duty of defending you, as a fellow, as one of the faithful, and as an instrument.

"You are familiar with this aspect of your Master as well: the flight of the apostles, of his friends, when the storm raged over the Innocent One, the selfish thought of man in all such cases: 'May I be saved,' and with it abandoning, without heroism and without justice, the defenseless one to his accusers.

"But God, even if He seems absent, is present. But God judges and measures. But God defends. And human injustice, I repeat once again, cannot affect divine Justice.

... My God, turn to me. Why have You abandoned me? Yes, that is the moaning of the soul in the hours of darkness. But it is not condemned by God. But it is not an offense to God. But it does not denote despair of God. Otherwise the Most Holy Word would not have cried thus, both in Gethsemane and on the Cross. In his lament, which to the superficial may appear a reproach against God and despair, is faith. Faith in his help, in his presence, in his justice, even if the forces of evil, triumphing for their brief hour, seem to negate everything and so lead the soul to tremble like a guilty man before the Perfect Judge.

"The forces of evil that hurl the anathema against the innocent and accuse them of crimes to crush them in the spirit as well and 'separate them from salvation.'

"Oh, soul of mine, even if you were burdened with sin, a victim expiating and redeeming the sins of men, a victim offering herself to continue the work of Jesus the Redeemer, burdened with accusations of sins as was the Christ in those tremendous hours, consider *that it is an external weight, external garb*. It is not the fault of the spirit, not leprosy upon it, not filthy clothing of which would cause you to be thrown out of God's banquet but on that spirit there are only the glorious wounds of the victim soul, and those wounds are an ornament, not a dishonor. The angel apostle stated who the ones before the throne of God and the Lamb are: 'These are the ones who come from the *great tribulation* and have washed and whitened their robes in the blood of the Lamb.'

"Those robes whitened with the Pain of pains, with the Victim of victims, and with the great tribulation of the true faithful, of the 'victims,' of those martyred to be co-redeemers, are

adorned with the gems of your sufferings, including the gem of unjust accusations.

"Do not fear, soul of mine. And do not moan if you are humiliated and crucified. The Prayer says so: because He humbled Himself in taking on mortal flesh and subjected Himself to death on the cross, the Most Holy Word became the Savior. Little voice, voluntary host, join and even surpass the Prayer's request and ask not only to deserve to receive the teachings and fruits of the vital and mortal sacrifice of Christ, but rather to be like Him and humiliated and crucified with Him to save a great number of souls.

"To save is greater than to be saved. For it is an affirmation that the little savior is already saved, since only where God lives in the fullness of his graces is there heroic virtue; and love for the cross, for pain, and for holocaust through love of that great love possessed by 'whoever lays down his life for his brothers' is heroic virtue. And because to save means to be 'another Christ.' Through patience you will arrive at Glory and the resurrection in Heaven, in God, forever, after the death which is life on Earth.

"Let us read Paul: 'Have the same sentiments as Jesus Christ in yourselves.' That is the model. Paul does not say, 'The same as this or that saint.' He says *the same as Jesus Christ.*

"Christ said, 'Be perfect as my Father in Heaven is perfect.'

"It is obvious, even for upright human reflection, that even if Christ had been only a great prophet, he would have been the first to strive to reach the perfection of the Father, according to what He taught. And in truth Jesus is the mirror reflection of Heavenly Perfection, of the Triform God. Not a single fault in Him in thirty-three years of life, to the extent that the Truth, living in mortal form, could state, 'Who among you can convict me of sin? And, when near death, in the hour when not even ordinary men lie, but only those who are servants of Deceit can maintain deceit, He repeated before the Pontiff, 'I have spoken in the hearing of all and have said nothing in secret. Why do you question me? Question those who have heard me about what I told them.'

"Oh, blessed are those who can repeat these words to their accusers without blushing, certain that they have not performed reprehensible actions! Blessed! Most blessed! *Slain, but not contradicted by the facts, they ascend to God, already crowned,* and if in time men change their judgment of those they one day condemned, it is indeed not they who raise the crown from the dark

Earth to place it on the head of the blessed one, but it is a crown which descends and in its celestial splendor speaks and causes those to tremble who raised their hands and opened their mouths against the one God loved and who loved God and served Him with perfect service.

"Have in yourselves the same sentiments as Jesus Christ, who, though existing in the form of God, did not regard this equality of his as plunder.'

"Jesus, on account of being the One Born to Mary, was no less God than He was as the Word in Heaven. The Flesh did not annul the Divinity in Christ. As True God and True Man, He had not one, but two perfections in Himself. That of the Divine Nature, hidden, but not diminished by the Flesh, and that of the Human Nature, retrieved and indeed superperfected from what was Adam's nature, for to the gift of a perfect human nature God's gratuitous gift to Adam-He had joined his own will to superperfect human nature. The First-Born from among the dead wished to redeem fallen man not only with his Blood, but by bearing Humanity-once perfect, then fallen-to a superperfection so that Hell and the blasphemers of the Truth would be left defeated and confused.

"Bend your heads, O men who want to explain the unexplainable with the poor science created by you, dark and devoid of supernatural lights and guides. Annihilate yourselves, O you that know only how to discover Error, or Harm. You are defeated. Jesus Christ, the Man, with the flashing of his Humanity, destroys your axioms, annuls your calculations, shows you up for what You are: the maniacally proud who measure God-if you accept Him-by your pettiness, and, if you do not accept Him, go on raving about impossible self-creations of matter, about degrading and impossible lines of descent.

"Jesus Christ is the Man. And there is no philosopher or mad founder of sacrilegious religions who can create a superman that is more so than the Man not born by carnal will, but by the Will of God.

"And this Perfect One, in whom was the Fullness of the Divinity and that of the Holy Humanity, did not think that because of the former He could abuse all power for the sake of the latter.... 'But He annihilated Himself, taking the form of a slave and becoming similar to men, He appeared as a simple man and humiliated Himself, making Himself obedient unto death, and

death on the cross.'

"This, O dear voices, O dear victims, is where you must arrive, precisely so that God may shine forth more brightly in you. Honor entails obligation. Being extraordinary instruments must not give you pride or pretensions of enjoying material benefits, pretensions of immunity from pain, offenses, calumnies, unjust accusations, disdain, abandonment-from everything, in short, which Jesus, the God-Man, suffered. But rather, deeming yourselves more than compensated for all sacrifice by the extraordinary gifts which God grants you and by acceptance of your sacrifice-for there is no greater honor than to be judged worthy to be 'hosts'-you must perfect yourselves in humility and in obedience, heroic obedience unto death, and death on a cross.

"But listen to what Paul says in concluding: 'For this reason as well, however, God exalted Him and gave Him a Name above every other name, so that in the name of Jesus every knee must bend in Heaven and on Earth and in Hell, and every tongue must confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father.'

"In due measure-oh, fear not, dear victim souls and voices you will be given by God a name which is above the one men have given you, a name already written in Heaven. And a day will come when, at least for a period of time, the knee of every man that did not deserve to be at the right hand of the Lord and Judge will have to bend before the victors, and your name will be known, and more than one of those who judged you, with mistaken judgment, will change his tune before the truth. They will kneel not to honor you spontaneously, but crushed by the flashes which from Christ the Judge will go out to his saints, forming a blinding sea of light entirely written in words of Truth, with the names of truth. And the Truth will separate forever the voluntarily blind from the willing seers, and the Light will establish Himself in glory with his chosen ones, while Darkness will swallow up darkness, and in the Abyss there will be the howl of anguish and despairing recognition from those who have failed to know God and recognize God in his servants and God in the works of those same servants. The reflection of the Name of Jesus written on the brows of the saints! And not one will then be unknown. One hundred and forty-four thousand times the Name of Jesus written on the foreheads of the saints! Arrows of flashing light to wither the one hundred and forty-four thousand times 144,000

guilty ones who denied God in his dearest creatures and and tortured them with their denials!

"Dear soul, it is worthwhile to suffer the Cross for that hour. Place your right hand in the hand of the Lamb going up to his Calvary and let yourself be led with his approval so as to be welcomed with honor afterwards where those marked with the Name of Jesus await the hour of the triumphal review.

"How good the Lord is to the upright of heart! How good He is! But keep awake and watch so that your steps will not stray from the path and your heart will not Frumble against justice on seeing the momentary triumph of sinners.

"Christ, too, saw it and wept, shouting, 'I cry to You and You do not hear me. But, in this hour, I am a worm and not a man, the disgrace of men and dregs of the people. All who see me deride me, mutter with their lips, and shake their heads, saying, "He hoped in the Lord. Let the Lord free him, then, and save him, since He loves him so much!" And they strip me after having derided me, and divide my possessions, drawing lots on my Truth, almost as if it were a matter for wagers ... !,

"Oh, holy modesty of Christ, not only because of the covering of the Flesh left uncovered, but because of the Truth ill-treated, mocked, and altered to render it ridiculous and sacrilegious, like the work of a madman or a demon.

"Your torture, crucified extraordinary instruments. Your torture! You await someone with respect and compassion and find no man to console you. You ask for charity, and they give you gall. You beg for the refreshment of a fraternal word, of holy understanding, and they give you vinegar to sharpen the pain of your wounds.

"Prostrate yourself and with your Guardian pray, 'Father, if this chalice cannot be separated from me without my drinking it, Thy Will be done.' *The great word which many, who are severe to their brothers, are unable to say as far as they are concerned.* But say it yourself, to bend the Lord to the fulfillment of your just desires.

"Let us bless the Lord!"

"Thanks be to God."

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

RESURRECTION SUNDAY

Introit: Ps 139(138):18, 5-6, 1-2

Collect: Lord, You have unlocked today the gate of eternity by Your only begotten Son's defeat of death; we entreat You, that the prayer which You have put into our hearts may be brought to fruition by Your continual help. Through the same Christ our Lord.

Epistle: 1 Co 5:7-8

Gradual: Ps 118(117):24, 1

Alleluia: 1 Co 5:7

Gospel: Mk 16:1-7

Offertory: Ps 76(75):9-10

Secret: Accept, Lord, we pray, the prayer of Your people with the offering of the gifts for sacrifice, so that what we have begun in these mysteries of Easter, may win us, through the working of Your power, the remedy of everlasting life. Through our Lord.

Communion: 1 Co 5:7-8

Postcommunion: Fill us, Lord, with Your Spirit of love, and of Your goodness unite together in charity those whom You have feasted with these Easter sacraments. You who are God, living and reigning... in the unity of the same Holy Spirit.

April 21, 1946

Azariah says:

"My Lord orders me to bring you these words: 'For your comfort, I say to you the word of the Introit, which the liturgy possesses as if I were saying it to my Father. Believe in my Word. I have risen *and remain with you.*'

"To have the Lord with oneself is the certainty of help and peace about not deserving censure. Conserve yourself in this union and do not fear.

"For over two months I have been telling you in our Holy Masses, 'Fear not.' And an angel does not utter vain flattery. He says what is true. In the Name of God, I, your guardian, assure you that you have no reason to fear because Most Holy Jesus is with you; his pierced Hand is upon you to protect you, and He, HeIncarnate Wisdom-instructs you and speaks to you with the marvelous wisdom surpassing all forms of wisdom.

"To conserve these gifts, you have only to conserve yourself in such a way as to be able to say in truth before Him who cannot be deceived, 'Lord, You search me and know me: You know if I sit or stand up. You know, O all-seeing God, if I sit down-

that is, if I let myself be invaded by spiritual sloth or if I rise to continuous battle against the forces of Evil which would like to extinguish You in me and extinguish my Light, which comes to me from You, to make me "darkness." You know the truth of my actions and my sufferings, and in the name and memory of all the times your Incarnate Word was judged badly, because He was badly known, I ask You to support me and defend me in the discouragement which comes from obtuse men who forget the words "Judge not" taught by your Word and judge even what they do not know.'

"It is *the destiny of those who are 'set apart,'* in the words of Paul, *to be not understood.* My Lord spoke to you about this a long time ago, and, out of reverence, I will not repeat the lesson. But you can read it to understand and pity men's incapacity to understand those set apart by God. *In Heaven,* where there will no longer be differences, because all intelligence, all wisdom, all justice, and all charity will be given in equal measure with equal possession of God, *both those who were not understood because they were travelling along an extraordinary way and those who by an ordinary way arrived at the same Holy Kingdom of God will understand one another.*

"For the time being the incapacity to understand one another exists and persists, as it existed for Christ and his contemporaries and for the first apostles and disciples, even though they were joined together by a single purpose and tended towards a single goal. The Acts speak. And yet they loved one another. They loved one another in a single Christ. They wanted his glory. But they were great spirits in human bodies and thus still slaves to the reactions and wretchedness of man, of this man who never dies completely and has unexpected impulses even in the holiest. And this to a great extent accounts for that friction and incompatibility which, though remaining on the surface of the magnificent basic block of the Apostolic Church, have scratched it, giving her enemies the chance to criticize and try to belittle Her.

"But man is always man. And God, even in the best and most beloved, for the purpose of spurring them towards increasingly heroic virtue, allows some particles of humanity to hold out, provoking reactions which are not blameworthy in his sight, but capable of occasioning them-from the quite imperfect world which believes it is more perfect than the servants of God-criticisms, reproaches, mockery, offenses, and malevolent judg-

ments. These particles do not harm the design of God and of the soul to tend towards perfection and lead to perfection-rather, they help, keeping the soul lowly, pruned in the poisonous branch, the most poisonous one, born of the evil plant of Lucifer: pride.

"The union of the infinite merits of Most Holy Jesus with the good will of man and humility, which your weaknesses and imperfections themselves nourish, grant that, through Grace, the inspirer of holy desires, and the painful death and glorious Resurrection of the Only-Begotten Son of God, you may fulfill the aspirations which God has placed in your hearts and, through the gates of eternity, reopened by the immolated Victim and the eternal Victor, reach the blessed Kingdom which knows no end.

"But, as Paul says, it is necessary 'to remove the old leaven.' The leaven of the passions is renewed more quickly than the leaven in bread which the housewife kneads and keeps warm. The willing soul always removes it and always finds it again. The world, events, disappointments, observations, joys, and sorrowseverything tends to introduce into the soul a leaven of malice, impurity, deceit, and rebelliousness. No, no, dear souls. One leaven alone must be in you. That which is holy, pure, and true the leaven of the Word of God, of the Love of God. For the Word is Love. The Word immolated Himself so as to be able to instruct you now as well. For this reason as well. The Word immolated Himself in becoming Man so He could speak to men and give them the true Word leavening true knowledge of the Law, which is Love, instead of the acid leaven-impure, malicious, and wicked, stale and harmful-which was then among the children of God.

"The Word immolated Himself in becoming the Victim so He could bring the Paraclete, the Leaven of Love through whom all the particles of the flour of the Jesus-Yeast, his innumerable words, might swell up, rising in purity, truth, wisdom, understanding, and holiness in human intellects.

"But if the good Yeast is mixed with the old, wicked yeast, the wicked is not improved, but, rather, the good one is corrupted, and it thus does not help to have received the holy Yeast which comes from God. One must therefore clear away every particle of wicked leaven and become pure, new, like newborn children, and do so continuously, to impede the work of Satan and of the flesh, and do so with assiduous watchfulness, without dejection, without laziness, without presumption. Act over and over again, for, as long as man is on earth, Satan, the flesh, and the

world act. And receive the holy Leaven in one's cleansed heart ever anew so that you will always be new dough, without mold or corruption, formed according to the form of God and worthy of God.

"This day, like everything which exists, has been made by God. But truly this is a perfect day, a day surpassing every other creative day because the divine, eternal Power and Mercy shine therein in all their strength.

"Only a God could spur Mercy to become a victim for sinners, and only a God could by Himself rise again to testify that He is the true God, as by death He had testified that He was a true Man, to say that Life-God-is stronger than Death-Satan; and that the Author of All cannot be killed by a part. And God, the Author of All, could not be killed by man and remain killed. For if it is true that out of love for man He tasted the bitter ashes of death, it is also true that He defeated death, and forever; nor will all the forces of Evil, whether they bear the name of the great Satan or of the little satans, ever be able to kill the Living One again.

"Maria, little Maria of Jesus, you, too, with the great Mary of Lazarus, 'have seen the tomb of the living Christ and the glory of Christ Risen, and the angel witnesses, and the shroud and the robes,' as the Paschal sequence states. Because of this gift, may every bitter sorrow coming to you from everyone, *except from God*, prove sweet to you. And may every gift given you be an aid to your obtaining Heaven, by not imitating those who use a freely given benefit with pride, disobedience, and imprudence, believing themselves to be already secure because they have been benefited and not considering *that the gift is a test and that as it is given, it can be taken away, and together with it-if, instead of producing love for the truth, obedience, and justice, it causes deceit, pride, and disobedience to ferment-the immediate possession of the eternal reward can be taken away, or, if the ingratitude of the one benefited reaches a serious degree, even the possession of the reward eternally, which is God Himself*

"The Jews, the Princes of the Priests, and the Scribes and Pharisees had time to repent and render the infinite Gift of the Word made Man in Israel benign to them, as long as Justice did not say, 'Enough.' Afterwards-when neither the Doctrine nor the Death nor the signs of the elements and fulfillment of the prophecies nor the new shaking of Creation at the return of breath into the lifeless Body were able to bend the haughty minds of

Israel to the Truth-afterwards 'God rose up to do justice.'

"And justice, patient justice, was the clear-cut separation of the goats from the kids-that is, of those who *absolutely* rejected the gift from those, like Gamaliel and others, who, after the passing away of Christ, went about beating their breasts and saying, 'We have sinned! He was what He said He was! May God have mercy on us.' Not yet lambs, but already predisposed to becoming such, they were justly separated, with divine justice, from the indomitable, hellish goats that had turned God's gift to their ruin.

"And among those who were able to change from kids into lambs and whom Mercy granted forgiveness on account of their repentance, how many are among the saints who, with the Virgin Mother, the apostles, and the martyrs named in the Preface, are remembered today and invoked that they may help those living on Earth to become the *'living ones' of Heaven*, joining in prayer and offering, so that the days of the believers will transpire in spiritual peace and they will not be struck with eternal damnation, but numbered with the flock of the elect.

"Those who were kids have also conquered the Kingdom! For God can do all things, if only man offers his good will.

"Do not fear, then, dear voices, and do not take in the insinuations of the world, which too often believes it is learned just because it has a lot of theories in its head and wonders, 'How can a nobody ever become a *somebody* if we don't

"This reason, entirely composed of the pride of the self, is already an answer to the question. And it answers by itself. 'Yes, it is possible for that to happen; first of all, *because everything is possible for God and licit for God and, secondly, because God Himself, to confound the proud, takes nobodies and makes them into what He wants.*

"She who was Full of Grace spoke this truth: 'He has brought low the powerful and exalted the humble.'

"And whoever would like to place limits upon God or suggest to God the actions to be performed commits the sin of pride. May not pride, but charity be in you, O judges, and in you, O judged. For whoever loses charity loses God. Not humanity in thought, but faith in the power of the Lord. Not pride, but relinquishing one's Judgment in favor of perfect Judgment. Charity in accepting, charity in examining, charity in bearing. Charity so as not to increase the weight burdening those who bear the weight of an extraordi-

nary gift to make them dismayed and fearful of undergoing spiritual death because of that gift. Charity in thinking that he who calls his brother 'racaTfool' in Aramaic] commits a sin, and, in men's eyes, those who are simply 'set apart' in God's service too often appear to be fools and possessed people. Charity in thinking that the condemnation you apply without justice in proofs would be unpleasant for you if applied to you.

"And to you, crucified voices, I say, Charity! Charity in forgiving whoever speaks without knowing what he is saying, whoever judges without having the right to and thus without spiritual light, and whoever afflicts you in a thousand ways. Charity and silence. Enclosed in your hearts, like the Apostles in the Cenacle, increase your faith. Do not disavow the gift out of fear of men. And you will have the Paraclete, who is already announced to help you convert the proud and respond to those who persecute you. He, Jesus, said so before going to his death. He repeats this to you now that He has emerged from death. He will do so, for Jesus, God, does not lie.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

IN ALBIS SUNDAY

Introit: 1 P 2:2; Ps 81(80):2

Collect: Grant, we pray, almighty God, that we who have celebrated the Paschal solemnity, may by Your bounty remain faithful to it in the conduct of our lives. Through our Lord.

Epistle: 1 Jn 5:4-10

Paschal alleluia.- Mt 28:7; Jn 20:26

Gospel: Jn 20:19-31

Offertory: Mt 28:2, 5, 6

Secret: Receive, Lord, we pray, the gifts of Your exultant Church and after giving her cause for such great joy grant to her the fruit of eternal gladness. Through our Lord.

Communion: Jn 20:27

Postcommunion: We pray You, Lord our God, that the most holy mysteries, which You have given to insure in us the work of Your redemption, may be a remedy for us in our present life and a presage of eternity. Through our Lord.

April 28, 1946

Azariah says:

"Let us join the candid statement by the great Apostle Peter to the joyful recollection of the innocent babe who today is regenerated in Holy Baptism' and, in ceasing to be just a child born of man who draws life from the milk which is offered him to nourish his little body, passes on to a more perfect nourishment-that of the spirit-and sucks from the inexhaustible breast of the merits of Christ his first food regenerating in him the Life of the soul with the Grace infused by the Sacrament.

"Her first food! What is enough to nourish her with God in her innocence and make her God's. Later on, with the use of reason-which we shall request for her at an early age from Heaven, so that she will soon be able to possess and enjoy in her[†]Ep 4:13 self the three theological virtues and reach perfect maturity in Christ-with wonderful solicitude she will increasingly crave spiritual milk and through it grow in health.

"But the 'children' are not just those recently born of a woman's womb, but also those newly born to the life of Grace, so that in your family, far-off but dear-dear because of what it has cost

[†] She is referring to Holy Baptism, conferred that day on the newborn Marcella, daughter of Paola Belfanti, Maria Valtorta's cousin.

you in prayers and sacrifices-more than one is a 'spiritual child' to whom the divine breast should be offered so that the infant will grow solicitously in Christ during the time remaining for life in this world.

"This beginning of Holy Mass on In Albis Sunday can thus be devoted to them so they may savor another sip of supernatural Wisdom, which is always a gift of infinite value giving Life which knows no death.

"Yearn, O you' whom the Lord's goodness has brought close to the jet-spout fi-om which his Word issues forth-and He has brought you there through his infinite Mercy and for a far-sighted, provident end, so that all of you may be his and there may be voices fi-ee fi-om all bias and all previous formation who can speak out, so that there may be hearts to show what God can do in hearts so that there may be certain proofs of the truthfulness of the 'spokeswoman,' to proclaim by words and deeds that Maria is a sincere 'voice,' a 'voice' of grace-yearn, O you that have received this gift, to nourish yourselves more and more at the breast pouring into the hungry who cling to it the sanctifying merits of Christ, the confirming rivers of Grace, the lights of Wisdom. Increasingly Catholic so as to be increasingly just.

"You can and must say, experts in voices of darkness and voices of light, that the fi-uits of these two opposing voices are quite different, as are the spiritual states those voices create. You may conclude that only the voice of light, because it comes fi-om the Light, made you children of the Light and fi-lends of Most Holy Jesus, who shows you love by gluing you miracles of protection. You can say so. Satan does not serve God by redeeming for God those who were on the path of error. Only God and his servants serve God, bringing into the Light and onto the Way ending in Heaven the souls that were in the mist and on the wrong road.

"God has wanted you here by Maria so that, like many of those miraculously healed in the Gospel, to the deniers, the uncertain, or the denigrators of the miracle who is your relative-a 'nobody' whom God uses because He takes pleasure in indigence to bewilder and mortify the proud-you may say, 'I do not know who He is. I know that I was wretched and He has healed me in soul and in body.' And you can particularly make the luminous statement of the man born blind to those who reproached him for having

¹ A reference to the Belfanti's, cousins of Maria Valtorta's mother.

received his sight from a reprobate: 'I don't know if He is a sinner, but I know this alone: that I was blind and now I see.... Ever since the world began there has never been talk of someone's opening the eyes of a man born blind. If the one who healed me were not God, He couldn't have done it.'

"Yes, *that's how you can reply to those insinuating doubts about the spokeswoman: 'We don't know what she is. We know only that she has healed our spirits. Ever since the world began there has never been talk of the devil's having opened the eyes of one who was in sin to the Light of God. If the one who healed us were not an instrument of God, her pages would not have been able to convert us.'*

"And now, holding tight in my loving embrace the soul I have in keeping, the little Christian, her relatives, and all the souls yearning to grow spiritually, I shall proceed to teach the spirit of the words in the liturgy. And pay close attention, O dear voices who for your missions greatly need supernutrition in wisdom.

"How is spiritual milk to be received so that it will be useful to the spirit? The apostle explains how: 'Like newborn babes.' That is, *without any malice whatsoever. No malice in compromises between High and Low, between the spirit and the flesh, between licit and illicit; no malice in thought, acts, appetites, and hopes.*

'You must be free from calculations of every kind. And desire this as your only food, not previously encumbering the spirit with other heavy, harmful foods; and if your spirit is already so encumbered, empty it out, rejecting the stimulating, heavy, acid foods of every kind of sensuality and of selfishness with a thousand faces. And desire this food because you believe it is life-giving, working within you. Do not go to this food, then, which is generally distributed in houses of prayer, through ceremonies and preaching, to the Sacraments and other means, just to be seen and to say, 'In practicing this way, in death I shall be blessed.'

"Oh, it is not in frequenting the places of prayer that man is sanctified! *It is with one's whole life. You improperly call 'practice' what is only 'frequenting.'* *Whoever goes often to a place frequents it. Whoever puts into effect what is taught or imparted to him in that place practices.* But how many scribes and pharisees among those who come into the places of prayer once or several times a day are seen by the angels at the altar! How many!

"One must practice the teachings, make their fruits and those of the Sacraments act, not out of calculation to have praise on Earth

and a good place in Heaven, but out of the superspiritual desire to honor the Lord in this way and not enjoy imperfectly the food which He offers to your spirit. Then, in sincerity, humility, and charity of purpose, the spiritual milk, which is sincere, can truly act in you and make you grow in Health.

"Someone will shake his head, saying, 'Whoever is assiduous in pious practices cannot sin.'

"Oh! *The fornications Of false piety are more numerous than people think! Many souls, similar to many lustful spouses, have two lives, and one ceases at the threshold Of the church. Once they are out Of it, they go Off to adulterous loves with the flesh, selfishness, and concupiscence. Nourished with the Meek One, they are cruel to their brothers and sisters; cleansed by the Blood Of charity shed for all, they are uncharitable with their fierce egoisms; instructed by the Word, they commit acts contrary to the Word's teaching. And can they not be called adulterers? Can they not be called liars? At the very least, thoughtless butterflies or idle, noisy blue bottles wasting their time in fruitless curiosity, in the vagrancy of spiritual sensuality; whereas the true lover Of the spiritual milk is united to this food and seeks nothing that will divert him from it, but seeks it and then produces its sweetjuices, like an industrious bee.*

"And you, true children of the Most Holy Lord, 'sing with joy to God your protector, raise your cries of rejoicing to the God of Jacob,' to your God, who nourishes you with Himself. Alleluia! And pray to Him that 'by his grace He will grant that you may conserve the fruits of the Paschal feasts in your lives and in your works.' For, if you did not conserve them, it would be useless for you to have sucked the spiritual milk, which would not turn into nourishing juice, but into a harmful element, like every gift of God which men have not managed to direct towards a yield. Pray to the Lord because no man in the world can feel so strong in spirit as to say, 'I can act on my own.' If he spoke thus, he would be quite weak. For the worm of accursed pride would be in him to eat away the pith of his soul, and the plant, corroded in its depths, instead of remaining erect towards Heaven, ready to be transplanted up above, would collapse, perishing in the mire of sensuality. Until his last breath man needs God and the Saints to persevere in the ways of Light and Justice.

"And now let us read the words of the apostolic Seraph, of our Brother John, a brother because of his chaste purity and perfect

love, a companion in ministry by the Cross of Christ, an angel of flesh and a soul in the procession of spirits watching over the sublime Martyr and the sublime Martyred Woman, a companion in assistance to the Queen of Angels and men, a 'voice' of the divine heartbeat, possessor of Charity and apostle of Charity, blessed John, a light among the lights of Heaven.

"All that is born of God triumphs over the world.'

"Yes. *An answer to the syllogisms, the doubts, the excessive asking why of those who, even in questions of the spirit, want to treat them as they would material questions (both Wisdom and science-the former supernatural, the latter human- seek to dissect with the same system of limited reasoning, because it is stripped of the light which enables one to comprehend and accept the former-that is, the Wisdom which only Faith renders comprehensible) is given by the duration of what comes fi-om God. Human works do not survive the impact of events or withstand the erosion of time. But what comes from God does not perish.* All of divine History offers proof of this: the history prior to the coming of the Word and that which has taken place from that moment until the present, as well as what will occur until the termination of the world writes 'The End' upon the long historical description of God's relations with mankind.

"Since the first chapter of this multimillenary history the truth that *man comes from God and God provides him with salvation and reserves Heaven for him* has never been lost or annulled. And when there is no more time and the last word is added to the long History, the resurrected will see that, since it was born of God, the lineage of the saints triumphed over the world and time and human and Satanic deceits, possessing perpetual life in the eternal Kingdom created in the beginning for the children of God, conserved for those children even after the sin, restored by the Holocaust of Christ, opened by his Death, and given to the just for the Father's joy in giving what He had created for them.

"But what is the victory which triumphs over the world? 'It is our faith,' assures John. Indeed, without faith in God, in his Reward, in the wisdom of his Commandments, how can man surpass the angels in the merit of the struggles to be undergone in order to deserve the promised Reward? Would he not succumb, like the soldier who knows he is separated from his comrades, unarmed, without hope, and abandons himself to his enemies, defeated by despair rather than by them?

"But the believer knows! The believer knows! He sees. Behind the hard, cruel, insidious rampart surrounding, separating, opposing, and tempting him on all sides and seeking to persuade him that everything comes to an end here below, that the hereafter does not exist, that God does not exist, that there is no reward or punishment, and that it is wise to enjoy the present hour, he sees, as if he were already in the hereafter, for faith gives supernatural sight; he sees that God exists, that Life lasts, and that there is a reward. And he arrives at that reward through faith, which makes him hope and love and struggle and win out over Satan, the world, and the flesh.

"And if it could still be difficult to believe before the coming of Jesus the Savior, in the times of severity and indignation, in which man had nothing but words as the basis for his faith, after the coming of the Savior faith had every means to grow and triumph. Faith in the forgiveness of God, in the possibility of salvation, in the truth of the Law, in the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus has testified *for everything*, and *on everything*, and *by everything*. By his Most Holy Incarnation. By his Divine Word. By his Most Holy Death. By his glorious Resurrection.

"Faith, in hearts not sold to Darkness, expanded enormously through these testimonies, feeling that a God who humbles Himself in Flesh to save man will undoubtedly forgive and have a reward and a Kingdom to give to the saved. The certainty of a second, immortal life grew enormously, for otherwise the Incarnation would not have been necessary-if everything were to end in death. Faith in Christ, the true Son of the true God, greatly expanded with the proof of his true Humanity offered by his being able to shed his blood and die, and with the proof of his true Divinity through the testimonies of the Father's voice, the miracles, and the Resurrection.

"For whoever had a heart desirous of believing, faith was thus rendered easier through Jesus Christ, believed to be true Man and true God, proof of love, forgiveness, and power.

"And whoever believes this overcomes the world, because his faith is supported on a foundation which does not collapse.

"This is that Jesus who has come with the water and with the Blood,' the Apostle says.

"What water? What Blood? Only the material water of Baptism, whose nature was modified through his merits, changing from a purifying rite into a regenerating rite? No, not just with

the material water, but by the testimony of the Father and of the Spirit, who came to indicate Him in his divine Nature at the beginning of his ministry in the moment of the baptismal water, to illuminate his figure, celebrate his humility, and command that He be venerated as the One in whom the Eternal Lord took pleasure. Not just with the material water, but with the water emerging from his gashed chest to say to deniers-then and now and always-that He was true Flesh and had truly died after having given *all* his Most Precious Blood for men.

"Oh! When the Font is blessed for Baptism the substances the liturgy prescribes are poured into it. But don't you think that a meritorious droplet of that most holy water flowing from the gashed chest of the crucified Lamb is infused, by a divine prodigy, into the natural water in every baptismal font to make the instrument valid, so that it will regenerate to Grace? This is the water which regenerates man, annulling original sin! That which is drawn from the Lamb immolated for the redemption of men, struck even after death so that no doubt would remain, emptied of every trace of life, down to the water after the Blood, for the immensity of the Sin demanded *the totality of the Sacrifice*.

"The Spirit testified that Christ is truth. The Blood testified that Christ is Man. The water testified that the Redemption was totally fulfilled, just as on the Jordan and on the water God had testified that the Manifestation was beginning.

"There are three in Heaven to testify to the Divinity: the Father, who proclaims Him to be his Son; the Word, who manifests Himself, and the Spirit, who crowns Him with his flashes of lightning.

"There are three on the Earth to testify to his Humanity: the spirit, surrendered after a tremendous agony; the Blood, shed in the painful Passion; and the water, the only survivor of the One Bled Dry, dripping in a supergenerous totality of redemption from the side now devoid of heartbeats. The Redeemer even after Death!

"And, as the testimony offered by men cannot be denied, so the testimony offered by God cannot be denied, but, rather, as the first and most valid, that of God must be accepted which He has always given to his Son, from the moment of his Incarnation by the work of the Holy Spirit to that of his Ascension in Body and Soul after the fulfillment of his mission on Earth. Therefore, whoever accepts these testimonies, of the Earth and of Heaven, believes that Jesus Christ is the Redeemer, Savior, Judge, and

Son of God, and thus possesses in himself the testimony of God. But those who say they believe in God and reject faith in the Most Holy Divinity and Humanity of Christ do not have Faith in them and are consequently separated from God, attackers of God, and dead to God.

"For them the Risen One's preceding them into the Kingdom of Heaven is null and void. For them Christ's continual selfmanifestation in the works of the Servants of God and of the Church founded by Him is null and void. The words of divine hope are useless. There is no peace in whoever does not believe. God's showing Himself is also useless. They reject it as a delirium. Once faith is lost, or even simply crushed by the rationalisms of and science, it is no longer possible to admit that God is omnipotent, and, therefore, miracles-whatever their form and nature may be-are also denied. Oh, to how many Most Holy Jesus could say the words spoken to Thomas: 'Come here, observe, and do not be incredulous, but believe!'

"The world is teeming with Thomases! Well then, my Lord has me say to those who out of pride-this is the bad plant extinguishing faith-cannot admit anything but what they understand, forgetting that God is infinite in everything and they are limited in all respects: 'Blessed are those who are able to believe even without comprehending the reason for something.' Blessed for their simplicity, for their humility. Blessed for their abandonment.

"Always blessed, even if they should happen to be deceived. Because the trap would weigh upon the one who had contrived it and not upon the one falling into it. And, besides, to repeat the first words of the Epistle, *what comes from God is testified to by its duration. False phenomena soon fall. Either because they cease or because they degenerate into acts and words of error. Therefore, if something lasts-and lasts with decorous seriousness and holy virtue-it comes fi-om God, and it is preferable to accept it and say, 'Glory be to You, O Lord, for this manifestation ofyours,'instead of saying, 'I cannot believe that God can do this.'*

"Two sins against Charity. *Regarding both the Lord God, whom you offend by placing limitations upon Him and his instruments, whom you unjustly blame. Ifyou do not understand, keep silent. In Heaven you will understand. But do notjudge so as not to beJudged. Leave to God the task of making Truth and Mercy shine forth.*

"Maria, soul of mine, do not offend the Lord by harboring the

doubt of men and Satan for an instant. Pray for whoever is unable to see and hear God, but be steadfast in your truth. Reject the Enemy, who uses doubt when he cannot use any other temptation to separate souls from God, with the always victorious words 'Step back, O Satan, in the Holy Name of God and through the most holy merits of Jesus Christ Our Lord.'

"I shall leave you, Maria. I am going to give your kiss to the innocent babe who is being born to Grace. May the Lord be with you and the angels, my brothers, keep you company.

(The innocent child Azariah refers to in this Holy Mass is the daughter of Paola Belfanti, Marcella, baptized today.)

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

Introit: Ps 33(32): 5-6, 1

Collect: Lord, You have raised up a fallen world by the humility of Your Son; grant Your faithful people perpetual joy, so that to those whom You have saved from the perils of eternal death, You may grant everlasting happiness. Through the same Christ our Lord.

Epistle: 1 P 2:21-25

Paschal alleluia: Lk 24:35; Jn 10:14

Gospel: Jn 10:11-16

Offertory: Ps 63(62):2, 5

Secret: May this holy oblation, Lord, ever bring us Your saving blessing; so that what it represents in a mystery it may perform by its efficacy. Through our Lord.

Communion: Jn 10:14

Postcommunion: Grant us, we pray, almighty God, that we who receive from You the grace of a new life, may always glory in Your gift. Through our Lord.

May 5, 1946

Azariah says:

"The Earth is filled with the Mercy of the Lord; and if it were received by hearts just as it is shed upon all the living, there would no longer be any wretches, sinners, or separated ones. But entirely united in a Single Flock-guided and protected by the Shepherd who gave his Life for his sheep and who offers Himself, Life, to all, to give Life-Humanity would proceed in unity and with the strength of that union, defended by it against hatreds, political divisions, egoisms, and cupidity between State and State, People and People, defended against this evil, whose flame is fanned by the Adversary to provoke ever new and ever greater misfortunes for mankind.

"But Mercy remains inert for too many, not on its own account, but because of the excessive number who do not want to receive it. Like the Lord, whose gentle attribute it is, Mercy can say, 'I stand at the door of hearts and knock.' But too often the eternal, beneficent Lover receives in reply the response of the Bride in the Song: 'I have taken off my tunic. Why put it on again? I have washed my feet. Why soil them again?'

"Yes, this poor Humanity replies that way to its Powerful Lover, the Only One who loves it and could save it, and does not

reflect on how great his love is and on how much it can hope for from this great love of a God who humbles Himself by offering Himself and asking to be received!

"Those proud people who say, 'Too much have we wanted to act on our own, and He can no longer love us,' and thus the ones who moan contritely (but with a spurious contrition not surpassing the stagnant point of human despair moaning over material sufferings and complaining about being tormented by them, but not passing on to the luminous degree of contrition-that is, the degree which says, 'I have sinned. Your punishment is just. Thank you for giving me a way to expiate with pain in this life. But have mercy on me for the sake of your Mercy') resemble the lazy Sulamite who still does not know the Bridegroom perfectly in his infinite beauty and power, to possess which no sacrifice is too weighty and do not leap at the invitation by the one forgiving them even before they ask for forgiveness and coming forward, saying, 'Receive me.'

"Or mankind stands up, when despair is such that Humanity recognizes therein the claw mark of the infernal Beast, but it rises when He, tired of waiting, has departed. Nor is it capable of imitating the repentant spouse who makes reparation for her cold laziness by untiringly going in search of Him, defying darkness, watchmen, heavy dews, and dangers, agreeing to be stripped of her robes-which are quite poor, even if appearing regal, as are those of Humanity as a queen fallen upon hard times that has lost the King who made her such-if only she could find Him again. And yet his Word fills the Heavens created by Him and they bear witness to Him, just as everything in Creation bears witness to his providential power, and events confirm prophecies, and there is no doubt that the Word of the Father is King, Savior, Redeemer, and, therefore, the Only Shepherd.

"How can man, so many men, persist in a deafness which lower beings do not display that obey the orders received in the beginning and, if stars and planets, they give light and heat and lead their lives providing assistance to the inhabitants of your planet, as you are unable to; if animals, they procreate, and each supplies what it should; if plants, they bear fruit or serve with wood; if elements, they provide heat, bedew, ventilate, transport, nourish? Why does man-so many, too many men-not accept the invitation seeking to unite them in One Single Church founded by Him who died for men? Why do the branches want to remain sepa-

rated and wild, when, if rejoined to the trunk, they would be nourished with good sap? Is man worse than the plants, which accept the graft and the transplant in order to be more useful and fruitful?

"Yes, man is worse than the tree. And he deprives himself of so much good because he is obstinate in his separation. And, though the upright of heart are not lacking among the separated, we thus see that they mutilate and sterilize their uprightness by wanting to remain separated from the trunk, whose roots sink into the earth of the catacombs and whose summit touches the Heavens: from Rome; and, therefore, the One Catholic, Apostolic Church is called Roman, created not by a poor man, poor even if a powerful king on a human throne, not by an excommunicate already marked with the sign of Hell, but by the God Man, the eternal, Thrice-Holy King.

"Yes, man, and too many men who, though knowing Christ as Evangelicals, Orthodox, Orientals, Greeks, schismatics, Maronites, Lutherans, Calvinists, and Waldenses-just to name some of the leading separated branches-trample on even the proof of love which Christ has given for their salvation: his humiliations. And they prefer to remain impoverished when they could be ennobled; they prefer to be '*dead*' when they could be '*alive*,' because of their obstinate will to be the 'separated.'

"Condemnation upon them? No. They continue to be your brethren. Poor brethren far from the House of the Father. Eating a bread which does not satisfy, living in a haze which keeps them from seeing the radiant Truth, slaking their thirst at impure founts not offering the Water which comes from Heaven and leads to Heaven. The sadness of their religions is reflected in their rites. Their hymns resemble the songs of exiles, the songs of slaves. The search of one who knows he has a father but no longer finds him is in their preaching. The display of one making up for the void of truth with choreography is in their ceremonies.

"They try to feel God and bring God to be felt; they speak the language of God and his saints so as to persuade themselves that they are still his brothers and saved by Him. But the melancholy of separation is upon them and in them. They are the false rich, the false well-fed, the poor ones obsessed with having nourishment and abundance; but they are undernourished-and very, very poor. The great treasures of Catholicity, the infinite treasures of Christ, the Head of Catholicity, are closed to them.

Let us pray for them.... And you that can suffer, suffer for them. "To suffer! God's gift to men. Sharing in the mission of Christ. A means to become saviors in addition to being saved. A nobility which the best among men in wisdom and sanctity possess. For only those who have comprehended and who want wisdom and sanctity love suffering. But if Christian man meditated on how Christ has revealed Himself and has always acted, he would love suffering.

"Luke says that the disciples recognized the Lord when He broke the bread. Perhaps because Jesus had a special way of breaking bread? No, every man breaks it as He did, every head of a family, everyone presiding at table....

"But in the symbolic gesture of Himself-the Divine Bread, broken and split up so that every man could have it-He manifested Himself as who He was. The Pilgrim encountered along the way by the two from Emmaus revealed Himself to be Jesus by that symbolic gesture. He had already spoken to them and explained the Scriptures. And yet, although they were disciples who had known Him for years in his appearance and way of teaching, they had not recognized Him. The perfect beauty of the Risen One was able to transfigure the features of the Rabbi whom they remembered as often sweaty, dusty, and weary in the labors of the Gospel and whom they had last seen for a moment in the hours of Friday, altered by the sufferings and the foulness hurled upon Him, swollen by the blows, disfigured by the crust of dust and blood covering over his Face. But that was his speech. Jesus has never changed his accent, tone, and method. And yet they did not recognize Him as the Savior.

"But when He took the intact bread and blessed it, offered it and then broke it and gave it to them, *then they recognized Him.*

"Jesus was the Bread of Heaven, the Intact Bread which had undergone no manipulation by man. Intact, holy, and gentle, He had descended from Heaven to Earth on a winter's night and had separated Himself a first time in a mysterious measure from the Two who with Him formed the holy Triad. The pain of the separation, of the first break, marked the entry of the Light into the midst of Darkness. And for thirty-three years, at an increasing pace, the life of Christ was nothing but a succession of humiliations metaphorically comparable to those of bread reduced to crumbs and scattered in progressive fractions, annihilated to being: a means for all needs. Were the last three years not a reduc-

tion to crumbs for all hungers, for all souls, for all the needs of souls? Who was more annihilated than He, misunderstood by ignorant, closed-minded friends and by resentful enemies? Who was more broken to give-by suffering and untiring action-health to bodies and souls, and wisdom, and forgiveness, and example to everyone?

"And at the Last Supper did He not summarize in one rite the whole meaning of Himself and his mission and his holocaust? The evangelists agree in saying that, on coming to a point in the Paschal Supper, He introduced a new rite into the old one: He took bread, blessed it, and broke it, giving a piece to each one of his Twelve and saying, 'This is my Body given for you. *Do this in memory of Me.*'

"Oh, I beg you, O Christians! Release your thought from your heavy limitations; clarify your spiritual gaze, and *see*, and *understand* beyond your usual limits!

... This is my Body given for you.' 'Given,' He meant, in this way: '*broken*, for love of your good spurs Me to break Myself, to let Myself, the Untouchable One, be broken by men....'

"Do this in memory of me.' The Eucharistic rite is established with these words. But not that alone.

"The advice to the elect among his redeemed ones is also in those words. And that advice is 'To be worthy of the election by which I have chosen you-my true servants among the servants in memory of Me, who by this teach you the form and manner of becoming Masters and Redeemers, *break yourselves into pieces*. Without repugnance, pride, fears, or human considerations. Split, break, annihilate, and destroy yourselves, *give yourselves* to men, for men, and out of love for Me, who, out of love for them, give Myself to whoever breaks Me, as I gave Myself to whoever wanted miracles and instruction.'

"*Someone incapable of breaking and giving himself is not a good disciple*. And the generosity, the immolation of the person able to break himself to satisfy the hunger of his brothers and sisters is the sign causing the true servants of God to be recognized.

"And they recognized Him when He broke the bread.' *And they will recognize you by your breaking yourselves out of charity and justice*. They will recognize you as true servants.

"Therefore, O dear voices, O chosen instruments, love what is humbling, painful, laborious, holy breaking into pieces for the

good of one's brothers and the glory of God. Then the Good Shepherd will speak for you and say, 'I am the Good Shepherd, and I know my sheep, and my sheep know Me.' He will say, 'My sheep? Here they are. These are the ones! These who set their feet where I set them, even if the final way is that of Calvary. And since they truly *know* Me, they do what I did, willing to be broken if only they can save their brothers.'

"The blessed apostle Peter confirms my words in his epistle. Listen to him: 'Christ suffered for us, leaving you an example so that you will follow in his footsteps.'

"The sheep of the true Sheepfold would no longer belong to it if they abandoned their Shepherd by following in the footsteps of another, to other pastures which were not those of the Master of the Flock. And his steps do not involve material joy, but suffering, fruitful for the one undergoing it and for others, since to suffer with Christ and in Christ means to continue the Redemption of Christ.

"Nor should any of you specially chosen instruments-along with all of you wishing to call yourselves fervent Christians-complain about trials, sorrows, and anguish, terming them unjust because they are undeserved.

"'He,' the Apostle says, 'who never committed sin or uttered deceitful words, who, when cursed, did not curse, when ill-treated, did not threaten and placed Himself in the hands of those judging Him unjustly, bore our sins Himself, in his body, on the cross.'

"Who among men can say this in the knowledge that it is not a lie? Who can say, 'I have never sinned or uttered deceitful words or cursed or felt rancor towards those who hated me, and without reacting I placed myself in the hands of my executioners'? No one can say so. And why, then, do you complain, if He did not? Why do you react, if He did not offer resistance?

"Do you not, then, have in yourselves the key to the secret whereby one can suffer with joy and a willing haste to suffer? The secret is this: 'So that, dead to sin, men might live in justice, healed of their wounds through his Wounds.'

"That's it! Love, once more love, ever again perfect love provides the key to the joy of suffering. Those who have understood the Master and have completely wished to imitate the Master are able to die so that men will live in justice and be healed of the wounds of their sins.

"For all our brothers, Maria! For all our brothers, O true Chris-

tians! Without pharisaisms which annul Christianity: a religion of love to take back to old Israel, full of severity.

"To suffer, therefore, not only for our Catholic brothers and sisters, but for the 'separated' brethren, for the straying sheep, that they may return to the Shepherd and Bishop instituted by Christ: the Successor of Peter, Head of the lambs and also a lamb himself of the Eternal Lamb.

"And I entrust you to the arms of the Good Shepherd, consumed lamb, for the charity of your suffering today, this suffering of yours, which I deposit in the heavenly thuribles so that, together with all the prayers of the saints it will burn and give Rv 5:8;

8:3-4
off fragrance before the throne of God to obtain Mercy for the 'separated' and the grace of a return to the One Sheepfold.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit! Alleluia!"

The Eternal, in the evening: "Maria! I bless you for all you are doing for souls!"

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

Introit: Ps 66(65):1-3

Collect: Lord, You show to those in error the light of Your truth, so that they may return to the way of righteousness; grant to all who profess themselves Christians that they may reject what is contrary to that name and follow what is consonant with it. Through our Lord.

Epistle: I P 2:11-19

Paschal alleluia: Ps 111(110):9; Lk 24:46

Gospel: Jn 16:16-22

Offertory: Ps 146(145):2

Secret: May these holy mysteries, Lord, enable us to subdue worldly desires and learn to love the things of heaven. Through our Lord.

Communion: Jn 16:16

Postcommunion: May the sacraments which we have received, Lord, we implore You, be a quickening food for our souls and a protection to our bodies. Through our Lord.

May 12, 1946

Azariah says:

"It would, indeed, be proper for the whole Earth to sing praise to the Lord with an exultant voice. But if, with the faculties granted them, the lowest of the Earth do so, *for simply to carry out what one was created for is also to sing the praises of God the Creator*, the king of the Earth-man the king of the animal creatures, master and exploiter of the animal, vegetable, aqueous, and mineral realms-is incapable of doing so. Not with order, not with love. Order, through animal nature, which puts him on a level with all the species created with matter, leaving him the first place on the scale of those living on Earth. Love, through the spiritual nature with which God has endowed him to make him similar to Himself, this ring joining the materiality of the brutes and the spirituality of the angels, this being for whom God has reserved an immortal life, as what is participation in God, one for whom He has created a Kingdom of eternal blessedness, cannot perish in nothingness.

"Man violates order, all order. He therefore violates love as well. For disorder is hatred, leading to works harmful to one's brothers and negligent towards God. Whoever harms his brothers, using the realms in which man is the king and exploiter to do harm, whoever does harm to his brothers, using the superior in-

telligence with which he is endowed to cause harm, whoever, believing himself to be a little god for a short time, in that time is incapable of offering God homage and obedience shows that he contravenes order and is thus disorderly in order and demonstrates that he hates his fellows and hates God, in harming the former and offending God in a thousand ways.

"The Liturgy recalls this duty of man, as a living being on Earth, of loving and praising the Lord, the first among the forms of reverential love for the One Worthy of all praise, a prudent act which, in reminding the intellect of the thought of God, restrains man's whole being from performing works which only those without faith can perform. But too few accept the advice, the liturgical invitation, and the Earth lacks too many human voices in the chorus of creation to its Creator. The most beautiful voices in the immense choir are scarce, for too many men forget that they exist because God maintains them.

"In the time of the psalmist the works of Creation were still acknowledged to be God's. Man now denies even these. And this being, who is unable on his own to create a single, slender, but innocent and useful, stalk of hay, denies God the attribute of Creator, frequently substitutes heavy, obscure Matter in place of God the Luminous and, repeating the accursed phrase, 'Like You, I am,' the phrase of the Rebel, succeeds in being the creator of death and pain, taking from the things created by God, which 'were good,' the elements to create what 'is not good,' what is torment and estrangement.

"As in the psalmist's day, however, while with their works and their thought they go *against* God, *against* order, *against* peace, and against everything, it is clear that they also go against sincerity and, out of hypocrisy, calculation, and baseness, adulate God with false utilitarian celebrations, aimed at deceiving other men and fit for offending God more than any honest absence from worship.

"O hypocrites who always say, 'God! God!' while exclaiming J! P'in your hearts; *your* works cover the Earth. But with what? With ruins, pain, death! The sublime terribleness of God has given 'good things' in his terrible Power, according to the ancient mode of expressing the grandiosity or perfection of a power; He has given them in his infinite power, according to the proper expression of recognition of God. And these works, terrible in power, made by God, had covered Creation with things, beings, elements,

aids, natural laws, and supernatural Laws providing upbuilding, contentment, and life.

"This is man without God, for he is without charity towards either God or his brothers, doing his works, truly terrible in the current sense of the word, frightful, cruel, which destroy what God has made, trample on every right and every duty, deride every natural and supernatural law, annul love, and cause ruin, pain, and death.

"Can man check this avalanche of the godless? He can individually, by not cooperating with it-that is, by leading a *truly* Christian life of order, justice, and love. And God helps these willing ones by giving them all the means to live with order, justice, and love.

"He gives them Grace through the merits of Christ, sustains them with the Sacraments, amplifies the Faith with the proofs of Truth and the Love of God. And, from man's birth to his death, He does nothing but continue these aids and others still, all of them supernatural, among which not the least is the angelic ministry, to make man arrive at death in grace and peace so as to receive eternal glory.

"He can do so collectively by joining his other brothers with benevolent brotherhood. A Christian society against an anti-Christian society, a family of children faithful to the Father against a family of degenerate children who have abandoned the Father of Lights to choose the father of Darkness as their father.

"But man is so weak that his will does not suffice to offer resistance to the force of Evil, that in a thousand forms scours the world and corrupts it, and corrupts souls, either definitiv

or by snatches, with sudden assaults. Man by himself cannot withstand Satan, for Satan is oneself and the flesh and the world. And, then, let us angels pray, along with you, good men, asking the Almighty, who has given the erring what they need to get back on the ways of justice, to grant those who are already on this path-but who might be wrenched away from it by some trap or some bending of their will-what they need to have the strength to reject all that is contrary to the Christian life and to practice what is in conformity with it, with fortitude and constancy until the end-that is, let us ask that God grant his aid. With the help of the Lord, the weak become strong; the fearful, heroic; the sensual, temperant; and Justice is reached, and people maintain themselves and live therein, for even if one falls through a vio-

lent assault, through a momentary spiritual somnolence, we see that with the help of God he quickly gets up again and proceeds towards the goal: Heaven.

"And now let us meditate on the teachings of Peter, who can speak as a master, both because of his human experience and because he was instructed by the Word and enlightened by the Spirit Paraclete so that he could be the perpetual teacher of the Apostolic Church.

"Simon of Jonah, of Capernaum, Cephas of Our Lord Jesus, can speak to men as a man who *wanted* and *was able* to become an Apostle and as an Apostle upon whom the Pentecostal Flame descended to consecrate him to the perfect teaching.

"Have you ever meditated, O soul of mine, on the symbol of that tongue of fire which-you have seen it-rested upon each of the Apostles' heads while it crowned the All-Holy Woman with a wreath? I want to have you comprehend it. You are generally told: in the form of a flame to be perceptible to the Apostles and to signify love and light. Yes, that, too-but not that alone.

"The Paraclete could have-and it would have sufficed-come in the 'great rush of wind' and penetrated into the Cenacle-where the Eucharistic Rite had already been fulfilled: the donation of the God made Flesh to his faithful so that He would be in them even after the separation and they would not be deserted by their beloved Master; He could have penetrated and remained, a globe of marvelous splendor to enlighten the minds which had to speak to the world of the True God and of his Christ.

"But the Paraclete did not limit Himself to that. He, too, like the Incarnate Word, *broke* and *gave Himself*, in a Communion, in an outpouring and donation of his gifts of Wisdom, Intelligence, Counsel, Science, Fortitude, Piety, and Fear of God, just as Jesus had given Himself in Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity. And since, notwithstanding the sanguinary, most holy lavacre in the Blood of the Lamb, which had cleansed their souls, but had not destroyed their humanity-which had to struggle on its own and evolve towards perfect spirituality-that humanity remained, even after the Resurrection, heavy and dull, Ineffable Love, the Creator together with the Father and the Son-for the Union and Will of the Three who love one another divinely are inseparable-wanted *to create* the new apostolic man, when the Father in due course had already created him for life and the Son for Grace. The Paraclete, acting upon these two creations, wanted to complete

and perfect them, burning up the heaviest, the most poisonous dross remaining in the humanity of the apostolic man, located in the head, where the five senses are joined together at the service of material sensuality, where the organ is enclosed presiding over sensations and transmitting them to the most remote organs, and where the agent of thought is. The head: the apex of man, the only animal that stands erect, almost as if to testify to his regality, and who, on account of his erectness, seems to symbolize the fact that, as the sun reigns longer on summits and the bolts of natural electricity descend, so he, the summit of creation, gathers in upon himself the divine Sun and receives the supernatural, marvelous commands and comforts of his Father who is in Heaven.

"But into the head, sometimes, and too often, informed with heavy slabs of threefold sensuality, the Divine Sun and the Father's messages cannot enter while the corrupt fumes of a corrupt humanity rise up.

"He, the Most Holy Master, has said, 'It is from the heart that evil thoughts, homicides, thefts, adulteries, fornications, false witness, envies, and blasphemies come.' And they rise up, like smoke from a malodorous brazier, to the head, producing disturbing thoughts which are then transmitted to the executive organs.

"Even if in the Apostles there were not homicides, robberies, adulteries, fornications, false witness, and blasphemies, what a lesser throng of lesser shortcomings-but still unworthy of spiritual masters-was in them and might grow, out of pride over being masters and aided in an extraordinary way by the extraordinary gifts of God! How many fall into discredit for this reason! In how many the extraordinary gifts are a ruin!

"It should in truth be said that the selection of spirits is carried out on account of sin, but it can be stated that not only by way of darkness the lambs are separated from the goats, but also through the luminous means of the extraordinary gifts. God often pours Himself out with these gifts. He seldom persists, for He is put to flight by the pride, deceit, and spiritual sensuality of the creature benefited by the extraordinary gift.

"In the Apostles that was not to happen. In the son of Darkness, in the wretched deicide Judas, the gift of miracles had initiated the Apostle's ruin. But in the twelve destined to evangelize the world there were not to be any more ruins. And behold the Spirit in his Pentecostal Communion burning and purifying the seat of sense and thought: the heads of the apostolic men,

while He crowned with love the head of the Virgin, his Spouse, and drew close to kiss with the only kiss worthy of the Most Blessed Virgin Mother, the one who was All-Grace, Daughter, Spouse, and Mother of Grace, Mary, Queen of the Apostles and of the Church on Earth, Queen of the Angels in Heaven. Alleluia!

"And now that I have explained the symbol of the breaking of the Paraclete Fire into so many tongues and of their burning over the Apostles' heads, let us return to the Apostle Peter, who, having become spiritual after the Communion of the Spirit, remembered that he had been a man and with charity and knowledge and truth told and tells men who are his disciples and brothers the rules to reach the spirituality which makes them saints.

"He says, 'I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, to refrain from carnal desires.'

"Indeed, Christian man is a stranger and pilgrim in the midst of pagan throngs. The world, pagan in its customs, and humanity itself, more or less latent, or more or less violent in the Christian, makes the spirit proceed as a pilgrim and stranger through countries not his own, unknown and dangerous.

"And we see, then, that Peter warns, 'Refrain from carnal desires' as beings of another nation that could take you and then make you their slaves.

"Proceed warily. For you do not know the real visage of the things surrounding you. They may have a good appearance and be abject, an innocent appearance and be roguish. Watch yourselves. Do not make easy alliances. Have charity, but do not let what belongs to others not of your chosen lineage penetrate you.

"Charity which prays and forgives and instructs by actions even more than by words. But discretion. Always remember that the spirit is more delicate than a virgin and that, if deflowered, it no longer has the lovely freshness of innocence. Forgiveness descends upon the repentant spirit, and penance makes it once again acceptable to the Lord. But the memory remains, the memory of the fall. And memory mortifies and may be of use to Satan to shake specters in the twilight hours which every man encounters-and especially in the hour of death-to make man fearful and distrustful of God.

"Oh, supreme security of a spirit unsullied by mortal sins and voluntary sins! How you should be sought after and protected, supreme security, to make man take joy in you!

"Be cautious, then, while you are strangers and pilgrims. For your own sakes and for the honor of God. Don't you want to work for his glory? And you must thus be bent on converting the pagans enslaved to sense and the world. But how can you be if the sensual and worldly could oppose against your words the fact that you are like them? Be careful, then, not to provoke complaining on your account, but, rather, by your authentically holy works, take care to provoke positive reflections which prepare for the Lord's coming to the pagans of the world, who, on the day of their conversion through your merit, will glorify you as their saviors, together with the great and Thrice-Holy God and Savior.

"And Peter says, 'Be subject to all authority out of consideration for God.'

"And what of it? Does God perhaps protect certain inauspicious authorities? Oh, don't harbor that thought! But what accumulates merits upon you-your obedience to all human authority, so that it cannot be said that you are rebellious and turbulent and a scandal to others-at the same time accumulates condemnations upon anyone holding authority who uses it iniquitously. Be subject, therefore. And to what point? As far as human law goes. But if a human authority should wish to penetrate into the domain of God and impose upon you laws contrary to the Divine Law, then be *free and* capable of dying, but without betraying God and his Law out of fear of a man or various men.

"And do not do so out of calculation either, so as to gain men's favor, but with a supernatural spirit which is capable of distinguishing and practicing good order as opposed to that which is wicked and of doing what does not prejudice the right to Life, which persecutions do not destroy, for they instead lead those faithful to the Holy Law to life.

"Respect everyone. God leaves man's will free. Man does not have the right to violate his brothers' wills. And eternally accursed are those who by violence impose slavery on human thought to have throngs of slaves bound to their heretical, pernicious ideas.

"Be loyal adversaries of your ideological enemies. Seek to bring them to your idea, which is holy, by holiness of life rather than the eloquence of your speech. But never stoop to their systems of secret accusation and violence, of contempt and calumny. Even if those leading you astray are poor brothers enveloped in heretical ideas, they are still your brothers. The Savior came and

prayed and suffered and died for them as well. You must pray and suffer for their conversion, in imitation of Christ Our Lord.

"Do not give the king or heads of state greater honor than you give God. You weep over having done so. You have mistaken a man, a wretched man,' for an envoy of God, forgetting that it is the works of men which speak of their belonging to God or Satan. And you are bitterly atoning for this foolish idolatry of yours. No idolatry is left without punishment. Bear this in mind. Honor the heads, then, but worship God alone.

"And be respectful of major dependence-that is, the citizen's dependence on his leaders, children's on their parents, and servants' on masters-without rancor and envy, without dishonesty or betrayal. Learn to see God beyond man, and as you obey magistrates, relatives, or masters, who may also be such as not to attract love, look beyond them and say, 'Father, I *serve You*. I serve you by fulfilling your command, which is to be meek and obedient.' Oh, you will then see that it is easy to obey if you firmly believe that this obedience is seen and blessed by God as the greatest of the meritorious works by man; as the Saint in whom Christ is so visible, your St. Francis of Assisi, says, perfect joy does not lie in science or in different things, but in doing the will of the Father and being able to suffer afflictions and sorrows patiently out of love for God.

"You see, soul of mine, that the Apostle's words are echoed in those of the Seraphic Father, proclaiming it to be a grace and a great grace-to be able, out of consideration for God, to bear troubles and suffer unjustly, for when one suffers punishment for sins committed, it is only expiation, a debt which is settled, and nothing more. But when without having committed sins indeed, having done good-it is granted to you to suffer, it is a great grace which shines in the eyes of God, a treasure which is accumulated to your advantage in the Kingdom of Heaven.

"And now I shall leave you, soul of mine, under the mantle of the Crowned Spouse of the Holy Spirit and Queen of the Apostles, and thus of the 'Voices,' of the great 'Voices'-and, on account of her mission, which is perpetuated forever and ever, of all the 'voices' who meritoriously fulfill their mission for the glory of God and salvation of souls. She is, therefore, your Queen, O voice.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

¹A reference to *Mussolini*, according to Maria Valtorta's annotation on a typewritten copy.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

Introit: Ps 98(97):1, 2, 1

Collect: Lord, You make the minds of the faithful to be of one will; grant Your people to love what You command and to desire what You promise, so that amid the changing things of this world our hearts may be fixed where true joys are to be found. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Jm 1:17-21

Paschal alleluia: Ps 118(117):16; Rm 6:9

Gospel: Jn 16:5-14

Offertory: Ps 66(65):1-2, 16

Secret: Lord, by the sacred exchange which is effected in this sacrifice, You have made us partakers of the one supreme divinity: grant, we pray, that as we now know Your truth, so we may attain to it by holy living. Through our Lord,

Communion: Jn 16:8

Postcommunion: Be present with us, Lord our God, that by these gifts which we have received in faith, we may be purified from sin and saved from all dangers. Through our Lord.

May 19, 1946

St. Azariah says:

"Men, who no longer want, and no longer can, read and grasp the words which events write on the pages of Time, certainly do not say the words of the Introit, but, rather, lifting their fists and their hatred towards God, they curse, 'No marvelous work! No justice! Either God does not exist, or, if He exists, He is an idol God who cannot set Himself against men. An idol-God. Man is more of a god because man can do what he wants and no one punishes him.'

"Men speak this way, that part of mankind which is most numerous, but wherein the supernatural regality of man is annulled, for they possess a dead spirit upon which Evil is seated in its different forms of atheism, hatred of God, hatred of men, savagery, and corruption.

"But I am not speaking to them. I am speaking to you, little voice, to all the 'voices,' and also to those who are still men made in the image and likeness of God-that is, a mixture of body and soul in which the king is the spirit that remembers God, serves God, obeys God, and will have the possession of God, the beatific possession which makes men as many gods, eternal and most blessed.

"And I bring you to consider the truth of the words of the Introit. A truth which superficial observation seems to belie, but which is luminous beyond the smoky, opaque screen of the ruins, the slaughters, the wretchedness, and other punishments which have struck and will strike Humanity.

"God has worked wonders. If, as happens when you look below from the altitude of one of your airplanes at the continents you are flying over, you could look from on high, from a very great height-that is, from the spheres where the spirituality reigning over you and the Truth and Light that are your queens permeate the inhabitants of that supernatural world-if you could see with a single gaze of intelligent observation all that has occurred in these last years on your planet, you would see, as if in a huge mosaic, the fragmentary wonders worked by God being recomposed and and an immense, marvelous masterpiece appearing testifying to the Lord's justice.

"For, O dear children who are faithful in the Lord, there is no one among you who cannot say, 'The Lord has protected me; He has provided for all my legitimate needs; I have seen his Hand in that hour of war, in that other of persecution.' Many among you lament because the family is no longer what it was before the war, because well-being is no longer as before.' Children of the Lord, you weep; but wouldn't you mourn even more if by chance the one you weep over were no longer among the living? For so many death has been a mercy!

"You do not know. Mercy in time. Mercy in eternity. If they had lived, they would now be in danger of falling as they had never been before. If they had lived, they would have encountered the justice of men, which in its forms is always cruel compared to that of God, made up more of hatred than of equanimity, communicating hatred towards or to the guilty. Observe, however, how much mercy God has shown in certain deaths which have been an expiation, full payment of the *great debt* to God of him or her that you mourn. And even in the event that not a single thought of repentance emerged from the corrupt spirit in the hour of death-and a *single* cry invoking the Father, the Savior, would have sufficed to save the spirit from death and restore it to Life in the hour when its little life was coming to an end-that death was still merciful justice because it kept you from being ashamed,

† An allusion to the second world war and to Maria Valorta's own family.

from shuddering with horror, 0 mothers, 0 wives, 0 children, in the face of the new moral appearance of the one you now mourn.

"And general events have been and are justice. Would you perhaps expect the Offended God to be and remain inactive in the face of the continual provocations of man, who in a thousand ways tramples on and destroys the capital precept? Do you think it is licit to deride God and act as if He did not exist? You can do a great deal, and you abuse this power. But observe God's response: his non-intervention in your favor, in favor not of individuals, but of masses.

"The Creator does not exist,' they cry. 'God does not exist,' they blaspheme. And the Creator shows you his existence with inexplicable meteoric and animal scourges.

"Do not say, 'Then He is not good.' Goodness is virtue; foolishness is a disease. God cannot be sick, imperfect, or disabled in any of his powers. And to man, who has destroyed, violated, and trampled on the rights of his fellows-and this criminality has involved the *whole* Earth-He responds with his right to destroy what He has created. God strikes man, who does not return to reason with war, but becomes more and more of a demon, with the blow of famine, treating you like brute beasts that understand nothing but animal needs-treating mankind as what it is.

"You, to whom I speak, will ask, 'What about us? It is true. On account of the sins of a people its just men perish as well. But as you weep over present punishments, lift up your hearts, as the Prayer teaches, setting them in the place 'where the *true* joys are.' In spiritual things, in the promise of a future life, of a reward for the persevering, in God, your Father and your Reward.

"To annul every trace of doubt about the providential presence of God, even in the events which do not seem to have their origin in God, a good origin, because they occasion weeping, here are the words of the Apostle John: 'Every excellent thing received, every perfect gift comes from above.'

"*One must be able to see.* This is vital. To see in order to believe. Not to see to believe in the existence of God-for, in regard to this, blessed is he who is able to believe even without seeing, and his continuous act of faith will give him great glory in Heaven-but to see, beyond the materiality of the event, the forms of supernatural justice which are hidden in that event. When one *is able to see in this way*, it thus happens that, through a metamorphosis of the material event, it is changed into a supernatural,

beneficial event and ennobled to become the money for an immortal gain and merit.

"Observe the chrysalis enclosed in the cocoon: an ugly animal which is willingly crushed on account of the repugnance it causes. But if the chrysalis manages to escape from destruction by man, the cold, birds, and rains and to remain attached with its cocoon in the spot where the far-sighted care of the one who placed it there has left it, it thus happens that, at the time established by immutable, wise laws, the cocoon then opens and amazed man sees that the inactive, repugnant caterpillar has changed into an agile, beautiful butterfly.

"God does the same in his faithful and in favor of his faithful. He takes the ugly, cruel, repellent human events willed by the egoism, hatred, and greed of the majority of men, which strike like hail and like scourges wound the best part of mankind, together with those deserving to torture one another because they have lost human brotherhood and turned into an immense throng of beasts and demons and-if only God's faithful succeed in remaining where the far-sighted care of God has placed them: in the ray of his Light-He metamorphoses them into excellent things, perfect gifts. In such a way that we see that from a common misfortune a selection arises, and the children of the Light become more luminous and chosen, because *they are able to see*. While the children of darkness become more and more tenebrous and reprobate, for not even the observation of all the evil done by their wicked wills makes them repentant, or at least pensive, thereby placing them at the beginning of the road leading back to God.

"Therefore, good children of my Lord, *succeed in seeing. Seeing supernaturally*. Seeing that from the tortures of the world which you suffer, and which are the work of men, you can obtain an increase in merits and glory. Seeing, therefore, beyond the claw-like hand of the Evil One and of the wicked which rips and torments you, the Most Holy Hand of the Father, which presents you with the means to possess a great, eternal gift through your patience, your faith, and your acceptance of what cannot be repelled, as if everything came from God.

"Every excellent thing, every perfect gift, can wisely be said to come from above, then, while things which are wicked and lacking perfection rise from below and surface, like malefic spores, and are gathered in by those serving the Most Base and scattered

as a rain of torment over all Humanity.

"Every perfect gift comes from above and *descends* from the Father of lights.'

"See how much security comes from this phrase: 'descends from the Father of lights.' If He is the Father of lights, could He ever be like one groping in the dark and choosing by chance what falls into his hands in the darkness, but without knowing its nature and effects? No, He cannot be like that. And so, be trusting, O dear children of this Father of lights, be trusting. He knows what perfect gifts to give you, when and how, to make you perfect. Do not repel them, do not use them badly, do not corrupt them. Accept them. With humility. With all the more humility the more they are extraordinary gifts-and I am saying this for you, dear voices. With great love for truth, without adding or removing an iota of what God entrusts to you, without concealing a part or introducing a frill out of false shame or false fear.

"Be as God makes you. Do you believe it? Blessed are those who *are able to see* God in the instrument. Don't you believe it? Pray for them. Do they mock you? Do they try to induce you to disavow what you are? Be gentle in reacting with forgiveness to the offense, but *unshakable, tenacious as a mountain of granite in your certainty*. Only God has the right not to make you what you are any longer. And you must not complain if, after having used you, He leaves you aside on Earth to arouse others. Believe me, O voices: if you are equally obedient to both the call and the order to rest, even if your voice had to transmit a *single word*, your merit in Heaven would be great because of your obedience in acting and in resting after having acted.

"James says so: 'from the Father of lights, in whom there is no variation or shadow of change.'

"Do you hear how stable God is, on his own, in his decrees? Only the creature is unstable and thus escapes at times from the stable will of God, creating his own sad state by himself. But God does not vary or change. And if He has loved you to the point of attracting you to Himself to give you a mission among men, He cannot afterwards abandon you and change his decree.

"Our Most Holy Lord Jesus, though equal to the Father, did not experience a change of heart towards the apostles. While He knew full well who Judas, the inconstant one *par excellence*, was, Jesus never changed. Until the final hours He treated Judas as an apostle and friend. At the Supper He purified him along with

the others and communicated Himself to him as He did to the others, and in Gethsemane He continued to greet Him as 'Friend.' And, let us imagine, if Judas, instead of hanging himself, had run to the foot of the Cross, the Dying One would have gathered together the strength to say to him still, 'Friend, what have you come for? To receive forgiveness? Here it is-and complete. Go and sin no more. Love me and bring others to love me.' And He would have said to Our Mother, 'Woman, here are *your* sons,' joining the innocent one to the repentant deicide; nor would the Most Holy Woman, the greatest Creature after God, have rejected him, for She is the Holy One, second only to God in perfection. Judas' weeping at the foot of the Cross would have given the world the superperfect prayer of Jesus to the Father in favor of the sinner. But the World did not deserve to receive the exact measure of what merciful love is. And this prayer was not uttered....

"But Jesus, God, like the Father, never changed his Heart or his Thought towards his chosen ones. Not He, but Judas changed his heart and his thought and freely harmed himself. 'He,' says James, 'by his own will has generated us with the word of truth so that we may be the first fruits of his creatures.'

"That's it: this should be said of all God's true faithful, most especially the chosen ones in the midst of the chosen flock. But the first fruits, in order to be such-that is, of great worth-must be flawless, respond with good will to the Will of God-that is, 'quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow in wrath.'

"Soul entrusted to me, I now offer you a great counsel which my Lord gives me to bear to you. Receive it, for it comes from the Light and is wholly light, from Wisdom and is wholly wise, and from Justice and is wholly just. Receive it as you have received the preceding ones, with the same docility as a tuft of cloud lets itself be led by the wind. God is your wind and leads you along helpful and just ways. Not a single one of his acts towards you does not involve infinite benevolence. My Lord has your 'good companion,' me, Azariah, say to you, 'Be slow to speak.'

"Until now you have spoken, responding with sincerity to what was simply curiosity. Enough, now. Remember that you are not faced with upright intentions, real charity. With a great deal of humanity, and not always *righteous* humanity, they question you. Why? To help you? No. The best ones, out of curiosity alone; the others, out of the desire to find fault with you. Jesus, too, was questioned by Pharisees, scribes, and Sadducees for these two rea-

sons: curiosity or ill-will, the idleness of useless discourse or the hope of catching Him in a blameworthy action.

"I told you who your witnesses are when my and your Lord orde~ed me to tell you. See and treat every other as a stranger *not to be admitted* into the domains of the King because he is doubtful-at least his spirit is doubtful, the spirit with which he seeks to enter inquiringly 'into the closed garden.' Be slow, extremely slow, niggardly, most niggardly, in words with everyone, except with your witnesses. You see that the others do not change their attitude. They seem to be going back up the slope towards the Light; then, weighed down with too many theories and not lightened by the spiritual breeze which could counterbalance the weight of those theories, they fall back to the previous point. And sometimes they distort the discourses, either deliberately or out of an inability to understand, and tempt, going against both prudence and charity.

"You left the door half-open, at God's command, so that they would not have ignorance as an excuse. Now, at God's command, *close it*. Be enclosed within yourself, with your great Treasure, and with your lesser treasure-God and the Work,' having great charity in prayer and forgiveness for those who do not have it for you and so demonstrate in many ways-but also possessing right and proper prudence, for, when everything has been said to convince and others do not want to be convinced, it is useless to utter idle words concerning things which are not idle. Imitate the Most Holy Lord Jesus, who, after having spoken tirelessly for three years before those whom not a single word, act, or example had changed in his favor and who were assembled to condemn Him, opposed them with silence. You and they now speak two different tongues. And since on one side charity is lacking, that side does not have the light to comprehend you.

"The time of the 'great silences' which St. Th6rbse of the Child Jesus prophesied to you in your exile in the mountains in the summer of 1944 has thus come.² Sink into them. Identify your-

¹ A reference to Maria Valtorta's writings as a whole, constituted by the monumental work on the life of Jesus (beginning with the birth of the Mother of God, continuing with Jesus' hidden and public life, passion, death, and resurrection, and concluding with Our Lady's assumption into Heaven); comments on Old Testament passages, on St. Paul's Letter to the Romans, and on New Testament texts; and some accounts of the early Christians and martyrs. Maria Valtorta affirmed that her writings were due to visions and dictations communicated by God.

² See note 1 on p. 34.

self more and more with God, separating yourself increasingly from men. Let God once again be your only Director and Confidant, as in the period when Our Lord Jesus was preparing you to be a *voice*. From time to time He will indicate to you the conduct to be observed. For if it is true that men think a great deal is licit, it is also true that God opposes them with his 'Enough!' when charity is offended.

"Manifest these words just once, and then silence. Silence in the face of useless answers and useless questions and silence regarding useless references to whoever cannot change things or does not want to change them.

"And now let us resume the epistle. 'Slow in wrath because man's wrath does not cause God's justice to be fulfilled.'

"For this reason, too, it is well for you to be silent. There are creatures who do not remember that they are face to face with other creatures and, reversing the command, they do to others what they would not want done to them and expect from others what they are unable to do, even if much less. Therefore, silence, silence, silence. Do not speak. And, if questioned and prodded in such a way as to disturb what dies with man and unsettle the spirit, give the short reply, 'In the name of the Lord, I beg you to refrain from asking what it is not necessary for me to say.' Respect God's command of justice, the command of silence, so as not to sin by resentment and not admit strangers into the dominions of the King.

"In this fashion, soul of mine, you will also free yourself from the dust raised by the wind of resentment, from the mire which in-depth knowledge of the human psyche raises again to the surface of hearts: lakes of humanity keeping Heaven from being reflected clearly there; you shall increasingly forget malice, sign of the Satanic venom remaining in man's blood to make him spiteful and incredulous; you shall free yourself from everything and 'with meekness' embrace your great treasure: God and his Word, 'the word deposited in you, which can save your soul.' Save, yes. By both the teaching which is in each word and the peace it communicates to you.

"It is said, 'Christ, having risen from the dead, no longer dies. Death no longer reigns over Him.'

"But for the little 'Christ,' too, that is after the trial. Now you are in the tomb. In the tomb there is solitude and silence. Only those who are witnesses to the sacrifice and the glory fol-

lowing upon it enter the tomb. To them you can narrate 'all the things the Lord has done for your soul.' As for the others, silence.

"When the Consoler comes, He will convince the world regarding sin, justice, and judgment.'

"In your case, though in a measure proportionate to the creature as compared to the Most Holy Savior, as for Jesus Our Lord, the Consoler will show those who reject you and have no mercy on the instrument and thus rise in judgment against God, who has chosen it, their sin, their error of obstinacy and deafness, the affront offered to the Word, who once again has spoken for the purpose of love, and the anti-charity shown to a sister; He will show the justice of his action in you and through you and of every order He has given you; He will show his judgment, not open to appeal, of the little 'voice,' whom the world, the great ones of the world, of your little world as a Christian, have not wanted to receive. For once more men reject the Light, which manifests itself when and where it wishes, with the humblest means, with the holiest purposes, to counterbalance the darkness of a false wisdom which knows a great deal in human terms, but exceedingly little about true Wisdom, that which has always spoken to the humble to raise them above the powerful and has flowed from the lips of the simple rather than of the learned, for the Spirit of the Lord does not seek pompously prepared chairs, but hearts burning with love from which to irradiate his teachings.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit! Alleluia!"

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER

Introit: Is 48:20; Ps 66(65):1-2

Collect: O God, from whom all good things proceed, be generous to Your petitioners; so that by Your inspiration we may think what is right, and by Your guidance may perform it. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Jm 1:22-27

Paschal alleluia - First: Alleluia, alleluia. Christ is risen, and has shone upon us, whom He redeemed with His blood. - Second: Jn 16:28

Gospel: Jn 16:23-30

Offertory: Ps 66(65):8-9, 20

Secret: Receive, Lord, the prayer of the faithful with the offering of this sacrifice; so that by performing our duty of devotion we may be brought to heavenly glory. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 96(95):2

Postcommunion: Grant us, Lord, after feasting on the strengthening food of Your heavenly table, that we may both desire what is right and receive what we desire. Through our Lord.

May 26, 1946

Azariah's explanation, which will certainly come, is preceded this Sunday by the Immaculate Virgin's smile, for She appears in a white robe just as in the apparitions of Lourdes and Fatima, but without the blue sash or golden cordon: a simple cordon as white as the robe keeps it gathered in at her waist, and the sweet gold of her hair is visible, for She has neither a veil nor a mantle. She is the Gentle One clad in white as She often was in the summers at Nazareth. It is only that now her robe is more brilliant than all earthly fabrics and seems to be made of a truly celestial linen. Since last night She has been comforting me and smiling, and in my pains entirely preventing me from sleeping which would be an escape for a few hours from the excessive number of thorns oppressing me-I find Her always present every time I emerge from the interrupted drowsiness that is the only repose for my weary, exhausted flesh, which cannot really rest in true sleep. Her whiteness, the snow-white emanation of her glorified Body, and the inexpressible look on her Face shine like a star in the dark room and in my afflicted heart. The night passes this way, and the gentle Mother is still here in the morning, and then in the ensuing hours of the day. Alone with Her, I venerate Her with the silent words of the spirit and ask for nothing, for I *know* that She knows everything, for I *know* that She is here to console me and that it is not necessary for me to ask Her because the Mother anticipates every request by those She knows to be her children....

I spend the hours with these thoughts. Many will say, "I would have asked for this or that." If a latent request is in me, I can have only this one: "Do what You know is best." I do not request anything at all for myself. God knows what is best; Mary knows what is best. I therefore

say, "Act, both of You, for the best and there is absolute peace. A peace which floats above all that men unleash with their acts of wickedness, selfishness, baseness, deceit, and similar mean things, blowing this meanness over the little sea of my spirit, which is in itself placid because it reflects Heaven. I wonder: What punishment will those receive who disturb the people entirely devoted to the Lord's service?"

And the Most Pure Mother answers me:

"What Jesus has explained to you in many dictations. And what, in your case, you have already seen come true on several occasions. For it is useless to give other names to what is happening to this or that person who has failed to fulfill his mission with you or has caused you pain and disturbance. The name is the one you know.

"My daughter, do you remember that hour of sad peace in which I appeared to you as a Servite and drew you to Myself, under the black mantle, to protect you while I wept, looking towards the north? Now I shall explain to you the meaning of that prophetic vision.

"My Son-and I cannot explain the reasons to you for the time being-had placed you under the protection of the Servants of Mary because you cannot remain alone, my daughter, with your great Treasure.² The Eternal had also given Me the protection of a spouse-useless for generation,³ necessary for guardianship -when the Treasure of Heaven and the World was about to descend into Me. My Divine Maternity could well have been fulfilled even without Joseph. But, because of the scandal of an unmarried woman's begetting a child and in view of the sign which this maternity in an innocent one would have given to that tireless scrutinizer of souls who is Satan, and, finally, on account of the need a child has for a father and protector, Most Holy Wisdom imposed my husband upon me. All of the above-mentioned reasons were illuminated for me from the moment the Holy Spirit infused Himself into Me, making me the Mother. I then understood the justice of my marriage, which up to that point I had accepted out of obedience.

"Well then, my daughter, Jesus had given protection to you as well. *That* protection. Do not inquire into why it was that and not another. That would amount to wanting to inquire into why the twelfth apostle was Judas Iscariot and not one of the holy and humble pastors, for example. Well, I have received you under the black mantle of a Servite, I, who in that dress wept because I saw-and you can understand where

¹ Maria Valtorta was a Tertiary in the Order of the Servants of Mary.

² See note 1 on p. 104.

³ In the sense that, since Our Lady was the bride of God, fecundating her corresponded to God alone.

I was looking-that there were too many infringements of the decrees of my Jesus concerning the Word, the instrument, and the way to treat the former and the latter. So that you would not feel too empty in the place where, for a special and always adorable motive of His, my Jesus had set you, to make you feel the full protection of the Queen of the Order and of the children of this Order, who, for a perfect life, are with me in Heaven, I drew you to Myself, close to my Heart, protected by my mantle while I wept over those who were failing to fulfill *their* task.

"But, O my daughter, do not lose heart. Bear in mind the Mother in this contingency as well. How you resemble your Mother when, as a stranger in Bethlehem and bearing the incarnate Word, She knocked in vain at the doors, asking for aid, shelter, mercy! Mercy more for the Word than for Herself, a poor woman weighed down with maternity and weary from the long journey....

"Our John states the great truth about this rejection, this deafness in understanding, this lukewarmness or iciness in receiving the Word: 'The Word-the Light-shone in the darkness, but the darkness did not grasp it. The Word-the true Light-was in the world, but the world did not know it. He came to his own, and his own did not receive him.'

"And so as not to receive Him they also rejected the Woman who was bearing Him and who, in the eyes of Israel, was nothing but a poor woman to whom it was impossible that God should have granted Himself.' She was, therefore, a cheat, a deceiver who was seeking by a lie protection and undeserved honors. It is always that way, beloved daughter. We are disliked, persecuted, mocked, and misunderstood because we bear the Word that the world does not want to receive. And we go wearily, sorrowfully from heart to heart, asking: 'For pity's sake, receive us! Pity for you. Not, indeed, for us. For we, in this gift which we bear, have, it is true, our burden, our cross as creatures, but also our peace and glory in spirit, and we ask for no more. But about the Word, the Word we bear you so *that it will be giuen*, for it is Life, *to those for whom it has been deposited in us*, we are solicitous and troubled

"How many, in Bethlehem, after the glory of the Lord had manifested itself in the Resurrection and when his Doctrine was spreading throughout the world, would not have wished to have received the Bearer of the Word on that cold night in Kislev so they could say, 'We recognized Her!' But it was then too late! God's moment comes and passes. And belated regrets do not make up for the mistake. The person responsible should be reminded of this.

„But do not be afflicted. In the eyes of God you are justified exactly as I was in giving birth to the King of kings in a fetid cavern. We are not to blame for not worthily honoring the Word pouring Himself forth, but those who prohibit our honoring Him publicly. The incense of our

† Kislev is the ninth month of the Jewish year, corresponding to our November-December.

loving and secret adoration is sufficient to replace every other honor which we are not allowed to give the Word deposited in us.

"Smile, my daughter, and hope, recalling that the Almighty can raise up children of Abraham even from the stones and will not leave you without the comfort and aid of priestly guides, raising up people responsible for this duty just as He has granted you, at exactly the right moment, the angelical teacher for your increased comfort

And Mary Most Holy shines more gloriously and sweetly than ever as She receives the angelical greeting of Azariah, whose luminous presence seems tenuous in comparison to the most luminous Virgin.

And Azariah speaks, remaining on his knees with his arms crossed over his chest and head bowed before Mary, as if he were before an altar.

Azariah says:

"You, soul of mine, are one of the spirits that the Lord has redeemed, from his people. For if Christ has become incarnate and has evangelized and died to redeem all of mankind; if, more specifically, He has done so for those who were of Israel, and even more for those in Israel who had received the Master, not all among these and among their descendants-that is, among Catholics-are equally redeemed, for not all equally respond with generosity to the generosity of the Great Saving Victim. The name of Catholic Christians has been borne and is borne by millions and millions of souls, but not all of these souls, upon whom Grace has descended to remake them as children of God, have been able to be redeemed forever, and immediately after death, since 'good will' was more or less defective in them.

"Generosity ought to be responded to with generosity. We, spirits who see men from the height of the Heavens and follow them with divine light as our guide, view the wonderful prodigies provoked by this competition in generosity between the soul giving itself to Him who has given Himself to it and God, who gives Himself even more to reward the generous one giving himself to Him. And we can truly say, in response to the questions of many about the humanly inexplicable ascents and descents of souls, that the rise or fall is linked to and follows from the degree of generosity with which a soul adheres to the Lord. Culture and status in the world have only a relative weight. What counts is generosity. For generosity remains charity. Whoever is more generous is therefore more charitable. The greater the degree of charity is, the greater union with God is. And where God is greatly united to a spirit, this spirit, dispensing with other external

agents, changes from a common spirit into a chosen spirit, capable of that which on its own it would not be capable, for in union it is God who acts with his perfections and according to his ends.

"Consequently, when a creature finds himself enraptured to special heights, he must humbly sing, so that the praise will be given to Him who deserves it, 'The Lord has redeemed Jacob his servant.'

"Woe, woe to those who say, 'I have become like this because I wanted to. The merit is mine.' Man has no merit other than good will, which must be active and humble until the creature's death. But the merit belongs to God, who gives you the aids to change you from men into gods. The pride of calling yourselves the *only* authors of your election is sufficient to turn a chosen one into a reprobate, for pride is hated by God, who withdraws with his gifts, whereas the proud one, instead of bowing his head, saying, 'I have sinned,' persists in wanting to appear as he no longer is, persisting out of pride, thus falling into deceit and sacrilege, and ending up, in contrast to what he was, as a future damned soul.

"I am speaking before the Woman Full of Grace, the One Without Original Sin, who deserved to be the Mother of God. What glories are greater than these? What greater assurance of glory? She indeed knows. Just imagine, if at any moment in her life, strewn with events capable of stirring up pride in any creature, She had had a movement of pride, it would prove vain for Her to have been Blameless, Full of Grace, and the Mother of God. Neither more than less than any other creature, She would have forfeited her splendid nature. For pride destroys *everything*.

"And it is useless to ask the Lord to grant good inspirations so as to put them into practice, as the Prayer says, if one does not first keep the terrain of the heart free from every plant of pride. Where there is no humility good inspirations cannot turn into good works, for good works are always supported on a foundation of humility holding them up.

"James the Apostle writes, continuing last Sunday's epistle, 'Put the Lord's word into practice; do not just listen to it while deceiving yourselves.'

"But how can you put it into practice if you do not first bring low the pride of the self forever? To obey is to humiliate one's judgment before another judgment which, by obeying it, we confess to be greater than our own. An initial action of humility is,

therefore, the recognition that others have a greater capacity to direct and judge than ourselves.

"Pride and egoism, like two sharp, ever reviving horns, try to destroy this humility. But man must incessantly make it spring up again if he wants to be able to put God's teachings, his commands, or his counsels and inspirations into practice.

"The word of the Lord is a word which crushes all that is base in man to make all that is lofty, spiritually lofty, grow vigorously. But if it remains scarcely supported on the heart, rendered granite by egoism and pride, or deadened by sloth, it cannot put forth fruit. It yields fruit when it penetrates, sinks in its root, grows its stem, produces foliage, flowers-that is, it yields fruit when it is received, when it is cared for with love and constancy, when it is aided with every effort to grow and adorn itself with all the virtues which are the marriage of the teaching Word with the acting will.

"James says, 'Deceiving yourselves.'

"How many deceive themselves in such fashion! They believe they are in the right only because they go to hear the word of God. But to listen and not practice, believe oneself saved because one has gone to listen, is to deceive oneself.

"The word must be assimilated, made one with the self, just as the juices in food become a single substance with the blood into which they flow. If one were ill with a disease whereby all assimilation of food ceased, even if one ate a whole lamb each day, one would die of consumption. It is likewise with those who listen and listen to the divine Word, but do not afterwards make it into juice for their spirit and believe they are nourished, whereas they are simply ballasted with inert matter.

"James says, 'He who does so is like one that, having gazed at his face in a mirror, goes off and forgets it.'

"I would say more. I would say he is like one who places himself in front of a mirror, but because he does not want to open his eyes, or because he wants to do so in the dark, does not see the details of what is in front of him and therefore cannot remember them.

"The holy Law, having become most sweet in the Gospel of Christ, should be known, to remember or practice it, in the fulness of light and will. And whoever transgresses it out of laziness, stupidity, or hatred of charity calls himself religious and a servant of God in vain.

"What is, then, the true religion, the true practice of the Word which has become Doctrine? That which turns into good works. And James does not cite attendance at ceremonies, ostentation in rites, and other similar things. But he limits himself to naming prudence and charity.

"Oh, how many trample on both of these! How many make their brothers weep because they are unable to check their tongues in backbiting, or in untimely, out-of-place praise, or in not being able to keep a secret whose disclosure may place a little mundane halo over their poor heads continually in search of motes of straw instead of the true branches of the heavenly palms, but which may prejudice God's right, obedience to God, and the peace of their brothers!

"Prudence is also one of the cardinal virtues. But those practicing it in heroic fashion are very-too-rare, and the tears which fall on account of acts of imprudence-all the more blameworthy when coming from those who, because of their mission, are expected to be of aid and guidance and restraint and comfort to their brothers-are innumerable. And great is the harm. Harm not concerning a human matter, but higher matters which are handled without prudence and thus despoiled of that holy, fragile veil in which God envelops his lights, too holy to be starkly tossed out as a gift to mortals.

"If only they would remember the great Moses, who was so reserved about presenting the reflection of the Divine, which remained on his face, that he covered himself with a veil because not all of Israel was worthy to know the reflection of God!

"The other of the two manifestations of pure, immaculate religion, according to James and all the true just ones, is that of charity towards one's neighbor, concerning which James cites the two most merciful cases: orphans and widows to be visited in their tribulation so that they will not feel forsaken and not be overwhelmed by the world, which does not know charity.

"But widows and orphans are not just those who have lost a spouse or parents. There are losses, solitudes, and abandonments even vaster than those of an affection and a protection which cease for flesh and a heart. There are abandonments of those who, as 'voices of God,' no longer feel supported and protected by the ones having this duty. And this cries out to God with the cry of someone moaning in a desert and having nothing but the Star in Heaven as a guide for his steps.

"O priests, what is your ministry if not to be everything to everyone, and especially to these, to these martyrs of God's will? Are you, then, no longer the descendants of those priests, those deacons, those Bishops and Pontiffs who, in times of persecution, went down into the jails, emerging from the catacombs, and penetrated into the arenas, ready to die if discovered in their action of love in bearing fraternal and spiritual aid to the martyrs for the sake of Christ's name? Your dangers are like straw in comparison to their enormous dangers. And yet nothing kept them from facing such dangers because the Priesthood is a militia, a militia which must be able to combat alongside laymen, for the protection of God's instruments so as to be the archangels putting the Adversary in his different forms to flight. Ready to die in the tranquillity of a simple life, ready to leave it, momentarily impaired-in what respect? In the wretched opinion of men, but haloed by the shining wreath of heroic justice because they have been the 'fathers,' the 'Cyreneans,' of the crucified instruments.

"For, even if no other impurity harms you, this one-fearing the world in its judgment and thus being impure in your action with the instruments-is upon you; and you are therefore not unstained by the world, since you think with the modes of thought of this world of yours, where human respect has value and sacrifice to be faithful to justice and charity does not.

"There is a great deal of suffering in Heaven, our suffering out of love, on seeing the sufferings of the souls chosen by God, and mocked by the world, and Heaven comes down to them, multiplying their lights to dry their tears and gather together their moans. But the charity of Heaven does not exclude the charity brothers *owe to their brothers*, for their brothers are still flesh in addition to spirit.

"And if, having come from the Father, who has roused them for reasons of goodness which will be known only in Heaven, they return to the Father laden with their crowns of thorns, as afflicted and tormented instruments they will still pray for their tormentors; it is not stated, however, that the Father forgives everything done by those who have unjustly tormented them, burdening them with inhuman loads not approved by God.

"Extinguish the 'voices' all the same. Your sky will thus become increasingly dark for lack of stars. But do not complain afterwards if your hagiography is not adorned with flowers. The

flower, in order to bloom, should be cultivated, not trampled on under weights of indifference or saddened by unjust harshness.

"Woe to those who cause the stem which was reaching out to heaven to bend under the weight of this thought: 'Am I perhaps a satan? A dart which further weighs down, which lowers towards the earth the eye that was securely gazing at its God-wounded souls, rendered doubtful, weary.... Poor souls! Not these, however, but rather those disheartening them will be called to justify themselves before their Lord. And you, soul of mine, remember this: 'When every human joy has disappeared from a task and yet that work is continued exclusively with the supernatural spirit of giving glory to God and aid to one's brothers, it is then that the work is supersanctified and supernaturalized, becoming profitable.'

"Remember this. And may what crushes you at the same time sustain you. Rise, rise, up to the final summit, with your holy weight of God's Treasure. Write, write, until the final word, even if every word wrenches a tear from you, aware that it is a pearl destined to lie unknown and therefore useless to so many who, however, need it. Your charity, victim soul, towards God, who speaks to you, towards your brothers who are waiting, shall be ever active, even if human lukewarmness is unable to rouse itself and make God's gift active.

"Be at peace. Weep no more. And let us hail the Blessed One with her own song, which is that of the great humble ones."

And Azariah sings the Magnificat in such heavenly fashion that my many tears stop in order to follow this celestial harmony....

SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE ASCENSION

Introit: Ps 27(26):7,8,9,1

Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, grant us always to have a will devoted to You and to serve Your majesty with a sincere heart. Through our Lord.

Epistle: 1 P 4:7-11

Paschal alleluia: Ps 47(46):9; Jn 14:18

Gospel: Jn 15:26-27; 16:1-4

Offertory: Ps 47(46):6

Secret: Lord, may this spotless sacrifice purify us and give to our minds the vigor of heavenly grace. Through our Lord.

Communion: Jn 17:12-13,15

Postcommunion: Grant, Lord, we pray, that replenished by Your heavenly gifts, we may remain always grateful for them. Through our Lord.

Azariah says:

"This Holy Mass

June 2, 1946

is really entirely for you, soul of mine. For you, in this hour, for you, to illuminate your heart with rays of hope, and confident hope in the Lord, your Father, Brother, and Spouse.

"Look. It opens with the words of your inner prayer: 'Listen, O Lord, to the voice of my prayer; my heart speaks to you.'

"Yes, your heart truly speaks to the Lord your God, and with words which do not plead for earthly needs, for physical comforts, for any of those usual requests by man, who asks the Most High for very earthly things. It is not a sin to ask for them. The Most Holy Lord Jesus Christ has taught men to ask for their daily bread. But, if one were to properly meditate on it, He placed this request-for an entirely human need-after the three sublime requests that the Most Holy Name of God may receive the honors due it, that His Kingdom may come, and that His Will may be done on earth as it is in Heaven. The perfect prayer, because it is taught by the Word, like a swallow of loving light, after having soared on high, descends with a swift wingbeat to entreat: 'Give us this day our daily bread'; but we see that it immediately rises up again from the animal need for food to the spiritual needs of the soul and flies, rendered light once more by the will to forgive the creature 'as we forgive those who trespass against us,' asking to be forgiven, and finishes by alighting, after hav-

ing completed a cycle of perfect prayer, again at the feet of Him whom, while adoring, he has called 'Father' at the beginning, asking Him for what a loving Father can do: to defend his children from temptation.

"This prayer, without any lacuna or defect, teaches man *how, why, and for what* he should pray. But man generally does nothing but pray for ponderous material need. And if it were only for the need of bread! But how many, how many foolish, and even offensive, requests prompt man's anxious prayers!

"One who prays only for spiritual things and for the glory of God and the welfare of his brothers is like a star set aflame in the uniform grayness of Mankind. Heaven thus sees these solitary people at prayer, and their entreaty rings out in a golden voice amidst the sing-song of the jarring, raucous, poor requests of ninety percent of creatures.

"Truly, if for an instant the Perfect One were to agree to the requests of imperfection-that is, of the Humanity which willingly loves imperfection-we would see things taking place which would be sinful, for man seldom refrains from praying to have his instincts seconded, to have his vicious desires sated-or, if they did not arrive at sin, they would still be a lowering of the creature, who, forgetful of having a soul, is concerned and anxious only about giving joy to the body.

"But blessed are those who are able to pray for the spirit and for spiritual things. More blessed are those who are able to pray not even to ask for holy things, but to say, 'You, that know what is best for me, give me what's best.' Most blessed are those who come to forget about themselves and asking God to do what is best, but say only, 'I pray that what is for your glory and what may serve to sanctify my brothers and sisters may be accomplished.'

"Then the one at prayer rises to perfect prayer, to that which forgets one's *own* martyrdoms, but entreats for others. The prayer of Most Holy Jesus on the Cross, even loftier than the prayer of obedience in Gethsemane. Loftier because it is perfect charity: 'Father, forgive them.'

"When you say, 'Father, not for me, but for the good which so many brothers can receive from it, so that this good may increase your glory,' then you touch perfect prayer. That of the creature who adheres to his God so closely that he fuses with Him and has the same desires as He: the good, the sanctification, and the glory of men to give glory to the Lord. The voice of your prayer

is this. Your heart speaks this way to God, and God for this reason loves you as a dear daughter.

"I sought your Face and shall seek your Face.' That's it! Just so! Never imitate those who, after having sought the Face of God in the hour of need, no longer seek it when a grace has been obtained or those who, not having received a grace, no longer seek the Face of God as if He were a disliked enemy in their eyes.

"No, the life of a loving soul must be, starting on Earth, what it will be in Heaven: a continuous fixing itself in the Divinity to worship it, honor it, love it, delight in it, and grasp its Words of light, just as we angels do. In necessity? To raise one's spiritual gaze to God. In the satisfaction of grace obtained? To raise one's spiritual gaze to God. In sorrow? To raise one's spiritual gaze to God. In solitudes? To raise one's spiritual gaze to God. To receive help, to thank Him, to share your joy with Him, to have someone showing compassion for your sorrow, so as not to be alone.

"Oh, the joy of being able to keep one's gaze established in the Divinity! Maria, this is the blessedness of Heaven. You see. To fulfill the final touch of the most agonizing and complete Passion of the Redeemer it was permitted that the Divinity should conceal itself from his spirit. And then the Willing, Heroic, and Silent One in pain cast forth the cry of his complete sorrow: 'Father, why have You abandoned me?'

"Oh, if we were to enter deeply into the immensity of pain, the completeness of pain which that cry contains! Heaven trembled at it; the Divinity had to force Itself to resist, not to have mercy, so that *everything* would be made up for, *everything* fulfilled in the expiation of the Humanity *which had abandoned God by following the Tempter*; the Angels trembled before the unfamiliar appearance of the Divinity, for the first time unmerciful, and they wept, meditating and comprehending fully what an abyss of sin Lucifer and the other rebels had achieved in instituting Evil and provoking the consequent sufferings, culminating in those of the Great Victim; they superadored the most obedient and meek Word, comparing Him to all that was, is, and will be created; and even in the reign of Darkness that cry produced a trembling and exterminated the last tenacious thought that they might one day be forgiven.

"No, the Earth came unhinged, and the veil of the Temple was torn; the tombs were opened at the loud cry with which the Martyr surrendered his spirit. But it was the horror at the deicide

accomplished, the sign given the incredulous and hateful, the start of joy of the just men who were waiting which made the Earth shake, the Veil tear, and the just emerge from the tombs. Oh, while the cry of perfect abandonment shook spirits, *all* spirits, and crushed them in an anguish which had never before existed and never will exist again! For abandonment by God, not being able to fix oneself in God, is the greatest trial for the living and the greatest punishment for the deceased. And here it was not only the trial given to a creature, it was not just the Man who found Himself separated from God, but it was the Word no longer in contact with Thought, it was the Son separated from the Father. God the Son, with perfect love, who no longer felt the perfect love of God the Father and desolately loved alone.

"You, soul of mine, are a victim, but you are not the Great Victim. This desolation is therefore not given you. You have known it so as to understand it; you have consummated it to relieve so many brothers and sisters of the desperation of human ferocity; you have had it at the proper time. No longer now. Lift up the gaze of your soul. Look. Take delight.... And sing the alleluia with me. The Divinity keeps you under its loving gaze, as the hen does with her chicks. Recollect yourself under this blessed radiance.... Let us pause: you stop writing, and I'll stop speaking, and let us worship....

"And now, emerging from the Most Holy Fire, entirely strengthened, purified, set aflame, and willing, say the word of the prayer: 'O God, make me have a will always devoted to You and let me serve Your Majesty with a sincere heart.' Yes, may your will never prevail. May it never know weariness or soil itself with compromises or be diminished with reflections aimed at judging whether the Most Holy Will, according to human judgment, gives you orders which do not strike you as the best.

"Always have this real faith that God does nothing but good things. Act. And even if you do not understand at once the reason for an order, act. And even if the order seems dangerous to you, act. Serve with a sincere heart. And that's all. Good, devoted, faithful servants never censure the orders of their lords. They always submit themselves to their judgment, which, for good servants, is always perfect. Now you are not, indeed, serving a king, a prince, just any lord of the Earth, who, however good he may be, is always subject to error, but you are serving the Lord God Omnipotent, Wise, Good. Therefore, with the calm of one who

knows that he is commanded by someone who does not err, listen and act according to his will. Is it an order that gives you joy? Do not grow proud, but act and adore, praising Him, the Lord. Is it an order which torments you? Do not be disheartened, but act and love, obeying Him, the Lord.

"Let us now listen to the Apostle Peter, the great and good Simon of Jonah, who formed himself with a constant and painful effort of good will to become worthy of his Master, without calculation about the future, with the only stimulus of giving joy to his Rabbi and God. Let us listen to the man who was able to turn everything he humanly experienced in himself into a gift for his future ministry, making the human spiritual through the force of love. And he became the father of peoples, the pastor, master, and helmsman of the Church, but, above all, the father, a father of most gentle and firm paternity for all the children whom his Jesus had entrusted to him with the three recommendations after the three professions of love: 'Feed my lambs and feed my sheep.' And Peter, the apostle and pastor, speaks to you, little lamb of Christ's flock. Listen.

"Be prudent and watchful in prayer. But, above all, constantly have charity among you, for charity covers the multitude of sins.'

"He had well understood the lesson of his Lord as an adult Israelite! And he transmits it to his children and brothers who are not perfect, who need continual absolutions for their faults and who do not always have the absolver ready. For death lies in ambush in a thousand ways, and every moment may sound the roll-call before the eternal Judge. Here is the absolver, then love. Every sin, every omission, and every imperfection-what is it but a momentary or persistent collapse of love in man?

"Mortal, obstinate, impenitent sin is the persistent collapse of love, the coma, the mortal agony ending in eternal death. Venial sin is a less profound collapse, but it still keeps the soul in a state of numbness. Imperfection is even less. If involuntary, it is scarcely a momentary sagging of loving watchfulness. But a man would die asphyxiated even if he paused too often in breathing, and so a man would die as a result of limitlessly repeated pinpricks as well. He would not bleed to death but would die of exhaustion to the point of agony. And it is no different for the spirit. One must confirm it even when one is wounded with slight punctures. And the absolver that confirms, that also keeps people ready for the roll-call, so that they will not have to fear, is love.

"To make up with love for the more or less serious collapse of love which has occurred. To reconquer the God lost with love. Love for one's neighbor offered to God so as to have God burn up your faults with his Love and cover them over with his Mercy towards the humble, which recognizes love and restores it with the suitable means, the creature's wretchedness which so easily stains his soul.

"In this life and the other, faults not deserving damnation are made up for with love. When the spirit has learned to love in such a way as not to offend Love any longer, it is then blessed.

"Do not fear sudden death or the judgment of God. They are not things which cause fear. But fear not fulfilling Charity. Sins against charity provoke God's sternness. And only one who must meet with that sternness ought to be afraid of death. Others ought not to. Whether it comes slowly or like a swift streak of lightning, it does no harm to the spirit continually washed by charity.

"Charity ought to be so great in you that even a simple gaze should be a caress for your brothers because it is so full of love. And, truly, when God is so alive in the spirit that He is entirely one with the creature, the human eye becomes that source of peace, of affection, whereby whoever suffers feels consoled, whoever is alone feels himself to be with a brother, and whoever doubts reaches faith, for, as in the time of the early Christians, the one that converts is love.

"See how they love one another! The pagans would say among themselves. And with this simple and sublime means the Christians made more numerous and convinced proselytes than if they had spoken in learned fashion from dawn to dusk and conducted disputations and exerted pressure.

"Practice hospitality ... without backbiting.' That's it-Peter names *one* of the material forms of love for one's neighbor. But the same counsel is valid for all. Charity must be silent, modest, understanding, and prudent. Our Most Holy Lord Jesus said so: 'May your left hand not know what your right hand is doing.' And not just for alms, but also for other types of help for misfortunes on a higher level-that is, moral and spiritual ones-charity *must be able to act and remain silent so* as to be free from all dross, for even mere surprise-the intimate thought 'What's going on with my brother?'-injures charity, though only slightly. Never judge, not even in your hearts, for the Divine Eye also descends into your hearts and reads. Do not swell with pride, saying, I

am holier because I do not have these things which diminish my brother.' Not holier. More fortunate. More protected. And why? On account of your merits alone? Would it not be a great merit instead to think humbly that God spares you because you are the most imperfect of all, and He does not want your ruin?

"And now, specifically for the voices, here is the word of Peter: 'Let each one, according to the gift received, place it at the service of all the others as good dispensers of the multiform grace of God.'

"You, voices, have had the gift of receiving the most holy words to pass them on to your brothers. Now then, do so with joy, humility, diligence, and generosity.

"You that are directors of the voices have received the gift of guiding these instruments. Do so with joy, diligence, charity, patience, and heroism. Do not remain seated, saying, 'The Lord

:16 will act.' You have been told not to tempt the Lord and not to be useless servants. If you remained inactive, waiting for the Lord to act, you would tempt God and be useless servants, no longer with any savor to your salt, no longer good for preserving what God has entrusted to you, which should always be protected, for God speaks to the spirit of the 'voices,' but the voices are not only spirit, but also flesh and intellect. Watch and keep vigil so that flesh and spirit will not be seduced by the Enemy, who observes them to tempt them, defeat them, and bring them to decline. Do not lead the 'voices' to pride by exalting them. Do not lead the ~voices' to weariness by leaving them without aid. Do not lead the 'voices' to decline by leaving them alone. Do not fail in charity towards the 'voices.' *Their cross is made of heavy lead, and everything serves to make it heavier.* If they did not have love, they could not carry it. Do you wish to make it worse with the boulders of indifference, incomprehension, sloth, and excessive waiting for supernatural aids? God has made you pastors *of these, too.* God has made you brothers *of these, too.*

"Do you hear Peter? Then was the time when the 'voices,' by God's just decree and through the ardor of the early Christians, who truly loved with heroism, were frequent. Here is Peter, who says, 'If one speaks, let him speak as one who sets forth the oracles of God; if one exercises a ministry, let him do so through the virtue communicated by God, so that in everything God will be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom is glory and rule forever and ever.'

"The voices cannot appropriate for themselves the words they receive. That would be sacrilegious theft. The priests who are directors of the voices, and of all other souls, cannot for any reason refuse or conduct their ministry with weariness. Because that would mean disdain for the virtue communicated by God to his ministers. And anyone who either abused or left his gift inactive would be committing a sin in the eyes of God.

"The aim of everyone wishing to be just is to give glory to the Lord. And to the Lord give glory, for everything you are, in the ways of Goodness, is because He gives you the means to be such.

"And you, soul of mine, rest in the promise of Our Most Holy Lord Jesus: 'I will not leave you orphaned. I am going, but I shall return, and your hearts will be glad.' Rest in the prayer of Christ: 'Father..., in coming to You I do not ask that You remove them from the world, but that You save them from evil.' The Consoler is about to come, Maria. He is preceded by the prayer and the promise of Most Holy Jesus. He is coming! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!"

And, after having adored and praised his Lord, St. Azariah says to me, "Tell Marianol to understand the words supernaturally." Nothing more....

† Father Mariano De Sanctis, of the Order of the Servants of Mary, who for several years took the Eucharist to the infirm Maria Valtorta.

PENTECOST SUNDAY

Introit: Ws 1:7; Ps 68(67):2

Collect: O God, who on this day taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us by the same Spirit to relish what is right and always to rejoice in His consolation. Through our Lord ... in the unity of the same Holy Spirit.

Epistle: Ac 2:1-11

Paschal alleluia - First: Ps 104(103):30 - Second: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful: and kindle in them the fire of Thy love.

Sequence: Veni Sancte Spiritus.

Gospel: Jn 14:23-31

Offertory: Ps 68(67):29-30

Secret: Sanctify, Lord, we pray, the gifts which we offer You and cleanse our hearts by the light of the Holy Spirit. Through our Lord ... in the unity of the same Holy Spirit.

Communion: Ac 2:2, 4

Postcommunion: Lord, may the outpouring of the Holy Spirit purify our hearts and make them fruitful by the inward sprinkling of His heavenly dew. Through our Lord ... in the unity of the same Holy Spirit.

June 9, 1946

Azariah says:

"Glory be to the Divine Paraclete! Gloria! Alleluia! Let us celebrate together his praises on this, his Epiphany of love. And let us consider it in its preparation, in its form, and in its effects.

"Human narrowness generally considers one single Epiphany of God: that of Christ. Man is truly unable to see, reflect, and understand. If *man were able to love*, he would see, reflect, and understand. The proportions of seeing, understanding, and reflecting are given by the degree of love reached by the soul.

"The more man gives and abandons himself to love so as to be enveloped, burned, and destroyed by it and constructed with a new form, burned so as to burn, and to honor by burning, and to sanctify by bringing among men the heat of the immense furnace where the creature is transformed into a seraph so that he will truly *enter* into God, into the blazing Tabernacle that is God the Worker from whom everything comes, the Tireless One who works all, the Perfect, Finished, Holy One, Power, Wisdom, Light, Thought, Word, Love, Life, Grace, Confirmer of Grace-the more man is capable of seeing, reflecting, and understanding, for he

possesses wisdom. Love is wisdom. Wisdom is the source of virtue. Love-that is, wisdom-is never disconnected from holiness. Rather, it is always the instigator of perfection because it spurs man towards fruitful works. And fruitful, constructive works are always works of love. Like steps on a golden stairway, such works elevate him more and more towards Heaven. Like feathers becoming fortified in flight-and every work of love is a flight towards Heaven-such works become ever vaster, holier, and more joyful, with the same joy God experiences in working.

"Man, when imbued with Love, appropriates for himself-shall we say-sentiments of Love and, with the Triune Love, recreates himself, redeems others in addition to himself, and takes delight in creating and redeeming; and, though active beyond measure in his working in the two forms of charity-adoration of God and love for his neighbor-acquires, through sweet ecstasy, continual and continually perceiving, the sapiential lights of God in which he is immersed, a deep, balanced, peaceful, and solemn majesty, which is the shining of superhuman union with the Divine.

"In a word: when man is loving, living with his spirit in the Most Holy Trinity, he takes on the modes and affections of the Place where he dwells and, therefore, active, contemplative, joyful love, which is thus Light and Wisdom, the faculty of seeing, reflecting, understanding.

"Now, by what I am saying to you, by the Light I am bringing you, by the fervor I nourish in you, I want you to fix yourself upon the higher knowledge, that which man commonly does not contemplate, and *see* what God is, the Multiform and Equable, the One who is completed in Himself, but does not exceed Himself through the prevalence of One of his parts over another, for prevalence, and the spirit of prevalence, is already egoism, and God knows no egoism, for in God there is Obedience in the Son, Agreement in the Spirit to shine alongside the Power of the Father, but never a spirit of overwhelming by One aimed at devaluing the actions of the Other Two.

"*To see* God means to note his actions, including those which the dull do not note. And *to see* means to note that to the Epiphanies of Christ, which the Most Holy Lord Jesus has already explained to you, there correspond the prior Epiphanies of the Father and those, which also follow, of the Spirit.

"The Father manifests Himself for the first time in Creation. An immense Epiphany of the Power which has made everything

from nothing, for the All can make things from nothing, whereas nothing, nonbeing, cannot form itself alone or form.

"The reply to the proud deniers of God is what their eyes seeundeniably see-and the impotence, which their pride cannot fail to observe, of their not being able to create a blade, a single blade of grass, from nothing. What they make with instruments or drugs or new crosses of metals, plants, and animals is not to create. That is to work upon already existing materials. To create is when from nothing one obtains all that surrounds you, this firmament with its planets, these seas with their waters, this earth with the plants and animals inhabiting it, these men who arose from the original dust, transformed by God into man, this created man who is vivified not only with limited life, but with eternal life through the spirit, furnished not only with instinct, but with intellect. This is to create. And the Creator has manifested Himself in creating. The first Epiphany of God, placed as a radiant sun at the beginning of time, never, ever to grow dark again.

"What is the organism which lasts eternally, once formed? What thing knows no dispersion, darkening, disgregation, oblivion, death? A time will come when the stars, even the supreme sun, will no longer exist. The continents are no longer as they were when the Earth was created by God. Dynasties perish. Often the names of the great who once were are not known because the centuries have covered them over with the oblivious dust of time. But the Epiphany of the Creator and Father is and will be. For with the resurrected on the Last Day there will remain the superperfect part of the perfect dimension of this Epiphany-that is, the Living Ones, the Men, the eternal.

"Are you left dazed, soul of mine? It doesn't strike you as appropriate to call the damned 'superperfect'? They will be the perfection of Evil and will bear witness down there-in the kingdom of the Rebel, who did not want to bend his spirit in adoration of the Most Perfect One and wanted to be a god in the place of God to what He whom the Rebel wanted to treat as his equal can do as Creator and as Judge: make from nothing beings that are not only living, but eternal, not only animals, but endowed with spirit, and judge them with all their being, giving to all that was rebellious what it has deserved, keeping them alive forever and ever, while all that was created will experience death, and segregating them in the kingdom freely chosen by them as *their* kingdom.

"As you see, the first Epiphany of the Creator and Father will remain, even beyond time, in the two Kingdoms that will not know an end-Paradise, Hell-to remind everyone, according to his condition, and at all times, that God exists and has manifested Himself as such from the first day of creation. A luminous, blessed remembrance for the citizens of Heaven. A remembrance of punishment for those in Hell. But for both indelible, even after everything is annulled, except for the two kingdoms.

"The creative manifestation was followed by the other manifestations of the First Person, to the patriarchs of the early days until the manifestation on Sinai, second in power, and the third, complete one, because the Three Persons were present therein, at the Jordan, and still another, to shake Gentiles and Jews-the former better than the latter-so that, because of the then imminent Passion of the Savior, their hearts would be prepared by faith to benefit from his merits.

"And to the Epiphanies of the Father there are united those of the Love, of the Love always present in all the Father's actions and thus manifested with Him and the Word of the 'Fiat,' since the First Epiphany of the First Person, for, as the Introit says, 'The Spirit of the Lord fills the whole world,' but particularly manifesting Himself in the lessons of wisdom and operations of redemption.

"Oh, sublime manifestation of Love, in the virginal house of Mary! The Love who manifested Himself in all his love, showering Himself upon the Loving Woman to generate the Savior! 'In filling all things, He knows what He tells you,' the Introit professes. In filling the heart of the Virgin, He knew what He was doing: He was making the Virgin conceive the Man so that the promises would be fulfilled and man would again be God's friend and son through successive operations of love.

" Look! Meditate! He who had presided over all the Creator's actions and, therefore, the Thought of creating the Immaculate as well, the future Mother of the Redeemer, thus descends now to betroth Her, finding Her more beautiful than Paradise itself, because She is beautiful in justice through her own will, in addition to the will of the Lord of Paradise.

"What sweeter Epiphany of Divine Love than this? And through this sweet Epiphany there was thus formed in the womb of the Virgin the Flesh of the Most Holy Word, and the Heart of Christ had its beginning there, that Heart which did not have

in its first beat and will not have a single motion which is not obedience and love and which is proposed to you as a model to arrive at the glory of Heaven.

8 "But to that Epiphany in the Galilean March, to the other on the banks of the Jordan, there was joined the luminous, crowning Epiphany of Pentecost, the promised epiphany which Christ had mentioned to his Apostles to console them on that Paschal night and on the morning of the Ascension. There it was fulfilled, preceded by a preparation of obedience and prayer, to make the *poor* apostles into the *great* Apostles, 'to baptize them with fire,' as Jesus had predicted to them so that they would be cleansed of their dullness and, more spirit than flesh, be able to plunge into the Fire and spread it everywhere, setting the whole world aflame with it. The Spirit well knew what He was accomplishing at that moment. He was carrying out the transformation of hearts. And He was changing them from hearts of men into 'voices' of God.

"That's it. The Spirit carries out these operations. He takes the nothingness that is able to love, that is obedient, that is faithful, that speaks to God in confident prayer, and invests it with Himself, transforms it, makes it an instrument of God.

"'You will carry out a new creation,' it is said. Yes, He performs the recreation of man as an instrument, so that the instrument's good will, when joined to Love, will supercreate the holy.

"And observe: the First Person rose up and commanded, 'Let there be Light.' The Third says, 'Let there be Love.' The First commanded, 'Let there be man,' and the Third, 'Let there be holiness.' The First cried to Lucifer, 'Be accursed.' The Third sets Hatred to flight with the splendor of Love.

"The Lord rises up and disperses his and his children's enemies, and those who hate Love flee from his sight and from the proximity of his children.

"I told you before that Mary was beautiful and beloved because She was beautiful in justice through her own will in addition to the Lord's will and for this reason deserved marriage with God. And I also told you that the apostles deserved the Pentecostal Christ because of their obedience and prayer in preparation for the event.

"Every soul, to deserve Love, must, with its own will, want Love and must maintain itself worthy of Love by obedience and unwearying prayer. If it did not do so, the descent of the Holy Spirit upon it would be in vain, for in descending He could not

make his dwelling there and would swiftly ascend again to Heaven, leaving aridity, cold, darkness, and silence where there might have been fruitfulness, warmth, light, and divine lessons.

"But if this is for all the faithful, for the instruments it is even more so. The Apostles were changed from men into voices of God through the work of the Paraclete and their own preparation in obedience and prayer. Those called to a special mission-and every call is a test; it is not yet a sure and immutable election-are transformed into '*voices*' by the work of Love and their own preparation in obedience and prayer. Don't ever give another name different from these two to the 'nothings' who become an instrument. It is their obedience, their speaking with God, their obeying the commands of God which makes them what they are. And do not give another name except that of disobedience and pride to the falls of those who seemed just and had only the external varnish of the just.

"I, soul of mine, will never cease, at the cost of seeming monotonous to you, to exhort you to practice those virtues necessary for all, but absolutely indispensable, and in full measure, in the being chosen for an extraordinary way-which are a perfect obedience and a perfect humility, a spirit of union with God-that is, *lived prayer*, and not, indeed, the mechanical mumbling of prayers at certain hours.

"The day before yesterday, in an intimate lesson, I explained to you that even what your mind does not comprehend, *because it is not nourished with theological notions*, works spiritual transformations in you, for the soul, without the knowledge of your intellect itself, which cannot follow it, in being ignorant of theological notions, absorbs the juice of the lessons you receive and is nourished by them. Just let your brain, as you say, hear nothing but the external and incomprehensible sound of so many profound lessons. There is a part of you, the best part, which is nourished by them all the same, truthfully. And this has more value than if you, with your intellect, were able to analyze and grasp every word, but that analysis remained a cold study of the mind and not bread and fire of the spirit.

"Many are the learned, but few those who join justice to learning. And why? Because they *know* what God is, but do not want to take this knowledge from the brain to the heart, to the spirit, and they are learned, but they are not just, do not evolve from human into spiritual creatures. They are great in pride, but they

are not great in obedience. Bold in judging, but faint-hearted in loving. Many words flow from their lips. But they descend instead of rising, because they are *words*, not arrows of love shot towards Heaven. Prayer.... Oh, I want to give you a comparison for what true prayer is!

"Think of a woman bearing her son in her womb. The heart of the child about to be born is not wholly united to the mother's; distant, separated by organs and membranes, they would be termed independent. And yet to every beat of the mother's heart there corresponds a beat of the son's, because the blood flowing through their veins is one and the same. You see, that's what it's like with prayer when it's truly 'prayer.' It is a conforming of the creature's throbs of love to the throbs of love of his God, almost as if one and the same blood of love were to impress motion upon two different hearts, synchronizing them in their movements. But if the child is born, he thus takes on an independent beat, for he is now *separated* from the mother, outside her.

"Accordingly, if the believer separates himself and goes out of God, his motions are no longer synchronous with those of God. The child comes out by a natural, good law. The believer goes out by a voluntary choice that is not good. Never go out of the loving breast of Love.

"And let us go back to the consideration of this Manifestation of the Spirit Paraclete.

"I told you at the outset that we would consider Pentecost in its preparation, form, and effects. The preparation may be divided into three periods. The remote, near, and immediate ones.

"The remote preparation for Pentecost is that which had been in the Thought of God since He decreed the coming of the Word to Earth to redeem and give the holy, perfect Religion which takes its name from Christ. A very remote preparation, but ever present and more and more active as the times flowed on, approaching the limit of the time of punishment and, therefore, the limit of the time of forgiveness. Since Love is in all God's actions, it is not an error to say that the preparation had its beginning at the beginning of time.

"The near preparation is that of the time going from the Annunciation to the Immolation.

"Immediate is that going from the Resurrection to Pentecost. For this reason, little John, Our Lord Jesus transports you immediately to the pre-Pentecostal time as soon as Easter day is

over. He treats you as one of his best loved disciples, soul of mine. To them, when He had risen from death, He still gave teaching, and He gave it, I would almost say, in loving seclusion: He and they, they and the Lord, with no more preaching to the throngs and striking miracles, so as not to have the distraction of crowds surrounding his last teaching. And so He led them up to the moment of his Ascension, leaving them with the command to remain recollected in prayer while awaiting the Paraclete, and *under the* ^{Ac 1:14} *direction* of Mary Most Holy.

"He does so with you as well. And He takes you to the breeze of Pentecost when the last peal of the Easter bells is fading out. Nor are fifty days excessive to prepare to receive the Spirit, the Fire that consumes only what is useless, but that, to be received, as a sanctifier and agent, needs a spirit prepared like a cenaclesilent, isolated, perfumed with obedience and prayer.

"Then the Pentecost opens its seven rivers and gives light and spiritual virility, nourishes the soul with its gifts and makes it fit to receive the septiform fruits, for which the Spirit deposits the seed that the soul's good will brings to maturation. He certainly cannot be received where there is no place for his abundance, dignity for his Nature, where it would be in vain to teach, for worldly noise disturbs and overwhelms, where obedience is deficient and prayer is a mere shadow, where there are other savors which are not flour and the honey of the rock (as tomorrow's Mass says-that is, simple, pleasant things, truly nourishing, as are the things which come from God and which God in his goodness gives to his children), but the spicy, corrupting savors of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

"Maria, soul of mine, until now the mortification that has oppressed you has kept you in a state of humility and adherence to God because of which the Spirit loved you and communicated Himself with great grace. Now fortify your heart so that the smoke of praise will not corrupt it and make you a sounding cymbal, but without the luminous words of Wisdom.

"Fortify your heart. I say to you, '*Fortify.*' I told you, 'Do not fear' when men battled you and you were alone with God and your angel. Now I tell you, 'Fortify yourself.' Make yourself steadfast in the face of praise as you were in the face of reproaches. Not you, but He is the one worthy of praise.

"Lift and fix your heart in Him, and pay whatever homage is paid you to Him who is worthy of it. You have been and are the

means which brings the Word of God to men. Be the means which takes the praise of men to the Author of the prodigy. The humble means in order to be the useful means. The just means in order to be the holy means. You have always overcome the battles of pain, and every pain has always made you more God's. Be able to overcome the battles of satisfaction. Be just, humble, faithful.

"Thanks be to God, my Maria; let us give God thanks at the end of this singular explanation, which is what the Lord wanted me to tell you. Thanks be to God! Alleluia!"

HOLY MASS
OF THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
AND FEAST OF THE HOLY TRINITY

TRINITY SUNDAY

Introit: Tb 12:6; Ps 8:2

Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, You have given Your servants grace in the confession of the true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity and in the power of Your majesty to adore the unity; grant that by steadfastness in the same faith we may be defended from all adversities. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Rm 11:33-36

Gradual: Dn 3:55-56

Alleluia: Dn 3:52

Gospel: Mt 28:18-20

Offertory: Th 12:6

Secret: Lord our God, sanctify, we pray, through the invocation of Your holy name, the victim of this offering, and by it make ourselves an eternal gift to You. Through our Lord.

Communion: Th 12:6

Postcommunion: May the receiving of this sacrament, Lord our God, and the acknowledging of the holy and eternal Trinity in its indivisible unity, be profitable to us for the salvation of both body and soul. Through our Lord.

MASS OF THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Ps 13(12):6,1

Collect: O God, You are the strength of all those who put their trust in You; in Your mercy hear our prayers, and because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do nothing without You, grant us the help of Your grace, so that in keeping Your commandments, we may please You both in will and deed. Through our Lord.

Epistle: 1 Jn 4:8-21

Gradual: Ps 41(40):5, 2

Alleluia: Ps 5:2

Gospel: Lk 6:36-42

Offertory: Ps 5:3-4

Secret: We implore You, Lord, graciously receive our offerings that we dedicate to You, and grant that they may ever be a source of perpetual help to us. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 9:2-3

Postcommunion: Grant, we implore You, Lord, that we, who have been fed with such great gifts, may both receive Your saving benefits and may never cease from Your praise. Through our Lord.

June 16, 1946

Azariah says:

"I have been ordered to explain to you the two Holy Masses of this glorious Sunday. Let us, then, contemplate together these two Holy Masses.

"We have already contemplated and honored the Father, who shines in the works of the Redeemer Son, who was such because God the Father permitted it by an act of immeasurable goodness. We have already contemplated and honored the Son at the summit of his perfection as the God Man who dies and rises again and goes back up to the Father after having accomplished everything. We have already contemplated and honored the Holy Spirit from the beginning of his works until his perfect and complete Pentecostal epiphany.

"Today we contemplate and adore the Three Adorable Persons joined together, to initiate by this act the preparation for understanding fruitfully the Word's coming to the Earth and his holy words.

"The liturgical year does not begin today. You know it, and I know it. It begins with Advent. But as to prepare the coming of the Lord there were centuries of preparation in which the patriarchs and prophets were the masters for this readying, so I now want you to consider the many Sundays going from after Pentecost to Advent as a preparation for the beginning of the liturgical year.

"They are Sundays of Wisdom. The Holy Spirit truly pervades them all and acts as your Master to prepare men for the Holy Coming of the Messiah, so that when He is commemorated as an Infant, it will be with robust, active love and not just a superficial, sentimental, and useless affection for the Child.

"In the Child there is already the future Redeemer, who will die covered with wounds on the Cross after having toiled in evangelization and suffered mortifications and discomforts. By knowing Christ for what He really is, one comes to understand Christmas for what it really is.

"God is eternity; He is, therefore, continuity. There are no breaks in his works. One generates another, as the Three proceed from one another. The Triad has impressed its seal and likeness upon its actions. These are, therefore, uniform and multiform, but never separated or interrupted. An infinite and eternal and inextinguishable chain of love, for all that God works

is love, proceeding uninterruptedly for years and centuries. Accordingly, the liturgical year is also a chain in which one part generates another, and there is no end, for each has a reason for existence to prepare for another.

"Let us glorify the Lord for this magnificent proceeding of his times which is reflected in the little time of the liturgical year. And let us proceed in the knowledge of it after right and proper homage to the perfect Triad.

"The holy patriarch exclaims, and the liturgy adopts the just man's words: 'Bless the God of Heaven and give Him praise before the living, for He has shown you mercy.' In the liturgical specification, the initial phrase is changed into 'Most Holy Trinity and indivisible Unity' and later on in specifications of the Three Persons, to stress the sublime doctrine-never sufficiently contemplated, meditated on, and loved-of the Unity and Trinity of God. But the essence of the invitation is this: 'Boldly proclaim even before God's enemies or those who, though not combatting Him, are cold or indifferent to the Divinity or believe it to be a myth coming from man's need to believe in something-that God exists, and is active because He exists, and is all-merciful in his works.

"This humble and holy preaching is granted to every believer. There is no ignorance, no matter how profound, which forbids a true believer to preach God and his mercy. It is not just learned words or lofty actions which preach God. It is-and this penetrates more deeply even those who do not know and do not want to know God-simple faith, unshakable, serene even in pain, the profession, with works which are entirely peace, entirely hope, charity, and resignation, that God is merciful and that only goodness can come from Him.

"How many creatures who know nothing of science, who are isolated by illness, who are poor, desolate in physical or economic indigence, indeed surpass all preachers in persuasive power, just because of the peace they exude in their actions and words, and in the simple phrase appended to all their words-opposed to every insinuation by those who know God poorly: 'If God wants me to be like this, it is certainly just. His Will be done. He surely wants my good. I have no doubt. I have placed all my hope in Him. As He has freed me from sin, through the sacrifice of Jesus, so will He give me every grace I truly need, and I praise his Providence.'

"And even if, within his heart, the believer, oppressed by the ^{PS 11:1} crosses, moans, 'For how long? Will You forget me forever? When will You turn your face to me? It is not, indeed, with rage that this lament rises to God, but with the loving anxiousness of a son towards his Father, just as Christ felt it in the most painful hours. There is not a reproach, but hope in this cry. There is no rebellion over the delay, but expectation, serene expectation in the certainty that a time will come when the pain will cease and faith will be rewarded.

"Let us hear the two prayers. What is given to us to adore and to obtain? True faith.

"*Faith, to be true, must be bold. Heroically bold against all the things that are created to deride it, oppose it, and demolish it. The world and the flesh, in addition to Satan, constitute the enemies of faith against which one must be eternally bold.*

"The goodness of God is such that He grants the glory of martyrdom not only to the actual martyrs who die in their blood for the Faith, but also to those who, against everything and everyone, are able to remain faithful, integrally faithful to the Lord.

"How many battles are waged against faith! How many clever maneuvers Satan uses to diminish it, to cover it with ridicule, to show it to be impossible to be followed! But this is where the justice of the three theological virtues is seen. Faith, supported by Hope, and, above all, by Charity, does not collapse for any reason and triumphs. *Faith is knowledge which comes from love. The stronger love is, the stronger faith is, for love brings God to be known.*

"The words of the Prayer in the Holy Mass in honor of the Most Holy Trinity are, then, truthful: 'O God, who granted to your servants, through profession of the true faith, that they might know the glory of the Eternal Trinity and worship the Unity in the power of its majesty

"The Unity and Trinity of God is a mystery. No one, no matter how holy he is, can penetrate it. Not even those to whom it was revealed in part-for everything cannot be said to one who is still mortal-can say they have known it. It is such a dazzling mystery that man cannot fix himself upon it to know it integrally. Superior to every other mystery. The Incomprehensible mystery because it is the Most Sublime mystery. Therefore, only heroic faith, supported by strong love, can take one, if not within, to its threshold, and grant that one may hear, so to speak,

the divine murmur of the Unity of the Three, concealed beyond the blinding wall of its Fire. The stronger love is-and I remind you that to the degree of love the creature reaches there corresponds a respective degree of God's love multiplied through his power, for God loves to give Himself to one who seeks Him without measure, He who gives Himself with mercy and providence even to the children who do not seek Him-the stronger knowledge is, because the distance is more reduced, because the soul is more united to the God *who* descends-since the soul cannot rise up to the abyss of loftiness where the Trinity burns-to the God *who* grants *Himself in* order to be known as much as possible, burning to be entirely known, entirely possessed by his child when the reward of Paradise is given to his faith, his love, his heroism.

"What I am telling you is a proper preface to the words of the other prayer of this First Sunday after Pentecost. 'Human weakness can do nothing without You.' But is man ever again weak when he lives with God in himself? With his Trinity in his heart? With his knowledge of God, with his love for God, and with God's love in him, a creature, to make him strong, capable of doing what God wills, of being calm through hope, secure in faith? No, he cannot. For union circumscribes weakness, and *fusion annuls it*. It is no longer the creature, but God who lives in man and works.

"You know how union is maintained. Let nothing cause you to weaken the grasp of your love for God. Nothing. Neither joys nor sorrows. Not these sorrows, which your knowledge of God tells you are not willed by God, not approved by Him who is Love and Goodness.

"Soul of mine, like a weary, wounded dove you remain in the hollow which is your nest. You remain in God. You do not speak, do not move. You fix yourself. This alone. You cannot do otherwise, oppressed as you are by the pain coming from men, stunned by their anticharity, and absorbed by God, who shows Himself to you to console you, to say to you, 'I am everything for you.' But words are not needed for you to be understood by Him who loves you. Your love speaks with its faithful throbbing. And that's enough.

"Forget the world; isolate yourself in your loving silence. Be silent, for every word is useless, sterile, pernicious. Remain in your justice. Remain in your obedience. There is no one greater than God. Follow his commands, then, and nothing more.

"Hear how Paul speaks to you, soul wounded by the humani-

ty surrounding you. Paul, the great 'voice,' assures you that the inscrutable ways of God and his judgments, incomprehensible to men, are just and good, rich in divine wisdom and knowledge. He does not err, but those who claim to be more than God and, with their works, if not with their words, show they regard themselves as worthy to counsel God. And they speak while God's eye measures them and do not think that everything is a test and do not fear being punished because they have failed the test. And they do not tremble at showing they have not fulfilled love, at loving *themselves*, but not loving-either God or the creature. For love is obedience, and here there is no obedience. For love is action, and here there is no action. There is no charity.

"Charity is active. Active in making God's glories and mercies shine forth, in defending the innocent, in overcoming fear of men. And so? Do they fear men and not God? And are they afraid of not having God's help if they follow God's will? Why do they fear this, if not because they lack charity?

"Do they not remember John? If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar.' For one who does not love him whom he sees and knows, and whose innocence and actions he knows-how can he love God, whom he knows not? Do they no longer know the commandment? It is said that whoever loves God should also love his brother. Where is their love?

"I repeat to you the order of the Fourth Sunday after Easter. If they do not bend to the Lord's words, can they ever bend to yours? Be silent, therefore. Close yourself in God. He will heal your wounded soul. In silence He will speak to you. Separate yourself. Live in God and through God. Let the punishment be fulfilled and do not judge. Do not judge. God is already judging them. Imitate the Master to be like the Master, as the Gospel says. Imitate Him in love and humility.

"Come, come, poor soul whom Satan has found a way to wound by means of the one who was to protect you more than anyone else. Come. The Lord is your strength and your protection, and He is upon you with his Threefold power. Come. Exult in Him alone, for the enemies of the brothers are truly the servants of Satan, who is Pain, while God is Joy, and it is not fitting to entrust oneself to whoever is wicked pain.

"Exult in God, your Master and Savior. An entirely spiritual exultation and, therefore, entirely holy. And, if they insist, tell them only this: 'Since you have called what was a gift "burden

of the Lord," I am withdrawing, as I have been told. But remember that, as is said in Jeremiah, you that crush the Lord's servants and make action burdensome are the burden, and He who is not overpowered will therefore cast you out. Remember that your words are a "burden," not those of God, the words by which you change the meaning of the words and the decrees of the living God. And remember that for me there is already peace, for I am already hearing the steps of the messenger of the good news, of Him who announces peace and brings it with Him.'

"Enter into His peace. Enter ever further. Do not fear. Do not tremble. Silence is not for you. Silence is not estrangement or punishment for you. It is mercy for you, victim who consume yourself, and punishment for them.

"Soul of mine, the Lord is with you, and the Mother covers you with her mantle as I do with my wings."

CORPUS CHRISTI

Introit: Ps 81(80):17, 2

Collect: Lord, You left us in this wonderful sacrament a memorial of Your passion: grant us, we pray, so to venerate the sacred mysteries of Your Body and Blood, that we may always find within us the fruit of Your redemption. You who are God, living and reigning.

Epistle: 1 Co 11:23-29

Gradual: Ps 145(144):15-16

Alleluia: Jn 6:56-57

Sequence: Lauda Sion.

Gospel: Jn 6:56-59

Offertory: Lv 21:6

Secret: Lord, we pray You, mercifully grant Your Church the gifts of unity and peace which are symbolized in a mystery beneath the gifts which we offer. Through our Lord.

Communion: 1 Co 11:26-27

Postcommunion: Grant us, Lord, we pray, to be filled with the everlasting enjoyment of Your divinity, which is prefigured by our reception here in time, of Your precious Body and Blood. You who are God.

June 20, 1946

St. Azariah announces himself to me with one of those very sweet and unrepeatable angelical songs which have remained in my soul as one of the most ultramundane things I have savored. The light and the singing of Paradise are something indescribable in both their beauty and their effects.

Having already been calmed in my torment after the words of my Jesus the day before yesterday, this song completely plunges me again into the full, joyful, solemn, and also cheerful peace which has been my element since I became the instrument of my adored Jesus.

And I listen to this song as I write, a pure melody which is not word, which is only sound of a sweetness ascending up to beatitude. Oh, it is unutterable! I listen.... And I understand more things at this moment than in months of meditation entirely on my own.

I know that, once this moment has passed, I shall not be able even to explain what I have understood. It is too sublime! But the fruit of what I have understood will remain in my soul....

This song makes me understand what the Eucharist is for the Heavens, for those inhabiting them.... This song enlightens me concerning the ardent angelical desire to have this Bread....

Oh ... !

Azariah speaks:

"Come, rise, for, more than meditation, this explanation will be contemplation and adoration, and it will be identification with our angelical thought, which greatly differs from the usual explanations of the mystery. And it differs beginning with the Introit. Listen.

"It is said that the flour and honey with which the Introit summons people to the Eucharistic sweetnesses are mentioned in remembrance of the Manna: the bread raining down from heaven, like dew and coriander seed, and tasting like flour with honey, a symbol of the Eucharist, given to the Jewish people.

"But I, an angel, want you to know what we think in gazing at the Son and the Mother: the Son who has become Bread, and the Mother, blessed, on whom you feed as well in feeding on Him. For, oh, it is truly this way! For, on what do you feed, if not on the Bread who is the Son of Mary, of Her, Most Pure and sweet, formed as a Man by means of Herself: with her virgin blood, with her milk as Virgin Mother, with her love as Virgin Spouse?

"Yes, God nourishes you with pure wheat flour. The intact ear, growing on chosen ground, in God's enclosed Garden, ripened in the warmth of the God Sun, has become flour, flour to give you the Jesus Bread.

"She has become flour. It is not just an expression! Out of love for you, out of love for men, She immolated Herself, She was reduced to dust between the millstones of obedience and pain. She, the Intact One, whom marriage, Childbirth, and Death were unable to affect, violate, or reduce to dust, as with every mortal. Only love could. Love delivered Her to the millstone where She became the Co-Redemptrix, changing from an ear into wheat flour....

"The Son said, 'If the grain does not die, it does not later become an ear.' What mortal, more than Mary, the one not destined to die, has been able to die to self and to personal affections, to give you the Bread of Life? She who did not know death has tasted all the deaths of renunciations to give you the rich fruit of the Savior and Redeemer.

"And later, as the Mother, She raised Him for you with the best of Herself, with her virginal Milk, and, therefore, still with her blood, which gave motion to the Heart beating for God alone, with her blood turned into maternal love. She raised Him for you with her warmth, with her care, with all the honey drawn from

the intact rock, rising high towards Heaven, kissed by the God Sun; and, finally, She gave Him to you to eat, flavored not only by the honey of her love, but also by the salt of her weeping.

"Oh, Holy One! Holy Mother and Nurturer of the Human Race! Chosen Granary! Garden filled with flowers and golden bees! Enclosed Garden and gentle fount!

"The true Bread really is Jesus, but it is also Mary, also the One who has rendered the Word a Man to give Him to men, for redemption and nourishment. Wisdom, Life, and Strength is this Bread. But it is also Purity, Grace, and Humility. For if this Bread is Jesus, this bread is also Mary, who has made Jesus with the flour of her body and the honey of her Heart. Bread which recalls the Divine Passion. Bread which recalls the true Body and true Blood of Jesus Christ, but Bread which, to help you to be worthy to benefit from the Redemption, which is the Consummation of the Lamb on the Altar of the Cross, must also remind you of the Godlike One who formed that Bread in her Womb.

"Now, who is the believer that commits an outrage against his Lord? And who is the subject that offends his King? And who is the disciple that mocks his Master? And who is the son that offends his Mother? It is the believer, the subject, the disciple, and the son who is a sinner, hard-hearted, worthy of punishment. The one who by himself creates the condemnation-or, rather, the condemnations. For in time there is a loss of the help of Jesus and Mary; in eternity, the loss of the possession of God.

"And yet many, forgetful of Paul's warning, go to Holy Mass without 'examining themselves' and eat that Bread, drink that Blood with an impure soul, and Bread and Blood, which are Redemption, become condemnation, being sacrilegiously received by the sinner.

"He, the Divine One, did not become Man and give Himself for this. But so that man can become a god. He did not become Bread to give you death, but to give you Life. Mad with love, after having saved and redeemed you, He wanted to live in you, crucifiers, and make you gods, for sublime love has these sublime paradoxes. Being God, He became Man, and men killed Him, and He wanted to make men gods. And He makes gods with the Eucharist, which, when well received, transubstantiates you into Him, as Paul says, 'I do not live, but Christ lives in me.'

"Men destined to die-destined to die eternally, for original sin always keeps the toxins of death active in you, and you may

perish at any moment, in spite of the Grace which the Redeemer has restored to you with his immolation and his Sacraments, created by Him and vivified with his merits-you can combat death with Life: with the Eucharist.

"He said so: 'If you do not eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink his Blood, you will not have life in you. Whoever eats my Flesh and drinks my Blood will have eternal Life, and I shall raise him up on the Last Day.' And also: 'I have come that they may have Life and have it to the full.... For this reason I give my life

"But woe to those who knowingly make the Bread of Heaven their condemnation, the toxin which kills, using the most sublime Sacrament sacrilegiously. And harm as well to whoever limits its transforming power by receiving it with indifference and lukewarmness, without a real will to transform himself, in God and with God's help, to be increasingly worthy to receive it.

"Eucharistic life: life of fusion. Communion does not cease when you leave the Church or when the Species have been consumed in you. It lives. No longer materially. But it still lives, with its fruits, with its ardors, with the cohabitation-or, rather, the inhabitation of Christ in you-with your fructification in Christ, for 'the shoot which remains united to the vine bears fruit,' and 'those who remain in Me and in whom I remain bear much fruit.'

"Eucharistic life: life of love. Both through what the Eucharist, the memorial of love, and of love as a spring and furnace, transmits into whoever receives it-and it is undeniable that where there is good will, even if the creature is weak and formless, the Eucharist is seen to bring an increase in formation, a strengthening of will, a transformation of feeling from lukewarm to ardent, of desire from weak to strong, of obedience to the precept of receiving Communion on Feasts into hunger to do so every day-and through what the soul contributes on its own, increasingly assisted by the grace of the Sacrament.

"The Eucharist keeps Christ present in all his operations as Christ. His Incarnation: the Eucharist is a perpetual Incarnation of Christ. His hidden life: the Tabernacle is a continuous house in Nazareth. His life as a worker: Jesus Eucharist is the unwearying craftsman who works souls. His mission as Priest alongside the dying or the suffering: as it was alongside the bed of the dying Joseph, and with all who went to Him to be consoled, so Jesus is now there to console, counsel, fortify, and ask, as He asked the

two of Emmaus, 'Why are you sad?'; and to remain with you, as a Friend and Cyrenean, as 'the evening falls and the day wanes,' as the way of the Cross and the final immolation are consumed.

"He is there, as when He evangelized the crowds and said, 'I feel sorry for these people. Let us give them bread so they will not perish on the way'; and, as then, He evangelizes you in the virtues of charity, humility, patience, and meekness. A Lamb, more than ever a Lamb who does not open his mouth before those striking Him, He, in his external silence, speaks to you with the torrents of divine sparks emerging from the Most Holy Host in which his Divinity annihilates itself and says to you, 'Be my imitators in generosity, meekness, humility, and mercy.' And, as from Thursday evening to the ninth hour, He teaches you to be redeemers

"Maria, I once told you that Jesus Christ is '*the compendium of the love of the Three.*' Now I tell you that the Eucharist '*is the compendium of the love of Jesus, in whom the compendium of the Threefold Perfect Love is already present.*' And let this tell You everything.

"Jesus Eucharist teaches you to speak and to be silent, to work and to contemplate, to suffer and to humiliate yourselves, and, above all, to love and love and love.

"The Holy Spirit gives the lights to understand. But the Incarnate Word who has become the Eucharist gives the fire to speak and to convert *through charity, which is what demolishes heresies, heals hearts, fills them with the knowledge of God, and guides them to God.* And He gives them the ardor to be martyrs. From the lips of the Eucharistic creature flows Wisdom, for Eucharistic life is also the life of Wisdom, and from this heart emerges heroism, for the Eucharist communicates Christ. The Most Holy and Perfect Hero. And Eucharistic life is apostolic life, for Christ within you changes you into apostles, and the more or less powerful apostolic degree is never separated from the degree of Eucharistic life attained.

"And, finally, Eucharistic life is life deified by the Flesh and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus, who descends into you to make his dwelling in you.

"You call the Eucharistic vessels, the tabernacles, and all that touches the Most Holy Sacrament '*sacred.*' But it is only a *container* or a being *touched.* An external action, therefore. And yet it impresses a sacred character on the object whose lot it is to

contain or touch the Eucharist, for the Holy Host is the Body of the Lord Jesus.

"But, then, what *your* body will become, into whose interior the Most Holy Body descends and vanishes in the Species, absorbed, like every food of man, by the juices changing it into your blood? Do you understand? Into Your blood. Your blood, the blood of you that feed on the Most Holy Eucharist, contains-not metaphorically-what was the Species of the Most Holy Body, just as your spirit retains the grace which issues from this complete Body, endowed with Flesh, Blood, and Soul, like that of every man, and, in addition, with Divinity, for it is the Body of the Divine Word.

"If your body should be holy because it is the temple for the Holy Spirit, who descends into you and breathes, what should it become to be a worthy tabernacle for the God who comes to dwell in you-even more: to fuse with you, to *become* you-and, since the Greater cannot be absorbed by the lesser: to absorb you, to *make you become* Him-that is, gods, as He is God? I tell you: with every effort you should imitate the Virgin, to whom the Word united Himself to the point of becoming Flesh of her flesh and Blood of her blood, and receiving life from Her, obeying the motions of his Mother's heart, his Mother's vital laws, so as to form Himself and be Jesus.

"Christ, when conceived, obeyed his Mother. But the Mother to what superabundant purity She took Herself, She, already the All-Pure, to place around the Divine One a Holy of Holies even more select than the one shining on Moriah! Mary made Herself a heavenly tabernacle, a celestial throne, so that God might still live in a Heaven, as long as possible, before suffering from the contacts of the world.

"The lovers of Jesus must act this way. Make themselves heavenly recesses so that the Eucharist may still live in them in a pulsating, adoring Heaven, preserved from the stench and blasphemy of the world.

"And in this little Heaven, in your little Heaven, in which, if such it is, there is really nothing lacking-for the Three are present in the Eucharist, inseparable although They are Three, forming the sublime Unity which is called Trinity, and the charity of Mary and the saints is not absent, always adoring wherever the Lord is, nor are the angelical choirs absent, with their hymns bearing you to Heaven-be capable of praising. Not with

words, but with love. Be capable of praising. Do not be afraid of praising too much. Jesus Eucharist deserves measureless praise because his miracle of power and love is superior to all human praise.

"Soul of mine, I shall not comment for you on the perfect sequence of the great and holy Thomas. Simple and profound, like all the things which come from God, it is self-explanatory. I do, however, tell you this: Thomas, the one in love with the Eucharist, his Light and Teacher in comprehending the theological truths and rendering them comprehensible, as he composed did nothing but *listen to what was ascending fi-om his spirit with a voice of light*. That is, Thomas Aquinas was then a 'voice' transmitting what the Divine Beloved said for the joy of his worshiper.

"But it is always like that, soul of mine. When He speaks to you, He does so for your joy. When a '*nothing*' says what the angels can scarcely express, it is because He speaks or grants that a citizen of the Heavens may speak to you, for your instruction and the instruction of your brothers. He is the Good Shepherd who leads you to pastures blooming with flowers of truth and wisdom. He is the Love that satiates you and gives you words. Himself. Word and Food.

"Oh, let us exult! There is nothing, no, there is nothing but exultation in me, an angel, over seeing you nourished with the Heavenly Bread and the Divine Word. I approach and hear the Word. I approach and smell the fragrance of the Bread of Paradise. Did you call my music at the outset sublime? Oh no, this is! This Voice of your Lord and mine that speaks to you-this is the music which only a special grace grants that one may hear without dying of joy, O mortals, one and all! This Word is the one that makes us angels sing, with great joy.... And this one gives itself to be given and, like the Eucharistic Bread, this Word is Bread, sapiential bread which under different species that are appearance and not substance conceals sublime things. Indeed, dictations or visions are forms (species); but the substance is the Word who teaches. He gives Himself and produces different fruits, always as the Eucharist, according to whether He is received by the good or the not good. And it is just for it to be this way, for the Word is Eucharist and the Eucharist remains the Word under a different form, but with the same divine holiness. Since they are, then, one and the same, the gifts and fruits produced are identical: Life, Wisdom, Holiness, Grace.

"Communion may be called the Word and the Bread. For the former is Communion of God Spirit for the spirit and intellect of man, and the latter is Communion of God Flesh and Blood for the whole man, to transform him into God by the operation of most holy grace and infinite love.

"As with Communion of the Angelical Bread, I tell you, as regards the Word as well: never receive it unworthily so that it will not be 'death' for you, but in an upright, humble, obedient spirit, filled with love, satiate yourself with it and the Eucharist in time so as to be rich therewith for eternity. Because these Foods, which come from Heaven, help and complete each other, giving full, eternal Life according to the promise of the Word Jesus: 'Whoever keeps my words will not see death in eternity,' and J 'Whoever eats this Bread will live forever.'

"Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!"

Three piercing alleluias and then the inexpressible song again which annuls every pain, anxiety, and care and immerses me in the Heavens' breeze

HOLY MASS IN THE OCTAVE OF CORPUS CHRISTI

Introit: Ps 18(17):19-20,2-3

Collect: Grant, Lord, that we may have a perpetual fear and love of Your holy name; for You never fail to direct and govern those whom You establish in the steadfastness of Your love. Through our Lord.

Epistle: 1 Jn 3:13-18

Gradual: Ps 120(119):1-2

Alleluia: Ps 7:2

Gospel: Lk 14:16-24

Offertory: Ps 6:5

Secret: Lord, may we be cleansed by this sacrifice, which is to be offered in Your name; so that every day our life on earth may become more like the life of heaven. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 13(12):6

Postcommunion: Having received Your sacred gifts, we implore You, Lord, that by our assiduous assistance at these holy mysteries, they may the more surely avail to our salvation. Through our Lord.

June 23, 1946

Azariah says:

"In past time, in present time, in future time, and in eternal time, the Lord drew you apart and saved you because He loved you, and He saves and will save you because He loves you. But you must recognize Him and fear not. You have always recognized Him, even when your love was still very imperfect and combatted by youth and trials and sorrows of your youth. You must recognize Him now as well, and always, until you are with Him.

"The actions of others must not lie like thick veils between Him and you in such a way that you no longer know his Face, his Voice, his love, his peace and truth. I shall not say a word about those who shatter the peace and trust of a heart with their way of acting, which discourages souls and makes them doubtful. But I say to you: their actions, even if they wound you, should not defeat you with fears and doubts about the truth of the Voice and its origin.

"The Lord has cared for you, poor soul, and you have recognized Him. For it is not possible to be mistaken between God and Satan, between heavenly and hellish voices, if the one who hears them bears in mind not the delights of the words, but the effects which they produce. Satan can ape God in speech, but he cannot

communicate that grace and peace which the words of God or of the spirits of light produce. He cannot produce grace and holiness because his words are always mixed with insinuations which cannot be accepted by a soul in grace. And he cannot produce a sense of peace because the soul in grace starts with horror at the hellish voices, and even if the individual has no other signs to recognize who the spirit speaking is, this shudder of the soul suffices to give man the signal that it is Darkness which is manifesting itself at that moment. Satan can deceive sinners dazed by sin, the thoughtless and unreflecting, the curious who out of excessive desire for knowledge, imprudently approach all founts. But he cannot deceive an upright spirit united to God. All he can do is disturb it, drawing near to it, or wounding it by his own action, or by that of unfortunates who, rarely realizing that they are doing so, much more readily unaware of doing so, at a given moment are instruments used by Satan to cause God's instruments pain and dismay. But then God intervenes and draws you away, into the clear, and saves you, bathing you in his ocean of peace and love. As He has done with you, because He loves you.

"Today is also the vigil of the Nativity of the Baptist, and the

Introit of that Holy Mass sings, 'Do not fear, O Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard....' I tell you, 'Do not fear, O Maria, for your prayer has been heard.' Jesus hears the prayers of those who love Him. And He has intervened so you will not perish in a sea of dejection. But, not speaking to you alone, but to all souls, I say that the Lord always loves and brings into the clear, to safety, those who entrust themselves to Him without fear.

"Overcome the fear which paralyzes love, confidence, and prayer. Overcome the fear which still shows in you ignorance of God and of his power, and also shows a faith in God that is not good. Good and true faith is humble and accepts everything, for it says, 'If God says so or has me say so, it is a sign that it is something true.' But this total faith is never joined to fear, distrust, doubt, or, even worse, a stubborn, intimate persuasion that God *cannot* do such-and-such a thing. God can do everything. You must hope in God's being able to do all. You must believe in God's being able to do all.

"Do not kill love with doubt or negation-ever. Do not break the chain of love joining you to God with the statement of the doubtful or of those who want to judge God according to their measure-the statement by Zechariah which was punished so:

'How is this possible if Zechariah remained with his question sealed upon his lips until he was again able to believe and praise the Lord, acknowledging Him to be capable of working all prodigies.

"O dear souls, never deserve the punishment of spiritual muteness for distrust of the Almighty. And pray to be maintained in this spirit of absolute faith in the Lord your God and of fear joined to love of the Blessed Lord, as the Prayers of today's Holy Mass recall.

"Observe the beautiful faith of the Baptist in Him whom he did not know, except through what the prophets said about Him. Nothing indicated the Messiah in the humble wayfarer who was coming towards the banks of the Jordan. But faith, when it is absolute, when it is fused with absolute charity, gives foreknowledge and the possibility of seeing and understanding God, even when He conceals Himself under an apparent form of ordinary life. And John saw the Divine Messiah in the man from Galilee, and as the holy fear of God had made him a saint, so most holy love made him a seer.

"The fear of God which preserves man from sins gives certain vision to man's spirit, and the spirit that 'sees' cannot fail to believe in God and in his Words and thus save itself from spiritual death. John, the Precursor, preached the fear of God to clear the way for Christ, who was coming to save his people. Jesus, the Savior, preached love to lead his people onto the ways of salvation.

"Fear always precedes love; it is, so to speak, the incubation of love, the metamorphosis of sentiment into a higher degree. Fear remains man's; love already belongs to the spirit. The man who fears God is undeniably on the right path if his fear of God is just-that is, not ignorant, unreasonable fear of God; but it is always the path trod by one who has not yet spread his wings to fly to an even loftier knowledge of what God is-that is, Mercy and Love. The man who fears still feels 'punished' for the ancient Sin and for his current sins. The man who loves feels 'forgiven' through the merits of Christ and clothed in them, to the point that the Father no longer sees him as a subject, but as a son. Fear is good to keep a bit and reins on matter, but love is optimal to introduce the warmth of sanctity into the spirit.

"The guilty one with his fear repents, but his repentance remains mute and obscure because it is suffocated, like a flame under a bushel, by fear of God the Judge. The guilty one who joins

love to fear experiences sighs, and his soul is already in a light, helping him to speak to the Father and see his spiritual state whereby not only serious sins, but also venial sins and imperfections are revealed to be a low layer of grass under very high trees and, on seeing, he can not only resaw the trees, but also pull up the steles, leaving the ground clean to sow the virtues pleasing to God there.

"The guilty one, moreover, who has love as his strength not only has perfect repentance-because he repents not, indeed, out of fear of punishment, but in an agony at having pained his beloved God-but in love itself receives his first absolution. And, in truth, one who loves with his whole self seldom arrives at mortal sins. Only a sudden, ferocious assault by Satan and the flesh can knock him down for a moment. But love generally preserves one from falling, and the stronger it is, the weaker sins are in the same measure, in both number and seriousness, to the point of being reduced to imperfections that are scarcely apparent in those who have reached the absolute in love and, therefore, sanctity.

"John the Apostle, the blessed and loving John, gives you in his epistle the measure of what charity can do and the heights it reaches, and, on the other hand, shows you the abyss into which someone lacking charity falls headlong. 'We know that we have been transferred from death to life because we love our brothers.'

"From death to life! What a lapidary phrase, Maria! Man is dead-he is dead if he does not love. Man rises and acquires life, after having been dead, if he loves. What is this miracle? The poor, the world's real poor-that is, those who do not know God cannot comprehend this truth and mock it as a word of delirium. But whoever believes, really believes, comprehends it.

"God is Charity. Whoever loves, therefore, is in God. Who is the One who gives or restores life? God. Whether He draws man from the slime and vivifies him with the divine breath exhaled upon the clay or cooperates in the procreation of men by creating a soul for the animal embryo that has been conceived in a womb-the soul: the life of man, who is not a beast and who, without this life of his existence, would not even be materially alive, for it does not suffice in order for him to be so to have breath in his nostrils, like an animal, but he must possess this spiritual gem, this spiritual vein which keeps him joined to the Most Holy Breast of his Creator and nourished by Him who is Spirit and

Light and Wisdom and Love. And, finally, whether, for him who has already yielded up his soul, He recasts that soul, raising it up again. It is always the divine act of willing which makes the creature live.

"But the creature has a life in life: his soul. And the soul, which does not die through physical death, for it is immortal, can indeed die if, as I said before, it cuts itself off from the Breast of its Lord. Hatred-in whatever form or manifestation-is the knife which cuts the tie to the Lord, and the soul, separated from its God, dies.

"Only charity, therefore, makes the dead living. For without charity you are dead. And many were dead, the majority, before Charity made Flesh came to teach Love as Salvation.

"John the Apostle can rightly say, then, that true Christians know they have been transferred from death to life through the Charity that has commanded them to love their brothers to the point of holocaust, providing an example of perfect love. The command of love, which the good accept, is like the breath of life exhaled upon the clay to make it into Adam, or the fiat which is repeated for every infusion of a soul into a human embryo, and, above all, like the cry of the Resurrector-'I tell you: Rise!' and 'Lazarus, come out!'-to those raised to life again in Palestine.

"God, who re-enters with love, brings the dead back to life through love. But whoever does not love remains in death-that is, in sin-for sin, in all its forms, is hatred. The son who does not respect his parents and oppresses them with pretensions and egoism, he who harms his neighbor with violence, theft, calumny, and adultery, is a murderer. It is not necessary to kill to be a murderer. Whoever causes people to die of shame or pain, whoever leads souls to despair by actions taking away their peace and faith and honor and esteem, and means of working, of living, and enabling the members of their family to live, and whoever brings people with his sanguinary ferocity or subtle moral persecution to despair of God and die hating Him is also a murderer of his brothers, and it is as if he attempted to kill God, in a new Crucifixion, for God is in your brothers and your brothers are in God, whose sons they are, and the murderer of his brothers, the one who hates his brothers materially or morally or spiritually, does not strike them alone, but, by way of them, he strikes God, and, like all decides, he is dead.

"The dead do not enter the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom

of God is initiated in the spirit of man on Earth with union with God and is completed in Heaven with the full possession of God. Here, on Earth, God in you; in Heaven, you in God. But God does not enter into the putrefaction of death, and the putrescence of death does not enter into Heaven. In the eternal Jerusalem, just as there will be no temples, 'for its temple is the Lord, in whom we shall all exist'; just as there will be no need for sun or moon, for its brightness is God, and its luminary, the Lamb; just as there will be no gates, for there will no longer be an Enemy for it, or Darkness to hate it; so there will be no one impure and corrupt in it, nothing dead, but only those who have written their names in the Book of Life-that is, in the Charity that is Life. 'From this we have known the charity of God: from his having given his life for us.'

"This is the measure of perfect love: immolation. And JesusLove has given it to you with Himself dead on a scaffold after

having given you doctrine and miracles-that is, still love, but not perfect love. The perfection of love is in sacrifice. When on the threshold of the Passion, when He could already say He had finished his preaching, when He should have been dejected because to the river of words spoken there corresponded only a minuscule brook of converts, He Himself exclaimed, 'When I am raised up from the earth, I shall draw all to Myself.' Christ knew, therefore, that only immolation would overcome the obstacles of Satan and the flesh, and the words would germinate under the rain of his Blood.

"Immolation. Generosity. Material generosity in the works of corporal mercy. Moral generosity in the works of spiritual mercy. Supergenerosity, because it is spiritual, in being able to die of love to give life to the spirits of his brothers dead in the spirit, communicating the charity of which they are deprived. Example is more holy and active than lessons, and action is the only thing true. Be capable, then, of loving 'with works and in truth,' not just in words, and the charity of God will be in you.

"And you, soul of mine? For you here is the epistle of the Holy Mass on the eve of St. John the Baptist. The Lord already spoke to you many months ago about this passage from Jeremiah. But it will do you no harm, to persuade you that you are what you

are because God wants you to be this-and it is God's will, God's word which occurs and resounds in you-for you to reread the actions which the Divinity carries out to prepare its 'voices.'

`Before forming you in your mother's womb, I knew you.' "Of course, soul of mine! God is not ignorant of his creatures. He respects their freedom of action; He knows which ways they will pass along to sanctify or damn themselves; He sees what will be a cause of evil or a cause of good for them; He already knows who will secretly immolate himself to contend with Satan for a soul, with the creaturely sense possessing that soul, and cooperates with his lights, the inspirations and merits of Jesus, to fight against Satan and sense to save a son of his for Heaven.

"And God, through his aspiration as Father, would have wanted only saints among men. But Evil is against Good, and if the battle increases the victor's merits, it is also true that the battle leaves many of the weak lying in the mire....

"God, even before you existed, knew you. He knew the little Maria, the little 'voice,' filled with boldness in her littleness, and for this reason He loved you. You will know all the operations of grace He has worked in you when you are in Heaven. But believe your angel: as every heartbeat pushes the blood into the veins of the breast and changes it into waves of milk in the loving mother, who suckles her newborn babe and from the nipple pours it into the infant's mouth, and he nourishes himself on it and grows without even knowing he is drawing life and growth from that tepid, sweet liquid, so, into you, without your knowledge, the Most Holy Father has poured his operations and formed you into what you now are. But also: as the suckling instinctively smiles at the breast nourishing him without even knowing exactly what is coming to him from it, and reaches out to it with his little hands and avid mouth, so you have instinctively reached out to Him with yourself and have not wanted anything but Him. A mutual loving action which has allowed God to form you and you to form yourself, for the successful outcome of God's Will is always formed by two sources: his love and the love of the creature, fused into a single love and desire-to do what is good.

"I do not know how to speak,' Jeremiah said. And you said and say, 'I am not worthy. Why me? Can a nothing be chosen by You?'

"And the Lord replied to Jeremiah and to you, 'Do not speak in that way, for you will carry out whatever commission I entrust to you and say what I order you. Do not fear before men, for I am with you to free you.'

"Oh, how the Lord delights in humble, obedient nothings! Do

not fear, soul of mine; your 'nothingness' would be capable only of loving. But the Lord extended his hand and touched his "victim" and said to you, "Behold! I am placing my words in your mouth for the good of your brothers."

"When I am lifted up, I shall draw all to Myself," the Redeemer said.

"You have asked for and obtained the cross and, lifted up upon it, you have hoped, by your sacrifice, to attract many to the Lord. And the Lord has given you not only this magnet, but also the other, the Word, to attract your brothers to God.

"Remain on the cross until the end and attract your brothers to God, suffering and receiving the words, dying at every moment and giving at every moment, through love, with love, with a love no dejection overcomes: 'For complete love is stronger than death, and the waters cannot extinguish it nor rivers submerge it.' Let yours not even be shaken by men's indifference or Satan's spite.

"Remain there, where God has drawn you: in his love. And do not fear, for, even before you invoke Him, He acts, freeing your soul from those persecuting you.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

SUNDAY IN THE OCTAVE OF THE SACRED HEART
AND COMMEMORATION OF ST. PAUL

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Ps 25(24):16, 18, 1-2

Collect: O God, the protector of those who hope in You, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy; multiply Your mercy upon us, so that under Your rule and Your guidance, we may so pass through temporal things that we do not lose those that are eternal. Through our Lord.

Epistle: 1 P 5:6-11

Gradual: Ps 55(54):23, 17, 19

Alleluia: Ps 7:12

Gospel: Lk 15:1-10

Offertory: Ps 9:11-12, 13

Secret: Look, Lord, upon the offerings of Your suppliant Church, and grant that, by Your sanctification of them, they may always avail for the salvation of the faithful who receive them. Through our Lord.

Communion: Lk 15:10

Postcommunion: Lord, may the receiving of Your sacred gifts bring life to us and prepare us, purified from our sins, for Your eternal mercy. Through our Lord.

COMMEMORATION OF ST. PAUL

Introit: 2 Tin 1:12; Ps 139(138):1-2

Collect: O God, You taught the multitude of the Gentiles by the preaching of blessed Paul the apostle; grant, we pray You, that we who celebrate his heavenly birthday, may also enjoy his patronage with You. (Through our Lord.)

Epistle: Ga 1:11-20

Gradual: Ga 2:8-9; 1 Co 15:10

Offertory: Ps 139(138):17

Secret: Sanctify, Lord, the offerings of Your people through the prayers of Your apostle Paul, that this sacrifice, which is pleasing to You as being of Your institution, may become more pleasing by his intercession and support. (Through our Lord.)

Communion: Mt 19:28, 29

ostcommunion: Relying, O Lord, on the intercession of blessed Paul, Your apostle, we, who have received Your sacraments, most humbly beg of You, that the mysteries we have celebrated to his glory, may be to us a healing remedy. (Through our Lord.)

Azariah says:

"Trust must not cancel out humility, nor should the recogni-

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tion of your weaknesses cancel out trust in the goodness of the Lord. A soul which possessed one of these two elements, but lacked the other, would be imperfect and proceed with difficulty on the ways of perfection.

"Yesterday the Most Holy Lord was speaking, and I remained silent. If I had been able to speak to you, I would have had you consider that Peter is a perfect example of the soul that is in a balance of sanctity between the trust which cancels out fear and the humility which keeps the soul in the conditions necessary to serve the Lord and receive aid from Him.

"Peter had sinned as a man and as an apostle. But his sins as a man, before his being chosen as an apostle, were no obstacle to his becoming the Apostle, for, indeed, through them his humility was strengthened, and his trust in Divine Justice, which was choosing him as an apostle, was manifested.

"One of the pitfalls of the soul is often false humility or weak trust. False humility arrives at making you deny the prodigies of God in you. But why? To hear yourselves say, 'Oh, no! You deserve it because you are good, you are worthy,' and so on. Weak trust acts in such a way as to lead you to doubt God and his power and judge his actions. Do not have either one of these imperfect things.

"Be humble, but with true humility, that which first intervenes in relations between you and God and which humbly confesses to Him your dismay and reminds you of what you are *and what you were*, so that you will never come to proclaim yourselves saints, and God is obliged to benefit you on this account. True humility, that of true saints, always recognizes that the creature's merits are always atoms compared to the vastness of the gifts which the Father grants the creature. And from this recognition there comes an increase in love and, therefore, in union with God.

"True trust abandons itself to the Lord. It knows what it is: a nothing. But it believes that God is just in his actions. It serves Him, then, without judging whether the instrument is imperfect for the task. It abandons itself. It places itself in the hands of God and says, 'Make me whatever You want.' This is the act which obtained the Savior for the Earth.

"Mary, in the solitude of her house, was dismayed not because of the miracle announced, 'but because of the form of the greeting' used by the radiant Herald. But when Gabriel explained to Her why the Lord was with Her and why She was the Blessed

One among all women, when She learned that She would be the Virgin giving birth to the Man, and when it was revealed to Her that her intact womb could bear fruit without man's action having sowed the seed, then She, the truly Humble and Trusting One, thus said, 'I am the handmaid of God. Let it be done to me according to his Word,' and the Verbum left Heaven and became incarnate through the work of the Holy Spirit-that is, of Love and dwelt among you and suffered and died on the Cross, and man was redeemed. All because of the humble, trusting 'let it be done' of Most Blessed Mary.

"Do you feel yourselves to be such 'nothingness,' such 'wretchedness,' such 'ugliness'? Do you remember so much that you were 'sin,' that you were 'a sorrow for God'? And is it for this reason that your trust does not dare to soar? Oh, no!

"Here is Paul, the former Saul, unjust persecutor of Christ in his servants. He says, 'I well know in whom I have placed my trust and am certain that He is powerful enough to conserve my deposit....' Hear how Paul rests in regard to himself, the man of the past, the present apostle, the doctrine which death will keep him from continuing to spread-in regard to everything. He knows who he has placed his trust in and fears nothing. As God has removed him from the quagmire of the past, as He has guided him along the ways of the apostolate, so He will gather from the hands of the slain apostle the treasure He has placed therein, to entrust it to others who will propagate it, continuing the work cut off by death.

"God's treasure does not perish, and God does not disappoint good wills. Do not fear. Cast your cares upon the Lord, as the Gradual says in the Holy Mass in the Octave of the Sacred Heart, for when a son 'cries to the Lord, He hears his voice,' He, who knows the truth of men's actions, and long prayers are not necessary to explain to Him what is needed or to dumbfound Him so that He will not see. He, who 'searches and is aware and knows whether one sits down or rises.' He, who can do all, and, just as He made Simon an Apostle, so He made the zealous Pharisee and enemy of Christianity the Apostle of Christianity-for in both of them, 'the grace of God was not useless, but in them always remained' active and transforming.

"But I want to explain to you the Epistles of the two Holy Masses. Peter sings the power of humility. 'Humble yourselves under the powerful hand of God so that He will exalt you in the time of visitation.'

"Peter knew by experience how the honor of having been touched by the hand of God and marked out as his servant can lead man to pride. And how pride, by making the soul's vigilance drowsy, can allow the Tempter to lead man to sin. He had experienced it. He had felt sure of himself. He felt secure. He was the Head of the Apostles. God had, therefore, recognized him to be the best. That evening, then, he felt like a soldier in a safe fortress: he had Jesus Eucharist in his breast. He could thus diminish his watchfulness, engage in self-complacency, yield to humanity a little bit, leaving Jesus in his breast to fight for him. Here is an example of mistaken trust. God can do all. But man must not abandon himself to what God can do, almost as if God's power in favor of man were an obligation on God's part. Man must work on his own as well, join his work to God's. From this mutual aid, from this cooperation there arises the holy and perfect operation.

"Peter forgot that evening to cooperate with God and 'fell asleep.' Three times. What a symbolic sleep and what a symbolic number! There are three concupiscences; there were three moments of sleep by the Apostle who had yielded to humanity and had, therefore, abandoned himself, like one who sleeps, to the Thief lying in ambush. And, like Samson, after he had lost union with God because he had fallen asleep on the breast of Temptation, Peter, too, was a laughingstock without strength in the hands of Satan, who led him to lie, disavow, and flee vilely.

"Peter, then, knew the evil which a thought of self-complacency sows and which then sprouts and grows under ever more sinful forms, and he says, 'Humble yourselves under the hand of God.' This means: may God's gift not be for your ruin, but, rather, through humility, which conserves the gift and union with God, may He, the Lord, exalt you in the time of visitation.

"The time of visitation is that of the coming of God to reward or punish on the last day. There are other visits: the manifestations of God in you with counsels, inspirations, or missions. But the visitation of which Peter is speaking is the Last Judgment. Every visit by God is exaltation because it is elevation of the creature to Him. And if the creature uses these priceless gifts badly, he will experience sorrow and pain as a result. But he can always make up for it with acts of reparation as long as he lives, whereas the final coming admits of no reparation or modification. It is either exaltation or eternal condemnation of man. Seek,

then, to live in such a way that God can exalt you at the time of visitation.

"And cast all your cares upon Him, for He takes care of you.'

"God is the Father. Who is the son that knows that his father loves him who, when something grieves him, does not go to his father to confide his troubles to him and receive his help, counsel, and comfort? Do, then, for this fatherhood that is greater and more perfect than the relative, imperfect fatherhood of the flesh, what you do on life's painful occasions as long as your father, according to the flesh, is at your side. What is it that makes you weep when death takes a parent away from you? Knowing that you no longer have his or her zealous love around you. The world seems like a desert to you because the one who took care of you is no longer there.

"But God is always there. And God is always the Father. Do not weep, then, O you that are anxious, because there is one who wants to allay your anxieties: God. Always be his children, and He will always be your Father. To be his children it is necessary to be 'sober and keep watch, for the devil, your adversary, is circling round you like a roaring lion seeking to devour: resist him, strong in faith, knowing that your brothers, scattered around the world, undergo the same sufferings as you.'

"Oh, Peter was familiar with the sudden attacks of the Adversary! And he knew that it was necessary to be sober in all things so as to remain awake to repel him. Sobriety does not involve just food or drink. There are the intellectual and spiritual varieties, just as necessary to save oneself from Satan. Even if one does not drink and eat like a glutton, but then satisfies without measure hunger and thirst for knowledge and goes seeking to drink at the fountains of all human successes and praises; even if one does not commit excesses at the table or in other satisfactions of a corporal nature, in the spiritual field, however, he then causes charity to degenerate into sentimentalism, piety into quietism, or into a search for the emotional thrill of mysticism which is sterile because it excites the senses, but does not increasingly and continuously renew the spirit in goodness and gets intoxicated with these outward appearances, piling up one after another, to receive praise from men on this account and engage in self-praise; he then shatters the beautiful sobriety which involves not just the palate and the stomach, but, above all, the mind and the spirit, contrary to the threefold concupiscence, the

reason for all the ruins of souls.

"Be sober. Content yourselves with your 'daily bread'-that is, what God gives us-and do not wish for more. He knows what is sufficient for you. To want more and procure more produces venom, for this imprudent 'more' is composed of harmful and not blessed food.

"And do not have the egoism of saying that painful things happen to you alone. Every man bears his cross, and it is certainly not a sign of divine predilection to be deprived of it or to have a small one. The more the spirit is formed, the more God identifies it with the Model: the God-Man, whose passion was complete. Be capable of suffering, and suffering with joy, considering that your suffering, when joined to that of your brothers, is fused with the suffering of Christ for the salvation of the world and the victory over Satan. Be capable of suffering, and joyfully, knowing that 'with a little suffering the God of all grace will perfect, comfort, and conform you, giving you, in the end, eternal glory for your suffering joined to the infinite merits of Most Holy Jesus.'

"And after the blessed Peter, speaking to all believers, and all the more to those who, on account of an element of election in their lives, must reciprocate with absolute dedication, there is Paul, who seems to be speaking precisely to you 'voices'-or, rather, in your name, responding for you to the world of the incredulous and irresolute. 'I declare to you that the Gospel preached by me does not come from man, for I have not received or learned it from man, but through the revelation of Jesus Christ.'

"And what else can you say, spokesmen of the Lord? Is what you say yours? Or was it given to you by someone who was a teacher on Earth? No, it comes to you from the Word. It is His. You receive it in order to give it. You can neither pride yourselves on it nor refuse it. For if you were to do the latter, you would displease God, who, however, might repeat in you the miracle of Damascus and terrify you, to persuade you that against the will of God there is no resistance that is of use. How many of you, gripped by fear, have tried to refuse this supernatural brilliance raining down upon you like heavenly lightning? How many, before being voices, have almost or actually mocked or denied the supernatural coming to seek a 'nothing,' saying that 'it could not be.'

"Well then? Do you now hear what 'can be'? However, since you are sometimes assailed by the fear of having sinned because

of this thought or the resistance offered, I tell you that it is better to be in that state than anxious to possess certain gifts, anxious enough to fall into the Satanic trap and favor him with the yearning to dress oneself in robes which only God can give.

"And I tell You that you would act badly in taking pride in yourselves, for it is a gratuitous gift given for divine ends, not because you are you, but because there is need of you. The power is not yours. Never rob God of the glory which is his. You would soon be unmasked and punished by the mockery of the world and the judgment of God.

"Have some, like Paul, believing they were doing good, rejected the gift? Have they called it imaginary foolishness on seeing it in others' hearts? Let them examine themselves. Why? With what thought did they do so? With that of denying that God can do all? If so, they have sinned. With the thought that what the Church possesses is sufficient and that it is useless to wish to perfect what is perfect? If it is because of this thought, they have not sinned, for a respectful, zealous love 'of the tradition of the fathers' has moved them.

"But when God calls, do not offer resistance. Imitate Paul. Listen to what he says: '...Immediately, without paying attention to flesh and blood.... I withdrew.... Then ... I returned to Damascus...'-that is, *he obeyed the Lord*.

"Every so often a combination of circumstances frightens you, poor souls, and you consider resisting out of fear of sinning by disobeying the 'the tradition of the Fathers.' No, dear souls, no! Listen: Who is strongest? God. Who calls you? God. Therefore, without taking into account one factor or another, obey the One who is above all, and go securely. Consider that God's sign is upon you. He knows. Go securely. Fears are of Satanic origin, to make you disobey God and snatch an instrument away from God. And the world's insinuations are a sound without value which falls after having sounded. Let them sound. Withdraw into God and serve Him alone.

"May the grace of the Lord always be with you. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit!"

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Ps 27(26):1, 2, 3

Collect: Grant us, Lord, we pray, that the course of this world may be so perfectly ordered for us by Your direction, that Your Church may rejoice in untroubled worship of You. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Rm 8:18-23

Gradual: Ps 79(78):9, 10

Alleluia: Ps 9:5, 10

Gospel: Lk 5:1-11

Offertory: Ps 13(12):4-5

Secret: Grant us Your favour, Lord, we pray, by receiving these offerings and in Your goodness, despite our resistance, draw our wills to You. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 18(17):3

Postcommunion: May we be purified, Lord, by these holy mysteries which we have received, and defended by their power. Through our Lord.

July 7, 1946

Azariah says:

"All for You, all for you, soul of mine, to be your comfort and sapiential food in place of the Bread which for you really ought to have been 'daily,' dear soul who have given *everything* out of love for your brothers in imitation of Christ and who, in your imprisonment as one separated by immolating Love, had nothing but this Sun.

"It is said in the Psalms: 'Blessed is he who has the intelligence of the poor and the indigent.' And of poverty in its forms. For poor and indigent is not only the one who lacks material bread and money. Poor, in a much higher sense, is the one, too, that, through a crucifying will of God, is prevented as well from satisfying his hunger for the bread which Jesus, through the mouth of Isaiah, promises, offers to the poor, to those who have no money, with the words: 'You that are thirsty, come to the waters, and you that have no money, come to buy and eat, come to buy without money.' Words which reappear, magnified in power, in the Word of Jesus in the Gospel of John: 'Seek to obtain for yourselves not perishable food, but that which lasts for eternal life and which the Son of Man will give.... My Father gives you the true bread from Heaven.... I am the Bread of Life: whoever comes to Me will no longer be hungry; whoever believes in Me will no longer be

thirsty.... All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, nor will I send away anyone who comes to Me, for I have descended from Heaven to do the will of my Father. And the Will of the Father is that I should not lose even one of those He has given Me.... I am the Living Bread that has come down from Heaven.... The Bread that I shall give is my Flesh given for the life of the world.' And later: 'Let whoever is thirsty come to Me and drink.'

"The word of God is clear. He wants his Bread to be given, and abundantly, to all those who ask for it, and especially those who bear a cross, so that they will be strengthened with the Bread of the strong.

"Charity, which too many confuse with alms, has no limitations in someone's impossibility of going, of speaking, of defending himself, of being able to obtain food and protection for himself. But, indeed, charity, *true* intelligent and conscious charity and it is such because, in being true, it has the perfection of something divine-should be solicited precisely where, because of a combination of circumstances, there is an impossibility of coming, speaking, obtaining food and defense for oneself. Charity comprehends the material and spiritual needs of the poor, of this special category of the poor who are prevented from going where the Bread that has come down from Heaven is bought 'without money.' This is the highest of the forms of charity, for it involves taking God to the creature that craves for Him and introducing into the creature the Consoler, Master, Friend-Him who cries out in an unwearying voice: 'All you that suffer, come to Me.'

"Whoever does not understand this does not possess intelligence concerning the forms of poverty and the poor and the indigent and does not know his brothers' souls, as he does not know God. He does not know Him because he does not have and is not in charity, and whoever is not in and does not have charity is not in God.

"And then? What will you do, poor soul that are not assisted by those not having mercy on your indigence? Will you be 'alone' because they withdraw?' Will you be desolate for this reason? Will you have to doubt your being loved and saved by God? None of these things. But, rather, you must rejoice, just like Christ, who, after the tremendous hour of Gethsemane, with all the doubt

¹ "This refers to the Father General [of the Order of the Servants of Mary], who prohibited my being brought Holy Communion" (Maria Valtorta's annotation on a typewritten copy).

of the world and the worldly ones moved by Satan like a military engine to knock down the Strong One, revived in the certainty of his mission, seeing that the Lord was consuming Him in sufferings, burdening Him with the full weight of expiation, abandoning Him to the hatred of his enemies, in order to make Him, afterwards, the Victor over Death, over Sin. Then, while dying transfixed, struck, vilified, accursed, Christ, in his dying Heart, said, 'I am the King and Redeemer. In vain, O Satan, have you wished to make me doubtful. This is the sign that I am in the Grace of the Lord and pleasing to Him, and that I *shall obtain everything, for everything is against Me*. The contradictions of Satan and the world, against one who is not of the world, is the surest sign that he who is persecuted is in You, O my Father.'

"Yes, Maria. Contradiction regarding a good work, persecution of an innocent soul, is the most certain probative sign, never lacking, that this work is *of God* and that this soul is in the service of God.

"Believe it, believe it as if it were a certainty of faith; you can believe, because an angel does not lie, that when one is persecuted without having deserved persecution, that when a good work is opposed, it is because Satan hates them. And the hatred of Satan is always against the place where God is.

"Rejoice, then, because you are persecuted and contradicted, for this is the sign that you are in God and your Work is of God. And repeat to your disheartened soul the words of the Introit: 'The Lord is my light and my salvation. What, then, do I have to fear? The Lord protects my life. Who, then, can make me tremble?'

"Oh, Maria! Raise the eyes of your spirit to contemplate the citizens of the Heavens. Those citizens who, before being blessed spirits in the contemplation of God, were men on Earth. Well then? What do you see upon them? The signs by which they conquered that place. And not one-except the children who died before the use of reason-lacks the sign of the world's contradiction of their virtues and mission. This sign of martyrdom, whether bloody or bloodless, is not lacking in any of them. For the world hates, persecutes, and scorns whoever is of God.

"Just as red is an incitement for a ferocious bull, so the radiance of the charity expanding out from those beloved to the Lord is an incitement for the envious or deniers, and they hurl themselves at it to demolish and destroy it. They cannot. Every howl

makes it increase in power. And its power is such that, as the

Introit says, 'The enemies stagger and fall.' Let them fall without rancor, without rejoicing over their fall. Let them fall without being distracted by the noise of their fall. Listen to God and his voices, and do not tremble in your heart.

"Just pray. Pray to the Lord that the course of the world may unfold tranquilly, according to his orders, and that the Church may have the joy of peaceful devotion. And you understand what this means.

" The world is not, according to the common idea, tranquil. Misfortunes, calamities of every kind traverse and torment it. But all of this still occurs by the will of men. The world in itself, the Earth, the planet, tranquilly follows its course as the Creator's will has ordered it. Like a star fulfilling its trajectory in the firmament, the planet named Earth for tens of thousands of years has been following its course, which began with its being created and which was to have ended with disintegration, when its end had come at the appointed time.

"But since, in its infancy, it was threatened with destruction because the corruption of men had made the Creator repent of having created them, so, in this age of the Earth, in which corruption exceeds all measure-and is found equally in royal palaces and hovels, and the holy place is not free from iniquitous pollutions, and love is dead, to make way for hatred, without even a nationalistic reason any more, hatred for the sake of hatred, hatred of humanity, and, therefore, self-hate, and men are at once suicides, homicides, and deicides, raising their hands armed with spite and impiety and the Satanic discoveries against God in creatures, and against God in Himself, and against themselves, and against everything-can't this continual sin against charity and this Satanic seething of pride in many, in too many men and for all reasons, provoke a divine Fiat which interrupts the world's course and triggers its disgregation with horrible convulsions on account of which men, mad with terror-because of wars, famines, massacres from epidemics and earthquakes, cyclones, floods, hail, fire, pestilences, invasions by destructive animals, and the creation of deadly machines and poisons, in an apocalyptic succession of punishments-and blinded in their vision by the darkness and in their hearts by dread and atheism, go to their death and then to the tremendous Judgment before the hour?

"Remember, all of you, that if the prayers of the just and of

the Woman Full of Grace hastened Christ's coming by years, and it was a great grace, this accelerating the times of the end of the world with numberless sins will be the greatest misfortune Humanity will have to suffer, for it will be the Lord's wrath which will strike.

"Pray, then, O you good ones, that the world will die when it is indicated for it to die. Pray that God will not send his executioners to strike it, as He did with Lucifer and with Adam. For God's decrees are eternal, indeed. But they can undergo mutation when his Justice and his own dignity force Love to remind creatures that One alone is God and no one is greater than He. I say this as regards the world.

"And for the Church, do you know, soul of mine, what 'the joys of a tranquil devotion' are? Those coming from precise knowledge, just application, a holy will, with respect to the Faith, the Gospel, charity.

"A precise knowledge of Faith and a just application of the Gospel-wherein, when it is applied to perfection, the whole ancient religion is fused to the Christian religion-impede the creation of heresies and sects, of blameworthy exaltation or coldness, and a holy will of love destroys with its fire the venomous plants of heresies and sects.

"It is always love which saves and conserves. It is not fanatic exaltation or freezing sternness. It is being Christians as Christ wanted. In both the Church in all its hierarchies and the faithful in all their conditions. Then, from a Church militant that is truly Christian in all its members, nourished with Christ as the plant is nourished with the pith and pushes its energy up to the last little leaf on the highest branch, there will come the joy of tranquil devotion, free from intercurrent fevers of sterile mysticism and obscurations whereby darkness rises to envelop the Light, giving harmful blows to spirits, that are not all of adults, but, rather, for the most part of weak spiritual children in need of tranquil joy to grow in the Lord, constant faith, and warm charity which will swathe and fortify them, to protect them from the snares of the Adversary, the world, and the flesh.

"Daughter of the Church, pray, always pray for this Mother of yours; pray for your brothers who are not, like you, children of the Church-perhaps prodigal, sometimes separated, at other times led astray-that they may be with the Mother, and the Mother may have only the charity of Christ for the faithful flock

and the sheep led astray and summon, exhort, comfort, and support-maternal, maternal, maternal, holy, perfect like her Head: the Lord Jesus Christ.

"And now let us read Paul. He herewith comforts you with a holy word. Accept it because it is truth. Paul said it on Earth. But now it descends from the Heavens, confirmed by the approval of Him who suffered more than all others and, divinely glorious, manifests in his Body that He has suffered and that He is, therefore, glorious as a Man in addition to his glory as God. 'I am convinced that the sufferings of the present time are not comparable to the glory which will be manifested in us.'

"That's it. Many are the sufferings of the true children of the true God. But immeasurably superior is the glory they will have in Heaven.

"The Word was God. His glory as God was, therefore, infinite, But He Himself was glory for Himself. He became Man and suffered in time, atrociously, completely. He then rose to Heaven and joined the glory of all the saved to his infinite glory. And every saint is an increase in glory which the Word has obtained for Himself by suffering in time. What would the Heavens have been without his suffering? The static glory of God would have filled them, it is true. But they would not have known the hosannas of the thousand and ten thousand blessed ones, of the one hundred and forty-four thousand of every tribe, nor would they have known the new canticle, supported by a sound similar to that of many waters and the rumble of thunder, similar to a concert of harpists playing their instruments, the new canticle of the virgins who follow the Lamb wherever He goes and bear on their forehead his Name and that of the Father, the canticle which only those who were rescued from the Earth, the first fruits of the Lamb and of God, can sing.

"All of this glory which is multiplied around that of the Word for every saint comes to Christ, for He suffered in time and what He was shone through his sufferings and shines eternally in Him and in his glorified Body, as it does in his Divine Spirit.

"In fact, the creation is anxiously awaiting the revelation of the children of God.'

"Pay close attention, soul of mine. What does this sentence mean? What revelation is it talking about? Once I spoke to you of the two branches of Humanity: the branch of the children of the free woman and that of the children of the slave. That expla-

nation, then, helps you to understand this Sentence.'

"Creation is awaiting to know the children of God to distinguish them from the children of sin. When will it know? When, at the end of time, all men have passed in the great review and, according to justice, the children of God are separated from the children of sin.

"For the time being, it is a continuous, incessant labor to arrive at this revelation. Every creature must accomplish it in himself, and the union of all creatures and the knowledge of the labor of each one will yield the revelation of the children of God to be distinguished from those who did not want to be such.

"The life of each individual is similar to a tessera in a mosaic. And each can freely give it the color he wishes. When all the lives are gathered together in the final resurrection, the great picture of the history of humanity will be composed, of this side of the creation, the most select one, and, because it is the most select, the one most beset by the snares of the Adversary, who in your ancestors subjected all Mankind to vanity, with God's permis Sion, to test their children and be able to reward them with multiplied merits for their sanctity, obtained by their own efforts and not by a gratuitous gift of God.

"What ruinous pride man would have arrived at if, through a sin which in two ways was felicitous and propitious, he had not known humiliation at the dawn of his existence! Happy the fault because the Christ was obtained, happy because it mortified man before centuries of immunity had made him as proud as Lucifer, who, because he was without sin, believed himself to be like God.

"This falling of Humanity was also Providence, this sinking into mire, to remind himself that he is mire animated by God, in itself only mire, by the will of God: spirit in mire, to sanctify him, to give him an imprint, a likeness to the Unknown, the Perfect, the Spirit, the Eternal. This falling at the start of his day was Providence, so as to have a long expiation and be able to rise again the whole way, return to Heaven from the abyss, go back with good will, with the help of the Savior, with the battle against Temptation, with the fortitude breaking the chains of concupiscence, with Faith, Hope, Charity, with holy Humility and holy Obedience, to come to be deservedly glorious and free with the glorious freedom of the children of God.

¹See p. 47ff.

"Too often man sterilely curses the first sin and blasphemes against God as an imprudent Lord who has placed Man in temptation stronger than he is. But what would have happened if Man, instead of yielding to the Temptation leading him to believe that by eating the forbidden fruit he would become like God, if, without any tempter, he had come to believe himself to be God on his own, because he was sinless, without pain, without death?

"Then there would not have been any redemption, because Man would have been a new Lucifer-rather, a numberless legion of lucifers, for, in the course of the centuries, Mankind would have increased through all those begotten, and not one man and one woman, but all would have sinned by this sacrilegious heresy, and the whole race would have perished in an infernal punishment.

"The Creator loved the most beautiful creature in creation. The one in whom the soul cast forth heavenly lights. And he wanted it in a condition to be saved still. So? Can man doubt that God could not have prevented Satan from entering Eden? No, do not think this. But believe that God's act was good, like all his acts, and the cause of an infinitely good act, as was the Incarnation of the Word for the salvation of man.

"We know that until now all creatures sigh and are in birthpangs.'

"In fact, each one must give birth to himself, the eternal self, the one born to Heaven or Hell at the moment the first death removes the soul and breath, and the first call, before Him who cannot be deceived, takes place. From matter, like fruit from a flower-from the matter that the Sacraments help to change (from a chain, a hindrance, a burden for sanctification to birth, Life as an immortal son of God, the blessed citizen inhabiting Heaven)-from matter, like fruit from the flower, the son of God, the brother of Christ, sharing in the divinity through the divine promise, will be begotten, with pains in his whole life, with the burden of gestation throughout life.

"You are gods' is written in Scripture and in the letters of Paul. Nor did Jesus deny that man, in becoming holy with a constant effort towards perfection, becomes similar to God his Father, in the measure of a son towards the Father, of the created spirit in relation to the Most Holy Uncreated Spirit.

"But to arrive at this glorification it is necessary to sigh and suffer with patience and hope, with faith and love, just like a

mother who for long months suffers and hopes, and willingly confronts pain provided she can give birth to her child.

"Do you see how good God is? He grants procreation to matter, almost being little creators. But He grants that all spirits may recreate themselves, for the soul, given by God, can recreate and supercreate itself, reaching the sublime dignity of children of God, sharing in the Father's eternal glory.

"And not just these, but we, too, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, sigh inwardly, awaiting adoption as children of God and the redemption of our bodies, in Jesus Christ Our Lord.'

"Possessing extraordinary gifts does not eliminate having to suffer to recreate oneself for Heaven. Indeed, in proportion to the joy coming to you from Heaven, you must be able to suffer to arrive at ever loftier degrees of spiritual perfection. And isn't having the 'word of God' having the first fruits of the Spirit, soul of mine? Let your strength, therefore, be in proportion to this grace. Proceed, from your safe refuge, from the arms of your Father, who comforts You in your tribulation and gives you his consolations to compensate you for those which men deny you. Keep yourself in the Light so that your eyes will be illuminated and you will never fall asleep in spiritual death-so that the one who is your enemy can never say, 'I have defeated her!' Consider that you must be wide awake, just, luminous, and wise, for both your soul and the Work of God, which even a slight defection of yours would depreciate. Be holy to give joy to God, peace to your soul and eternal life, and not diminish God's gift. Consider that you would play into the hands of your enemies. Crown your brow with thorns, be steadfast under flagellation, go beneath the cross. But make those tormenting you have to say one day the words of the crucifiers on Calvary: 'This was a just spirit,' and beat their breasts, saying, 'The sufferings we have occasioned her weigh upon our conscience and cry out to God because we have oppressed an innocent one who served God. We have thus combatted God.'

"Come, come, soul of mine, ever more beloved soul. Come, rest on the breast of Him who does not betray his children. Rest upon the One who is given you as your Father.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Ps 27(26):7, 9, 1

Collect: Lord, You have prepared for those who love You, good things unseen by any eye; pour into our hearts the fervor of Your love, so that loving You in all things and above all things, we may obtain Your promises, which exceed all that we can desire. Through our Lord.

Epistle: 1 P 3:8-15

Gradual: Ps 84(83):10, 9

Alleluia: Ps 21(20):2

Gospel: Mt 5:20-24

Offertory: Ps 16(15):7, 8

Secret: Lord, be appeased by our entreaties and in Your goodness receive these offerings from Your sons and daughters; so that, what each has offered to the glory of Your name, may be profitable for the salvation of all. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 27(26):4

Postcommunion: Lord, You have filled us with Your heavenly gifts; grant, we pray, that we may be cleansed from our secret faults and saved from the snares of our enemies. Through our Lord.

July 14, 1946

St. Azariah says:

"This, too, entirely for you, to console you in this painful hour.

"Listen, O Lord, to the words of my prayer. Be my help. Do not abandon me. Do not disdain me, O God, my Savior. The Lord is my light and my salvation. Who am I to be afraid off the Introit says.

"I always explain the Introit in detail, for it is the basic note of each individual Holy Mass. Afterwards the liturgical canticle continues, breaks free, and rises higher and higher, but the initial note endures in all its parts. Here it is a note of trust in divine helps, those which everyone needs, and especially you, soul of mine, who have only God as your help in this hour. But trust. Just one single glance of God is more powerful than all the evil forces of men joined together.

"Do you, a poor creature, wish to attempt to bend the men who resist even the Lord? Your words and your trials fall, after having struck the very hard block of their will, which is antagonistic to you, without leaving even a scratch on the surface impervious to all penetration. Only a divine will can penetrate them,

crumble them, as the thunderbolt breaks what it strikes. And the divine thunderbolt is stronger than everyone and cannot be resisted. But do not desire thunderbolts for them which are not of love. This, too, is a thunderbolt, but it does not destroy-rather, it edifies, transforms, softens, makes those not good good, changes persecutors into supporters, and, above all, impedes the ruin of their souls.

"You, a victim offered for the salvation of souls and so that the Kingdom of Christ-that is, love-will be established in souls, must have this as the main goal of all your actions. They, hard; you, gentle. They, enemies; you, a sister. They, moved to wound you; you, to caress them. Until now you have been heroic in this love opposed to resentment, in this patience against all their obstinate will to dissolve what God wants and you ask in the name of God. They have raised their hands, spiritually, to pierce your spirit. Well then, imitate the lamb that kisses the hand of the one cutting its throat and the Divine Lamb, who, docile, did not elude those striking Him, but, rather, was spurred by love to pray for them in his last words.

"Act this way. And if not even this softens them and you die consumed before their impenetrable wall, do not fear. Justice is in Heaven. And there will be justice for the flame which has been extinguished, giving light and warmth until the end, and for those who remained cold and dark before its quivering with love. Entrust yourself to God. Entreat Him only not to abandon you and disdain you, and then do not worry about the abandonment and disdain of the world. They are an honor for the one receiving them, for it is a sign that he is not of the world, but of God.

"Do do hear the Prayer? 'O God, who keep invisible goods prepared for those who love you.'

"You love Him. Much more than yourself. What is not the glory of God does not prompt in you a desire to possess it. This glory alone. You have given all that God has granted you for his glory. Remember, for your comfort, the episode of the rich young man. He asked the Master, 'What must I do to obtain eternal life?' And Jesus said to him, 'You know the commandments.' He responded, 'I have observed them since my youth.' And then the Divine Master said to him, 'You still lack one thing: sell all you own and give it to the poor, and you will have a treasure in Heaven. Then come and follow me.'

"That's it. After the Commandments, observed from your

youth, and after having sold all your goods with the sacrifice of your health, the supreme holocaust and the most meritorious one, because it was offered by you-not accepted, like the others which God asked of you-you have placed yourself in the retinue not of the King, but of the Martyr. The poor, for you, are those for whom You have obtained God's friendship by your obscure immolation. Now if Most Holy Jesus assures eternal life for one who sells his possessions, his material possessions, to give them as material assistance to the poor, what will He give to those who strip themselves even of life and with this coin purchase Life for those languishing or dead in spirit?

"You have given everything. God will give to you infinitely. And from now on He gives you infinite love; He gives you the good of his sensitive love, his word, advances of the immeasurable good awaiting you up above: the good which will be Himself, your God, no longer forced to conceal Himself to adapt to your creaturely capacity to sustain his presence.

"Infuse into hearts the sentiments of your love.'

"Oh, and what do you live on, stripped of everything, deprived of everything, even of his Bread, if not on these sentiments of divine love? But look at your brothers. In whom, in how many is the rich measure which the Lord gives you of Himself?

"In order to love You in everything and above everything.'

"Love is returned with love, and in love every sacrifice is possible, and with love 'the things God promised were obtained, which are superior to all desire.'

"They are superior to all desire! Truly, what creature, however advanced he may be in the knowledge of Good, can arrive with his longing thought at the border-even just the border-of what the reward is which awaits him in Heaven? And there, not at the border, but within, the spirits of those who, having loved God in all things and above all things, will have obtained the possession of God will be immersed in perfect blessedness. Now empty, there nourished; now penalized by creatures, there rewarded by the Creator.

"Forget time and men. Look at eternity and the Eternal. Your place is not here. Like a pilgrim at a hotel where the hirelings serve you poorly, or refuse to serve you, you are on Earth. But in the House of the Father you will no longer know the discomforts of the present. Do not be afflicted, then, over what you suffer now, but consider that each day which comes to a close draws

you closer to the celestial place where you will be loved by the Father and your brothers and sisters as they love in Heaven, where there is only perfection, and increase your formation constantly, recalling the words of Jesus, Our Lord: 'Be perfect as my Father is perfect.'

"How does one arrive at this perfection? Oh, always by way of love! Your Most Holy Master did not teach any other means; his first Vicar, the Blessed Peter, did not teach any other. 'Be of one mind, compassionate, loving towards your brothers, merciful, modest, and humble, all of you.' Are these different manifestations of Christian virtues not, perhaps, love? Love for one's brothers in the first four. Love for God in the last two, recognizing that if an act of goodness by Him makes you something more than what others are, this is a gift of God, and, therefore, in your election, be increasingly modest and humble, so that election will not change into ruin, into a false sanctity capable of deceiving men, but not the Lord, a hypocritical sanctity for which you will be called to account before the Judge and for which you will be punished.

"From these first virtues Peter then passes on to a more difficult virtue, that of forgiveness. Forgiveness of offenses is the proof of your charity and of your union with the Word. 'For if you love those who love you, what merit do you have? Love those who hate you and offer the other cheek to those who cuff you.' Our Lord Jesus said this. Because He wants you saved. And if the Synedrium condemned whoever hurled an insult at his neighbor and the fire of Gehenna was promised for whoever offended his neighbor-and this occurred when Love had not yet come to teach and reign on the Earth in the hearts of his followers-the one who, in the New Law, is unable to love his enemies and put up with offenses, but reacts with animality opposed to the animality of others, a beast ready for every base reaction of the brute, will encounter a much more serious judgment than that of the Synedrium and a much more atrocious fire when, stripped of the flesh as if despoiled of armor making him offensive and dark, he will present himself with his naked spirit to the Judge who taught love and redeemed with love.

"Peter, a faithful echo of his Master, repeats, 'Do not pay back evil with evil, or curse with curse, but, rather, bless, since it is for this that you have been called: to inherit the blessing.'

"Oh, it is hard! I understand that it is hard! Even in the most

spiritual creatures the flesh is not canceled out and attempts to jump under the lash of offenses. But I want to teach you the secret to obtain victory over the human self, excessively incited by the arrows which continually wound you.

"Listen, soul of mine. If you contemplate the arrows of offenses for what they are-offenses-you cannot love them. If you contemplate those who shoot at you for what they are-unjust-you cannot love them. But if you contemplate the arrows of offenses as the weapons of martyrdom and do the same as Blessed Sebastian, who considered that every additional arrow was another feather granted for his flight close at hand, if you contemplate them as numerous darts of fire which, in consuming your flesh with quick flames, serve to purify it and dissolve the jail of your soul, if you see your torturers as the most effective collaborators in giving you the martyr's crown, if you consider that God loves you limitlessly to the point of allowing you to be like his Confessors, like his Son, killed by men to redeem men, if you do what I am saying to you, you will love the offenses which transfix you, you will kiss them as the martyrs kissed their chains, and you will love the ones who, in opening Heaven to you by taking your life, are, without realizing, your prime benefactors.

"They do not know what they are doing' in evil. For if they knew it and did the same, their souls would be wretched! But they believe they are serving God, these new Jews, and saving the people by putting the innocent one to death. But 'they do not know what they are doing' in good, either. For with their own hands they give you the means with which to be crowned after this final battle. You must love them for this.

"Our Most Holy Lord told you once, speaking in a vision: 'There is no man who is *completely* bad, voluntarily bad throughout life. It is thus necessary to feel pity, thinking of the good someone may have done which we do not know.' Act this way, soul of mine.

"Let anyone, then, who wants to love Life and see happy days restrain his tongue from evil and his lips from fraudulent speech, shun evil, do good, seek peace, and strive to obtain it.'

"The Blessed Peter names not the poor life of an hour, but Eterlial Life, and speaks of eternal days, those which for those 'living' in the Lord will be eternally happy. Oh, it is worthwhile to be able to remain silent! For speech often leads people away from charity, making the spirit bewildered with the din of the words of oneself and others, and in bewilderment fraudulence may

emerge with a view towards excelling in combat with the adversary, and the dispute may degenerate from justice to injustice, and the one who is right may pass over to the side that is wrong by overstepping the bounds of respect and love and, above all, he alters peace and alters it in the hearts of others.

"In peace is God. God must not be lost, then, to obtain a poor victory. But, rather, suffocating all rebellion by humanity which rears up under the unjust lashes, let all your rights fall, even just and licit rights, to be free to adhere with all your strength to God alone. And peace-full, luminous, a good friend and holy teacher, 'for the Lord has his eyes upon the just and his ears are intent on their prayers'-will be in you. Indeed, God will not be above,' but within you, for the pacific will be in the Father and the Father in them, according to the beatific promise of the Word.

"To have God, Peace in you! If we angels consider what it is to see God, we can well understand what it must be for you to have God, the Pacific One in you. And we can also intuit what the lives must be like of those who, in an hour of meditation, understand they have acted badly and, therefore, have the irate gaze of God set upon them and his severe judgment.

"Oh, soul of mine! Peace, peace, always peace in you. For you are in the tabernacle, under God's tent. Do not go out of it even if all the whirlwinds shake the tent and jolt the tabernacle to frighten you, even if jackals or brigands roam about the desert surrounding you. You would get lost in flight; in reacting, you would be defeated. Remain where you are. Remember what Jesus says about his Church: 'And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'

"You, enclosed in God's pavilion of wisdom, in the tabernacle of his Heart, of his Love, are in a kind of living Church, 'and the forces of evil shall not prevail.' I tell you so because my Lord commands me to tell you so, together with the Blessed Peter, who assures you that no one will be able to harm those who are zealous in good and in truth calls suffering for the sake of justice 'beatitude,' recalling once again the words of his Master, who has promised the Kingdom of Heaven to whoever suffers persecutions for the sake of justice.

"And, with the Apostle and Pontiff, I say, 'Do not fear their threats. Do not be disturbed, but sanctify Christ the Lord in your heart, giving Him praise for your justice so that men will have to proclaim, "Christ, the Sanctifier, was truly alive in her, and,

therefore, she was victorious over her humanity and temptations, and over those who persecuted her for no reason, as they persecuted Christ, her Spouse, Master, and Lord."

"Bless the Lord, who gives you counsel. Always stay before the Lord and keep before your eyes the Divine Model, to reproduce Him faithfully in yourself. Lean on the One who loves you, and you will not waver. Ask for one thing alone from the Lord and seek this only: to dwell in the house of God, under the tent of wisdom which He has erected for defense and comfort, in the safety of his living tabernacle, in his Heart, for all the days of earthly life, until the moment when the flame, after a last flicker, detaches itself from the earthly lamp and rises to Heaven, a little light returning to the Light, a little fire that is reabsorbed by the Divine Fire, creaturely love which is divinized by losing itself in that of God.

"Glory, Glory, Glory be to the Lord, who divinely compensates his servants and martyrs! Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Ps 28(27):8-9, 1

Collect: O God of power and strength from whom comes every perfect gift, implant in our hearts the love of Your name, and increase in us true religion; foster what is good in us and protect with Your watchful love what You have fostered. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Rm 6:3-11

Gradual: Ps 90(89), 13, 1

Alleluia: Ps 31(30):2-3

Gospel: Mk 8:1-9

Offertory: Ps 17(16):5-7

Secret: Lord, be appeased by our entreaties and in Your goodness receive these offerings of Your people; and so that the hope of none may be in vain, the prayer of none unanswered, grant that we may effectively obtain what we faithfully ask. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 27(26):6

Postcommunion: Grant, Lord, that we, who have been filled with Your gifts, may be cleansed by their power and strengthened by their help. Through our Lord.

July 21, 1946

Azariah says:

"To give comfort to your spirit, having mercy on the weakness of matter, which cannot remain applied, God sends me to speak, as is entreated in the Introit, so that you will not have to feel 'like those going down into the pit.' And to reassure you that 'you will not die,' but 'live in Christ,' I propose to you the meditation in Paul's epistle, so little understood even by those calling themselves fervent Catholics.

"What is Baptism exactly? Most would answer, 'A ceremony which is usually performed at the beginning of life to show we are Catholics'; another, smaller group would say, 'It is the Sacrament which cancels out original sin and restores Grace to us.' They would, indeed, have answered well, showing themselves to be possessors of a minimum of religious knowledge sufficient to live in a Catholic way so as to save themselves, if good will is joined to knowledge.

"But very few would go further in thought to the point of thoroughly examining what Baptism truly is, what it is formed of, its real nature, hidden under the substances used for the rite. If many thought of the 'nature' of Catholic Baptism and if many

did their best to make their children or godchildren understand this nature from the most tender age, there would truly arise in both these children and their parents or godparents a profound love for Christ, such a love that it would restrain them from sinning, such a strong love that it would lead to holy works to recompense the gift received at the beginning of life and, with love, pay the debt we owe to Christ, and also pay our debt to the Most High with pain.

"Forgive us our trespasses,' you pray. He taught this to you. But it is also just, as far as one can, to strive to pay the debt on one's own, without expecting God to be the only generous one.

"This restraining from sin, this loving gratitude to Him who restores your nature as children of God-the sharing, through Grace, in Life, glory, and divinity-comes spontaneously in whoever is able to contemplate Baptism for what it really is.

"It is immersion in the suffering of Christ, in his tears, in his Blood, in his humiliations, in his death. This is under the species of water. The Victor over Death died to destroy the truest death: that of sin. And He opened his veins to give you the means to make your souls white, and He let his chest be rent to gather you into the hollow of his Heart. And have you rise from there to a life of Grace.

"The Victor and Consummator, He won the victory and consummated. But it is required that man second Him so that the blood of the Lamb will not cry out against you, as against sacrilegious mockers and dissipators of his Sacrifice.

"If the Catholic considered these things, he would no longer call Baptism a 'ceremony'; he would see it not only as a Sacrament which restores Grace and cancels out Sin, but as the holocaust of Christ, who opened his veins to give you the lavacre which takes away Evil and makes you sharers in Good; to change you from creatures into semigods; to infuse into you the Virtues indispensable to save yourselves and, therefore, to make you capable as well of understanding Wisdom, believing, hoping in Mercy.

"Whoever is born and rises again in the Blood of Christ and remains faithful to that Blood no longer dies, but lives in Jesus Christ the Savior, having, like Him, overcome the world and Satan in taming concupiscences.

"Rest, soul of mine. I gave you few words so that you would not tremble at being abandoned. But charity prohibits me from

demanding an effort of you-even if it is only one of attention. Rest. I shall pray in place of you. Offer your suffering as a sharing in the Holy Sacrifice of this Sunday

In fact, I can no longer resist and with difficulty manage to follow the angelical words....

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Ps 47(46):2-3

Collect: God, whose providence never fails in its ordering, we humbly entreat You to remove from us all harmful things and to give us all that may help us. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Rm 6:19-23

Gradual: Ps 34(33):12, 6

Alleluia: Ps 47(46):2

Gospel: Mt 7:15-21

Offertory: Dn 3:40

Secret: Lord, You have united the various sacrifices of the old law in a single perfect sacrifice; receive this sacrifice, which Your devoted servants offer You, and sanctify it with the blessing which You gave Abel's offerings, so that, what each of us has brought here to the glory of Your name, may be profitable to all for salvation. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 31(30):3

Postcommunion: Lord, may Your healing work in our souls mercifully free us from our perverse affections and make us cling through out our lives to Your commandments. Through our Lord.

July 28, 1946

Azariah says:

"Today as well a few words which come from the Heavens out of mercy on your physical suffering, but all, all spiritual joy in return for all the pain.

"The fact that you have persuaded yourself, through this passion and this persecution which they have given you, that the Work is really of God' must make you regard this torture which God has permitted to test the metals of hearts, yours and others', assay their matter, and measure their vibrations at the touch of the supernatural-as something good, not useless and sterile.

"It has been explained to you on other occasions. God, the good Father, to make Satan's and men's actions less wicked, does not let them pass without drawing merit from them for those suffering them.

"Have you ever reflected, O Maria, that even Satanic iniquity-which believes itself free to act, the master of torture,

¹See note 1, p. 104.

capable of competing with God, whose equal it believes itself to be, and of mocking and contradicting God-ends up serving God's designs, causing the actions of the children of God to shine more brightly than ever?

"Oh, there is only one God! And everything is subject to Him. Even the Adversary, who thinks he is like Him, is nothing but a subject, and, in wishing to harm Him, in reality serves Him because he increases the heavenly court-that is, the glory of God, of the saints he tempted and tormented, who were able to resist him and practice the virtues under the lash of persecution.

"Yes, the saints, who, without the Adversary, would have gently become holy, only out of gratitude for God's gratuitous gifts, through the work of the devil become powerfully holy, for they must fight throughout their lives against his snares, all the more intense the more he grasps they are quarries which are escaping from him. That is why everything is providence which lovingly follows a benevolent design, even if this cannot appear so to human narrowness.

"I know! Understanding this is hard for someone in the vise of pain. But you, soul of mine, already living in the pacific, beatific halo descending from the Heavens which envelops you, already living in the light illuminating all truth, now expert in the language of wisdom spoken in Heaven, rendered happy by the smiles and glances which we, who love you, give you to tell you that you are dear to us-and I dare to join my smile and glance as an angelical creature, so inferior to God, to those divinely perfect ones of God, of your Jesus, and of our glorious Queen-while the darkness tries to wrap you in darkness to occasion you fear and pain, you always keep your gaze fixed in the Light that loves you, you understand this truth and say with me, 'Everything is providence which lovingly follows a benevolent design.'

"You perform this continuous act of faith, hope, and charity because you believe in the Lord's Wise Goodness, because you love Him and love those who, in wounding you, give you an additional crown; you love them with Christ, 'forgiving them because they do not know what they are doing,' and because you intensely hope that for this suffering the Lord will give you a greater and more solicitous peace.

"Let us read Paul now, the blessed Paul, who gives another version concerning the usefulness of suffering.

"It is true that to reach sanctification means to suffer, while

to follow the Tempter means to enjoy materially. For the way of sanctification is strewn with renunciations, struggles, and pain, whereas the way of Temptation is strewn with satisfactions and an apparent calm which is a deceit concealing the truth of future and eternal despair.

"And it is also true that there is no creature that has never yielded to Temptation, making a gift of himself, of his own members-and not these alone, but also of the intellect, which consents, and the soul, which does not react-to the varied kinds of foulness which are called 'sins' and constitute as many acts of disobedience to the Commandments of God and the holy precepts.

"For this consenting to sin man deserves punishment-it is all the more serious according to the number and type of the sins. Nor is the debt owed God entirely annulled by the Sacrament of Penance, which cancels the sin, but still requires expiation for it. Well then, the goodness of the Father grants that the creature may expiate on Earth, making those very things serve for the conquest of eternal Good-the members, the intellect, and the spirit, which had foolishly consented to evil. Man can, then, as the Apostle recommends, serve justice with what served sin and make reparation for the past by conquering sanctification.

"A sweet slavery, this, of following and serving justice, a holy slavery to obtain freedom without end. Those who are servants of the world deride it and deride as fools those who introduce themselves into that wise slavery, refusing the false freedoms of the world and the flesh, discountable in tremendous perpetual slavery in the other life.

"But you, souls of the just, who prefer mortification and embrace pain as the surest friend to go to God, as the most certain transformer of the animal man into a spiritual man and then into a regal spirit in the Heavenly Kingdom, into a son of God in the Country of God-in looking at the time when you were not yet in this service of Good, what do you say? Was the freedom at that time perhaps true? Did it really yield a gain for you? No, in the pangs of mortifications, sometimes of pain, don't you perhaps feel rich and blessed because of the real gifts which will not pass away, but, rather, when complete, perfect, and beatific, they will increase when you are able to enjoy them in Heaven, as spirits capable of tasting thoroughly what as men you could not taste because of the limitation of your strength?

‘The end of shameful things is certainly death,’ says Paul. Whereas, with liberation from the slaveries of sense and sin, and with loyal service of God, the end is peace, glory, Life, the Possession of God.

"Love suffering and mortification, then, as means of expiation, initially, and then of sanctification, and praise the Lord, who grants that you may offer a continuous sacrifice, more select than that of material offerings of money and other gifts similar to the rams and calves of the Old Law. The sacrifice of your will, of your passions, of the whole self to the paternal providence of God so that He will lead you, as He led his Son even to death on the Cross, so as to be, in addition to redeemers of yourselves, redeemers of your brothers.

"Yes, Maria. Offer your sacrifice for your human and religious brothers.' Say with your Jesus, 'My soul is disturbed.' You are not more than Jesus. He experienced repugnance at pain and death. You, too, can experience it and confess it humbly.

"But continue: 'And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? I have come precisely for this hour'-that is, so that, by total sacrifice, the glory of God will be increased by the conquest of many souls for the Lord.

"And ask, certain of being listened to, that where you are going they, too, may be-that is, in God. Immolation obtains all that it asks for. And there is nothing greater, to show your love to your human and religious brothers and sisters, than this fulfillment of your sacrifice, requesting Light and Love for them for salvation and future glory."

¹ Reference to her brothers in the Order of the Servants of Mary, in which Maria Valtorta was a Tertiary.

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Ps 48(47):10-11, 2

Collect: Grant us, we pray, Lord, in Your goodness, the spirit to think and to do always what is right, so that we, who cannot exist without You, may be able to live according to Your will. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Rm 8:12-17

Gradual: Ps 31(30):3; 71(70):1

Alleluia: Ps 48(47):2

Gospel: Lk 16:1-9

Offertory: Ps 18(17):28, 32

Secret: Receive, Lord, we pray, the offerings which we make to You of what You Yourself have given us, so that by the power of Your grace these holy mysteries may sanctify our present life and bring us to everlasting joys. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 34(33):9

Postcommunion: May this heavenly mystery, Lord, restore us both in soul and in body, so that we may feel within us the power of the sacrament which we celebrate. Through our Lord.

August 4, 1946

Azariah says:

"Understand clearly the sentence in the Introit of this Holy Mass. For the sake of precision in translation the following is written: 'We have received your mercy in the midst of your temple.' But to make the idea of the liturgical expression exact, I tell you to meditate on it as modified in this way: 'We have received your mercy in the midst-or by means-of your temple.'

"Consider. Who is Christ? The real Christ and the mystical Christ? He is the Temple of God. He Himself said so. And this truth of his was hurled against Him as an accusation and a mockery in the hours of his Passion, and even in the final moments: 'You, that said you could rebuild the Temple in three days'; and before: 'We heard him say, "I can destroy the Temple of God and rebuild it in three days," while lying vilely, for it is a lie to alter a word spoken by another for the purpose of making the statement more incriminating, or in such a way as to change it from a just into an unjust sentence and liable to severe judgment; it is a lie, like completely inventing a piece of news or saying, 'I have not done this,' when, on the contrary, one has done so.

"The wicked use this system, for everything is of use to the wicked, everything serves to do harm, even goodness, even truth,

even the indulgence and patience of others. And even the miracle which they are capable of taking and showing as evidence of Satanism or physical and psychic anomaly is of use. And you, dear souls, you, dear voices, must not be astonished at or complain about the remarks and mockeries of men, their conduct towards you. You must not even judge it.

''Limit yourselves to thinking that what they do is not entirely the will to harm you, but it is a defect and sometimes the oppression of the Enemy, who labors as best he can to slow down and diminish God's works and to take revenge on the instruments, making them the object of the persecution of others. It is a defect: as not all men are perfect in their five senses and members, so, too, not all spirits are perfect in their sensitivity to the divine and the supernatural.

"It is oppression by the Enemy. It is not said that whoever is oppressed is a demon or a sinner. Rather, quite often it is precisely a spirit that walks in the ways of the Lord and is, therefore, hated by Satan, who, unable to make it appear wicked or an obstructor of God in men's eyes in any other way, dulls, stuns, and oppresses it as long as God allows. Notice that I do not say they are possessions or even obsessions. I say they are oppressions. The infernal lion has seized a moment of spiritual languor or distraction and has knocked down his prey, keeping it oppressed in his darkness, but he cannot devour it because it is a warrior knocked down, but still defended by the armour of its virtues; it may, therefore, remain dulled by the bump for a time, but then come around and rise again, freeing itself of the weight oppressing it.

"Still others are oppressed because, through an initial error, they have gotten onto the path of the lion-that is, they have committed a sin which is slight in nature, so that they have not lost Grace, but such as always to entangle them in a net which is not broken except when they retrace their steps on the evil path, humbly saying, 'I have erred.' These, until they get back onto the good path by a spontaneous decision, find it hard to free themselves, for, groping blindly in all directions-except in that heroic one of humbling confessing their first error-they get increasingly ensnared in the net Satan has cast over them, without even having labored to assail them, the net placed to annoy God, in both the spirit of those who have fallen therein and the ones whom their error puts in a trying situation, consequently rendering their

extraordinary ministry difficult.

"We have gone far from the Introit, soul of mine. But the desire of us in Heaven that you may be increasingly learned in that Science of Sciences which is knowledge of spirits and their , movements, so that you may not err in knowing and judging, making yourself contrary to Charity, is such that we take every care to instruct you in that Science. Instruction in it creates goodness and mercy, for when the twists and turns of souls are thoroughly examined, there comes the same compassionate mercy towards their failings or imperfections which good doctors have towards sick or constitutionally weak or deformed bodies. You know with what merciful goodness the Most Holy Lord Jesus bent his absolute Perfection over hearts, for He knew their twists and turns with the perfection of God.

"We want this complete knowledge in you so that it will generate a sea of most gentle mercy in which you may purify the souls of your brothers and sisters, absolving them on your own of every sin and asking the God of mercy to absolve them. Always remember that your Lord and mine has taught you that the force which obtains God's forgiveness for a sinner is forgiveness of the offense. It is an inversion of the request in the Prayer of Jesus Most Holy: 'Father, forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,' the Our Father says. The mercy of a heart that absolves everything and everyone by saying, 'They are unfortunates, not wicked,' cries out instead, 'Father, forgive those who trespass against us, for we have already forgiven them for everything.'

"Don't you perceive that this is the gentleness which submerged the dying Heart of Christ in his most bitter cares while He prayed for the forgiveness of his crucifiers and, in the darkness of his tremendous Hour, causes Him to close his eyes in peace in the contemplation of a sun in which the faces of all those 'saved by his forgiveness' were present? Don't you perceive that, because of the motion-so full, so complete, so blessed by Charity-you had in these days, your spirit remains in sweetness?

"Truly, like Hezekiah, you can say, 'My most bitter bitterness is now changed into peace. You have freed my soul.' God dresses all your wounds, soul of mine-remember this. Abound increasingly in the Most Gentle One, and every wound produced by men will be healed by Him who loves you with a love of special fondness, and only the scars of the pains will remain, the gems which

will shine in Heaven.

"But let us go back to the Introit. I was asking you, 'Who is Christ, the real and mystical Christ?'

"He is the Living Temple of God. In Him rests the Promise and the Law, and the Manna is deposited, and the Divinity shines in its Triune Glory. This is the real Christ. The mystical Christ is, moreover, that Body where He is the Head and the faithful, members, and whose name is Church.

"Now, what has mercy towards men come from? From the Living Temple of God, from the Incarnate Word, who died for men

on the Cross, and from the Temple which is the Church, through which, in its hierarchies, there descend the waters of the seven Sacraments to sprinkle souls and nourish them with their fruits. And it is thus just to say, and just to comprehend, that it is through the true Temple of God-Jesus living eternally in Heaven and

living in his Church-that men have received and receive the Lord's mercy-that is, Grace and Forgiveness.

"The gratitude of spirits to Jesus Most Holy, through whom Mercy spreads, should be in proportion to the greatness of the gift and the holiness of the Giver-that is, it should be perfect and complete, for perfect and infinite was the self-giving of Jesus Christ, God and Man, so that you, by means of Him, would

have the Divine Mercy and might exist, in spirit, for the existence of this is what is important, so as to have eternal Life.

"Wisdom comes from God, and from God, Justice, from God, Fortitude, and every other virtue making you capable of 'living according to the divine will'; and all of this strength, the nourishment and light of your spirits, comes from God, indeed, and it is thus just to say that through Him you exist, but it comes precisely from God the Son, from Jesus, in whom the Perfections of the Most Holy Three are summed up, to make Him the masterwork of saving Love, of Merciful Divine Love.

"Listen to St. Paul: 'We are not debtors to the flesh so as to

live according to the flesh.' You owe no subjection to the flesh, if you really want to live. For the flesh is death when it is queen; the flesh is a means when it is a slave. Death and means of what?

For what? For the spirit and of the spirit.

"The spirit dominated by overbearing flesh dies. The spirit dominating the flesh lives and adorns itself with the merits acquired, the victories obtained through the sufferings of the tamed flesh. If men meditated on the regality of the spirit and the dig-

nity which being someone in whom the spirit reigns gives man, no man would truly want to live in a way different from that of the spirit.

"Hear the Apostle: 'Those who are moved by the Spirit of God are children of God.'

"The Spirit of God, you know, does not dwell except where the flesh is chained in its animal hungers and freedom deprived of a spirit-king does not reign. Then the Spirit of God descends to be the Master and Guide of man's spirit, and since God's contact cannot leave things in the state in which it finds them, man's spirit, through the indwelling of God's Spirit within itself, is thus transformed and divinized, and takes on the Father's paternity. Since he is so spiritual as to merit being inhabited and instructed by the Spirit of God and led by Him in his different actions, man thus performs works and has thoughts, lights, and movements which are no longer human, but divine; he is a little god, for his human personality is annulled in the power of Him who possesses him. The servant is no longer even a servant; he is absorbed by the Eternal Lord and, therefore, becomes Him, Part of Him, a blessed part, heir of the paternal possessions, coheir with the Father's beloved Son, a brother to Christ, having the right, like Him, to call the Most High 'Father.'

"To us angels it is not granted to call the Eternal 'Father.' To you men it is. And He really is a Father to you, O just ones who have received, who have been able to receive in yourselves this blessed Spirit of God, not to have a new reason for fear in you, but to have a new reason for trust, peace, and joy, not feeling yourselves to be alone in exile, weak in trials, but joined to Christ, your brother, who has loved you to the point of death to give you Life and to give you the Spirit of God, who is Wisdom and Light.

`It is good for you that I am going (to death), for if I do not go, the Consoler will not come to you. If I go, I shall send Him to you.... And when this Spirit of Truth comes, He will instruct you in all truth.' And later: 'I shall ask the Father to give you another Consoler to remain with you forever, the Spirit of truth, whom the world (that is, the flesh which is world) cannot receive.... He will teach you all things and remind you of what I have said to you.'

"Souls, remember what you have received the Spirit of God through! Through the sacrifice of Christ. He, this most blessed

Light, this Fire of love, passed through the gashes in the Flesh of the Lamb and, like a flame issuing out of a furnace bursting with heat, He gushed from the lacerated Heart of the Son of God and your Most Holy Brother.

"Let your love for Christ, then, be stronger and stronger, for, in truth, all that you possess you possess through Him. And sanctify yourselves to glorify Him, for this is your debt towards Him.

"Rest, soul of mine, and increasingly be a spirit led by the Spirit of God. You will never err, for He leads over the inflamed paths of Charity.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Ps 54(53):6-7, 3

Collect: Lord, let Your merciful ears be open to the prayers of Your suppliant people and, that You may grant them their petitions, make them ask for what pleases You. Through our Lord.

Epistle: 1 Co 10:6-13

Gradual: Ps 8:2

Alleluia: Ps 59(58):2

Gospel: Lk 19:41-47

Offertory: Ps 19(18):9, 10, 11, 12

Secret: Grant us, Lord, we pray, that we may be worthily present at these mysteries, for whenever the commemoration of this sacrifice takes place, the work of our redemption is made effective. Through our Lord.

Communion: Jn 6:57

Postcommunion: Lord, may our participation in Your sacrament both purify us from sin and unite us with one another. Through our Lord.

August 11, 1946

Azariah says:

"The psalm belongs to the time of severity. You can, therefore, still call for revenge upon your enemies. But charity is so great in us-and must be so great in you, soul of mine-that we shall not stop to comment on the first sentence of the Introit.

"You belong to the time of love; you are a Christian, and on your lips only prayer in favor of your enemies must flourish indeed, you ought to call those who cause you pain not enemies, but 'poor brothers.' Are they not really deprived of true riches, not possessing charity, not having justice, not knowing the supernatural voices, so that they do not understand the tongue of the Heavens and call it creaturely delirium or, even worse, a creaturely lie? Poor, poor brothers of yours!

"One day the Lord will say to them, 'I have spoken, and you have not known me. I have taken, according to my Word, a "little one," and have placed her in your midst, doctors, and have instructed her so that she would say my words, since the Spirit of the Lord takes delight in revealing Himself to the humble, with whom He plays, like a father with his children, finding his solace in them. I came, and you did not receive me. I spoke, and you did not listen to me. I called you and invited you to enter into

the room of my treasures, which I was opening to you, and you did not come. My love did not move you. You denied my doctrine, saying that there could be no addition to the doctrine I had preached in Palestine. I wanted to make you rich; I wanted to make you learned; I wanted to place in your hands an instrument enriched with new notes so that you might sing the infinite and unknown to many mercies of God, converting hearts; I wanted you holy: knowledge of me is love, and there is no limit to this knowledge, for the teaching Christ is God, and God is infinite in his love and in every other attribute of his, and whoever knows more loves more, and whoever loves more sanctifies himself more. You, as holy, fervent, and wise in "my" holiness, in "my" love, and in "my" wisdom, would have sanctified, inflamed, and instructed. Oh, my Wisdom, Love, Perfection! Why did you not want me? Now you are poor. More than poor Lazarus. He had his wounds as a robe, but in his heart he had the treasure of his being able to know God. Go and robe yourselves in light; go to learn love; go to meditate on the words which you have not received, and when you are robed and adorned with charity, truth, and wisdom, come

"Pray *a great deal* that in the time remaining to them they may be able to robe themselves and adorn themselves with what the Lord demands for those invited to the wedding, without halting painfully outside the House of God while expiating their sloth and lukewarmness, and, along with these, pride and egoism.

"In response to this point in the Introit, pause often to ask for protection for yourself. Nothing else. You belong to the time of love, and love wants for others what it wants for itself. It therefore invokes God's power for your defense and their conversion, and nothing else. And you will truly be asking the Lord for what is pleasing to Him because it corresponds to his wishes—first of all that men should love one another as brothers.

"'Let us not wish for bad things,' the Apostle says. To desire that misfortune should fall again upon one's enemies is something supremely wicked, for it is the negation of the precept of love and forgiveness. And, if you meditate carefully, you will see in this wishing evil for one's enemies not only the sin of hatred, but also of idolatry. The idol is the self, loved in an exaggerated way, adored as the lord, the greatest god, loved in such disorderly fashion as to make it the sacred center of all man's thoughts and movements, loved in such disorderly fashion as to be outside

all order for this reason, for, since man is composed of matter and spirit, but the spirit is immortal as the heir of Heaven, it is order to proceed in such a way as to give the spirit what is destined for it. To live, therefore, supernaturally, as children of God, moved and led by the Spirit of God, with regal subjection and sublime sonship; not to live as brutes, outside of justice, outside of the Way and the Truth, in the disorder of the flesh, the world, and Satan.

"I am the Lord your God.' God is God, the Only One. No one should substitute another god for the One and Holy. Whoever loves himself as the only one to whom all must give honor and joy is an idolater of himself. And idolatry leads men to savage forms of religion, such as wishing for misfortune, vengeance on their enemies, and calling for it to give satisfaction to the self while departing from the Christian Religion-that is, from the true Religion, from Charity.

"Paul enumerates the sins of Israel: worship of the golden idol. He considers the humiliation, not only of religion, but of reason, to which idolatry leads. Man, king of the animals, having God as his Father, having God the Spirit in himself as the spirit making him the image and likeness of the Father-for the soul is spiritual, free, immortal, intelligent, capable of adorning itself with the virtues which are in God, except for the power of creation, in the proportion which, according to justice, should be preserved between the Most High and man, between the Creator and the creation-man, a perfect creature, thus comes to adore the figure of an animal servant of his, of a calf; though a son of the Creator, he thus comes to be blinded before a substance made by the Creator: the poor gold, which shines only if the light strikes it, whereas God is the Splendor of Uncreated, Infinite Light. And then he descends even lower, degrading himself in gluttony, making eating not a need, but a vice, and, afterwards, intoxicated with wine and food, he rises to give himself over to lascivious pleasures as the most lascivious of animals do not do.

"And here, incidentally, I will have you observe the conduct of Moses. He, a saint, refuses the honor God wanted to give him as a reward: '...Let me act; I shall exterminate them and then make you the head of a great nation.' But he begs that his 'poor sinful brothers' may be forgiven and saved. Moses had already understood love, which wants the good of others, their true good, more than its own temporary honor.

"Paul, after the idolatry, recalls fornication and its punishment: the killing of the licentious, for in the People of God, destined to enter into the Promised Land, there could not be impure persons, fornicators, idolaters, homicides, liars, or the abominable, through the action of the sons of Levi, zealous about God's honor more than about their love for their own blood, who, 'in the blood of their son and brother' killed to make reparation for the offense committed against the Lord, 'consecrated their hands to obtain the blessing.'

"Now, in the Law of love, offenses are still cleansed with sacrifices. Not, however, by cutting veins and killing the blameworthy, but, rather, by offering oneself as a victim for them, in imitation of the Most Holy Redeemer, and not just one's hands, and not just the priestly blessing, but the whole being is consecrated and is given the blessing which opens the Kingdom of God to the Saints, to these who immolate themselves to save sinners and make reparation for the offenses committed against God.

"Nor should we tempt Christ, as some of them who were killed by snakes tempted Him.'

"God had provided Manna for his People and had given them protection before that from the night of the angelical passage into Egypt, and they, forgetful of the sufferings undergone in Egypt and the Lord's miraculous intervention, had already looked back longingly at the fish, the watermelons, other melons, and vegetables of Egypt, placing their stomach and its pleasures before the pleasures of independence and union with God.

"They again said, 'We are nauseated by this very light food,' forgetful of the death of those who had sated themselves beyond measure with the quails they had before arriving at Ashdod. They complained about not having water and not having bread. They had seen the miracle of the water from the rock. They had God to supply them with what was necessary. They grumbled. They tempted Him. They wanted what was superfluous.

"A sad example of many Christians! And, having listened to the hiss of the Serpent, who suggested concupiscences, they were killed by snakes. For whoever welcomes Satan receives death from Satan. Too many, having received everything from Jesus Most Holy, reject the Lamb in favor of the Serpent, and then, looking with horror at the snake pit moving to kill them, forget to uplift their gaze to the Cross, upon which is the Savior.

"Finally, the Hebrews did a wicked thing by grumbling against

the Lord, who, for a little sacrifice, wanted to give them the land overflowing with milk and honey.

"Tempters of the Lord, rebels, and grumblers ten times over, they deserved death in the desert, struck down by God, indignant at their obstinate spirit of rebellion. To die in the desert, struck down by God-when there is one assuring that the promised dwelling is blessed and its possession, secure, if only the will of man, whom God helps in every way, wants it, so that the snare of the Evil One is not to be feared as something invincible-is great foolishness.

"And yet this is what continually happens, nor do these events-a figure of the events which you, having come to the end of the centuries of severity (that is, to the time of mercy, the time preceding the eternal time of Joy), would encounter spiritually serve to impede in man the great foolishness of losing the eternal Heaven for the sake of the fleeting world.

"Paul's warning is great: 'Let whoever believes he is standing see that he does not fall.'

"Always bear in mind that men sinned in ancient times, in spite of their terror before God. Do not say, 'They were less advanced than we are.' You have received, it is true, the perfecting of the Law and the measureless help of the Sacraments, made into channels of Grace through the merit of Christ. But are you perhaps better? You have progressed in human knowledge, and nine tenths of it are against yourselves. You have progressed in knowledge. But in spirit you have not. Malice leads you; pride governs you. The threefold concupiscence destroys you. The egoism of individuals and collectivities floods the world with tears and blood, in sporadic, multiple effusions, or in real worldwide, fatal deluges of blood and tears.

"You have not progressed. Rather, between those who were robbers, idolaters, violent, and incestuous in ancient times, for they did not know the moral and religious laws with precision and are now, for they are still savage-and you, evolved and acquainted with the Law of Jesus Christ, you are more blameworthy because you do these things and do them knowingly. Therefore, let whoever has not sinned seriously up to the present moment of his life not brag. He might sin in the following instant, for the reins holding man's self in check are relaxed. He places himself in a position to fall because he separates himself from God.

"Paul says, 'Until now you have been assailed only by human

temptations.' He does not mean by this that these temptations are not to be feared or should be undergone tranquilly with the words, 'I am so strong that I am uselessly tempted. I always overcome.' Anyone speaking in this way would instantly yield to a spiritual temptation: to the temptation towards pride, which opens the way to the other six capital vices. And pride would impede God's effusion with his gifts, for God does not communicate Himself to the proud and the proud do not have recourse to God. But when man is humble and loves his Lord, God does not disappoint him, faithful as He is in his loving and in his making and keeping promises.

"Jesus Most Holy has not said a word which has proved useless or has not yielded fruit. He said, 'When you pray, pray like this: "Our Father.... And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."' If He said this to you, it is because He knows that the Father wants to do so and will therefore not allow the strength of man, his son, to be inferior to the violence of temptation.

"Reflect carefully. I am not saying, 'And the Lord permits little temptations for his faithful children, whereas those given to the unfaithful children are enormous.' But I am saying, 'He does not allow the son's strength to be inferior to the violence of the temptation.'

"He wants you to be combatants so as to be victorious. The merit must be yours. The glory must be in proportion to the merit and the struggle sustained. Like a good second of the warrior in lists, He hands the latter new weapons to offer effective resistance constantly to the repeated assaults of Temptation and gives him the confirming chalice of his Grace to restore the strength of his son who combats, and is ready, when the struggle is over, to clasp him to his heart so as to crown him with peace, reserving the joy of celestial glory for the moment of his return to God.

"He comforts Paul, cuffed three times by the envious angel of darkness, so that he will not fear. And I, with him, comfort you. And I comfort all by saying the words of the liturgy: 'The precepts of the Lord are just, his judgments sweeter than honey.' Be faithful to them, then, growing in grace and wisdom in the sight of God and men.

"And I further say to you the words of the Most Holy Master: 'Take upon yourselves the yoke of Christ. It is gentle and light.' Take it upon you with holy boldness and heroic will. Take it with absolute trust in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, who are Love, and Love is strength. Glory be to Them eternally."

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Ps 55(54):17, 18, 20, 23, 2-3

Collect: Lord, You show Your omnipotence most especially by Your pardon and pity; increase Your mercy to us, so that we, by pursuing the way of Your promises, may be made sharers in Your heavenly treasures. Through our Lord.

Epistle: 1 Co 12:2-11

Gradual: Ps 17(16):8, 2

Alleluia: Ps 65(64):2

Gospel: Lk 18:9-14

Offertory: Ps 25(24):1-3

Secret: Accept, Lord, this hallowed sacrifice which You have charged Your people to offer, that it may be at the same time a remedy for our ills. Through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Communion: Ps 51(50):21

Postcommunion: We entreat You, Lord our God, that those whom You never cease to renew with Your divine sacraments, may not be deprived of Your gracious assistance. Through our Lord.

Azariah says:

August 18, 1946

"Last Sunday I told you that the expression calling down misfortune upon one's enemies was not to be commented upon. A soul that has given itself to Love calls for only love, love and mercy.

"But today the Introit is not a cry calling for vengeance. It is recognition of the swiftness with which God listens to his children and protects their interests. It is recognition of the just action of God, who is able to relieve the oppressed and take up their part, who is able to remember those who think they are greater than God-and, therefore, obstruct the will of God by placing limitations on his works, thinking they can place them, but in reality creating barriers alone which prop up only what is needed to have them judged and give greater merit to the just man, who suffers from being oppressed because he serves the Lord. He keeps an eye on them, and He can re-establish the order violated-for it is disorder to place obstacles before the Will of God-when He wants to. He can re-establish order-always. He, who is perfect Order, as He re-established it in Heaven after the revolt of the Rebels and re-established it in Eden after Adain's sin, casting the disorderly out of one Paradise and the other.

"Lift up your cry to the Lord, then, and cast all Your cares upon Him. He will sustain you supernaturally with the hours of beatific love and materially, not allowing you to be hard pressed and tried beyond measure.

"The Prayer.... Soul of mine, the prayer of this Holy Mass seems to be the echo or musical motif which has supported and inspired your song over the past days. You asked, at the cost of your sacrifice, 'God to show his omnipotence more by forgiving and having mercy,' giving Himself to them with the fullness of his love as He does with you-so that they, through the power of the fire of love, will expand their closed hearts and make them warm and luminous, free from what oppresses them-and sanctifying them.

"You have asked for a great deal. You have asked Justice to alter its course. You have asked Merciful Love to go where Punishment is headed, and in place of the latter. Can God change his just decrees? Can He fail to practice justice towards Himself.? For-meditate on this-the fault has been committed mainly against Him. You, like a screen placed between them and God, have been pierced by their darts. But where have these darts ended up? Who were they aimed against? Whom did they strike at the end of their wicked trajectory? God. Charity. The Will of God. His Word. His Omnipotence. His Generosity. I shall not add other words to explain why they struck these attributes of God, which are God Himself. But everyone who knows what God had wanted and given and how people acted can grasp why I say that God was struck-his Charity, Will, Word, Omnipotence, and Generosity. On Golgotha as well, and in Christ Most Holy, God was struck, and in these attributes.

"Man raised his hand against God. He struck the Charity that was in Christ and had become flesh to give the supreme love of God to men, that for three years had provided help with evangelization, miracles, and material aid received either miraculously or humanly from whoever was able to give it to those in need. Man repudiated and cursed the Divine Word, calling Him a madman and a devil. He repudiated visible Omnipotence in the Incarnation, through the work not of man, but of the Holy Spirit, and in the miracles involving the elements, diseases, and striking conversions, which are greater miracles than a corporal healing. Man mocked his Generosity and rejected it as if it were pollution. God had sent his beloved Son, his Word, and with Him

his forgiveness and his love; and men mocked and cuffed what was God's Generosity as an opprobrium, a monster.

" But the Great Victim-the most holy screen through whom, when He was pierced until entirely changed into a wound, just as David and Isaiah describe him, God, Heavenly Love, was wounded by Hatred composed of Satan and men, by all the Hatred which is on Earth and, perennial and eternal, in Hell-but the Great Victim requested precisely what you have asked: for Justice to alter its course. For the Hosts request this, as they are immolated: that the purpose for which they have come and offered themselves may be accomplished-that Love may triumph, regenerating spirits in God.

"I said 'all the Hatred which is on Earth and, perennial and eternal, in Hell.' I was not mistaken in using the present for a past action, as the Redeemer's Death now is.

"The Word, Jesus, is the Eternal Expiator, Eternal Love and Expiator. He was such before Man existed and will be until the last man. And the fruit of his Expiation will remain even beyond time, for eternal is the people of the Saints, and they, beyond time, will be the fruit of Jesus' expiation.

"And Hatred is, like Love, also eternal. Not a perfection of eternity, like that of God, who never had a beginning, who is the eternal is. But eternal from the moment it arose in the accursed spirits of Lucifer and his followers. Eternal in Hell, which has existed since then and which will never end. Eternal in the hearts of the men who choose it as their lord and will take it with them beyond time. The Incapacitator on Earth since the blood of Abel was shed because of Cain's hate, Hatred untiringly wounds God. Entirely present to Christ in the hour of his suffering, Hatred crushed Him, like a body cast under a millstone-so numerous were the wounds it inflicted on Incarnate Love. After time it will continue to blaspheme in the people of the accursed, who will be, beyond time, the fruit of the work of Satan. And these two eternities, Love and Hatred, the Expiator and Sin, Jesus and Lucifer, will be, in a continuous is, the King of Heaven and the king of the Abyss, each at the head of his people.

"Of that people which was to have been one-of Humanity in the retinue of its Creator and Lord which, by its own free will, chose to split into two peoples, with the new branch choosing for itself an accursed king through whom it turned its back on God, choosing Evil as its law. For incurable Evil is not to have been

born in the darkness of Gentilism or an idolatry or even in the haze of a heretical faith in which a recollection of the Truth, of the parts of the True Religion, persists-but they are deprived of Life because that religion is separated from the Mystical Body, which is the only living Body. Evil is, rather, to live, after being born in the Church, to live as heretics, pagans, separated, and dead because of sin.

"There is no Life outside the Roman Church. But all can enter into Life, and the Roman Church does not refuse to receive within her the 'dead,' those proceeding from other religions, whether revealed or idolatrous, and bring them forth to Life, just as the Tomb of Jesus Most Holy received a corpse and brought forth the Living One, that Living One who came back to life by Himself because He is Life, that Living One who, as the Head of the Mystical Body, cannot fail to vivify all that belongs to it and enters it.

"The Church does this. She is the Bride. And she is the Mother. As a Holy Bride, she wishes only to give birth to children for her Spouse so that many men will bear His Name in every part of the Earth. She is the Mother. Wedded to the Divinity, who is Father, possessing this quality as the First Person, as the Generator of the Son, as the Fecundator of the Virgin who gave birth to the Man by the work of the Holy Spirit, as the Creator of men-a Father, therefore, in regard to Himself and his creatures. Having a Father as her Spouse, the Church can only be a Mother. She has taken on the thought and affections of her Creator, Founder, Spouse, and Head-she is a Mother. And, as a Mother, she trembles with fond wishes for every creature. She sees in every creature scattered over the Earth a seed which must be borne and brought forth for Heaven, and she reaches out her arms and opens her breast to receive the formless seeds so as to nourish them with Herself and bring them forth for her Spouse.

"But the militant Church is made up of the teaching and learning Church, just as the body is made up of organs and flesh. The organs, without the flesh protecting them, would not be able to form a body. The flesh, without the organs keeping it supplied with blood, nourished with glandular secretions and oxygen, and purified of the toxins which form each day and wastes, could not live. The Church, too, the Mystical Body, to live and be a body, needs mutual work between the organs and members, between the teaching and learning parts. And the teaching Church addresses the learning Church, this great Mother, and says, 'Help

me to bring forth to Life the formless seeds which are on the Earth.'

"How? With sacrifices, for the sacrifice of the faithful helps priests. And with offerings. For evangelization entails a most costly burden. To penetrate, expand, and make oneself loved means to spend. Money is one of the traps Satan has created for man's ruin. But, like everything which Evil has created, it can be redeemed. The great Sin is redeemed through the sacrifice of Christ. Wealth can also be redeemed if used for a holy purpose. And, I tell you, there is no purpose holier than to use wealth for the works of mercy. And almost all the corporal and spiritual works of mercy are performed by those who are missionaries—that is, good priests—for the whole Earth is a missionary land, and outside the door of their church, on the threshold of their convent, the Priest or Religious finds the idolater, the heretic, the unbeliever, the atheist, and the 'dead' one—the formless seed to be taken to the bosom of the Mother Church so that She will bring it forth for God.

"He, the Word, said so: 'Whoever gives a single glass of water to a disciple of mine will not lack his reward.' And He said, 'Make friends for yourselves with unjust riches so that when you die, they will receive you in the eternal dwellings.'

"Out of duty towards the Mother and holy astuteness towards themselves, the Catholics, the believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, should obtain these friends: those Christianized through their spiritual or economic aid—better, because it is perfect, if spiritual and economic at the same time—to receive them, at the death of their indirect saviors, in the eternal dwellings.

"Whoever prays for himself alone is not a good Catholic. Whoever thinks of *his* future glory, *his* present needs, *his* struggles and *his* labors and does not think of the Mother's glory, her needs, her struggles, and her labors to gather together and generate for the Truth, Life, Way, and Light the poor brothers who are like orphans without a father or mother on Earth or in Heaven because they are outside the Family in which the Father is God, the Mother is the Church, and the brothers and sisters are the saints and Catholics is not a good son of the Church of Christ. Why, O Catholics, are you so lukewarm in getting numerous brothers in humanity to enter the sweet, holy Communion of the Saints? Why, if you say you love the Lord and His Name, don't you labor with sacrifice and money so that He will be loved by all men?

"He said so: 'The harvest is truly great, but there are few workers. Ask the Master of the harvest to send many workers to his harvest.' And don't you remember when He said so? Matthew says, 'And when He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them, weary and worn out, like sheep without a shepherd.' Those words emerged from the lips of Jesus Our Lord, then, when a compassionate love made Him afflicted over those who were without a shepherd, weary and worn out.

"Whoever does not have a hope of future Life, whoever does not have the Faith which satisfies the spirit-that is, the true Faith without gaps, the Catholic Faith (for every other Religion, every other Faith presents gaps and breaks, because they cannot be assuaged, before which at certain hours the mind that feels it is not in truth trembles)-whoever does not medicate his pain as a man with the balm and honey of Charity, and, finally, whoever does not have all the spiritual aids which are bestowed by living in the Church and benefiting from the merits of Christ and the Sacraments is quite worn out and weary and feels just like a sheep without a shepherd at the mercy of thieves and wolves.

"You men do not know and meditate upon the sadness of souls out of Grace. We see them. And we feel the same compassion for them as the Master felt on seeing such a large harvest left in a state of neglect.

"Souls living in the Church, gather in Christ's lament. The granaries of the Lord await the harvest before the hour of the great review strikes. Act, so that the uncultivated sod will be seeded and yield fruit and there will then be workers following the sowers. For, among the workers of the Lord, the true workers, the scythe of death quickly passes and cuts them down, and the one who has sown often does not gather, so that one must pray and pray that they will be numerous-as numerous as the ears of grain, 1 man-in order for the seed, every single seed, to have two angels to protect it: God's, who is spiritual, and the Church's, who is priestly. The world dies for lack of Priests.

"Do you know what Priest means? It means consecrated. It means dedicated, offered completely to one's God and to bear souls to one's God. Everything must perish for the Priest. Everything. And God alone and souls alone remain. He must be stripped of everything, even of his humanity. He must be immolated to his mission. Like Christ.

"When he is like that, he is a worker of Christ. He can sow and reap, sure that danel will not grow in his furrow, sure of making every man a soul, a spotless soul.

"In Heaven the colors of the different races do not exist. Everything is light and beauty, purity and love. The Master of Heaven and Earth lets those with a spotless, adorned soul enter Heaven. He does not reject the blacks, the Mongolians, the Polynesians anyone. They are his children. They are the brothers of his Son, who has loved them all from the Father's bosom, and then on the Earth and on the Cross, contemplating those as well of whose existence the world at that time was ignorant. The South American Indians with the Patagonian, those of far-off Oceania, the Australians and the Redskins, along with the Eskimos—they were all seen passing by as if in review by the eyes of the Dying One against the dark sky of Good Friday. And northern moors covered with ice and forests and desolate heaths and equatorial virgin forests and unknown islands as big as continents, as small as atolls, and regions burned by underground fire and Arctic icecaps where life seems impossible were outlined for him in their future and over all of them his Sacrifice and his boundless Love wished that God's sun would trace the shadow of a cross and that, in the same way, his Tau, impressed by the Missionary upon souls, would make idolaters and pagans members of his People.

"Do not forget the last wish of Christ, expressed in the prayer of Holy Thursday, already implied in the words 'I pray to You for all who will believe in Me through the words of my priests, that they may be one, as You are in Me, and I, in You,' and expressed even earlier in the discourse of the Good Shepherd: 'I have other sheep that are not of this fold; I must gather them together, too, and they will listen to my Voice, and there will be one single Fold and one single Shepherd. Because of this the Father loves Me, for I lay down my life for my sheep.' And both were repeated in the dying Heart when the agony was already nailing shut his lips, between the sixth and the ninth hour.

"Work to make your Savior's wish come true. Do not be proud, like the Pharisees of old, who believed themselves to be the only ones chosen by God. Do not judge that between the idolaters and you, between the schismatics and you, there is an unfillable abyss and that it is fitting that there should be because you are 'the pure,' and they are the unclean.

"Paul says, 'You know that when you were Gentiles, you let

yourselves be led after mute idols, obeying those who led you on.' "But were those Gentiles who let themselves be led after idols greater sinners than the ones who, in the role of pagan priests, presented the idols to them as gods, or you, that, though knowing the true God, having already been regenerated by Grace, so often follow the idols which the triple concupiscence and Satan present to you?

"You are truly greater sinners because, though knowing the Truth, you subordinate it to what is vain and dissolute. Those Gentiles, like the present-day Gentiles, like the current idolaters, once they knew the Truth, followed it, even at the cost of their lives, heroically rejecting the past to embrace the Faith, which had become their eternal Present.

"Do not, then, show disdain and astonishment towards those who still do not know the true God, but make them emerge from ignorance to enter into wisdom and, above all, act as so not to be a scandal for those living in your midst as idolaters, heretics, unbelievers, or schismatics. Make them unable to say, 'They don't believe in what they say, for they would otherwise be different.' Let your actions be missionary works for the gentiles who, under different names, live together with you in your cities and sometimes in your very families. Woe to whoever preaches and raises his voice in the name of God and then performs reprehensible actions which his neighbor judges. He then shows that he is a false son of God and a hypocrite.

"Let each one give what God allows him to give for the edification of his neighbor, and let him give it in holy fashion, so that the merciful works of God will be manifest. For if one uses God's gifts badly, or pretends he possesses what he does not have, or what was taken away from him as a punishment after having used it badly, he is a hypocrite hateful to God, a liar and idolater, for he engages in self-worship and demands it from others, and speaks deceitful words, and, therefore, has the devil in himself.

"No one who speaks by the Spirit of God calls Jesus anathema.' And to lead a life not in conformity with his doctrine is to call Jesus anathema.

'And no one can say 'Lord Jesus' except through the Holy Spirit.' In fact, Christ is recognized only by him who, having Grace in himself, can recognize-that is, know Jesus for what He really is, in Jesus the Lord Savior, Wisdom, and Word that should be followed and listened to with faith, charity, hope, and humili-

ty, always with truth, without envies coming to deny a brother's gifts because they are not one's own, without avaricious egoisms, keeping for oneself what the Divine Spirit has given in different forms and measures, but drawing them from a single FountHimself, the One Spirit Himself.

"Let each of you be content with his spiritual destiny: whoever has, because he can give; whoever does not have, because he can receive. For, whether you give or receive, you possess everything from One alone-from God, who distributes gifts with perfect wisdom, knowing who they will be good for and who they will not, giving and wanting to give only for your good. Therefore, not being able to demand what is given you gratuitously and being *obliged* not to refuse what God gives you, you should see God in everything and his desire to be loved by all men. And be joyful, each of you, in giving what you can. A great deal, a little-it doesn't matter. It is enough for it to be what you are able to give.

"God knows. God sees. God judges. Every action of the good man is justified by God, even if small. Every act of man is seen by the eyes of God with justice.

"Love, therefore, and you will do everything well. Towards God, towards the Church, towards your neighbor who is closest to you, belonging to the one true Church, towards the neighbor who is further away, being outside the Fold, towards the sinner, to bring him back to Salvation. Make Love defeat Hatred. In individuals and in all Mankind.

"Remain in the certainty that God is with you-0 you, all of you, that serve the Lord with this or that gift. Remain in the sure hope that God does not permit his servants to be confused and always proceed towards the goal, giving thanks to the Lord for everythinLy.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Ps 68(67):6-7, 36, 2

Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, whose abundant goodness exceeds all that Your supplicants can desire or deserve; pour Your mercy upon us, forgiving us the sins of which our consciences are afraid and adding to us what we dare not ask. Through our Lord.

Epistle: 1 Co 15:1-10

Gradual: Ps 28(27):7, 1

Alleluia: Ps 81(80):2-3

Gospel: Mk 7, 31-37

Offertory: Ps 30(29):2-3

Secret: Lord, look down in mercy, we pray, upon our humble service, so that what we offer may be a gift acceptable to You and a support for our weakness. Through our Lord.

Communion: Pr 3:9-10

Postcommunion: Lord, may we find in the reception of Your sacrament a support for our minds and for our bodies, so that being redeemed in both, we may glory in the full effect of this heavenly remedy. Through our Lord.

August 25, 1946

Azariah says:

"What is the holy dwelling of God? To this question some would respond, 'Heaven'; others, 'The Church'; others, 'The heart of man.' And no one would be completely wrong, though not reaching perfection in the reply. For God dwells in Heaven, is in his Church, and is in the hearts of the men who are in Grace. But, to speak precisely, God is in Himself. He has his dwelling in his infinite Charity, the only dwelling which, in perfection and infinity, can contain the Perfect and Infinite One. In Charity everything is done, proceeds, is generated, is satisfied, rests, becomes calm. Charity-that is, Himself-is the holy dwelling of God.

"For this reason the words of the liturgy state, 'It is God who makes those of the same character dwell in his house'; this wisely means that only those who dwell in charity dwell in God. A concept contained in the statement by Jesus Our Lord: 'Remain in Me and I in you.... If anyone remains in Me and I in Him, he bears much fruit,' and in that of the divine prayer: 'May they all be one, as You are in Me, O Father, and I in You.' Words which, gathered by the Apostle of Love, resound in his Epistle, written many years after the Holy Supper, when, on the threshold of the

Other Life, John, with no need for ecstasy, already contemplated 'the dwelling of God,' which was descending to receive the one who had understood Charity: 'Whoever loves is born of God and knows Him.... God is Love.... If we love one another, God dwells in us, and his charity in us is perfect. By this we know that we are in Him and that He is in us-from the fact that He has given us his Spirit.'

"Three operations which summarize all works, all their fruits, all the phases of man the creature, who, after a time, returns to the Origin forever. 'Whoever loves is born of God.' When a woman gives birth to a son, it is said, 'This child was born to this woman.' *Born to*. That is, he emerged from her, from her womb. She formed him, clothed him with flesh, endowed him with blood and organs, and not just these material things, but she impressed upon him, if not everything, at least some aspect of character and physical likeness to herself.

"Woman is only an imperfect creature, and her matrix is imperfect. But God is not imperfect. Consider, then, the character and likeness He impresses upon those emerging from his bosom. Every soul is created by God, and from the Father takes on an initial image and likeness. But, by its spontaneous will, each soul can, so to speak, return to the Father and be born again of Him. This is the 'recreation' of the soul of which the Doctors of the Church have spoken.

"After these words of mine, you see all the profound truth of the words of St. John: Whoever loves is born of God and knows Him. Whoever loves. For, if he did not love God, he would not try to *go back into* Him and be reborn of God by a full and personal act of will.

"Your first birth is willed by those who have begotten you. God sanctions and ennoble it by granting matter the soul, but this birth is independent of your will. The Church, God's Spouse, cooperates in your birth by fortifying the creature with Baptismal Grace and, afterwards, with the other Sacraments. But only the creature, on reaching the age of understanding and willing, can want to be born of God in a second and more perfect birth. This is accomplished through love for God and one's neighbor, for this is the Law.

"The second operation: God's indwelling in you and yours in God through Charity. God descends to dwell in a heart that loves Him. The soul rises to dwell in the abode of God-that is, in char-

ity. It is then that 'his charity in you is perfect.' So perfect that the distance between Heaven and Earth is annulled, the separation between creature and Creator, and they, the finite and the Infinite, the nothing and the All, become 'one,' as your Most Holy Master requested.

"The third operation: granting the creature the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God is Love. The Spirit whom Jesus calls the Spirit of Truth, the Consoler, He who can be received by whoever is not of the world, He who will teach everything and bring to mind all that is holy, He who proceeds from the Father. The Holy Spirit impresses upon those who receive Him the character of being true Christians-that is, Christ's brothers and, therefore, children of God.

"The Introit says that God has those of a like character dwell in his abode. The character is that of love. Jesus Most Holy said, 'In my Father's house there are many places.' But to occupy them *one single character* is required-that of charity.

"One will possess his place in Heaven by having been a master of souls on Earth; another, by having been a disciple; another, by suffering; another, by wisdom; another, by preaching; another, by a hidden life-some by remaining in the world, but as good citizens, children, husbands, and fathers; some, on the other hand, by renouncing everything for a cloistered or monastic vocation. But all those who dwell in the house of God-children or old people, rich or poor, learned or illiterate-must possess *one single character*: that of charity, which is 'patient, beneficent, not envious, insolent, factious, or selfish'-the charity that loves its own brother in its neighbor and does not do to others what it does not want for itself, the charity that checks concupiscences, fosters faith, sustains hope, and creates, like a powerful tree, multiple branches from its trunk, and these are fortitude, justice, prudence, temperance, humility, obedience, and sincerity, whereby the one possessing it may enter the Heavenly Jerusalem, from which the pusillanimous, incredulous, abominable, homicides, fornicators, venomous, idolaters, and liars will be excluded-and nothing impure enters.

"Finally, O soul of mine, Charity by itself puts the devil to flight, for charity is light, and the devil loves the darkness; charity is Wisdom, and the deceitful words of Satan are belied by Wisdom; charity is Truth, and the Evil One hates it; and Charity is God, and Satan cannot bear the sight of God.

"Every disturbance which the Adversary may create by recalling past faults or suggesting present temptations is annulled by Charity, which is merciful and exceeds the merits and desires of the creatures that love it, granting-in addition to liberation from the Evil One and his disturbing arts-even what the humble, loving creature dare not presume to obtain with his prayer.

"Jesus Most Holy calls you 'little John.' Today I would like to call you 'little Paul.' Not Saul, but Paul. For you have never been Saul. Charity dazzled you before the age of reason made you responsible for your actions, and you were blind to the world from then on, seeing only the joyful radiance in which your Lord revealed Himself to you increasingly, and you were dead to the world, and the world, to you, for the Spirit who is not of the world had always taken you, and forever, and you had taken Him as your Life.

"But you have become a little Paul by the will of God. And the will of God is this: that you are to give your brothers and sisters the Gospel you have received.' To you, too-not an apostle, not a master, the least of all, in science and degree according to men, a useful instrument only through the merit of your charity, which has never refused to serve God and has wished to be consumed in service provided your brothers love the Lord-to you, too, and precisely because of these two latter factors, the Lord has appeared, and you have seen and heard Him, and you see and hear Him, and you will see and hear Him here and hereafter.

"And then, little Paul, with the great Paul say the sincere, humble, grateful words, and let these be the close of this Sunday meditation before turning the spirit's gaze towards Him who once again presents Himself to you to make you blessed, to instruct you, and to give you the lessons to be passed on to souls.

"By the grace of God I am what I am, and the grace which He has given me has not been useless; rather, I have labored more than all the others-not I, though, but the grace of God which is with me.'

"The justice of this recognition of the works of God in you; the salvation of humility which knows what it has done and why it has done so: through the merit of the grace of God, who has wanted you to be what you are! And you honor Him. And honor Him always so as not to become a Cain not recognizing God's merit

[†]See note 1, p. 104,

and right to the riches and beauties of the fruits of your soul. "Honor Him with your goods, with the first fruits of all your possessions, offering everything to Him who gives you everything, so that He, knocking down the barriers upraised by Envy living for itself and in many, will scatter his treasures over those for whom they have been given. And do not be afraid that the effusion upon you will ever cease. The more you give, the more you will have, for the treasures of God, the rivers of Wisdom, are inexhaustible, and while the fruits still persist on the branches, the plant is already decking itself with new corollas which will be new fruits tomorrow.

"The tree of Life sprouts flowers and leaves and ripens its fruits unceasingly for those who love it and serve and respond with good will to the desires of the Grace of God.

"The Grace of God which is with you protects and sustains you against those who would like to rejoice over your fall to silence the voice of conscience, which reproaches them for many things-first of all, for sins against charity; secondly, for their behavior as regards making God's gift yield a profit.

"But pray for them, for all, that they may have the charity which is the origin of every virtue and salvation.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Ps 70(69):2-4 Collect: Almighty and merciful God, by whose gift it comes that Your people can do You true and worthy service, grant, we pray, that we may run without hindrance towards the attainment of Your promises. Through our Lord. Epistle: 2 Co 3:4-9 Gradual: Ps 34(33):2-3 Alleluia: Ps 88(87):2 Gospel: Lk 10:23-37 Offertory: Ex 32:11, 13, 14 Secret: Look in mercy, we pray, Lord, on the sacrifices which we lay on Your altar; that they may both gain pardon for our sins and give glory to Your name. Through our Lord. Communion: Ps 104(103):13, 14-15 Postcommunion: May our holy communion in this mystery, give life to us, Lord, we pray; and may it give us both the expiation of our sins and protection. Through our Lord.

September 1, 1946

Azariah says:

"Let us unite ourselves to the altar where at his hour (it is 3:30 p.m.) a Holy Mass is being celebrated. A consoling thought! There is no moment throughout the 24 hours when at some point on the globe the eternal Sacrifice is not consummated. How much greater is this continual celebration of the divine Lamb than the immolation, which astonishes men today, of the animal hosts in the Temple on Moriah!

"But I do not want to weary you, soul of mine, who have just emerged from such a profound agony, a victim with the Victim for the sins of the world. And I will speak to you only of the epistle. But in return, to make you understand it, I shall have you consider some verses preceding today's epistle and clarifying it.

"Listen. 'But thanks be to God, who always leads us to victory in Christ Jesus and by means of us is spreading everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of Himself. Before God, we are, indeed, the sweet smell of Christ for those who are being saved and for those on the way to destruction-for the latter, the smell of death producing death; for the former, the smell of life producing life.'

"This is what the servants of God are, his instruments in the

different missions for which God consecrates them. Whether they are apostles or victims, doctors or faithful or 'voices,' they must be the altars of incense and holocaust from which not, indeed, the fragrance of Paul or Peter, of Benedict or Bonaventure, of the Magdalene or Theresa, of Maria (yourself or others), but only the scent of Christ must rise to God. Spread it in honor of God, spread it to perfume your brothers and imbue them with it. Apostles or victims, instruments or voices, the servants of God must be so united to Christ Jesus that they bear Him among men in a perpetual incarnation, so that the world will know Him and by free will give itself life or death, accepting or rejecting the Lord, without being able to say as an excuse: 'We did not know Him.'

"Paul asks, 'And for such things, who among us is better ^{2 Co 2:16} suited?"

"In fact, who, if not those that out of love consecrate themselves entirely to the service of God, are indicated to accomplish this work? Not, indeed, those who do so out of habit or necessity, not, indeed, those who do so out of obligation-and there are also some like this-not, indeed, those who do so out of human reflection, but only those who do so out of love, with an immolation known only by God and the angels, can perfume the world, for the scent of the holocaust is not given off when it is still far from the sacrificer and the altar, but when he has already suffered martyrdom and is totally consumed, burning amidst the flames of the stake.

"Who, if not those who make the sacrifice moved only by love, so that they do not allow themselves to adulterate the word of God so as to gain a benefit from it, but 'in its purity, as it comes ^{2 Co 2:17} from God, they give it to their brothers,' even if as a result there come to them pain and the rancor of those for whom the word of God becomes death, who do not receive it with love, but mock it as madness?"

"Paul, speaking on behalf of the Apostles, of whom he is the least, through participation in the apostolic corps-but he is not ^{1 Co 11:1} really the least in terms of merit-says, 'You are our letter... ^{2 Co 3:2-3} known and read by all men, for it is well known that you are a letter of Christ drafted by us, written not in ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but on the living tablets of hearts of flesh.'

"And these words, which are Paul's, are really words of the Spirit of God, who addresses Himself to you, O instruments of

God, speaking through the Apostle's lips: 'You are a living page of Christ drafted by Us: Father, Son, Holy Spirit, with our Spirit, on your hearts.' This is what you are, true instruments of God.

"And you must believe this, not, indeed, to boast about it, but to recognize the Lord's work in you, and give Him praise for it, and reverence the gift you receive, and use it with veneration and justice for yourselves and your brothers, for with the gift God gives you the capacity to deal with it, and these capacities are lost only when an instrument declines through pride, deceit, disobedience, and selfishness.

"Many, too many, believe they are masters only because they know the words. But it is not knowing the words which vivifies-it is being able to make them live in you. Many boast of being 'doctors' because they bear the doctors' robe and disdain whoever does not have one, and they would like to impose silence upon those speaking in the name of God. But what hand can forbid the Spirit of the Lord to speak in the beings who are able to be spiritual in giving and receiving, in learning and practicing?

"And here we read St. Paul's consideration: 'If the ministry of death ... was surrounded by such glory.... by what greater glory is the ministry of the Spirit to be surrounded?'

"But this should be said to the deniers and mockers, to those who think they can say to God, 'Why to this *nobody*, and not to us?' And the Lord will reply to them one day, and it will be too late for them.

"Soul of mine, let everything drop away which might be transient glory, and watch constantly over what is an uncorruptible gift and glory that remains. Keep constant watch so that what comes from God will not be profaned, altered, or humiliated. Stick to your duty until the ninth hour and your last heartbeat-they to their smoke. And, when dying, entrust the gift again to the Lord, saying, 'Into your Hands I entrust my spirit and the words of your Spirit so that You will save them from corruption and dismemberment.'

"Remain in peace. God is with you."

NATIVITY OF MARY MOST HOLY
AND THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

I

THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Introit Hail, holy Mother, you who brought forth the King, who rules heaven and earth for ever and ever. - Ps 45(44):2

Collect: Bestow on Your servants, Lord, we pray, the gift of heavenly grace, so that as the childbearing of the Blessed Virgin was the beginning of their salvation, this feast in honor of her birthday may bring them increase of peace. Through our Lord.

Gradual: Blessed and venerable are you, O Virgin Mary: without stain to Your virginity you became the Mother of our Savior. Virgin Mother of God, He whom the whole world cannot contain enclosed Himself within your womb, being made Man.

Alleluia: Alleluia, alleluia. Great is your happiness, O holy Virgin, you are worthy of the highest praise; for from you arose the sun of justice, Christ our God. Alleluia.

Gospel: Mt 1:1-16

Offertory: What blessedness is yours, O Virgin Mary: you bore the Creator of all things; you brought forth Him who made you, and remain a Virgin forever.

Secret: Lord, may the humanity of Your only-begotten Son be our help, that He, who, born of a Virgin, did not lessen her integrity but consecrated it, may make our offering acceptable to You on this feast of her birthday, taking away from us our sins: Jesus Christ, our Lord; who being God lives and reigns.

Communion: Blessed is the womb of the Virgin Mary, which bore the Son of the eternal Father.

Postcommunion: We have received, Lord, the sacred mysteries celebrated on this annual feast; grant, we pray, that they may relieve both our temporal and our eternal needs. Through our Lord.

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Ps 74(73):20, 19, 23, 1

Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, grant us an increase of faith, hope and charity, and that we may deserve to gain Your promises, make us love Your commandments. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Ga 3:16-22

Gradual: Ps 74(73):20, 19, 22

Alleluia: Ps 90(89):1

Gospel: Lk 17:11-19

Offertory: Ps 31(30):15-16

Secret: Look with favor, Lord, upon Your people; look with favor on their offerings, and, appeased by this sacrifice, grant us mercy and answer our prayers. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ws 16:20

Postcommunion: May Your sacraments, Lord, at all times purify and defend us, and may they bring us to the fullness of eternal salvation. Through our Lord.

Azariah says:

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September 8, 1946

"I shall not speak about the Holy Mass proper to the Newborn Mary Most Holy. The Most Holy Lord Jesus and our Most Blessed Queen have already spoken to you about it-when they made you the gift of the Life of Mary., And I have nothing to add because They are Wisdom, and I, just a reflection of Wisdom. But just to have the joy of speaking about Mary, our Most Holy Queen, I want to tell you the profound meaning of a sentence of Wisdom which we read in the Holy Mass of the Name of Mary.

"That sentence says, 'Whoever eats me will still be hungry, and whoever drinks me will still be thirsty.' A sentence in contrast to the concepts stated more than once by Jesus Most Holy when speaking to the Samaritan woman and to the Jews and disciples: '...Whoever drinks the water which I shall give him will not ever thirst again.' 'I am the Bread of life; whoever comes to Me will not hunger any longer, and whoever believes in Me will not thirst any longer.'

"Is Mary, then, so inferior to her Divine Son that nourishing oneself and quenching one's thirst with Her does not serve to remove the hunger and thirst of the spirit on its earthly pilgrimage, eager for the Father's House and the foods savored therein? Or is she so superior-an impossible supposition-that whereas, once men are sated, they have no more desire for Christ, the desire for Her lasts? Neither the former nor the latter formulation, but a third one, truly sapiential and without deceit.

"Listen. Mary is the preparation for Christ. As certain beverages given to someone who is weak, lacking appetite, and nauseated by food and drugs or different illnesses serve to restore strength, appetite, health, and desire for nourishment and prepare, in short, the physical state's return to well-being and assist this return to the point of perfect recovery, so Mary, the Mother of the Lord, is the One who prepares the spirit for true, fruitful union with Jesus.

"She, universal Mother, pours her milk of grace on her poor

[†]See note 1, p. 104.

children-sinners, weak, sick, fearful, nauseated, and weary. It is always sweet to receive comfort and care from a Mother. And she strengthens them, gives them a healthy appetite, a desire for more perfect Food, that Food which is in Her, one with Her: her Jesus.

"Oh, Our Queen is the perfect Ciborium! The Bread of Life and Grace are always in Her, and you men do not arrive at that Bread and that Fount of Grace except by going through Her.

"That is why it is proper to say of Her, 'Whoever eats me will still be hungry, and whoever drinks me will still be thirsty,' while we read, concerning Most Holy Jesus, that whoever feeds on Him and quenches his thirst will no longer experience hunger or thirst. Mary is holy Necessity. Jesus is Fulfillment. She prepares. He completes. She maintains the hunger and thirst and increases them, to bear you, with the sweetness of her holy savors, to the increasingly intense and renewed desire to live on Christ.

"She is the true Eve, the root and Tree of the Living. The Father created Her; Love fecundated Her; and from her pith has come the sap of Grace that has given you the Fruit, which is Grace itself.

"Her virginal, immaculate roots have not left their native sod-the shining bosom of the Most Holy Trinity. The breezes of Paradise have always kissed Her. The True Tree of Life. She extends her branches, laden with the Fruit of her Womb, so that you may eat them. Now, who does not go to the tree to pick its fruit? And go back when the fruit is sweet? No one, unless he is foolish. So, you, too, go there, O Christian spirits, and eat and drink of Mary to arrive at the holy appetite for Jesus that-by his communicating Himself to you-will give you eternal life.

"The Birth of Mary itself shows that God has had consideration for the pact made with Mankind. The first ring of it comes from Eden, a threatening statement addressed to the most astute of creatures: 'I shall place enmity between you and the woman.... Her offspring will crush your head, and you will strike its heel.' The second to Abraham, and to Isaac in Abraham. And the pact was fulfilled when the Redeemer was born of Mary and, after a short life, ascended onto the Cross to save the souls of God's poor ones, the children in misfortune because of Sin and in exile.

"God always keeps his promises. He is not always quick to act. Men would like shorter waits. But He always acts at the right

moment. Great faith, absolute hope, and ardent charity are needed to come to accept this thought. But blessed are those who, under the torrent of pain, before the observation of human events, are able to say and believe firmly that God will intervene at the proper moment.

"Put aside your whys and wherefores, whose only fruit is to weary your minds and poison your souls by distressing, embittering, and discouraging them and making them fearful, with a fear which is not good in regard to their God. Trust and entrust yourselves. Human justice, even the most just and severe, is always deficient alongside God's, which is not in a hurry, which seems to be permissive, but which does not lose sight of men and their actions for an instant.

"As true good children, always try to obey the command Abraham received from the Most High: 'Walk in my presence and be perfect,' and then let your God act. The divine fury does not rage against God's sheep, even if the boom of lightning bolts thunders over their heads. Wolves and goats often mix with the sheep, and the lightning bolts are for them, not for the sheep. The perpetual, envious asper of God, Satan, flings other lightning bolts into life's fray. And these are against the sheep, who are wounded by them as well. But it is not a mortal wound. Their robes are embellished with the rubies of their pain and the pearls of their weeping, and they are more worthy of the shining dwelling of Heaven.

"Have this faith in the justice of God and in his promises, just as the Patriarch Abraham did. Do you see? Faith in the promises of God is an incentive towards a life even more perfect than the Law. So much so that long before the Law was given to men, God gave the promise to Abraham and the progeny of peoples that would come from him, so that therein the peoples would find the motive to walk in the presence of God so as to deserve the fulfillment of the promise.

"The infinite Mercy of God-always mercy, even in the time of severity-then gave the Law, seeing that Satan's venom acted so powerfully as to make it hard for men to walk with perfection in the sight of God.

"Like children who are defective from birth or through illness and continuously need supervision, an instructor to say, 'Do this; don't do that,' men, before the time of Grace, were furnished by God with a detailed code so that they would know how to live

justly and be pleasing to their Lord. And the Law lasted in its function as guardian and preparer Of Souls until the time when the Promise came true with the coming of the Living One to overcome Death and sin.

"The Apostle rightly says, 'If the Law had been "Life" on its own, then justice would indeed have come.' But the Law was only a preparation for Life. Grace was lacking, Sin endured, and, therefore, not the Law, but the Promise has generated Life, Christ Jesus, who has come to restore Grace and annul Sin, to provide the means to resist the concupiscences through the new Law, his own, based on love, rendered easy by mutual love, by the merits of Jesus, by the Sacraments, by union, through the Mystical Body, with the Holy, Victorious, and Immortal One.

"God always keeps his promises. Let this be the lesson and the strength which the Holy Mass of the Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost communicates to you.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Ps 84(83):10-11, 2-3

Collect: Guard Your Church, Lord, we pray, with Your continued mercy, and since our human mortality must fail without You, keep it always by Your help from all that may hurt it, and direct it in the way of salvation. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Ga 5:16-24

Gradual: Ps 118(117):8-9

Alleluia: Ps 95(94):1

Gospel: Mt 6:24-33

Offertory: Ps 34(33):8-9

Secret: Grant us, we pray, Lord, that this saving Victim may both purify us from our sins and propitiate for us Your almighty power. Through our Lord.

Communion: Mt 6:33

Postcommunion: May Your sacraments, Lord, at all times purify and defend us; and may they bring us to the fullness of eternal salvation. Through our Lord.

September 15, 1946

Azariah says:

"As an individual creature, or as a society united in a single organism, the Christian and Christians encounter all assistance in being protected in relation to the Eternal Lord by his beloved Son.

"Just as when one person addresses another to greet him or help him or reproach him, or simply to get to know him, he does not look at the other's hands or feet, shoulders or chest, but looks fixedly at his face, so your Father, when He turns to hear your entreaties or gets angry over your sins or observes you to know your actions and thoughts-what does He look at first? The Face of Him with whom He is well pleased and who shines in the spirits of the good, but who also remains upon the infirm members of the great Body which is the Church of all Catholic Christians.

"First of all, He encounters the gaze of his Christ, and his anger is placated, and his mercy grows out of justice and exultation. Justice-for Christ has already atoned for the sins of all men who afterwards return to the Lord in repentance or for whom another Christian prays and suffers together with Christ. Exultation-for in every just man who implores the Lord He hears again the voice of his beloved Beseecher and is happy to grant favors in his Name.

"That is why the liturgy uses the formula 'Through Jesus Christ Our Lord.' All good comes through Him, the Great Victim who, with the outflowing of his Blood and the fullness of his pain, forced open the dikes of mercy and love, closed to limit God's sentiments-an act of violence which God had applied to Himself, in anger over Original Sin.

"Knowing that everything is obtained through the Christ and that the Father is unable to remain severe if the one who uplifts his supplicating glances is Christ, the Head of the Church, you can thus pray with confident words for Her that needs so many prayers to be strong, solid, and holy. Satan's hour lashes like a storm upon the shores marked by the Cross. One promise stands like a reef in defense of the Apostolic Church. Jesus' words: 'They shall not prevail.'

"But observe the words accompanying this promise! They recall a quality of the Church. And they prompt another Gospel comparison. They say, 'You are Peter, and on this Rock I shall build my Church.'

"A solid building, therefore. Of rock. Not of soft mud which the wind dries up and disperses or water dissolves, not of lime mortar which time deteriorates, not of bricks which a pick can undermine if introduced between them or shatter if smacked against them with rage. But of rock. A single rock-powerful, indestructible, unassailable, solid, firm. Do you remember John the Baptist? What is the praise Jesus utters of his Forerunner? It is this: 'What did you go out to see in the desert? A reed shaken by the wind'

"John, the Precursor, was a not a reed shaken left and right by the wind and broken by a child's hand or a passing animal. He was strong to the point of violence-that violence by which the Kingdom of Heaven is defended and conquered. John, the Forerunner of Christianity, had to be this force which nothing cracks and knocks down. Otherwise, how could he have prepared the ways of the Lord-if he had been a weak man whom just anyone could have cast aside?

"But is the Church Militant not perhaps the one which precedes the eternal Church Triumphant and prepares the great Victory of the Lamb in the Heavenly Jerusalem? How could the Bride dress herself in resplendent linen for her wedding, with no more weeping, if she changed from a queen into a slave, if before Satan's waves she were stripped of her members like leaves torn

away by a whirlwind or she crumbled like a collapsing house? It would be horrible! Indescribably horrible. But he who saw Heaven and the Last Time says, 'There came a great red dragon..., and with his tail he drew after him a third of the stars and made them fall.'

"Pray, Christians, pray that no more than a third will fall, swept away by Satan, by his seven accursed hydras, by the tenfold infernal weapons, by his serpentine, diabolical work.

"Pray, pray that the organism of the believers, the Church Militant, will remain the 'Rock' and not become mud, lime mortar, or brick. Raise up around her the shield of your prayer, for the hour is really tremendous. More tremendous than the hour of darkness in which Christ was immolated. For Christ was then standing up against the spite of a world rendered Satanic, and against Him its prevailing was relative, for his power and Holiness are measureless; but in this hour, long and ever darker, the Satanized world which is rising up against you Christians, against the Church, is faced only with men-that is, beings in whom, as the Prayer states, it is mortal human nature which, without the aid of God, succumbs. And the more it is already infected and softened by the fumes of the world and the science of the world, the more it succumbs.

"Pray, indicating to the Father the mystical Head of the Church so that, out of respect for the Face of his Christ, the Most High will intervene to impede the affronts He already suffered on Good Friday, a figure of those which over the centuries-and with increasing violence-would be hurled against the Head and the Mystical Body of Christ. And to pray with merit, pray as just men-that is, as the Blessed Paul says, 'Walk according to the spirit,' not satisfying the desires of the flesh.

"The select part is the spirit. Give precedence to the spirit; give it regality. The flesh is the handmaid; the spirit is the king. If the handmaid were unlawfully to become the queen, your nature-in which the Creator's likeness is outlined, making man the link joining the created perfections of animals, plants, and minerals to the angelical supercreations, and, even more, in giving you a spiritual part, as we are, and giving you a carnal part, like the one Christ Himself assumed in order to redeem, He makes you similar to the Divine Brother, to the Firstborn of the Living-would lose its likeness to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit because of spiritual immortality, the power to unite

yourselves to Jesus, fulfilling in your flesh what is lacking to the Passion of Christ, the intellect set aflame by the infused Virtues and the Seven Gifts, and you would become similar to inferior animals that are only flesh and, when breathing ceases, no longer exist.

"In the perpetual clash between flesh and spirit-your field of battle and victory-be steadfast in giving all weapons to the spirit so that it will be the executioner of the flesh. Holy justice which wounds, tames, and breaks so as to give its identical eternal glory one day to the matter it now wounds so that it will be healed! Holy combat that frees you from the severity of the Law, for he who is guided by the spirit does not sin in a voluntary, premeditated way, but, even if he yields through a sudden assault of matter, immediately gets up again, and his fall is no longer a misfortune, but something good, for it marks a victory over discouragement, lack of confidence, and pride. The Evil One against his will serves Good. For the Evil One is 'a chained freeman.' Always remember this. He can still do harm, but not beyond a certain limit, and his presence, his possible cunning, and his untiring attention to causing wounds serve to keep you watchful, make you call upon God's help, and give you a crown of victory.

"God is Goodness. He makes everything 'good.' If Satan had really been 'invincible' for men, God would not have left this 'evil thing.' But in his perfect evil Satan contributes to the glorification of the heroes of the spirit, the Lord's true faithful ones.

"And for these heroes of the spirit the Law of severity no longer exists. Just as their will rejects the things of the flesh, so the Divine Will and Justice annul involuntary weaknesses, immediately redressed through loving desire, and open the gates of the Kingdom to the faithful children. God opens them while the earthly day still lasts, giving his gifts, which are charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, continence, chastity. The virtues which were in the perfect Man, in Our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though God, when He took on flesh, becoming like you, wanted to give his spirit the gifts and virtues to be able to withstand Satan and the world and keep Himself perfect in the eyes of the Father and of men.

"Who among you can convict me of sin? Oh, what peace, peace before accusers and judges and death and God, to be able to utter this sentence! And this divine sentence can blossom-luminous and sweet, prompting respect in whoever hears it and calm and

serenity in whoever utters it-in those who have walked according to the spirit by crucifying-like Christ, to whom they belong their flesh in its vices and concupiscences. Then, serving the Most Holy Spirit with the spirit-king, you will deserve the Angel of the Lord, and he will save you when the assault of Satan and his servants is too furious for your capacity to withstand.

"Do not fear! Do not fear, O sweet souls who love the Lord to the point of sacrificing yourselves and his very joys provided the world is saved and the Kingdom of God comes.

"Do not fear! You have understood the Truth, who has spoken to you. You have sought the Kingdom of God before all else, and not for yourselves alone, but for everyone. And it is in you. It is already in you. And this alone has value. The other things will be given to you in addition. But even if they were not given to you, because the war waged by Satan and men destroyed them while they came down to you from Heaven, do not fear. It is as if you had accomplished *everything*, and given, and received. Those who will *not* have the things given in addition are not you. They are the others.

"It is not given to whoever does not want to receive. It is not given to whoever would like to receive, but not for the spirit rather, for the concupiscences and works of the flesh. But nothing and no one can snatch the gifts of the Spirit away from those who love Him with their whole self to the point of sacrifice.

"And now let us venerate the Blessed Woman with the Transfixed Heart. Maria, isn't this a gift? To see Her. Just as John gazed at Her at the foot of the Cross.

"Little John, take your place. Console your Mother. The Apostle, too, was tormented, and yet he consoled the Most Tormented One. For he had his own pain alone. She, all the present and future pains of the Co-Redemptrix. Including the ones which you know.... Imitate John-you, little John broken by *your* pain, which is so great, but is nothing in comparison to the pain of the Mother of Sorrows. The Mystical Rose-all the thorns of the immense rose garden which is the world-not excluding any kind-are pointed at her pure-white heart and turn it crimson.... Drink in her weeping and remain under her mantle. She is your Mother. In Heaven you will discover how much

And I see Our Lady of Sorrows.... And I see a hand flinging into her heart a sheaf of thorns.... And She turns her head in the opposite direc-

tion of that masculine, powerful, hooked hand-and weeps without sobbing.... A rain of tears which fall to the right, to the ground The distress of Mary Most Holy.... Oh, I cannot express all that I see ... ! I forget my pain in the face of hers, and I call Her with all the love I am capable of...

I am a poor, little creature.... But, oh, Mother, increase my capacity to console you for all those who strike you-strike us this way ... !

Mother! Is it not enough to have asked that every sweetness, every ecstasy of love be taken from me for their sake? When will I restore to them, then, the spirit that You would like in them? When will I die?

May God's Will be done.... But love me and be consoled by my love, Mother, Mother, Mother of Sorrows....

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Ps 86(85):1, 2-4 Collect: Lord, may Your continual pity cleanse and defend Your Church, and, since it cannot be preserved in safety without You, govern it always by Your providence. Through our Lord. Epistle: Ga 5:25-26; 6:1-10 Gradual: Ps 92(91):2-3 Alleluia: Ps 95(94):3 Gospel: Lk 7:11-16
Offertory: Ps 40(39):2, 3, 4 Secret: May Your sacraments, Lord, protect us and always defend us against the devil's attacks. Through our Lord.
Communion: Jn 6:52 Postcommunion: May the power of this heavenly gift take possession, Lord, we implore You, of our minds and bodies, that so we may be always guided not by our natural impulses but by its working in us. Through our Lord.

Azariah says:

September 22, 1946

"Soul of mine, like a wayfarer who, while walking along the road, comes across a repellent object, but, after the first, involuntary glance, continues on, without stopping to consider, and leaves the repugnant sight behind him, striving not even to remember it and gazing instead at the flowers, plants, and good travelers he encounters, so you, too, should act after this new, painful knowledge of what is hidden in certain hearts; and look ahead; look at the good things of God, your good brothers; look at your Lord, in whom you trust. Leave behind you even the remembrance of the duplicity, interests, selfishness, greed, pride, and disaffection hidden by a false stage set of love. Leave what is mire in the mire, and proceed, and open your wings, rise up, fly where Love wants you, be glad in your Lord, and with the cheerful, active charity of the children of God pray for the Church of God, in which there is so much need for Grace.

"Grace is Salvation, Wisdom, Love. Now, Love and Wisdom are much more necessary to the Church in her members responsible as pastors for the care of souls than Knowledge. But knowledge abounds to the detriment of the other things. And spiritual light is extinguished, being replaced by the reddish glow of their

human fires. Offer all your pain and your disgust, all your sacrifice and your forgiveness, that Grace may restore to life the excessive number of languishing spirits who are in the Priesthood.

"You will be more blessed for this than for what your mission as a spokeswoman would and will give you. This is a gift you receive. Your love, pain, disgust, sacrifice, and forgiveness are, on the other hand, gifts which you give. And you have heard the Most Holy Lord Jesus say, 'Giving is greater than receiving.'

"Receiving also imposes a burden of obligations. Giving is lightening of the spirit; it is to sprout wings, the enkindling of heavenly fires. Give, then, without measure, and through the promise which is not deceit, 'an overflowing measure will be poured into your lap,' here, and cover you with blessed light in the other life.

"You see! They know the inspired and Gospel words by heart. They know what is the letter by heart, but do not possess the spirit of the letter. And why this, this which keeps them from proceeding on ways of real justice? Because will is slack in them-I am speaking about spiritual will-Grace is obstructed, even when it is not put to flight by real sins, by a spirit of vainglory. Vainglory over the office held, vainglory over verbal facility in preaching, vainglory deriving from a real beginning of virtues which were later relaxed, but which created a reputation for holiness which is accepted by one who has enjoyed it even after the virtue is diminished, and even vainglory over one's good looks, vainglory over knowledge acquired. How much vainglory! Vainglory over successes obtained, churches built, convents founded vainglory, vainglory, vainglory.

`If we live by the spirit, let us walk according to the spirit, without provoking and envying one another,' says the Apostle in today's Epistle.

"Let us compare actions. On the one hand, there you are, with your disinterested stripping yourself of what could give you even human glory. Satan has tempted you over and over concerning this. In regard to you, with an elevated mind and position, he could not attempt anything but this, and he has done so. It was easy to assail you-in straitened circumstances and in need of care-by stirring up fear about tomorrow and pointing out the income from a publication of yours. To make you fall the Tempter thus prodded you morally and materially-the pride of the mind, the need of the flesh. If you had accepted his accursed ad-

vice, lying to God and to men, and robbing God, everything would have been over. Haven't you ever reflected that the real ordered Gospel' began after you had overcome the temptations in this sense of undue appropriation for the purpose of profit and glory? First you had to overcome-and then receive.

"Now let us observe the other side. Without any merit on their part,² God offered them a gift, a great gift, introducing some stipulations. If they had meditated on the words accompanying the gift, they would have understood that it was only the test of their spirit. The reference to the other Order³-towards which your spirit tended and tends by a true vocation which an inscrutable thought of God has opposed for you-is severe. 'Why,' you ask yourself, 'did I, a Franciscan in spirit since my childhood, so completely Franciscan, faithfully Franciscan'-although a deplorable indifference by your brothers in religion does not show concern for you-'have to undergo the imposition of another Third Order⁴ which I did not ask for? Why was I not even asked about such an important matter? Your continual questioning when you kiss the two scapulars. You will know the reason why in Heaven. God makes use of third persons to test the first-always remember that. And in this sentence is the explanation, such as you may have it for the time being.

"The reference to the other Order is severe. It should have made them meditate. And the stipulations joined to the gift conditioned by them should have made them meditate. They have not meditated. Vainglory has caught them in its tentacles and strangled their charity, justice, discernment, and obedience. It has made them cruel and envious, the provokers and torturers of an innocent one.

"Is Paul speaking to you or to them? He is speaking to them, as persons who ought to be spiritual masters. You cannot speak to them. Each in his place. Through you, Wisdom and your actions speak to them, and they are of no use. But Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, can speak to them. Charitable, but firm, he says to them, 'If one should fall into some error..., instruct him in a spirit of gentleness.'

"Here is one mistake by them in the error of judgment which

¹See note 1, p. 104.

²Allusion to the religious of the Order of the Servants of Mary.

³Reference to the Franciscan Order, in which Maria Valtorta from her youth on was a Tertiary. ⁴Reference to the Order of the Servants of Mary.

is not sincere. Do they say that you may be deceived? But why, then, do they do not show you with love in what? Why? Because their assertion is not true, and they have no basis to prove their demonstrations. And to this first error of wanting to mortify you, so as not to confess that God has loved you extraordinarily, they thus join that of being unkind to you.

"And watch out for yourself, that you may not be tempted either.' Oh, how charity obliges me to be silent in this regard! Disobedience to the word of God, arrogance and disorder towards the canonical rules and the diocesan bishops, vainglory over feeling and showing themselves to be learned with a wisdom and spirituality not their own-haven't these been the temptations accepted by them which have become their second nature?

"Carry one another's burdens, and you will thus fulfill the Law of Christ.' Jesus Most Holy did not want to give other burdens to you, wearied by your mission, and He had entrusted to them what you could not bear so that they would bear it as your good brothers. They did not want to, and, indeed, flinging it back upon your shoulders, they have increased it by their actions. Charity has thus perished.

⁴⁴'If anyone believes he is something, when he is nothing, he is deceiving himself.' The Only One who is is God. Men, all of them, are what God and their wills want. God chooses his instruments and his servants. If they respond to the calls and the orders of God, then they change into what God would like them to be. Those who boast about being something either are deceived or fall into the category of 'those who do not know what they are doing'-or they are knowingly guilty of clothing themselves with merits which are not their own and are satans.

"Paul counsels the deceived: 'Let each one examine his works and he will thus have reason to boast only in himself and not because of others, for each will bear his burden.'To pride oneself on the help which God has given one, on the mission He has presented one with, choosing one with special love, and on one's own conformity with the Lord's will. Not to take pride in anything else. And humble oneself, recognizing one's errors, the cause of one's own misfortunes and those of others, and to regret not one's own misfortunes, which are an expiation for error, but having harmed one's neighbor. To the greedy and the envious, who greedily take and unjustly use what they have taken, Paul says, 'Let the one catechized ... share his possessions with the one

catechizing him.'

'The first one with whom they are obliged to share is he who has unselfishly given to them, feeling himself to be hierarchically inferior. And even if he does not need the Word, because he receives it directly, he needs many other things from the one who is his hierarchical superior. And their deformed justification is not valid in the eyes of God: 'He already has God to direct him.' This has never been said by the voice of God: 'He does not need a priest because I instruct and care for him.'

'When did Christ ever say to his healed lepers, 'You don't need to go to the Priest because I have directly observed that you are cleansed?' And when did Christ ever say, 'I don't go to the Temple because I don't need it to be in the Law and with God?' Christ always pointed to the Temple and the Priesthood as a medium between men and God. Whoever refuses to protect a soul because God uses it is a deserter of his own militia.

'Do not let yourselves be deceived!' Oh! What good is it to say, 'Now we are the ones who are saying these things'? Certain instruments and certain animals also repeat the words which are taught or transmitted to them. But are the instruments or the animals perhaps the ones who have created those words with their own thought? Can a mechanism or parrot-like speech say, 'What I am saying is mine'? What good is it to deceive yourselves and men when there is one looking at you from Heaven and seeing even your smallest thought? Do you want to mock God? Do you think you can falsify his words and believe that He does not recognize them? Do you want to mock God?

'God is not derided! Do not rest on the dangerous and presumptuous support of this thought: 'Until now I have done what I wanted, even against what was said to be God's will, and no misfortune has come to me, but, rather, increasing well-being.' You do not know what the following minute may bring you. And, after the many minutes on Earth, there is an eternity to atone for the mockery directed at God and harshness towards one's brothers. In eternity what has been sown is reaped. For this reason people should tirelessly perform spiritual works and, therefore, do good if they do not want afterwards to reap tribulations for the fires of purgatory or-God forbid-for the braziers of hell. Do good as long as you have time to do so. Everyone, and especially those who are clothed in a robe which makes them observed by the world, by this world which perishes more because of the

extinguishing of the lights placed to illuminate than through the perverse doctrines stirred up by Satan.

"Paul calls his successors 'spiritual masters.' But it is useless to say this to them. I have told you, so that you will feel the duty to intensify prayer and sacrifice increasingly for them and in order for you to be able to say the right words-I have indicated them to you-to anyone taking an interest in your case.

"Trust your angelical companion. I take your hand, protect you under my wings, and purify the air your spirit breathes, which the actions of others render acrid and unhealthy. And let us sing together, in the joy of doing our duty, you and I: 'It is beautiful to give praise to the Lord, sing hymns to his name, so as to proclaim his mercy in the morning and his faithfulness during the night. It is beautiful to give praise to Him who listens to us, sets us upon the rock, and guides our ways in safety.'

"This, soul of mine, is the new canticle God places upon your lips with today's liturgy.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit!"

Direction not written (by Jesus' order) on what the Work is in the intentions of its Divine Giver (received today, 9/25/46).

9/28/46. Jesus Most Holy explains to me why Satan seeks to prevent me from writing the dictations on the Gospel of St. John. Secret direction.

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Ps 86(85):3, 5, 1

Collect: Lord, we entreat You, may Your grace always lead us and follow after us, and make us always intent on doing good. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Ep 3:13-21

Gradual: Ps 102(101):16-17

Alleluia: Ps 98(97):1

Gospel: Lk 14:1-11

Offertory: Ps 40(39):14, 15

Secret: Cleanse us, we pray, Lord, by the effect of this sacrifice, and work mercifully in us, so that we may be made worthy to be partakers of it. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 71(70):16-17, 18

Postcommunion: Purify our minds, Lord, in Your goodness, we entreat You, and give us new life by Your heavenly sacraments, so that our bodies, too, may be strengthened in time and for eternity. Through our Lord.

September 29, 1946

Azariah says:

"The Lord, who has instructed you since your childhood and from whom you remember having received only love, tells me to consider only the Epistle with you, on account of your weakness and so as not to repeat what is a memory of pain. You and God have spoken. He orders you to keep for yourself only what He has told you. Let us obey. In the Introit I should skim over the topic. But now everything has been said. You are convinced of the goodness and mercy of God. He knows your needs. There is nothing more to be said which is not superfluous and painful for your weakness.

"But it is a comfort to listen to the Apostle. He addresses himself to you with the words of a paternal master: 'I exhort you not to lose heart over the tribulations which I am suffering for your sake and which are your glory.'

"That's it-let your spirit say to your members, your flesh, your organs, consumed and languishing in mortal suffering, 'I exhort you not to tremble over what I am suffering and what you are suffering indirectly. For this suffering of mine, which is also your suffering, is the motive for your glory.'

"What will the bodies of the saints shine with one day, the eternal day? With the sufferings undergone for the sake of justice, because they have wearied themselves for the sake of justice, to cultivate it in themselves, to give it to others, because they have been persecuted on account of this labor.

"Those who taught many justice will shine like stars for all eternity,' says Daniel. And Wisdom: 'The just will shine, run like sparks through a cane thicket, judge the nations, and dominate the peoples, and the Lord will reign in them throughout eternity.'

"And what does the Lord promise in the beatitudes? Glory and light, and satisfaction and peace to those who wept and suffered out of faithfulness to justice.

"Now then, since you are body and soul-and, indeed, the burdensome law of the flesh tends to predominate as long as you are in exile-precisely that flesh which was mortified by the will of the heroic spirit and bore tribulation indirectly from the great suffering of the spirit will thus receive glory in eternity. It is, therefore, just to have your spirit say to your flesh, 'Do not lose heart on account of my tribulations, which I am suffering for you as well, body of mine, and which will be your future and eternal glory.'

"And Paul teaches what to do to obtain supernatural aid to confirm the creature who is spirit and flesh. 'To this end I bend my knee before the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ ... that He may grant you ... powerfully confirmed through his Spirit, that Christ may dwell in you by faith ... and you, rooted and grounded in charity, may, with all the saints, comprehend ... what surpasses all knowledge-that is, the charity of Christ, so that you will be filled with all the fullness of God.'

"God is Charity. Whoever has charity has God in himself. Jesus Most Holy, I told you, is the summary of the Charity of the Three Divine Persons. Therefore, whoever has Christ in himself is filled with the *fullness* of God.

"In the old Law, in the former time, the Hebrews had the Father, who filled the Temple with his glory, and the Spirit from time to time filled some creatures with Himself But in the New Time, in the era of Christ, Christians do not, indeed, have the First or the Third Person, but the completeness of the Triune God in Jesus Christ Our Lord.

"They have Him through Grace and the Sacraments, and especially through the Sacrament of Love, in which, with the Body,

Blood, Soul, and Divinity of the Incarnate Word, the Father and the Paraclete are inseparable from the divinity of the Second Person, through the sublime Unity of the three Gods who are One Single God. To this invisible, but sensible and active Presence, to this Infinite who compresses Himself into a minuscule part of the all: into a believing man-and from this jail, where love alone constrains Him, He works and transforms, since He can do everything, even what is above all that man can ask and do and think and desire, and He can turn nothingness into grandeur, for not nothingness, but the one inhabiting it works with his infinite means-let there be given the glory which is due Him and the trust of those who know they are supported by a Strong One and guided by a Wise One who is unequaled. And in this trust let your spirit find peace and your body strength for the glorious fight which reaches Life through the preparation of pain and death.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

10/5/46. An elevation not written (by Most Holy Jesus' order) on the wonders of the Creation.

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Ps 119(118):137, 124, 1

Collect: Grant Your people, Lord, we pray, to avoid the defilements of the devil, and with pure minds to follow You, the only God. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Ep 4:1-6

Gradual: Ps 33(32):12, 6

Alleluia: Ps 102(101):2

Gospel: Mt 22:34-46

Offertory: Dn 9:4, 17, 18, 19

Secret: We humbly implore Your majesty, Lord, that by these holy mysteries which we celebrate we may be freed from our past sins and from relapsing into them in time to come. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 76(75):12-13

Postcommunion: May our vices be subdued, Lord, by Your sanctifying mysteries and may we obtain healing for our eternal salvation, Through our Lord.

October 10, 1946

Azariah says:

"He always treats you with mercy, in great things and small, with paternal mercy, requiring of you only obedience. For obedience has as its consequence a life without voluntary imperfections and a mode of proceeding according to the Lord's law and will. Most Holy God can want only the good of his children; therefore, whoever obeys his will does good insofar as his capacities permit, and God is pleased with that much, for it is all that the creature can give Him.

"And obedience also has another fruit-that of uniting closely to God. Blessed are those who can say what Jesus Christ said to the ones reproaching Him: 'I have always done and do what the Most High wants.' Obedience, by uniting one closely to God, almost fusing one with God, through uniformity of will-God wants a creature's good, and the creature wants the good which God wants from him-makes God descend with his love to dwell in whoever loves Him: obedience is love. And then, since the strongest always prevails-and here the strongest is God-it also happens that the one who works is God, the absolute possessor of the faithful spirit, and the creature no longer performs actions on his own, but divine actions-so lost and dominated is he in

the Divine and by the Divine-and divine actions can only be holy actions, devoid of diabolical contagion, as the Prayer requests in its entreaty.

"This absolute union, this complete donation to God, this selfannulment in God by stripping oneself of the ego so as to be absorbed by God-the ego is material and with it one cannot enter into the Lord, who is pure Spirit-predisposes one for that union, donation, humility, charity, patience, and gentleness which Paul terms essential in order to be true Christians, united to Christ, united to God, united to the Spirit, with the bond of peace among brothers, and of charity in its two branches, one of which extends towards Heaven to embrace the throne of God and the other over the Earth to caress one's brothers. Then you really form a single body and a single spirit, entirely one with the Lord, with one single faith, one single Baptism, one single Father who is over all and in everything, and especially in the members of the Body of Christ, living members, in whom the infused graces really live and vivify.

"To be baptized, confirmed, absolved, and given Communion *is little if they are inactive gifts. It is everything if the creature's good will makes the gifts received through the Sacraments active* and makes hope an eternal reality which gladdens the exile of those called by God to the great People of Christ.

"Good will! What a powerful weapon to overcome! As the Gradual says, the Lord looks from Heaven and gazes at his children and sees them animated by the good will to serve Him, even if they are unable to do so perfectly. Well, will God then be annoyed at this incapacity of yours to act perfectly? Will He perhaps say, 'No matter how much they do, they cannot enter here, into my Paradise, where only perfect things and perfect creatures enter, for these are imperfect and their actions are also imperfect'?

"Oh, no! That God who by a word created the heavens, grouping together the molecules of gas, and thus created the stars and the Earth, joining the different parts scattered in the cosmos to make them the solid mass which is your world, the burning masses which are the stars and the liquid ones which are the seas, all those things which since then have been the Universe-will He perhaps be unable to accomplish perfect works with your formless, imperfect actions carried out with good will?

"With faith, hope, and living charity let Him act, and He will. Sanctity is made of the heroic good will of the children of God

and the power of God, who completes and renders perfect the heroic good will of his children. And it is very beautiful, O men, that your Father, who is God, should be the One to take what his little children do and make it similar to something done by a god, completing it with his goodness. We do not have this. And it is just. Always just. But how beautiful it is, how it ought to fill you with grateful joy, to think that in order to serve Him and help Him in the Redemption and the apostolate He makes use of men, and not of angels, and to make men gods, his children, He makes use of his power which is wholly love!

"You can do all, provided you live as children, with your Father, who is God Most High; even speak to Him just as you would to a paternal friend, even ask Him to ward off the punishment already prepared for the faithless who offend Him; even to obtain the fulfillment of the bold desires arising in your hearts under the impetus of inflamed love.

"Desires! Holy desires! Do you know what they are, Maria? They are the desire of God Himself-inspired by Him in the hearts of his children, and especially of the most loving ones, and the more the child of God is a lover of God, the more they are bold desires; the desire of God, inspired by Him, gathered in by the human creature and shot like a golden arrow at the feet of God, and the spirit rises behind the precious dart, to ask for the things which seem like madness to humanity, the actions of love-to be able to accomplish these actions for His glory.

"Oh, you lovers who make God's desires for you your own! You are the sublime madmen in the retinue of the Divine Jesus, mad with love to the point of death on the Cross. You are the madmen of the sublime madness of love and sacrifice. Fling yourselves! Do not fear! The world needs you, holy madmen, to continue to obtain mercy. And souls need you to continue to be saved. They, the majority, are no longer able to do so to save themselves. Their wings are broken, torn, burned. They are crawling and losing heart on the ground. Your sacrifice, your madness of love, gives them back wings and pupils and resuscitates celestial desire, and they rise again, seek God, and spread their wings....

"Your thirst for love, your inexhausted desire is what God wants, and accomplishing what God desires is what leads them to Heaven. The flesh, the world, and the devil are the halter which holds them back. You burn that heavy halter, place the golden thread of charity around their necks, and lead them with you

higher and higher, to Heaven, to God.

"Praise be to the Love that inspires. Praise be to the love that works. Praise be to the love that saves. Praise be to God, the inspirer of the actions of the saints. Praise be to the saints who work with Christ. Praise be to Love, Love, Love!

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit!"

The night between October 6th and 7th. I awaken amidst sufferings of physical agony, and the Adversary insinuates, to cause fright, "How will you manage to present yourself before God. Judgment.... Punishment I respond by fighting against the Horror: "I'll do as all do, from Adam to the last man. I shall die. And, what's more, to be sure at the final moment, I shall trust in the Mercy of God more than ever." Defeated, he goes away. And the physical agony goes away, too.... I placidly fall asleep on the breast of God.

October 12, 4 p.m. Mordant as venom is the insinuation-it is certainly him-of Satan: "You, that so desire Heaven, to see your father again as well, know that you will never find him there. Neither your father nor your mother. You will also suffer there." I respond to assuage the agony of this thought: "I shall not suffer. I shall love God. One cannot suffer with regret over anyone or for any reason when one enjoys God."

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Si 36:15-16; Ps 122(121):1

Collect: Lord, we entreat You, may our hearts be guided by the power of Your mercy; for without Your help we cannot please You. Through our Lord.

Epistle: 1 Co 1:4-8

Gradual: Ps 122(121):1, 7

Alleluia: Ps 102(101):16

Gospel: Mt 9:1-8

Offertory: Ex 24:4, 5

Secret: O God, through the communion of this adorable sacrifice, You make us partakers of the one supreme Godhead; grant, we entreat You, that having come to the knowledge of Your truth, we may follow it by worthy lives. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 96(95):8-9

Postcommunion: Nourished, Lord, by Your sacred gift, we give You our thanks, imploring Your mercy, that we may be made worthy to partake of it. Through our Lord.

October 13, 1946

Azariah says:

"The reward given to the patient is certain, for the patient imitate their Heavenly Father, who is so patient in awaiting the conversions of sinful men, but is then rewarded for his loving patience by enjoying his saved ones. The imitation of God, which is love in action, always obtains a reward from God. And, as long as this earthly day of yours lasts, the reward is profound peace in spirit, peace which those incapable of serving the Lord do not know. Beyond the little earthly day, the reward is eternal, joyful glory. Another reward for one who is able to be patient is the granting of the graces requested, which may be deferred, but which, sooner or later, are granted-and always at the time when it is good to grant them.

"Abandon yourself, therefore, with full trust, to the Mercy that loves you and guides you-and guides your dearest affairs-and you will be very pleasing to God, and everything that matters to you will turn out well, for God Himself will take your concerns into his hands and make them his own, defending them and carrying them through.

"If only all men knew how to act that way and let themselves be moved by Wise Mercy, like a soft fabric that folds as the wind

blows, even if it is as light as the breeze in which the prophet heard God! They would find themselves borne to Heaven without even knowing how they got there, just like an infant who, unable to walk, can touch the summit of a mountain and delight in the sun, the blue sky, the immensity, and the flowers, because he is taken up there by his mother, in the sweet refuge of her arms.

"And let us meditate on Paul. To be the testimony of Christ confirmed in the midst of one's brothers does not indeed mean that those faithful have received Baptism and the other Sacraments. But it means that their works bear witness to their being imitators of Christ. Religious practices limited to the hours of worship, the observance of certain concrete ceremonies without, when they are over, religiosity and obedience to the precepts and counsels of Christian life afterwards continuing intensely and sincerely at all hours and in all events and actions of the day-do not constitute the testimony of Christ in you, but only hypocrisy, or at least quite a weak Christian life. You would be similar, if you acted that way-and anyone who acts in that way is-to those anemic infants who from the maternal milk and care draw a minimum barely sufficient in order not to die, but insufficient to grow, remaining atrophic beings without movement and strength, subject to all diseases until some oversight in food or against the elements kills them.

"It is just the same with those spirits who do not produce vital fluids with what is given to them through the Sacraments and limit themselves to receiving and do not make an effort to give, parasites who vegetate and do not live, invalids in the living Body of Christ destined to die because they are lukewarm, aboullic, anemic, a very easy prey for all spiritual infections, increasingly weak, until they perish like plants with withered roots.

"Paul, the great master of the doctrine of the Mystical Body of which Christ is the Head, rejoicing with his Corinthians over the testimony to Christ which they give of magnificent vitality as living, willing members, is glad-and not, indeed, about the parasites who are a burden and danger for the others and a scandal and a shame and an offense to God and, 'neither cold nor warm?' as they are, He 'spits them out of his mouth,' as Revelation says.

"Paul rejoices to see the Christian character of the Corinthians confirmed by Christian virtues; they have 'become rich with all things, every gift of words and knowledge' through the grace of

God obtained through Christ and maintained and augmented by the merits of the creature with good will.

"He rejoices and exhorts them to grow increasingly in Christ, absorbing and assimilating the vital fluids of Christianity, which is life and not a formula, which is truth and not hypocrisy, which is a way and not a quagmire where one sinks and remains, so that 'no gift will be lacking in them'-I have already explained that the gifts truly live only if the creature's good will makes them live-'so that they will be blameless at the coming of the Lord Jesus.' Without the greatest sin, that of having disdained the infinite gifts of God, neglecting them to the point of not making them the life of one's life and perfection of the spirit, failing, therefore, in all the virtues and becoming nonperseverant in Faith, Hope, Charity, Fortitude, Prudence, Justice, and Temperance, but yielding to the allurements of the devil, the world, and the flesh, impoverished or completely dead spirits, for whom the sacrifice of Christ has been useless, or painful beyond measure.

"I will not say anything more to you, soul of mine, victim soul. You suffer with Christ and for your regal triumph, and let this be your perpetual Holy Mass.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

October 13 (but two hours after the explanation of the Holy Mass).

A secret lesson on the merit a sick person can obtain from being capable as well of bearing in peace the thought "Because of me, A cannot go to Mass; B cannot rest," and so on. To put up with ourselves, even when we see with sorrow that we are a burden for others, is always virtuous. And God is able to derive therefrom a motive for rewarding both the sick person and those who on his account are prevented from doing different things.

And, as an explanation for those who in due time will read these short references to secret lessons, I state that Jesus Most Holy told me (Sept. 25) not to write any longer his intimate instructions for my soul as a punishment for those who are not capable of recognizing that it is Him who speaks to me or who lie by saying they do not recognize Him so as to discourage my soul by committing faults against charity and sincerity. And I have done so since Sept. 25, limiting myself, as He wants, to setting down the subject and the day of the secret instruction.

October 13, 1946, 4 p.m.

Can one do violence to Fire when it blazes forth and to God-Love when He wants to love? Love sensibly? No. And I experience it.

Today one of the most violent hours of divine love I have known is falling upon me.

I feel it coming.... And it is not an oppressive weight, although it is an immense wave, but a force which attracts, which tears you from the Earth and carries you higher and higher....

I feel it coming, more and more enrapturing, and before losing my memory from its inexpressible sweetness, mindful of my prayer and offering of August 15, I beseech, "Not to me! Not to me! To *them*. That they may love You." The will to renounce my mystical joys, provided *they* see and understand, is always in me.

But with an even more intense sweetness in the already immeasurable sweetness, from the ocean of Light and Fire impending over me, descending from Heaven, there comes the inexpressible Voice of the Triune God, and it says, "No. You reject Me to no avail for a sacrifice of love. I *want you*. I *want to give Myself to you*. I seek relief for Myself. I seek a heart that loves Me. I don't want science, but love. I don't want to discuss, but to possess. I don't want to reproach, but to love. I want you. Sate Me. Console Me. Love Me. I pour Myself forth where I find someone who understands Me in my infinite desire to communicate Myself. Write and then come

And one can only abandon oneself-and hear the words being said: "You must love for *them* as well. I want to be satiated by you with the love *they* are unable to give Me just as I want it. And I want to penetrate you with Myself so that you will come to love just as I loved my executioners: *measurelessly*. For when one loves with perfection, the most unfortunate are loved measurelessly, the ones who are *our* sorrow. Without this love of ours, they would be lost."

"And I go into rapture and burn, as it is not licit to describe, and love God, and in God all creation, with the inhabitants of Heaven, with the living on the Earth, with those suffering in Purgatory, all, all, and oh, they would not believe it even if I told them!-I love *them* as a mother can love her sick children who, if not cared for with supreme love, may perish, and suffer because they are sick, even if they do not think they are sick and suffer.

"Lord, not so violent, if I must serve You ... ! You know my *complete* weakness ... !

"But when I go back to being the poor creature, with a peaceful sweetness as a reminder of the hurricane of love which seized me, I feel that God has not accepted my prayer and my heart has withstood only by His will, but it now beats wearily, like a bird that has risen too high and sung too intensely....

But if my Lord has been consoled, if my nothingness has been able to serve the All, long live love and the gentle suffering of my wretched heart.... To die, too, through the violence of love! What do living and dying matter? All that matters is to make God happy.

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: I am the salvation of the people, says the Lord: in whatever tribulation they shall cry to Me, I will hear them; and I will be their Lord forever. - Ps 78(77):1

Collect: Almighty and merciful God, keep us in Your goodness from all things that may hurt us, so that we, ready both in mind and in body, may carry out Your bidding with a free heart. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Ep 4:23-28

Gradual: Ps 141(140):2

Alleluia: Ps 105(104):1

Gospel: Mt 22:1-14

Offertory: Ps 138(137):7

Secret: Grant, Lord, that these gifts, which we offer in the presence of Your majesty, may be profitable for our eternal salvation. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 119(118):4-5

Postcommunion: Lord, may Your healing work within us mercifully free us from our perverse affections and make us cling throughout our lives to Your commandments. Through our Lord.

October 20, 1946

Azariah says:

"How much worry there is in man over his health and prosperity! If one considers carefully, man is tormented and bound by this perennial anxiety, like a galley slave to his bench. It is an obsession which takes away from life even that little bit of material happiness which good health or good affairs can give. The fear of tomorrow! Fright over illnesses! The nightmare of a possible loss of money, employment, business, terror at meteorological upsets for farmlands, at epidemics for those raising livestock, at workers' rebellions for industrialists, at national revolts for the majority of the people.

"And man-who can do nothing against these things, in themselves immaterial, though accomplished by material forces, who cannot repel the microbe, theft, dismissal, the thunderbolt, hail, wind, earthquake, murrain, and revolt-lives with the noose of his fear around his neck. This living without peace is the fruit of having made materialism the law of his life. If man were spiritual, in his affections and thoughts, he would not tremble like this. First of all, because he would raise his glance to God in prayer;

secondly, because he would say, 'This is the passage; Heaven is the goal. The passage will be painful, but the goal is luminous and joyful. Let us endure today so as to enjoy tomorrow, eternally. Let us tremble only at losing the goal and not at losing something in the passage, something we cannot carry there, to the goal. With constancy and faith, charity, hope, and the other virtues, let us do our best only to construct for ourselves the treasure to take with us to the place of the goal! And let us trust in the Lord, who says, "I am the salvation of the people; whatever tribulation they cry out from, I shall hear them."' "

"But the request which is in the Prayer-how can it be reconciled with the offering of the victim souls? I speak to you because you are one, as are all the little voices, and through you I speak to the other victim souls. How can you utter the request of the Prayer if you have offered yourselves for immolation and if God has accepted you? Would you be traveling backwards, distancing yourselves from your place of torment? Would you perhaps beseech the Father to give you back health, well-being, affections-all that you have offered Him in order to be victims? Or will you not pray by uttering these words? No, you may say them. But by elevating your spirit so high as to ask for what is perfect-that is, that God, 'appeased, may ward off from you all *spiritual* adversity so that, free in your souls (from temptations and disturbances) and in your bodies (from fears about tomorrow and from the natural appetites of the flesh, appetites which it is not sinful to satisfy, but which it is meritorious not to gratify), you will be able to attend to God's service in freedom of spirit.' It becomes perfect, entirely supernatural, angelical prayer-so superior is it to the common prayer of man, in whom material concerns prompt 98% of his requests.

"And let us meditate on Paul, who continues to enumerate the conditions for being Christians *in reality*. To renew oneself in the spirit of one's mind-that is, to take on thought which contemplates and judges events and actions to be undergone or carried out from a supernatural standpoint.

"Man, even if a Catholic, does not strive to live and act in Christian morality. He lives in a continual compromise between Christianity and the flesh, Christianity and the world, Christianity and Satan, forgetful of a great statement: 'One cannot serve two masters at the same time.' But man serves several masters: himself, the world, Satan. Can he ever belong to God, then, if

he already belongs to three demanding, ferocious Mammons?

"How does man make himself and remain a slave of these Mammons? By taking on from childhood the thoughts of the flesh, the world, and Satan. He absorbs them, even without noticing them, by a spirit of imitation, from what surrounds him, which only exceptionally is perfect, even in the main nucleus, which is the family. But, when he has become mature, and, therefore, capable of completely distinguishing what is good and what is evil, what is the spirit of the age and what is the supernatural spirit, what is Christianity and what is not, the Christian who really wants to be one, has the duty *of renewing himself in the spirit of his mind, of putting on the new man*, who is the one born of the consequences of the sacrifice of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the new man, created, *recreated in justice and in true holiness*. And what is this new man like? Sincere, as Jesus Christ was, even in the face of the danger of death for telling the truth. For sincerity is one of the main characteristics of Jesus Christ, and He has imposed it as one of the main characteristics of his followers by saying, 'Let your "yes" be yes, and your "no," no.'

"And it is logical for this to be so. Jesus Christ is the Antagonist of Satan. Satan is Deceit. Jesus Christ is Truth. Can one who says he belongs to Christ ever take on the character of Satan? Let man, therefore, renew his thought in heroic faithfulness to sincerity. Sincerity with all and in all cases, without reflecting about possible gains coming from lying and possible harm coming from being sincere. Untruth is like leprosy, and it grows worse and worse after the first blemish. No one would like to be leprous. Let no one wish to be a liar. Lying, in addition to being harmful to oneself, is harmful to one's spirit, and also harmful to one's brothers. Whether you lie with them, deceiving them in regard to others or your sentiments; utter false testimony, calumny, or complaints; or, so as not to make them your enemies, fail to say to them, 'You are wrong for such-and-such a reason. You have this or that defect,' you harm the brothers who are 'members' with you and must, consequently, serve and be served by other members, just as happens in your bodies, with the mutual exchange of aids and functions among organs and members.

"If you get angry, take care not to sin. Living together is very difficult in a society where virtue is the exception and vice is the rule. If virtue were the rule, your life together would be sweet. But multiform vice predominates, the sevenfold sin; egoisms reign,

and living is ugly and hard. Neighbors give each other continual reasons for unrest.

"Observe, though, how balanced the Apostle is in demanding virtue from Christians, He does not impose an inhuman, impossible virtue, such as not getting worried for any reason. Even if unrest does not burst out into evident manifestations, an offense, an act of disobedience, or deceit cannot fail to disturb the heart's quietude, agitate it and stir it up. Disdain for the guilty one who has offended, disobeyed, or betrayed thus arises. That's human.

"In the true Christian, however, whose spirit is stronger than his flesh, the human movement is quickly assuaged, and, though the bitterness of the experience undergone remains, one forgives and does not react to those who have occasioned this bitter experience, and no vengeance is taken against the guilty. So it is, then, as Paul says, that 'if you get angry, you are able not to sin and must not sin.' One cannot keep the self from suffering over an offense received, but that is not to sin. To sin is when one offense is paid back with another, in a failure to observe charity.

"Let the sun not set on your wrath. Remember the words of the Gospel: 'If, when you are about to make your offering at the altar, you remember that your brother is angry with you, leave your offering at the foot of the altar and go first to reconcile yourself with your brother.' The sacrifice of your resentment, if you are the offended ones, of your pride, if you are the offenders, is worth much more than material sacrifice and mechanical prayer. And the offering or prayer-and even the Sacrament-is nothing if it is not preceded by the charity which is forgiveness and humility. Let the sun not set on your wrath. Yes, how can you entreat God in your evening prayer, that holy prayer capable of keeping away the phantasms of the night and Satanic suggestions, so acute in those hours, if you have Satan in you by harboring rancor towards those who have offended or harmed you? How can you say the Prayer of Prayers if you do not forgive? 'As we forgive those who trespass against us,' you say. But if you do not pardon, you do not forgive anything. Forgive, then, each day the evil which is done to you each day. Do not make room for the devil either. Indeed, one who does not forgive does not love; one who does not love drives God away and welcomes Satan. It is a truth seldom meditated on, but quite certain.

"Let whoever stole steal no longer. The Most Holy Lord Jesus has already told you how many ways there are to steal.
Many

would rebel if they were told, 'You are thieves'; and, in fact, they have never stolen a penny or a grape. But theft does not involve just money or food or gems. And thieves are much more numerous than people think. Uncounted moral thieves, spiritual thieves in regard to spiritual gifts received from a third party. Truly, too many do not recall and meditate on the fact that the Tenth Commandment orders them not to desire others' possessions. Now, if it is already a sin to desire, isn't it theft to take what belongs to others, whether it is a human affection (another's wife, to seduce another's daughter and tear her away from her duty as a daughter), a job, or a gift of God, by clothing oneself in it as if it were one's own glory and perhaps denigrating the person who received it from God to persuade others that the latter cannot be the one benefited, tormenting him, making him doubt his reason and his

soul, the origin of the gift, and so on, so as to enjoy afterwards his inheritance as one's own? Yes, this is theft, and aggravated by deceit and premeditation. And woe to whoever commits it. Only a sincere confession of the sin, with restitution of and indemnification for what was taken or damaged, can obtain forgiveness.

"But let him do some honest work to help the needy,'the Apostle advises. Honest work! How much I would have to say! But you understand, and I remain silent, and we both forgive out of

love for charity and so that I can relieve my spirit, and you, yours, like the evening sacrifice, to spread a pleasing fragrance at God's

feet. Spirits free of even the slightest cloud going against charity, perfumed with patience and gentleness, aromatized by forgiveness always, always.

"Always that way, soul of mine, and then, though continuing to walk amidst tribulations-0 victim soul that have been going up your calvary for years and on an ever more arduous path, the closer you get to the summit and consummation-God will be with you and will comfort you, reaching out to defend you against your torturers or adversaries so that they will not overstep the limit. That limit which God knows, which his prudence wants to have respected. For to want to wound and combat further would be to tempt the strength of your soul, and this is imprudence which God does not allow.

"God permits trials in order to grant greater blessedness, but He does not permit whims and unjust wishes, for He wants the salvation and not the death of spirits, and especially those who have given themselves generously for his glory.

"And I shall finish with the wish in the liturgy: 'May your conduct follow the holy desires of God until the end.'
"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

LAST SUNDAY IN OCTOBER
FEAST OF CHRIST THE KING
AND TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

FEAST OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST THE KING

Introit: Rv 5:12; 1:6; Ps 72(71):1

Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, You willed to restore all things in Your beloved Son, the King of the whole world; grant in Your mercy that all the families of nations, torn apart by the wound of sin, may become subject to His most gentle rule. Who, being God, lives and reigns.

Epistle: Cl 1:12-20

Gradual: Ps 72(71):8, 11

Alleluia: Dn 7:14

Gospel: Jn 18:33-37

Offertory: Ps 2:8

Secret: We offer You, Lord, the Victim of man's reconciliation; grant, we pray, that He whom we immolate in our present sacrifice may Himself give to all nations the gifts of unity and peace, Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who, being God, lives and reigns.

Communion: Ps 29(28):10,11

Postcommunion: After receiving the Food of immortality, Lord, we pray that we who glory in our service under the banner of Christ the King may come to reign forever with Him in His heavenly home. Who, being God, lives and reigns.

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Dn 3:31, 29, 35; Ps 119(118):1

Collect Generously grant, we entreat You, Lord, pardon and peace to Your faithful people, that they may be cleansed from their offenses and serve You with a quiet mind. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Ep 5:15-21

Gradual: Ps 145(144):15-16

Alleluia: Ps 108(107):2

Gospel: Jn 4:46-53

Offertory: Ps 137(136):1

Secret.- May these mysteries, Lord, bring us a heavenly remedy and purify our hearts from all evil. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 119(118):49-50

Postcommunion: We have obtained the food of immortality; grant, Lord, that what we have received with our mouths we may embrace with a pure mind. Through our Lord.

Azariah says:

"It will be double work. But the liturgical cycle must be fulfilled, and today's solemnity cannot pass unobserved. Let us, then, contemplate the lights of the Holy Mass of Jesus Christ the King.

"It begins with a statement which is a key to understanding how one becomes glorious. It says, 'The Lamb, *who has been immolated, is worthy to receive power, divinity, wisdom, fortitude, and honor. To Him be glory and rule forever and ever.*'

"Who is the Lamb? He is the Son of God and of Mary Immaculate. From the Father He has received life eternally; from his Mother He received humanity at the proper time and became Jesus Christ. In being Jesus Christ, has He perhaps ceased to be God? No, He has not ceased to be God, but He has also taken on human nature, becoming a true man, in order to be the Savior that is, Yeshua ['Yahweh saves'].

"The learned explain that this means 'Savior.' But, soul of mine, it also means something much more powerful! It contemplates and compares the Name of God, as the Hebrews said it, and the name of the Son of Mary. They have the same root, to signify the same origin and nature. Jesus, then, means God, remains God. And it means salvation, with the ending 'shua.' But descent-indeed, his proceeding from God the Father-is confirmed by the root of the name.

"In being God, could the One who is called the Lamb not be worthy to receive power, divinity, wisdom, fortitude, and honor? Not only was He capable of these things, but He possessed them through his own divine nature. Is it, then, an error to say that the Lamb is worthy to receive them? It is not an error. From the moment the Word became flesh and the Lamb of God for the great redeeming Passover, He joined the nature of Man to the perfection proper to God and, like all men, had a free will, passions, sentiments, and senses.

"The Most Holy Father did not apply any coercion to the Incarnate Son and treated Him just like every other man so that his sanctity as a Man would be real and perfect and similar to his Holiness as God. If the Father had bound or reduced the Son's freedom and senses and sentiments; if-and He could have done so-He had forbidden the devil, the world, and the flesh to assert themselves before the Incarnate Son, the Humanity of the Son and his sanctity as a man would have been a mere appearance.

October 27, 1946

But the Father wanted the full and perfect Holiness of the Son made Flesh so that the Victim would really be the spotless Lamb and immaculate host immolated *pro omnibus*.

"The Son of God was tempted not once, but thousands and thousands of times in his Humanity, for only therein could He be tempted-by his Humanity itself, by the world, and by the devil. And He remained Holy and Faithful to the Law, Justice, and, therefore, to his Mission by his own free will. And thus also faithful to the Sacrifice for whose accomplishment He had taken on Flesh.

"And it is *for this reason*, then, that He who, being God, became Man, Victim, and Lamb is worthy to receive, as a Man as well, what He already possessed as God, both glory and rule forever and ever.

"If He had not sacrificed Himself-this is the key-He would not have received it. It is because of his love of sacrifice-which is the highest form of love-that the Lamb is given the scepter of King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

"Let whoever wants to have true glory love sacrifice, imitating the Lamb, and with the Lamb he will share beatific glory.

"The Prayer sings, 'O almighty and eternal God, who wanted to restore all things in your beloved Son, King of the Universe.' Do you see, O souls, God's wish and his generosity in love? There was no one but a God who could placate God and restore Order, disturbed in Eden, to its primitive perfection. The Order was that they who had been created in the image and likeness of God might enjoy God and be gods in beautiful Paradise.

"It was not fitting that in men the spirit-granted by God, an emanation of God, a seed of God, the Father of men-should be lost after the death of the flesh. And neither was it fitting that a perpetual exile should keep the just spirits far from the Dwelling of the Father in a sempiternal limbo. The former was not fitting on account of the dignity which should be given to all that comes from God; the latter, on account of the Justice of God. The just had to receive a reward. What reward, if not Paradise? But souls impaired by original sin, which no purgatory erases, could not enter Paradise. There was, then, a need to cancel this Sin. There was a need for a God to re-establish Order and also elevate it, so that being unstained by the Sin does not now come solely from an inheritance, as men's cleanness would have been from a faithful Adam and Eve, but from the Sacrifice of a God-

Man, his infinite merits, and his Doctrine, which, when accepted by souls with good will, makes them imitators of the Son of God in works and virtues.

"Sacrifice, heroic love, the imitation of the Divine Martyr, the sharing of poor creatures in the Passion of a God, with similar merits and fruits-though we must always bear in mind the difference between God and man-would not have existed if the sin of two had not provoked the need for the Incarnation and the Most Holy Redemption. How much would have been lacking to men to make the angels envious if the Goodness of God the Father and the Generosity of God the Son, arising from and supported by Infinite Love, had not sent men the Savior, the perfect Master, whom every man who wants to become a 'god' must reflect and imitate in order to share the glory of Jesus Most Holy in Heaven.

"Your crowns are no longer the innocent, easy crowns which the sons of man would have had in Eden, but the golden, thorncovered, precious regal crowns of the brothers of Christ, of the Crowned King of pain, the Crowned King of Glory, the crowns of martyrdom, with hard branches of thorns beaded with blood, the crowns of glory beaded with your sacrifices which await you in Heaven.

"'Brothers,' the Apostle exclaims, 'let us thank God the Father, who has made us worthy to share in the destiny of the saints in the Light and, freeing us from the rule of darkness, has transported us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in the blood by which we have received redemption and the forgiveness of our sins.'

"A perpetual hymn of thanks should issue from men's hearts for so much love. A hymn not of useless words, but of loving surges and holy actions performed in imitation of Christ. A hymn of gratitude and praise for his having made you sharers with Christ in the redemption of your brothers, for having made you brothers of his Word, Jesus, Son of God and of Mary, the Most Perfect God, the Most Perfect Man, the eternal King, who has brought men'the image of the invisible God,'the true First-Born, 'for in Him all things were made on Earth and in Heaven,' and 'everything was made by means of Him, the "Word," and with a view towards Him'-that is, so that the Beloved of the Father might become King of Kings after having taken on all majesty: Humanity, Wisdom, Pain, the Pontifical Tiara, sway over Death.

"You are the brothers of such Perfection through the Most Pre-

cious Blood, which it pleased the Father that the Son should take up and shed, humiliating the fullness of his divinity, joined to the Immaculate Flesh, on the block of the Cross, to reconcile 'the things on Earth with those in Heaven.' And, a Perfect Brother, He extends his Hand to you and offers you the scepter so that, as we read in the story of Esther, you may kiss it and no longer have to fear the great and terrible King, who, for you, O you that love and imitate Him, is the Brother you ought not to be afraid of.

"The Father perpetually says to Him, 'Ask Me, and I shall give You the peoples as your heritage....' And He, the sublime King, asks for you, you that love, the best loved, and asks for sinners, and turns to you so that you will join your entreaty to His, your present suffering to his suffering in the past, and, joined together, work with Him to propagate his dominion to the very ends of the Earth. Be proud of this election, and militate heroically under the standard of Christ the King so as to reign afterwards with Him in heavenly glory.

"To militate heroically is to proceed according to the code which Paul establishes for his Christians. The life of the Christian is a perpetual militia, and a heroic one, for it is a constant battle against the same things Jesus Christ combated in his thirty-three years of earthly life to conserve Himself as the spotless Lamb.

"The Liturgy of this time preceding Advent already prepares hearts for the time of Christmas, recalling, through the epistles, the conditions in which the Christian must maintain himself to benefit from the great gift of the Incarnation of the Word.

"To live with prudence as the companion of one's actions without wasting time which you do not know you can later recover. Always to consider that even the best will have to render an account for many hours. Hours of lukewarmness, useless gossip, lazy somnolence, and even sin. To benefit, therefore, from every minute in order to make reparation for the evil done and the good not done. Tomorrow is never sure. Use the present, therefore, which is always a gift of God, to provide yourselves with the way to acquire merits in his Most Holy Eyes.

"To be prudent-that is, to reflect before doing things which an internal stimulus spurs you to do and which even seem good. Sometimes the devil prompts an impulse which is good in appearance, but which later creates incorrect conduct. The devil sometimes makes use even of a truly divine inspiration or gift to push people towards evil by either disdain or exaggerating it-or

by continuing to say it exists when it has already passed. That is the reason for the fall of many souls that God had dearly loved and that proved unable to be prudent and all the more watchful, the more sublime the gifts and inspirations were. Prudence in thought, action, the use of the gift, and carrying out the inspiration. Let there not issue forth the smoke of pride or the craving for exaggeration, which would spoil everything.

"To be able to remain silent and listen in silence to the reactions of conscience to the voices it hears. To recall that what comes from on high always communicates peace and fortitude against the voices of the senses and seductions, whereas what comes from the envious Adversary always occasions disturbance and fosters the self's yielding to what seduces the inferior part with sensuality or thought with pride and deceit. To learn to read the will of God. In a recollected life this is obtained. In an inattentive one it is not.

"Paul says, 'Do not get drunk on wine, the source of lust, but be full of the Holy Spirit.' Oh, not only the wine drawn from the vine is to be feared, but also, and even more, the wine of pride, more intoxicating than the juice of the vine! Pride does not make man a superman, but a pygmy, an animal, just a rational animal-and even this only slightly, for pride obfuscates reason an animal, and no longer a god, because of the absence of the Holy Spirit, who flees from the proud and the impure. Besides, pride is the impurity of the spirit. The presence of the Spirit of God divinizes man; pride deprives him of this Spirit, and man descends.

"Prudence in words. How much people sin with words! Licentious words, words of complaint, words of wrath, useless words. Be capable of keeping watch over the tongue, making it an organ of praise for God and edification for your brothers, and not an instrument for wounding or uproar.

"Prudence in saying to oneself and others, 'I am greater, and I give the orders.' Let those who are really greater than the others be humble in their greatness, older brothers and not despots over the younger ones. Let the younger be humble and assist the older, with their obedient humility, to carry out their mission. And let all occur in the love of Jesus Most Holy, who was humble like no other, and for the glory of God.

"The ancient Hebrews, in their sorrow devoid of brotherhood with the Most Holy Christ, could sit on the banks of the rivers

of Babylon and weep, remembering the Lord, whose indignation they had deserved. But Christians, even if they have sinned, must proceed, get back up after the fall, cleanse themselves in the blood of the Lamb, refresh themselves with the Bread of the strong, and continue on in confidence. They know that the Pure, Immaculate Host whose name is Jesus is there to plead their cause and placate the Father.

"God has promised through the mouth of his Word that whoever hopes in Him will not be disappointed. Let these words confirm the good, comfort the weak, and spur the guilty towards humble repentance, and may every Christian therein find a light of loving joy to proceed towards the Kingdom of God.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Es 13:9, 10-11; Ps 119(118):1

Collect: Lord, keep Your household, we pray, in Your continual mercy, so that, through Your protection, it may be free from all that may harm it and may serve You faithfully in good works. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Ep 6:10-17

Gradual: Ps 90(89):1-2

Alleluia: Ps 114(113A):1

Gospel: Mt 18:23-35

Offertory: Jb 1

Secret: In Your goodness, Lord, receive this offering, by which You have willed to be appeased and, in Your power and mercy, to restore to us our salvation. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 119(118):81, 84, 86

Postcommunion: We have obtained the food of immortality; grant, Lord, that what we have received with our mouth, we may follow after with a pure mind. Through our Lord.

November 3, 1946

Azariah says:

"Man, a new Lucifer, often wants to rebel against the Lord and proudly believes himself to be free to divert the events willed by God, even annul them, and create other, different ones which are his own. He offers resistance, introduces his laws, and boasts of doing so. The result is pain. For everything which departs from justice and order is a cause of pain. And man obtains pain for himself because he departs from supernatural order and justice. He punishes himself on his own and then accuses God of punishing him harshly. But the first author of man's punishment is man himself, for God is so much a Father that He would never arrive at certain forms of ferocity in punishment.

"Unjust punishments are those of men, for they are provoked by unjust things, punishments which overwhelm the guilty and the innocent-rather, they rage more furiously against the innocent than the guilty: above all, those most responsible for the punishment. It is their hour. Satan protects them because they serve him well. But, beyond earthly life, the equilibrium of justice will be re-established, and Satan will no longer be able to protect his servants or torment the servants of God, and the will of God will be untouchable, and He will decree joy for the martyrs

of man and Satan, joy for those who wept and suffered persecutions, joy for whoever was able to remain faithful to the virtues and the Law of love, and tremendous punishment for the rebels, the proud, the cruel, the unjust, those persecuting their brothers and offending God.

"On All Saints' Day I remained silent, for all Paradise was speaking to you with its love. Everything was a lesson in the joy with which you rejoiced. I was, therefore, at your side, protecting the mystery and adoring with you the Divinity that was benefiting you. What was I to say in addition to all you were told by what you saw and tasted and understood? The Church in glory, in giving you what you have called 'her love,' and it was a proper definition, was giving you the most beautiful and just explanation of what the dogma of the Communion of the Saints is, what sanctity is, what the way to become holy is, and what constitutes the reward for whoever is able to become a saint. The liturgy for the Feast of All Saints changed from words into a vision, from a vision into comprehension, and from comprehension into participation. I remained silent, keeping watch and venerating.

"But today I can rightly say, 'Well, you have seen the blessedness of those who were able to be spotless on their way. Proceed like them in the Law of the Lord and you will arrive at that blessedness which compensates you for every pain suffered here below.'

"And love, as you felt loved by the great and luminous People of the Saints; love and pray for all your militant brothers, to draw down upon them the protective care of God to defend them from trials which they are unable to overcome and attract them, with his goodness, to goodness in works and thoughts. And you know the ones you must always begin with.... Jesus on the cross had the first word, of prayer, for those who were the greatest sinners and his most subtle executioners-rather, torturers-for even to the part that was not flesh they gave pain, the greatest pain.

"To love this way requires great spiritual fortitude, inexhaustible fortitude. Your self is a trinity of different forces and sensations. The highest part, the spiritual self, in the true children of God has a continuous will to love and forgive in order to imitate Christ Most Holy and, consequently, the desire for his way of living in Love and with love. The moral self already reacts more forcefully against what strikes it. Wounded affections take offense. Shaken esteem loses heart. Disappointments lead to severe judg-

ments; offenses, to a will to return what has been received, or at least to resentments which harden towards the guilty.

"Man has material dullness even in his way of thinking and acting in response to what he receives. Only the spiritual self escapes from this condemnation of yours for being sensual, even in the moral sphere, almost as if the roots of the tree of your carnality sank, beyond the flesh, into the immaterial-and yet already opaque and dull, in comparison to the spirit-fibers of your thought.

"Finally, the material part, the animal self-also because pain, whatever its origin and form may be, is always irritation of flesh and blood, nerves and organs-howls-at every slightest cause of pain or offense which, in disturbing physical and psychic equilibrium, occasions disturbances for the whole man-his animal will to react violently. A god and a beast are hidden in man. At the center, acting as an axis for the scale of these two opposing forces, there stand man's will, his reason, his moral sphere, and the needle of the scale is subject to continuous jolts. It tips towards the beast if the dark forces predominate. It tips towards the god if the luminous spiritual forces predominate. But if the axis is steady, if it does not come unhinged, and man is able to maintain himself as a *rational animal*, the needle of the scale shifts to the place where there is the fervor of supernatural works, and the beast is overcome, and the god triumphs.

"I could also tell you that the will of man, free and conscious, is like the magnetized needle of a compass quivering on the delicate central pin, nearly suspended, but attracted by divine force, by the perfect Pole opposed to the demoniacal pole. If the will is able to keep itself good, the needle must necessarily turn at all times towards the place where the supernatural is. The events of life may turn the creature around and around in every direction, like a leaf caught by a whirlwind. But the will, his needle, will always point in the direction of God. It may sometimes have to turn itself around completely to find God again. But it will do so when God is its All. And it will always be in God, always in love, even if men and demons, working tirelessly, endeavor to disturb and overwhelm it, take it into the storm towards deadly reefs. No, if one is strong in God, his needle does not lose its magnetism, and it turns to God and works through God and forgives through God.

"How does one get to remain in this fortitude? Paul explains,

'By putting on the armor of God'-that is, by taking on his virtues to make them plates for the defensive armor. For only the forces of God can resist the forces assaulting you, that are not the little men who are apparently your attackers; they are not the forces of the flesh and blood latent in yourselves; but it is the dominators of this world of darkness, the princes and powers of hell that are really the agents moving those who attack you and cause you pain. Men are often puppets controlled by Satan, and they don't know it and don't believe it. They could not do so much evil by themselves. But, superficial, thoughtless, and proud as they are, they do not stay on the defensive, disdain the defenses God offers them, and naked, weak, lulled to sleep, and manipulated, they are eventually seized by the Adversary, who shakes them, occasioning the children of God pain.

"Another dangerous force is the flesh. It is in you and is the rebel that always lifts up its head. But the weapons of God tame it. Take them up, then, to withstand in the temptations with names by the thousands coming from thousands and thousands of points, which rage so against man's animality, along with his moral sphere and his spirit, and you will be victorious. Truth, justice as your sword and armor. Faith as your shield. Profound knowledge of pre- and post-Christian Wisdom to be able to walk with no danger of error on the peaceful, holy way of God.

"Faith, faith, faith. Whoever believes in the future life to be enjoyed in union with God, whoever believes in the truths taught is not lost. The fiery darts, says Paul (I also call them the poisoned darts of the Evil One), are rendered cold and harmless by the innocent river of Faith. Faith, Fortitude, and Wisdom. And you will have a spirit victorious over the seductions and assaults of all that is hatred of God.

"And patience with yourselves as well. Not becoming impatient if, in spite of all care, some blows reach you. Do not say to yourselves, 'It is a sign that I have fallen out of God's grace.' Always consider that Satan works against those who do not belong to him. He is not a fool who wastes time on those he has subjected. He uses his time to intelligent advantage to do evil where it is worthwhile to do so, where there is an occasion to cause God sorrow, where to leave someone in peace would amount to confessing that he is regarded as defeat and a loss. For Satan sees the past and the present, but not the future. He can, therefore, hope, as long as man lives, to make his own even the one who

at present is just. And by his perseverance he sometimes succeeds. "Take shelter in the refuge of God, and do not fear. Bear in mind Job of Uz. Satan challenged God. Satan, who does not see the future and hopes for victory even over one whose name is already written in Heaven and, as a mocker of God and the just man, satirically stated, 'Touch him in his possessions, and you will see how he curses you!' And the Lord allowed him to tempt Job, but not to take his life. And Satan raged against the just one, not sparing him any sorrow, not even that of the unjust reproaches of the spurious just men-that is, just only in words and because they enjoyed every good.

"You know what this sorrow is. It is the sorrow more painful than illness, death, and the loss of possessions. The one that puts virtues to the test more than everything else. But Job (do not observe the fact that he uttered laments in his sorrow-he remained a man), since he was clothed in the fortitude of the virtues of God, continued to be just, and Satan lost the battle, and the three puppets moved by him to increase the pain of the man subjected to trial and lead him to speak words of lament were humiliated.

"Satan can act within certain limits and no further. Always remember this. And just let the new Eliphazes, Bildads, and Zophars persecute you, speaking with their tongues alone, like talking birds or mechanical instruments, without the luminosity of reason. Let them act, and do not be consumed with the fear that God will not come to your aid. God sees you and them, and God provides. Remain in the way of the Lord, and He will be with you.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Ps 130(129):3-4, 1-2

Collect: O God, our refuge and our strength, hear the devout prayers of Your Church, being Yourself the source of all devotion, and grant that what we confidently ask, we may effectually obtain. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Ph 1:6-11

Gradual: Ps 133(132):1-2

Alleluia: Ps 115(113B):11

Gospel: Mt 22:15-21

Offertory: Es 14:12, 13

Secret: Merciful God, grant that this saving oblation may free us continually from the burden of our faults and guard us from all that may hurt us. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 17(16):6

Postcommunion: We have received, Lord, the gifts of the sacred mystery, humbly entreating You that what You have commanded us to do in memory of You, may serve to support our weakness. You, who are God, living and reigning.

November 10, 1946

Azariah says:

"No one would find grace before the Lord if, in order to grant it, He required immaculateness of spirit. But Christians know that it has been the time of Mercy since the Heavens were opened to let the Just One rain down and reopened to receive the Victor, *who reigns* and has instituted *his* time-that is, the time of Mercy.

"Mercy is with the God of Israel, the Eternal and Immense God, whose name is Jesus Christ, your Divine Brother, the beloved Son with whom the Father is well pleased and to whom He refuses nothing.

"Once man truly cried out 'from the depths.' It was the time of severity. Man trembled before God, this God, immense in all his attributes, with such sublime Majesty and Perfection that poor men, aware of their blameworthy wretchedness, quaked and did not dare even to call Him by his true Name or raise their gaze towards his throne. Crushed, therefore, by such Infinity, they moaned in the depths of their abyss. How far removed, separated, the Earth then was from Heaven!

"But now, in this hour which is already twenty centuries long,

not from the depths, but from the heights of the altar of Christ man can cry out to the One he knows is his Father. The altar: the Cross of Jesus Christ.

"It was quite lofty, on a hilltop, on that Friday. But it is much higher, and on a most lofty mountain touching Heaven, with its weight of mercy speaking on your behalf. All the sins of men were on the Cross of the Divine Martyr so as to be expiated. But all men's needs are also there, and Jesus has already paid for them for your sake. All that you obtain has been paid for by Him with his Love and Pain. You receive everything through his merits. And lest you be unable to speak to the Father with perfect words, He taught you the Prayer in which all men's true needs are summarized, those of both the flesh and the spirit. And, still not content, from the Cross he prayed-and from the Cross prayspointing out his tremendous scaffold to the Father and saying, 'Because of what I suffered, give me graces for *them*.'

"Maria, victim soul, it is always through the Cross that you obtain graces. Through the Cross of Jesus, and through your cross as victims. They keep the gates of the Heavens open. They support the world and raise up the sorrows of your brothers, presenting them to the Eternal. The perpetual Holy Mass of love. And the paten is your pain, together with that of Christ, your immolation, and on the paten are the needs of the world and your brothers: the need for continuous forgiveness, continuous mercy, light, guidance, spiritual and corporal health, food, clothingeverything.

"How much suffering there is in the world through its own fault! How many sorrows men occasion themselves! And then they weep and despair, and are unable to seek the fount of peace-at least of peace, at least of resignation-to suffer meritoriously the bitter fruits of their flowers of evil.

"And you assist them, souls dead to yourselves, to your needs, and active, diligent, most diligent regarding the souls of your brothers, souls caught up by compassionate love for those who, whether innocent or guilty, suffer around you and are unable to suffer.

"Never cease to thank the Lord, who has given you the gift of loving pain. It is the greatest gift God has given you. Let us bless Him together.

"Now, then, men no longer cry out from the depths. I am speaking of those who are living members of the Body of Christ. But

they cry out from the height of his Most Holy Scaffold. And how can one fear that the Father will not heed the voice crying out to Him from the Cross of his Beloved One? Be capable of praying from that point, O Christians, and praying with faith, and you will receive what is useful for you.

"Do you hear Paul, who nearly takes up again my previous concept? The Apostle trusts in saving his brothers. Why? Because he loves them with the very entrails of Christ, with *his* love, with *his* Heart, with *his* pain. He loves them in the chains received for having evangelized, in the approaching martyrdom; he loves them, with Christ, to the end. 'And, having loved them.... He loved them until the end.'

"Persevere, soul of mine, in glorious love. Love, love all, *until the end*. Perfect your love more and more. And for whatever you may obtain, however minimal, you will have peace in you that is, God. A minimum which is an absolute and blessed maximum. Even if God cannot in justice give to those for whom you pray and suffer what you beseech Him for, even if they reject the graces God grants through your prayer or use them badly, the peace of love will be in you. And all will be sweet therein. You feel how sweet it is to live in this peace! It is to live already in the breeze of Heaven. Hoping in Christ, asking for your brothers that 'charity may increasingly abound in knowledge and in all sharpness of discernment so that they will choose what is best and be pure and irreproachable until the day of Christ,' and proceed tranquilly.

"Where there is charity, where the flowering of charity is luxuriant, Satan cannot be as possessor and dominator. Remain tranquil. He, your Lord and mine, has said, 'You know the plant by its fruit.'

"A Satanic plant could not yield fruits of love. Look back. You have always been a lover of Charity. But if this was sufficient to make you loved with a love of special fondness, how scanty, imperfect, and human your love still was alongside what has come to you since you became the Master's pupil. Your branch of love for God was robust, but still weak, that of your love for your neighbor. A love still too human to be perfect. Even when you offered yourself, it was still imperfect love because you were unable to

¹ Maria Valtorta had offered herself as a victim to Merciful Love on January 28, 1925 and to Divine Justice on July 1, 1931.

forgive *everything*. You gave your life for them; you were unable to give complete forgiveness. You had not understood that there is no love greater than to give one's life for one's enemies. For then it means that, in addition to material life, the forces of mental and emotional life, those which it is hardest to sacrifice, are sacrificed as well.

"The Most Holy Lord Jesus, in his discourse at the Supper, having as his table companions men who were still very much men, did not speak of this perfect love. It would not have been understood. Indeed, only with difficulty were they then able to comprehend the love of sacrifice for one's friends. He left, therefore, to the Spirit Paraclete-to Him who would complete the teaching of the Word by communicating at the same time the capacity to comprehend and assimilate-the task of making this perfection of love understood, limiting Himself, for his part, to giving a hint of it which none of the Eleven understood-the Apostle who killed Love, unworthy of hearing Love's last teachings, had already gone off-a hint which no one understands even now, O rare souls for whom the Spirit of Love Himself always makes it comprehensible, a hint not sufficiently meditated upon in the words 'My commandment is that you love one another as I have loved you'-that is, by dying for his enemies so that they would have life.

"Jesus Most Holy, in speaking to the Eleven, in reality was speaking to the *whole* world, present and future, to those who loved Him and those who hated Him, to those who would love Him and those who would hate Him and derisively contest his Words to destroy them in many hearts. Indeed, He was speaking more to the lukewarm and adversaries than to those who were his, for He was mainly concerned with the redemption of the lukewarm and blameworthy.

"He had also referred to the task of the Holy Spirit in completing the teaching by saying, 'I still have many things to tell you which you are not now able to comprehend, but when the Spirit of Truth comes, He will lead you towards all Truth.'

"The direct instruction you have received with your work as a spokeswoman has brought you Him who perfects all affection, and your love has been formed by reaching the complete measure, which is to be able to die even to one's justified resentments, to be able to sacrifice everything-even the judgment of others, just severity with others-to perfect love.

"How beautiful and sweet it is for brothers to dwell together! Yes, it would be beautiful if they really were brothers. But they are often half-brothers and sometimes Cains and wound. It is then that forgiving charity descends like oil to console the wounded heart which nevertheless forgives, thinking of its Crucified Lord. These are the sentiments which I vivify in you so that they will flower in your heart and on your lips with words suited to gain the favor of your Shepherd.

"Do not fear. The Spirit Consoler will help you to speak when you are questioned. Your Jesus Most Holy has promised: 'Do not worry about how to respond and what you should say, for at that moment you will be given the words. For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father.'

"Remain, therefore, in peace. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are with you.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit!"

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Jr 29:11, 12, 14; Ps 85(84):2

Collect: Pardon, Lord, we entreat You, the sins of Your people; that by Your goodness we may be free from the bonds of those sins which, by our frailty, we have committed. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Ph 3:17-21; 4:1-3

Gradual: Ps 44(43):8-9

Alleluia: Ps 130(129):1-2

Gospel: Mt 9:18-26

Offertory: Ps 130(129):1-2

Secret: We offer You, Lord, this sacrifice of praise for the increase of our devotion in Your service, that You may complete the work, which without merit on our part, You have begun in us. Through our Lord.

Communion: Mk 11:24

Postcommunion: We entreat You, almighty God, that You would not suffer us to be subject to human dangers, now that You grant us to rejoice in this divine communion. Through our Lord.

November 17, 1946

Azariah says:

"The sins of the peoples are such and so numerous that if God's benignity and his divine patience were not infinite, the world would for some time have been destroyed as the horror of the Universe, a horror that should be removed, for in the perfect creation opprobrious things must not exist.

"But in the world, which now is truly the vestibule of Hell and the domain of Satan, there are always just people. Rare as stars on a stormy night, as palm trees in the arid vastness of the deserts. And as has already been understood from the episode of Abraham, God is ready to use mercy even with sinners and save them from punishment, if among them there are just ones who pray. To save them from material and moral misfortunes as long as their day lasts, leaving time until their eventide to return to the Lord. Not to save them beyond life, if they have deserved punishment, for on the Day of God the intercession of the just is no longer of use to restore salvation to those dead to Grace. Justice seeks its course. And even if with wrath and rebelliousness they scream at the Eternal Judge, 'You hate us and cheat us out of our share in goodness,' He will answer them injustice, 'No, I have given you your share. You wanted to enjoy. Enjoy

wealth, power, lust, and debauchery, obtained by every means. You have had them. I let you enjoy as you wished. You have chosen. I respect your choice and leave it to you eternally. Those who have lived chastely, temperately, justly, and mercifully, who have suffered and wept on your account, too, and have loved God, their neighbor, and even you, that afflicted them-these shall enter into my Kingdom. Go. Did you not perhaps say that it was foolishness to postpone joy for the future and that it was wise to enjoy the certain present? This is what I grant you. You have enjoyed in the little present; now suffer in the eternal present.'

"The just pray for sinners. Woe if it were not that way! The prayers and the tears of the just are mixed with the daily, perpetual lavacre of the Divine Blood. And this dew of charity cleanses the world of that excess filth which Infinite Mercy could not tolerate. So that the world can endure, although the Eye of God views it with a severity which impresses us angels. If by chance a single day were to pass without even one work of justice being accomplished throughout the Orb, if by chance there came a day in which the just turned into sinners, the light would not again illuminate the Earth because it would no longer exist. Justice, during the night, would erase it from among the works of creation.

"Let what I am saying give you the measure of how valuable men's justice is in the sight of God. One of the causes of justice is sincere, humble knowledge of oneself and the works of God in you. This is one of the forms of wisdom that is hardest to find even in the best Christians. A mistaken evaluation of the virtues makes people become insincere in order to be humble, and sometimes even hypocrites, without considering that they thereby become ungrateful as well.

"There are many who, being good and possessing special gifts, and knowing they are good and have been especially benefited by the Lord, through an unjust humility say they are perfidious or devoid of those gifts which others know are in them.

"In these things, too, very great justice, prudence, humility, and sincerity are needed. Prudence in keeping the gift gratuitously received concealed so that knowledge of it will not degenerate into people's fanaticism, disturbance of the one benefited, wasted time-which could instead be used worthily in the service of the Lord-temptation, and sometimes sin, through pride. Not to *lead oneself* into temptation is obligatory. Man, even when fa-

vored to a greater extent by God, must always remember that he is a man and, therefore, not entertain illusions about being perfect or rashly take for granted that the Lord will make up for any act of imprudence committed out of love for his dear son. To ask the Father not to lead you into temptation is a good request. But the right and proper way to behave is to take care on one's own not to place oneself in temptation.

"The devil is a great seducer. But man often calumniates the devil himself because he makes the devil the cause of all his falls. But it is frequently man who goes in search of slippery ground, not the devil who pushes him onto it. Could someone who went walking on a roof's edge accuse the owner of the house of having made him fall and get hurt? He could not. Likewise, the man who, in one sense or another, spontaneously and imprudently places himself in danger of sinning cannot accuse either God or the devil on account of his sin, for neither God nor the devil have led him into temptation, but his own will has been the only one to blame, having placed itself in an occasion of sin.

"This goes for everyone. In particular, in the Lord's beloved ones with extraordinary gifts not to protect the gift received with secrecy so as to avoid fanaticisms which may prompt selfcomplacency and, therefore, ruinous pride is to lead oneself into the condition of committing the sin of pride. Imprudent is the instrument of God who does not keep the Lord's gift secret. Imprudent three times over is the Priest who, as the director of the instrument or confessor or pastor or diocesan Bishop or one temporarily placed in a position to counsel and direct (like a Lenten preacher or organizer of spiritual exercises or missionary), on coming to know of an extraordinary case, divulges it or, on finding out that the instrument does not know how to behave and risks ruining himself and the gift out of either ignorance or imprudence, does not intervene with holy counsels to help the instrument for his own good and that of the gift of which the instrument is the depository.

"Prudence, which is always the companion of a silent reserve not permitting propaganda and conceals the extraordinary under the ordinary appearances of life, should never degenerate, however, into false humility and deceit.

"When it is necessary for you, dear extraordinary souls, to speak or respond to *someone duty-bound* to question you, you must not, out of false modesty, say, 'I have nothing, for I am the greatest

sinner,' when, within yourselves, you feel that you are, indeed, little souls, but also that, by the grace of God, you are not sinners to the point of disgusting the Lord. It would be a lie. If you were convinced of being such, saying it would be nothing but a humble confession of your sin and wretchedness, regarded as such by you, but if conscience assures you that your smallness is not sullied with serious sins, you must not lie. And, above all, you must not do so with the secret desire to hear yourselves being told, 'No, you are holy,' to take delight therein. With your spirit humbly kneeling before the tender power of God, who loves you, sincerely respond to the one having the right to question you: 'Yes, the Lord has done these things in me, although I am poor and imperfect.'

"Mary was not proud in singing her psalm. She humbly recognized the great things which God had done for her so that her praise would rise to Heaven, and with hers that of her kinswoman, founder of the family of all the souls that would praise the Lord through Mary, the gentle, holy instrument of the Lord's works and your salvation.

"Paul is not proud in saying, 'Imitate me.' He simply tells his faithful to imitate him, for the mercy of God, joined to man's will, had made him, Paul, a perfect image of Christ. Just as elsewhere he had mentioned his past sins, just as elsewhere he had confessed that, when already an Apostle, the angel of Satan had struck him, so here he says, 'Imitate me,' as he sincerely states in another place that he enjoyed the Lord's revelations and was taken up to the third heaven.

"To say, 'God has loved me in an extraordinary way' is not to sin by pride if you say so-and God sees you-with one sentiment and will alone: that of magnifying the Lord for what He has done for you. Did the Divine Master perhaps not say, 'When a lamp is lit, it is not placed under a bushel, but on high so that it will be seen and give off light'? And is it not further stated, 'The just will be like the stars'?

"God lights them. God lights you. Oh, the man who goes on a solitary road at night raises his head and sees the stars following their course from east to west, and even if he does not know the name of each individual light, he is able to say to himself, 'This is the way to go to the goal,' for the stars' passing overhead from east to west gives him the direction of the cardinal points.

"So it is with the instruments of God. They must shine. Lofty

in their special sphere where God has situated, separated, and secluded them from the rest of the world-with their names and addresses unknown, sometimes they themselves unknown as special instruments for years even after their death-they must, however, shine. And how? By the sanctity of their lives, by tireless work obedient to God's desires, and by their love and other virtues which at the right moments 'magnify the Lord for the great things done in them,'but they always illuminate, for the Lord, living in them completely, shines and casts forth his light and his holiness from them, and, like sailors lost on a dark, tumultuous sea, spirits head towards these solitary beacons, battered by the storms of the Enemy and the enemies of God and of his instruments, but strong, heroic, always ready to receive the Light and beam it upon the shipwrecked so that they will be saved.

"Souls seek God. It often seems to you that they do not. You do not know the spiritual sufferings of the souls enclosed in a body and subject to thought which are hostile to God. Those who possess these disheartened souls do not themselves notice the tears of their blinded, chained soul going about in distress in search of the Light, from the depths of its jail, sometimes trying to escape and seek God, and drink a sip of heavenly air, and fill its spiritual sight with a heavenly light, and receive mysterious words to bear off with itself in secret. Words which seem to have been spoken and received in vain and which sometimes reappear on one's deathbed and win the final battle, delivering a spirit to God. Words which sometimes halt a descent into horror and crime. Words which sometimes pull a spirit out of the abyss and put it back on the way of God.

"Many words are not needed. Sometimes none. To see one another-a glance. Your eyes gaze in a way that is no longer earthly. You look, but it is not you-Christ looks through you. You see: but you do not see the man in front of You. You see his soul with your soul. It is because of this looking with the soul after you have filled your gaze with celestial light that you do not look the way everyone else does. You listen to the stories of others and often remain silent. But while your lips are silent, your soul loves. And by loving it caresses and comforts the embittered, sick, irate soul speaking to you. You also speak sometimes and say commonplace words to commonplace listeners, from whom you want to keep your secret hidden. But, like the note of a song which now and then escapes from a closed hall and fills the street with

sweetness and which the poor man gathers in and draws consolation from, now and then a spiritual gem falls from your lips, a spark escaping from the Fire possessing you, and the one speaking with you receives it and meditates upon it, and his soul awakens, reflects, and sometimes decides.

"Nothing from the works of love is ever lost. Love is in you, and everything is thus active. Yes, there are many, too many, who live as enemies of the Cross of Christ. Their end is perdition; their god is their belly; and they make their glory consist of their shame and think of nothing but the things of the earth. It is true. But they are often only savage souls or have been made savage by a combination of circumstances. *They do not know. They are not aware.* They thus do not love and do not distinguish.

Churches are of no use to them. Priests are of no use to them. What are Priests to them? The Sacraments are useless for them. What are the Sacraments to them?

"Does the savage perhaps know what the ship is that he sees passing before his coasts or the airplane streaking across the sky? He thinks they are mysterious, magical, fearful forms capable of harming him and combats them, if he can. Does the cannibal perhaps know what the man is who in the name of the Cross and knowledge ventures into his lands to take them a faith or to study the diseases and treat them? To him, the cannibal, he is the prey

that should be killed to be eaten, or at least killed as a malefic wizard. Does the savage-or even the primitive or ignorant man perhaps know what the serum is that the doctor wants to inject him with to save him from a certain pestilence? To him, it is poi-

son, the white man's vengeance upon the inferior races, and among whites in civilized countries it is a means used by those in power to suppress the most wretched. How many doctors have

died lynched by the fury of the fear of the savage and ignorant? "Do not, therefore, be amazed if the spiritual savages dwelling in your midst fear and hate, shun or rage against what is of the spirit and the Church, and live in their brute ignorance.

They are unfortunates. They do not go to the spiritual streams. They see them, for they are conspicuous, and shun them. But who avoids drinking from a fresh jet emerging from a mountainside? It seems so humble, so devoid of all miraculous power. There is no suspicion or precaution against it. And people drink from its freshness. And Grace enters this way, unnoticed, where it would have entered in no other manner.

"Many who were enemies of the cross and lived for their bellies and the things of the earth stop being such through the secret operations of the secret missionaries of the civilized world that you are, instruments of God.

"Many, too, hate you-those in whom Satan reigns and hates you from them. But disregard this; do not be afraid of them. Tell yourselves, 'We are citizens of Heaven, from which there comes to us the Christ, who transforms the body of our humiliation into light that will not go out.' And be steadfast in your work.

"Even if you do not find anyone to lend you a hand among the priests of Christ, just as Paul exhorts his faithful companion and his Philippians to do with Syntika and Evodia, be steadfast, considering that your names are written in the book of life, for you live, work, suffer, and die for the glory of God and the knowledge of the Gospel.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Introit: Jr 29:11, 12, 14; Ps 85(84):2

Collect: Stir up, we pray, Lord, the wills of Your faithful people, so that they, seeking more earnestly the fruit of Your divine work in them, may receive with more abundance the remedies of Your mercy. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Cl 1:9-14

Gradual: Ps 44(43):8-9

Alleluia: Ps 130(129):1-2

Gospel: Mt 24:15-35

Offertory: Ps 130(129):1-2

Secret: Be favorable, Lord, to our entreaties and, accepting the prayers and offerings of Your people, convert the hearts of us all to Yourself so that we, delivered from worldly covetousness, may rise to desire the things of heaven. Through our Lord.

Communion: Mk 11:24

Postcommunion: Grant us, we pray, Lord, that through these sacraments which we have received, all that is evil in our souls may be cured by the gift of their healing power. Through our Lord.

November 24, 1946

Azariah says:

"In the Prayer of the Mass proper to St. John of the Cross there is summarized in a few words the whole theory to be perfect Christians: to deny oneself and love the Cross. The holy Doctor and Reformer of Carmel is great in Heaven because he was able to do these two things in perfect fashion.

"It would have been little to have reformed the old Constitutions. The heads of nations also reform the Constitutions of States. But few of them are holy. Even the owners of a business reform uses and practices in work. But few of them are holy.

"And just as little-indeed, less than nothing, or, even more, a motive for condemnation-would it have been for St. John of the Cross to have written the mystical treatises if his actions had not corresponded to the words. Writers, too, compose moral pages to make the figure of one or several characters in their books shine forth, but, afterwards, in everyday life, they observe conduct which is the antithesis of the moral theses they have supported in their books. They are, therefore, not saints, though they have written moral and even mystical pages. Theirs has not been the fragrance of their lives given off in words, the conviction of their minds fixed upon paper, but only a bit of cleverness formed to receive applause

and gain therefrom. They are, therefore, mountebanks-this alone. "If St. John of the Cross had written these mystical works only through his capacity as a writer and had then been lukewarm, just lukewarm, he would have himself written his own condemnation to a more or less long punishment. For Justice would have asked him, 'Why were you a hypocrite? The excuse the ignorant have of not knowing is of no use to you. You have known love and have described it, but you were not afterwards burned by it. Go, therefore, to learn to love and to be sincere.'

"But St. John of the Cross heroically reformed himself before others and practiced the perfection he described to leave souls a code of perfection. And for this reason he was great; for this reason he is holy.

"And for the same reasons every Christian can be holy: by denying himself-that is, by reforming the human self into a perfect spiritual self and loving the Cross. Without imitation of the Divine Crucified One there can be no reforming oneself, and without love for the cross, the transformation of the self cannot be worked. For to reform oneself means to work with shears and cautery upon the rebellious plant of humanity, to work thereupon not once, but a hundred and a thousand times, because it is a rebellious plant which from the very sites of the amputations sprouts new shoots or rejects the grafts forcing it to change its nature and remain subject to the will of the highest part-the spirit.

"In what I have told you in referring to the Saint commemorated today, has what the Epistle says perhaps not already been dealt with? That letter, written so many centuries before the coming of St. John of the Cross, illustrates, however, the virtues of the Christian and indicates what ways are to be kept to so as to receive the virtues always according to an order. For the truth does not change. It is what it is today, as it was twenty centuries ago and will be on the last day. There is only one way to reach Heaven-that of denying oneself and loving the cross. A way which is, as Paul says, wisdom and spiritual intelligence and knowledge of the will of God.

"Knowledge of this divine Will (which proposes to you-and also imposes upon you-all things for the purpose of giving you glory and joy) and spiritual wisdom and intelligence, which develop luxuriantly from the renunciation of all that weighs the spirit down and from loving meditation on the Divine Model, who denied Himself to the point of death on the cross, grant that you

may 'behave in a manner worthy of God' so as to please Him in every action, performing actions which will have eternal life beyond life as their fruit and virtue as their support and seal. Oh, the joyful and active life of those able to deny themselves and love the cross!

"It is similar to a fruitful spring day in which everything cooperates to make flowers open on plants and fecundate them so that the flowering will not be useless. From one action others are produced; from one sacrifice a perfecting is generated. From one throb of love there comes a love of sacrifice. From a love of sacrifice, a loving action. From a loving action, the courage for greater renunciation and imitation of the Divine Crucified One. It is a chain. Rings are joined to rings-they succeed one another, increasingly sturdy, ever more in the light, in the heights, towards God, the Fatherland, joy. And the artificer of his perfection proceeds: thanking God the Father for 'making him worthy to share in the lot of the saints' who live in Light here and enjoy Light in Heaven, free from the seductions of Darkness, for Darkness finds no place to take root so as to do harm in a heart which has amputated itself at all the points suitable for the Great Enemy to get a grip so as to enter and cause ruin.

"Courage, Maria. To the point of the absolute annihilation of the creature so that God's cause will triumph-and his glory will increase with many other spirits upon whom the Blood of Christ is waiting to descend to redeem and forgive.

"Remember that the little voices, who are always victim souls, are also little Moseses. And the lot of the Moseses is to pray on the mountain while the Lord's athletes combat amidst the Lord's enemies for his glory.

"The glory of God comes from the knowledge of God. Where there is ignorance of God, his glory does not even exist, for ignorance combats the Lord because it does not know Him. In not knowing Him, it does not love Him and does not seek out his words. It lives in sin, therefore, more out of ignorance than through a will to sin.

"Help with your whole self the athletes who come to combat Satan and ignorance, heresies and indifference. Your Love, Jesus Most Holy, is waiting for an offering of souls from you as well.

"Little voice, little host, also be a little missionary, supporting the missionaries with your sacrifices. For the glory of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Introit: Ps 25(24):1-4

Collect: Lord, rouse Your power, we pray, and come; that we may deserve by Your protection to be rescued from the threatening dangers of our sins and by Your deliverance to be made free from them; You who are God, living and reigning with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.

Epistle: Rm 13:11-14

Gradual: Ps 25(24):3, 4

Alleluia: Ps 85(84):8

Gospel: Lk 21:25-33

Offertory: Ps 25(24):1-3

Secret: May these oblations, Lord, cleanse us by their strong power and bring us in greater holiness to their own fountainhead. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 85(84):13

Postcommunion: Lord, may we embrace Your mercy in the sanctuary of Your house, that we may herald with due honors the festival of our renewing. Through our Lord.

December 1, 1946

Azariah says:

"It is laborious-when men weigh down or wound one's wings-to raise oneself with the spirit to God. Men are cruel. The precept of fraternal love is the one most trampled upon by them. With the fury of a sanguinary madman, or of a child with a toy, according to the case and the individual, they rage against their brothers, and especially-I might say 'exclusively'-against those among their brothers who, because of their spiritual formation, make them sure they will not react by returning evil for evil.

"But, soul of mine, even if it's laborious, it must be done indeed, the more laborious it is, the more it must be done-for no one can heal the wounds inflicted upon the spirit by men except the Physician, the Comforter of spirits: God, the good Father who does not disappoint the one who trusts in Him.

"Are you so wounded that you cannot fly? Like a dove that the hunter has injured while it went securely towards its good master and that, no longer able to fly high and fast, proceeds with short flights, with swift lunges, suffocating-with the will to go to its master, who loves it-the voice of the flesh, which suffers and begs not to be subjected to additional efforts and pains-so,

poor wounded one, go, at least go underneath the ray of your Sun, and place yourself there, gazing at Him, loving Him, extending your wounded wings so that He will see the torment men have caused you and medicate you with the balms of his love.

"Soul of mine, no longer address men. Their counsels are wicked or sneering or stern; the best are like the ones a squinteyed person can give at twilight to those who ask him which way to follow. Only God sees; only God knows; only God loves with perfection.

"Soul of mine, aren't you the little voice? Isn't He your Master? Can you doubt that it is He who speaks to you and leads you as his dearest lamb? Follow his voices and his paths. He has never let you err. He has taken you from your mother's womb; He has watched over in infancy, childhood, adolescence, youth, and mature age. He has instructed you, protected you, and drawn you away from those who could really harm you in one way or another; He has brought you close to persons or things that could prove useful to you. Like a Father and like a Lover. That which is for you. He has not waited for your prayer to arouse his power and come. Even before you knew what it is to love, He reached out his arms to you. Only I, your guardian angel, know how much the Lord has loved and loves you.

"And now I tell you what Paul said to the Romans. But I will tell you in a sense different from the one Paul gave to his discourse. I say to you, 'Your salvation is now closer than you can imagine. The night is advanced. Most of the sad, dark time is over, and the day is drawing near. Do you understand me? The day is drawing near. When the day approaches-the day of God the guests get ready for the feast. They take off their robes of mourning and sorrow and clothe themselves in white, luminous robes and inspect themselves carefully to make sure not even a speck of impurity remains upon them. Soul of mine, the hour preceding the dawn is the darkest in the night, but afterwards the sun rises. Soul of mine, the lover waiting for her bridegroom anticipates the morning hour so as to be ready for his coming.

I never speak to you about the Gospel because the Most Holy Lord is your Master in the Gospel. But today I tell you, 'When you see that everything, in a personal little apocalypse, turns against you to cause you pain and upset you, when you feel yourself swooning with dismay at such raging of forces opposed to you, when it seems to you that even Heaven is deaf to your suffering,

then raise your head, for your joy will be near.'

"I am not going to explain to you Paul's words, for the epistle is too clear. But I shall conclude with the words at Communion: 'The Lord will show Himself to be benign.'

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
AND SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Introit: Is 61:10; Ps 30(29):2

Collect: Lord, You have prepared a worthy dwelling place for Your Son by the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin; grant, we pray, that as You preserved her from all stain of sin in Your foreknowledge of His death, so we, by her intercession, may come to You with pure hearts, Through the same Christ our Lord.

Epistle: Pr 8:22-35

Gradual: Jt 13:23; 15:10

Alleluia: Sg 4:7

Track Ps 87(86):1-2, 3, 5

Paschal alleluia: Jt 15:10; Sg 4:7

Gospel: Lk 1:26-28

Offertory: Lk 1:28

Secret: Accept, Lord, the saving Victim we offer to You on this feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary and grant that, as we confess her to be free from all stain through your prevenient grace, so we, through her intercession, may be delivered from all our faults. Through our Lord.

Communion: Glorious things are said of you, O Mary, for He who is mighty has done great things in you.

Postcommunion: Lord our God, may the sacrament which we have received repair in us the wounds of that sin from which, by a unique privilege, You preserved the Immaculate Conception of Blessed Mary. Through our Lord.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Introit: Is 30:30; Ps 80(79):2

Collect: Stir up our hearts, Lord, to make ready the paths of Your only begotten Son, that through His coming we may become worthy to serve You with purified minds. You who are God, living and reigning.

Epistle: Rm 15:4-13

Gradual: Ps 50(49):2-3, 5

Alleluia: Ps 122(121):1

Gospel: Mt 11:2-10

Offertory: Ps 85(84):7-8

Secret: Look down with mercy, Lord, we pray, on the prayers and offerings which we humbly present to You; and since no merits of our own can avail us, come to our rescue and be Yourself our helper. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ba 5:5; 4:36

Postcommunion: Feasted by this spiritual food, we implore You, Lord, that through our sharing in this mystery, You would teach us to raise our minds above the things of earth and to love those of heaven. Through our Lord.

December 8, 1946

Azariah says:

"Let us meditate, singing the glories of Mary Most Holy. The Holy Mass of this feast is entirely a hymn to the power of God and the glory of Mary. Let us introduce ourselves, so as to understand rightly this liturgy of light and fire, into the sentiments of the Queen and Teacher of every creature who loves the Lord.

"Queen and Teacher! Of men. But also of angels. There are mysteries which you do not know, which we are not permitted to disclose completely. But it is granted to raise a veil so that some greatly beloved souls may enjoy it. And I shall raise it for you. The edge of a veil. With the obstacle removed, you will be permitted to fix your spiritual gaze on the infinite Light which is Heaven, and in the Light you will understand better. Look, listen, and be blessed.

"When Lucifer's sin upset the order of Paradise and swept the less faithful spirits into disorder, a great horror struck all, almost as if something had been lacerated, destroyed-and without hope of seeing it rise again. In reality, that was so. The complete charity which *alone* had existed up above before had been destroyed, and it had collapsed into an abyss from which there emerged the stench of Hell.

"The absolute charity of the angels had been destroyed, and Hatred had arisen. Bewildered, as it is possible to be in Heaven, we, the ones faithful to the Lord, wept over God's pain and his indignation. We wept over the altered peace of Paradise, over the order violated, over the fragility of the spirits. We no longer felt sure about being flawless because we were made of pure spirit. Lucifer and those like him had proven to us that even the angel can sin and become a demon. We felt that pride-existing latently-might develop in us. We feared that no one, except for God, could resist it if Lucifer had yielded to it. We trembled at these dark forces which we had thought could not invade us-of whose existence, I might say, we had been ignorant-and which were brutally revealing themselves to us. Discouraged, we wondered, with throbs of light, 'But is being so pure of no use, then?

Who, then, can ever give God the love He demands and deserves if even we are subject to sinning?'

"It was then that, uplifting our contemplation from the abyss and desolation to the Divinity and gazing fixedly at his Splendor, with a fear theretofore unknown, we contemplated the second Revelation of Eternal Thought. And if through the knowledge of the first there came Disorder, created by the proud, who did not want to adore the Divine Word, through knowledge of the second the peace which had been disturbed returned to us.

'Ve saw Mary in the eternal Thought. Seeing Her and possessing that wisdom which is comfort, security, and peace was one and the same thing. We saluted our future Queen with the song of our Light and contemplated Her in gratuitous and voluntary perfections. Oh, the beauty of that moment in which, for the comfort of his angels, the Eternal presented to them the jewel of his Love and Power! And we saw Her so humble as to make up by Herself alone for all creaturely pride.

"From then on She was our teacher in not turning gifts into an instrument of ruin. Not her corporeal effigy, but her spirituality spoke to us wordlessly, and we were preserved from every thought of pride by having contemplated for an instant, in the Thought of God, the Most Humble One. For ages and ages we worked in the sweetness of that radiant revelation. For ages and ages, through eternity, we have rejoiced and rejoice and shall rejoice in possessing Her whom we contemplated spiritually. The Joy of God is our joy, and we keep ourselves in his Light so as to be penetrated with it and to give joy and glory to Him who created us.

"Now, filled with her very own heartbeats, let us, then, meditate on the Liturgy which speaks of Her.

'With joy.' The characteristic of true humility is true joy which nothing disturbs.

"Whoever is relatively humble always has a reason for disturbance even in his most straightforward triumphs. Whoever is truly and completely humble, on the other hand, experiences no disturbance whatsoever. Whatever the gift or triumph is which clothes him in a special robe, he is joyful and does not fear, for he knows and recognizes that what he does differently from the majority is not something he has created for himself with human means, but something coming from lofty spheres which no one can seize from him. He contemplates and regards it as clothing

of great value which he has been given to wear for a time and which must be used with the care reserved for what is not ours and should be returned undamaged to the one who has given it.

"He also knows that this regal clothing, not asked for out of a craving for appearances, has been given to him by an infinite Wisdom which has judged it fitting to give it. There is no concern, then, about obtaining or keeping it. The humble person who is truly so does not long for extraordinary things and is not disturbed if the one who has given takes away. He says, 'All is well, for Wisdom so wills.' The humble man is, therefore, always joyful. Because he does not crave, because he is not greedy for what is given to him, because he does not feel diminished if it is taken away from him.

"Mary Most Holy had this joy. From her birth to her ascent she had it on the Earth, even amidst the tears of her long Calvary as the Mother of Christ, even under the sea of torment of the Calvary of her Son. In her pain, which was unlike all others, she had the exultant joy of doing, *to the point of complete sacrifice*, what God wanted, what God showed Her that He sought from Her since He clothed Her with the robes of salvation and covered Her with the mantle of justice like a bride adorned with jewels.

"Do you gauge what Mary's fall would have been if, having received the Immaculate Conception, justice, and every other divine jewel, She had trampled upon everything to follow the voice of the eternal Corruptor? Do you gauge its depth? There would no longer have been redemption for men, no longer Heaven for men, no longer possession of God for men. Mary has given you all this because with the true joy of the humble She wore her robes as the Dearly Beloved of the Eternal and sang his praise, *his alone*, even amidst the sobs and desolation of the Passion.

"She exulted! What a profound word! She always exulted, magnifying her Lord with her spirit, even when her humanity experienced the mockery of a whole people and She was submerged and crushed by her pain and the pain of her Son. She exulted, considering that her pain and the pain of her Jesus gave glory to God by saving men for God.

"Above the sobs of the Mother, above her laments as the Woman, there sang the joy of her spirit as Co-Redemptrix. It sang with submission to that hour, with hope in the words of Wisdom, with the love that blessed God for having pierced Her.

"The long passion of Mary completed Mary, joining to the great

things God had done in Her the great things She was able to do for the Lord. Truly, while her entrails as the Mother cried out the agony of her torture, her faithful spirit sang, 'I exalt you, O Lord, for You have protected me and have not allowed my enemies to rejoice over me.'

"Do you see what humility? Anyone else would have said, 'I am happy to have been able to remain faithful even in the trial. I am happy to have done the Will of God.' They are not sinful words. But a thread of pride is still in them. 'I am happy because I have done.' The creature's self feels itself to be the only author of the good accomplished. Mary Most Holy says, 'I exalt You *because You have protected me.*' She credits God with having kept Her holy in those hours of struggle.

"God had prepared a worthy dwelling for his Word. But Mary was able to maintain that dwelling worthy of God, who was to incarnate Himself in Her. Imitate Her, O creatures. In a lesser measure, as is fitting for you, who do not have to conceive the Christ, but for the sake of all you need to bear Christ in you, God gives you the means and gifts suitable for making you temples and altars. Imitate Mary, being able to maintain the dwelling of your hearts worthy of the Holy One, who asks to enter you to take delight in you and live among the children of men, loved by Him measurelessly.

"And if you have not been capable of imitating Her and your dwelling is now profaned and dismantled by too many who have inhabited it, rebuild it in Mary, who is the lovable and tireless Mother who begets children for the Lord, for through Mary one goes to Life, and, therefore, whoever is languishing or dead and does not dare to raise his eyes to the Lord, can become alive and pleasing again to the Eternal if he enters into the Womb and the Heart which have given the world the Savior.

"The Lord Jesus explained to you the light of the chapter of wisdom. I shall not take the liberty of speaking where He has spoken. But to confirm what I am saying, I would have you note the words which Wisdom applies to Mary: 'My delight is to be with the children of men.' With these children, who have cost Her so many tears. But it is proper to true Mothers to weep and love, and to love what one has wept for, to love so much that they lead to love, to weep so much that they convert the perverse. Why would She experience delight in being with men-this Blessed Woman, whose dwelling is Heaven from eternity, this Blessed

Woman, whose abode was the marvelous Bosom of God and who was God's abode, this Blessed Woman, whose People is that of the Angels and those in glory-if not to rebuild the poor hearts that the world and Satan, the flesh and the passions have devastated? Why would She experience delight, if not because, in staying in your midst, She gives birth to you again for God?

"Hear Her sing in her pearl-like light: 'Blessed are those who devote themselves to my ways.' The ways of Mary end in the Heart of God. 'Listen to my counsels to become wise. Do not reject them.' A Mother, and holy as She is, can give nothing but words of life. But consider how much the Word, borne for nine months in her womb and on her lap for so many years undoubtedly left in the Woman already full of Grace and, therefore, of Wisdom. On her lap in infancy and childhood, and in death, in the most pure Heart for thirty-three years. God the Son was never inactive towards his lovable Mother-He who was never, ever, inactive even towards guilty men. Therefore, all Wisdom is fused with all Purity, and Mary can only speak with the word of God, with that word which Christ called the Life of whoever listens to it. Mary, She who knows what is in Her, sings, 'Blessed the man who listens to me and keeps watch at my door and waits at the entrance to my house.' As the Abode of God, She knows that whoever enters Her finds God-that is, just as She sings, 'Whoever finds Her will find Life and receive salvation from the Lord.'

"Truly, whoever lives in Her has salvation, life, wisdom, glory, happiness, and honor, for She is all of this, having her roots in God Himself, founded as She is on the mountain of God to be his Temple, loved more than any other creature by the Most High Lord, for She is to be the Mother of Man eternally.

"Oh, words meditated upon little and even less understood, in which the whole figure of Mary is summarized. What is Mary? She is the Reparatrix. She cancels out Eve. She takes the things thrown into disorder back to the point where they were when the wicked Serpent and imprudent Eve unsettled them. The angel greets her: '*Ave*.' This *Ave is* said to be the reversal of Eve. But *Ave is* still an echo recalling the Most Holy Name of God, just as the name of the Word, *Yeshua*, recalls even more vividly, as I explained to you.

"In the holy tetragram which the children of the People of God had formed to pronounce the unrepeatable Name in the secret temple of the spirit, there is already *Ave* [play on the sound of

Yahweh]. The beginning of the word God sent to make the AllBeautiful One the Holy Mother and Co-Redemptrix. *Ave*: almost as if-as really happened-He, in announcing Himself with his Name, entered to become flesh in a womb, in the Only Womb that could contain the Incomparable One.

"Ave, Mary, Mother of Man like Eve, more than Eve, who, through the Man, brought man back to his Fatherland, his inheritance, his sonship, his Joy.

"Ave, Mary, Womb of holiness where the seed of the Species is again deposited so that the eternal Abraham will have the children of whom Satanic envy had left him barren.

"Ave, Mary, Mother God-Bearer, bearing the eternal FirstBorn, merciful Mother of Mankind, washed in her tears and in the Blood which is your blood.

"Ave, Mary, Pearl of Heaven, Starlight, gentle Beauty, Peace of God.

"Ave, Mary, full of grace, in whom the Lord is, never separated from Him who in You takes his delight and his rest.

"Ave, Mary, Woman blessed among all women, living love, made by Love, spouse to Love, Mother of Love.

"In You purity, in You peace, in You Wisdom, in You obedience, in You humility, in You the three and four virtues are perfect....

"Mary-Heaven is delirious with love in contemplating Mary. Its song increases to the point of incomparable notes. No mortal, no matter how holy, can understand what Mary is for all Heaven.

"All things have been made through the Word. But all the greatest works have also been done by Eternal Love in Mary and through Mary. For He who is powerful has loved and loves Her limitlessly. And the Power of God remains in her hands as a most pure Lily so as to be strewn over those having recourse to Her.

"Ave! Ave! Ave! Mary ...!"

Second Mass of Advent

"Hail Mary, through whom the Lord comes to save the nations and to make his glory understood in the joy of the Savior granted to the world.

"The liturgy of the Holy Mass of the Second Sunday of Ad-

vent is placed quite well alongside the liturgy of the Holy Mass proper to the Immaculate Conception, for it is also through Mary that the Savior comes to deliver the peoples and be the Lamb who is a shepherd, and a Good Shepherd, arriving to guide the just into the Lord's pastures. The just, foreshadowed in Joseph, meek and just like a sheep obedient to every command of the Eternal, the Supreme Shepherd of the peoples.

"And it is also through Mary that poor and weak men manage to obtain the means of salvation and eternal riches. John went in advance of Christ, preparing his ways. Mary goes in advance of Christ, preparing his way into your hearts. Open your hearts to Mary, place your spirits in her maternal hands so that She may prepare them for the Divine Coming. Imitate Mary in this time of Advent, and you will be ready to receive Christmas and its supernatural fruits in a manner worthy of the angelical praise.

"Paul says that all that has been written to make you wise in the Lord has been written so that hope will be conserved. What hope? That of the divine promises. But the promises, which are certain-and, therefore, one must *believe* even more than hope, absolutely believe that they will be fulfilled-will receive fulfillment if you are able to persevere and work with patience and with the strength which comes from consolations, of which Scripture is full, in the different contingencies of life.

"For this life is a continuous struggle, always new, full of uncertainties and surprises-a struggle which would weary even a hero, if he were not supported by something more than the earthly. This something is God and his Law, and his promises-it is the certainty of the future life, the certain faith that the Man who has immolated Himself for you could only be God, for no one except Christ has ever been able to live and die as He lived and died. These are the things which nourish your strength as fighters today and victors tomorrow. These are the certainties and consolations which the God of patience and consolations infuses into you so that you will be able to fight with Christ and for Christ, arriving at the glory which through Christ you can have.

"And, with faith and hope, Charity is also recalled in the words of Paul, without which everything else is useless. Even the life of most austere virtue would be useless if it were not joined to charity. He who practiced the most austere penances, who was temperant, honest, and continent, who believed in God, who hoped in Him, and who was observant of the Commandments and

Precepts, but who did not love his neighbor would mortify his virtues in such a way as to expiate for quite a long time his sin of egoism.

"Love for God is holy; obedience to the precepts, holy; temperance, holy; and honesty, good. But if there is no love for one's neighbor, isn't all of this like an excessively mortified tree which remains just a hard trunk, without branches or leaves, without flowers or fruits, useless to the hot traveler seeking shade or protection from a downpour, useless to the dejected one who from the sight of its flowers almost draws a word of hope for the future, useless to the hungry one who cannot support his languishing strength with the fruit picked from its branches and feel that there is a God who watches over the needs of his children, useless even to the bird seeking refuge in vain against the bare trunk? Truly, rigid virtue which is devoid of love is the sad vision of a trunk that is powerful, but bare and destined to die. It is also egoism. It is also pharisaism. It is a paganism taking the place of true worship. For true Religion rests upon the two columns of the two loves, for God and for one's neighbor, and the whole edifice is precarious if supported by a single column, always disharmonious.

"The Law is to love God and for brothers to love one another, accepting, supporting, instructing, and forgiving each other as Christ did.

"Little voice, see how Christ loved the circumcised, for they had the right to be loved as members of the People of the promise, and the uncircumcised, as it was his right to love them as the new people of the King of Kings. He loved them so much that the former turned that into an unjust accusation against Him, just as now the present-day 'circumcised'-those who because they are, or believe they are, the chosen ones among the nations turn the pages revealing the Divine Master's incomparable love for the Gentiles into a scandal and object of denial.

"The rabbis at that time did not understand, and the current ones do not understand, the supreme charity which sees in men numerous brothers and loves them-if they are holy and of the People of God, because they are; and if they are not holy, in order to make them holy.

"I tell you, however, with Paul, that the latter, at the present time, in the love they return for love surpass those who believe themselves to be perfect. It is always that way, now as twenty

centuries ago. The unwise wise-that is, those who know the letter, but not its spirit-do not know how to understand and believe and accept that Jesus Christ, the Savior, has come and comes more for the Gentiles than for his own, more for the sheep without a shepherd-or for those who have become wild or even wounded and scabby-than for the ninety-nine sheep already safely in his Fold.

"Jesus Christ has been, is, and will be He who is Salvation for all who are able to seek and desire Him.

"Now then, without distinguishing between the ones that are in the flock and the ones that are not, be capable of loving, suffering, and working, considering that twenty centuries ago Heaven was opened to grant the Savior and Master not to Bethlehem or Nazareth or Jerusalem or all Palestine or the even vaster Israel scattered around the world, but to *give Him to all men*.

"This is the spirit of preparation for the coming of Christ, the supreme charity of God: a spirit of universal love so that all men will go to the Kingdom of God, to the house of the Father.

"To you, moreover, there corresponds an even greater task of love, and you know why and for whom. But do not be discouraged by the greatness of the love being asked of you. What you have received is so much. Be generous, then, in giving. In giving in every way. To the point of total consummation. Be heroic. You are a victim. Be heroic. Time is passing and peace is coming. Be heroic. *Afterwards*, everything will seem to You so little in comparison to what you will have.

"Raise your spirit! Look at the joy coming to you from your God; look at your God, who is your joy and who is coming to you to comfort you.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

The Procession has passed. I wanted to see.... I collapsed just from making the effort to remain upraised to look.... I was moved while recalling so many things.... I have thrown kisses and my soul at the feet of Mary.... I would have wanted to be-and forever-in the place of Bernardette-but in Heaven, not here on Earth. But, O Holy Virgin, if I have given You all my homage as a believer-and You know I have-You also know that, more than your image, I have had to recall, gaze at your effigy with my spirit, for whoever sees You as I see You finds the most beautiful reproduction to be so cold, material, and downgraded that he cannot look at it without suffering.

"Our punishment as seers. The spiritual reality is too different from

the material one, and we get a sense of coldness, of-discomfort, almost. Oh, You! You! You as we see You, as You are! What artist can sculpt and paint You without diminishing You and in such a way that we can look at You without feeling sorrow, the sorrow of one seeing what is ineffable beauty downgraded ... ?

"How You love us, O God! Just for this gift of seeing You as You are, every other painful thing is paid back....

"But meanwhile I say that it was sweeter for me to see the homage of the people and, above all, hear your maternal greeting this morning when I painfully awakened than to see your image, so different from what You are like.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Introit: Ph 4:4-6; Ps 85(84):2

Collect: Lord, lend Your ear, we beg, to our prayers, and lighten the darkness of our minds with the grace of Your coming. You who are God, living and reigning.

Epistle: Ph 4:4-7

Gradual: Ps 80(79):2-3, 2

Gospel: Jn 1:19-28

Offertory: Ps 85(84):2-3

Secret: May the sacrifice of our devotion, Lord, be offered to You continually, and may it both perform its appointed task in this holy mystery and in a wonderful way work Your salvation in us. Through our Lord.

Communion: Is 35:4

Postcommunion: We implore, Lord, Your clemency, that freed from our sins, we may be prepared by these divine aids for the coming festival. Through our Lord.

December 15, 1946

[12/14/46, 5:20 a.m.]

I awaken. I find my affliction on my sickbed and load it upon myself like a cross. But at the same time there is the dear, divine Voice: 'Jesus is coming to give his kiss (the Eucharist) to his little bride.'

I respond, 'Oh, my Lord, give me light. Tell me if it's really You! Everything the Fathers of the Servants of Mary in general and Father Migliorini in particular make me suffer leads me to believe I am deluded, mentally ill, and obsessed. Is it You that speak or is it my brain, which has become ill and raves? It is You or Satan? My greatest pain is this, and You know it. The fear of listening to voices which are not yours and your holy ones' or of erring in calling what is really just my thought 'your word.'

Jesus answers me:

"And even if it were? Didn't I tell you that from the heart there emerge the thoughts of men and that from the fruit one knows if the plant is good? Isn't it stated in Scripture and in Wisdom that whoever makes Me known already has eternal life and that whoever works for Me will not sin? How often is it stated openly or covertly that whoever is full of Wisdom is full of Me, that whoever speaks supernatural words is a voice of the Spirit of God, who dwells in his heart? For it is the Spirit of God, beloved soul of mine, who carries out these operations in the hearts of the men in whom He dwells, finding them worthy of being inhabited by Him. And the Spirit Paraclete is the Love of the Father

and of the Son. If you, then, in your heart hear these words sounding, it is a sign that you are listening to the divine conversation of the Most Holy Trinity. If you hear Me speaking, then, it is a sign that I am in you with my love. Even if it were really your heart which suggested these thoughts which you later write, it is, then, a sign that your heart *is full of God*, 'for it is from man's heart that there comes what emerges from his mouth.' Now then, if your heart pushes into your mouth and mind divine or supernatural thoughts, sights, and words, it is a sign that your heart is holy, that your heart harbors only love, justice, heavenly things; it is a sign that your conversation is in Heaven and that you dwell in your spirit in Heaven, having Heaven enclosed within you.

"Blessed are those who are like you! And what are you afflicted about, O my beautiful tree, sweet apple tree, gentle olive, if you yield celestial fruits, sweet with the Wisdom that We are, luminous like pure oil lit with the Light that We are?"

"Remain in peace! Remain in peace, my beloved, my faithful one, my sweetheart, and my *cherished little bride*. Remain in peace. And proceed with peace. You do what I want. Whoever opposes you does not wound you, but Me, for he opposes Me, Me alone, to such a point do I, and no *one else*, possess and dominate and shine and instruct and *live* in you.

"Proceed. You make the Lord, Mary, and the Heavenly Populace of the Holy Ones loved. For this alone, for this alone you would have eternal life! And then there is all your long-time, ever-growing love. There is your suffering. There is your immolation. There is everything for you. Oh, fear not! You cannot err because you are immersed in heroic love.

"Fear not. That which is full and that which is immersed cannot receive anything more or be more bathed and submerged by anything other than that in which it already finds itself.

"Fear not. Proceed and forgive.

"The short-sighted and those who, because of threefold sensuality or even just pride, live on the flat plain have cataracts over the pupils of their intellects and cannot see the sun shining on the mountaintops which tend towards the sky because they love the sky, the heights, the purities; they do not see the plants which the sun causes to grow on the summits. Similarly, they do not see the divine contact of the God Sun with the pinnacle of your spirit and the plants which your will to love Me has caused to sprout there, on the summit of your spirit, and which the God Sun causes to grow ever more luxuriantly, and *no* storm can uproot them.

"To every soul that gives itself entirely to Wisdom the words of the sapiential book can be applied: 'I have risen like a cedar on Lebanon and like a cypress on Mount Hermon. I have grown like a palm in EnGedi, like the rose bushes of Jericho, like a fine olive in the **fields and**

a plane tree in the square near the fountain; like a fragrant plant or sweet resins, I exhale my perfumes and fill my house with them.' For whoever gives himself to Wisdom exhales Wisdom. And Wisdom is fertile; it is a useful and beautiful forest of plants of every kind, with flowers, fruits, and sweet scents, nourished by the eternal Founts of its own Nature: the Divinity. This praise is not only of Mary Most Holy. In Her Wisdom was complete, and every creaturely perfection was reached by Her. But, I tell you, it is also of all the souls that give themselves to Wisdom, and the Liturgy applies it to many of them who have been able to possess Wisdom.

"Who are you? Do they ask and do you ask yourself who you are? I shall tell you with the words of Isaiah what your name is: 'I, the Lord, give and shall give them a better name than that of sons and daughters: I shall give them an eternal name which will never perish.' I shall tell you with the words of John the Beloved: 'To the victor I shall give hidden manna and *a white stone with a new name written on it* which no one knows except the one who receives it.' And I have already given it to you and will not take it away from you if you remain faithful to Me. I will not take it away from you, and you shall bear it with many others, with all 'those who come from the great tribulation,' where there is no longer pain, 'for God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'

"Are you at peace, little bride? Have I come to kiss you, as I told you at the outset? Is my Eucharistic honey in you? Do you taste how sweet it is? Do our two hearts not beat as one? Does my Blood intoxicate you? Does my Sun shine in you? Does it warm you, console you? Oh, my Maria! Come! Abandon yourself! It is so beautiful to love one another and forget the quadrigas of Aminadab-fierce, harsh, dark, cold, and material. Come to love. Give me love. I have so few souls who love me unreservedly as you do. Why would you like to withdraw, frightened by the voices of those remaining between the grass and the guagmire, like frogs that would like to silence the nightingale and fly in the sun like the dove and are annoyed because they cannot? Come. It's really Me. Come. You cannot doubt, you doubt no more when I hold You this way. But ecstasy is not at all hours. And you must be able to remain blessed, secure as you now are, even when ecstasy withdraws and you are enveloped by the willful incomprehension and distrust of men.

"Everything will pass, soul of mine. But I shall remain for you always, forever. After Calvary comes the Resurrection. After the Passion, the Ascension. For Christ and for the brides of Christ.

"My peace, my charity be in you, for you, and with you always."

Azariah says:

"Our Most Holy Lord has anticipated for you the picture which the liturgy sings today. He has come to console and reaffirm you,

poor soul that are shaken mercilessly in order to bend you to saying what is not true.

"Never say it. I remind you of the Master's words: 'Give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's.' A tax was referred to there; a work is referred to here. But in both cases what belongs to God should always be given to God. Even if, by insisting on wanting the supernatural origin of the work recognized, you succeeded in having no one be further concerned with it-I am speaking of priests-let them act. They will have to answer to God for three things: not having recognized the Word, having scandalized many souls, and having sinned against charity towards you and also towards those hungry for the Word, for whom Jesus Most Holy, having mercy on them, dictated the Work. In wanting to do what God wills, you *have acted* on your own, even though you are prevented from acting. In the eyes of God, you have complied, as both a spokeswoman and an executor of God's orders. And that must suffice for you. God will attend to the rest and the others. Oh, what words in the Gospel can be applied to *this* case!

"But the little ones are always blessed who serve the Lord with simplicity and love, and woe always to those who, by their way of acting, opposed to the goodness of the Lord, heap up the rigors of Justice upon their heads!

"And let us still, and always, pray that by the grace of the coming of Christ darkness may be dispelled from the minds of many.

"And, faithful souls that serve and follow God and his Will with simplicity and love, always be cheerful in the Lord. May the joy of this mutual love and of the peace that comes from saying, 'I do what God wills' always accompany you, amidst the crosses and trials. Whatever justice you may attain, whatever reflection may shine from your actions and disclose to men the joint operations by God in you and by you out of love for God, whatever the graces may be which eternal Goodness grants you, be modest, so that men, on observing you, can say, 'He is a true son of God, for to his merits he adds modesty in every act or word or glance.'

"Be very watchful, for there are looks which betray imperfect virtue more than open words. Truly, some who in all other things are virtuous are deficient in this virtue of perfect humility. Perfect humility does not caress, even in the secrecy of the heart, complacency over being good and aided by God. Perfect

humility is not disturbed by the praise of others and does not adopt those hypocritical poses of humility which are refined pride and calculation aimed at having oneself praised even more. There are looks, smiles, and acts which wordlessly say clearly that you enjoy praise. And then it is no longer true humility.

"Souls that tend towards perfection out of love for God, be truly modest in everything. The eye of God is always upon you and sees the reality of your hearts. Always remember this. And the Lord may still be near with his judgment, for no one knows when death will come to liberate your souls and direct them to God's judgment. Always live as if the Lord were about to appear to you, calling you to the other life.

"Do not worry about anything, mindful of Christ's words: 'Your Father knows what you need. Every day has its own difficulty.' Why get sad and weary over future things which you may see only through suggestion or the work of the devil aimed at frightening you and making you doubt Providence? Worry about the morrow is like water cast upon the sweet fire of hope in divine goodness and like sand flung to destroy the tender little plants of your daily trust in God.

"Jesus Most Holy, on teaching you the Sunday prayer, told you to say, 'Give us this day,' not 'Give us for the whole year or throughout life.' For the Our Father is, must be, a daily act of charity, faith, hope, and contrition asking for forgiveness. Have you never reflected that in the Our Father there are the four acts-of faith, hope, charity, and contrition-which the Church includes among the parts of the prayer which a good Christian must offer each day to help himself to reach these virtues, increase them in his soul, and profess them heroically against human respect and the mockery of the world, whereas the act of contrition is useful reparation and a means towards greater virtue the following day, for it is assumed that in whoever prays attention to what he is saying is present-otherwise it would not be prayer, but stammering sounds without value-and that the act of contrition is, therefore, the close of a daily, most salutary examination of conscience during which man humbly recognizes the sins and omissions of the day and accuses himself of them with sincere sorrow over having offended God?

"Meditate and you will see that in the Our Father these four acts are included, right and proper in regard to God and necessary to your growth in wisdom and grace. Do not worry, then,

about the morrow so as not to fall into sadness and fear. Useless concerns separate one from God. They are like opaque, dark screens placed between yourselves and your eternal Sun. They are like chains keeping you imprisoned down here, whereas without them and with wonderful trust in God you would fly in spirit to God. They are slits open to Lucifer, who can enter through them to wound and embitter you.

"Do not worry, but turn to God in everything with prayers and entreaties joined to thanksgiving. And remain in peace. Charity, faith, hope, humility, trust in God and for God, and obedience to his wishes yield this peace surpassing all intelligence. May it be in you. And with peace in your hearts you will gain a foretaste of Paradise, for to have peace is to have Jesus Christ and to be established in Him.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Introit: Is 45:8; Ps 19(18):2

Collect: Lord, rouse Your power, we pray, and come; lend Your great strength to aid us; so that through the help of Your grace and by Your merciful forgiveness, the good which our sins obstruct may be quickly brought to us. You who are God, living and reigning.

Epistle: I Co 4:1-5

Gradual: Ps 145(144):18, 21

Gospel: Lk 3:1-6

Offertory: Lk 1:28, 42

Secret: Look mercifully, Lord, we pray, upon these sacrifices that they may be profitable both to our devotion and to our salvation. Through our Lord.

Communion: Is 7:14

Postcommunion: Lord, having received Your gifts, we pray You that with our frequenting of Your mystery, the work of our salvation may be increased in us. Through our Lord.

December 22, 1946

Azariah says:

"Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! The joy of the Birth is already at the door. Let us sing for those who on such a day will be able to let the Messiah be born in them. Every Christmas creates resurrections of souls. Alleluia for these who come to the Lord-until then unknown-and who bend their knee in worship before the Divine Child. For them the words of the Baptist come true. They have prepared the way for the Lord by making straight the self, filling in the gaps, bringing low all pride, and embracing the Truth, which is straightforward, and humility, which is sweet. Let us sing for those newly born to the Lord. Alleluia!

"And afterwards let us read the Pauline epistle. Most Holy Jesus makes you work a lot, and you are very ill. Offer your suffering as a final aid to those being born in God in these days and obey your Master. I listen and am glad with you. For this reason, I shall say little to you by way of commentary. I tell you, though, that today's epistle is precisely for you and all those who perform extraordinary service of all those faithful to God.

"Let each consider us this way, as servants of Christ and dispensers of the mysteries of God.'

"A priestly word for priests. But there are other priesthoods

in addition to that of the altar, public and known to all. There are secret consecrations, secret ministries in which those called do not serve this or that Temple, do not officiate at this or that altar, but serve the immense Temple of God and officiate at his immense altar, directly, entirely taken up by his service in complete dedication.

"Servants of God and their brothers. Dispensers of the Word, the Light, the Wisdom, and the Mercy of God, of this Word that is like an immaterial Sacrament not needing means, species, or formulas to be imparted and communicated, but which has in itself the sum of Grace and Life, that which increases light in the souls that Grace already renders luminous and augments life in those which Grace renders alive, but which even by itself alone can give the yearning for Light and Life and lead to Grace through the sevenfold fount of the Holy Sacraments, previously neglected or derided.

'Whoever listens to my Word will never see death,' the Lord Jesus said. For, in fact, if one does not listen to his Word and does not listen to it believing that it is divine and that the One who speaks it is God, the Son of God, what value does the sevenfold sacramental fount have? The Grace infused by Baptism dies, for whoever does not follow the Word sins, and whoever sins loses Grace, and with Grace, Light and Life, and fails increasingly to believe in Christ-in his merits, in the Sacraments, in the sacred Hierarchies of the Church-and, like a human embryo detaching itself from the matrix, dies, no longer nourished by the vital fluids.

"Extraordinary dispensers of the Word-never sufficiently given, in view of the continuous work of the adverse forces against the Word and the spirit of man, never sufficiently conserved, assimilated, and turned into life of the individual to make the individual the citizen of eternity-are the 'voices.' What is required of them, as of Priests, masters in the explanation of the Word, just as the 'voices' are the Word's channels? Here is what St. Paul says: 'What is required in the dispensers is that each should be found faithful.'

"Many are called; few are those able to remain faithful to their mission. It was precisely a year ago today that a soul that you and the one who directed you know-he, personally; you, indirectly-committed the first act of infidelity to the grace God had given that person, and, consequently, the influence of the

forces of darkness has become stronger by one degree. That person could have risen, gotten free of the chains cast by Lucifer always raging and towards all, but especially towards those he sees to be more on the ways of God. That person had numerous heavenly aids and earthly ones as well. More than you, that from creatures have received nothing but opposition and have *had to make yourself* mature personally by remaining constantly under the rays of God, steadfast and faithful, even though pain struck you from all sides, and the thought 'God does not love me' would have been justified. But you felt that He loved you and that the storms were predilection, for they made you wise in the great truth that God alone deserves all the love of his creatures and that God alone is able to love.

"And yet, despite the great aids, that soul has not managed to remain faithful. Rather, the aids-and particularly certain aids-have proved harmful, joining their imperfect spirituality to the soul's own, also imperfect. And the holy supernatural has distanced itself increasingly from that soul. Pray for the person.

"And the example-one, but I could recall a thousand for you, and I shall illuminate one for you in the depths of your heart without naming him here, out of respect for the indelible sacred character which the creature possesses who is an example of an act of infidelity which makes people dull and obscure, punished with the privation of supernatural lights for their unfaithfulness -let it help you to be increasingly faithful so that what has happened to others may not happen to you. And when you are able to remain faithful and know that God can so regard you, to those who would like to judge you-who, indeed, express judgments (and not all those judgments are believed to be good by the very ones who make them, but they make them for reasons that are in part excusable and in part inexcusable)-say the words of St. Paul. Say them, all of you, dispensers of the Voice of God: 'It matters very little to me to be judged by you or by a human tribunal indeed, I do not even judge myself, for, though I do not feel guilty of anything, not for this reason am I justified, since my judge is the Lord.'

And, in addition, to be in perfect justice, O extraordinary souls enclosed in creatures in whom the creature's moral reaction is not suppressed-and you must keep it subdued in a heroic, continuous struggle between the spirit and humanity to obtain the final victory of the spirit over humanity-do not judge your as-

sayers. This is their true name. They are the acid which tests the metal of your hearts. They corrode, but the noble metal shines more beautifully after their painful corrosion and appears in all its real nobility. If it were only a hypocritical layer of golden virtue, the assayers' erosion would soon lay bare the lead of your interior. Do not 'judge them before the time, until the Lord comes; He will point out what is hidden in darkness and manifest the deliberations of hearts, and then each will receive from God the praise he deserves.'

"That's it! Then no attire and no calculated manner of speaking, moving, and acting will be a bulwark against the Light that will uncover spirits' most secret folds. Then no calumny, no insinuation, negation, or anything else will avail to stain the heroic spirit of the faithful dispenser. The shadows of the ill will of others on the pure pages of the faithful spirits-upon which God wrote his Word so that they would dispense it to men-will turn into *nothingness, for God will disperse them*, and the stainless integrity of the faithful spirits in regard to their mission-accepted, fulfilled, and borne, for it represents an election, but is also toil and pain-exclusively for the glory of God. Accepted, fulfilled, and borne amidst the obstacles always flung against the '*voices*' to make the service more grievous for them, the mission could be borne because, if around the *voices* there is a mob of tormentors, as there was around Christ for three years of mission, and especially along the way of the cross, the divine Cyrenean, Christ Himself, is close to the voices, for the Lord is close to those who invoke Him with sincerity.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit!"

SUNDAY WITHIN THE CHRISTMAS OCTAVE

Introit: Ws 18:14-15; Ps 93(92):1

Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, guide our actions according to Your good pleasure so that we may deserve to abound in good works in the name of Your beloved Son. Who with You lives and reigns.

Epistle: Ga 4:1-7

Gradual: Ps 45(44):3, 2

Alleluia: Ps 93(92):1

Gospel: Lk 2:33-40

Offertory: Ps 93(92):1-2

Secret: Grant us, we pray, almighty God, that the gifts now offered in the sight of Your majesty may win for us the grace of true devotion and the reward of a happy eternity. Through our Lord.

Communion: Mt 2:20

Postcommunion: By the virtue of this mystery, O Lord, may our sins be purged away and our rightful desires fulfilled. Through our Lord.

December 29, 1946

Azariah says:

"The word of God is always judgment. It is always placed as a touchstone before men. According to their metal, reactions differ, and according to the reactions, God judges.

"Having descended a first time in the middle of the night, in the period of wrath, to be an inexorable punishment for those trampling upon the servants of God, and having descended in the middle of the night the second time in the period of mercy to be most powerful saving love, the Word of God throughout the ages continues to be judgment and a touchstone for men. Inexorable punishment for those who deride it and for its sake persecute the ones who are faithful to it. Most powerful, saving, instructing love for those who with good will seek this Word and love it as a cherished spouse of their spirit from which they never separate themselves, for they find every delight therein.

"The descent of the Word generally comes in the silence of the intimate hours, when man is with himself and the recollection of his actions, of those daily actions he has performed with a humble desire to obey the Lord in his precepts of holiness and twofold love or with insolent derision of God, morality, and love.

"Whether a sweet, lengthy conversation of the Divine Spirit with the spirit of man or a brief, flaring cry of God to the sinner,

the Word of God descends at the most unexpected hours, seizing the moment in which the self is alone with itself. And love sings or wrath roars-either gentle as a caress or fearful as a burst of lightning, the promise of greater beatitude or the warning of a tremendous thunderbolt from God. And it is always mercy, even if it threatens, always mercy, even if it terrifies. It knocks down while wishing to lift up again. It fulminates to purify. It blinds that one may see.

"The roads to Damascus have been repeated for numberless creatures. And blessed are those who have been able to get up again on them, with matter burned to ashes by the mercy of God, with their eyes dead to the vanities of the world, prepared to change from enemies into servants of God and to be such all the more, the more God shows them how much they will have to suffer for His Name.

"And blessed are those that, in always being friends of God, do not grow proud because of the Word that loves them, but humbly obey it in every order or counsel it gives them and without calculation or avarice use it and spread it solely in a spirit of love, honor, and glory of God.

"All of them-whether those going to perfection by the constant proceeding of their wills or those going there by a miraculous intervention of God, who annihilates them on the way of Evil to make them rise again on the way of Good, through the Wordchange from the children they were into adults, ready to receive their paternal inheritance as intelligent children worthy to bear such a name.

"To be baptized, to be Christians by virtue of Holy Baptism, to be, therefore, born to the Light, dwelling in the marvelous society of the 'living,' is a great thing. But it does not yet suffice. It would suffice if in material childhood the soul were called to God. Then nothing else is required to enter as members of the joyful people of the Heavens. But, as the one born of woman grows in age, *he* must, in resemblance to the First-Born of all those born, of all the 'living,' also grow in wisdom and grace before God and men.

"The Holy Church, the Bride of Christ, and, therefore, Mother, the fecund Mother of those born to Her, watches over and administers the treasures of her Spouse, the infinite treasures which Christ has instituted and which by his Sacrifice He has rendered perennial founts of Grace and Salvation. **And souls can grow and**

nourish themselves, grow and become stronger, grow and reach adult age, in which they change from children who cannot yet make use of their paternal inheritance into heirs in possession of their father's goods.

"The Church offers. The suckling, the child, must accept the food. If he refuses it or takes it with nausea, if he prefers to mix it with other foods or even replace it with other foods, to no avail will the Mother Church offer him the foods which make the child a spiritual adult, one who 'lives' and 'sees,' for he has Life in himself and Light as a friend. Then the child will not grow, but die, or at least remain in an infantilism which is not a sin, but which is not heroic sanctity, and will have to reach the perfect age by a long expiation amidst the purgative, merciful fires. Then the child-the lazy, apathetic, indolent spirit-will not change at his death from a child into an heir, but will have to suffer at length to atone for his lukewarmness, selfishness, and thoughtlessness and reach the perfect age.

`As long as the heir is a child, he in no way differs from the servant, even if he is the owner of everything, but remains under his guardians and proxies until the time set beforehand by his father.' In these words there is hidden the warning that man, always a child in perfection compared to Infinite Perfection, is obliged to remain under the protection of and in obedience to his Holy Mother Church, which, perfect in spiritual things, knows how to lead him and with what foods to nourish him, with what medicines to care for him to defend him from the venoms of original sin, the flesh, the World, and Satan. The incitements are not destroyed even though the stain is erased, and upon the creeping fires of the incitements Satan blows so that, in addition to spreading, producing an unpleasant scalding, they will flame up in a blaze which burns and destroys. The Holy Church sprinkles her balms, her chrisms, her waters, and the Divine Blood of Christ to calm down the storms, put out the flames, medicate the scaldings, make the spirit fireproof so that it will not get burned, and refresh those exhausted by the struggle against the repeated assaults of Satan and the flesh with the vivifying Blood, the vivifying Body of the Most Holy Lord Jesus.

"Therefore, to take nourishment from the Holy Mother, the Roman Church, One, Catholic, and Universal, is a necessity more than a duty if one wants to live and become an heir to the Father's Kingdom. Consequently, whoever does not do so by resorting con-

tinually to her treasures imprudently exposes himself to weakness and death. As a result, whoever says that this is not necessary and that the Holy Church is a useless institution which souls that have been able to become spiritual do not need is speaking Satanic words, and the one who hates the Church as he hates Christ-whom, even before man existed, he refused to adore-is indeed speaking through his lips.

"You cannot, you are unable to become spiritual without the help of the Spirit of God. And the Spirit comes to you through the Sacraments and the Church.

"You cannot, you are unable to keep yourselves spiritual, if by the grace of God you have arrived at so much by means of the foods the Mother Church offers you, if you do not continue to live in Her, with Her, and on what She gives you.

"You ought to be immersed, like fish in a fish pond, in the sevenfold fount and never leave it, so as to be preserved from Satan's bite. The one who says, 'God is with me, and so I no longer need the Church' by this proud thought itself departs from the Church and from Life and appears foul in the eyes of God with the slaver of the hellish Serpent.

"The more you live in obedience to and with love for the Holy Church of Christ, the more you grow in wisdom and grace. The more you drink in Life from her holy nipples, the more you attain the virile fortitude of the strong. The more you are in the Holy, Roman, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, through whose body there circulates the Most Holy Blood of Jesus, my Lord and yours, the more you are in God and with God and the more God is in you. Woe to whoever separates himself! Woe, woe thrice over, to whoever makes others separate themselves from the Church! Woe to whoever, to test souls or seduce them, tempts them to separate themselves or reduce their contacts by saying, 'Do not come to the fount and the granary.' If it is true that you are with God and God is in you, nothing will change, even if you do not nourish yourself with the foods of the Church,' or 'God is with you to such an extent that you can do without this.'

"From the Word the order and counsel to do without the Church and her hierarchies has still not come. It will never come. She is an eternal institution, against which not even Satan gains victory. And if now the violence of hell and the avalanche of heresies and sins of the ages seems to want to overwhelm her, she will suffer only a hard jolt therefrom which will make her trem-

ble and suffer, but from which she will emerge more beautiful, having remade her robes with shining linen-robes which the dust of so many things covered over-and her mantle as a persecuted one in red. Tears and blood are needed to whiten the linen and redden the mantle for the great Bride of Christ, that will not die.

"After the darkness the light. Always. In the creation of the world. In the birth of the day after the night. In the succession of epochs and eras. Corruption generates elements of life from death. From the dark graves of the cemeteries dancing little flames are generated which, if gathered, could provide heat and light. Life, Light, and the spirit are not overcome even by the most dismal spiritual periods, in which it appears that Death is to extinguish Life, Darkness defeat Light, and matter strangle the spirit. They are oppressed. They are hidden. Like the grain cast in the furrows and covered with manure in the gloomy winter months. That grain seems degraded, buried under layers of dirt and the stench of dung. It seems lost to the sun, and the sun to it, But precisely because it is there below, mortified, pressed down, and overwhelmed by the dust and the wheat, it can take root, no longer be a tenuous grain which the passer-by can crush with his foot, the wind carry elsewhere, or the bird swallow, but it may become a stable, cheerful, useful, prosperous plant, multiplied in value and power, beneficial, victorious under the intense sun of the loveliest months.

"Light seems to grow dark and Death come. Corruption spreads and overflows with its burdensome waves. Fear not. It's what's needed to rouse the drowsy and make them desirous of voices from on high. Struggle is useful to keep the athlete strong. The nausea of corruption prompts the desire for what is pure. Darkness spurs people to seek the light. Materiality, when pushed to fearful limits, generates a stimulus towards spirituality.

"Humanity, seized like a ball by Satan because it had fallen asleep in the mist of epochs without religious struggles and flung into the mire with scorn, in reaction to the blow will rebound towards the heights. The era of the spirit will come after this time of materiality. The era of the Light will return after the current obscurantism. The era of Life will succeed the almost mortal agony. The era of God will arise to be a force in the final struggle. The era of God will reign over that of Satan.

"On your feet, O Christians, in the fullness of your charity for God, for the Church, for your neighbor, for yourselves.
God

the Father sent you his Son and your Brother through the Mother, so that He would be your Master and Redeemer and you would be children of God. And since you are children, God has infused the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, and through you He cries out, 'Abba! Father!'

"Man, even the most perfect man, would never be able to pray with that loving violence which obtains miracles, all miracles. And so it is, then, that the Spirit of God prays in you, through you, to obtain what is useful and necessary for you and what, as holy, is suitable for sanctifying you. It is always the Spirit of God that, enclosed in the hearts of the faithful, asks and cries out with ineffable moans: 'Abba! Father!'

"And He says it through you. What, then, are you afraid of, if you can call God 'Father'? If the Spirit of God Himself says it through you, thus confessing that you may call yourselves children of the Father, that you are children of God? If the Spirit Himself, whom God loves infinitely, for He is God, prays and calls out through you?

"Courage, then, and do not be afraid of the things that pass. Fear not. You are not servants that can be dismissed from one day to the next and have no right to the possessions of the Father of the family. But you are children, born to True Life through the merits of Christ, further conserved for Life through these merits, which the Bride of Christ maternally offers you. You are children. And the paternal inheritance cannot be taken away from you. It cannot be destroyed, for the Kingdom of Heaven is untouchable for the disintegrating elements which offend and diminish, wandering over the Earth. The fires of Satan and the unleashed hordes of the Satanized, the black hordes of the black Rebel Prince, do not arrive at the luminous regions where the rejoicing of the saints is completed, where peace is perfected, where charity is so sublime that only beyond life will you know its extent and superbeatific sweetness.

"This rejoicing, this being in peace, this possessing Charity already the joy of the true servants of God here where you are, and which I, an angel of the Lord, hope will be ever more perfect for you- await you there. They are yours. They belong to those who, against everything and everyone, and out of faithfulness to the Word, are able to become and remain children of God.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

THE MOST HOLY NAME OF JESUS
AND VIGIL OF THE EPIPHANY

FEAST OF THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS

Introit: Ph 2:10-11; 8:2

Collect: Lord, You have appointed Your only begotten Son to be the Savior of mankind and given Him the Name of Jesus; grant in Your goodness that we, who venerate His Holy Name on earth, may also enjoy the sight of Him in heaven. Through the same Christ our Lord.

Epistle: Ac 4:8-12

Gradual: Ps 106(105):47; Is 63:16

Alleluia.-Ps 145(144):21

Tract: Ps 80(79):20; Sg 2:14; 1:2

Gospel: Lk 2:21

Offertory: Ps 86(85):12, 5

Secret: Most merciful God, may Your blessing, by which all creatures live, sanctify this sacrifice which we offer You to the glory of the Name of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, so that it may be an honor pleasing to Your majesty and an aid to our salvation. Through the same Christ our Lord.

Communion: Ps 86(85):9-10

Postcommunion: Almighty and everlasting God, You have created and redeemed us; graciously give ear to our prayers and in Your mercy and kindness deign to accept this sacrifice of the saving Victim we have offered to Your majesty for the glory of the Name of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, so that by the power of Your grace upon us, we may rejoice to see our names written in heaven, under the glorious Name of Jesus, in the book of eternal predestination. Through the same Christ our Lord.

SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE NATIVITY

Introit: Ws 18:14-15; Ps 93(92):1

Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, guide our actions according to Your good pleasure so that we may deserve to abound in good works in the name of Your beloved Son. Who with You lives and reigns.

Epistle: Ga 4:1-7

Gradual: Ps 45(44):3, 2

Alleluia: Ps 93(92):1

Gospel: Mt 2:19-23

Offertory: Ps 93(92):1-2

Secret: Grant us, we pray, almighty God, that the gifts now offered in the sight of Your majesty may win for us the grace of true devotion and the reward of a happy eternity. Through our Lord.

Communion: Mt 2:20

Postcommunion: By the virtue of this mystery, O Lord, may our sins be purged away and our rightful desires fulfilled. Through our Lord.

January 5, 1947

Azariah says:

"Today's Holy Masses-the Sunday celebrating the Holy Name of Jesus and Vigil of the Epiphany-are the poem of obedience, of this great virtue which, after the three theological virtues, should be loved and followed to perfection and which, on the contrary, is virtually passed over or is observed poorly and loved even less. And yet it is one of the cornerstones of the Uncreated and of creation and an indispensable cornerstone to support the edifice of sanctity. Let us contemplate it together, soul of mine, and you will see that it is, wherever it is found, a good thing.

"Obedience in the Uncreated: the *Verbum* obeys the Father's wishes. Always. He never refuses to be the One through whose Word the Father's will is accomplished. The perfect acts of obedience by the Divine Word are known. They shine out to you mortals from the first words of Genesis: 'God said, "Let there be light."' So it was that the Word immediately expressed the command that the Father had conceived, and there was light. There was light, and the Word took Flesh among men, several times declaring Himself to be '*Light*,' and Light He is called by the inspired mouth of John the Apostle: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All *things were made through Him*, and without Him no created thing was made. In Him was Life, and the Life was *the Light* of men. And *the Light* shone in the darkness, but the darkness grasped it not. There was a man sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, *to bear witness to the Light*, so that all might believe by means of him. He was not the Light, but he came to bear witness to the *Light*, the true *Light* enlightening every man who comes into this world.'

"This seraphic page of the seraphic man who had known God and not just the God-Man, Savior and Master, but God, the Unknowable, and had understood his Nature-is truly a song, the song of the truth about the Nature of the Word, and gives wings to the soul of whoever is able to listen to it, wings to ascend to contemplate the Word who became man to give men Life and Light.

"The Word wanted the name '*Light*' as his characteristic. He

nearly baptized Himself with this name, which was spoken by Him in his first act of obedience to the Father: 'Let there be Light!'

"The Word has always obeyed. The Father said to Him, 'You shall be a Man, for only You can instruct Humanity.' The Word said, 'I will be a Man. May your Will be done.' The Father said, 'You shall die, for only your Sacrifice can redeem Humanity.' The Word said, 'I will die. May your will be done.' The Father said, 'And You shall die on the Cross, for to redeem the world the sacrifice of your life amidst the pains of death from illness is not sufficient for Me.' The Word said, 'And I will die on the Cross. May your Will be done.'

"The centuries passed, and the Word, when his time had come, became incarnate in the Womb of the Virgin and was born like all born of man-little, weak, unable to speak or walk, obeying the Father in this, too, who wanted Him subject to the common laws to preserve Him from the snares of Satan and men, fiercely looking to and waiting for the feared Messiah, and to forestall the future objections of the deniers and heretics on the *true Humanity* of the Son of God.

"He grew in wisdom and grace, *obeying*. He became a man and worker, *obeying-God the Father* and his relatives. On reaching his thirtieth year, He became the Master to instruct Humanity, *obeying*. After three years and three months, and when the time came to die-and by death on the *Cross-He obeyed*, repeating, 'May your Will be done.'

"And to obey as long as obedience is only in thought is still easy. To say, 'You shall do...,' and to respond, 'I will do,' when there are years ahead between the order and its execution-in Christ's case, centuries-is still easy. But to repeat, 'May your Will be done' when the Victim is already faced with the instruments of the Passion and it is time to embrace them to accomplish the will of God is much more difficult. Everything fills the human creature with repugnance-the pain, the offenses, death. In the case of Christ, the weight of men's sins as well, which teemed over Him, the Redeemer close to the Redemption. But Jesus *obeyed*, saying, 'May your Will be done,' and died on the Cross after having suffered and consummated. This is obedience in the Uncreated.

"In creation. The elements, which were confused in chaos, obeyed by ordering themselves. Recall here the words of Genesis, so as not to say that the spokeswoman hears badly: 'God cre-

ated heaven and the earth, and the earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the face of the abyss, and the Spirit of God moved over the waters, and God said, "Let there be Light." Air, water, fire, and light were, then, made, but they were not separated and ordered. God commanded them to separate and order themselves, according to the Law He was giving them, and they *obeyed* and *have been obeying* for thousands of Years, making the day and the night, the seas and the lands-and fire, working, in the veins of the earth, to prepare the minerals man needs.

"Obedience in creation. God, after having made heaven-that is, the strata of the atmosphere-sprinkled them with stars, commanding them to follow a certain immutable course, and the stars obeyed. God, after having made the Earth-that is, after having rendered matter compact and ordered, first scattered and confused with dust and water-created the plants and animals of the Earth and the waters and commanded them to fructify and multiply, and animals and plants *obeyed*.

"Then came man, the creature-king of creation, and God gave man the command of obedience. And man's obedience would have maintained the Earth in the state of an earthly Paradise in which death, hunger, wars, misfortunes, illnesses, and weariness would have been unknown-a joyous sojourn of peace and love in the friendship of God would have been man's life until his passing on to the heavenly Dwelling, the way it was for Mary Most Holy, who did not die, *but fell asleep in the Lord and awakened in his Bosom, beautiful and glorified, with her perfect spirit and faultless flesh*.

"And Satan did not want this joy of man, this joy only slightly inferior to that of the angels and, to make up for the difference between men and angels, with the joy of having children without concupiscence, which is always pain, and without pain, the fruit of concupiscence. And man seconded Lucifer's desire and disobeyed, bringing upon himself and his descendants all the consequences of disobedience, which is never good and always creates ruins.

"Since then, because man's spirit was contaminated with disobedience, the characteristic of Satan, only those loving God have been able to obey and, on this foundation, which is the spirit of obedience, sanctify themselves.

"Obedience, which seems inferior to the three theological virtues, just because it is not even named among the four cardinal

virtues [prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance], is in reality present in all of them, inseparable from all the virtues. It is like a support on which they rest to grow in you.

"Meditate. How can you have Faith? By obeying God, who tells you to believe and proposes that you believe in his truths and mysteries, and by obeying what the Holy Church tells you: the Voice of the voices of God. How can you have Hope? Here, too, by believing in God, who infuses this virtue into you, telling you that you must hope in Him, who will give you his aids and mercies to arrive at eternal Life and its possession. How can you have Charity? By obeying the precept of love for God and towards one's neighbor.

"How can you have Prudence? By remaining obedient to the precepts of God and his counsels, whose purpose is to direct every action by man to its proper end.

"And how Justice? By obeying the Law of supernatural morality, which teaches you not to do to others what you would not want done to yourselves.

"And how Fortitude? By heroically obeying God, whom you know is greater than all created things and for whom you must be willing to suffer all to keep yourselves faithful to Him and possess Him for eternity; by heroically obeying with his promise in your hearts: 'I shall be with you in the hours of trial.' For this is what all the words of Truth promise which one must be able to grasp in their spirit. To act and not fear. God is with those obedient to his will. The persecutors remain here below. O you that are obedient to God, beyond life they cannot reach you. And a day will come when they will see you again and be amazed to observe you among the blessed.

"And how can you have Temperance? Also by obedience to the holy prohibitions of God and to the limits set for your salvation in order to use temporal things without danger.

"You see that Obedience, a silent virtue, is in all the virtues. In all.

"And now that we have uttered praise of obedience, let us meditate on the Holy Mass of the Most Holy Name of Jesus.

"Jesus also obeyed in taking the Name which the Father wanted Him to bear. Let men not object, 'Of course He took that Name, since He was the Savior!' They will perhaps say as well, 'The prophets had already called Him the Savior.' Men always want to diminish the heroicity of the saints' virtues and, there-

fore, the perfect heroicity of the Saint of Saints as well-Jesus, Son of God and of Mary.

"There were many names in the language of Israel which could have served to signify who the son of Mary was. He could have been named Elisha, Joab, Jonathan, Malachi, Matthias or Mattathias, Zacchaeus or Zebedee, Nathaniel or Uriah, or Joachim, too, for the Lord God raised up his Word-on the Cross, over the world, and over all creatures. And there were the names used by the Prophets, under the impulse of the Holy Spirit, to indicate the Incarnate Word. It should not, therefore, be said that He had to take that Name alone. But He took it because his Father so willed. And Mary and Joseph, other heroically obedient ones, imposed it upon the Child because 'the angel had so named Him before He was conceived in his Mother's womb.'

"I have already explained to you what 'Jesus' means, and with a broader explanation than the one commonly provided by the learned. But to the power and justice of this Name you can now join as well knowledge of the virtue it conceals. Holy obedience, taken as his faithful companion in great and small things alike, and even in taking the Name to be borne eternally as the GodMan. That Name, before which every knee must bend on Earth, in Heaven, and in Hell, and every tongue must confess that the divine Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of the Father. That Name, which is admirable more than any other borne by a creature. That Name, which works miracles and frees from demons on just being mentioned, for it is the Powerful name of the Almighty. You have on several occasions experienced the truth and measure of its being omnipotent, and the extent to which it is, and its working miracles on having it in your midst.

"To say 'Jesus' is already to utter prayer and entreaty which the Father of Heaven never rejects. To say 'Jesus' is to overcome the adverse forces, whatever they are. Satan and his black ministers cannot hold the prey if he-or someone on behalf of him-cries out, 'Jesus.'

"Let us praise this Name, you and I, and praise Jesus for saying it and wanting it to be king in homes to re-establish peace and joy, order and love where Lucifer has caused disorder. The Prince of the Apostles, when rendered a true apostle and master by pentecostal baptism, says so: 'Let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene..., by virtue of this Name, he is healthy in your

sight.... There is no other salvation. *And there is no other Name under Heaven ... by virtue of which we may be saved.'*

"The Name of the One Obedient unto death, and death on the Cross, is the name victorious over everything always. Today as well you have seen how, by virtue of the Name and the love of Jesus, the one you know is *healthy* in the sight of those who previously knew him to be sick. He is freed. May the Name of Christ keep the return of the Evil One-who hates those wanting to live in the Law of God-far away from him.

"He hates. As he hated Mary and Joseph, inciting everything that could harm them and cause them pain because they were obedient to the Lord. He hates. As he hated the Three Wise Men, to the point of trying to make their gift become harmful to the Divine Child and themselves, sought by Herod, disappointed and irate over their eluding him. They, too, were among the obedient. They obeyed the celestial voices. Always. Both when these voices said to them, 'Depart to worship the newborn King of the Jews,' and when they said, 'Do not go back to Herod.' They obeyed and deserved to bend their knees, the first fruits of all the peoples, before Christ, before the Son of God and of Mary-Jesus.

"The life of Christ, and of the relatives and friends of Christ, was entirely obedience. Obedience paves the way of the Lord, and He passed over it, with his Mother and Joseph, from the first moments of his earthly life. Indeed, those who, by God's will, represented God for Him and near Him carried Him as a helpless Child upon that way-the putative Father and the Virgin Mother. And if the Mother knew, through the Grace of which She was full, that the Child did not have to be taught the ways of Justice, Joseph, who did not know all the mysteries which Mary stored up in her heart-recall here the explanation received in the book on the Childhood of Jesus Our Lord-as the just man he was, wanted to teach the Child, from the first glimmers of intelligence on, that God's orders must be obeyed, even if these orders mean exile, greater poverty, and pain. And Mary, the humble and prudent Wife, seconded her husband, becoming similar to him in relation to the Child, who, to ward off Satan, had to be treated like every other little son of man.

"What depth of virtue in these words, spoken after the others concerning obedience in the name to be imposed on the Child! 'And Joseph, *getting up at night*, took the Child and the Mother and withdrew to Egypt, where he remained....' And in the others:

'And he, getting up, took the Child and the Mother and returned to the land of Israel ... and, warned in a dream, he withdrew to Galilee

"Prompt, complete obedience, to the point of not replying with a single word of contention and not even waiting for the morning to put it into practice. And this was not only the first time, when an hour's delay might have meant even 'death' for the Child, but also the second time, when the departure was less urgent, when, indeed, leaving the hospitable city meant losing his customers again and, therefore, his income and that minimum which by his work he had again recovered. Joseph did not know what he would find on going back to his country. But he departed because God so willed, and he went where God wanted him.

"Joseph had doubted only once, and concerning a creature. Never concerning God. Now, having progressed in virtue through closeness to Mary, he would not doubt-indeed, did not doubt even creatures. He accepted everything. And he told himself, 'I trust the Most High. He knows the hearts of men and will save me from the snares of the deceitful and wicked.' He had never doubted and did not doubt the heavenly voices. And he went.

"Imitate the obedience of the chosen and the Beloved which luminously appears from the two Holy Masses of today and tomorrow's feast. *He who is able to obey will reign. For if charity is God, obedience is the sign of being God's children.*

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FAMILY AND
SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE EPIPHANY

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Introit: Pr 23:24, 25; Ps 84(83):2-3

Collect: Lord Jesus Christ, when You were subject to Mary and Joseph, You sanctified the life of the home with ineffable virtues; grant by their help that we may be taught by the example of Your Holy Family and become sharers in eternal happiness. You, who are God, living and reigning.

Epistle: C1 3:12-17

Gradual: Ps 27(26):4; 84(83):5

Alleluia: Is 45:15

Gospel: Lk 2:42-52

Offertory: Lk 2:22

Secret: We offer You, Lord, the sacrifice of propitiation, humbly begging You that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and blessed Joseph, You would firmly establish our families in Your peace and grace. Through the same our Lord.

Communion: Lk 2:51

Postcommunion: Lord Jesus, make us whom You refresh with Your heavenly sacraments follow continually the example of Your Holy Family; so that in the hour of our death Your glorious Virgin Mother and blessed Joseph may come to us and we may be found worthy to be received by You into Your eternal dwelling place. You who are God, living and reigning.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Introit: Upon a high throne I saw a Man sitting, whom a multitude of Angels adore singing together: Behold Him the name of whose empire is for ever. - Ps 100(99):1

Collect: Lord, we entreat You of Your heavenly goodness, hear the prayers of Your suppliant people; and grant that they may perceive what is their duty and may have the strength to carry it out. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Rm 12:1-5

Gradual: Ps 72(71):18, 3

Alleluia: Ps 100(99):1

Offertory: Ps 100(99):1, 2

Secret: May the sacrifice which is offered to You, Lord, ever give us life and protect us. Through our Lord.

Communion: Lk 2:48, 49

Postcommunion: We humbly entreat You, almighty God, to grant to those whom You refresh with Your sacraments, that they may serve You worthily by a life well pleasing to You. Through our Lord.

January 12, 1947

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I have been living in the joy of the first days of the year. What great joy! How many intimate lessons from Jesus in my long nights of infirmity! What love! Since the night of January 2-3 He has removed from me that agony in my stomach which yielded to nothing, and then.... This morning the sweet parable of the two lamps. But if He does not order me to write it down, I won't. He now gives me many secret, most delicate lessons, but tells me it is useless for me to write them. And I obey.

Azariah says:

"Today as well two Holy Masses have to be contemplated, and I shall do so with loving solicitude to leave you free to do what the Lord has told you.

"The introits of the two Masses sing the two natures of Jesus Most Holy. In that of the Mass of the Holy Family, the Savior's Humanity appears to us from the words 'Let the father of the just one exult happily.... May she who has given birth to you rejoice.' If the Savior is 'just,' it is a sign that He is a man. For men, men alone, with their nature, in which the lower part is in opposition to the higher one, are in a position, by free will, to be or not to be, to become or not to become 'just.'

"God, as Perfection, cannot be unjust. We angels do not have the weight of flesh and the incitement to sin; we have only to keep watch, then, to be humble, obedient, and charitable spiritually, to serve the Most High Lord, our Creator, with perfection. You men, on the other hand, have the painful and glorious possibility of being just-that is, of fighting against the incitements of the flesh and against temptations and concupiscences of every kind. This fight against what is evil forms your justice. The one who works with justice by triumphing over the tempting voices and tendencies of the human creature is, therefore, called Just.' And man can thus be just.

"If Jesus was, then, just, Jesus was a *true* man, exactly as, if He was born of a woman, He was a *true* man. For what is spiritual does not need a womb to form itself, and what is ghostly does not need a womb to take on an appearance.

"We angels manifest ourselves with the embodiment God gives us to make ourselves perceptible to your dull senses, when it is necessary to do so, but you see that generally it is not to the eyes located in the head that we present ourselves, but to spiritual

sight, and we speak to your spiritual hearing, and that both, sight and hearing, enjoy this with the vividness which material eyes and ears would experience, and even more, for while the spirit sees and hears, it also rejoices over the peace we bear with us. The Saints whom the Lord Jesus sends when it is proper to do so appear thus. And always to whoever needs or deserves this. But they do so with no need to be reborn from a womb to form themselves and appear.

"Jesus, on the other hand, as a true Man, was born from a womb just like every other person born of man and became just through his will to serve the Most High Lord, as it is justice for every man to do.

"It is not up to me to combat the controversial theories on the Savior's reactions to temptations and to what surrounded his Humanity. I shall only state that the heretics are quite wrong who deny Christ a true Humanity and the capacity to perceive what man's sensation is, like those who through a misunderstood veneration of Christ make Him a Man in whom the perfect Holiness of God produced physical, moral, and spiritual insensitivity to all events.

"But He Himself, if He wishes, will speak on this. Let it suffice for you to understand that the words of the Introit are an affirmation of his true Humanity, just as in those of the Introit of the Holy Mass in the Octave of Epiphany there is an affirmation of the Divinity of the Man born of Mary. 'On the sublime throne I saw a man seated, worshipped by multitudes of angels psalmodizing in chorus, "Here is the One whose rule is eternal."' Who, except God, cannot remain on the throne of the heavens and be worshipped by angels, though a man? And who has eternal rule and is both God and Man, except Jesus Christ, the Savior?

"The twofold Nature of the blessed Messiah is, then, established, of Christ the Redeemer, of Him who became incarnate to save you, and who has loved you to the point of death, and death on a cross, giving you his Blood as a lavacre and his Flesh as food, giving you Wisdom with his Word, and salvation through the infinite power of his love.

"Total love should be given to whoever loves totally. Whoever is not grateful does not have love. Whoever does not have love does not belong to God and to God will not return.

"Gratitude leads to loving not only the benefactor, but also all that forms the benefactor. Among men, isn't there perhaps

a tendency to take on the habits and thoughts of the one who is, or seems to be, the benefactor of an individual or a whole people? Yes, you act that way. And shouldn't you, then, strive more carefully to take on what was in your true benefactor, Jesus. Clothe yourselves, therefore, as the Apostle says, with what clothed the Most Holy Word, who has chosen you to be his followers. Be holy. Love as you have been loved by God, love God in your neighbor, possessing mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, and patience, mutual forbearance and forgiveness, always considering that no one can call himself so perfect that he can tell himself, 'I do not forgive because I don't need forgiveness.'

"Jesus was entirely without defect and forgave *everyone*. God is Perfection, and yet He forgives whoever asks for forgiveness. Do not want to be more than the Savior and God.

"Charity is the bond of perfection and the seal upon every creature. If charity is lacking, the creature does not have the seal which opens Heaven to him. The *Tau* is the sign of the redeemed; charity, the sign of the saints. You members of the Mystical Body must love as the Head of this Body loves. If you do not love, you do not remain in the Body and die like pieces of flesh which separate from what nourishes them and fall into atrophy and gangrene, with disturbance and pain, for whoever separates himself from the true Christ separates himself from Christ's peace.

"The true Christ is not the ideal and idealized figure which has slowly been taking the place of the real one in too many consciences which, either individually or collectively, have formed for themselves, according to what pleases them, an unreal Christ that is nothing but the reflection of their very own thought, more or less removed from the truth. The true Christ is the one who appears alive in the Gospel, a giant of mortification, goodness, altruism, modesty, heroism, and unselfishness, a hero of love and pain, *who would perform an action before saying to others, 'Do this'*, and who clearly stated, 'Do what I do,' 'Be perfect,' 'Do not be greedy,' 'Do not fear for your lives.'

"This is the Christ. The poor Christ, the meek Christ, the humble Christ, the patient Christ, the tireless Christ, the willing Christ, the obedient Christ, the martyr Christ, the loving Christ. Not, indeed, the Christ from whom hatred or aestheticism or even quietism prunes away all the vigorous branches of what He is through spiritual action, material constitution, and selfmortification, so as not to have to say, 'He was really great. He

was ruggedly heroic. He was a powerful Master and Example. And we must imitate Him.'

"He is not the Christ diminished to artistic beauties, poetic actions, and placid episodes lying outside every struggle. He is the Strong One who works, wears Himself, combats Satan and the evil tendencies of men, disfigures Himself in labor and suffering, and transfigures Himself from a Man into the Martyr of all martyrs, and from a martyr into the Divine Victor.

"This is the Christ that a whole world has wanted to demolish for twenty centuries and has not managed to, that all the heresies and quietisms have wanted to alter, that all the unhealthy or imperfect adorations have tended to negate, believing they were confessing Him and were the only perfect and healthy ones. This is the Christ: God by Nature, Holy by will, Man by Birth. This is the Christ, the perfect Being in whom a trinity of perfections is brought together. The Perfection of God, the perfection of the Man, the perfection of the soul of the God-Man. In Christ, the Word-that is, God, like the Father. In Christ, the Man; in the Man, the soul full of Grace-that is, of Himself again. If God, always perfect, could be said to have once surpassed Himself, it could be said on contemplating the threefold perfection of the Divinity, the Humanity, and Grace brought together in Christ, in whom there is the superperfection of all that exists.

"A God who generates from Himself his Only Son and who one day makes this Son a Man, without forcing the Divine to make use of a carnal will to give flesh to the Infinite. A Man who through love is formed like a diamond from the igneous heat of the depths. The love of the Divinity and the love of the Immaculate creature that unite and, in the furnace of charity, generate the Love of loves, the Redeemer of all mankind. And while the Immaculate One nurtures the First-Born in her inviolate womb, the Almighty creates for Him, at the proper moment, the perfect, unstained soul that can descend to merge opportunely into the Flesh, conceived by the will of the Eternal Spirit and creaturely obedience. And the God-Man is in the living Tabernacle worthy to host Him until the day of his birth.

"This is the Christ who says to you, 'Be as I am. Be perfect,' and proposes Himself to you as a model, for He knows that you can imitate Him if you immolate yourselves completely to charity as He immolated Himself to Charity. For this is the secret of perfection and of imitation of Jesus Christ Our Lord: to be able

to immolate oneself to love with Christ and like Christ, and for the same purposes as Christ did, according to his Word of doctrine, which is wisdom and grace and which He has given and gives you so that, together with the Sacraments, it will be the Way, the Truth, Life, and Light for you, as He is.

"And-recalling the other epistle of the other Holy Mass-by doing so you will truly offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing to the Lord, and it will be 'your rational worship.' That living worship which is not choreography or deceit, as are the things of the age, but true, continual reforming of the old man into the new man in the Christian, who is a son of God and brother of Christ-that worship which is renewal of the spirit that, after having distinguished good and evil by reason, and the will of the Lord, willingly repudiates evil and the will of the flesh, and weds its own will to God's and follows God's because it is good, pleasing, and perfect.

"By this 'reasonable worship,' which is true imitation of the Lord Jesus, you will really be living members in the living Mystical Body of Christ and in time and eternity will dwell in the house of the Lord and in his peace.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit!"

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Introit: Ps 66(65):4, 1-2 Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, You govern all things both in heaven and on earth; hear in Your mercy the prayers of Your people and give us peace in our time. Through our Lord. Epistle: Rm 12:6-16 Gradual: Ps 107(106):20-21 Alleluia: Ps 148:2 Gospel: Jn 2:1-11 Offertory: Ps 66(65):1-2, 16 Secret: Sanctify, Lord, the gifts which we offer: and cleanse us from the stains of our sins. Through our Lord. Communion: Jn 2:7, 8, 9, 10-11 Postcommunion: May the working of Your power be increased in us, Lord, so that the reception of Your divine sacraments may prepare us to gain these eternal gifts which they promise us. Through our Lord.

Azariah says:

January 19, 1947

"A great lesson is in the Epistle of St. Paul. A lesson in which the need to follow the Tenth Commandment from childhood on and in all things is made manifest, so as to arrive at justice in holy things as well.

"For, soul of mine, one can be unjust even in what is just. Not because just things can become unjust by themselves, but because man can want and practice them in a disorderly way. And so it is with holy things. The theft-or at least the immoderate, concupiscent desire-for the supernatural is more widespread than is thought and takes on a violence and condescension which not even material theft and immoderate desire take on.

"The concupiscence of being like God-not because such a desire comes from knowledge of your destiny and from love spurring you towards the attainment of a perfection which makes you gods, but out of pride-is the same concupiscence Lucifer had. And from the Rebel it has taken tenacity, as it has taken the same form and violence.

"Your Most Holy Master said to you, 'Be perfect, like my Father.' It is, therefore, not a sin, but obedience to tend towards this perfection, which makes you resemble your Father. But per-

fection brings justice with it. And in justice there is only love. Injustice and in love there is always humility and wisdom. And in humility and wisdom, the desire to be similar to God is not confused with pride and the ignorance of wanting to be so in power and infinity, to do the things He does-and, even more, surpassing Him, dominating Him, and dethroning Him by saying, 'I am,' as Lucifer tried to do and Lucifer said-but remains pure, remains love, nothing but love. Love spurring the children to imitate the Divine Father and Brother, to be perfect in goodness and charity. In these. Not in the thirst to do the stupendous works which make God the Creator and Lord of Heaven and Earth.

"And yet, alongside the atheists, who curse God by denying Him, and the rationalists, who curse Him by diminishing Him, the many heretics who curse Him by mutilating Him, and the indifferent, who curse Him by not remembering Him-categories of men whom the Catholics who believe themselves to be perfect, not observing themselves before judging others to see if some beam is in their pupil (and if they did so, they would see that, if there is no main beam, in their eyes there is at least a straw, and it is already sufficient to have their sight obscured), judge severely, being scandalized by them-there are other sinners, and precisely in the sin of spiritual concupiscence. And they are precisely in the ranks of the Catholics who think they are fervent, and they are in their way. They are. But with unjust fervor, with impure fervor, with disorderly love. In the time of Jesus Our Lord they would have been in the ranks of the Pharisees. Now they are in the ranks of those who are disorderly in religion.

"And there are many. Just because they do not let a single day pass without going to church and respect abstinence and fasting at all costs, even at the cost of neglecting their husband or wife or children and thereby fostering in them looseness which a good Catholic ought to take care to keep from arising, or, failing in charity towards a sick person, they forget that assistance to the infirm, through the mercy practiced, is a rite of honor and love for God, who is hidden in the sick themselves-they are all those who, because they do this, for their souls, have a disorderly religion. Disorderly because it is selfish. Disorderly because it is thirsty for praise from men who see their-external-fervor, their-external-daily prayer. But God also sees the inside of hearts and things. He sees the true motive for so many practices. And He sees the consequences of these entirely external prac-

tices. And He does not approve. For God is Love and Order and wants order and love in all things.

"When the Divine Master was asked by the Scribe what the greatest precept was, He replied, 'To love God with all our strength, soul, heart, and intellect, and love our neighbor as ourselves' and, while teaching, told his disciples that to those judged at the Last Judgment who asked Him when they had seen Him hungry, thirsty, without shelter, naked, infirm, or imprisoned He would reply, 'What you failed to do to one of these you failed to do to Me.'

"Wisdom wants love in all things and in the practice of all things. It does not ask for the outward appearance of the act, but the soul of the act. To go from church to church while neglecting the duty of a husband or wife, father or mother, son or brother, and leading the man or woman to blasphemy and wrath, the son or brother to dissipation, and the daughter to looseness in harmful friendships and contacts is not to honor God. Time, when one knows how to use it, suffices for all things, if it is joined to a true spirit of charity and sacrifice. And God, who is just, has established just obligations for worship, precisely to temper the needs and stimuli of creatures and souls. The Church has had the same just measure. All the rest is a surplus which should be used when and as circumstances permit, not letting one's own merit cause harm to other souls. For, if that were the case, the merit would be canceled out by responsibility for the anger or sin arising in other hearts.

"Be just, O Catholics, if you want to be perfect. Be just, if you want truly to belong to God. Love with perfection. Loving, in order to love your Father, honoring Him out of love, not for the gain that may accrue to you therefrom. Otherwise, if you gave honor to obtain a gain, 'you would be like the Gentiles and sinners.' If you were fervent just to receive an immediate reward at your death, I tell you that you would long atone for your selfishness in Purgatory.

"Now then, since disorder generates confusion, so among these Catholics who humanize, shall we say, the spiritual worship which is called religion, and which is love, and thus divert its uprightness and alter its nature and beauty there are precisely the spiritually concupiscent of whom I spoke at the beginning-so numerous among Catholics, so removed from justice, humility, and true love. In them is a sin against the Tenth Commandment,

and a sin of pride, avarice, and envy. The habit of these capital vices arises in them, for they do not immediately break the weed of spiritual concupiscence which has sprung up in them through disorderly love.

"The Apostle particularly addresses these, as sick people who must be informed of their illness and treated by baring the wound, and he also addresses those who, though not yet sick, may fall into sickness and those who, though very healthy (indeed, already clothed with the salutary wealth of God), may fall into the sins of avarice and pride, and, therefore, get sick and die.

"We have different gifts according to the grace which has been given to us That's it. Let each do *what* God has given him to do, and let him do so 'with cheerfulness' of spirit and great charity. For if he has charity, his heart will also be cheerful, since it is hate alone that yields sadness of spirit because it generates sin and separates from God.

"Let no one, therefore, envy whoever has prophecy and crave for it and, just to appear as a 'voice,' simulate or accept the voices of darkness, always ready to lend themselves to caress man's pride and content it to carry him to perdition. Let the Christian never do that, for simulation and commerce with Satan are horrendous sins in the eyes of God.

"And let whoever has a mission as a 'voice' not grow proud or be greedy towards his brothers with the treasures of God, but teach and distribute with prudence and simplicity. There are a thousand ways to do so without failing in charity and prudence and respect for the teaching Church.

"May example, above all, be the word of the 'voices.' Example in every virtue. Afterwards let it be the word which is able to repeat at the proper time and place the wisdom received, 'offering, giving thanks' for the bread and the fish to be broken and distributed 'to this people that has nothing to eat and for whom he feels compassion.' To distribute *the soul* of the words *received*, their vital fluid to whoever is languishing-for, tired of the usual food or too languid to assimilate the excessively spicy or insipid food which the rigorism or lukewarmness of too many idol-pastors breaks for the multitudes, he does not approach the tables of wisdom-is not to sin against prudence and obedience to God and the Church. Does a woman who offers her breast to the mouth of a suckling perhaps sin? She does not sin. But if she performed the same act towards an adult, to receive a lustful embrace, she

certainly would sin. So it is in this case. Someone who said, 'Come, take from me, for I am God's coffer and have enough for everyone. Come, praise me for my glory,' would offend justice. But one who, like hidden water rising from a secret source and humbly transuding its humors to refresh the nearby plants, that drink in life without even knowing its instrument, gives one the fluid that confirms, another that which placates, another that which enlightens, another that which guides, oh, does not, indeed, sin! And God blesses his labor, for it is given to 'provide for the needs of the saints' and to 'practice hospitality' towards his brothers. That two-sided mercy which will crown you with the crown of the spirits saved by you and make the Judge say to you, 'Come to my right and take possession of my Kingdom, which has been prepared for you since the foundation of the world.'

And, finally, O you that suffer because you are servants of justice, 'bless those who persecute you.' They are-I already told you on another occasion-the main authors of your eternal triumph. Love them, then, for, in wanting to strip you of the robe of your earthly ministry, they weave for you the incorruptible robe of God's chosen in eternity.

"Always love-your enemies, who for Christians are not enemies, but simply poor lunatics who should be pitied because they do not know what they are doing-the fortunate and the unfortunate, rejoicing with whoever rejoices and weeping with whoever weeps, as if the joy or pain of others were your joy and your pain.

"And, returning to the initial subject, be stripped, all of you, of spiritual concupiscence, 'not aspiring to lofty things, but adapting yourselves to those which are lowly,' always content with your mission, whatever it is, glad that others have more than you, blessing God for what He gives you, humbly asking Him, if it is something sublime, to be able to use it worthily for his glory and for the salvation of your neighbor.

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

Jesus says:

"I could have spoken before to give you this gem, O my little John. ¹ But such is the dignity of the Holy Sacrifice, too little known for what it is by too many Catholic Christians, that I have given precedence to the explanation of it. And this is the first lesson which I am giving to many, speaking exceptionally on a feast day and on a Gospel passage

¹ See note 1, p. 29.

which I have already dealt with according to the usual teaching.

"When a priest or a voice speaks, in the name of God or by the order of God, when a precept is obeyed, I, who am the Lord, remain silent, for great is the dignity of a master who speaks in my Name and by my order, and great is the dignity of a rite, most great that of the Holy Mass, the rite of rites, just as the Eucharist is the Sacrament of Sacraments.

"Now then, listen, O my little John.

"I told you a long time ago-you were in the place of exile' and suffered to a degree that I alone know-that every Gospel passage and episode is a mine of teachings. Do you remember? I had shown you the second multiplication of bread and had told you that, as with a few fish and a few pieces of bread I was able to feed the crowds, in the same way your spirits can be limitlessly fed by the few passages which are reported by the Four Gospels. Indeed, an incalculable number of men have been feeding on them for twenty centuries. And I, now, through my little John, have given an increase in episodes and words² because starvation is truly about to consume spirits and I have mercy on them. But for twenty centuries bread and fish have also been coming to men from those few episodes in the Four Gospels so that they will be satiated and there will still be some left over. All of this is done by the Holy Spirit, who is the teaching Master seated on the cathedra of Gospel instruction.

"When the Paraclete comes, He will instruct you concerning all truth and teach you everything and remind you of all that I have said,' teaching the true spirit of every word, of every letter of the episode. For it is the spirit of the word, and not the word in itself, which gives life to the spirit. The word not understood is a useless sound. It is not understood when it is just a term, a noise, not 'life, a seed of life, a spark, and a source' which sinks in roots, sets aflame, washes, and nourishes....

"And may my Body and my Blood forever be in you those precious and incorruptible Things through which, as Simon Peter says, you have been rescued so that you will exalt the virtues of Him who called you out of darkness into his admirable Light.

"My Peace to you, little bride, longing for Love. Peace to you. Peace to you. Peace to you."

¹See note 1, p. 34. ²See note 1, p. 104.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Introit: Ps 97(96):7-8; 1

Collect: Almighty and everlasting God, look with favor on our weakness, and stretch forth the right hand of Your majesty to help us. Through our Lord.

Epistle: Rm 12:16-21

Gradual: Ps 102(101):16-17

Alleluia: Ps 97(96):1

Gospek Mt 8:1-13

Offertory: Ps 118(117):16, 17

Secret: May this offering, we entreat You, Lord, cleanse away our sins, and sanctify the bodies and minds of Your servants to celebrate this holy sacrifice. Through our Lord.

Communion: Lk 4:22

Postcommunion: Grant, Lord, that we who by Your generosity are admitted to frequent these great mysteries, may be made fit to profit by them as we ought. Through our Lord.

Azariah says:

January 26, 1947

"A brief lesson, given your condition. And it should be entirely for you, since your humanity, continually put to the test by the humanity of others which is not good, might truly desire to take revenge. No, soul of mine. You see that God is already taking his revenge and your cause is his. Let them act, therefore. And as for you, 'overcome evil with good.' If they are not afterwards defeated, the burning coals will be upon their heads while you burn with the marvellous flames of love.

"But for everyone here is Paul's lesson. A lesson of humility, charity, peace, and mercy.

"Be wise out of love for God alone, not to receive praise from men and even less from yourselves. No one is a good judge of himself or his brothers; do not, therefore, judge either yourselves or your brothers. There is one who judges for all. Let your good be done not just for yourselves, though, but let your lives be like a light in the world, a good light which illuminates and induces others to do what you do and persuades many for the holiness of Religion.

"See how they love one another?!'the pagans said of the first Christians. Make it said now as well. Consider that the apathy,

continual bad habits, or open hypocrisy of false or weak Christians are more injurious to religion than the violent stabs of the enemies of God. Religion and the Church are injured by the lukewarmness of the faithful more than by the aggression of the enemies.

"Do not turn your confession into a party weapon. See what happened when Israel made the Hebrew confession a political instrument. Never give holy things for profane uses. But be holy, though, in public life as well, so that the dark forces will not prevail and morality and the Faith will be defended.

"Work. Without useless din, but with real good deeds. Do not hate, but forgive and have God as your friend, for without God you uselessly get excited about acting. In a word, be Christians. Always. In everything. There are not two lives-that of the hours of worship and the other usual one. There is one alone, and you cannot be true Christians if you are only for the hour in church. Christians at home and at the office, at shops and in diversions, in affections and in earnings, so that your life will not be a lie which God observes with indignation.

"The little John is exhausted today. Charity for her weakness. And, all the same, glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit."

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY

Introit: Ps 18(17):5, 6, 7, 2-3

Collect: In Your goodness, Lord, hear the prayers of Your people, that we, who are justly punished for our sins, may be mercifully delivered for the glory of Your name. Through our Lord.

Epistle: 1 Co 9:24-27; 10:1-5

Gradual: Ps 9:10-11, 19-20

Track Ps 130(129):1-4

Gospel: Mt 20:1-16

Offertory: Ps 92(91):2

Secret: Receive, Lord, we pray, our offerings and prayers, cleanse us by these heavenly mysteries and mercifully hear us. Through our Lord.

Communion: Ps 31(30):17-18

Postcommunion: May Your faithful people, Lord, be strengthened by Your gifts, that by receiving them they may desire them, and by desiring them, constantly receive them. Through our Lord.

Azariah says:

February 2, 1947

"In your long passion, in which no suffering of any kind has been spared you and you have had to suffer atrociously—flesh, blood, intellect, heart, spirit: everything—how often you have been in the state of crying out, 'Save me' to your Lord, the only one with mercy on you, the tortured victim. The truest epigraph to be written upon your life and your tomb is this: 'Mortal pains encircled me, the pains of hell surrounded me, and in my anguish I called upon the Lord, and He heard me from his holy temple.' And it should be completed with the other verse of the psalm which is not in the liturgy of today's Holy Mass, Septuagesima, but it is in your Mass, O immolated victim, and, joined to the first sentence witnessing to your pain, would testify how God, God alone, has loved you, offering you his hand to pull you out of the immense waters. This sentence: 'The Lord was my support. He drew me into the clear. He saved me.'

"Soul of mine, read Psalm 18 by David today. It is prophetic for you. And may the psalmist's words be a prelude to rejoicing for you. Let us read Paul, the comforter and example for those struggling out of love for God.

"With a proper comparison the Apostle says that the Chris-

tian's life is the spiritual life of an athlete in the great arena of the Earth, during the more or less long competition of human life to conquer the prize which goes to the victors. And, still quite properly, he points out that those running in the stadiums subject themselves to every kind of abstinence for an uncertain prize, for only one of the runners wins it, and for a corruptible prize which, no matter how much it may be worth, lasts only temporarily, while those who struggle to obtain the eternal prize are certain of obtaining it-all of them-since God is good and also gives a prize to whoever is not the first athlete, but with all his strength and with tenacious will does all he is capable of doing to obey God; nor does the Lord's prize cease after a time, but lasts for eternity.

"These considerations ought to spur Christians to imitate the athletes in the stadiums to keep their spirits strong and agile, to increase their strength, agility, and resistance to the snares of the adversary so as to obtain the incorruptible crown of heavenly glory.

"Not all Christians can have the same strength in the struggle, nor is there one way alone to arrive at the victory which is the end. Some are austere with an austerity so absolute that the little souls are afraid of them; some are so supernaturally human-may I be allowed to use these words-giving you a gentle example of virtue which every other man, even the weakest in supernatural heroism, can imitate. A gentle, childlike virtue, which, however, in its constancy and perfection, crucifies the will of the flesh no less than the great sanctity full of acts of penance and extraordinary austerities of the spiritual giants. And, do you see? The Holy Church, maternal and wise, describes as heroic both the ascetic with powerful gestures dismaying the little souls and the little one who does little things well-to perfection.

"Truly, there is no difference in Heaven between those who have mortified themselves with unheard-of penances and those who have used as a hair shirt only loving, humble, constant adherence to all that has had the appearance of being the will of God, either through the explicit commands of the Lord and the Holy Church or of their superiors and relatives, or in resigned acceptance of daily events, received with love, **performed with** love, and consummated with love, **for in all of them a will of God for the** sanctification of the soul is recognized.

"The dull, continual file of **loving obedience is a martyrdom**

not inferior to that of flagellations; the despoliation of one's own will is not of less supernatural value than the despoliation of wealth to embrace a religious state; the renunciation of life, offered silently and voluntarily for the purposes of God and the conversion of sinners, is not inferior to the renunciation of material liberty to enter a cloister.

"Sufficient to make the athletes of many exercises equal who compete in the stadium of earthly life are the means and the end: love to conquer Love, the prize and eternal crown of the spiritual fighters and victors.

"I, then, run in this way, and not in a haphazard fashion; I combat like that and not like someone striking the air; but I treat my body harshly and force it to serve so that, after having preached to others, I myself may not become a reprobate.'

"The whole rule for the good fighter and the good fighting master is in these words. Not to run haphazardly. How many souls, with good impulses, but without reflection, run in a disorderly way-that is, to the point of exhausting their strength in an irregular effort-and then lie inactive, letting themselves be surpassed by those who with constancy train themselves, prepare themselves with order, and do everything with constancy and order, thus fortifying themselves for the great test, which they happily overcome because they have prepared themselves for it by continuous exercise.

"Do not run haphazardly, therefore, but with secure norms. Do not combat to no end, so as not to slog along, making only a useless display of gestures to be noted and praised. Even madmen are able to shake themselves against the phantoms of their deliriums. But no one could say that the madman is an athlete deserving a prize. Mimes, too, feign actions against supposed adversaries. But no one could crown them except as mimes-that is, as skilled simulators of reality. Neither simulators nor the delirious enter Heaven, because they have been such. The mime can enter if on stepping down from the stage he has led a true life of sanctity, and the madman can enter if, before his madness, he was a just man, for illness is suffering and not sin; but people enter Heaven on real merits, not through useless scenes.

"To fight truly, therefore, against the adversaries, silently, in the secret stadium of the self, where the spirit has the flesh, the devil, and the world against it, along with the threefold concupiscence, seductions, temptations, acts of violence, reactions

to violence-everything. It is a continuous, tenacious struggle, a man-to-man fight with different enemies always resurging in you and around you. A struggle in which not just the spirit combats, but the body itself must combat against itself, serving the orders of the spirit. The flesh which must punish itself, deny itself the surfeits it demands for its hungers, the flesh which must on its own place itself in chains to check its agitation as a wild colt or raging beast or creeping serpent or unclean animal wishing to run to dangers, assault, hiss, or wallow in the mud. The imprudence, ferocity, deceitfulness, and lust of the flesh. There should be combat against this. And against the immaterial, but no less violent enemies coming from the mental self which are cupidity, pride, and sloth. So it is that the human individual, made of matter and thought, is forced to serve the spirit, which is the select part of man.

"So it must be so that, 'after having preached to others,' the man who poses as a master of others 'will not himself become a reprobate,' causing a scandal which is not caused by those who openly demonstrate that they do not have faith. For the eyes of the world are fixed upon those who set themselves up as masters, and if the world sees in them a rule of life contrary to the perfection they teach, shaking its head, it concludes, 'What they teach must not be true; there must be no God or reward or punishment or other life or judgment-otherwise they would act differently from the way they act.' And so it is that a false master provokes a ruin greater than that of a sincere unbeliever, and not only fails to convert sinners, but entirely cools off the lukewarm, makes the fervent lukewarm, and scandalizes the just, who, at least in their interior, cannot avoid harboring a severe judgment of these idol-masters.

"Your fathers were all under the cloud; they all crossed the sea; they all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink.... but God was not pleased with many of them.'

"Another great lesson. It is not sufficient to have Baptism and the other divine aids to be saved and glorious, but good will is needed. For the possession of the eternal Kingdom is not a gratuitous gift, but is an individual conquest through continuous struggle. God helps. Without his aid man would not arrive there, for he has merciless enemies against him to dispute his way to Heaven: sin and its incitements, the flesh, the world, and the Accursed One, who gives him no respite. But it is man who must

want Heaven. Free will is not left for the ruin of man; if it were, for this reason alone God would have made man a gift that was not good, and God does not do things that are not good. But it is left also, and above all, to *want* salvation-that is, Heaven, God.

"Ensure, then, that, with the protection of the cloud, with the crossing of the deep sea, with the foods and drinks that are given to you-the protection of God, the overcoming of the dangerous barrier of Original Sin with all its resulting injuries to man, with Grace and the Sacraments-foods and drinks of immeasurable power, you may all maintain yourselves in such a state that God will be pleased with you.

"God's being pleased means God's help in the time of need and tribulation. God's being pleased is the Father's remembrance in favor of his poor son, patient and faithful. God's being pleased is a force opposed to the predominance of the wicked against the faithful children who are able, even in their involuntary weaknesses, not to lose trust, humility, and love, and cry out, 'From my depths I cry out to You.... If you observe sins, who can stand? But with You is mercy, and because of your law I trust in You,' and, after having fought and moaned, always faithfully and lovingly, they can sleep in peace, saying the words which are read in the other Mass today, the Purification of Mary Most Holy: 'Now let your servant go in peace,' for 'I have fought the good fight; I have run the race; I have kept the faith; and all that remains is for me to receive the crown of justice' which your mercy, much greater than your severity, has in store for those who with all their capacities have loved and served You.

"So be it with you, soul of mine, whom I have instructed for the fifty-two Holy Masses on Sunday. The cycle is fulfilled. But the good friendship remains, nor will you lack my word for guidance and comfort. I shall joyfully go to prostrate myself before God to receive pearls of wisdom for you, and we shall be glad together-1, giving them to you; you, receiving them-in admiring the treasures which God gives to those who serve Him with their whole selves. And we shall praise the Lord. Let us praise Him, giving Him thanks for everything and singing with all Paradise and the just on Earth: **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.**"

3/16/47. Sweetness and promises from blessed Jesus.

I note down today what has been my joy for three days now. The night

between the 12th and 13th, while I agonized so from the polyneuritis which disturbed my heart as well, Jesus presented Himself to me with his Most Sacred Heart uncovered in the middle of his chest and entirely surrounded by quivering flames more beautiful than gold. He said to me, "Come and drink," and, moving close to the bed, so that I could lay my head on his chest, He drew me to Himself, pressing my mouth upon the wound in his Heart and pressing his Heart with his Hand so that the Blood would gush from it copiously. And, with my mouth pressed against the lips of the divine wound, I drank. It seemed to me that I was a suckling clinging to his mother's breast.

When I was about to suck, I thought I would perceive the taste of the Blood, like that time when Jesus had me drink from a chalice filled with his Blood. I still remember that taste, that liquid a little thick and glutinous, that characteristic smell of living blood. But from the first sip which went down my throat I instead perceived a sweetness, a fragrance which no honey or sugar or anything else that's sweet and aromatized can have. Sweet, fragrant, sweeter than a mother's milk, more intoxicating than a wine, more fragrant than a balsam. I find no words to express what that Blood was for me!

And the flames? On approaching, I was a little afraid of that fire. I felt at a distance the intense heat of those quivering flames, and the more Jesus drew me to Himself, the more it seemed I was going close to a blazing furnace, and I am afraid of fire. I cannot bear even slight heat. But when my head was against the Divine Heart and I was thus wrapped in the singing flames-for, in quivering, they sent off something resembling extremely melodious notes, not at all like the rumbling and whistling of wood in hearths or the roaring of blazing fires-I felt the tongues of flame caressing my cheeks and hair, working their way into them, sweet and fresh as an April wind, as a sunbeam on an April morning wet with dew. Yes, just like that.

And while I relished these gentle sensations, I thought-for my ecstasy has this beautiful aspect: it allows me to reflect, analyze, think about what I am experiencing, and remember afterwards; I don't know if it happens this way with other ecstasies-while I was thus enjoying, wrapped in the flames of the Divine Heart, I thought that the flames in the midst of which the three boys Daniel speaks of walked singing must have been like that: "He made the center of the furnace like a place where a wind laden with dew was blowing." Yes, just like that! The fragrant wind of the morning, in the soft light of the first sun!

And Jesus, after having held me for a long time upon his Heart, against his Heart so that I would drink, drew me away from it, holding my head in his hands, raised up towards Him, bending over me, so that if I was no longer drinking at his Heart and was no longer wrapped in the living flames, I drank in his breath and his words and was wrapped in the fire of his gaze. He said:

"There: in this every other fire, including the purgative one, differs from my fire. For this fire of mine is of most perfect charity and does no harm, not even to do good. And this is the fire which I reserve for you. This alone. That's what my love is for you. A fire that comforts and does not burn, light, harmony, a soft caress. And this is what my Blood is for you: sweetness and strength. And this is what I do for you, to compensate you for men. I squeeze out my Blood for you as a mother does with the milk for her child-you, my daughter! That's how I love you!"

Since then these words and this vision have been repeated each day, and now Jesus always adds these words:

"And we shall love each other this way in the future. This is what I shall give you as a reward for your faithful service. This is your future as long as you live on the Earth. *Afterwards* there will be perfect union. "

This morning Fr. Mariano,¹ too, noticed, on coming to bring me Holy Communion, that I was even farther from the Earth than the sun is. I was in Jesus, to drink his Blood and rejoice in the fire of his love ... !

Some days ago as well-March 14, to be exact, my fiftieth birthdaywhile I was saying to myself, after having had a vision in which Jesus, heading towards Jerusalem, went singing the psalms, just as the pilgrims of Israel do, "How I will miss these songs, afterwards, when the Gospel is finished! What longing for the perfect song of Jesus! And for his glances when he speaks to the throngs and to his friends!" He appeared to me, saying,

"Why do you say this? Can you think that I will deprive you of them because you have completed the work? I shall always come. And *for you alone*. And it will be even sweeter because I shall be entirely for you. My little John, faithful spokeswoman, I shall not take away from you any of what you have merited: to see Me and to hear Me. But, rather, I shall take you higher up, into the pure spheres of pure contemplation, wrapped in the mystical veils which will serve as a curtain for *our* love. *You will be only Maria*. Now you had to be Martha as well because you had to work actively to be the spokeswoman. From now on you will only contemplate. And it will be so lovely. Be happy. Ever so. I love you so much. And you love Me so much. Our two loves ... ! Heaven, which already receives you! The beautiful season is coming, O my hidden turtledove. And I shall come to you amidst the living perfume of the vines and the apple orchards, and I *shall make you forget the world in my love*

Oh, it is impossible to say what this is!

¹See note 1, p. 123.

Maria Valterra's works are published by

CENTRO EDITORIALE VALTORTIANO
03036 ISOLA DEL LIRI (FR) ITALY

Distributor for Canada and USA:

EDITIONS PAULINES
250, boul. Saint-François Nord
SHERBROOKE, QC, J1E 2J3, Canada
T61.: (819) 569-5535 - Fax: (819) 565-5474

The Book of Azariah represents a series of "dictations" which Maria Valtorta ascribed directly to her guardian angel. 'niese inspired "lessons" (1946-1947) take as their starting point fifty-eight Masses found in the Roman Missal of the Catholic Church which reflect the liturgy prior to the reforms introduced in the wake of the Second Vatican Council.

Above all, *The Book of Azariah* is mystical speech-that is, the inspired articulation of God's Being-in-Love with man and man's being-in-Love with God-as mediated, in this instance, by an angel, and a guardian angel at that: the

privileged witness to and participant in the enamored exchanges between Spirit and spirit, Divine Persons and human person. In this burning language of mystical dialogue, words are brands which both wound and heal, revealing God to be at once supremely powerful and supremely tender, the consummate Romantic of eternal poetry.

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ISBN 88-7987-013-0