The Early Church Fathers Writings

Volume 91

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Volume 91

Bede: The History of the English Church and People, and Homilies on the Gospels

c. AD 700 – 735

SERMONINDEX

The Early Church Fathers Writings
Volume 91: Bede: The History of the English Church and People, and Homilies on the Gospels

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Introduction to This Volume

How this book is arranged

This is the ninety-first volume of a series that gathers the writings of the early Church in order of date, from the generation after the apostles down to the eighth century. This volume holds Bede, The History of the English Church and People, and Homilies on the Gospels, from the period about AD 700 – 735.

Within each work the text is divided into chapters and numbered sections, so that any passage can be found again and cited. The small bold figures in the text are the section numbers.

The translations

The text is in English only. Wherever a modern English version has been prepared for SermonIndex it is used here; otherwise the book prints an older public-domain translation. In both cases the wording is the translator's own: older translations have not been altered beyond dividing them into sections. The sources for every work are listed at the back of the book, together with the licence under which each text is released. The modern English version prepared for SermonIndex is used for Homilies on the Gospels, Book I (The Venerable Bede); the other works are printed in older public-domain translations.

In this volume

Bede was born about AD 673 on land belonging to the monastery of Wearmouth in Northumbria. At seven years old he was given to the abbot Benedict Biscop, and he spent the rest of his life in the twin monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow, rarely leaving them. He was made a deacon at nineteen and a priest at thirty. He taught the monks, sang the daily services, and wrote on the Scriptures, on the calendar and on the history of his own people. Most of his books explain the Bible by gathering what Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine and Gregory had taught, and adding his own lessons for the Church. His Ecclesiastical History of the English People, finished in AD 731, is the chief source

for the early English church. He died at Jarrow in AD 735, and the title Venerable was given to him in the centuries after.

The History is printed in its five books, with Bede's preface to King Ceolwulf, a title for every chapter, and the short Continuation by a later hand at the end. The notes, the introduction and the index of the 1907 edition are left out. The Homilies are the first of Bede's two books on the Gospel readings; each begins with the Gospel passage that it explains.

Dates and authorship

Dates are approximate and are debated by scholars. Each work begins with a short introduction that states what is known about its author and its date, and what is uncertain.

PART ONE

The Ecclesiastical History of the English People

The history of the conversion of the English, in five books, finished in AD 731.

Ecclesiastical History of the English People

The Venerable Bede

AD 673–735

Bede's history of the English church and people, finished in AD 731, in five books: Roman Britain and the mission of Augustine, the conversion of the English kingdoms, the quarrel between the Celtic and Roman churches over Easter and the Synod of Whitby, the age of Archbishop Theodore, Hilda and Cuthbert, and the church of Bede's own day. It is dedicated to King Ceolwulf of Northumbria. The English is the translation of A. M. Sellar (1907), a revision of the version of J. A. Giles. The Continuation at the end is by a later hand, not by Bede.

PREFACE

To the most glorious king Ceolwulf. Bede, the servant of Christ and Priest. I formerly, at your request, most readily sent to you the Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation, which I had lately published, for you to read and judge; and I now send it again to be transcribed, and more fully studied at your leisure. And I rejoice greatly at the sincerity and zeal, with which you not only diligently give ear to hear the words of Holy Scripture, but also industriously take care to become acquainted with the actions and sayings of former men of renown, especially of our own nation. For if history relates good things of good men, the attentive hearer is excited to imitate that which is good; or if it recounts evil things of wicked persons, none the less the conscientious and devout hearer or reader, shunning that which is hurtful and wrong, is the more earnestly fired to perform those things which he knows to be good, and worthy of the service of God. And as you have carefully marked this, you are desirous that the said history should be more fully made known to yourself, and to those over whom the Divine Authority has appointed you governor, from your great regard to the common good. But to the end that I may remove all occasion of doubting what I have written,

both from yourself and other readers or hearers of this history, I will take care briefly to show you from what authors I chiefly learned the same.

My principal authority and aid in this work was the most learned and reverend Abbot Albinus; who, educated in the Church of Canterbury by those venerable and learned men, Archbishop Theodore of blessed memory, and the Abbot Hadrian, transmitted to me by Nothelm, the pious priest of the Church of London, either in writing, or by word of mouth of the same Nothelm, all that he thought worthy of memory that had been done in the province of Kent, or the adjacent parts, by the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory, as he had learned the same either from written records, or the traditions of his predecessors. The same Nothelm, afterwards went to Rome, and having, with leave of the present Pope Gregory, searched into the archives of the Holy Roman Church, found there some epistles of the blessed Pope Gregory, and other popes; and, returning home, by the advice of the aforesaid most reverend father Albinus, brought them to me, to be inserted in my history. Thus, from the beginning of this volume to the time when the English nation received the faith of Christ, we have acquired matter from the writings of former men, gathered from various sources; but from that time till the present, what was transacted in the Church of Canterbury by the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory or their successors, and under what kings the same happened, has been conveyed to us, as we have said, by Nothelm through the industry of the aforesaid Abbot Albinus.

They also partly informed me by what bishops and under what kings the provinces of the East and West Saxons, as also of the East Angles, and of the Northumbrians, received the grace of the Gospel. In short, I was chiefly encouraged to undertake this work by the exhortations of the same Albinus. In like manner, Daniel, the most reverend Bishop of the West Saxons, who is still living, communicated to me in writing some things relating to the Ecclesiastical History of that province, and the adjoining one of the South Saxons, as also of the Isle of Wight. But how, by the ministry of those holy priests of Christ, Cedd and Ceadda, the province of the Mercians was brought to the faith of Christ, which they knew not before, and how that of the East Saxons recovered the faith after having rejected it, and how those fathers lived and died, we learned from the brethren of the monastery, which was built by them, and is called Laestingaeu. Further, what ecclesiastical matters took place in the province of the East Angles, was partly made

known to us from the writings and tradition of former men, and partly by the account of the most reverend Abbot Esi. What was done with regard to the faith of Christ, and what was the episcopal succession in the province of Lindsey, we had either from the letters of the most reverend prelate Cynibert, or by word of mouth from other persons of good credit.

But what was done in the Church in the different parts of the province of Northumbria from the time when they received the faith of Christ till this present, I received not on the authority of any one man, but by the faithful testimony of innumerable witnesses, who might know or remember the same; besides what I had of my own knowledge. Wherein it is to be observed, that what I have written concerning our most holy father, Bishop Cuthbert, either in this volume, or in my account of his life and actions, I partly took from what I found written of him by the brethren of the Church of Lindisfarne, accepting without reserve the statements I found there; but at the same time took care to add such things as I could myself have knowledge of by the faithful testimony of trustworthy informants. And I humbly entreat the reader, that if he shall find in these our writings anything not delivered according to the truth, he will not lay the blame of it on me, for, as the true rule of history requires, withholding nothing, I have laboured to commit to writing such things as I could gather from common report, for the instruction of posterity.

Moreover, I beseech all men who shall hear or read this history of our nation, that for my infirmities both of mind and body, they will offer up frequent intercessions to the throne of Grace. And I further pray, that in recompense for the labour wherewith I have recorded in the several provinces and more important places those events which I considered worthy of note and of interest to their inhabitants, I may for my reward have the benefit of their pious prayers.

Book I

chapter 1.1: of the situation of britain and ireland, and of their ancient inhabitants

Britain, an island in the Atlantic, formerly called Albion, lies to the northwest, facing, though at a considerable distance, the coasts of Germany, France, and Spain, which form the greatest part of Europe. It extends 800 miles in length towards the north, and is 200 miles in breadth, except where

several promontories extend further in breadth, by which its compass is made to be 4,875 miles. To the south lies Belgic Gaul. To its nearest shore there is an easy passage from the city of Rutubi Portus, by the English now corrupted into Reptacaestir. The distance from here across the sea to Gessoriacum, the nearest shore in the territory of the Morini, is fifty miles, or as some writers say, 450 furlongs. On the other side of the island, where it opens upon the boundless ocean, it has the islands called Orcades. Britain is rich in grain and trees, and is well adapted for feeding cattle and beasts of burden. It also produces vines in some places, and has plenty of land and water fowl of divers sorts; it is remarkable also for rivers abounding in fish, and plentiful springs. It has the greatest plenty of salmon and eels; seals are also frequently taken, and dolphins, as also whales; besides many sorts of shellfish, such as mussels, in which are often found excellent pearls of all colours, red, purple, violet and green, but chiefly white.

There is also a great abundance of snails, of which the scarlet dye is made, a most beautiful red, which never fades with the heat of the sun or exposure to rain, but the older it is, the more beautiful it becomes. It has both salt and hot springs, and from them flow rivers which furnish hot baths, proper for all ages and both sexes, in separate places, according to their requirements. For water, as St. Basil says, receives the quality of heat, when it runs along certain metals, and becomes not only hot but scalding. Britain is rich also in veins of metals, as copper, iron, lead, and silver; it produces a great deal of excellent jet, which is black and sparkling, and burns when put to the fire, and when set on fire, drives away serpents; being warmed with rubbing, it attracts whatever is applied to it, like amber. The island was formerly distinguished by twenty-eight famous cities, besides innumerable forts, which were all strongly secured with walls, towers, gates, and bars. And, because it lies almost under the North Pole, the nights are light in summer, so that at midnight the beholders are often in doubt whether the evening twilight still continues, or that of the morning has come; since the sun at night returns to the east in the northern regions without passing far beneath the earth.

For this reason the days are of a great length in summer, and on the other hand, the nights in winter are eighteen hours long, for the sun then withdraws into southern parts. In like manner the nights are very short in summer, and the days in winter, that is, only six equinoctial hours. Whereas, in Armenia, Macedonia, Italy, and other countries of the same latitude, the

longest day or night extends but to fifteen hours, and the shortest to nine. There are in the island at present, following the number of the books in which the Divine Law was written, five languages of different nations employed in the study and confession of the one self-same knowledge, which is of highest truth and true sublimity, to wit, English, British, Scottish, Pictish, and Latin, the last having become common to all by the study of the Scriptures. But at first this island had no other inhabitants but the Britons, from whom it derived its name, and who, coming over into Britain, as is reported, from Armorica, possessed themselves of the southern parts thereof. Starting from the south, they had occupied the greater part of the island, when it happened, that the nation of the Picts, putting to sea from Scythia, as is reported, in a few ships of war, and being driven by the winds beyond the bounds of Britain, came to Ireland and landed on its northern shores. There, finding the nation of the Scots, they begged to be allowed to settle among them, but could not succeed in obtaining their request. Ireland is the largest island next to Britain, and lies to the west of it; but as it is shorter than Britain to the north, so, on the other hand, it runs out far beyond it to the south, over against the northern part of Spain, though a wide sea lies between them. The Picts then, as has been said, arriving in this island by sea, desired to have a place granted them in which they might settle.

The Scots answered that the island could not contain them both; but "We can give you good counsel," said they, "whereby you may know what to do; we know there is another island, not far from ours, to the eastward, which we often see at a distance, when the days are clear. If you will go thither, you can obtain settlements; or, if any should oppose you, we will help you. The Picts, accordingly, sailing over into Britain, began to inhabit the northern parts thereof, for the Britons had possessed themselves of the southern. Now the Picts had no wives, and asked them of the Scots; who would not consent to grant them upon any other terms, than that when any question should arise, they should choose a king from the female royal race rather than from the male: which custom, as is well known, has been observed among the Picts to this day. In process of time, Britain, besides the Britons and the Picts, received a third nation, the Scots, who, migrating from Ireland under their leader, Reuda, either by fair means, or by force of arms, secured to themselves those settlements among the Picts which they still possess. From the

name of their commander, they are to this day called Dalreudini; for, in their language, Dal signifies a part.

Ireland is broader than Britain and has a much healthier and milder climate; for the snow scarcely ever lies there above three days: no man makes hay in the summer for winter's provision, or builds stables for his beasts of burden. No reptiles are found there, and no snake can live there; for, though snakes are often carried thither out of Britain, as soon as the ship comes near the shore, and the scent of the air reaches them, they die. On the contrary, almost all things in the island are efficacious against poison. In truth, we have known that when men have been bitten by serpents, the scrapings of leaves of books that were brought out of Ireland, being put into water, and given them to drink, have immediately absorbed the spreading poison, and assuaged the swelling. The island abounds in milk and honey, nor is there any lack of vines, fish, or fowl; and it is noted for the hunting of stags and roe-deer. It is properly the country of the Scots, who, migrating from thence, as has been said, formed the third nation in Britain in addition to the Britons and the Picts.

There is a very large gulf of the sea, which formerly divided the nation of the Britons from the Picts; it runs from the west far into the land, where, to this day, stands a strong city of the Britons, called Alcluith. The Scots, arriving on the north side of this bay, settled themselves there.

CHAPTER 1.2: HOW CAIUS JULIUS CAESAR WAS THE FIRST ROMAN THAT CAME INTO BRITAIN

Now Britain had never been visited by the Romans, and was entirely unknown to them before the time of Caius Julius Caesar, who, in the year 693 after the foundation of Rome, but the sixtieth year before the Incarnation of our Lord, was consul with Lucius Bibulus. While he was making war upon the Germans and the Gauls, who were divided only by the river Rhine, he came into the province of the Morini, whence is the nearest and shortest passage into Britain. Here, having provided about eighty ships of burden and fast-sailing vessels, he sailed over into Britain; where, being first roughly handled in a battle, and then caught in a storm, he lost a considerable part of his fleet, no small number of foot-soldiers, and almost all his cavalry. Returning into Gaul, he put his legions into winter-quarters, and gave orders for building six hundred sail of both sorts. With these he again crossed over early in spring into Britain, but, whilst he was marching with the army

against the enemy, the ships, riding at anchor, were caught in a storm and either dashed one against another, or driven upon the sands and wrecked. Forty of them were lost, the rest were, with much difficulty, repaired. Caesar's cavalry was, at the first encounter, defeated by the Britons, and there Labienus, the tribune, was slain. In the second engagement, with great hazard to his men, he defeated the Britons and put them to flight.

Thence he proceeded to the river Thames, where a great multitude of the enemy had posted themselves on the farther side of the river, under the command of Cassobellaunus, and fenced the bank of the river and almost all the ford under water with sharp stakes: the remains of these are to be seen to this day, apparently about the thickness of a man's thigh, cased with lead, and fixed immovably in the bottom of the river. This being perceived and avoided by the Romans, the barbarians, not able to stand the charge of the legions, hid themselves in the woods, whence they grievously harassed the Romans with repeated sallies. In the meantime, the strong state of the Trinovantes, with their commander Androgius, surrendered to Caesar, giving him forty hostages. Many other cities, following their example, made a treaty with the Romans. Guided by them, Caesar at length, after severe fighting, took the town of Cassobellaunus, situated between two marshes, fortified by sheltering woods, and plentifully furnished with all necessaries. After this, Caesar returned from Britain into Gaul, but he had no sooner put his legions into winter quarters, than he was suddenly beset and distracted with wars and sudden risings on every side.

CHAPTER 1.3: HOW CLAUDIUS, THE SECOND OF THE ROMANS WHO CAME INTO BRITAIN, BROUGHT THE ISLANDS ORCADES INTO SUBJECTION TO THE ROMAN EMPIRE; AND VESPASIAN, SENT BY HIM, REDUCED THE ISLE OF WIGHT UNDER THE DOMINION OF THE ROMANS

In the year of Rome 798, Claudius, fourth emperor from Augustus, being desirous to approve himself a prince beneficial to the republic, and eagerly bent upon war and conquest on every side, undertook an expedition into Britain, which as it appeared, was roused to rebellion by the refusal of the Romans to give up certain deserters. No one before or after Julius Caesar had dared to land upon the island. Claudius crossed over to it, and within a very few days, without any fighting or bloodshed, the greater part of the island was surrendered into his hands. He also added to the Roman empire the Orcades, which lie in the ocean beyond Britain, and, returning to Rome in the

sixth month after his departure, he gave his son the title of Britannicus. This war he concluded in the fourth year of his reign, which is the forty-sixth from the Incarnation of our Lord. In which year there came to pass a most grievous famine in Syria, which is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles to have been foretold by the prophet Agabus.

Vespasian, who was emperor after Nero, being sent into Britain by the same Claudius, brought also under the Roman dominion the Isle of Wight, which is close to Britain on the south, and is about thirty miles in length from east to west, and twelve from north to south; being six miles distant from the southern coast of Britain at the east end, and three at the west. Nero, succeeding Claudius in the empire, undertook no wars at all; and, therefore, among countless other disasters brought by him upon the Roman state, he almost lost Britain; for in his time two most notable towns were there taken and destroyed.

CHAPTER 1.4: HOW LUCIUS, KING OF BRITAIN, WRITING TO POPE ELEUTHERUS, DESIRED TO BE MADE A CHRISTIAN

In the year of our Lord 156, Marcus Antoninus Verus, the fourteenth from Augustus, was made emperor, together with his brother, Aurelius Commodus. In their time, whilst the holy Eleutherus presided over the Roman Church, Lucius, king of Britain, sent a letter to him, entreating that by a mandate from him he might be made a Christian. He soon obtained his pious request, and the Britons preserved the faith, which they had received, uncorrupted and entire, in peace and tranquillity until the time of the Emperor Diocletian.

CHAPTER 1.5: HOW THE EMPEROR SEVERUS DIVIDED FROM THE REST BY A RAMPART THAT PART OF BRITAIN WHICH HAD BEEN RECOVERED

In the year of our Lord 189, Severus, an African, born at Leptis, in the province of Tripolis, became emperor. He was the seventeenth from Augustus, and reigned seventeen years. Being naturally of a harsh disposition, and engaged in many wars, he governed the state vigorously, but with much trouble. Having been victorious in all the grievous civil wars which happened in his time, he was drawn into Britain by the revolt of almost all the confederated tribes; and, after many great and severe battles, he thought fit to divide that part of the island, which he had recovered, from the other unconquered nations, not with a wall, as some imagine, but with a rampart. For a wall is made of stones, but a rampart, with which camps are fortified to

repel the assaults of enemies, is made of sods, cut out of the earth, and raised high above the ground, like a wall, having in front of it the trench whence the sods were taken, with strong stakes of wood fixed above it. Thus Severus drew a great trench and strong rampart, fortified with several towers, from sea to sea. And there, at York, he fell sick afterwards and died, leaving two sons, Bassianus and Geta; of whom Geta died, adjudged an enemy of the State; but Bassianus, having taken the surname of Antonius, obtained the empire.

CHAPTER 1.6: OF THE REIGN OF DIOCLETIAN, AND HOW HE PERSECUTED THE CHRISTIANS

In the year of our Lord 286, Diocletian, the thirty-third from Augustus, and chosen emperor by the army, reigned twenty years, and created Maximian, surnamed Herculius, his colleague in the empire. In their time, one Carausius, of very mean birth, but a man of great ability and energy, being appointed to guard the sea-coasts, then infested by the Franks and Saxons, acted more to the prejudice than to the advantage of the commonwealth, by not restoring to its owners any of the booty taken from the robbers, but keeping all to himself; thus giving rise to the suspicion that by intentional neglect he suffered the enemy to infest the frontiers. When, therefore, an order was sent by Maximian that he should be put to death, he took upon him the imperial purple, and possessed himself of Britain, and having most valiantly conquered and held it for the space of seven years, he was at length put to death by the treachery of his associate Allectus. The usurper, having thus got the island from Carausius, held it three years, and was then vanquished by Asclepiodotus, the captain of the Praetorian guards, who thus at the end of ten years restored Britain to the Roman empire.

Meanwhile, Diocletian in the east, and Maximian Herculius in the west, commanded the churches to be destroyed, and the Christians to be persecuted and slain. This persecution was the tenth since the reign of Nero, and was more lasting and cruel than almost any before it; for it was carried on incessantly for the space of ten years, with burning of churches, proscription of innocent persons, and the slaughter of martyrs. Finally, Britain also attained to the great glory of bearing faithful witness to God.

CHAPTER 1.7: THE PASSION OF ST. ALBAN AND HIS COMPANIONS, WHO AT THAT TIME SHED THEIR BLOOD FOR OUR LORD

At that time suffered St. Alban, of whom the priest Fortunatus, in the Praise of Virgins, where he makes mention of the blessed martyrs that came to the Lord from all parts of the world, says: And fruitful Britain noble Alban rears. This Alban, being yet a pagan, at the time when at the bidding of unbelieving rulers all manner of cruelty was practised against the Christians, gave entertainment in his house to a certain clerk, flying from his persecutors. This man he observed to be engaged in continual prayer and watching day and night; when on a sudden the Divine grace shining on him, he began to imitate the example of faith and piety which was set before him, and being gradually instructed by his wholesome admonitions, he cast off the darkness of idolatry, and became a Christian in all sincerity of heart. The aforesaid clerk having been some days entertained by him, it came to the ears of the impious prince, that a confessor of Christ, to whom a martyr's place had not yet been assigned, was concealed at Alban's house. Whereupon he sent some soldiers to make a strict search after him. When they came to the martyr's hut, St. Alban presently came forth to the soldiers, instead of his guest and master, in the habit or long coat which he wore, and was bound and led before the judge.

It happened that the judge, at the time when Alban was carried before him, was standing at the altar, and offering sacrifice to devils. When he saw Alban, being much enraged that he should thus, of his own accord, dare to put himself into the hands of the soldiers, and incur such danger on behalf of the guest whom he had harboured, he commanded him to be dragged to the images of the devils, before which he stood, saying, "Because you have chosen to conceal a rebellious and sacrilegious man, rather than to deliver him up to the soldiers, that his contempt of the gods might meet with the penalty due to such blasphemy, you shall undergo all the punishment that was due to him, if you seek to abandon the worship of our religion." But St. Alban, who had voluntarily declared himself a Christian to the persecutors of the faith, was not at all daunted by the prince's threats, but putting on the armour of spiritual warfare, publicly declared that he would not obey his command. Then said the judge, "Of what family or race are you?"—"What does it concern you," answered Alban, "of what stock I am? If you desire to hear the truth of my religion, be it known to you, that I am now a Christi-

an, and free to fulfil Christian duties."—"I ask your name," said the judge; "tell me it immediately."—"I am called Alban by my parents," replied he; "and I worship ever and adore the true and living God, Who created all things." Then the judge, filled with anger, said, "If you would enjoy the happiness of eternal life, do not delay to offer sacrifice to the great gods." Alban rejoined, "These sacrifices, which by you are offered to devils, neither can avail the worshippers, nor fulfil the desires and petitions of the suppliants. Rather, whosoever shall offer sacrifice to these images, shall receive the everlasting pains of hell for his reward."

The judge, hearing these words, and being much incensed, ordered this holy confessor of God to be scourged by the executioners, believing that he might by stripes shake that constancy of heart, on which he could not prevail by words. He, being most cruelly tortured, bore the same patiently, or rather joyfully, for our Lord's sake. When the judge perceived that he was not to be overcome by tortures, or withdrawn from the exercise of the Christian religion, he ordered him to be put to death. Being led to execution, he came to a river, which, with a most rapid course, ran between the wall of the town and the arena where he was to be executed. He there saw a great multitude of persons of both sexes, and of divers ages and conditions, who were doubtless assembled by Divine inspiration, to attend the blessed confessor and martyr, and had so filled the bridge over the river, that he could scarce pass over that evening. In truth, almost all had gone out, so that the judge remained in the city without attendance. St. Alban, therefore, urged by an ardent and devout wish to attain the sooner to martyrdom, drew near to the stream, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, whereupon the channel was immediately dried up, and he perceived that the water had given place and made way for him to pass. Among the rest, the executioner, who should have put him to death, observed this, and moved doubtless by Divine inspiration hastened to meet him at the appointed place of execution, and casting away the sword which he had carried ready drawn, fell at his feet, praying earnestly that he might rather be accounted worthy to suffer with the martyr, whom he was ordered to execute, or, if possible, instead of him.

Whilst he was thus changed from a persecutor into a companion in the faith and truth, and the other executioners rightly hesitated to take up the sword which was lying on the ground, the holy confessor, accompanied by the multitude, ascended a hill, about half a mile from the arena, beautiful, as

was fitting, and of most pleasing appearance, adorned, or rather clothed, everywhere with flowers of many colours, nowhere steep or precipitous or of sheer descent, but with a long, smooth natural slope, like a plain, on its sides, a place altogether worthy from of old, by reason of its native beauty, to be consecrated by the blood of a blessed martyr. On the top of this hill, St. Alban prayed that God would give him water, and immediately a living spring, confined in its channel, sprang up at his feet, so that all men acknowledged that even the stream had yielded its service to the martyr. For it was impossible that the martyr, who had left no water remaining in the river, should desire it on the top of the hill, unless he thought it fitting. The river then having done service and fulfilled the pious duty, returned to its natural course, leaving a testimony of its obedience. Here, therefore, the head of the undaunted martyr was struck off, and here he received the crown of life, which God has promised to them that love him. But he who laid impious hands on the holy man's neck was not permitted to rejoice over his dead body; for his eyes dropped upon the ground at the same moment as the blessed martyr's head fell.

At the same time was also beheaded the soldier, who before, through the Divine admonition, refused to strike the holy confessor. Of whom it is apparent, that though he was not purified by the waters of baptism, yet he was cleansed by the washing of his own blood, and rendered worthy to enter the kingdom of heaven. Then the judge, astonished at the unwonted sight of so many heavenly miracles, ordered the persecution to cease immediately, and began to honour the death of the saints, by which he once thought that they might have been turned from their zeal for the Christian faith. The blessed Alban suffered death on the twenty-second day of June, near the city of Verulam, which is now by the English nation called Verlamacaestir, or Vaeclingacaestir, where afterwards, when peaceable Christian times were restored, a church of wonderful workmanship, and altogether worthy to commemorate his martyrdom, was erected. In which place the cure of sick persons and the frequent working of wonders cease not to this day.

At that time suffered Aaron and Julius, citizens of the City of Legions, and many more of both sexes in divers places; who, after that they had endured sundry torments, and their limbs had been mangled after an unheard-of manner, when their warfare was accomplished, yielded their souls up to the joys of the heavenly city.

CHAPTER 1.8: HOW, WHEN THE PERSECUTION CEASED, THE CHURCH IN BRITAIN ENJOYED PEACE TILL THE TIME OF THE ARIAN HERESY

When the storm of persecution ceased, the faithful Christians, who, during the time of danger, had hidden themselves in woods and deserts and secret caves, came forth and rebuilt the churches which had been levelled to the ground; founded, erected, and finished the cathedrals raised in honour of the holy martyrs, and, as if displaying their conquering standards in all places, celebrated festivals and performed their sacred rites with pure hearts and lips. This peace continued in the Christian churches of Britain until the time of the Arian madness, which, having corrupted the whole world, infected this island also, so far removed from the rest of the world, with the poison of its error; and when once a way was opened across the sea for that plague, straightway all the taint of every heresy fell upon the island, ever desirous to hear some new thing, and never holding firm to any sure belief.

At this time Constantius, who, whilst Diocletian was alive, governed Gaul and Spain, a man of great clemency and urbanity, died in Britain. This man left his son Constantine, born of Helena, his concubine, emperor of the Gauls. Eutropius writes that Constantine, being created emperor in Britain, succeeded his father in the sovereignty. In his time the Arian heresy broke out, and although it was exposed and condemned in the Council of Nicaea, nevertheless, the deadly poison of its evil spread, as has been said, to the Churches in the islands, as well as to those of the rest of the world.

CHAPTER 1.9: HOW DURING THE REIGN OF GRATIAN, MAXIMUS, BEING CREATED EMPEROR IN BRITAIN, RETURNED INTO GAUL WITH A MIGHTY ARMY

In the year of our Lord 377, Gratian, the fortieth from Augustus, held the empire for six years after the death of Valens; though he had long before reigned with his uncle Valens, and his brother Valentinian. Finding the condition of the commonwealth much impaired, and almost gone to ruin, and impelled by the necessity of restoring it, he invested the Spaniard, Theodosius, with the purple at Sirmium, and made him emperor of Thrace and the Eastern provinces. At that time, Maximus, a man of energy and probity, and worthy of the title of Augustus, if he had not broken his oath of allegiance, was made emperor by the army somewhat against his will, passed over into Gaul, and there by treachery slew the Emperor Gratian, who in consternation at his sudden invasion, was attempting to escape into Italy. His brother,

the Emperor Valentinian, expelled from Italy, fled into the East, where he was entertained by Theodosius with fatherly affection, and soon restored to the empire, for Maximus the tyrant, being shut up in Aquileia, was there taken by them and put to death.

CHAPTER 1.10: HOW, IN THE REIGN OF ARCADIUS, PELAGIUS, A BRITON, INSOLENTLY IMPUGNED THE GRACE OF GOD

In the year of our Lord 394, Arcadius, the son of Theodosius, the forty-third from Augustus, succeeding to the empire, with his brother Honorius, held it thirteen years. In his time, Pelagius, a Briton, spread far and near the infection of his perfidious doctrine, denying the assistance of the Divine grace, being seconded therein by his associate Julianus of Campania, who was impelled by an uncontrolled desire to recover his bishopric, of which he had been deprived. St. Augustine, and the other orthodox fathers, quoted many thousand catholic authorities against them, but failed to amend their folly; nay, more, their madness being rebuked was rather increased by contradiction than suffered by them to be purified through adherence to the truth; which Prosper, the rhetorician, has beautifully expressed thus in heroic verse: — They tell that one, erewhile consumed with gnawing spite, snake-like attacked Augustine in his writings. Who urged the wretched viper to raise from the ground his head, howsoever hidden in dens of darkness? Either the sea-girt Britons reared him with the fruit of their soil, or fed on Campanian pastures his heart swells with pride.

CHAPTER 1.11: HOW DURING THE REIGN OF HONORIUS, GRATIAN AND CONSTANTINE WERE CREATED TYRANTS IN BRITAIN; AND SOON AFTER THE FORMER WAS SLAIN IN BRITAIN, AND THE LATTER IN GAUL

In the year of our Lord 407, Honorius, the younger son of Theodosius, and the forty-fourth from Augustus, being emperor, two years before the invasion of Rome by Alaric, king of the Goths, when the nations of the Alani, Suevi, Vandals, and many others with them, having defeated the Franks and passed the Rhine, ravaged all Gaul, Gratianus, a citizen of the country, was set up as tyrant in Britain and killed. In his place, Constantine, one of the meanest soldiers, only for the hope afforded by his name, and without any worth to recommend him, was chosen emperor. As soon as he had taken upon him the command, he crossed over into Gaul, where being often imposed upon by the barbarians with untrustworthy treaties, he did more harm than good to the Commonwealth. Whereupon Count Constantius, by the

command of Honorius, marching into Gaul with an army, besieged him in the city of Arles, took him prisoner, and put him to death. His son Constans, a monk, whom he had created Caesar, was also put to death by his own follower Count Gerontius, at Vienne.

Rome was taken by the Goths, in the year from its foundation, 1164. Then the Romans ceased to rule in Britain, almost 470 years after Caius Julius Caesar came to the island. They dwelt within the rampart, which, as we have mentioned, Severus made across the island, on the south side of it, as the cities, watch-towers, bridges, and paved roads there made testify to this day; but they had a right of dominion over the farther parts of Britain, as also over the islands that are beyond Britain.

CHAPTER 1.12: HOW THE BRITONS, BEING RAVAGED BY THE SCOTS AND PICTS, SOUGHT SUCCOUR FROM THE ROMANS, WHO COMING A SECOND TIME, BUILT A WALL ACROSS THE ISLAND; BUT WHEN THIS WAS BROKEN DOWN AT ONCE BY THE AFORESAID ENEMIES, THEY WERE REDUCED TO GREATER DISTRESS THAN BEFORE

From that time, the British part of Britain, destitute of armed soldiers, of all military stores, and of the whole flower of its active youth, who had been led away by the rashness of the tyrants never to return, was wholly exposed to rapine, the people being altogether ignorant of the use of weapons. Whereupon they suffered many years from the sudden invasions of two very savage nations from beyond the sea, the Scots from the west, and the Picts from the north. We call these nations from beyond the sea, not on account of their being seated out of Britain, but because they were separated from that part of it which was possessed by the Britons, two broad and long inlets of the sea lying between them, one of which runs into the interior of Britain, from the Eastern Sea, and the other from the Western, though they do not reach so far as to touch one another. The eastern has in the midst of it the city Giudi. On the Western Sea, that is, on its right shore, stands the city of Alcluith, which in their language signifies the Rock Cluith, for it is close by the river of that name.

On account of the attacks of these nations, the Britons sent messengers to Rome with letters piteously praying for succour, and promising perpetual subjection, provided that the impending enemy should be driven away. An armed legion was immediately sent them, which, arriving in the island, and engaging the enemy, slew a great multitude of them, drove the rest out of the territories of their allies, and having in the meanwhile delivered them

from their worst distress, advised them to build a wall between the two seas across the island, that it might secure them by keeping off the enemy. So they returned home with great triumph. But the islanders building the wall which they had been told to raise, not of stone, since they had no workmen capable of such a work, but of sods, made it of no use. Nevertheless, they carried it for many miles between the two bays or inlets of the sea of which we have spoken; to the end that where the protection of the water was wanting, they might use the rampart to defend their borders from the irruptions of the enemies. Of the work there erected, that is, of a rampart of great breadth and height, there are evident remains to be seen at this day. It begins at about two miles' distance from the monastery of Aebbercurnig, west of it, at a place called in the Pictish language Peanfahel, but in the English tongue, Penneltun, and running westward, ends near the city of Alcluith.

But the former enemies, when they perceived that the Roman soldiers were gone, immediately coming by sea, broke into the borders, trampled and overran all places, and like men mowing ripe corn, bore down all before them. Hereupon messengers were again sent to Rome miserably imploring aid, lest their wretched country should be utterly blotted out, and the name of a Roman province, so long renowned among them, overthrown by the cruelties of foreign races, might become utterly contemptible. A legion was accordingly sent again, and, arriving unexpectedly in autumn, made great slaughter of the enemy, obliging all those that could escape, to flee beyond the sea; whereas before, they were wont yearly to carry off their booty without any opposition. Then the Romans declared to the Britons, that they could not for the future undertake such troublesome expeditions for their sake, and advised them rather to take up arms and make an effort to engage their enemies, who could not prove too powerful for them, unless they themselves were enervated by cowardice. Moreover, thinking that it might be some help to the allies, whom they were forced to abandon, they constructed a strong stone wall from sea to sea, in a straight line between the towns that had been there built for fear of the enemy, where Severus also had formerly built a rampart. This famous wall, which is still to be seen, was raised at public and private expense, the Britons also lending their assistance.

It is eight feet in breadth, and twelve in height, in a straight line from east to west, as is still evident to beholders. This being presently finished, they gave the dispirited people good advice, and showed them how to furnish

themselves with arms. Besides, they built towers to command a view of the sea, at intervals, on the southern coast, where their ships lay, because there also the invasions of the barbarians were apprehended, and so took leave of their allies, never to return again. After their departure to their own country, the Scots and Picts, understanding that they had refused to return, at once came back, and growing more confident than they had been before, occupied all the northern and farthest part of the island, driving out the natives, as far as the wall. Hereupon a timorous guard was placed upon the fortification, where, dazed with fear, they became ever more dispirited day by day. On the other side, the enemy constantly attacked them with barbed weapons, by which the cowardly defenders were dragged in piteous fashion from the wall, and dashed against the ground. At last, the Britons, forsaking their cities and wall, took to flight and were scattered. The enemy pursued, and forthwith followed a massacre more grievous than ever before; for the wretched natives were torn in pieces by their enemies, as lambs are torn by wild beasts. Thus, being expelled from their dwellings and lands, they saved themselves from the immediate danger of starvation by robbing and plundering one another, adding to the calamities inflicted by the enemy their own domestic broils, till the whole country was left destitute of food except such as could be procured in the chase.

CHAPTER 1.13: HOW IN THE REIGN OF THEODOSIUS THE YOUNGER, IN WHOSE TIME PALLADIUS WAS SENT TO THE SCOTS THAT BELIEVED IN CHRIST, THE BRITONS BEGGING ASSISTANCE OF TIUS, THE CONSUL, COULD NOT OBTAIN IT. (AD 446)

In the year of our Lord 423, Theodosius, the younger, the forty-fifth from Augustus, succeeded Honorius and governed the Roman empire twenty-six years. In the eighth year of his reign, Palladius was sent by Celestinus, the Roman pontiff, to the Scots that believed in Christ, to be their first bishop. In the twenty-third year of his reign, Aetius, a man of note and a patrician, discharged his third consulship with Symmachus for his colleague. To him the wretched remnant of the Britons sent a letter, which began thus:—"To Aetius, thrice Consul, the groans of the Britons." And in the sequel of the letter they thus unfolded their woes:—"The barbarians drive us to the sea; the sea drives us back to the barbarians: between them we are exposed to two sorts of death; we are either slaughtered or drowned." Yet, for all this, they could not obtain any help from him, as he was then engaged in most serious

wars with Bledla and Attila, kings of the Huns. And though the year before this Bledla had been murdered by the treachery of his own brother Attila, yet Attila himself remained so intolerable an enemy to the Republic, that he ravaged almost all Europe, attacking and destroying cities and castles. At the same time there was a famine at Constantinople, and soon after a plague followed; moreover, a great part of the wall of that city, with fifty-seven towers, fell to the ground. Many cities also went to ruin, and the famine and pestilential state of the air destroyed thousands of men and cattle.

CHAPTER 1.14: HOW THE BRITONS, COMPELLED BY THE GREAT FAMINE, DROVE THE BARBARIANS OUT OF THEIR TERRITORIES; AND SOON AFTER THERE ENSUED, ALONG WITH ABUNDANCE OF CORN, DECAY OF MORALS, PESTILENCE, AND THE DOWNFALL OF THE NATION

In the meantime, the aforesaid famine distressing the Britons more and more, and leaving to posterity a lasting memory of its mischievous effects, obliged many of them to submit themselves to the depredators; though others still held out, putting their trust in God, when human help failed. These continually made raids from the mountains, caves, and woods, and, at length, began to inflict severe losses on their enemies, who had been for so many years plundering the country. The bold Irish robbers thereupon returned home, intending to come again before long. The Picts then settled down in the farthest part of the island and afterwards remained there, but they did not fail to plunder and harass the Britons from time to time. Now, when the ravages of the enemy at length abated, the island began to abound with such plenty of grain as had never been known in any age before; along with plenty, evil living increased, and this was immediately attended by the taint of all manner of crime; in particular, cruelty, hatred of truth, and love of falsehood; insomuch, that if any one among them happened to be milder than the rest, and more inclined to truth, all the rest abhorred and persecuted him unrestrainedly, as if he had been the enemy of Britain. Nor were the laity only guilty of these things, but even our Lord's own flock, with its shepherds, casting off the easy yoke of Christ, gave themselves up to drunkenness, enmity, quarrels, strife, envy, and other such sins. In the meantime, on a sudden, a grievous plague fell upon that corrupt generation, which soon destroyed such numbers of them, that the living scarcely availed to bury the dead: yet, those that survived, could not be recalled from the spiritual death, which they had incurred through their sins, either by the death of their

friends, or the fear of death. Whereupon, not long after, a more severe vengeance for their fearful crimes fell upon the sinful nation. They held a council to determine what was to be done, and where they should seek help to prevent or repel the cruel and frequent incursions of the northern nations; and in concert with their King Vortigern, it was unanimously decided to call the Saxons to their aid from beyond the sea, which, as the event plainly showed, was brought about by the Lord's will, that evil might fall upon them for their wicked deeds.

CHAPTER 1.15: HOW THE ANGLES, BEING INVITED INTO BRITAIN, AT FIRST DROVE OFF THE ENEMY; BUT NOT LONG AFTER, MAKING A LEAGUE WITH THEM, TURNED THEIR WEAPONS AGAINST THEIR ALLIES

In the year of our Lord 449, Marcian, the forty-sixth from Augustus, being made emperor with Valentinian, ruled the empire seven years. Then the nation of the Angles, or Saxons, being invited by the aforesaid king, arrived in Britain with three ships of war and had a place in which to settle assigned to them by the same king, in the eastern part of the island, on the pretext of fighting in defence of their country, whilst their real intentions were to conquer it. Accordingly they engaged with the enemy, who were come from the north to give battle, and the Saxons obtained the victory. When the news of their success and of the fertility of the country, and the cowardice of the Britons, reached their own home, a more considerable fleet was quickly sent over, bringing a greater number of men, and these, being added to the former army, made up an invincible force. The newcomers received of the Britons a place to inhabit among them, upon condition that they should wage war against their enemies for the peace and security of the country, whilst the Britons agreed to furnish them with pay. Those who came over were of the three most powerful nations of Germany—Saxons, Angles, and Jutes. From the Jutes are descended the people of Kent, and of the Isle of Wight, including those in the province of the West-Saxons who are to this day called Jutes, seated opposite to the Isle of Wight.

From the Saxons, that is, the country which is now called Old Saxony, came the East-Saxons, the South-Saxons, and the West-Saxons. From the Angles, that is, the country which is called Angulus, and which is said, from that time, to have remained desert to this day, between the provinces of the Jutes and the Saxons, are descended the East-Angles, the Midland-Angles, the Mercians, all the race of the Northumbrians, that is, of those nations

that dwell on the north side of the river Humber, and the other nations of the Angles. The first commanders are said to have been the two brothers Hengist and Horsa. Of these Horsa was afterwards slain in battle by the Britons, and a monument, bearing his name, is still in existence in the eastern parts of Kent. They were the sons of Victgilsus, whose father was Vitta, son of Vecta, son of Woden; from whose stock the royal race of many provinces trace their descent. In a short time, swarms of the aforesaid nations came over into the island, and the foreigners began to increase so much, that they became a source of terror to the natives themselves who had invited them. Then, having on a sudden entered into league with the Picts, whom they had by this time repelled by force of arms, they began to turn their weapons against their allies. At first, they obliged them to furnish a greater quantity of provisions;

and, seeking an occasion of quarrel, protested, that unless more plentiful supplies were brought them, they would break the league, and ravage all the island; nor were they backward in putting their threats into execution. In short, the fire kindled by the hands of the pagans, proved God's just vengeance for the crimes of the people; not unlike that which, being of old lighted by the Chaldeans, consumed the walls and all the buildings of Jerusalem. For here, too, through the agency of the pitiless conqueror, yet by the disposal of the just Judge, it ravaged all the neighbouring cities and country, spread the conflagration from the eastern to the western sea, without any opposition, and overran the whole face of the doomed island. Public as well as private buildings were overturned; the priests were everywhere slain before the altars; no respect was shown for office, the prelates with the people were destroyed with fire and sword; nor were there any left to bury those who had been thus cruelly slaughtered. Some of the miserable remnant, being taken in the mountains, were butchered in heaps. Others, spent with hunger, came forth and submitted themselves to the enemy, to undergo for the sake of food perpetual servitude, if they were not killed upon the spot. Some, with sorrowful hearts, fled beyond the seas. Others, remaining in their own country, led a miserable life of terror and anxiety of mind among the mountains, woods and crags.

CHAPTER 1.16: HOW THE BRITONS OBTAINED THEIR FIRST VICTORY OVER THE ANGLES, UNDER THE COMMAND OF AMBROSIUS, A ROMAN

When the army of the enemy, having destroyed and dispersed the natives, had returned home to their own settlements, the Britons began by degrees to take heart, and gather strength, sallying out of the lurking places where they had concealed themselves, and with one accord imploring the Divine help, that they might not utterly be destroyed. They had at that time for their leader, Ambrosius Aurelianus, a man of worth, who alone, by chance, of the Roman nation had survived the storm, in which his parents, who were of the royal race, had perished. Under him the Britons revived, and offering battle to the victors, by the help of God, gained the victory. From that day, sometimes the natives, and sometimes their enemies, prevailed, till the year of the siege of Badon-hill, when they made no small slaughter of those enemies, about forty-four years after their arrival in England. But of this hereafter.

CHAPTER 1.17: HOW GERMANUS THE BISHOP, SAILING INTO BRITAIN WITH LUPUS, FIRST QUELLED THE TEMPEST OF THE SEA, AND AFTERWARDS THAT OF THE PELAGIANS, BY DIVINE POWER. (AD 429)

Some few years before their arrival, the Pelagian heresy, brought over by Agricola, the son of Severianus, a Pelagian bishop, had corrupted with its foul taint the faith of the Britons. But whereas they absolutely refused to embrace that perverse doctrine, and blaspheme the grace of Christ, yet were not able of themselves to confute the subtilty of the unholy belief by force of argument, they bethought them of wholesome counsels and determined to crave aid of the Gallican prelates in that spiritual warfare. Hereupon, these, having assembled a great synod, consulted together to determine what persons should be sent thither to sustain the faith, and by unanimous consent, choice was made of the apostolic prelates, Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, and Lupus of Troyes, to go into Britain to confirm the people's faith in the grace of God. With ready zeal they complied with the request and commands of the Holy Church, and put to sea. The ship sped safely with favouring winds till they were halfway between the coast of Gaul and Britain. There on a sudden they were obstructed by the malevolence of demons, who were jealous that men of such eminence and piety should be sent to bring back the people to salvation. They raised storms, and darkened the sky with clouds. The sails could not support the fury of the winds, the sailors' skill was forced to give way, the ship was sustained by prayer, not by strength, and as it happened,

their spiritual leader and bishop, being spent with weariness, had fallen asleep.

Then, as if because resistance flagged, the tempest gathered strength, and the ship, overwhelmed by the waves, was ready to sink. Then the blessed Lupus and all the rest, greatly troubled, awakened their elder, that he might oppose the raging elements. He, showing himself the more resolute in proportion to the greatness of the danger, called upon Christ, and having, in the name of the Holy Trinity, taken and sprinkled a little water, quelled the raging waves, admonished his companion, encouraged all, and all with one consent uplifted their voices in prayer. Divine help was granted, the enemies were put to flight, a cloudless calm ensued, the winds veering about set themselves again to forward their voyage, the sea was soon traversed, and they reached the quiet of the wished-for shore. A multitude flocking thither from all parts, received the bishops, whose coming had been foretold by the predictions even of their adversaries. For the evil spirits declared their fear, and when the bishops expelled them from the bodies of the possessed, they made known the nature of the tempest, and the dangers they had occasioned, and confessed that they had been overcome by the merits and authority of these men.

In the meantime the bishops speedily filled the island of Britain with the fame of their preaching and miracles; and the Word of God was by them daily preached, not only in the churches, but even in the streets and fields, so that the faithful and Catholic were everywhere confirmed, and those who had been perverted accepted the way of amendment. Like the Apostles, they acquired honour and authority through a good conscience, learning through the study of letters, and the power of working miracles through their merits. Thus the whole country readily came over to their way of thinking; the authors of the erroneous belief kept themselves in hiding, and, like evil spirits, grieved for the loss of the people that were rescued from them. At length, after long deliberation, they had the boldness to enter the lists. They came forward in all the splendour of their wealth, with gorgeous apparel, and supported by a numerous following; choosing rather to hazard the contest, than to undergo among the people whom they had led astray, the reproach of having been silenced, lest they should seem by saying nothing to condemn themselves. An immense multitude had been attracted thither with their wives and children. The people were present as spectators

and judges; the two parties stood there in very different case; on the one side was Divine faith, on the other human presumption; on the one side piety, on the other pride; on the one side Pelagius, the founder of their faith, on the other Christ.

The blessed bishops permitted their adversaries to speak first, and their empty speech long took up the time and filled the ears with meaningless words. Then the venerable prelates poured forth the torrent of their eloquence and showered upon them the words of Apostles and Evangelists, mingling the Scriptures with their own discourse and supporting their strongest assertions by the testimony of the written Word. Vainglory was vanquished and unbelief refuted; and the heretics, at every argument put before them, not being able to reply, confessed their errors. The people, giving judgement, could scarce refrain from violence, and signified their verdict by their acclamations.

CHAPTER 1.18: HOW THE SOME HOLY MAN GAVE SIGHT TO THE BLIND DAUGHTER OF A TRIBUNE, AND THEN COMING TO ST. ALBAN, THERE RECEIVED OF HIS RELICS, AND LEFT OTHER RELICS OF THE BLESSED APOSTLES AND OTHER MARTYRS. (AD 429)

After this, a certain man, who held the office of tribune, came forward with his wife, and brought his blind daughter, a child of ten years of age, to be healed of the bishops. They ordered her to be brought to their adversaries, who, being rebuked by their own conscience, joined their entreaties to those of the child's parents, and besought the bishops that she might be healed. They, therefore, perceiving their adversaries to yield, poured forth a short prayer, and then Germanus, full of the Holy Ghost, invoking the Trinity, at once drew from his side a casket which hung about his neck, containing relics of the saints, and, taking it in his hands, applied it in the sight of all to the girl's eyes, which were immediately delivered from darkness and filled with the light of truth. The parents rejoiced, and the people were filled with awe at the miracle; and after that day, the heretical beliefs were so fully obliterated from the minds of all, that they thirsted for and sought after the doctrine of the bishops.

This damnable heresy being thus suppressed, and the authors thereof confuted, and all the people settled in the purity of the faith, the bishops went to the tomb of the martyr, the blessed Alban, to give thanks to God through him. There Germanus, having with him relics of all the Apostles, and of

divers martyrs, after offering up his prayers, commanded the tomb to be opened, that he might lay therein the precious gifts; judging it fitting, that the limbs of saints brought together from divers countries, as their equal merits had procured them admission into heaven, should find shelter in one tomb. These being honourably bestowed, and laid together, he took up a handful of dust from the place where the blessed martyr's blood had been shed, to carry away with him. In this dust the blood had been preserved, showing that the slaughter of the martyrs was red, though the persecutor was pale in death. In consequence of these things, an innumerable multitude of people was that day converted to the Lord.

CHAPTER 1.19: HOW THE SAME HOLY MAN, BEING DETAINED THERE BY SICKNESS, BY HIS PRAYERS QUENCHED A FIRE THAT HAD BROKEN OUT AMONG THE HOUSES, AND WAS HIMSELF CURED OF HIS INFIRMITY BY A VISION. (AD 429)

As they were returning thence, the treacherous enemy, having, as it chanced, prepared a snare, caused Germanus to bruise his foot by a fall, not knowing that, as it was with the blessed Job, his merits would be but increased by bodily affliction. Whilst he was thus detained some time in the same place by his infirmity, a fire broke out in a cottage neighbouring to that in which he was; and having burned down the other houses which were thatched with reed, fanned by the wind, was carried on to the dwelling in which he lay. The people all flocked to the prelate, entreating that they might lift him in their arms, and save him from the impending danger. But he rebuked them, and in the assurance of his faith, would not suffer himself to be removed. The whole multitude, in terror and despair, ran to oppose the conflagration; but, for the greater manifestation of the Divine power, whatsoever the crowd endeavoured to save, was destroyed; and what the sick and helpless man defended, the flame avoided and passed by, though the house that sheltered the holy man lay open to it, and while the fire raged on every side, the place in which he lay appeared untouched, amid the general conflagration. The multitude rejoiced at the miracle, and was gladly vanquished by the power of God. A great crowd of people watched day and night before the humble cottage; some to have their souls healed, and some their bodies.

All that Christ wrought in the person of his servant, all the wonders the sick man performed cannot be told. Moreover, he would suffer no medicines to be applied to his infirmity; but one night he saw one clad in garments as

white as snow, standing by him, who reaching out his hand, seemed to raise him up, and ordered him to stand firm upon his feet; from which time his pain ceased, and he was so perfectly restored, that when the day came, with good courage he set forth upon his journey.

CHAPTER 1.20: HOW THE SAME BISHOPS BROUGHT HELP FROM HEAVEN TO THE BRITONS IN A BATTLE, AND THEN RETURNED HOME. (AD 430)

In the meantime, the Saxons and Picts, with their united forces, made war upon the Britons, who in these straits were compelled to take up arms. In their terror thinking themselves unequal to their enemies, they implored the assistance of the holy bishops; who, hastening to them as they had promised, inspired so much confidence into these fearful people, that one would have thought they had been joined by a mighty army. Thus, by these apostolic leaders, Christ Himself commanded in their camp. The holy days of Lent were also at hand, and were rendered more sacred by the presence of the bishops, insomuch that the people being instructed by daily sermons, came together eagerly to receive the grace of baptism. For a great multitude of the army desired admission to the saving waters, and a wattled church was constructed for the Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord, and so fitted up for the army in the field as if it were in a city. Still wet with the baptismal water the troops set forth; the faith of the people was fired; and where arms had been deemed of no avail, they looked to the help of God. News reached the enemy of the manner and method of their purification, who, assured of success, as if they had to deal with an unarmed host, hastened forward with renewed eagerness. But their approach was made known by scouts.

When, after the celebration of Easter, the greater part of the army, fresh from the font, began to take up arms and prepare for war, Germanus offered to be their leader. He picked out the most active, explored the country round about, and observed, in the way by which the enemy was expected, a valley encompassed by hills of moderate height. In that place he drew up his untried troops, himself acting as their general. And now a formidable host of foes drew near, visible, as they approached, to his men lying in ambush. Then, on a sudden, Germanus, bearing the standard, exhorted his men, and bade them all in a loud voice repeat his words. As the enemy advanced in all security, thinking to take them by surprise, the bishops three times cried, "Hallelujah. A universal shout of the same word followed, and the echoes from the surrounding hills gave back the cry on all sides, the enemy was pan-

ic-stricken, fearing, not only the neighbouring rocks, but even the very frame of heaven above them; and such was their terror, that their feet were not swift enough to save them. They fled in disorder, casting away their arms, and well satisfied if, even with unprotected bodies, they could escape the danger; many of them, flying headlong in their fear, were engulfed by the river which they had crossed. The Britons, without a blow, inactive spectators of the victory they had gained, beheld their vengeance complete.

The scattered spoils were gathered up, and the devout soldiers rejoiced in the success which Heaven had granted them. The prelates thus triumphed over the enemy without bloodshed, and gained a victory by faith, without the aid of human force. Thus, having settled the affairs of the island, and restored tranquillity by the defeat of the invisible foes, as well as of enemies in the flesh, they prepared to return home. Their own merits, and the intercession of the blessed martyr Alban, obtained for them a calm passage, and the happy vessel restored them in peace to the desires of their people.

CHAPTER 1.21: HOW, WHEN THE PELAGIAN HERESY BEGAN TO SPRING UP AFRESH, GERMANUS, RETURNING TO BRITAIN WITH SEVERUS, FIRST RESTORED BODILY STRENGTH TO A LAME YOUTH, THEN SPIRITUAL HEALTH TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD, HAVING CONDEMNED OR CONVERTED THE HERETICS. (AD 447)

Not long after, news was brought from the same island, that certain persons were again attempting to teach and spread abroad the Pelagian heresy, and again the holy Germanus was entreated by all the priests, that he would defend the cause of God, which he had before maintained. He speedily complied with their request; and taking with him Severus, a man of singular sanctity, who was disciple to the blessed father, Lupus, bishop of Troyes, and at that time, having been ordained bishop of the Treveri, was preaching the Word of God to the tribes of Upper Germany, put to sea, and with favouring winds and calm waters sailed to Britain. In the meantime, the evil spirits, speeding through the whole island, were constrained against their will to foretell that Germanus was coming, insomuch, that one Elafius, a chief of that region, without tidings from any visible messenger, hastened to meet the holy men, carrying with him his son, who in the very flower of his youth laboured under a grievous infirmity; for the sinews of the knee were wasted and shrunk, so that the withered limb was denied the power to walk. All the country followed this Elafius. The bishops arrived, and were met by the ignorant multitude, whom they blessed, and preached the Word of God to

them. They found the people constant in the faith as they had left them; and learning that but few had gone astray, they sought out the authors of the evil and condemned them. Then suddenly Elafius cast himself at the feet of the bishops, presenting his son, whose distress was visible and needed no words to express it. All were grieved, but especially the bishops, who, filled with pity, invoked the mercy of God; and straightway the blessed Germanus, causing the youth to sit down, touched the bent and feeble knee and passed his healing hand over all the diseased part. At once health was restored by the power of his touch, the withered limb regained its vigour, the sinews resumed their task, and the youth was, in the presence of all the people, delivered whole to his father.

The multitude was amazed at the miracle, and the Catholic faith was firmly established in the hearts of all; after which, they were, in a sermon, exhorted to amend their error. By the judgement of all, the exponents of the heresy, who had been banished from the island, were brought before the bishops, to be conveyed into the continent, that the country might be rid of them, and they corrected of their errors. So it came to pass that the faith in those parts continued long after pure and untainted. Thus when they had settled all things, the blessed prelates returned home as prosperously as they had come. But Germanus, after this, went to Ravenna to intercede for the tranquillity of the Armoricans, where, after being very honourably received by Valentinian and his mother, Placidia, he departed hence to Christ; his body was conveyed to his own city with a splendid retinue, and mighty works attended his passage to the grave. Not long after, Valentinian was murdered by the followers of Aetius, the patrician, whom he had put to death, in the sixth year of the reign of Marcian, and with him ended the empire of the West.

CHAPTER 1.22: HOW THE BRITONS, BEING FOR A TIME AT REST FROM FOREIGN INVASIONS, WORE THEMSELVES OUT BY CIVIL WARS, AND AT THE SAME TIME GAVE THEMSELVES UP TO MORE HEINOUS CRIMES

In the meantime, in Britain, there was some respite from foreign, but not from civil war. The cities destroyed by the enemy and abandoned remained in ruins; and the natives, who had escaped the enemy, now fought against each other. Nevertheless, the kings, priests, private men, and the nobility, still remembering the late calamities and slaughters, in some measure kept within bounds; but when these died, and another generation succeeded,

which knew nothing of those times, and was only acquainted with the existing peaceable state of things, all the bonds of truth and justice were so entirely broken, that there was not only no trace of them remaining, but only very few persons seemed to retain any memory of them at all. To other crimes beyond description, which their own historian, Gildas, mournfully relates, they added this—that they never preached the faith to the Saxons, or English, who dwelt amongst them. Nevertheless, the goodness of God did not forsake his people, whom he foreknew, but sent to the aforesaid nation much more worthy heralds of the truth, to bring it to the faith.

CHAPTER 1.23: HOW THE HOLY POPE GREGORY SENT AUGUSTINE, WITH OTHER MONKS, TO PREACH TO THE ENGLISH NATION, AND ENCOURAGED THEM BY A LETTER OF EXHORTATION, NOT TO DESIST FROM THEIR LABOUR. (AD 596)

In the year of our Lord 582, Maurice, the fifty-fourth from Augustus, ascended the throne, and reigned twenty-one years. In the tenth year of his reign, Gregory, a man eminent in learning and the conduct of affairs, was promoted to the Apostolic see of Rome, and presided over it thirteen years, six months and ten days. He, being moved by Divine inspiration, in the fourteenth year of the same emperor, and about the one hundred and fiftieth after the coming of the English into Britain, sent the servant of God, Augustine, and with him divers other monks, who feared the Lord, to preach the Word of God to the English nation. They having, in obedience to the pope's commands, undertaken that work, when they had gone but a little way on their journey, were seized with craven terror, and began to think of returning home, rather than proceed to a barbarous, fierce, and unbelieving nation, to whose very language they were strangers; and by common consent they decided that this was the safer course. At once Augustine, who had been appointed to be consecrated bishop, if they should be received by the English, was sent back, that he might, by humble entreaty, obtain of the blessed Gregory, that they should not be compelled to undertake so dangerous, toilsome, and uncertain a journey. The pope, in reply, sent them a letter of exhortation, persuading them to set forth to the work of the Divine Word, and rely on the help of God. The purport of which letter was as follows:

"Gregory, the servant of the servants of God, to the servants of our Lord. Forasmuch as it had been better not to begin a good work, than to think of desisting from one which has been begun, it behoves you, my beloved sons,

to fulfil with all diligence the good work, which, by the help of the Lord, you have undertaken. Let not, therefore, the toil of the journey, nor the tongues of evil-speaking men, discourage you; but with all earnestness and zeal perform, by God's guidance, that which you have set about; being assured, that great labour is followed by the greater glory of an eternal reward. When Augustine, your Superior, returns, whom we also constitute your abbot, humbly obey him in all things; knowing, that whatsoever you shall do by his direction, will, in all respects, be profitable to your souls. Almighty God protect you with His grace, and grant that I may, in the heavenly country, see the fruits of your labour, inasmuch as, though I cannot labour with you, I shall partake in the joy of the reward, because I am willing to labour. God keep you in safety, my most beloved sons. Given the 23rd of July, in the fourteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the thirteenth year after the consulship of our lord aforesaid, and the fourteenth indiction."

CHAPTER 1.24: HOW HE WROTE TO THE BISHOP OF ARLES TO ENTERTAIN THEM. (AD 596)

The same venerable pope also sent at the same time a letter to Aetherius, archbishop of Arles, exhorting him to give favourable entertainment to Augustine on his way to Britain; which letter was in these words: "To his most reverend and holy brother and fellow bishop Aetherius, Gregory, the servant of the servants of God. Although religious men stand in need of no recommendation with priests who have the charity which is pleasing to God; yet because an opportunity of writing has occurred, we have thought fit to send this letter to you, Brother, to inform you, that with the help of God we have directed thither, for the good of souls, the bearer of these presents, Augustine, the servant of God, of whose zeal we are assured, with other servants of God, whom it is requisite that your Holiness readily assist with priestly zeal, affording him all the comfort in your power. And to the end that you may be the more ready in your help, we have enjoined him to inform you particularly of the occasion of his coming; knowing, that when you are acquainted with it, you will, as the matter requires, for the sake of God, dutifully dispose yourself to give him comfort. We also in all things recommend to your charity, Candidus, the priest, our common son, whom we have transferred to the administration of a small patrimony in our Church. God keep you in safety, most reverend brother. Given the 23rd day of July, in the

fourteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the thirteenth year after the consulship of our lord aforesaid, and the fourteenth indiction."

CHAPTER 1.25: HOW AUGUSTINE, COMING INTO BRITAIN, FIRST PREACHED IN THE ISLE OF THANET TO THE KING OF KENT, AND HAVING OBTAINED LICENCE FROM HIM, WENT INTO KENT, IN ORDER TO PREACH THEREIN. (AD 597)

Augustine, thus strengthened by the encouragement of the blessed Father Gregory, returned to the work of the Word of God, with the servants of Christ who were with him, and arrived in Britain. The powerful Ethelbert was at that time king of Kent; he had extended his dominions as far as the boundary formed by the great river Humber, by which the Southern Saxons are divided from the Northern. On the east of Kent is the large Isle of Thanet, containing, according to the English way of reckoning, 600 families, divided from the mainland by the river Wantsum, which is about three furlongs in breadth, and which can be crossed only in two places; for at both ends it runs into the sea. On this island landed the servant of the Lord, Augustine, and his companions, being, as is reported, nearly forty men. They had obtained, by order of the blessed Pope Gregory, interpreters of the nation of the Franks, and sending to Ethelbert, signified that they were come from Rome, and brought a joyful message, which most undoubtedly assured to those that hearkened to it everlasting joys in heaven, and a kingdom that would never end, with the living and true God. The king hearing this, gave orders that they should stay in the island where they had landed, and be furnished with necessaries, till he should consider what to do with them. For he had before heard of the Christian religion, having a Christian wife of the royal family of the Franks, called Bertha;

whom he had received from her parents, upon condition that she should be permitted to preserve inviolate the rites of her religion with the Bishop Liudhard, who was sent with her to support her in the faith. Some days after, the king came into the island, and sitting in the open air, ordered Augustine and his companions to come and hold a conference with him. For he had taken precaution that they should not come to him in any house, lest, by so coming, according to an ancient superstition, if they practised any magical arts, they might impose upon him, and so get the better of him. But they came endued with Divine, not with magic power, bearing a silver cross for

their banner, and the image of our Lord and Saviour painted on a board; and chanting litanies, they offered up their prayers to the Lord for the eternal salvation both of themselves and of those to whom and for whom they had come. When they had sat down, in obedience to the king's commands, and preached to him and his attendants there present the Word of life, the king answered thus: "Your words and promises are fair, but because they are new to us, and of uncertain import, I cannot consent to them so far as to forsake that which I have so long observed with the whole English nation.

But because you are come from far as strangers into my kingdom, and, as I conceive, are desirous to impart to us those things which you believe to be true, and most beneficial, we desire not to harm you, but will give you favourable entertainment, and take care to supply you with all things necessary to your sustenance; nor do we forbid you to preach and gain as many as you can to your religion. Accordingly he gave them an abode in the city of Canterbury, which was the metropolis of all his dominions, and, as he had promised, besides supplying them with sustenance, did not refuse them liberty to preach. It is told that, as they drew near to the city, after their manner, with the holy cross, and the image of our sovereign Lord and King, Jesus Christ, they sang in concert this litany: "We beseech thee, O Lord, for Thy great mercy, that Thy wrath and anger be turned away from this city, and from Thy holy house, for we have sinned. Hallelujah."

CHAPTER 1.26: HOW ST. AUGUSTINE IN KENT FOLLOWED THE DOCTRINE AND MANNER OF LIFE OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH, AND SETTLED HIS EPISCOPAL SEE IN THE ROYAL CITY. (AD 597)

As soon as they entered the dwelling-place assigned to them, they began to imitate the Apostolic manner of life in the primitive Church; applying themselves to constant prayer, watchings, and fastings; preaching the Word of life to as many as they could; despising all worldly things, as in nowise concerning them; receiving only their necessary food from those they taught; living themselves in all respects conformably to what they taught, and being always ready to suffer any adversity, and even to die for that truth which they preached. In brief, some believed and were baptized, admiring the simplicity of their blameless life, and the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine. There was on the east side of the city, a church dedicated of old to the honour of St. Martin, built whilst the Romans were still in the island, wherein the queen, who, as has been said before, was a Christian, was wont

to pray. In this they also first began to come together, to chant the Psalms, to pray, to celebrate Mass, to preach, and to baptize, till when the king had been converted to the faith, they obtained greater liberty to preach everywhere and build or repair churches.

When he, among the rest, believed and was baptized, attracted by the pure life of these holy men and their gracious promises, the truth of which they established by many miracles, greater numbers began daily to flock together to hear the Word, and, forsaking their heathen rites, to have fellowship, through faith, in the unity of Christ's Holy Church. It is told that the king, while he rejoiced at their conversion and their faith, yet compelled none to embrace Christianity, but only showed more affection to the believers, as to his fellow citizens in the kingdom of Heaven. For he had learned from those who had instructed him and guided him to salvation, that the service of Christ ought to be voluntary, not by compulsion. Nor was it long before he gave his teachers a settled residence suited to their degree in his metropolis of Canterbury, with such possessions of divers sorts as were necessary for them.

CHAPTER 1.27: HOW ST. AUGUSTINE, BEING MADE A BISHOP, SENT TO ACQUAINT POPE GREGORY WITH WHAT HAD BEEN DONE IN BRITAIN, AND ASKED AND RECEIVED REPLIES, OF WHICH HE STOOD IN NEED. (AD 597–601)

In the meantime, Augustine, the man of God, went to Arles, and, according to the orders received from the holy Father Gregory, was ordained archbishop of the English nation, by Aetherius, archbishop of that city. Then returning into Britain, he sent Laurentius the the priest and Peter the monk to Rome, to acquaint Pope Gregory, that the English nation had received the faith of Christ, and that he was himself made their bishop. At the same time, he desired his solution of some doubts which seemed urgent to him. He soon received fitting answers to his questions, which we have also thought meet to insert in this our history: The First Question of the blessed Augustine, Bishop of the Church of Canterbury.—Concerning bishops, what should be their manner of conversation towards their clergy? or into how many portions the offerings of the faithful at the altar are to be divided? and how the bishop is to act in the Church?

Gregory, Pope of the City of Rome, answers.—Holy Scripture, in which we doubt not you are well versed, testifies to this, and in particular the

Epistles of the Blessed Paul to Timothy, wherein he endeavours to show him what should be his manner of conversation in the house of God; but it is the custom of the Apostolic see to prescribe these rules to bishops when they are ordained: that all emoluments which accrue, are to be divided into four portions;—one for the bishop and his household, for hospitality and entertainment of guests; another for the clergy; a third for the poor; and the fourth for the repair of churches. But in that you, my brother, having been instructed in monastic rules, must not live apart from your clergy in the Church of the English, which has been lately, by the will of God, converted to the faith, you must establish the manner of conversation of our fathers in the primitive Church, among whom, none said that aught of the things which they possessed was his own, but they had all things common.

But if there are any clerks not received into holy orders, who cannot live continent, they are to take wives, and receive their stipends outside of the community; because we know that it is written concerning the same fathers of whom we have spoken that a distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. Care is also to be taken of their stipends, and provision to be made, and they are to be kept under ecclesiastical rule, that they may live orderly, and attend to singing of psalms, and, by the help of God, preserve their hearts and tongues and bodies from all that is unlawful. But as for those that live in common, there is no need to say anything of assigning portions, or dispensing hospitality and showing mercy; inasmuch as all that they have over is to be spent in pious and religious works, according to the teaching of Him who is the Lord and Master of all, "Give alms of such things as ye have over, and behold all things are clean unto you."

Augustine's Second Question.—Whereas the faith is one and the same, are there different customs in different Churches? and is one custom of Masses observed in the holy Roman Church, and another in the Church of Gaul? Pope Gregory answers.—You know, my brother, the custom of the Roman Church in which you remember that you were bred up. But my will is, that if you have found anything, either in the Roman, or the Gallican, or any other Church, which may be more acceptable to Almighty God, you should carefully make choice of the same, and sedulously teach the Church of the English, which as yet is new in the faith, whatsoever you can gather from the several Churches. For things are not to be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things. Choose, therefore, from every

Church those things that are pious, religious, and right, and when you have, as it were, made them up into one bundle, let the minds of the English be accustomed thereto.

Augustine's Third Question.—I beseech you, what punishment must be inflicted on one who steals anything from a church? Gregory answers.—You may judge, my brother, by the condition of the thief, in what manner he is to be corrected. For there are some, who, having substance, commit theft; and there are others, who transgress in this matter through want. Wherefore it is requisite, that some be punished with fines, others with stripes; some with more severity, and some more mildly. And when the severity is greater, it is to proceed from charity, not from anger; because this is done for the sake of him who is corrected, that he may not be delivered up to the fires of Hell. For it behoves us to maintain discipline among the faithful, as good parents do with their children according to the flesh, whom they punish with stripes for their faults, and yet they design to make those whom they chastise their heirs, and preserve their possessions for those whom they seem to visit in wrath. This charity is, therefore, to be kept in mind, and it dictates the measure of the punishment, so that the mind may do nothing beyond the rule prescribed by reason. You will add to this, how men are to restore those things which they have stolen from the church. But let not the Church take more than it has lost of its worldly possessions, or seek gain from vanities.

Augustine's Fourth Question.—Whether two full brothers may marry two sisters, who are of a family far removed from them? Gregory answers.—Most assuredly this may lawfully be done; for nothing is found in Holy Writ on this matter that seems to contradict it. Augustine's Fifth Question.—To what degree may the faithful marry with their kindred? and is it lawful to marry a stepmother or a brother's wife? Gregory answers.—A certain secular law in the Roman commonwealth allows, that the son and daughter of a brother and sister, or of two full brothers, or two sisters, may be joined in matrimony; but we have found, by experience, that the offspring of such wedlock cannot grow up; and the Divine law forbids a man to "uncover the nakedness of his kindred." Hence of necessity it must be the third or fourth generation of the faithful, that can be lawfully joined in matrimony; for the second, which we have mentioned, must altogether abstain from one another. To marry with one's stepmother is a heinous crime, because it is written

in the Law, "Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father:" now the son, indeed, cannot uncover his father's nakedness; but in regard that it is written, "They twain shall be one flesh," he that presumes to uncover the nakedness of his stepmother, who was one flesh with his father, certainly uncovers the nakedness of his father. It is also prohibited to marry with a sister-in-law, because by the former union she is become the brother's flesh. For which thing also John the Baptist was beheaded, and obtained the crown of holy martyrdom. For, though he was not ordered to deny Christ, and it was not for confessing Christ that he was killed, yet inasmuch as the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, said, "I am the Truth," because John was killed for the truth, he also shed his blood for Christ.

But forasmuch as there are many of the English, who, whilst they were still heathens, are said to have been joined in this unholy union, when they attain to the faith they are to be admonished to abstain, and be made to know that this is a grievous sin. Let them fear the dread judgement of God, lest, for the gratification of their carnal desires, they incur the torments of eternal punishment. Yet they are not on this account to be deprived of the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, lest they should seem to be punished for those things which they did through ignorance before they had received Baptism. For in these times the Holy Church chastises some things with zeal, and tolerates some in mercy, and is blind to some in her wisdom, and so, by forbearance and blindness often suppresses the evil that stands in her way. But all that come to the faith are to be admonished not to presume to do such things. And if any shall be guilty of them, they are to be excluded from the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ. For as the offence is, in some measure, to be tolerated in those who did it through ignorance, so it is to be rigorously punished in those who do not fear to sin knowingly.

Augustine's Sixth Question.—Whether a bishop may be consecrated without other bishops being present, if there be so great a distance between them, that they cannot easily come together? Gregory answers.—In the Church of England, of which you are as yet the only bishop, you cannot otherwise ordain a bishop than in the absence of other bishops. For when do bishops come over from Gaul, that they may be present as witnesses to you in ordaining a bishop? But we would have you, my brother, to ordain bishops in such a manner, that the said bishops may not be far asunder, to the end that there be no lack, but that at the ordination of a bishop other pastors also,

whose presence is of great benefit, should easily come together. Thus, when, by the help of God, bishops shall have been ordained in places near to one another, no ordination of a bishop is to take place without assembling three or four bishops. For, even in spiritual affairs, we may take example by the temporal, that they may be wisely and discreetly conducted. For surely, when marriages are celebrated in the world, some married persons are assembled, that those who went before in the way of matrimony, may also partake in the joy of the new union. Why, then, at this spiritual ordinance, wherein, by means of the sacred ministry, man is joined to God, should not such persons be assembled, as may either rejoice in the advancement of the new bishop, or jointly pour forth their prayers to Almighty God for his preservation?

Augustine's Seventh Question.—How are we to deal with the bishops of Gaul and Britain? Gregory answers.—We give you no authority over the bishops of Gaul, because the bishop of Arles received the pall in the old times of my predecessors, and we must by no means deprive him of the authority he has received. If it shall therefore happen, my brother, that you go over into the province of Gaul, you are to concert with the said bishop of Arles, how, if there be any faults among the bishops, they may be amended. And if he shall be lukewarm in keeping up discipline, he is to be fired by your zeal; to whom we have also written, that aided by the presence of your Holiness in Gaul, he should exert himself to the utmost, and put away from the behaviour of the bishops all that is opposed to the command of our Creator. But you shall not have power to go beyond your own authority and judge the bishops of Gaul, but by persuading, and winning them, and showing good works for them to imitate, you shall recall the perverted to the pursuit of holiness; for it is written in the Law, "When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest bruise the ears with thine hand and eat; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbours' standing corn. For thou mayest not apply the sickle of judgement in that harvest which thou seest to have been committed to another;

but by the influence of good works thou shalt clear the Lord's wheat of the chaff of its vices, and convert it by exhortation and persuasion in the body of the Church, as it were, by eating. But whatsoever is to be done by authority, must be transacted with the aforesaid bishop of Arles, lest that should be omitted, which the ancient institution of the fathers has appointed. But as for all the bishops of Britain, we commit them to your care, that

the unlearned may be taught, the weak strengthened by persuasion, and the perverse corrected by authority. Augustine's Eighth Question.—Whether a woman with child ought to be baptized? Or when she has brought forth, after what time she may come into the church? As also, after how many days the infant born may be baptized, lest he be prevented by death? Or how long after her husband may have carnal knowledge of her? Or whether it is lawful for her to come into the church when she has her courses, or to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion? Or whether a man, under certain circumstances, may come into the church before he has washed with water? Or approach to receive the Mystery of the Holy Communion? All which things are requisite to be known by the ignorant nation of the English.

Gregory answers.—I do not doubt but that these questions have been put to you, my brother, and I think I have already answered you therein. But I believe you would wish the opinion which you yourself might give and hold to be confirmed by my reply also. Why should not a woman with child be baptized, since the fruitfulness of the flesh is no offence in the eyes of Almighty God? For when our first parents sinned in Paradise, they forfeited the immortality which they had received, by the just judgement of God. Because, therefore, Almighty God would not for their fault wholly destroy the human race, he both deprived man of immortality for his sin, and, at the same time, of his great goodness and loving-kindness, reserved to him the power of propagating his race after him. On what ground, then, can that which is preserved to human nature by the free gift of Almighty God, be excluded from the privilege of Holy Baptism? For it is very foolish to imagine that the gift can be opposed to grace in that Mystery in which all sin is blotted out. When a woman is delivered, after how many days she may come into the church, you have learnt from the teaching of the Old Testament, to wit, that she is to abstain for a male child thirty-three days, and sixty-six for a female. Now you must know that this is to be received in a mystery;

for if she enters the church the very hour that she is delivered, to return thanks, she is not guilty of any sin; because the pleasure of the flesh is a fault, and not the pain; but the pleasure is in the copulation of the flesh, whereas there is pain in bringing forth the child. Wherefore it is said to the first mother of all, "In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children. If, therefore, we forbid a woman that has brought forth, to enter the church, we make a crime of her very punishment. To baptize either a woman who has brought

forth, if there be danger of death, even the very hour that she brings forth, or that which she has brought forth the very hour it is born, is in no way prohibited, because, as the grace of the Holy Mystery is to be with much discretion provided for those who are in full life and capable of understanding, so is it to be without any delay administered to the dying; lest, while a further time is sought to confer the Mystery of redemption, if a small delay intervene, the person that is to be redeemed be dead and gone.

Her husband is not to approach her, till the infant born be weaned. An evil custom is sprung up in the lives of married people, in that women disdain to suckle the children whom they bring forth, and give them to other women to suckle; which seems to have been invented on no other account but incontinency; because, as they will not be continent, they will not suckle the children whom they bear. Those women, therefore, who, from evil custom, give their children to others to bring up, must not approach their husbands till the time of purification is past. For even when there has been no child-birth, women are forbidden to do so, whilst they have their courses, insomuch that the Law condemns to death any man that shall approach unto a woman during her uncleanness. Yet the woman, nevertheless, must not be forbidden to come into the church whilst she has her courses; because the superfluity of nature cannot be imputed to her as a crime; and it is not just that she should be refused admittance into the church, for that which she suffers against her will. For we know, that the woman who had the issue of blood, humbly approaching behind our Lord's back, touched the hem of his garment, and her infirmity immediately departed from her. If, therefore, she that had an issue of blood might commendably touch the garment of our Lord, why may not she, who has her courses, lawfully enter into the church of God?

But you may say, Her infirmity compelled her, whereas these we speak of are bound by custom. Consider, then, most dear brother, that all we suffer in this mortal flesh, through the infirmity of our nature, is ordained by the just judgement of God after the fall; for to hunger, to thirst, to be hot, to be cold, to be weary, is from the infirmity of our nature; and what else is it to seek food against hunger, drink against thirst, air against heat, clothes against cold, rest against weariness, than to procure a remedy against distempers? Thus to a woman her courses are a distemper. If, therefore, it was a commendable boldness in her, who in her disease touched our Lord's gar-

ment, why may not that which is allowed to one infirm person, be granted to all women, who, through the fault of their nature, are rendered infirm? She must not, therefore, be forbidden to receive the Mystery of the Holy Communion during those days. But if any one out of profound respect does not presume to do it, she is to be commended; yet if she receives it, she is not to be judged. For it is the part of noble minds in some manner to acknowledge their faults, even when there is no fault; because very often that is done without a fault, which, nevertheless, proceeded from a fault. Thus, when we are hungry, it is no sin to eat; yet our being hungry proceeds from the sin of the first man. The courses are no sin in women, because they happen naturally; yet, because our nature itself is so depraved, that it appears to be defiled even without the concurrence of the will, a defect arises from sin, and thereby human nature may itself know what it is become by judgement. And let man, who wilfully committed the offence, bear the guilt of that offence against his will. And, therefore, let women consider with themselves, and if they do not presume, during their courses, to approach the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord, they are to be commended for their praiseworthy consideration; but when they are carried away with love of the same Mystery to receive it according to the custom of the religious life, they are not to be restrained, as we said before.

For as in the Old Testament the outward works are observed, so in the New Testament, that which is outwardly done, is not so diligently regarded as that which is inwardly thought, that the punishment may be with discernment. For whereas the Law forbids the eating of many things as unclean, yet our Lord says in the Gospel, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. And afterwards he added, expounding the same, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts. Where it is abundantly shown, that that is declared by Almighty God to be polluted in deed, which springs from the root of a polluted thought. Whence also Paul the Apostle says, "Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure. And presently, declaring the cause of that defilement, he adds, "For even their mind and conscience is defiled. If, therefore, meat is not unclean to him whose mind is not unclean, why shall that which a woman suffers according to nature, with a clean mind, be imputed to her as uncleanness?

A man who has approached his own wife is not to enter the church unless washed with water, nor is he to enter immediately although washed. The Law prescribed to the ancient people, that a man in such cases should be washed with water, and not enter into the church before the setting of the sun. Which, nevertheless, may be understood spiritually, because a man acts so when the mind is led by the imagination to unlawful concupiscence; for unless the fire of concupiscence be first driven from his mind, he is not to think himself worthy of the congregation of the brethren, while he sees himself burdened by the iniquity of a perverted will. For though divers nations have divers opinions concerning this affair, and seem to observe different rules, it was always the custom of the Romans, from ancient times, for such an one to seek to be cleansed by washing, and for some time reverently to forbear entering the church. Nor do we, in so saying, assign matrimony to be a fault; but forasmuch as lawful intercourse cannot be had without the pleasure of the flesh, it is proper to forbear entering the holy place, because the pleasure itself cannot be without a fault. For he was not born of adultery or fornication, but of lawful marriage, who said, "Behold I was conceived in iniquity, and in sin my mother brought me forth.

For he who knew himself to have been conceived in iniquity, lamented that he was born from sin, because he bears the defect, as a tree bears in its bough the sap it drew from the root. In which words, however, he does not call the union of the married couple iniquity, but the will itself. For there are many things which are lawful and permitted, and yet we are somewhat defiled in doing them. As very often by being angry we correct faults, and at the same time disturb our own peace of mind; and though that which we do is right, yet it is not to be approved that our mind should be disturbed. For he who said, "My eye was disturbed with anger," had been angry at the vices of sinners. Now, seeing that only a calm mind can rest in the light of contemplation, he grieved that his eye was disturbed with anger; because, whilst he was correcting evil actions below, he was obliged to be confused and disturbed with regard to the contemplation of the highest things. Anger against vice is, therefore, commendable, and yet painful to a man, because he thinks that by his mind being agitated, he has incurred some guilt. Lawful commerce, therefore, must be for the sake of children, not of pleasure; and must be to procure offspring, not to satisfy vices.

But if any man is led not by the desire of pleasure, but only for the sake of getting children, such a man is certainly to be left to his own judgement, either as to entering the church, or as to receiving the Mystery of the Body and Blood of our Lord, which he, who being placed in the fire cannot burn, is not to be forbidden by us to receive. But when, not the love of getting children, but of pleasure prevails, the pair have cause to lament their deed. For this the holy preaching concedes to them, and yet fills the mind with dread of the very concession. For when Paul the Apostle said, "Let him that cannot contain have his own wife; he presently took care to subjoin, "But this I say by way of permission, not of commandment. For that is not granted by way of permission which is lawful, because it is just; and, therefore, that which he said he permitted, he showed to be an offence.

It is seriously to be considered, that when God was about to speak to the people on Mount Sinai, He first commanded them to abstain from women. And if purity of body was there so carefully required, where God spoke to the people by the means of a creature as His representative, that those who were to hear the words of God should abstain; how much more ought women, who receive the Body of Almighty God, to preserve themselves in purity of flesh, lest they be burdened with the very greatness of that inestimable Mystery? For this reason also, it was said to David, concerning his men, by the priest, that if they were clean in this particular, they should receive the shewbread, which they would not have received at all, had not David first declared them to be clean. Then the man, who, afterwards, has been washed with water, is also capable of receiving the Mystery of the Holy Communion, when it is lawful for him, according to what has been before declared, to enter the church.

Augustine's Ninth Question.—Whether after an illusion, such as is wont to happen in a dream, any man may receive the Body of our Lord, or if he be a priest, celebrate the Divine Mysteries? Gregory answers.—The Testament of the Old Law, as has been said already in the article above, calls such a man polluted, and allows him not to enter into the church till the evening, after being washed with water. Which, nevertheless, a spiritual people, taking in another sense, will understand in the same manner as above; because he is imposed upon as it were in a dream, who, being tempted with uncleanness, is defiled by real representations in thought, and he is to be washed with water, that he may cleanse away the sins of thought with tears; and unless the fire of

temptation depart before, may know himself to be in a manner guilty until the evening. But a distinction is very necessary in that illusion, and one must carefully consider what causes it to arise in the mind of the person sleeping; for sometimes it proceeds from excess of eating or drinking; sometimes from the superfluity or infirmity of nature, and sometimes from the thoughts. And when it happens either through superfluity or infirmity of nature, such an illusion is not to be feared at all, because it is to be lamented, that the mind of the person, who knew nothing of it, suffers the same, rather than that he occasioned it. But when the appetite of gluttony commits excess in food, and thereupon the receptacles of the humours are oppressed, the mind thence contracts some guilt;

yet not so much as to hinder the receiving of the Holy Mystery, or celebrating Mass, when a holy day requires it, or necessity obliges the Mystery to be shown forth, because there is no other priest in the place; for if there be others who can perform the ministry, the illusion proceeding from over-eating ought not to exclude a man from receiving the sacred Mystery; but I am of opinion he ought humbly to abstain from offering the sacrifice of the Mystery, but not from receiving it, unless the mind of the person sleeping has been disturbed with some foul imagination. For there are some, who for the most part so suffer the illusion, that their mind, even during the sleep of the body, is not defiled with filthy thoughts. In which case, one thing is evident, that the mind is guilty, not being acquitted even in its own judgement; for though it does not remember to have seen anything whilst the body was sleeping, yet it calls to mind that, when the body was awake, it fell into gluttony. But if the illusion of the sleeper proceeds from evil thoughts when he was awake, then its guilt is manifest to the mind; for the man perceives from what root that defilement sprang, because what he had consciously thought of, that he afterwards unconsciously endured. But it is to be considered, whether that thought was no more than a suggestion, or proceeded to delight, or, what is worse, consented to sin.

For all sin is committed in three ways, viz., by suggestion, by delight, and by consent. Suggestion comes from the Devil, delight from the flesh, and consent from the spirit. For the serpent suggested the first offence, and Eve, as flesh, took delight in it, but Adam, as the spirit, consented. And when the mind sits in judgement on itself, it must clearly distinguish between suggestion and delight, and between delight and consent. For when the evil spirit

suggests a sin to the mind, if there ensue no delight in the sin, the sin is in no way committed; but when the flesh begins to take delight in it, then sin begins to arise. But if it deliberately consents, then the sin is known to be full-grown. The seed, therefore, of sin is in the suggestion, the nourishment of it in delight, its maturity in the consent. And it often happens that what the evil spirit sows in the thought, in that the flesh begins to find delight, and yet the soul does not consent to that delight. And whereas the flesh cannot be delighted without the mind, yet the mind struggling against the pleasures of the flesh, is after a manner unwillingly bound by the carnal delight, so that through reason it opposes it, and does not consent, yet being bound by delight, it grievously laments being so bound.

Wherefore that great soldier of our Lord's host, groaned and said, "I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members. Now if he was a captive, he did not fight; but he did fight; wherefore he was a captive and at the same time therefore fought against the law of the mind, which the law that is in the members opposed; but if he fought, he was no captive. Thus, then, man is, as I may say, a captive and yet free. Free on account of justice, which he loves, a captive by the delight which he unwillingly bears within him.

CHAPTER 1.28: HOW POPE GREGORY WROTE TO THE BISHOP OF ARLES TO HELP AUGUSTINE IN THE WORK OF GOD. (AD 601)

Thus far the answers of the holy Pope Gregory, to the questions of the most reverend prelate, Augustine. Now the letter, which he says he had written to the bishop of Arles, was directed to Vergilius, successor to Aetherius, and was in the following words: "To his most reverend and holy brother and fellow bishop, Vergilius; Gregory, servant of the servants of God. With how much kindness brethren, coming of their own accord, are to be entertained, is shown by this, that they are for the most part invited for the sake of brotherly love. Therefore, if our common brother, Bishop Augustine, shall happen to come to you, let your love, as is becoming, receive him with so great kindness and affection, that it may refresh him by the benefit of its consolation and show to others how brotherly charity is to be cultivated. And, since it often happens that those who are at a distance first learn from others the things that need correction, if he bring before you, my brother, any sins of bishops or others, do you, in conjunction with him, carefully inquire into

the same, and show yourself so strict and earnest with regard to those things which offend God and provoke His wrath, that for the amendment of others, the punishment may fall upon the guilty, and the innocent may not suffer under false report. God keep you in safety, most reverend brother. Given the 22nd day of June, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the eighteenth year after the consulship of our said lord, and the fourth indiction."

CHAPTER 1.29: HOW THE SAME POPE SENT TO AUGUSTINE THE PALL AND A LETTER, ALONG WITH SEVERAL MINISTERS OF THE WORD. (AD 601)

Moreover, the same Pope Gregory, hearing from Bishop Augustine, that the harvest which he had was great and the labourers but few, sent to him, together with his aforesaid envoys, certain fellow labourers and ministers of the Word, of whom the chief and foremost were Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Rufinianus, and by them all things in general that were necessary for the worship and service of the Church, to wit, sacred vessels and altar-cloths, also church-furniture, and vestments for the bishops and clerks, as likewise relics of the holy Apostles and martyrs; besides many manuscripts. He also sent a letter, wherein he signified that he had despatched the pall to him, and at the same time directed how he should constitute bishops in Britain. The letter was in these words: "To his most reverend and holy brother and fellow bishop, Augustine; Gregory, the servant of the servants of God. Though it be certain, that the unspeakable rewards of the eternal kingdom are reserved for those who labour for Almighty God, yet it is requisite that we bestow on them the benefit of honours, to the end that they may by this recompense be encouraged the more vigorously to apply themselves to the care of their spiritual work. And, seeing that the new Church of the English is, through the bounty of the Lord, and your labours, brought to the grace of God, we grant you the use of the pall in the same, only for the celebration of the solemn service of the Mass; that so you may ordain twelve bishops in different places, who shall be subject to your jurisdiction. But the bishop of London shall, for the future, be always consecrated by his own synod, and receive the pall, which is the token of his office, from this holy and Apostolic see, which I, by the grace of God, now serve. But we would have you send to the city of York such a bishop as you shall think fit to ordain; yet so, that if that city, with the places adjoining, shall receive the Word of God, that bishop shall also ordain

twelve bishops, and enjoy the honour of a metropolitan; for we design, if we live, by the help of God, to bestow on him also the pall;

and yet we would have him to be subject to your authority, my brother; but after your decease, he shall so preside over the bishops he shall have ordained, as to be in no way subject to the jurisdiction of the bishop of London. But for the future let there be this distinction as regards honour between the bishops of the cities of London and York, that he who has been first ordained have the precedence. But let them take counsel and act in concert and with one mind dispose whatsoever is to be done for zeal of Christ; let them judge rightly, and carry out their judgement without dissension. "But to you, my brother, shall, by the authority of our God and Lord Jesus Christ, be subject not only those bishops whom you shall ordain, and those that shall be ordained by the bishop of York, but also all the prelates in Britain; to the end that from the words and manner of life of your Holiness they may learn the rule of a right belief and a good life, and fulfilling their office in faith and righteousness, they may, when it shall please the Lord, attain to the kingdom of Heaven. God preserve you in safety, most reverend brother. "Given the 22nd of June, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the eighteenth year after the consulship of our said lord, and the fourth indiction."

CHAPTER 1.30: A COPY OF THE LETTER WHICH POPE GREGORY SENT TO THE ABBOT MELLITUS, THEN GOING INTO BRITAIN. (AD 601)

The aforesaid envoys having departed, the blessed Father Gregory sent after them a letter worthy to be recorded, wherein he plainly shows how carefully he watched over the salvation of our country. The letter was as follows: "To his most beloved son, the Abbot Mellitus; Gregory, the servant of the servants of God. We have been much concerned, since the departure of our people that are with you, because we have received no account of the success of your journey. Howbeit, when Almighty God has led you to the most reverend Bishop Augustine, our brother, tell him what I have long been considering in my own mind concerning the matter of the English people; to wit, that the temples of the idols in that nation ought not to be destroyed; but let the idols that are in them be destroyed; let water be consecrated and sprinkled in the said temples, let altars be erected, and relics placed there. For if those temples are well built, it is requisite that they be converted from the worship of devils to the service of the true God; that the nation, seeing that

their temples are not destroyed, may remove error from their hearts, and knowing and adoring the true God, may the more freely resort to the places to which they have been accustomed.

And because they are used to slaughter many oxen in sacrifice to devils, some solemnity must be given them in exchange for this, as that on the day of the dedication, or the nativities of the holy martyrs, whose relics are there deposited, they should build themselves huts of the boughs of trees about those churches which have been turned to that use from being temples, and celebrate the solemnity with religious feasting, and no more offer animals to the Devil, but kill cattle and glorify God in their feast, and return thanks to the Giver of all things for their abundance; to the end that, whilst some outward gratifications are retained, they may the more easily consent to the inward joys. For there is no doubt that it is impossible to cut off every thing at once from their rude natures; because he who endeavours to ascend to the highest place rises by degrees or steps, and not by leaps. Thus the Lord made Himself known to the people of Israel in Egypt; and yet He allowed them the use, in His own worship, of the sacrifices which they were wont to offer to the Devil, commanding them in His sacrifice to kill animals, to the end that, with changed hearts, they might lay aside one part of the sacrifice, whilst they retained another; and although the animals were the same as those which they were wont to offer, they should offer them to the true God, and not to idols;

and thus they would no longer be the same sacrifices. This then, dearly beloved, it behoves you to communicate to our aforesaid brother, that he, being placed where he is at present, may consider how he is to order all things. God preserve you in safety, most beloved son. "Given the 17th of June, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the eighteenth year after the consulship of our said lord, and the fourth indiction."

CHAPTER 1.31: HOW POPE GREGORY, BY LETTER, EXHORTED AUGUSTINE NOT TO GLORY IN HIS MIRACLES. (AD 601)

At which time he also sent Augustine a letter concerning the miracles that he had heard had been wrought by him; wherein he admonishes him not to incur the danger of being puffed up by the number of them. The letter was in these words: "I know, dearly beloved brother, that Almighty God, by means of you, shows forth great miracles to the nation which it was His will to

choose. Wherefore you must needs rejoice with fear, and fear with joy concerning that heavenly gift; for you will rejoice because the souls of the English are by outward miracles drawn to inward grace; but you will fear, lest, amidst the wonders that are wrought, the weak mind may be puffed up with self-esteem, and that whereby it is outwardly raised to honour cause it inwardly to fall through vain-glory. For we must call to mind, that when the disciples returned with joy from preaching, and said to their Heavenly Master, 'Lord, even the devils are subject to us through Thy Name;' forthwith they received the reply, 'In this rejoice not; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.' For their minds were set on private and temporal joys, when they rejoiced in miracles; but they are recalled from the private to the common joy, and from the temporal to the eternal, when it is said to them, 'Rejoice in this, because your names are written in heaven.' For all the elect do not work miracles, and yet the names of all are written in heaven. For those who are disciples of the truth ought not to rejoice, save for that good thing which all men enjoy as well as they, and in which their joy shall be without end.

"It remains, therefore, most dear brother, that amidst those outward actions, which you perform through the power of the Lord, you should always carefully judge yourself in your heart, and carefully understand both what you are yourself, and how much grace is bestowed upon that same nation, for the conversion of which you have received even the gift of working miracles. And if you remember that you have at any time sinned against our Creator, either by word or deed, always call it to mind, to the end that the remembrance of your guilt may crush the vanity which rises in your heart. And whatsoever gift of working miracles you either shall receive, or have received, consider the same, not as conferred on you, but on those for whose salvation it has been given you."

CHAPTER 1.32: HOW POPE GREGORY SENT LETTERS AND GIFTS TO KING ETHELBERT. (AD 601)

The same blessed Pope Gregory, at the same time, sent a letter to King Ethelbert, with many gifts of divers sorts; being desirous to glorify the king with temporal honours, at the same time that he rejoiced that through his own labour and zeal he had attained to the knowledge of heavenly glory. The copy of the said letter is as follows: "To the most glorious lord, and his most excellent son, Ethelbert, king of the English, Bishop Gregory. Almighty

God advances good men to the government of nations, that He may by their means bestow the gifts of His loving-kindness on those over whom they are placed. This we know to have come to pass in the English nation, over whom your Highness was placed, to the end, that by means of the blessings which are granted to you, heavenly benefits might also be conferred on your subjects. Therefore, my illustrious son, do you carefully guard the grace which you have received from the Divine goodness, and be eager to spread the Christian faith among the people under your rule; in all uprightness increase your zeal for their conversion; suppress the worship of idols; overthrow the structures of the temples; establish the manners of your subjects by much cleanness of life, exhorting, terrifying, winning, correcting, and showing forth an example of good works, that you may obtain your reward in Heaven from Him, Whose Name and the knowledge of Whom you have spread abroad upon earth. For He, Whose honour you seek and maintain among the nations, will also render your Majesty's name more glorious even to posterity.

"For even so the most pious emperor, Constantine, of old, recovering the Roman commonwealth from the false worship of idols, brought it with himself into subjection to Almighty God, our Lord Jesus Christ, and turned to Him with his whole mind, together with the nations under his rule. Whence it followed, that his praises transcended the fame of former princes; and he excelled his predecessors in renown as much as in good works. Now, therefore, let your Highness hasten to impart to the kings and peoples that are subject to you, the knowledge of one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that you may surpass the ancient kings of your nation in praise and merit, and while you cause the sins of others among your own subjects to be blotted out, become the more free from anxiety with regard to your own sins before the dread judgement of Almighty God.

"Willingly hear, devoutly perform, and studiously retain in your memory, whatsoever counsel shall be given you by our most reverend brother, Bishop Augustine, who is trained up in the monastic rule, full of the knowledge of Holy Scripture, and, by the help of God, endued with good works; for if you give ear to him when he speaks on behalf of Almighty God, the sooner will Almighty God hear his prayers for you. But if (which God forbid!) you slight his words, how shall Almighty God hear him on your behalf, when you neglect to hear him on behalf of God? Unite yourself, there-

fore, to him with all your mind, in the fervour of faith, and further his endeavours, by that virtue which God has given you, that He may make you partaker of His kingdom, Whose faith you cause to be received and maintained in your own. "Besides, we would have your Highness know that, as we find in Holy Scripture from the words of the Almighty Lord, the end of this present world, and the kingdom of the saints, which will never come to an end, is at hand. But as the end of the world draws near, many things are about to come upon us which were not before, to wit, changes in the air, and terrors from heaven, and tempests out of the order of the seasons, wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes in divers places; which things will not, nevertheless, all happen in our days, but will all follow after our days. If, therefore, you perceive that any of these things come to pass in your country, let not your mind be in any way disturbed; for these signs of the end of the world are sent before, for this reason, that we may take heed to our souls, and be watchful for the hour of death, and may be found prepared with good works to meet our Judge. Thus much, my illustrious son, I have said in few words, with intent that when the Christian faith is spread abroad in your kingdom, our discourse to you may also be more copious, and we may desire to say the more, as joy for the full conversion of your nation is increased in our mind.

"I have sent you some small gifts, which will not appear small to you, when received by you with the blessing of the blessed Apostle, Peter. May Almighty God, therefore, perfect in you His grace which He has begun, and prolong your life here through a course of many years, and in the fulness of time receive you into the congregation of the heavenly country. May the grace of God preserve you in safety, my most excellent lord and son. "Given the 22nd day of June, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, in the eighteenth year after his consulship, and the fourth indiction."

CHAPTER 1.33: HOW AUGUSTINE REPAIRED THE CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR, AND BUILT THE MONASTERY OF THE BLESSED PETER THE APOSTLE; AND CONCERNING PETER THE FIRST ABBOT OF THE SAME

Augustine having had his episcopal see granted him in the royal city, as has been said, recovered therein, with the support of the king, a church, which he was informed had been built of old by the faithful among the Romans, and consecrated it in the name of the Holy Saviour, our Divine Lord Jesus Christ, and there established a residence for himself and all his successors. He

also built a monastery not far from the city to the eastward, in which, by his advice, Ethelbert erected from the foundation the church of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, and enriched it with divers gifts; wherein the bodies of the same Augustine, and of all the bishops of Canterbury, and of the kings of Kent, might be buried. Nevertheless, it was not Augustine himself who consecrated that church, but Laurentius, his successor. The first abbot of that monastery was the priest Peter, who, being sent on a mission into Gaul, was drowned in a bay of the sea, which is called Amfleat, and committed to a humble tomb by the inhabitants of the place; but since it was the will of Almighty God to reveal his merits, a light from Heaven was seen over his grave every night; till the neighbouring people who saw it, perceiving that he had been a holy man that was buried there, and inquiring who and whence he was, carried away the body, and interred it in the church, in the city of Boulogne, with the honour due to so great a person.

CHAPTER 1.34: HOW ETHELFRID, KING OF THE NORTHUMBRIANS, HAVING VANQUISHED THE NATIONS OF THE SCOTS, EXPELLED THEM FROM THE TERRITORIES OF THE ENGLISH. (AD 603)

At this time, the brave and ambitious king, Ethelfrid, governed the kingdom of the Northumbrians, and ravaged the Britons more than all the chiefs of the English, insomuch that he might be compared to Saul of old, king of the Israelites, save only in this, that he was ignorant of Divine religion. For he conquered more territories from the Britons than any other chieftain or king, either subduing the inhabitants and making them tributary, or driving them out and planting the English in their places. To him might justly be applied the saying of the patriarch blessing his son in the person of Saul, "Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil." Hereupon, Aedan, king of the Scots that dwell in Britain, being alarmed by his success, came against him with a great and mighty army, but was defeated and fled with a few followers; for almost all his army was cut to pieces at a famous place, called Degsastan, that is, Degsa Stone. In which battle also Theodbald, brother to Ethelfrid, was killed, with almost all the forces he commanded. This war Ethelfrid brought to an end in the year of our Lord 603, the eleventh of his own reign, which lasted twenty-four years, and the first year of the reign of Phocas, who then was at the head of the Roman empire. From that time, no king of the Scots durst come into Britain to make war on the English to this day.

Book II

chapter 2.1: of the death of the blessed pope gregory. (ad 604)

At this time, that is, in the year of our Lord 605, the blessed Pope Gregory, after having most gloriously governed the Roman Apostolic see thirteen years, six months, and ten days, died, and was translated to an eternal abode in the kingdom of Heaven. Of whom, seeing that by his zeal he converted our nation, the English, from the power of Satan to the faith of Christ, it behoves us to discourse more at large in our Ecclesiastical History, for we may rightly, nay, we must, call him our apostle; because, as soon as he began to wield the pontifical power over all the world, and was placed over the Churches long before converted to the true faith, he made our nation, till then enslaved to idols, the Church of Christ, so that concerning him we may use those words of the Apostle; "if he be not an apostle to others, yet doubtless he is to us; for the seal of his apostleship are we in the Lord."

He was by nation a Roman, son of Gordianus, tracing his descent from ancestors that were not only noble, but religious. Moreover Felix, once bishop of the same Apostolic see, a man of great honour in Christ and in the Church, was his forefather. Nor did he show his nobility in religion by less strength of devotion than his parents and kindred. But that nobility of this world which was seen in him, by the help of the Divine Grace, he used only to gain the glory of eternal dignity; for soon quitting his secular habit, he entered a monastery, wherein he began to live with so much grace of perfection that (as he was wont afterwards with tears to testify) his mind was above all transitory things; that he rose superior to all that is subject to change; that he used to think of nothing but what was heavenly; that, whilst detained by the body, he broke through the bonds of the flesh by contemplation; and that he even loved death, which is a penalty to almost all men, as the entrance into life, and the reward of his labours. This he used to say of himself, not to boast of his progress in virtue, but rather to bewail the falling off which he imagined he had sustained through his pastoral charge.

Indeed, once in a private conversation with his deacon, Peter, after having enumerated the former virtues of his soul, he added sorrowfully, "But now, on account of the pastoral charge, it is entangled with the affairs of laymen, and, after so fair an appearance of inward peace, is defiled with the dust

of earthly action. And having wasted itself on outward things, by turning aside to the affairs of many men, even when it desires the inward things, it returns to them undoubtedly impaired. I therefore consider what I endure, I consider what I have lost, and when I behold what I have thrown away, that which I bear appears the more grievous." So spake the holy man constrained by his great humility. But it behoves us to believe that he lost nothing of his monastic perfection by reason of his pastoral charge, but rather that he gained greater profit through the labour of converting many, than by the former calm of his private life, and chiefly because, whilst holding the pontifical office, he set about organizing his house like a monastery. And when first drawn from the monastery, ordained to the ministry of the altar, and sent to Constantinople as representative of the Apostolic see, though he now took part in the secular affairs of the palace, yet he did not abandon the fixed course of his heavenly life; for some of the brethren of his monastery, who had followed him to the royal city in their brotherly love, he employed for the better observance of monastic rule, to the end that at all times, by their example, as he writes himself, he might be held fast to the calm shore of prayer, as it were, with the cable of an anchor, whilst he should be tossed up and down by the ceaseless waves of worldly affairs; and daily in the intercourse of studious reading with them, strengthen his mind shaken with temporal concerns. By their company he was not only guarded against the assaults of the world, but more and more roused to the exercises of a heavenly life.

For they persuaded him to interpret by a mystical exposition the book of the blessed Job, which is involved in great obscurity; nor could he refuse to undertake that work, which brotherly affection imposed on him for the future benefit of many; but in a wonderful manner, in five and thirty books of exposition, he taught how that same book is to be understood literally; how to be referred to the mysteries of Christ and the Church; and in what sense it is to be adapted to every one of the faithful. This work he began as papal representative in the royal city, but finished it at Rome after being made pope. Whilst he was still in the royal city, by the help of the grace of Catholic truth, he crushed in its first rise a new heresy which sprang up there, concerning the state of our resurrection. For Eutychius, bishop of that city, taught, that our body, in the glory of resurrection, would be impalpable, and more subtile than wind and air. The blessed Gregory hearing this, proved by

force of truth, and by the instance of the Resurrection of our Lord, that this doctrine was every way opposed to the orthodox faith. For the Catholic faith holds that our body, raised by the glory of immortality, is indeed rendered subtile by the effect of spiritual power, but is palpable by the reality of nature; according to the example of our Lord's Body, concerning which, when risen from the dead, He Himself says to His disciples, "Handle Me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have." In maintaining this faith, the venerable Father Gregory so earnestly strove against the rising heresy, and with the help of the most pious emperor, Tiberius Constantine, so fully suppressed it, that none has been since found to revive it.

He likewise composed another notable book, the "Liber Pastoralis," wherein he clearly showed what sort of persons ought to be preferred to rule the Church; how such rulers ought to live; with how much discrimination they ought to instruct the different classes of their hearers, and how seriously to reflect every day on their own frailty. He also wrote forty homilies on the Gospel, which he divided equally into two volumes; and composed four books of Dialogues, in which, at the request of his deacon, Peter, he recounted the virtues of the more renowned saints of Italy, whom he had either known or heard of, as a pattern of life for posterity; to the end that, as he taught in his books of Expositions what virtues men ought to strive after, so by describing the miracles of saints, he might make known the glory of those virtues. Further, in twenty-two homilies, he showed how much light is latent in the first and last parts of the prophet Ezekiel, which seemed the most obscure. Besides which, he wrote the "Book of Answers," to the questions of the holy Augustine, the first bishop of the English nation, as we have shown above, inserting the same book entire in this history; and the useful little "Synodical Book," which he composed with the bishops of Italy on necessary matters of the Church; as well as private letters to certain persons. And it is the more wonderful that he could write so many lengthy works, seeing that almost all the time of his youth, to use his own words, he was frequently tormented with internal pain, constantly enfeebled by the weakness of his digestion, and oppressed by a low but persistent fever. But in all these troubles, forasmuch as he carefully reflected that, as the Scripture testifies, "He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth," the more severely he suffered under those present evils, the more he assured himself of his eternal hope.

Thus much may be said of his immortal genius, which could not be crushed by such severe bodily pains. Other popes applied themselves to building churches or adorning them with gold and silver, but Gregory was wholly intent upon gaining souls. Whatsoever money he had, he took care to distribute diligently and give to the poor, that his righteousness might endure for ever, and his horn be exalted with honour; so that the words of the blessed Job might be truly said of him, "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my judgement was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor; and the cause which I knew not, I searched out. And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth." And a little after: "If I have withheld," says he, "the poor from their desire; or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof: (for from my youth compassion grew up with me, and from my mother's womb it came forth with me.")

To his works of piety and righteousness this also may be added, that he saved our nation, by the preachers he sent hither, from the teeth of the old enemy, and made it partaker of eternal liberty. Rejoicing in the faith and salvation of our race, and worthily commending it with praise, he says, in his exposition of the blessed Job, "Behold, the tongue of Britain, which only knew how to utter barbarous cries, has long since begun to raise the Hebrew Hallelujah to the praise of God! Behold, the once swelling ocean now serves prostrate at the feet of the saints; and its wild upheavals, which earthly princes could not subdue with the sword, are now, through the fear of God, bound by the lips of priests with words alone; and the heathen that stood not in awe of troops of warriors, now believes and fears the tongues of the humble! For he has received a message from on high and mighty works are revealed; the strength of the knowledge of God is given him, and restrained by the fear of the Lord, he dreads to do evil, and with all his heart desires to attain to everlasting grace." In which words the blessed Gregory shows us this also, that St. Augustine and his companions brought the English to re-

ceive the truth, not only by the preaching of words, but also by showing forth heavenly signs.

The blessed Pope Gregory, among other things, caused Masses to be celebrated in the churches of the holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, over their bodies. And in the celebration of Masses, he added three petitions of the utmost perfection: "And dispose our days in thy peace, and bid us to be preserved from eternal damnation, and to be numbered in the flock of thine elect." He governed the Church in the days of the Emperors Mauritius and Phocas, and passing out of this life in the second year of the same Phocas, he departed to the true life which is in Heaven. His body was buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter before the sacristy, on the 12th day of March, to rise one day in the same body in glory with the rest of the holy pastors of the Church. On his tomb was written this epitaph:

Receive, O Earth, his body taken from thine own; thou canst restore it, when God calls to life. His spirit rises to the stars; the claims of death shall not avail against him, for death itself is but the way to new life. In this tomb are laid the limbs of a great pontiff, who yet lives for ever in all places in countless deeds of mercy. Hunger and cold he overcame with food and raiment, and shielded souls from the enemy by his holy teaching. And whatsoever he taught in word, that he fulfilled in deed, that he might be a pattern, even as he spake words of mystic meaning. By his guiding love he brought the Angles to Christ, gaining armies for the Faith from a new people. This was thy toil, thy task, thy care, thy aim as shepherd, to offer to thy Lord abundant increase of the flock. So, Consul of God, rejoice in this thy triumph, for now thou hast the reward of thy works for evermore.

Nor must we pass by in silence the story of the blessed Gregory, handed down to us by the tradition of our ancestors, which explains his earnest care for the salvation of our nation. It is said that one day, when some merchants had lately arrived at Rome, many things were exposed for sale in the market place, and much people resorted thither to buy: Gregory himself went with the rest, and saw among other wares some boys put up for sale, of fair complexion, with pleasing countenances, and very beautiful hair. When he beheld them, he asked, it is said, from what region or country they were brought? and was told, from the island of Britain, and that the inhabitants were like that in appearance. He again inquired whether those islanders were Christians, or still involved in the errors of paganism, and was informed that

they were pagans. Then fetching a deep sigh from the bottom of his heart, "Alas! what pity," said he, "that the author of darkness should own men of such fair countenances; and that with such grace of outward form, their minds should be void of inward grace." He therefore again asked, what was the name of that nation? and was answered, that they were called Angles. "Right," said he, "for they have an angelic face, and it is meet that such should be co-heirs with the Angels in heaven. What is the name of the province from which they are brought?" It was replied, that the natives of that province were called Deiri. "Truly are they De ira," said he, "saved from wrath, and called to the mercy of Christ. How is the king of that province called?" They told him his name was Aelli; and he, playing upon the name, said, "Allelujah, the praise of God the Creator must be sung in those parts."

Then he went to the bishop of the Roman Apostolic see (for he was not himself then made pope), and entreated him to send some ministers of the Word into Britain to the nation of the English, that it might be converted to Christ by them; declaring himself ready to carry out that work with the help of God, if the Apostolic Pope should think fit to have it done. But not being then able to perform this task, because, though the Pope was willing to grant his request, yet the citizens of Rome could not be brought to consent that he should depart so far from the city, as soon as he was himself made Pope, he carried out the long-desired work, sending, indeed, other preachers, but himself by his exhortations and prayers helping the preaching to bear fruit. This account, which we have received from a past generation, we have thought fit to insert in our Ecclesiastical History.

CHAPTER 2.2: HOW AUGUSTINE ADMONISHED THE BISHOPS OF THE BRITONS ON BEHALF OF CATHOLIC PEACE, AND TO THAT END WROUGHT A HEAVENLY MIRACLE IN THEIR PRESENCE; AND OF THE VENGEANCE THAT PURSUED THEM FOR THEIR CONTEMPT. [CIRC. 603 A.D.]

In the meantime, Augustine, with the help of King Ethelbert, drew together to a conference the bishops and doctors of the nearest province of the Britons, at a place which is to this day called, in the English language, Augustine's Ác, that is, Augustine's Oak, on the borders of the Hwiccas and West Saxons; and began by brotherly admonitions to persuade them to preserve Catholic peace with him, and undertake the common labour of preaching the Gospel to the heathen for the Lord's sake. For they did not keep Easter Sunday at the proper time, but from the fourteenth to the twen-

tieth moon; which computation is contained in a cycle of eighty-four years. Besides, they did many other things which were opposed to the unity of the church. When, after a long disputation, they did not comply with the entreaties, exhortations, or rebukes of Augustine and his companions, but preferred their own traditions before all the Churches which are united in Christ throughout the world, the holy father, Augustine, put an end to this troublesome and tedious contention, saying, "Let us entreat God, who maketh men to be of one mind in His Father's house, to vouchsafe, by signs from Heaven, to declare to us which tradition is to be followed; and by what path we are to strive to enter His kingdom. Let some sick man be brought, and let the faith and practice of him, by whose prayers he shall be healed, be looked upon as hallowed in God's sight and such as should be adopted by all.

His adversaries unwillingly consenting, a blind man of the English race was brought, who having been presented to the British bishops, found no benefit or healing from their ministry; at length, Augustine, compelled by strict necessity, bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying that He would restore his lost sight to the blind man, and by the bodily enlightenment of one kindle the grace of spiritual light in the hearts of many of the faithful. Immediately the blind man received sight, and Augustine was proclaimed by all to be a true herald of the light from Heaven. The Britons then confessed that they perceived that it was the true way of righteousness which Augustine taught; but that they could not depart from their ancient customs without the consent and sanction of their people. They therefore desired that a second time a synod might be appointed, at which more of their number should be present.

This being decreed, there came, it is said, seven bishops of the Britons, and many men of great learning, particularly from their most celebrated monastery, which is called, in the English tongue, Bancornaburg, and over which the Abbot Dinoot is said to have presided at that time. They that were to go to the aforesaid council, betook themselves first to a certain holy and discreet man, who was wont to lead the life of a hermit among them, to consult with him, whether they ought, at the preaching of Augustine, to forsake their traditions. He answered, "If he is a man of God, follow him."—"How shall we know that?" said they. He replied, "Our Lord saith, Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; if therefore, Augustine is meek and lowly of heart, it is to be believed that he

bears the yoke of Christ himself, and offers it to you to bear. But, if he is harsh and proud, it is plain that he is not of God, nor are we to regard his words." They said again, "And how shall we discern even this?"—"Do you contrive," said the anchorite, "that he first arrive with his company at the place where the synod is to be held; and if at your approach he rises up to you, hear him submissively, being assured that he is the servant of Christ; but if he despises you, and does not rise up to you, whereas you are more in number, let him also be despised by you."

They did as he directed; and it happened, that as they approached, Augustine was sitting on a chair. When they perceived it, they were angry, and charging him with pride, set themselves to contradict all he said. He said to them, "Many things ye do which are contrary to our custom, or rather the custom of the universal Church, and yet, if you will comply with me in these three matters, to wit, to keep Easter at the due time; to fulfil the ministry of Baptism, by which we are born again to God, according to the custom of the holy Roman Apostolic Church; and to join with us in preaching the Word of God to the English nation, we will gladly suffer all the other things you do, though contrary to our customs." They answered that they would do none of those things, nor receive him as their archbishop; for they said among themselves, "if he would not rise up to us now, how much more will he despise us, as of no account, if we begin to be under his subjection?" Then the man of God, Augustine, is said to have threatened them, that if they would not accept peace with their brethren, they should have war from their enemies; and, if they would not preach the way of life to the English nation, they should suffer at their hands the vengeance of death. All which, through the dispensation of the Divine judgement, fell out exactly as he had predicted.

For afterwards the warlike king of the English, Ethelfrid, of whom we have spoken, having raised a mighty army, made a very great slaughter of that heretical nation, at the city of Legions, which by the English is called Legacaestir, but by the Britons more rightly Carlegion. Being about to give battle, he observed their priests, who were come together to offer up their prayers to God for the combatants, standing apart in a place of greater safety; he inquired who they were, and what they came together to do in that place. Most of them were of the monastery of Bangor, in which, it is said, there was so great a number of monks, that the monastery being divided into seven

parts, with a superior set over each, none of those parts contained less than three hundred men, who all lived by the labour of their hands. Many of these, having observed a fast of three days, had come together along with others to pray at the aforesaid battle, having one Brocmail for their protector, to defend them, whilst they were intent upon their prayers, against the swords of the barbarians. King Ethelfrid being informed of the occasion of their coming, said, "If then they cry to their God against us, in truth, though they do not bear arms, yet they fight against us, because they assail us with their curses. He, therefore, commanded them to be attacked first, and then destroyed the rest of the impious army, not without great loss of his own forces.

About twelve hundred of those that came to pray are said to have been killed, and only fifty to have escaped by flight. Brocmail, turning his back with his men, at the first approach of the enemy, left those whom he ought to have defended unarmed and exposed to the swords of the assailants. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy of the holy Bishop Augustine, though he himself had been long before taken up into the heavenly kingdom, that the heretics should feel the vengeance of temporal death also, because they had despised the offer of eternal salvation.

CHAPTER 2.3: HOW ST. AUGUSTINE MADE MELLITUS AND JUSTUS BISHOPS; AND OF HIS DEATH. (AD 604)

In the year of our Lord 604, Augustine, Archbishop of Britain, ordained two bishops, to wit, Mellitus and Justus; Mellitus to preach to the province of the East-Saxons, who are divided from Kent by the river Thames, and border on the Eastern sea. Their metropolis is the city of London, which is situated on the bank of the aforesaid river, and is the mart of many nations resorting to it by sea and land. At that time, Sabert, nephew to Ethelbert through his sister Ricula, reigned over the nation, though he was under subjection to Ethelbert, who, as has been said above, had command over all the nations of the English as far as the river Humber. But when this province also received the word of truth, by the preaching of Mellitus, King Ethelbert built the church of St. Paul the Apostle, in the city of London, where he and his successors should have their episcopal see. As for Justus, Augustine ordained him bishop in Kent, at the city of Dorubrevis, which the English call Hrofaescaestrae, from one that was formerly the chief man of it, called Hrof. It is about twenty-four miles distant from the city of Canterbury to the westward, and

in it King Ethelbert dedicated a church to the blessed Apostle Andrew, and bestowed many gifts on the bishops of both those churches, as well as on the Bishop of Canterbury, adding lands and possessions for the use of those who were associated with the bishops.

After this, the beloved of God, our father Augustine, died, and his body was laid outside, close by the church of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, above spoken of, because it was not yet finished, nor consecrated, but as soon as it was consecrated, the body was brought in, and fittingly buried in the north chapel thereof; wherein also were interred the bodies of all the succeeding archbishops, except two only, Theodore and Bertwald, whose bodies are in the church itself, because the aforesaid chapel could contain no more. Almost in the midst of this chapel is an altar dedicated in honour of the blessed Pope Gregory, at which every Saturday memorial Masses are celebrated for the archbishops by a priest of that place. On the tomb of Augustine is inscribed this epitaph: "Here rests the Lord Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, who, being of old sent hither by the blessed Gregory, Bishop of the city of Rome, and supported by God in the working of miracles, led King Ethelbert and his nation from the worship of idols to the faith of Christ, and having ended the days of his office in peace, died the 26th day of May, in the reign of the same king."

CHAPTER 2.4: HOW LAURENTIUS AND HIS BISHOPS ADMONISHED THE SCOTS TO OBSERVE THE UNITY OF THE HOLY CHURCH, PARTICULARLY IN KEEPING OF EASTER; AND HOW MELLITUS WENT TO ROME

Laurentius succeeded Augustine in the bishopric, having been ordained thereto by the latter, in his lifetime, lest, upon his death, the Church, as yet in so unsettled a state, might begin to falter, if it should be destitute of a pastor, though but for one hour. Wherein he also followed the example of the first pastor of the Church, that is, of the most blessed Peter, chief of the Apostles, who, having founded the Church of Christ at Rome, is said to have consecrated Clement to help him in preaching the Gospel, and at the same time to be his successor. Laurentius, being advanced to the rank of archbishop, laboured indefatigably, both by frequent words of holy exhortation and constant example of good works to strengthen the foundations of the Church, which had been so nobly laid, and to carry it on to the fitting height of perfection. In short, he not only took charge of the new Church formed among the English, but endeavoured also to bestow his pastoral care

upon the tribes of the ancient inhabitants of Britain, as also of the Scots, who inhabit the island of Ireland, which is next to Britain. For when he understood that the life and profession of the Scots in their aforesaid country, as well as of the Britons in Britain, was not truly in accordance with the practice of the Church in many matters, especially that they did not celebrate the festival of Easter at the due time, but thought that the day of the Resurrection of our Lord ought, as has been said above, to be observed between the 14th and 20th of the moon; he wrote, jointly with his fellow bishops, a hortatory epistle, entreating and conjuring them to keep the unity of peace and Catholic observance with the Church of Christ spread throughout the world. The beginning of which epistle is as follows:

"To our most dear brethren, the Lords Bishops and Abbots throughout all the country of the Scots, Laurentius, Mellitus, and Justus, Bishops, servants of the servants of God. When the Apostolic see, according to the universal custom which it has followed elsewhere, sent us to these western parts to preach to pagan nations, and it was our lot to come into this island, which is called Britain, before we knew them, we held both the Britons and Scots in great esteem for sanctity, believing that they walked according to the custom of the universal Church; but becoming acquainted with the Britons, we thought that the Scots had been better. Now we have learnt from Bishop Dagan, who came into this aforesaid island, and the Abbot Columban, in Gaul, that the Scots in no way differ from the Britons in their walk; for when Bishop Dagan came to us, not only did he refuse to eat at the same table, but even to eat in the same house where we were entertained."

Also Laurentius with his fellow bishops wrote a letter to the bishops of the Britons, suitable to his degree, by which he endeavoured to confirm them in Catholic unity; but what he gained by so doing the present times still show. About this time, Mellitus, bishop of London, went to Rome, to confer with the Apostolic Pope Boniface about the necessary affairs of the English Church. And the same most reverend pope, assembling a synod of the bishops of Italy, to prescribe rules for the life and peace of the monks, Mellitus also sat among them, in the eighth year of the reign of the Emperor Phocas, the thirteenth indiction, on the 27th of February, to the end that he also might sign and confirm by his authority whatsoever should be regularly decreed, and on his return into Britain might carry the decrees to the Churches of the English, to be committed to them and observed; together

with letters which the same pope sent to the beloved of God, Archbishop Laurentius, and to all the clergy; as likewise to King Ethelbert and the English nation. This pope was Boniface, the fourth after the blessed Gregory, bishop of the city of Rome. He obtained for the Church of Christ from the Emperor Phocas the gift of the temple at Rome called by the ancients Pantheon, as representing all the gods; wherein he, having purified it from all defilement, dedicated a church to the holy Mother of God, and to all Christ's martyrs, to the end that, the company of devils being expelled, the blessed company of the saints might have therein a perpetual memorial.

CHAPTER 2.5: HOW, AFTER THE DEATH OF THE KINGS ETHELBERT AND SABERT, THEIR SUCCESSORS RESTORED IDOLATRY; FOR WHICH REASON, BOTH MELLITUS AND JUSTUS DEPARTED OUT OF BRITAIN. (AD 616)

In the year of our Lord 616, which is the twenty-first year after Augustine and his company were sent to preach to the English nation, Ethelbert, king of Kent, having most gloriously governed his temporal kingdom fifty-six years, entered into the eternal joys of the kingdom of Heaven. He was the third of the English kings who ruled over all the southern provinces that are divided from the northern by the river Humber and the borders contiguous to it; but the first of all that ascended to the heavenly kingdom. The first who had the like sovereignty was Aelli, king of the South-Saxons; the second, Caelin, king of the West-Saxons, who, in their own language, is called Ceaulin; the third, as has been said, was Ethelbert, king of Kent; the fourth was Redwald, king of the East-Angles, who, even in the life-time of Ethelbert, had been acquiring the leadership for his own race. The fifth was Edwin, king of the Northumbrian nation, that is, of those who live in the district to the north of the river Humber; his power was greater; he had the overlordship over all the nations who inhabit Britain, both English and British, except only the people of Kent; and he reduced also under the dominion of the English, the Mevanian Islands of the Britons, lying between Ireland and Britain; the sixth was Oswald, the most Christian king of the Northumbrians, whose kingdom was within the same bounds; the seventh, his brother Oswy, ruled over a kingdom of like extent for a time, and for the most part subdued and made tributary the nations of the Picts and Scots, who occupy the northern parts of Britain: but of that hereafter.

King Ethelbert died on the 24th day of the month of February, twenty-one years after he had received the faith, and was buried in St. Martin's chapel within the church of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, where also lies his queen, Bertha. Among other benefits which he conferred upon his nation in his care for them, he established, with the help of his council of wise men, judicial decisions, after the Roman model; which are written in the language of the English, and are still kept and observed by them. Among which, he set down first what satisfaction should be given by any one who should steal anything belonging to the Church, the bishop, or the other clergy, for he was resolved to give protection to those whom he had received along with their doctrine. This Ethelbert was the son of Irminric, whose father was Octa, whose father was Oeric, surnamed Oisc, from whom the kings of Kent are wont to be called Oiscings. His father was Hengist, who, being invited by Vortigern, first came into Britain, with his son Oisc, as has been said above.

But after the death of Ethelbert, the accession of his son Eadbald proved very harmful to the still tender growth of the new Church; for he not only refused to accept the faith of Christ, but was also defiled with such fornication, as the Apostle testifies, as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. By both which crimes he gave occasion to those to return to their former uncleanness, who, under his father, had, either for favour or fear of the king, submitted to the laws of the faith and of a pure life. Nor did the unbelieving king escape without the scourge of Divine severity in chastisement and correction; for he was troubled with frequent fits of madness, and possessed by an unclean spirit. The storm of this disturbance was increased by the death of Sabert, king of the East Saxons, who departing to the heavenly kingdom, left three sons, still pagans, to inherit his temporal crown. They immediately began openly to give themselves up to idolatry, which, during their father's lifetime, they had seemed somewhat to abandon, and they granted free licence to their subjects to serve idols.

And when they saw the bishop, whilst celebrating Mass in the church, give the Eucharist to the people, filled, as they were, with folly and ignorance, they said to him, as is commonly reported, "Why do you not give us also that white bread, which you used to give to our father Saba (for so they were wont to call him), and which you still continue to give to the people in

the church? To whom he answered, "If you will be washed in that font of salvation, in which your father was washed, you may also partake of the holy Bread of which he partook; but if you despise the laver of life, you can in no wise receive the Bread of life. They replied, "We will not enter into that font, because we know that we do not stand in need of it, and yet we will be refreshed by that bread. And being often earnestly admonished by him, that this could by no means be done, nor would any one be admitted to partake of the sacred Oblation without the holy cleansing, at last, they said, filled with rage, "If you will not comply with us in so small a matter as that which we require, you shall not stay in our province. And they drove him out and bade him and his company depart from their kingdom. Being driven thence, he came into Kent, to take counsel with his fellow bishops, Laurentius and Justus, and learn what was to be done in that case;

and with one consent they determined that it was better for them all to return to their own country, where they might serve God in freedom of mind, than to continue to no purpose among barbarians, who had revolted from the faith. Mellitus and Justus accordingly went away first, and withdrew into the parts of Gaul, intending there to await the event. But the kings, who had driven from them the herald of the truth, did not continue long unpunished in their worship of devils. For marching out to battle against the nation of the Gewissi, they were all slain with their army. Nevertheless, the people, having been once turned to wickedness, though the authors of it were destroyed, would not be corrected, nor return to the unity of faith and charity which is in Christ.

CHAPTER 2.6: HOW LAURENTIUS, BEING REPROVED BY THE APOSTLE PETER, CONVERTED KING EADBALD TO CHRIST; AND HOW THE KING SOON RECALLED MELLITUS AND JUSTUS TO PREACH THE WORD. (AD 617–618)

Laurentius, being about to follow Mellitus and Justus, and to quit Britain, ordered his bed to be laid that night in the church of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, which has been often mentioned before; wherein having laid himself to rest, after he had with tears poured forth many prayers to God for the state of the Church, he fell asleep; in the dead of night, the blessed chief of the Apostles appeared to him, and scourging him grievously a long time, asked of him with apostolic severity, why he was forsaking the flock which he had committed to him? or to what shepherd he was leaving, by his flight,

Christ's sheep that were in the midst of wolves? "Hast thou," he said, "forgotten my example, who, for the sake of those little ones, whom Christ commended to me in token of His affection, underwent at the hands of infidels and enemies of Christ, bonds, stripes, imprisonment, afflictions, and lastly, death itself, even the death of the cross, that I might at last be crowned with Him?" Laurentius, the servant of Christ, roused by the scourging of the blessed Peter and his words of exhortation, went to the king as soon as morning broke, and laying aside his garment, showed the scars of the stripes which he had received. The king, astonished, asked who had presumed to inflict such stripes on so great a man. And when he heard that for the sake of his salvation the bishop had suffered these cruel blows at the hands of the Apostle of Christ, he was greatly afraid; and abjuring the worship of idols, and renouncing his unlawful marriage, he received the faith of Christ, and being baptized, promoted and supported the interests of the Church to the utmost of his power.

He also sent over into Gaul, and recalled Mellitus and Justus, and bade them return to govern their churches in freedom. They came back one year after their departure, and Justus returned to the city of Rochester, where he had before presided; but the people of London would not receive Bishop Mellitus, choosing rather to be under their idolatrous high priests; for King Eadbald had not so much authority in the kingdom as his father, and was not able to restore the bishop to his church against the will and consent of the pagans. But he and his nation, after his conversion to the Lord, sought to obey the commandments of God. Lastly, he built the church of the holy Mother of God, in the monastery of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, which was afterwards consecrated by Archbishop Mellitus.

CHAPTER 2.7: HOW BISHOP MELLITUS BY PRAYER QUENCHED A FIRE IN HIS CITY. (AD 619)

In this king's reign, the blessed Archbishop Laurentius was taken up to the heavenly kingdom: he was buried in the church and monastery of the holy Apostle Peter, close by his predecessor Augustine, on the 2nd day of the month of February. Mellitus, who was bishop of London, succeeded to the see of Canterbury, being the third archbishop from Augustine; Justus, who was still living, governed the church of Rochester. These ruled the Church of the English with much care and industry, and received letters of exhortation from Boniface, bishop of the Roman Apostolic see, who presided over the

Church after Deusdedit, in the year of our Lord 619. Mellitus laboured under the bodily infirmity of gout, but his mind was sound and active, cheerfully passing over all earthly things, and always aspiring to love, seek, and attain to those which are celestial. He was noble by birth, but still nobler by the elevation of his mind.

In short, that I may give one instance of his power, from which the rest may be inferred, it happened once that the city of Canterbury, being set on fire through carelessness, was in danger of being consumed by the spreading conflagration; water was thrown on the fire in vain; a considerable part of the city was already destroyed, and the fierce flames were advancing towards the bishop's abode, when he, trusting in God, where human help failed, ordered himself to be carried towards the raging masses of fire which were spreading on every side. The church of the four crowned Martyrs was in the place where the fire raged most fiercely. The bishop, being carried thither by his servants, weak as he was, set about averting by prayer the danger which the strong hands of active men had not been able to overcome with all their exertions. Immediately the wind, which blowing from the south had spread the conflagration throughout the city, veered to the north, and thus prevented the destruction of those places that had been exposed to its full violence, then it ceased entirely and there was a calm, while the flames likewise sank and were extinguished. And because the man of God burned with the fire of divine love, and was wont to drive away the storms of the powers of the air, by his frequent prayers and at his bidding, from doing harm to himself, or his people, it was meet that he should be allowed to prevail over the winds and flames of this world, and to obtain that they should not injure him or his.

This archbishop also, having ruled the church five years, departed to heaven in the reign of King Eadbald, and was buried with his fathers in the monastery and church, which we have so often mentioned, of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, in the year of our Lord 624, on the 24th day of April.

CHAPTER 2.8: HOW POPE BONIFACE SENT THE PALL AND A LETTER TO JUSTUS, SUCCESSOR TO MELLITUS. (AD 624)

Justus, bishop of the church of Rochester, immediately succeeded Mellitus in the archbishopric. He consecrated Romanus bishop of that see in his own stead, having obtained authority to ordain bishops from Pope Boniface,

whom we mentioned above as successor to Deusdedit: of which licence this is the form: "Boniface, to his most beloved brother Justus. We have learnt not only from the contents of your letter addressed to us, but from the fulfilment granted to your work, how faithfully and vigilantly you have laboured, my brother, for the Gospel of Christ; for Almighty God has not forsaken either the mystery of His Name, or the fruit of your labours, having Himself faithfully promised to the preachers of the Gospel, 'Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world'; which promise His mercy has particularly manifested in this ministry imposed upon you, opening the hearts of the nations to receive the wondrous mystery of your preaching. For He has blessed with a rich reward your Eminence's acceptable course, by the support of His loving kindness; granting a plentiful increase to your labours in the faithful management of the talents committed to you, and bestowing it on that which you might confirm to many generations. This is conferred on you by that recompense whereby, constantly persevering in the ministry imposed upon you, you have awaited with praiseworthy patience the redemption of that nation, and that they might profit by your merits, salvation has been bestowed on them. For our Lord Himself says, 'He that endureth to the end shall be saved. You are, therefore, saved by the hope of patience, and the virtue of endurance, to the end that the hearts of unbelievers, being cleansed from their natural disease of superstition, might obtain the mercy of their Saviour:

for having received letters from our son Adulwald, we perceive with how much knowledge of the Sacred Word you, my brother, have brought his mind to the belief in true conversion and the certainty of the faith. Therefore, firmly confiding in the long-suffering of the Divine clemency, we believe that, through the ministry of your preaching, there will ensue most full salvation not only of the nations subject to him, but also of their neighbours; to the end, that as it is written, the recompense of a perfect work may be conferred on you by the Lord, the Rewarder of all the just; and that the universal confession of all nations, having received the mystery of the Christian faith, may declare, that in truth 'Their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.' "We have also, my brother, moved by the warmth of our goodwill, sent you by the bearer of these presents, the pall, giving you authority to use it only in the celebration of the Sacred Mysteries; granting to you likewise to ordain bishops when there shall

be occasion, through the Lord's mercy; that so the Gospel of Christ, by the preaching of many, may be spread abroad in all the nations that are not yet converted. You must, therefore, endeavour, my brother, to preserve with unblemished sincerity of mind that which you have received through the kindness of the Apostolic see, bearing in mind what it is that is represented by the honourable vestment which you have obtained to be borne on your shoulders. And imploring the Divine mercy, study to show yourself such that you may present before the tribunal of the Supreme Judge that is to come, the rewards of the favour granted to you, not with guiltiness, but with the benefit of souls.

"God preserve you in safety, most dear brother!"

CHAPTER 2.9: OF THE REIGN OF KING EDWIN, AND HOW PAULINUS, COMING TO PREACH THE GOSPEL, FIRST CONVERTED HIS DAUGHTER AND OTHERS TO THE MYSTERIES OF THE FAITH OF CHRIST. (AD 625–626)

At this time the nation of the Northumbrians, that is, the English tribe dwelling on the north side of the river Humber, with their king, Edwin, received the Word of faith through the preaching of Paulinus, of whom we have before spoken. This king, as an earnest of his reception of the faith, and his share in the heavenly kingdom, received an increase also of his temporal realm, for he reduced under his dominion all the parts of Britain that were provinces either of the English, or of the Britons, a thing which no English king had ever done before; and he even subjected to the English the Mevanian islands, as has been said above. The more important of these, which is to the southward, is the larger in extent, and more fruitful, containing nine hundred and sixty families, according to the English computation; the other contains above three hundred.

The occasion of this nation's reception of the faith was the alliance by marriage of their aforesaid king with the kings of Kent, for he had taken to wife Ethelberg, otherwise called Tata, daughter to King Ethelbert. When he first sent ambassadors to ask her in marriage of her brother Eadbald, who then reigned in Kent, he received the answer, "That it was not lawful to give a Christian maiden in marriage to a pagan husband, lest the faith and the mysteries of the heavenly King should be profaned by her union with a king that was altogether a stranger to the worship of the true God." This answer being brought to Edwin by his messengers, he promised that he would in no

manner act in opposition to the Christian faith, which the maiden professed; but would give leave to her, and all that went with her, men and women, bishops and clergy, to follow their faith and worship after the custom of the Christians. Nor did he refuse to accept that religion himself, if, being examined by wise men, it should be found more holy and more worthy of God.

So the maiden was promised, and sent to Edwin, and in accordance with the agreement, Paulinus, a man beloved of God, was ordained bishop, to go with her, and by daily exhortations, and celebrating the heavenly Mysteries, to confirm her and her company, lest they should be corrupted by intercourse with the pagans. Paulinus was ordained bishop by the Archbishop Justus, on the 21st day of July, in the year of our Lord 625, and so came to King Edwin with the aforesaid maiden as an attendant on their union in the flesh. But his mind was wholly bent upon calling the nation to which he was sent to the knowledge of truth; according to the words of the Apostle, "To espouse her to the one true Husband, that he might present her as a chaste virgin to Christ." Being come into that province, he laboured much, not only to retain those that went with him, by the help of God, that they should not abandon the faith, but, if haply he might, to convert some of the pagans to the grace of the faith by his preaching. But, as the Apostle says, though he laboured long in the Word, "The god of this world blinded the minds of them that believed not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them."

The next year there came into the province one called Eumer, sent by the king of the West-Saxons, whose name was Cuichelm, to lie in wait for King Edwin, in hopes at once to deprive him of his kingdom and his life. He had a two-edged dagger, dipped in poison, to the end that, if the wound inflicted by the weapon did not avail to kill the king, it might be aided by the deadly venom. He came to the king on the first day of the Easter festival, at the river Derwent, where there was then a royal township, and being admitted as if to deliver a message from his master, whilst unfolding in cunning words his pretended embassy, he started up on a sudden, and unsheathing the dagger under his garment, assaulted the king. When Lilla, the king's most devoted servant, saw this, having no buckler at hand to protect the king from death, he at once interposed his own body to receive the blow; but the enemy struck home with such force, that he wounded the king through the body of

the slaughtered thegn. Being then attacked on all sides with swords, in the confusion he also slew impiously with his dagger another of the thegns, whose name was Forthhere.

On that same holy Easter night, the queen had brought forth to the king a daughter, called Eanfled. The king, in the presence of Bishop Paulinus, gave thanks to his gods for the birth of his daughter; and the bishop, on his part, began to give thanks to Christ, and to tell the king, that by his prayers to Him he had obtained that the queen should bring forth the child in safety, and without grievous pain. The king, delighted with his words, promised, that if God would grant him life and victory over the king by whom the murderer who had wounded him had been sent, he would renounce his idols, and serve Christ; and as a pledge that he would perform his promise, he delivered up that same daughter to Bishop Paulinus, to be consecrated to Christ. She was the first to be baptized of the nation of the Northumbrians, and she received Baptism on the holy day of Pentecost, along with eleven others of her house. At that time, the king, being recovered of the wound which he had received, raised an army and marched against the nation of the West-Saxons; and engaging in war, either slew or received in surrender all those of whom he learned that they had conspired to murder him. So he returned victorious into his own country, but he would not immediately and unadvisedly embrace the mysteries of the Christian faith, though he no longer worshipped idols, ever since he made the promise that he would serve Christ;

but first took heed earnestly to be instructed at leisure by the venerable Paulinus, in the knowledge of faith, and to confer with such as he knew to be the wisest of his chief men, inquiring what they thought was fittest to be done in that case. And being a man of great natural sagacity, he often sat alone by himself a long time in silence, deliberating in the depths of his heart how he should proceed, and to which religion he should adhere.

CHAPTER 2.10: HOW POPE BONIFACE, BY LETTER, EXHORTED THE SAME KING TO EMBRACE THE FAITH. [CIRC. 625 A.D.]

At this time he received a letter from Pope Boniface exhorting him to embrace the faith, which was as follows: COPY OF THE LETTER OF THE MOST BLESSED AND APOSTOLIC POPE OF THE CHURCH OF THE CITY OF ROME, BONIFACE, ADDRESSED TO THE ILLUSTRIOUS EDWIN, KING OF THE ENGLISH. "To the illustrious Edwin, king of the

English, Bishop Boniface, the servant of the servants of God. Although the power of the Supreme Deity cannot be expressed by the function of human speech, seeing that, by its own greatness, it so consists in invisible and unsearchable eternity, that no keenness of wit can comprehend or express how great it is; yet inasmuch as His Humanity, having opened the doors of the heart to receive Himself, mercifully, by secret inspiration, puts into the minds of men such things as It reveals concerning Itself, we have thought fit to extend our episcopal care so far as to make known to you the fulness of the Christian faith; to the end that, bringing to your knowledge the Gospel of Christ, which our Saviour commanded should be preached to all nations, we might offer to you the cup of the means of salvation.

"Thus the goodness of the Supreme Majesty, which, by the word alone of His command, made and created all things, the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, disposing the order by which they should subsist, hath, ordaining all things, with the counsel of His co-eternal Word, and the unity of the Holy Spirit, made man after His own image and likeness, forming him out of the mire of the earth; and granted him such high privilege of distinction, as to place him above all else; so that, preserving the bounds of the law of his being, his substance should be established to eternity. This God,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the undivided Trinity,—from the east unto the west, through faith by confession to the saving of their souls, men worship and adore as the Creator of all things, and their own Maker; to Whom also the heights of empire and the powers of the world are subject, because the pre-eminence of all kingdoms is granted by His disposition. It hath pleased Him, therefore, in the mercy of His loving kindness, and for the greater benefit of all His creatures, by the fire of His Holy Spirit wonderfully to kindle the cold hearts even of the nations seated at the extremities of the earth in the knowledge of Himself.

"For we suppose, since the two countries are near together, that your Highness has fully understood what the clemency of our Redeemer has effected in the enlightenment of our illustrious son, King Eadbald, and the nations under his rule; we therefore trust, with assured confidence that, through the long-suffering of Heaven, His wonderful gift will be also conferred on you; since, indeed, we have learnt that your illustrious consort, who is discerned to be one flesh with you, has been blessed with the reward of eternity, through the regeneration of Holy Baptism. We have, therefore,

taken care by this letter, with all the goodwill of heartfelt love, to exhort your Highness, that, abhorring idols and their worship, and despising the foolishness of temples, and the deceitful flatteries of auguries, you believe in God the Father Almighty, and His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, to the end that, believing and being released from the bonds of captivity to the Devil, you may, through the co-operating power of the Holy and undivided Trinity, be partaker of the eternal life.

"How great guilt they lie under, who adhere in their worship to the pernicious superstition of idolatry, appears by the examples of the perishing of those whom they worship. Wherefore it is said of them by the Psalmist, 'All the gods of the nations are devils, but the Lord made the heavens.' And again, 'Eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not; they have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not. Therefore they are made like unto those that place the hope of their confidence in them.' For how can they have power to help any man, that are made out of corruptible matter, by the hands of your inferiors and subjects, and on which, by employing human art, you have bestowed a lifeless similitude of members? which, moreover, unless they be moved by you, will not be able to walk; but, like a stone fixed in one place, being so formed, and having no understanding, sunk in insensibility, have no power of doing harm or good. We cannot, therefore, by any manner of discernment conceive how you come to be so deceived as to follow and worship those gods, to whom you yourselves have given the likeness of a body.

"It behoves you, therefore, by taking upon you the sign of the Holy Cross, by which the human race has been redeemed, to root out of your hearts all the accursed deceitfulness of the snares of the Devil, who is ever the jealous foe of the works of the Divine Goodness, and to put forth your hands and with all your might set to work to break in pieces and destroy those which you have hitherto fashioned of wood or stone to be your gods. For the very destruction and decay of these, which never had the breath of life in them, nor could in any wise receive feeling from their makers, may plainly teach you how worthless that was which you hitherto worshipped. For you yourselves, who have received the breath of life from the Lord, are certainly better than these which are wrought with hands, seeing that Almighty God has appointed you to be descended, after many ages and through many gen-

erations, from the first man whom he formed. Draw near, then, to the knowledge of Him Who created you, Who breathed the breath of life into you, Who sent His only-begotten Son for your redemption, to save you from original sin, that being delivered from the power of the Devil's perversity and wickedness, He might bestow on you a heavenly reward.

"Hearken to the words of the preachers, and the Gospel of God, which they declare to you, to the end that, believing, as has been said before more than once, in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ His Son, and the Holy Ghost, and the indivisible Trinity, having put to flight the thoughts of devils, and driven from you the temptations of the venomous and deceitful enemy, and being born again of water and the Holy Ghost, you may, through the aid of His bounty, dwell in the brightness of eternal glory with Him in Whom you shall have believed. "We have, moreover, sent you the blessing of your protector, the blessed Peter, chief of the Apostles, to wit, a shirt of proof with one gold ornament, and one cloak of Ancyra, which we pray your Highness to accept with all the goodwill with which it is sent by us."

CHAPTER 2.11: HOW POPE BONIFACE ADVISED THE KING'S CONSORT TO USE HER BEST ENDEAVOURS FOR HIS SALVATION. [CIRC.625 A.D.]

The same pope also wrote to King Edwin's consort, Ethelberg, to this effect: THE COPY OF THE LETTER OF THE MOST BLESSED AND APOSTOLIC BONIFACE, POPE OF THE CITY OF ROME, TO ETHELBERG, KING EDWIN'S QUEEN. "To the illustrious lady his daughter, Queen Ethelberg, Boniface, bishop, servant of the servants of God.The goodness of our Redeemer has in His abundant Providence offered the means of salvation to the human race, which He rescued, by the shedding of His precious Blood, from the bonds of captivity to the Devil; to the end that, when He had made known His name in divers ways to the nations, they might acknowledge their Creator by embracing the mystery of the Christian faith. And this the mystical purification of your regeneration plainly shows to have been bestowed upon the mind of your Highness by God's gift. Our heart, therefore, has greatly rejoiced in the benefit bestowed by the bounty of the Lord, for that He has vouchsafed, in your confession, to kindle a spark of the orthodox religion, by which He might the more easily inflame with the love of Himself the understanding, not only of your illustrious consort, but also of all the nation that is subject to you.

"For we have been informed by those, who came to acquaint us with the laudable conversion of our illustrious son, King Eadbald, that your Highness, also, having received the wonderful mystery of the Christian faith, continually excels in the performance of works pious and acceptable to God; that you likewise carefully refrain from the worship of idols, and the deceits of temples and auguries, and with unimpaired devotion, give yourself so wholly to the love of your Redeemer, as never to cease from lending your aid in spreading the Christian faith. But when our fatherly love earnestly inquired concerning your illustrious consort, we were given to understand, that he still served abominable idols, and delayed to yield obedience in giving ear to the voice of the preachers. This occasioned us no small grief, that he that is one flesh with you still remained a stranger to the knowledge of the supreme and undivided Trinity. Whereupon we, in our fatherly care, have not delayed to admonish and exhort your Christian Highness, to the end that, filled with the support of the Divine inspiration, you should not defer to strive, both in season and out of season, that with the co-operating power of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, your husband also may be added to the number of Christians; that so you may uphold the rights of marriage in the bond of a holy and unblemished union. For it is written, 'They twain shall be one flesh.' How then can it be said, that there is unity in the bond between you, if he continues a stranger to the brightness of your faith, separated from it by the darkness of detestable error?

"Wherefore, applying yourself continually to prayer, do not cease to beg of the long-suffering of the Divine Mercy the benefits of his illumination; to the end, that those whom the union of carnal affection has manifestly made in a manner to be one body, may, after this life continue in perpetual fellowship, by the unity of faith. Persist, therefore, illustrious daughter, and to the utmost of your power endeavour to soften the hardness of his heart by carefully making known to him the Divine precepts; pouring into his mind a knowledge of the greatness of that mystery which you have received by faith, and of the marvellous reward which, by the new birth, you have been made worthy to obtain. Inflame the coldness of his heart by the message of the Holy Ghost, that he may put from him the deadness of an evil worship, and the warmth of the Divine faith may kindle his understanding through your frequent exhortations; and so the testimony of Holy Scripture may shine forth clearly, fulfilled by you, 'The unbelieving husband shall be saved by the

believing wife.' For to this end you have obtained the mercy of the Lord's goodness, that you might restore with increase to your Redeemer the fruit of faith and of the benefits entrusted to your hands. That you may be able to fulfil this task, supported by the help of His loving kindness we do not cease to implore with frequent prayers.

"Having premised thus much, in pursuance of the duty of our fatherly affection, we exhort you, that when the opportunity of a bearer shall offer, you will with all speed comfort us with the glad tidings of the wonderful work which the heavenly Power shall vouchsafe to perform by your means in the conversion of your consort, and of the nation subject to you; to the end, that our solicitude, which earnestly awaits the fulfilment of its desire in the soul's salvation of you and yours, may, by hearing from you, be set at rest; and that we, discerning more fully the light of the Divine propitiation shed abroad in you, may with a joyful confession abundantly return due thanks to God, the Giver of all good things, and to the blessed Peter, the chief of the Apostles. "We have, moreover, sent you the blessing of your protector, the blessed Peter, the chief of the Apostles, to wit, a silver looking-glass, and a gilded ivory comb, which we pray your Highness to accept with all the goodwill with which it is sent by us."

CHAPTER 2.12: HOW EDWIN WAS PERSUADED TO BELIEVE BY A VISION WHICH HE HAD ONCE SEEN WHEN HE WAS IN EXILE. [CIRC. 616 A.D.]

Thus wrote the aforesaid Pope Boniface for the salvation of King Edwin and his nation. But a heavenly vision, which the Divine Goodness was pleased once to reveal to this king, when he was in banishment at the court of Redwald, king of the Angles, was of no little use in urging him to receive and understand the doctrines of salvation. For when Paulinus perceived that it was a difficult task to incline the king's proud mind to the humility of the way of salvation and the reception of the mystery of the life-giving Cross, and at the same time was employing the word of exhortation with men, and prayer to the Divine Goodness, for the salvation of Edwin and his subjects; at length, as we may suppose, it was shown him in spirit what the nature of the vision was that had been formerly revealed from Heaven to the king. Then he lost no time, but immediately admonished the king to perform the vow which he had made, when he received the vision, promising to fulfil it, if he should be delivered from the troubles of that time, and advanced to the throne.

The vision was this. When Ethelfrid, his predecessor, was persecuting him, he wandered for many years as an exile, hiding in divers places and kingdoms, and at last came to Redwald, beseeching him to give him protection against the snares of his powerful persecutor. Redwald willingly received him, and promised to perform what was asked of him. But when Ethelfrid understood that he had appeared in that province, and that he and his companions were hospitably entertained by Redwald, he sent messengers to bribe that king with a great sum of money to murder him, but without effect. He sent a second and a third time, offering a greater bribe each time, and, moreover, threatening to make war on him if his offer should be despised. Redwald, whether terrified by his threats, or won over by his gifts, complied with this request, and promised either to kill Edwin, or to deliver him up to the envoys. A faithful friend of his, hearing of this, went into his chamber, where he was going to bed, for it was the first hour of the night; and calling him out, told him what the king had promised to do with him, adding, "If, therefore, you are willing, I will this very hour conduct you out of this province, and lead you to a place where neither Redwald nor Ethelfrid shall ever find you.

He answered, "I thank you for your good will, yet I cannot do what you propose, and be guilty of being the first to break the compact I have made with so great a king, when he has done me no harm, nor shown any enmity to me; but, on the contrary, if I must die, let it rather be by his hand than by that of any meaner man. For whither shall I now fly, when I have for so many long years been a vagabond through all the provinces of Britain, to escape the snares of my enemies? His friend went away; Edwin remained alone without, and sitting with a heavy heart before the palace, began to be overwhelmed with many thoughts, not knowing what to do, or which way to turn. When he had remained a long time in silent anguish of mind, consumed with inward fire, on a sudden in the stillness of the dead of night he saw approaching a person, whose face and habit were strange to him, at sight of whom, seeing that he was unknown and unlooked for, he was not a little startled. The stranger coming close up, saluted him, and asked why he sat there in solitude on a stone troubled and wakeful at that time, when all others were taking their rest, and were fast asleep. Edwin, in his turn, asked, what it was to him, whether he spent the night within doors or abroad. The stranger, in reply, said, "Do not think that I am ignorant of the cause of

your grief, your watching, and sitting alone without. For I know of a surety who you are, and why you grieve, and the evils which you fear will soon fall upon you. But tell me, what reward you would give the man who should deliver you out of these troubles, and persuade Redwald neither to do you any harm himself, nor to deliver you up to be murdered by your enemies. Edwin replied, that he would give such an one all that he could in return for so great a benefit.

The other further added, "What if he should also assure you, that your enemies should be destroyed, and you should be a king surpassing in power, not only all your own ancestors, but even all that have reigned before you in the English nation? Edwin, encouraged by these questions, did not hesitate to promise that he would make a fitting return to him who should confer such benefits upon him. Then the other spoke a third time and said, "But if he who should truly foretell that all these great blessings are about to befall you, could also give you better and more profitable counsel for your life and salvation than any of your fathers or kindred ever heard, do you consent to submit to him, and to follow his wholesome guidance? Edwin at once promised that he would in all things follow the teaching of that man who should deliver him from so many great calamities, and raise him to a throne.

Having received this answer, the man who talked to him laid his right hand on his head saying, "When this sign shall be given you, remember this present discourse that has passed between us, and do not delay the performance of what you now promise." Having uttered these words, he is said to have immediately vanished. So the king perceived that it was not a man, but a spirit, that had appeared to him. Whilst the royal youth still sat there alone, glad of the comfort he had received, but still troubled and earnestly pondering who he was, and whence he came, that had so talked to him, his aforesaid friend came to him, and greeting him with a glad countenance, "Rise," said he, "go in; calm and put away your anxious cares, and compose yourself in body and mind to sleep; for the king's resolution is altered, and he designs to do you no harm, but rather to keep his pledged faith; for when he had privately made known to the queen his intention of doing what I told you before, she dissuaded him from it, reminding him that it was altogether unworthy of so great a king to sell his good friend in such distress for gold, and to sacrifice his honour, which is more valuable than all other adornments, for the love of money." In short, the king did as has been said,

and not only refused to deliver up the banished man to his enemy's messengers, but helped him to recover his kingdom. For as soon as the messengers had returned home, he raised a mighty army to subdue Ethelfrid; who, meeting him with much inferior forces, (for Redwald had not given him time to gather and unite all his power,) was slain on the borders of the kingdom of Mercia, on the east side of the river that is called Idle. In this battle, Redwald's son, called Raegenheri, was killed. Thus Edwin, in accordance with the prophecy he had received, not only escaped the danger from his enemy, but, by his death, succeeded the king on the throne.

King Edwin, therefore, delaying to receive the Word of God at the preaching of Paulinus, and being wont for some time, as has been said, to sit many hours alone, and seriously to ponder with himself what he was to do, and what religion he was to follow, the man of God came to him one day, laid his right hand on his head, and asked, whether he knew that sign? The king, trembling, was ready to fall down at his feet, but he raised him up, and speaking to him with the voice of a friend, said, "Behold, by the gift of God you have escaped the hands of the enemies whom you feared. Behold, you have obtained of His bounty the kingdom which you desired. Take heed not to delay to perform your third promise; accept the faith, and keep the precepts of Him Who, delivering you from temporal adversity, has raised you to the honour of a temporal kingdom; and if, from this time forward, you shall be obedient to His will, which through me He signifies to you, He will also deliver you from the everlasting torments of the wicked, and make you partaker with Him of His eternal kingdom in heaven."

CHAPTER 2.13: OF THE COUNCIL HE HELD WITH HIS CHIEF MEN CONCERNING THEIR RECEPTION OF THE FAITH OF CHRIST, AND HOW THE HIGH PRIEST PROFANED HIS OWN ALTARS. (AD 627)

The king, hearing these words, answered, that he was both willing and bound to receive the faith which Paulinus taught; but that he would confer about it with his chief friends and counsellors, to the end that if they also were of his opinion, they might all together be consecrated to Christ in the font of life. Paulinus consenting, the king did as he said; for, holding a council with the wise men, he asked of every one in particular what he thought of this doctrine hitherto unknown to them, and the new worship of God that was preached? The chief of his own priests, Coifi, immediately answered him, "O king, consider what this is which is now preached to us;

for I verily declare to you what I have learnt beyond doubt, that the religion which we have hitherto professed has no virtue in it and no profit. For none of your people has applied himself more diligently to the worship of our gods than I; and yet there are many who receive greater favours from you, and are more preferred than I, and are more prosperous in all that they undertake to do or to get. Now if the gods were good for any thing, they would rather forward me, who have been careful to serve them with greater zeal. It remains, therefore, that if upon examination you find those new doctrines, which are now preached to us, better and more efficacious, we hasten to receive them without any delay."

Another of the king's chief men, approving of his wise words and exhortations, added thereafter: "The present life of man upon earth, O king, seems to me, in comparison with that time which is unknown to us, like to the swift flight of a sparrow through the house wherein you sit at supper in winter, with your ealdormen and thegns, while the fire blazes in the midst, and the hall is warmed, but the wintry storms of rain or snow are raging abroad. The sparrow, flying in at one door and immediately out at another, whilst he is within, is safe from the wintry tempest; but after a short space of fair weather, he immediately vanishes out of your sight, passing from winter into winter again. So this life of man appears for a little while, but of what is to follow or what went before we know nothing at all. If, therefore, this new doctrine tells us something more certain, it seems justly to deserve to be followed." The other elders and king's counsellors, by Divine prompting, spoke to the same effect.

But Coifi added, that he wished more attentively to hear Paulinus discourse concerning the God Whom he preached. When he did so, at the king's command, Coifi, hearing his words, cried out, "This long time I have perceived that what we worshipped was naught; because the more diligently I sought after truth in that worship, the less I found it. But now I freely confess, that such truth evidently appears in this preaching as can confer on us the gifts of life, of salvation, and of eternal happiness. For which reason my counsel is, O king, that we instantly give up to ban and fire those temples and altars which we have consecrated without reaping any benefit from them. In brief, the king openly assented to the preaching of the Gospel by Paulinus, and renouncing idolatry, declared that he received the faith of Christ: and when he inquired of the aforesaid high priest of his religion,

who should first desecrate the altars and temples of their idols, with the precincts that were about them, he answered, "I; for who can more fittingly than myself destroy those things which I worshipped in my folly, for an example to all others, through the wisdom which has been given me by the true God? Then immediately, in contempt of his vain superstitions, he desired the king to furnish him with arms and a stallion, that he might mount and go forth to destroy the idols;

for it was not lawful before for the high priest either to carry arms, or to ride on anything but a mare. Having, therefore, girt a sword about him, with a spear in his hand, he mounted the king's stallion, and went his way to the idols. The multitude, beholding it, thought that he was mad; but as soon as he drew near the temple he did not delay to desecrate it by casting into it the spear which he held; and rejoicing in the knowledge of the worship of the true God, he commanded his companions to tear down and set on fire the temple, with all its precincts. This place where the idols once stood is still shown, not far from York, to the eastward, beyond the river Derwent, and is now called Godmunddingaham, where the high priest, by the inspiration of the true God, profaned and destroyed the altars which he had himself consecrated.

CHAPTER 2.14: HOW KING EDWIN AND HIS NATION BECAME CHRISTIANS; AND WHERE PAULINUS BAPTIZED THEM. (AD 627)

King Edwin, therefore, with all the nobility of the nation, and a large number of the common sort, received the faith, and the washing of holy regeneration, in the eleventh year of his reign, which is the year of our Lord 627, and about one hundred and eighty after the coming of the English into Britain. He was baptized at York, on the holy day of Easter, being the 12th of April, in the church of St. Peter the Apostle, which he himself had built of timber there in haste, whilst he was a catechumen receiving instruction in order to be admitted to baptism. In that city also he bestowed upon his instructor and bishop, Paulinus, his episcopal see. But as soon as he was baptized, he set about building, by the direction of Paulinus, in the same place a larger and nobler church of stone, in the midst whereof the oratory which he had first erected should be enclosed. Having, therefore, laid the foundation, he began to build the church square, encompassing the former oratory. But before the walls were raised to their full height, the cruel death of the king left that work to be finished by Oswald his successor. Paulinus, for the

space of six years from this time, that is, till the end of the king's reign, with his consent and favour, preached the Word of God in that country, and as many as were foreordained to eternal life believed and were baptized. Among them were Osfrid and Eadfrid, King Edwin's sons who were both born to him, whilst he was in banishment, of Quenburga, the daughter of Cearl, king of the Mercians.

Afterwards other children of his, by Queen Ethelberg, were baptized, Ethelhun and his daughter Ethelthryth, and another, Wuscfrea, a son; the first two were snatched out of this life whilst they were still in the white garments of the newly-baptized, and buried in the church at York. Yffi, the son of Osfrid, was also baptized, and many other noble and royal persons. So great was then the fervour of the faith, as is reported, and the desire for the laver of salvation among the nation of the Northumbrians, that Paulinus at a certain time coming with the king and queen to the royal township, which is called Adgefrin, stayed there with them thirty-six days, fully occupied in catechizing and baptizing; during which days, from morning till night, he did nothing else but instruct the people resorting from all villages and places, in Christ's saving Word; and when they were instructed, he washed them with the water of absolution in the river Glen, which is close by. This township, under the following kings, was abandoned, and another was built instead of it, at the place called Maelmin.

These things happened in the province of the Bernicians; but in that of the Deiri also, where he was wont often to be with the king, he baptized in the river Swale, which runs by the village of Cataract; for as yet oratories, or baptisteries, could not be built in the early infancy of the Church in those parts. But in Campodonum, where there was then a royal township, he built a church which the pagans, by whom King Edwin was slain, afterwards burnt, together with all the place. Instead of this royal seat the later kings built themselves a township in the country called Loidis. But the altar, being of stone, escaped the fire and is still preserved in the monastery of the most reverend abbot and priest, Thrydwulf, which is in the forest of Elmet.

CHAPTER 2.15: HOW THE PROVINCE OF THE EAST ANGLES RECEIVED THE FAITH OF CHRIST. (AD 627–628)

Edwin was so zealous for the true worship, that he likewise persuaded Earpwald, king of the East Angles, and son of Redwald, to abandon his idolatrous superstitions, and with his whole province to receive the faith and mys-

teries of Christ. And indeed his father Redwald had long before been initiated into the mysteries of the Christian faith in Kent, but in vain; for on his return home, he was seduced by his wife and certain perverse teachers, and turned aside from the sincerity of the faith; and thus his latter state was worse than the former; so that, like the Samaritans of old, he seemed at the same time to serve Christ and the gods whom he served before; and in the same temple he had an altar for the Christian Sacrifice, and another small one at which to offer victims to devils. Aldwulf, king of that same province, who lived in our time, testifies that this temple had stood until his time, and that he had seen it when he was a boy. The aforesaid King Redwald was noble by birth, though ignoble in his actions, being the son of Tytilus, whose father was Uuffa, from whom the kings of the East Angles are called Uuffings.

Earpwald, not long after he had embraced the Christian faith, was slain by one Ricbert, a pagan; and from that time the province was in error for three years, till Sigbert succeeded to the kingdom, brother to the same Earpwald, a most Christian and learned man, who was banished, and went to live in Gaul during his brother's life, and was there initiated into the mysteries of the faith, whereof he made it his business to cause all his province to partake as soon as he came to the throne. His exertions were nobly promoted by Bishop Felix, who, coming to Honorius, the archbishop, from the parts of Burgundy, where he had been born and ordained, and having told him what he desired, was sent by him to preach the Word of life to the aforesaid nation of the Angles. Nor were his good wishes in vain; for the pious labourer in the spiritual field reaped therein a great harvest of believers, delivering all that province (according to the inner signification of his name) from long iniquity and unhappiness, and bringing it to the faith and works of righteousness, and the gifts of everlasting happiness. He had the see of his bishopric appointed him in the city Dommoc, and having presided over the same province with pontifical authority seventeen years, he ended his days there in peace.

CHAPTER 2.16: HOW PAULINUS PREACHED IN THE PROVINCE OF LINDSEY; AND OF THE CHARACTER OF THE REIGN OF EDWIN. [CIRC. 628 A.D.]

Paulinus also preached the Word to the province of Lindsey, which is the first on the south side of the river Humber, stretching as far as the sea; and

he first converted to the Lord the reeve of the city of Lincoln, whose name was Blaecca, with his whole house. He likewise built, in that city, a stone church of beautiful workmanship; the roof of which has either fallen through long neglect, or been thrown down by enemies, but the walls are still to be seen standing, and every year miraculous cures are wrought in that place, for the benefit of those who have faith to seek them. In that church, when Justus had departed to Christ, Paulinus consecrated Honorius bishop in his stead, as will be hereafter mentioned in its proper place. A certain priest and abbot of the monastery of Peartaneu, a man of singular veracity, whose name was Deda, told me concerning the faith of this province that an old man had informed him that he himself had been baptized at noon-day, by Bishop Paulinus, in the presence of King Edwin, and with him a great multitude of the people, in the river Trent, near the city, which in the English tongue is called Tiouulfingacaestir; and he was also wont to describe the person of the same Paulinus, saying that he was tall of stature, stooping somewhat, his hair black, his visage thin, his nose slender and aquiline, his aspect both venerable and awe-inspiring. He had also with him in the ministry, James, the deacon, a man of zeal and great fame in Christ and in the church, who lived even to our days.

It is told that there was then such perfect peace in Britain, wheresoever the dominion of King Edwin extended, that, as is still proverbially said, a woman with her new-born babe might walk throughout the island, from sea to sea, without receiving any harm. That king took such care for the good of his nation, that in several places where he had seen clear springs near the highways, he caused stakes to be fixed, with copper drinking-vessels hanging on them, for the refreshment of travellers; nor durst any man touch them for any other purpose than that for which they were designed, either through the great dread they had of the king, or for the affection which they bore him. His dignity was so great throughout his dominions, that not only were his banners borne before him in battle, but even in time of peace, when he rode about his cities, townships, or provinces, with his thegns, the standard-bearer was always wont to go before him. Also, when he walked anywhere along the streets, that sort of banner which the Romans call Tufa, and the English, Thuuf, was in like manner borne before him.

CHAPTER 2.17: HOW EDWIN RECEIVED LETTERS OF EXHORTATION FROM POPE HONORIUS, WHO ALSO SENT THE PALL TO PAULINUS. (AD 634)

At that time Honorius, successor to Boniface, was Bishop of the Apostolic see. When he learned that the nation of the Northumbrians, with their king, had been, by the preaching of Paulinus, converted to the faith and confession of Christ, he sent the pall to the said Paulinus, and with it letters of exhortation to King Edwin, with fatherly love inflaming his zeal, to the end that he and his people should persist in belief of the truth which they had received. The contents of which letter were as follow: "To his most noble son, and excellent lord, Edwin king of the Angles, Bishop Honorius, servant of the servants of God, greeting. The wholeheartedness of your Christian Majesty, in the worship of your Creator, is so inflamed with the fire of faith, that it shines out far and wide, and, being reported throughout the world, brings forth plentiful fruits of your labours. For the terms of your kingship you know to be this, that taught by orthodox preaching the knowledge of your King and Creator, you believe and worship God, and as far as man is able, pay Him the sincere devotion of your mind. For what else are we able to offer to our God, but our readiness to worship Him and to pay Him our vows, persisting in good actions, and confessing Him the Creator of mankind? And, therefore, most excellent son, we exhort you with such fatherly love as is meet, to labour to preserve this gift in every way, by earnest striving and constant prayer, in that the Divine Mercy has vouchsafed to call you to His grace; to the end that He, Who has been pleased to deliver you from all errors, and bring you to the knowledge of His name in this present world, may likewise prepare a place for you in the heavenly country. Employing yourself, therefore, in reading frequently the works of my lord Gregory, your Evangelist, of apostolic memory, keep before your eyes that love of his doctrine, which he zealously bestowed for the sake of your souls;

that his prayers may exalt your kingdom and people, and present you faultless before Almighty God. We are preparing with a willing mind immediately to grant those things which you hoped would be by us ordained for your bishops, and this we do on account of the sincerity of your faith, which has been made known to us abundantly in terms of praise by the bearers of these presents. We have sent two palls to the two metropolitans, Honorius and Paulinus; to the intent, that when either of them shall be called out of

this world to his Creator, the other may, by this authority of ours, substitute another bishop in his place; which privilege we are induced to grant by the warmth of our love for you, as well as by reason of the great extent of the provinces which lie between us and you; that we may in all things support your devotion and likewise satisfy your desires. May God's grace preserve your Highness in safety!"

CHAPTER 2.18: HOW HONORIUS, WHO SUCCEEDED JUSTUS IN THE BISHOPRIC OF CANTERBURY, RECEIVED THE PALL AND LETTERS FROM POPE HONORIUS. (AD 634)

In the meantime, Archbishop Justus was taken up to the heavenly kingdom, on the 10th of November, and Honorius, who was elected to the see in his stead, came to Paulinus to be ordained, and meeting him at Lincoln was there consecrated the fifth prelate of the Church of Canterbury from Augustine. To him also the aforesaid Pope Honorius sent the pall, and a letter, wherein he ordains the same that he had before ordained in his epistle to King Edwin, to wit, that when either the Archbishop of Canterbury or of York shall depart this life, the survivor, being of the same degree, shall have power to ordain another bishop in the room of him that is departed; that it might not be necessary always to undertake the toilsome journey to Rome, at so great a distance by sea and land, to ordain an archbishop. Which letter we have also thought fit to insert in this our history:

"Honorius to his most beloved brother Honorius: Among the many good gifts which the mercy of our Redeemer is pleased to bestow on His servants He grants to us in His bounty, graciously conferred on us by His goodness, the special blessing of realizing by brotherly intercourse, as it were face to face, our mutual love. For which gift we continually render thanks to His Majesty; and we humbly beseech Him, that He will ever confirm your labour, beloved, in preaching the Gospel, and bringing forth fruit, and following the rule of your master and head, the holy Gregory; and that, for the advancement of His Church, He may by your means raise up further increase; to the end, that through faith and works, in the fear and love of God, what you and your predecessors have already gained from the seed sown by our lord Gregory, may grow strong and be further extended; that so the promises spoken by our Lord may hereafter be brought to pass in you; and that these words may summon you to everlasting happiness: 'Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.' And again, 'Well done,

good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' And we, most beloved brothers, sending you first these words of exhortation out of our enduring charity, do not fail further to grant those things which we perceive may be suitable for the privileges of your Churches.

"Wherefore, in accordance with your request, and that of the kings our sons, we do hereby in the name of the blessed Peter, chief of the Apostles, grant you authority, that when the Divine Grace shall call either of you to Himself, the survivor shall ordain a bishop in the room of him that is deceased. To which end also we have sent a pall to each of you, beloved, for celebrating the said ordination; that by the authority which we hereby commit to you, you may make an ordination acceptable to God; because the long distance of sea and land that lies between us and you, has obliged us to grant you this, that no loss may happen to your Church in any way, on any pretext whatever, but that the devotion of the people committed to you may increase the more. God preserve you in safety, most dear brother! Given the 11th day of June, in the reign of these our lords and emperors, in the twenty-fourth year of the reign of Heraclius, and the twenty-third after his consulship; and in the twenty-third of his son Constantine, and the third after his consulship; and in the third year of the most prosperous Caesar, his son Heraclius, the seventh indiction; that is, in the year of our Lord, 634."

CHAPTER 2.19: HOW THE AFORESAID HONORIUS FIRST, AND AFTERWARDS JOHN, WROTE LETTERS TO THE NATION OF THE SCOTS, CONCERNING THE OBSERVANCE OF EASTER, AND THE PELAGIAN HERESY. (AD 640)

The same Pope Honorius also wrote to the Scots, whom he had found to err in the observance of the holy Festival of Easter, as has been shown above, with subtlety of argument exhorting them not to think themselves, few as they were, and placed in the utmost borders of the earth, wiser than all the ancient and modern Churches of Christ, throughout the world; and not to celebrate a different Easter, contrary to the Paschal calculation and the decrees of all the bishops upon earth sitting in synod. Likewise John, who succeeded Severinus, successor to the same Honorius, being yet but Pope elect, sent to them letters of great authority and erudition for the purpose of correcting the same error; evidently showing, that Easter Sunday is to be found between the fifteenth of the moon and the twenty-first, as was approved in

the Council of Nicaea. He also in the same epistle admonished them to guard against the Pelagian heresy, and reject it, for he had been informed that it was again springing up among them. The beginning of the epistle was as follows:

"To our most beloved and most holy Tomianus, Columbanus, Cromanus, Dinnaus, and Baithanus, bishops; to Cromanus, Ernianus, Laistranus, Scellanus, and Segenus, priests; to Saranus and the rest of the Scottish doctors and abbots, Hilarus, the arch-presbyter, and vice-gerent of the holy Apostolic See; John, the deacon, and elect in the name of God; likewise John, the chief of the notaries and vice-gerent of the holy Apostolic See, and John, the servant of God, and counsellor of the same Apostolic See. The writings which were brought by the bearers to Pope Severinus, of holy memory, were left, when he departed from the light of this world, without an answer to the questions contained in them. Lest any obscurity should long remain undispelled in a matter of so great moment, we opened the same, and found that some in your province, endeavouring to revive a new heresy out of an old one, contrary to the orthodox faith, do through the darkness of their minds reject our Easter, when Christ was sacrificed; and contend that the same should be kept with the Hebrews on the fourteenth of the moon."

By this beginning of the epistle it evidently appears that this heresy arose among them in very late times, and that not all their nation, but only some of them, were involved in the same. After having laid down the manner of keeping Easter, they add this concerning the Pelagians in the same epistle: "And we have also learnt that the poison of the Pelagian heresy again springs up among you; we, therefore, exhort you, that you put away from your thoughts all such venomous and superstitious wickedness. For you cannot be ignorant how that execrable heresy has been condemned; for it has not only been abolished these two hundred years, but it is also daily condemned by us and buried under our perpetual ban; and we exhort you not to rake up the ashes of those whose weapons have been burnt. For who would not detest that insolent and impious assertion, 'That man can live without sin of his own free will, and not through the grace of God?' And in the first place, it is blasphemous folly to say that man is without sin, which none can be, but only the one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, Who was conceived and born without sin; for all other men, being born in original sin, are known to bear the mark of Adam's transgression, even whilst they

are without actual sin, according to the saying of the prophet, 'For behold, I was conceived in iniquity; and in sin did my mother give birth to me.' "

CHAPTER 2.20: HOW EDWIN BEING SLAIN, PAULINUS RETURNED INTO KENT, AND HAD THE BISHOPRIC OF ROCHESTER CONFERRED UPON HIM. (AD 633)

Edwin reigned most gloriously seventeen years over the nations of the English and the Britons, six whereof, as has been said, he also was a soldier in the kingdom of Christ. Caedwalla, king of the Britons, rebelled against him, being supported by the vigorous Penda, of the royal race of the Mercians, who from that time governed that nation for twenty-two years with varying success. A great battle being fought in the plain that is called Haethfelth, Edwin was killed on the 12th of October, in the year of our Lord 633, being then forty-eight years of age, and all his army was either slain or dispersed. In the same war also, Osfrid, one of his sons, a warlike youth, fell before him; Eadfrid, another of them, compelled by necessity, went over to King Penda, and was by him afterwards slain in the reign of Oswald, contrary to his oath. At this time a great slaughter was made in the Church and nation of the Northumbrians; chiefly because one of the chiefs, by whom it was carried on, was a pagan, and the other a barbarian, more cruel than a pagan; for Penda, with all the nation of the Mercians, was an idolater, and a stranger to the name of Christ;

but Caedwalla, though he professed and called himself a Christian, was so barbarous in his disposition and manner of living, that he did not even spare women and innocent children, but with bestial cruelty put all alike to death by torture, and overran all their country in his fury for a long time, intending to cut off all the race of the English within the borders of Britain. Nor did he pay any respect to the Christian religion which had sprung up among them; it being to this day the custom of the Britons to despise the faith and religion of the English, and to have no part with them in anything any more than with pagans. King Edwin's head was brought to York, and afterwards taken into the church of the blessed Peter the Apostle, which he had begun, but which his successor Oswald finished, as has been said before. It was laid in the chapel of the holy Pope Gregory, from whose disciples he had received the word of life.

The affairs of the Northumbrians being thrown into confusion at the moment of this disaster, when there seemed to be no prospect of safety ex-

cept in flight, Paulinus, taking with him Queen Ethelberg, whom he had before brought thither, returned into Kent by sea, and was very honourably received by the Archbishop Honorius and King Eadbald. He came thither under the conduct of Bassus, a most valiant thegn of King Edwin, having with him Eanfled, the daughter, and Wuscfrea, the son of Edwin, as well as Yffi, the son of Osfrid, Edwin's son. Afterwards Ethelberg, for fear of the kings Eadbald and Oswald, sent Wuscfrea and Yffi over into Gaul to be bred up by King Dagobert, who was her friend; and there they both died in infancy, and were buried in the church with the honour due to royal children and to Christ's innocents. He also brought with him many rich goods of King Edwin, among which were a large gold cross, and a golden chalice, consecrated to the service of the altar, which are still preserved, and shown in the church of Canterbury.

At that time the church of Rochester had no pastor, for Romanus, the bishop thereof, being sent on a mission to Pope Honorius by Archbishop Justus, was drowned in the Italian Sea; and thus Paulinus, at the request of Archbishop Honorius and King Eadbald, took upon him the charge of the same, and held it until he too, in his own time, departed to heaven, with the fruits of his glorious labours; and, dying in that Church, he left there the pall which he had received from the Pope of Rome. He had left behind him in his Church at York, James, the deacon, a true churchman and a holy man, who continuing long after in that Church, by teaching and baptizing, rescued much prey from the ancient enemy; and from him the village, where he chiefly dwelt, near Cataract, has its name to this day. He had great skill in singing in church, and when the province was afterwards restored to peace, and the number of the faithful increased, he began to teach church music to many, according to the custom of the Romans, or of the Cantuarians. And being old and full of days, as the Scripture says, he went the way of his fathers.

Book III

Chapter 3.1: How King Edwin's next successors lost both the faith of their nation and the kingdom; but the most Christian king Oswald retrieved both. (AD 633)

Edwin being slain in battle, the kingdom of the Deiri, to which province his family belonged, and where he first began to reign, passed to Osric, the son

of his uncle Aelfric, who, through the preaching of Paulinus, had also received the mysteries of the faith. But the kingdom of the Bernicians—for into these two provinces the nation of the Northumbrians was formerly divided—passed to Eanfrid, the son of Ethelfrid, who derived his origin from the royal family of that province. For all the time that Edwin reigned, the sons of the aforesaid Ethelfrid, who had reigned before him, with many of the younger nobility, lived in banishment among the Scots or Picts, and were there instructed according to the doctrine of the Scots, and were renewed with the grace of Baptism. Upon the death of the king, their enemy, they were allowed to return home, and the aforesaid Eanfrid, as the eldest of them, became king of the Bernicians. Both those kings, as soon as they obtained the government of their earthly kingdoms, abjured and betrayed the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom to which they had been admitted, and again delivered themselves up to defilement and perdition through the abominations of their former idolatry.

But soon after, the king of the Britons, Caedwalla, the unrighteous instrument of rightful vengeance, slew them both. First, in the following summer, he put Osric to death; for, being rashly besieged by him in the municipal town, he sallied out on a sudden with all his forces, took him by surprise, and destroyed him and all his army. Then, when he had occupied the provinces of the Northumbrians for a whole year, not ruling them like a victorious king, but ravaging them like a furious tyrant, he at length put an end to Eanfrid, in like manner, when he unadvisedly came to him with only twelve chosen soldiers, to sue for peace. To this day, that year is looked upon as ill-omened, and hateful to all good men; as well on account of the apostacy of the English kings, who had renounced the mysteries of the faith, as of the outrageous tyranny of the British king. Hence it has been generally agreed, in reckoning the dates of the kings, to abolish the memory of those faithless monarchs, and to assign that year to the reign of the following king, Oswald, a man beloved of God. This king, after the death of his brother Eanfrid, advanced with an army, small, indeed, in number, but strengthened with the faith of Christ; and the impious commander of the Britons, in spite of his vast forces, which he boasted nothing could withstand, was slain at a place called in the English tongue Denisesburna, that is, the brook of Denis.

CHAPTER 3.2: HOW, AMONG INNUMERABLE OTHER MIRACLES OF HEALING WROUGHT BY THE WOOD OF THE CROSS, WHICH KING OSWALD, BEING READY TO ENGAGE AGAINST THE BARBARIANS, ERECTED, A CERTAIN MAN HAD HIS INJURED ARM HEALED. (AD 634)

The place is shown to this day, and held in much veneration, where Oswald, being about to engage in this battle, erected the symbol of the Holy Cross, and knelt down and prayed to God that he would send help from Heaven to his worshippers in their sore need. Then, we are told, that the cross being made in haste, and the hole dug in which it was to be set up, the king himself, in the ardour of his faith, laid hold of it and held it upright with both his hands, till the earth was heaped up by the soldiers and it was fixed. Thereupon, uplifting his voice, he cried to his whole army, "Let us all kneel, and together beseech the true and living God Almighty in His mercy to defend us from the proud and cruel enemy; for He knows that we have undertaken a just war for the safety of our nation." All did as he had commanded, and accordingly advancing towards the enemy with the first dawn of day, they obtained the victory, as their faith deserved. In the place where they prayed very many miracles of healing are known to have been wrought, as a token and memorial of the king's faith; for even to this day, many are wont to cut off small splinters from the wood of the holy cross, and put them into water, which they give to sick men or cattle to drink, or they sprinkle them therewith, and these are presently restored to health.

The place is called in the English tongue Hefenfelth, or the Heavenly Field, which name it undoubtedly received of old as a presage of what was afterwards to happen, denoting, that the heavenly trophy was to be erected, the heavenly victory begun, and heavenly miracles shown forth to this day. The place is near the wall in the north which the Romans formerly drew across the whole of Britain from sea to sea, to restrain the onslaught of the barbarous nations, as has been said before. Hither also the brothers of the church of Hagustald, which is not far distant, long ago made it their custom to resort every year, on the day before that on which King Oswald was afterwards slain, to keep vigils there for the health of his soul, and having sung many psalms of praise, to offer for him in the morning the sacrifice of the Holy Oblation. And since that good custom has spread, they have lately built a church there, which has attached additional sanctity and honour in the eyes of all men to that place; and this with good reason; for it appears that

there was no symbol of the Christian faith, no church, no altar erected throughout all the nation of the Bernicians, before that new leader in war, prompted by the zeal of his faith, set up this standard of the Cross as he was going to give battle to his barbarous enemy.

Nor is it foreign to our purpose to relate one of the many miracles that have been wrought at this cross. One of the brothers of the same church of Hagulstald, whose name is Bothelm, and who is still living, a few years ago, walking carelessly on the ice at night, suddenly fell and broke his arm; he was soon tormented with a most grievous pain in the broken part, so that he could not lift his arm to his mouth for the anguish. Hearing one morning that one of the brothers designed to go up to the place of the holy cross, he desired him, on his return, to bring him a piece of that sacred wood, saying, he believed that with the mercy of God he might thereby be healed. The brother did as he was desired; and returning in the evening, when the brothers were sitting at table, gave him some of the old moss which grew on the surface of the wood. As he sat at table, having no place to bestow the gift which was brought him, he put it into his bosom; and forgetting, when he went to bed, to put it away, left it in his bosom. Awaking in the middle of the night, he felt something cold lying by his side, and putting his hand upon it to feel what it was, he found his arm and hand as sound as if he had never felt any such pain.

CHAPTER 3.3: HOW THE SAME KING OSWALD, ASKING A BISHOP OF THE SCOTTISH NATION, HAD AIDAN SENT HIM, AND GRANTED HIM AN EPISCOPAL SEE IN THE ISLE OF LINDISFARNE. (AD 635)

The same Oswald, as soon as he ascended the throne, being desirous that all the nation under his rule should be endued with the grace of the Christian faith, whereof he had found happy experience in vanquishing the barbarians, sent to the elders of the Scots, among whom himself and his followers, when in banishment, had received the sacrament of Baptism, desiring that they would send him a bishop, by whose instruction and ministry the English nation, which he governed, might learn the privileges and receive the Sacraments of the faith of our Lord. Nor were they slow in granting his request; for they sent him Bishop Aidan, a man of singular gentleness, piety, and moderation; having a zeal of God, but not fully according to knowledge; for he was wont to keep Easter Sunday according to the custom of his country, which we have before so often mentioned, from the fourteenth to the twen-

tieth of the moon; the northern province of the Scots, and all the nation of the Picts, at that time still celebrating Easter after that manner, and believing that in this observance they followed the writings of the holy and praiseworthy Father Anatolius. Whether this be true, every instructed person can easily judge. But the Scots which dwelt in the South of Ireland had long since, by the admonition of the Bishop of the Apostolic see, learned to observe Easter according to the canonical custom.

On the arrival of the bishop, the king appointed him his episcopal see in the island of Lindisfarne, as he desired. Which place, as the tide ebbs and flows, is twice a day enclosed by the waves of the sea like an island; and again, twice, when the beach is left dry, becomes contiguous with the land. The king also humbly and willingly in all things giving ear to his admonitions, industriously applied himself to build up and extend the Church of Christ in his kingdom; wherein, when the bishop, who was not perfectly skilled in the English tongue, preached the Gospel, it was a fair sight to see the king himself interpreting the Word of God to his ealdormen and thegns, for he had thoroughly learned the language of the Scots during his long banishment. From that time many came daily into Britain from the country of the Scots, and with great devotion preached the Word to those provinces of the English, over which King Oswald reigned, and those among them that had received priest's orders, administered the grace of Baptism to the believers. Churches were built in divers places; the people joyfully flocked together to hear the Word; lands and other property were given of the king's bounty to found monasteries; English children, as well as their elders, were instructed by their Scottish teachers in study and the observance of monastic discipline. For most of those who came to preach were monks.

Bishop Aidan was himself a monk, having been sent out from the island called Hii, whereof the monastery was for a long time the chief of almost all those of the northern Scots, and all those of the Picts, and had the direction of their people. That island belongs to Britain, being divided from it by a small arm of the sea, but had been long since given by the Picts, who inhabit those parts of Britain, to the Scottish monks, because they had received the faith of Christ through their preaching.

CHAPTER 3.4: WHEN THE NATION OF THE PICTS RECEIVED THE FAITH OF CHRIST. (AD 565)

In the year of our Lord 565, when Justin, the younger, the successor of Justinian, obtained the government of the Roman empire, there came into Britain from Ireland a famous priest and abbot, marked as a monk by habit and manner of life, whose name was Columba, to preach the word of God to the provinces of the northern Picts, who are separated from the southern parts belonging to that nation by steep and rugged mountains. For the southern Picts, who dwell on this side of those mountains, had, it is said, long before forsaken the errors of idolatry, and received the true faith by the preaching of Bishop Ninias, a most reverend and holy man of the British nation, who had been regularly instructed at Rome in the faith and mysteries of the truth; whose episcopal see, named after St. Martin the bishop, and famous for a church dedicated to him (wherein Ninias himself and many other saints rest in the body), is now in the possession of the English nation. The place belongs to the province of the Bernicians, and is commonly called the White House, because he there built a church of stone, which was not usual among the Britons.

Columba came into Britain in the ninth year of the reign of Bridius, who was the son of Meilochon, and the powerful king of the Pictish nation, and he converted that nation to the faith of Christ, by his preaching and example. Wherefore he also received of them the gift of the aforesaid island whereon to found a monastery. It is not a large island, but contains about five families, according to the English computation; his successors hold it to this day; he was also buried therein, having died at the age of seventy-seven, about thirty-two years after he came into Britain to preach. Before he crossed over into Britain, he had built a famous monastery in Ireland, which, from the great number of oaks, is in the Scottish tongue called Dearmach—The Field of Oaks. From both these monasteries, many others had their beginning through his disciples, both in Britain and Ireland; but the island monastery where his body lies, has the pre-eminence among them all.

That island has for its ruler an abbot, who is a priest, to whose jurisdiction all the province, and even the bishops, contrary to the usual method, are bound to be subject, according to the example of their first teacher, who was not a bishop, but a priest and monk; of whose life and discourses some records are said to be preserved by his disciples. But whatsoever he was himself,

this we know for certain concerning him, that he left successors renowned for their continence, their love of God, and observance of monastic rules. It is true they employed doubtful cycles in fixing the time of the great festival, as having none to bring them the synodal decrees for the observance of Easter, by reason of their being so far away from the rest of the world; but they earnestly practised such works of piety and chastity as they could learn from the Prophets, the Gospels and the Apostolic writings. This manner of keeping Easter continued among them no little time, to wit, for the space of 150 years, till the year of our Lord 715.

But then the most reverend and holy father and priest, Egbert, of the English nation, who had long lived in banishment in Ireland for the sake of Christ, and was most learned in the Scriptures, and renowned for long perfection of life, came among them, corrected their error, and led them to observe the true and canonical day of Easter; which, nevertheless, they did not always keep on the fourteenth of the moon with the Jews, as some imagined, but on Sunday, although not in the proper week. For, as Christians, they knew that the Resurrection of our Lord, which happened on the first day of the week, was always to be celebrated on the first day of the week; but being rude and barbarous, they had not learned when that same first day after the Sabbath, which is now called the Lord's day, should come. But because they had not failed in the grace of fervent charity, they were accounted worthy to receive the full knowledge of this matter also, according to the promise of the Apostle, "And if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." Of which we shall speak more fully hereafter in its proper place.

CHAPTER 3.5: OF THE LIFE OF BISHOP AIDAN. (AD 635)

From this island, then, and the fraternity of these monks, Aidan was sent to instruct the English nation in Christ, having received the dignity of a bishop. At that time Segeni, abbot and priest, presided over that monastery. Among other lessons in holy living, Aidan left the clergy a most salutary example of abstinence and continence; it was the highest commendation of his doctrine with all men, that he taught nothing that he did not practise in his life among his brethren; for he neither sought nor loved anything of this world, but delighted in distributing immediately among the poor whom he met whatsoever was given him by the kings or rich men of the world. He was wont to traverse both town and country on foot, never on horseback, unless

compelled by some urgent necessity; to the end that, as he went, he might turn aside to any whomsoever he saw, whether rich or poor, and call upon them, if infidels, to receive the mystery of the faith, or, if they were believers, strengthen them in the faith, and stir them up by words and actions to giving of alms and the performance of good works.

His course of life was so different from the slothfulness of our times, that all those who bore him company, whether they were tonsured or laymen, had to study either reading the Scriptures, or learning psalms. This was the daily employment of himself and all that were with him, wheresoever they went; and if it happened, which was but seldom, that he was invited to the king's table, he went with one or two clerks, and having taken a little food, made haste to be gone, either to read with his brethren or to pray. At that time, many religious men and women, led by his example, adopted the custom of prolonging their fast on Wednesdays and Fridays, till the ninth hour, throughout the year, except during the fifty days after Easter. Never, through fear or respect of persons, did he keep silence with regard to the sins of the rich; but was wont to correct them with a severe rebuke. He never gave money to the powerful men of the world, but only food, if he happened to entertain them; and, on the contrary, whatsoever gifts of money he received from the rich, he either distributed, as has been said, for the use of the poor, or bestowed in ransoming such as had been wrongfully sold for slaves. Moreover, he afterwards made many of those he had ransomed his disciples, and after having taught and instructed them, advanced them to priest's orders.

It is said, that when King Oswald had asked a bishop of the Scots to administer the Word of faith to him and his nation, there was first sent to him another man of more harsh disposition, who, after preaching for some time to the English and meeting with no success, not being gladly heard by the people, returned home, and in an assembly of the elders reported, that he had not been able to do any good by his teaching to the nation to whom he had been sent, because they were intractable men, and of a stubborn and barbarous disposition. They then, it is said, held a council and seriously debated what was to be done, being desirous that the nation should obtain the salvation it demanded, but grieving that they had not received the preacher sent to them. Then said Aidan, who was also present in the council, to the priest in question, "Methinks, brother, that you were more severe to your

unlearned hearers than you ought to have been, and did not at first, conformably to the Apostolic rule, give them the milk of more easy doctrine, till, being by degrees nourished with the Word of God, they should be capable of receiving that which is more perfect and of performing the higher precepts of God." Having heard these words, all present turned their attention to him and began diligently to weigh what he had said, and they decided that he was worthy to be made a bishop, and that he was the man who ought to be sent to instruct the unbelieving and unlearned; since he was found to be endued preeminently with the grace of discretion, which is the mother of the virtues. So they ordained him and sent him forth to preach; and, as time went on, his other virtues became apparent, as well as that temperate discretion which had marked him at first.

CHAPTER 3.6: OF KING OSWALD'S WONDERFUL PIETY AND RELIGION. (AD 635–642)

King Oswald, with the English nation which he governed, being instructed by the teaching of this bishop, not only learned to hope for a heavenly kingdom unknown to his fathers, but also obtained of the one God, Who made heaven and earth, a greater earthly kingdom than any of his ancestors. In brief, he brought under his dominion all the nations and provinces of Britain, which are divided into four languages, to wit, those of the Britons, the Picts, the Scots, and the English. Though raised to that height of regal power, wonderful to relate, he was always humble, kind, and generous to the poor and to strangers. To give one instance, it is told, that when he was once sitting at dinner, on the holy day of Easter, with the aforesaid bishop, and a silver dish full of royal dainties was set before him, and they were just about to put forth their hands to bless the bread, the servant, whom he had appointed to relieve the needy, came in on a sudden, and told the king, that a great multitude of poor folk from all parts was sitting in the streets begging alms of the king; he immediately ordered the meat set before him to be carried to the poor, and the dish to be broken in pieces and divided among them. At which sight, the bishop who sat by him, greatly rejoicing at such an act of piety, clasped his right hand and said, "May this hand never decay." This fell out according to his prayer, for his hands with the arms being cut off from his body, when he was slain in battle, remain uncorrupted to this day, and are kept in a silver shrine, as revered relics, in St. Peter's church in the royal city, which has taken its name from Bebba, one of its former

queens. Through this king's exertions the provinces of the Deiri and the Bernicians, which till then had been at variance, were peacefully united and moulded into one people. He was nephew to King Edwin through his sister Acha; and it was fit that so great a predecessor should have in his own family such an one to succeed him in his religion and sovereignty.

CHAPTER 3.7: HOW THE WEST SAXONS RECEIVED THE WORD OF GOD BY THE PREACHING OF BIRINUS; AND OF HIS SUCCESSORS, AGILBERT AND LEUTHERIUS. (AD 635–670)

At that time, the West Saxons, formerly called Gewissae, in the reign of Cynegils, received the faith of Christ, through the preaching of Bishop Birinus, who came into Britain by the counsel of Pope Honorius; having promised in his presence that he would sow the seed of the holy faith in the farthest inland regions of the English, where no other teacher had been before him. Hereupon at the bidding of the Pope he received episcopal consecration from Asterius, bishop of Genoa; but on his arrival in Britain, he first came to the nation of the Gewissae, and finding all in that place confirmed pagans, he thought it better to preach the Word there, than to proceed further to seek for other hearers of his preaching. Now, as he was spreading the Gospel in the aforesaid province, it happened that when the king himself, having received instruction as a catechumen, was being baptized together with his people, Oswald, the most holy and victorious king of the Northumbrians, being present, received him as he came forth from baptism, and by an honourable alliance most acceptable to God, first adopted as his son, thus born again and dedicated to God, the man whose daughter he was about to receive in marriage. The two kings gave to the bishop the city called Dorcic, there to establish his episcopal see; where having built and consecrated churches, and by his pious labours called many to the Lord, he departed to the Lord, and was buried in the same city; but many years after, when Haedde was bishop, he was translated thence to the city of Venta, and laid in the church of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul.

When the king died, his son Coinwalch succeeded him on the throne, but refused to receive the faith and the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom; and not long after he lost also the dominion of his earthly kingdom; for he put away the sister of Penda, king of the Mercians, whom he had married, and took another wife; whereupon a war ensuing, he was by him deprived of his kingdom, and withdrew to Anna, king of the East Angles, where he lived

three years in banishment, and learned and received the true faith; for the king, with whom he lived in his banishment, was a good man, and happy in a good and saintly offspring, as we shall show hereafter. But when Coinwalch was restored to his kingdom, there came into that province out of Ireland, a certain bishop called Agilbert, a native of Gaul, but who had then lived a long time in Ireland, for the purpose of reading the Scriptures. He attached himself to the king, and voluntarily undertook the ministry of preaching. The king, observing his learning and industry, desired him to accept an episcopal see there and remain as the bishop of his people. Agilbert complied with the request, and presided over that nation as their bishop for many years. At length the king, who understood only the language of the Saxons, weary of his barbarous tongue, privately brought into the province another bishop, speaking his own language, by name Wini, who had also been ordained in Gaul; and dividing his province into two dioceses, appointed this last his episcopal see in the city of Venta, by the Saxons called Wintancaestir. Agilbert, being highly offended, that the king should do this without consulting him, returned into Gaul, and being made bishop of the city of Paris, died there, being old and full of days. Not many years after his departure out of Britain, Wini was also expelled from his bishopric by the same king, and took refuge with Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, of whom he purchased for money the see of the city of London, and remained bishop thereof till his death. Thus the province of the West Saxons continued no small time without a bishop.

During which time, the aforesaid king of that nation, sustaining repeatedly very great losses in his kingdom from his enemies, at length bethought himself, that as he had been before expelled from the throne for his unbelief, he had been restored when he acknowledged the faith of Christ; and he perceived that his kingdom, being deprived of a bishop, was justly deprived also of the Divine protection. He, therefore, sent messengers into Gaul to Agilbert, with humble apologies entreating him to return to the bishopric of his nation. But he excused himself, and protested that he could not go, because he was bound to the bishopric of his own city and diocese; notwithstanding, in order to give him some help in answer to his earnest request, he sent thither in his stead the priest Leutherius, his nephew, to be ordained as his bishop, if he thought fit, saying that he thought him worthy of a bishopric. The king and the people received him honourably, and asked

Theodore, then Archbishop of Canterbury, to consecrate him as their bishop. He was accordingly consecrated in the same city, and many years diligently governed the whole bishopric of the West Saxons by synodical authority.

CHAPTER 3.8: HOW EARCONBERT, KING OF KENT, ORDERED THE IDOLS TO BE DESTROYED; AND OF HIS DAUGHTER EARCONGOTA, AND HIS KINSWOMAN ETHELBERG, VIRGINS CONSECRATED TO GOD. (AD 640)

In the year of our Lord 640, Eadbald, king of Kent, departed this life, and left his kingdom to his son Earconbert, who governed it most nobly twenty-four years and some months. He was the first of the English kings that of his supreme authority commanded the idols throughout his whole kingdom to be forsaken and destroyed, and the fast of forty days to be observed; and that the same might not be lightly neglected, he appointed fitting and condign punishments for the offenders. His daughter Earcongota, as became the offspring of such a parent, was a most virtuous virgin, serving God in a monastery in the country of the Franks, built by a most noble abbess, named Fara, at a place called In Brige; for at that time but few monasteries had been built in the country of the Angles, and many were wont, for the sake of monastic life, to repair to the monasteries of the Franks or Gauls; and they also sent their daughters there to be instructed, and united to their Heavenly Bridegroom, especially in the monasteries of Brige, of Cale, and Andilegum. Among whom was also Saethryth, daughter of the wife of Anna, king of the East Angles, above mentioned; and Ethelberg, the king's own daughter; both of whom, though strangers, were for their virtue made abbesses of the monastery of Brige. Sexburg, that king's elder daughter, wife to Earconbert, king of Kent, had a daughter called Earcongota, of whom we are about to speak.

Many wonderful works and miracles of this virgin, dedicated to God, are to this day related by the inhabitants of that place; but for us it shall suffice to say something briefly of her departure out of this world to the heavenly kingdom. The day of her summoning drawing near, she began to visit in the monastery the cells of the infirm handmaidens of Christ, and particularly those that were of a great age, or most noted for their virtuous life, and humbly commending herself to their prayers, she let them know that her death was at hand, as she had learnt by revelation, which she said she had received in this manner. She had seen a band of men, clothed in white, come

into the monastery, and being asked by her what they wanted, and what they did there, they answered, "They had been sent thither to carry away with them the gold coin that had been brought thither from Kent. Towards the close of that same night, as morning began to dawn, leaving the darkness of this world, she departed to the light of heaven. Many of the brethren of that monastery who were in other houses, declared they had then plainly heard choirs of singing angels, and, as it were, the sound of a multitude entering the monastery.

Whereupon going out immediately to see what it might be, they beheld a great light coming down from heaven, which bore that holy soul, set loose from the bonds of the flesh, to the eternal joys of the celestial country. They also tell of other miracles that were wrought that night in the same monastery by the power of God; but as we must proceed to other matters, we leave them to be related by those whose concern they are. The body of this venerable virgin and bride of Christ was buried in the church of the blessed protomartyr, Stephen. It was thought fit, three days after, to take up the stone that covered the tomb, and to raise it higher in the same place, and whilst they were doing this, so sweet a fragrance rose from below, that it seemed to all the brethren and sisters there present, as if a store of balsam had been opened.

Her aunt also, Ethelberg, of whom we have spoken, preserved the glory, acceptable to God, of perpetual virginity, in a life of great self-denial, but the extent of her virtue became more conspicuous after her death. Whilst she was abbess, she began to build in her monastery a church, in honour of all the Apostles, wherein she desired that her body should be buried; but when that work was advanced half way, she was prevented by death from finishing it, and was buried in the place in the church which she had chosen. After her death, the brothers occupied themselves with other things, and this structure was left untouched for seven years, at the expiration whereof they resolved, by reason of the greatness of the work, wholly to abandon the building of the church, and to remove the abbess's bones thence to some other church that was finished and consecrated. On opening her tomb, they found the body as untouched by decay as it had been free from the corruption of carnal concupiscence, and having washed it again and clothed it in other garments, they removed it to the church of the blessed Stephen, the Martyr. And her festival is wont to be celebrated there with much honour on the 7th of July.

CHAPTER 3.9: HOW MIRACLES OF HEALING HAVE BEEN FREQUENTLY WROUGHT IN THE PLACE WHERE KING OSWALD WAS KILLED; AND HOW, FIRST, A TRAVELLER'S HORSE WAS RESTORED AND AFTERWARDS A YOUNG GIRL CURED OF THE PALSY. (AD 642)

Oswald, the most Christian king of the Northumbrians, reigned nine years, including that year which was held accursed for the barbarous cruelty of the king of the Britons and the reckless apostacy of the English kings; for, as was said above, it is agreed by the unanimous consent of all, that the names and memory of the apostates should be erased from the catalogue of the Christian kings, and no year assigned to their reign. After which period, Oswald was killed in a great battle, by the same pagan nation and pagan king of the Mercians, who had slain his predecessor Edwin, at a place called in the English tongue Maserfelth, in the thirty-eighth year of his age, on the fifth day of the month of August. How great his faith was towards God, and how remarkable his devotion, has been made evident by miracles even after his death; for, in the place where he was killed by the pagans, fighting for his country, sick men and cattle are frequently healed to this day. Whence it came to pass that many took up the very dust of the place where his body fell, and putting it into water, brought much relief with it to their friends who were sick. This custom came so much into use, that the earth being carried away by degrees, a hole was made as deep as the height of a man. Nor is it surprising that the sick should be healed in the place where he died; for, whilst he lived, he never ceased to provide for the poor and the sick, and to bestow alms on them, and assist them. Many miracles are said to have been wrought in that place, or with the dust carried from it; but we have thought it sufficient to mention two, which we have heard from our elders.

It happened, not long after his death, that a man was travelling on horseback near that place, when his horse on a sudden fell sick, stood still, hung his head, and foamed at the mouth, and, at length, as his pain increased, he fell to the ground; the rider dismounted, and taking off his saddle, waited to see whether the beast would recover or die. At length, after writhing for a long time in extreme anguish, the horse happened in his struggles to come to the very place where the great king died. Immediately the pain abated, the beast ceased from his frantic kicking, and, after the manner of horses, as if resting from his weariness, he rolled from side to side, and then starting up, perfectly recovered, began to graze hungrily on the green herbage. The rider

observing this, and being an intelligent man, concluded that there must be some wonderful sanctity in the place where the horse had been healed, and he marked the spot. After which he again mounted his horse, and went on to the inn where he intended to stop. On his arrival he found a girl, niece to the landlord, who had long been sick of the palsy; and when the members of the household, in his presence, lamented the girl's grievous calamity, he gave them an account of the place where his horse had been cured. In brief, she was put into a wagon and carried to the place and laid down there. At first she slept awhile, and when she awoke, found herself healed of her infirmity. Upon which she called for water, washed her face, arranged her hair, put a kerchief on her head, and returned home on foot, in good health, with those who had brought her.

CHAPTER 3.10: HOW THE DUST OF THAT PLACE PREVAILED AGAINST FIRE. [AFTER 642 A.D.]

About the same time, another traveller, a Briton, as is reported, happened to pass by the same place, where the aforesaid battle was fought. Observing one particular spot of ground greener and more beautiful than any other part of the field, he had the wisdom to infer that the cause of the unusual greenness in that place must be that some person of greater holiness than any other in the army had been killed there. He therefore took along with him some of the dust of that piece of ground, tying it up in a linen cloth, supposing, as was indeed the case, that it would be of use for curing sick people, and proceeding on his journey, came in the evening to a certain village, and entered a house where the villagers were feasting at supper. Being received by the owners of the house, he sat down with them at the entertainment, hanging the cloth, with the dust which he had carried in it, on a post in the wall. They sat long at supper and drank deep. Now there was a great fire in the middle of the room, and it happened that the sparks flew up and caught the roof of the house, which being made of wattles and thatch, was suddenly wrapped in flames; the guests ran out in panic and confusion, but they were not able to save the burning house, which was rapidly being destroyed. Wherefore the house was burnt down, and only that post on which the dust hung in the linen cloth remained safe and untouched by the fire. When they beheld this miracle, they were all amazed, and inquiring into it diligently, learned that the dust had been taken from the place where the blood of King Oswald had been shed. These wonderful works being made known and re-

ported abroad, many began daily to resort to that place, and received the blessing of health for themselves and their friends.

CHAPTER 3.11: HOW A LIGHT FROM HEAVEN STOOD ALL NIGHT OVER HIS RELICS, AND HOW THOSE POSSESSED WITH DEVILS WERE HEALED BY THEM. (AD 679–697)

Among the rest, I think we ought not to pass over in silence the miracles and signs from Heaven that were shown when King Oswald's bones were found, and translated into the church where they are now preserved. This was done by the zealous care of Osthryth, queen of the Mercians, the daughter of his brother Oswy, who reigned after him, as shall be said hereafter. There is a famous monastery in the province of Lindsey, called Beardaneu, which that queen and her husband Ethelred greatly loved and venerated, conferring upon it many honours. It was here that she was desirous to lay the revered bones of her uncle. When the wagon in which those bones were carried arrived towards evening at the aforesaid monastery, they that were in it were unwilling to admit them, because, though they knew him to be a holy man, yet, as he was a native of another province, and had obtained the sovereignty over them, they retained their ancient aversion to him even after his death. Thus it came to pass that the relics were left in the open air all that night, with only a large tent spread over the wagon which contained them. But it was revealed by a sign from Heaven with how much reverence they ought to be received by all the faithful; for all that night, a pillar of light, reaching from the wagon up to heaven, was visible in almost every part of the province of Lindsey. Hereupon, in the morning, the brethren of that monastery who had refused it the day before, began themselves earnestly to pray that those holy relics, beloved of God, might be laid among them. Accordingly, the bones, being washed, were put into a shrine which they had made for that purpose, and placed in the church, with due honour; and that there might be a perpetual memorial of the royal character of this holy man, they hung up over the monument his banner of gold and purple. Then they poured out the water in which they had washed the bones, in a corner of the cemetery. From that time, the very earth which received that holy water, had the power of saving grace in casting out devils from the bodies of persons possessed.

Lastly, when the aforesaid queen afterwards abode some time in that monastery, there came to visit her a certain venerable abbess, who is still living, called Ethelhild, the sister of the holy men, Ethelwin and Aldwin, the

first of whom was bishop in the province of Lindsey, the other abbot of the monastery of Peartaneu; not far from which was the monastery of Ethelhild. When this lady was come, in a conversation between her and the queen, the discourse, among other things, turning upon Oswald, she said, that she also had that night seen the light over his relics reaching up to heaven. The queen thereupon added, that the very dust of the pavement on which the water that washed the bones had been poured out, had already healed many sick persons. The abbess thereupon desired that some of that health-bringing dust might be given her, and, receiving it, she tied it up in a cloth, and, putting it into a casket, returned home. Some time after, when she was in her monastery, there came to it a guest, who was wont often in the night to be on a sudden grievously tormented with an unclean spirit; he being hospitably entertained, when he had gone to bed after supper, was suddenly seized by the Devil, and began to cry out, to gnash his teeth, to foam at the mouth, and to writhe and distort his limbs. None being able to hold or bind him, the servant ran, and knocking at the door, told the abbess.

She, opening the monastery door, went out herself with one of the nuns to the men's apartment, and calling a priest, desired that he would go with her to the sufferer. Being come thither, and seeing many present, who had not been able, by their efforts, to hold the tormented person and restrain his convulsive movements, the priest used exorcisms, and did all that he could to assuage the madness of the unfortunate man, but, though he took much pains, he could not prevail. When no hope appeared of easing him in his ravings, the abbess bethought herself of the dust, and immediately bade her handmaiden go and fetch her the casket in which it was. As soon as she came with it, as she had been bidden, and was entering the hall of the house, in the inner part whereof the possessed person was writhing in torment, he suddenly became silent, and laid down his head, as if he had been falling asleep, stretching out all his limbs to rest. "Silence fell upon all and intent they gazed," anxiously waiting to see the end of the matter. And after about the space of an hour the man that had been tormented sat up, and fetching a deep sigh, said, "Now I am whole, for I am restored to my senses.

They earnestly inquired how that came to pass, and he answered, "As soon as that maiden drew near the hall of this house, with the casket she brought, all the evil spirits that vexed me departed and left me, and were no more to be seen. Then the abbess gave him a little of that dust, and the priest having

prayed, he passed that night in great peace; nor was he, from that time forward, alarmed by night, or in any way troubled by his old enemy.

CHAPTER 3.12: HOW A LITTLE BOY WAS CURED OF A FEVER AT HIS TOMB

Some time after, there was a certain little boy in the said monastery, who had been long grievously troubled with a fever; he was one day anxiously expecting the hour when his fit was to come on, when one of the brothers, coming in to him, said, "Shall I tell you, my son, how you may be cured of this sickness? Rise, enter the church, and go close to Oswald's tomb; sit down and stay there quiet and do not leave it; do not come away, or stir from the place, till the time is past, when the fever leaves you: then I will go in and fetch you away. The boy did as he was advised, and the disease durst not assail him as he sat by the saint's tomb; but fled in such fear that it did not dare to touch him, either the second or third day, or ever after. The brother that came from thence, and told me this, added, that at the time when he was talking with me, the young man was then still living in the monastery, on whom, when a boy, that miracle of healing had been wrought. Nor need we wonder that the prayers of that king who is now reigning with our Lord, should be very efficacious with Him, since he, whilst yet governing his temporal kingdom, was always wont to pray and labour more for that which is eternal. Nay, it is said, that he often continued in prayer from the hour of morning thanksgiving till it was day;

and that by reason of his constant custom of praying or giving thanks to God, he was wont always, wherever he sat, to hold his hands on his knees with the palms turned upwards. It is also commonly affirmed and has passed into a proverb, that he ended his life in prayer; for when he was beset with the weapons of his enemies, and perceived that death was at hand, he prayed for the souls of his army. Whence it is proverbially said, " 'Lord have mercy on their souls,' said Oswald, as he fell to the ground." Now his bones were translated to the monastery which we have mentioned, and buried therein: but the king who slew him commanded his head, and hands, with the arms, to be cut off from the body, and set upon stakes. But his successor in the throne, Oswy, coming thither the next year with his army, took them down, and buried his head in the cemetery of the church of Lindisfarne, and the hands and arms in his royal city.

CHAPTER 3.13: HOW A CERTAIN PERSON IN IRELAND WAS RESTORED, WHEN AT THE POINT OF DEATH, BY HIS RELICS

Nor was the fame of the renowned Oswald confined to Britain, but, spreading rays of healing light even beyond the sea, reached also to Germany and Ireland. For the most reverend prelate, Acca, is wont to relate, that when, in his journey to Rome, he and his bishop Wilfrid stayed some time with Wilbrord, the holy archbishop of the Frisians, he often heard him tell of the wonders which had been wrought in that province at the relics of that most worshipful king. And he used to say that in Ireland, when, being yet only a priest, he led the life of a stranger and pilgrim for love of the eternal country, the fame of that king's sanctity was already spread far and near in that island also. One of the miracles, among the rest, which he related, we have thought fit to insert in this our history. "At the time," said he, "of the plague which made such widespread havoc in Britain and Ireland, among others, a certain scholar of the Scottish race was smitten with the disease, a man learned in the study of letters, but in no way careful or studious of his eternal salvation; who, seeing his death near at hand, began to fear and tremble lest, as soon as he was dead, he should be hurried away to the prison-house of Hell for his sins. He called me, for I was near, and trembling and sighing in his weakness, with a lamentable voice made his complaint to me, after this manner: 'You see that my bodily distress increases, and that I am now reduced to the point of death. Nor do I question but that after the death of my body, I shall be immediately snatched away to the everlasting death of my soul, and cast into the torments of hell, since for a long time, amidst all my reading of divine books, I have suffered myself to be ensnared by sin, instead of keeping the commandments of God. But it is my resolve, if the Divine Mercy shall grant me a new term of life, to correct my sinful habits, and wholly to devote anew my mind and life to obedience to the Divine will.

But I know that I have no merits of my own whereby to obtain a prolongation of life, nor can I hope to have it, unless it shall please God to forgive me, wretched and unworthy of pardon as I am, through the help of those who have faithfully served him. We have heard, and the report is widespread, that there was in your nation a king, of wonderful sanctity, called Oswald, the excellency of whose faith and virtue has been made famous even after his death by the working of many miracles. I beseech you, if you have any relics of his in your keeping, that you will bring them to me; if haply the

Lord shall be pleased, through his merits, to have mercy on me. I answered, 'I have indeed a part of the stake on which his head was set up by the pagans, when he was killed, and if you believe with steadfast heart, the Divine mercy may, through the merits of so great a man, both grant you a longer term of life here, and render you worthy to be admitted into eternal life. He answered immediately that he had entire faith therein. Then I blessed some water, and put into it a splinter of the aforesaid oak, and gave it to the sick man to drink. He presently found ease, and, recovering of his sickness, lived a long time after;

and, being entirely converted to God in heart and deed, wherever he went, he spoke of the goodness of his merciful Creator, and the honour of His faithful servant."

CHAPTER 3.14: HOW ON THE DEATH OF PAULINUS, ITHAMAR WAS MADE BISHOP OF ROCHESTER IN HIS STEAD; AND OF THE WONDERFUL HUMILITY OF KING OSWIN, WHO WAS CRUELLY SLAIN BY OSWY. (AD 644–651)

Oswald being translated to the heavenly kingdom, his brother Oswy, a young man of about thirty years of age, succeeded him on the throne of his earthly kingdom, and held it twenty-eight years with much trouble, being attacked by the pagan nation of the Mercians, that had slain his brother, as also by his son Alchfrid, and by his nephew Oidilwald, the son of his brother who reigned before him. In his second year, that is, in the year of our Lord 644, the most reverend Father Paulinus, formerly Bishop of York, but at that time Bishop of the city of Rochester, departed to the Lord, on the 10th day of October, having held the office of a bishop nineteen years, two months, and twenty-one days; and was buried in the sacristy of the blessed Apostle Andrew, which King Ethelbert had built from the foundation, in the same city of Rochester. In his place, Archbishop Honorius ordained Ithamar, of the Kentish nation, but not inferior to his predecessors in learning and conduct of life.

Oswy, during the first part of his reign, had a partner in the royal dignity called Oswin, of the race of King Edwin, and son to Osric of whom we have spoken above, a man of wonderful piety and devotion, who governed the province of the Deiri seven years in very great prosperity, and was himself beloved by all men. But Oswy, who governed all the other northern part of the nation beyond the Humber, that is, the province of the Bernicians, could not

live at peace with him; and at last, when the causes of their disagreement increased, he murdered him most cruelly. For when each had raised an army against the other, Oswin perceived that he could not maintain a war against his enemy who had more auxiliaries than himself, and he thought it better at that time to lay aside all thoughts of engaging, and to reserve himself for better times. He therefore disbanded the army which he had assembled, and ordered all his men to return to their own homes, from the place that is called Wilfaraesdun, that is, Wilfar's Hill, which is about ten miles distant from the village called Cataract, towards the north-west. He himself, with only one trusty thegn, whose name was Tondhere, withdrew and lay concealed in the house of Hunwald, a noble, whom he imagined to be his most assured friend. But, alas! it was far otherwise; for Hunwald betrayed him, and Oswy, by the hands of his reeve, Ethilwin, foully slew him and the thegn aforesaid. This happened on the 20th of August, in the ninth year of his reign, at a place called Ingetlingum, where afterwards, to atone for this crime, a monastery was built, wherein prayers should be daily offered up to God for the redemption of the souls of both kings, to wit, of him that was murdered, and of him that commanded the murder.

King Oswin was of a goodly countenance, and tall of stature, pleasant in discourse, and courteous in behaviour; and bountiful to all, gentle and simple alike; so that he was beloved by all men for the royal dignity of his mind and appearance and actions, and men of the highest rank came from almost all provinces to serve him. Among all the graces of virtue and moderation by which he was distinguished and, if I may say so, blessed in a special manner, humility is said to have been the greatest, which it will suffice to prove by one instance. He had given a beautiful horse to Bishop Aidan, to use either in crossing rivers, or in performing a journey upon any urgent necessity, though the Bishop was wont to travel ordinarily on foot. Some short time after, a poor man meeting the Bishop, and asking alms, he immediately dismounted, and ordered the horse, with all his royal trappings, to be given to the beggar; for he was very compassionate, a great friend to the poor, and, in a manner, the father of the wretched. This being told to the king, when they were going in to dinner, he said to the Bishop, "What did you mean, my lord Bishop, by giving the poor man that royal horse, which it was fitting that you should have for your own use? Had not we many other horses of less value, or things of other sorts, which would have been good enough to give

to the poor, instead of giving that horse, which I had chosen and set apart for your own use? Thereupon the Bishop answered, "What do you say, O king? Is that son of a mare more dear to you than that son of God? Upon this they went in to dinner, and the Bishop sat in his place; but the king, who had come in from hunting, stood warming himself, with his attendants, at the fire.

Then, on a sudden, whilst he was warming himself, calling to mind what the bishop had said to him, he ungirt his sword, and gave it to a servant, and hastened to the Bishop and fell down at his feet, beseeching him to forgive him; "For from this time forward," said he, "I will never speak any more of this, nor will I judge of what or how much of our money you shall give to the sons of God. The bishop was much moved at this sight, and starting up, raised him, saying that he was entirely reconciled to him, if he would but sit down to his meat, and lay aside all sorrow. The king, at the bishop's command and request, was comforted, but the bishop, on the other hand, grew sad and was moved even to tears. His priest then asking him, in the language of his country, which the king and his servants did not understand, why he wept, "I know," said he, "that the king will not live long; for I never before saw a humble king; whence I perceive that he will soon be snatched out of this life, because this nation is not worthy of such a ruler. Not long after, the bishop's gloomy foreboding was fulfilled by the king's sad death, as has been said above.

But Bishop Aidan himself was also taken out of this world, not more than twelve days after the death of the king he loved, on the 31st of August, to receive the eternal reward of his labours from the Lord.

CHAPTER 3.15: HOW BISHOP AIDAN FORETOLD TO CERTAIN SEAMEN THAT A STORM WOULD ARISE, AND GAVE THEM SOME HOLY OIL TO CALM IT. [BETWEEN 642 AND 645 A.D.]

How great the merits of Aidan were, was made manifest by the Judge of the heart, with the testimony of miracles, whereof it will suffice to mention three, that they may not be forgotten. A certain priest, whose name was Utta, a man of great weight and sincerity, and on that account honoured by all men, even the princes of the world, was sent to Kent, to bring thence, as wife for King Oswy, Eanfled, the daughter of King Edwin, who had been carried thither when her father was killed. Intending to go thither by land, but to return with the maiden by sea, he went to Bishop Aidan, and en-

treated him to offer up his prayers to the Lord for him and his company, who were then to set out on so long a journey. He, blessing them, and commending them to the Lord, at the same time gave them some holy oil, saying, "I know that when you go on board ship, you will meet with a storm and contrary wind; but be mindful to cast this oil I give you into the sea, and the wind will cease immediately; you will have pleasant calm weather to attend you and send you home by the way that you desire."

All these things fell out in order, even as the bishop had foretold. For first, the waves of the sea raged, and the sailors endeavoured to ride it out at anchor, but all to no purpose; for the sea sweeping over the ship on all sides and beginning to fill it with water, they all perceived that death was at hand and about to overtake them. The priest at last, remembering the bishop's words, laid hold of the phial and cast some of the oil into the sea, which at once, as had been foretold, ceased from its uproar. Thus it came to pass that the man of God, by the spirit of prophecy, foretold the storm that was to come to pass, and by virtue of the same spirit, though absent in the body, calmed it when it had arisen. The story of this miracle was not told me by a person of little credit, but by Cynimund, a most faithful priest of our church, who declared that it was related to him by Utta, the priest, in whose case and through whom the same was wrought.

CHAPTER 3.16: HOW THE SAME AIDAN, BY HIS PRAYERS, SAVED THE ROYAL CITY WHEN IT WAS FIRED BY THE ENEMY [BEFORE 651 A.D.]

Another notable miracle of the same father is related by many such as were likely to have knowledge thereof; for during the time that he was bishop, the hostile army of the Mercians, under the command of Penda, cruelly ravaged the country of the Northumbrians far and near, even to the royal city, which has its name from Bebba, formerly its queen. Not being able to take it by storm or by siege, he endeavoured to burn it down; and having pulled down all the villages in the neighbourhood of the city, he brought thither an immense quantity of beams, rafters, partitions, wattles and thatch, wherewith he encompassed the place to a great height on the land side, and when he found the wind favourable, he set fire to it and attempted to burn the town. At that time, the most reverend Bishop Aidan was dwelling in the Isle of Farne, which is about two miles from the city; for thither he was wont often to retire to pray in solitude and silence; and, indeed, this lonely dwelling of his is to this day shown in that island. When he saw the flames of fire and the

smoke carried by the wind rising above the city walls, he is said to have lifted up his eyes and hands to heaven, and cried with tears, "Behold, Lord, how great evil is wrought by Penda!" These words were hardly uttered, when the wind immediately veering from the city, drove back the flames upon those who had kindled them, so that some being hurt, and all afraid, they forebore any further attempts against the city, which they perceived to be protected by the hand of God.

CHAPTER 3.17: HOW A PROP OF THE CHURCH ON WHICH BISHOP AIDAN WAS LEANING WHEN HE DIED, COULD NOT BE CONSUMED WHEN THE REST OF THE CHURCH WAS ON FIRE; AND CONCERNING HIS INWARD LIFE. (AD 651)

Aidan was in the king's township, not far from the city of which we have spoken above, at the time when death caused him to quit the body, after he had been bishop sixteen years; for having a church and a chamber in that place, he was wont often to go and stay there, and to make excursions from it to preach in the country round about, which he likewise did at other of the king's townships, having nothing of his own besides his church and a few fields about it. When he was sick they set up a tent for him against the wall at the west end of the church, and so it happened that he breathed his last, leaning against a buttress that was on the outside of the church to strengthen the wall. He died in the seventeenth year of his episcopate, on the 31st of August. His body was thence presently translated to the isle of Lindisfarne, and buried in the cemetery of the brethren. Some time after, when a larger church was built there and dedicated in honour of the blessed prince of the Apostles, his bones were translated thither, and laid on the right side of the altar, with the respect due to so great a prelate.

Finan, who had likewise been sent thither from Hii, the island monastery of the Scots, succeeded him, and continued no small time in the bishopric. It happened some years after, that Penda, king of the Mercians, coming into these parts with a hostile army, destroyed all he could with fire and sword, and the village where the bishop died, along with the church above mentioned, was burnt down; but it fell out in a wonderful manner that the buttress against which he had been leaning when he died, could not be consumed by the fire which devoured all about it. This miracle being noised abroad, the church was soon rebuilt in the same place, and that same buttress was set up on the outside, as it had been before, to strengthen the wall. It

happened again, some time after, that the village and likewise the church were carelessly burned down the second time. Then again, the fire could not touch the buttress; and, miraculously, though the fire broke through the very holes of the nails wherewith it was fixed to the building, yet it could do no hurt to the buttress itself. When therefore the church was built there the third time, they did not, as before, place that buttress on the outside as a support of the building, but within the church, as a memorial of the miracle; where the people coming in might kneel, and implore the Divine mercy. And it is well known that since then many have found grace and been healed in that same place, as also that by means of splinters cut off from the buttress, and put into water, many more have obtained a remedy for their own infirmities and those of their friends.

I have written thus much concerning the character and works of the aforesaid Aidan, in no way commending or approving his lack of wisdom with regard to the observance of Easter; nay, heartily detesting it, as I have most manifestly proved in the book I have written, "De Temporibus"; but, like an impartial historian, unreservedly relating what was done by or through him, and commending such things as are praiseworthy in his actions, and preserving the memory thereof for the benefit of the readers; to wit, his love of peace and charity; of continence and humility; his mind superior to anger and avarice, and despising pride and vainglory; his industry in keeping and teaching the Divine commandments, his power of study and keeping vigil; his priestly authority in reproving the haughty and powerful, and at the same time his tenderness in comforting the afflicted, and relieving or defending the poor. To be brief, so far as I have learnt from those that knew him, he took care to neglect none of those things which he found in the Gospels and the writings of Apostles and prophets, but to the utmost of his power endeavoured to fulfil them all in his deeds.

These things I greatly admire and love in the aforesaid bishop, because I do not doubt that they were pleasing to God; but I do not approve or praise his observance of Easter at the wrong time, either through ignorance of the canonical time appointed, or, if he knew it, being prevailed on by the authority of his nation not to adopt it. Yet this I approve in him, that in the celebration of his Easter, the object which he had at heart and reverenced and preached was the same as ours, to wit, the redemption of mankind, through the Passion, Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven of the Man

Christ Jesus, who is the mediator between God and man. And therefore he always celebrated Easter, not as some falsely imagine, on the fourteenth of the moon, like the Jews, on any day of the week, but on the Lord's day, from the fourteenth to the twentieth of the moon; and this he did from his belief that the Resurrection of our Lord happened on the first day of the week, and for the hope of our resurrection, which also he, with the holy Church, believed would truly happen on that same first day of the week, now called the Lord's day.

CHAPTER 3.18: OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF THE RELIGIOUS KING SIGBERT. [CIRC. 631 A.D.]

At this time, the kingdom of the East Angles, after the death of Earpwald, the successor of Redwald, was governed by his brother Sigbert, a good and religious man, who some time before had been baptized in Gaul, whilst he lived in banishment, a fugitive from the enmity of Redwald. When he returned home, as soon as he ascended the throne, being desirous to imitate the good institutions which he had seen in Gaul, he founded a school wherein boys should be taught letters, and was assisted therein by Bishop Felix, who came to him from Kent, and who furnished them with masters and teachers after the manner of the people of Kent. This king became so great a lover of the heavenly kingdom, that at last, quitting the affairs of his kingdom, and committing them to his kinsman Ecgric, who before had a share in that kingdom, he entered a monastery, which he had built for himself, and having received the tonsure, applied himself rather to do battle for a heavenly throne. A long time after this, it happened that the nation of the Mercians, under King Penda, made war on the East Angles; who finding themselves no match for their enemy, entreated Sigbert to go with them to battle, to encourage the soldiers. He was unwilling and refused, upon which they drew him against his will out of the monastery, and carried him to the army, hoping that the soldiers would be less afraid and less disposed to flee in the presence of one who had formerly been an active and distinguished commander. But he, still mindful of his profession, surrounded, as he was, by a royal army, would carry nothing in his hand but a wand, and was killed with King Ecgric; and the pagans pressing on, all their army was either slaughtered or dispersed.

They were succeeded in the kingdom by Anna, the son of Eni, of the blood royal, a good man, and the father of good children, of whom, in the

proper place, we shall speak hereafter. He also was afterwards slain like his predecessors by the same pagan chief of the Mercians.

CHAPTER 3.19: HOW FURSA BUILT A MONASTERY AMONG THE EAST ANGLES, AND OF HIS VISIONS AND SANCTITY, TO WHICH, HIS FLESH REMAINING UNCORRUPTED AFTER DEATH BORE TESTIMONY. [CIRC. 633 A.D.]

Whilst Sigbert still governed the kingdom, there came out of Ireland a holy man called Fursa, renowned both for his words and actions, and remarkable for singular virtues, being desirous to live as a stranger and pilgrim for the Lord's sake, wherever an opportunity should offer. On coming into the province of the East Angles, he was honourably received by the aforesaid king, and performing his wonted task of preaching the Gospel, by the example of his virtue and the influence of his words, converted many unbelievers to Christ, and confirmed in the faith and love of Christ those that already believed. Here he fell into some infirmity of body, and was thought worthy to see a vision of angels; in which he was admonished diligently to persevere in the ministry of the Word which he had undertaken, and indefatigably to apply himself to his usual watching and prayers; inasmuch as his end was certain, but the hour thereof uncertain, according to the saying of our Lord, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour." Being confirmed by this vision, he set himself with all speed to build a monastery on the ground which had been given him by King Sigbert, and to establish a rule of life therein. This monastery was pleasantly situated in the woods, near the sea; it was built within the area of a fort, which in the English language is called Cnobheresburg, that is, Cnobhere's Town; afterwards, Anna, king of that province, and certain of the nobles, embellished it with more stately buildings and with gifts.

This man was of noble Scottish blood, but much more noble in mind than in birth. From his boyish years, he had earnestly applied himself to reading sacred books and observing monastic discipline, and, as is most fitting for holy men, he carefully practised all that he learned to be right. Now, in course of time he himself built a monastery, wherein he might with more freedom devote himself to his heavenly studies. There, falling sick, as the book concerning his life clearly informs us, he fell into a trance, and quitting his body from the evening till cockcrow, he was accounted worthy to behold the sight of the choirs of angels, and to hear their glad songs of

praise. He was wont to declare, that among other things he distinctly heard this refrain: "The saints shall go from strength to strength." And again, "The God of gods shall be seen in Sion." Being restored to his body, and again taken from it three days after, he not only saw the greater joys of the blessed, but also fierce conflicts of evil spirits, who by frequent accusations wickedly endeavoured to obstruct his journey to heaven; but the angels protected him, and all their endeavours were in vain. Concerning all these matters, if any one desires to be more fully informed, to wit, with what subtlety of deceit the devils recounted both his actions and idle words, and even his thoughts, as if they had been written down in a book; and what joyous or grievous tidings he learned from the holy angels and just men who appeared to him among the angels; let him read the little book of his life which I have mentioned, and I doubt not that he will thereby reap much spiritual profit.

But there is one thing among the rest, which we have thought it may be beneficial to many to insert in this history. When he had been taken up on high, he was bidden by the angels that conducted him to look back upon the world. Upon which, casting his eyes downward, he saw, as it were, a dark valley in the depths underneath him. He also saw four fires in the air, not far distant from each other. Then asking the angels, what fires those were, he was told, they were the fires which would kindle and consume the world. One of them was of falsehood, when we do not fulfil that which we promised in Baptism, to renounce the Devil and all his works. The next was of covetousness, when we prefer the riches of the world to the love of heavenly things. The third was of discord, when we do not fear to offend our neighbour even in needless things. The fourth was of ruthlessness when we think it a light thing to rob and to defraud the weak. These fires, increasing by degrees, extended so as to meet one another, and united in one immense flame. When it drew near, fearing for himself, he said to the angel, "Lord, behold the fire draws near to me." The angel answered, "That which you did not kindle will not burn you; for though this appears to be a terrible and great pyre, yet it tries every man according to the merits of his works; for every man's concupiscence shall burn in this fire; for as a man burns in the body through unlawful pleasure, so, when set free from the body, he shall burn by the punishment which he has deserved."

Then he saw one of the three angels, who had been his guides throughout both visions, go before and divide the flaming fires, whilst the other two,

flying about on both sides, defended him from the danger of the fire. He also saw devils flying through the fire, raising the flames of war against the just. Then followed accusations of the envious spirits against himself, the defence of the good spirits, and a fuller vision of the heavenly hosts; as also of holy men of his own nation, who, as he had learnt, had worthily held the office of priesthood in old times, and who were known to fame; from whom he heard many things very salutary to himself, and to all others that would listen to them. When they had ended their discourse, and returned to Heaven with the angelic spirits, there remained with the blessed Fursa, the three angels of whom we have spoken before, and who were to bring him back to the body. And when they approached the aforesaid great fire, the angel divided the flame, as he had done before; but when the man of God came to the passage so opened amidst the flames, the unclean spirits, laying hold of one of those whom they were burning in the fire, cast him against him, and, touching his shoulder and jaw, scorched them. He knew the man, and called to mind that he had received his garment when he died.

The holy angel, immediately laying hold of the man, threw him back into the fire, and the malignant enemy said, "Do not reject him whom you before received; for as you received the goods of the sinner, so you ought to share in his punishment. But the angel withstood him, saying, "He did not receive them through avarice, but in order to save his soul. The fire ceased, and the angel, turning to him, said, "That which you kindled burned you; for if you had not received the money of this man that died in his sins, his punishment would not burn you. And he went on to speak with wholesome counsel of what ought to be done for the salvation of such as repented in the hour of death. Being afterwards restored to the body, throughout the whole course of his life he bore the mark of the fire which he had felt in the spirit, visible to all men on his shoulder and jaw; and the flesh openly showed, in a wonderful manner, what the spirit had suffered in secret. He always took care, as he had done before, to teach all men the practice of virtue, as well by his example, as by preaching. But as for the story of his visions, he would only relate them to those who, from desire of repentance, questioned him about them. An aged brother of our monastery is still living, who is wont to relate that a very truthful and religious man told him, that he had seen Fursa himself in the province of the East Angles, and heard those visions from his lips; adding, that though it was in severe winter weather and a hard frost, and the

man was sitting in a thin garment when he told the story, yet he sweated as if it had been in the heat of mid-summer, by reason of the great terror or joy of which he spoke.

To return to what we were saying before, when, after preaching the Word of God many years in Scotland, he could not well endure the disturbance of the crowds that resorted to him, leaving all that he looked upon as his own, he departed from his native island, and came with a few brothers through the Britons into the province of the English, and preaching the Word there, as has been said, built a famous monastery. When this was duly carried out, he became desirous to rid himself of all business of this world, and even of the monastery itself, and forthwith left the care of it and of its souls, to his brother Fullan, and the priests Gobban and Dicull, and being himself free from all worldly affairs, resolved to end his life as a hermit. He had another brother called Ultan, who, after a long monastic probation, had also adopted the life of an anchorite. So, seeking him out alone, he lived a whole year with him in self-denial and prayer, and laboured daily with his hands.

Afterwards seeing the province thrown into confusion by the irruptions of the pagans, and foreseeing that the monasteries would also be in danger, he left all things in order, and sailed over into Gaul, and being there honourably entertained by Clovis, king of the Franks, or by the patrician Ercinwald, he built a monastery in the place called Latineacum, and falling sick not long after, departed this life. The same Ercinwald, the patrician, took his body, and kept it in the porch of a church he was building in his town of Perrona, till the church itself should be dedicated. This happened twenty-seven days after, and the body being taken from the porch, to be re-buried near the altar, was found as whole as if he had died that very hour. And again, four years after, when a more beautiful shrine had been built to receive his body to the east of the altar, it was still found without taint of corruption, and was translated thither with due honour; where it is well known that his merits, through the divine operation, have been declared by many miracles. We have briefly touched upon these matters as well as the incorruption of his body, that the lofty nature of the man may be better known to our readers. All which, as also concerning the comrades of his warfare, whosoever will read it, will find more fully described in the book of his life.

CHAPTER 3.20: HOW, WHEN HONORIUS DIED, DEUSDEDIT BECAME ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY; AND OF THOSE WHO WERE AT THAT TIME BISHOPS OF THE EAST ANGLES, AND OF THE CHURCH OF ROCHESTER. (AD 653)

In the meantime, Felix, bishop of the East Angles, dying, when he had held that see seventeen years, Honorius ordained Thomas his deacon, of the province of the Gyrwas, in his place; and he being taken from this life when he had been bishop five years, Bertgils, surnamed Boniface, of the province of Kent, was appointed in his stead. Honorius himself also, having run his course, departed this life in the year of our Lord 653, on the 30th of September; and when the see had been vacant a year and six months, Deusdedit of the nation of the West Saxons, was chosen the sixth Archbishop of Canterbury. To ordain him, Ithamar, bishop of Rochester, came thither. His ordination was on the 26th of March, and he ruled the church nine years, four months, and two days; and when Ithamar died, he consecrated in his place Damian, who was of the race of the South Saxons.

CHAPTER 3.21: HOW THE PROVINCE OF THE MIDLAND ANGLES BECAME CHRISTIAN UNDER KING PEADA. (AD 653)

At this time, the Middle Angles, that is, the Angles of the Midland country, under their Prince Peada, the son of King Penda, received the faith and mysteries of the truth. Being an excellent youth, and most worthy of the name and office of a king, he was by his father elevated to the throne of that nation, and came to Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, requesting to have his daughter Alchfled given him to wife; but he could not obtain his desire unless he would receive the faith of Christ, and be baptized, with the nation which he governed. When he heard the preaching of the truth, the promise of the heavenly kingdom, and the hope of resurrection and future immortality, he declared that he would willingly become a Christian, even though he should not obtain the maiden; being chiefly prevailed on to receive the faith by King Oswy's son Alchfrid, who was his brother-in-law and friend, for he had married his sister Cyneburg, the daughter of King Penda.

Accordingly he was baptized by Bishop Finan, with all his nobles and thegns, and their servants, that came along with him, at a noted township, belonging to the king, called At the Wall. And having received four priests, who by reason of their learning and good life were deemed proper to instruct and baptize his nation, he returned home with much joy. These priests were

Cedd and Adda, and Betti and Diuma; the last of whom was by nation a Scot, the others English. Adda was brother to Utta, whom we have mentioned before, a renowned priest, and abbot of the monastery which is called At the Goat's Head. The aforesaid priests, arriving in the province with the prince, preached the Word, and were heard willingly; and many, as well of the nobility as the common sort, renouncing the abominations of idolatry, were daily washed in the fountain of the faith.

Nor did King Penda forbid the preaching of the Word even among his people, the Mercians, if any were willing to hear it; but, on the contrary, he hated and despised those whom he perceived to be without the works of faith, when they had once received the faith of Christ, saying, that they were contemptible and wretched who scorned to obey their God, in whom they believed. These things were set on foot two years before the death of King Penda. But when he was slain, and the most Christian king, Oswy, succeeded him in the throne, as we shall hereafter relate, Diuma, one of the aforesaid four priests, was made bishop of the Midland Angles, as also of the Mercians, being ordained by Bishop Finan; for the scarcity of priests made it necessary that one prelate should be set over two nations. Having in a short time gained many people to the Lord, he died among the Midland Angles, in the country called Infeppingum; and Ceollach, also of the Scottish nation, succeeded him in the bishopric. But he, not long after, left his bishopric, and returned to the island of Hii, which, among the Scots, was the chief and head of many monasteries. His successor in the bishopric was Trumhere, a godly man, and trained in the monastic life, an Englishman, but ordained bishop by the Scots. This happened in the days of King Wulfhere, of whom we shall speak hereafter.

CHAPTER 3.22: HOW UNDER KING SIGBERT, THROUGH THE PREACHING OF CEDD, THE EAST SAXONS AGAIN RECEIVED THE FAITH, WHICH THEY HAD BEFORE CAST OFF. (AD 653)

At that time, also, the East Saxons, at the instance of King Oswy, again received the faith, which they had formerly cast off when they expelled Mellitus, their bishop. For Sigbert, who reigned next to Sigbert surnamed The Little, was then king of that nation, and a friend to King Oswy, who, when Sigbert came to the province of the Northumbrians to visit him, as he often did, used to endeavour to convince him that those could not be gods that had been made by the hands of men; that a stock or a stone could not be

proper matter to form a god, the residue whereof was either burned in the fire, or framed into any vessels for the use of men, or else was cast out as refuse, trampled on and turned into dust. That God is rather to be understood as incomprehensible in majesty and invisible to human eyes, almighty, eternal, the Creator of heaven and earth and of mankind; Who governs and will judge the world in righteousness, Whose eternal abode must be believed to be in Heaven, and not in base and perishable metal; and that it ought in reason to be concluded, that all those who learn and do the will of Him by Whom they were created, will receive from Him eternal rewards. King Oswy having often, with friendly counsel, like a brother, said this and much more to the like effect to King Sigbert, at length, aided by the consent of his friends, he believed, and after he had consulted with those about him, and exhorted them, when they all agreed and assented to the faith, he was baptized with them by Bishop Finan, in the king's township above spoken of, which is called At the Wall, because it is close by the wall which the Romans formerly drew across the island of Britain, at the distance of twelve miles from the eastern sea.

King Sigbert, having now become a citizen of the eternal kingdom, returned to the seat of his temporal kingdom, requesting of King Oswy that he would give him some teachers, to convert his nation to the faith of Christ, and cleanse them in the fountain of salvation. Wherefore Oswy, sending into the province of the Midland Angles, summoned the man of God, Cedd, and, giving him another priest for his companion, sent them to preach the Word to the East Saxons. When these two, travelling to all parts of that country, had gathered a numerous Church to the Lord, it happened once that Cedd returned home, and came to the church of Lindisfarne to confer with Bishop Finan; who, finding that the work of the Gospel had prospered in his hands, made him bishop of the nation of the East Saxons, calling to him two other bishops to assist at the ordination. Cedd, having received the episcopal dignity, returned to his province, and pursuing the work he had begun with more ample authority, built churches in divers places, and ordained priests and deacons to assist him in the Word of faith, and the ministry of Baptism, especially in the city which, in the language of the Saxons, is called Ythancaestir, as also in that which is named Tilaburg. The first of these places is on the bank of the Pant, the other on the bank of the Thames. In these, gathering a flock of Christ's servants, he taught them to observe

the discipline of a rule of life, as far as those rude people were then capable of receiving it.

Whilst the teaching of the everlasting life was thus, for no small time, making daily increase in that province to the joy of the king and of all the people, it happened that the king, at the instigation of the enemy of all good men, was murdered by his own kindred. They were two brothers who did this wicked deed; and being asked what had moved them to it, they had nothing else to answer, but that they had been incensed against the king, and hated him, because he was too apt to spare his enemies, and calmly forgave the wrongs they had done him, upon their entreaty. Such was the crime for which the king was killed, because he observed the precepts of the Gospel with a devout heart; but in this innocent death his real offence was also punished, according to the prediction of the man of God. For one of those nobles that murdered him was unlawfully married, and when the bishop was not able to prevent or correct the sin, he excommunicated him, and commanded all that would give ear to him not to enter this man's house, nor to eat of his meat. But the king made light of this command, and being invited by the noble, went to a banquet at his house. As he was going thence, the bishop met him. The king, beholding him, immediately dismounted from his horse, trembling, and fell down at his feet, begging pardon for his offence; for the bishop, who was likewise on horseback, had also alighted.

Being much incensed, he touched the prostrate king with the rod he held in his hand, and spoke thus with the authority of his office: "I tell thee, forasmuch as thou wouldest not refrain from the house of that sinful and condemned man, thou shalt die in that very house. Yet it is to be believed, that such a death of a religious man not only blotted out his offence, but even added to his merit; because it happened on account of his piety and his observance of the commands of Christ. Sigbert was succeeded in the kingdom by Suidhelm, the son of Sexbald, who was baptized by the same Cedd, in the province of the East Angles, in the royal township, called Rendlaesham, that is, Rendil's Dwelling; and Ethelwald, king of the East Angles, brother to Anna, king of the same people, received him as he came forth from the holy font.

CHAPTER 3.23: HOW BISHOP CEDD, HAVING A PLACE FOR BUILDING A MONASTERY GIVEN HIM BY KING ETHELWALD, CONSECRATED IT TO THE LORD WITH PRAYER AND FASTING; AND CONCERNING HIS DEATH. (AD 659–664)

The same man of God, whilst he was bishop among the East Saxons, was also wont oftentimes to visit his own province, Northumbria, for the purpose of exhortation. Oidilwald, the son of King Oswald, who reigned among the Deiri, finding him a holy, wise, and good man, desired him to accept some land whereon to build a monastery, to which the king himself might frequently resort, to pray to the Lord and hear the Word, and where he might be buried when he died; for he believed faithfully that he should receive much benefit from the daily prayers of those who were to serve the Lord in that place. The king had before with him a brother of the same bishop, called Caelin, a man no less devoted to God, who, being a priest, was wont to administer to him and his house the Word and the Sacraments of the faith; by whose means he chiefly came to know and love the bishop. So then, complying with the king's desires, the Bishop chose himself a place whereon to build a monastery among steep and distant mountains, which looked more like lurking-places for robbers and dens of wild beasts, than dwellings of men; to the end that, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, "In the habitation of dragons, where each lay, might be grass with reeds and rushes;" that is, that the fruits of good works should spring up, where before beasts were wont to dwell, or men to live after the manner of beasts.

But the man of God, desiring first to cleanse the place which he had received for the monastery from stain of former crimes, by prayer and fasting, and so to lay the foundations there, requested of the king that he would give him opportunity and leave to abide there for prayer all the time of Lent, which was at hand. All which days, except Sundays, he prolonged his fast till the evening, according to custom, and then took no other sustenance than a small piece of bread, one hen's egg, and a little milk and water. This, he said, was the custom of those of whom he had learned the rule of regular discipline, first to consecrate to the Lord, by prayer and fasting, the places which they had newly received for building a monastery or a church. When there were ten days of Lent still remaining, there came a messenger to call him to the king; and he, that the holy work might not be intermitted, on account of the king's affairs, entreated his priest, Cynibill, who was also his own

brother, to complete his pious undertaking. Cynibill readily consented, and when the duty of fasting and prayer was over, he there built the monastery, which is now called Laestingaeu, and established therein religious customs according to the use of Lindisfarne, where he had been trained.

When Cedd had for many years held the office of bishop in the aforesaid province, and also taken charge of this monastery, over which he placed provosts, it happened that he came thither at a time when there was plague, and fell sick and died. He was first buried without the walls; but in the process of time a church was built of stone in the monastery, in honour of the Blessed Mother of God, and his body was laid in it, on the right side of the altar. The bishop left the monastery to be governed after him by his brother Ceadda, who was afterwards made bishop, as shall be told hereafter. For, as it rarely happens, the four brothers we have mentioned, Cedd and Cynibill, and Caelin and Ceadda, were all celebrated priests of the Lord, and two of them also came to be bishops. When the brethren who were in his monastery, in the province of the East Saxons, heard that the bishop was dead and buried in the province of the Northumbrians, about thirty men of that monastery came thither, being desirous either to live near the body of their father, if it should please God, or to die and be buried there. Being gladly received by their brethren and fellow soldiers in Christ, all of them died there struck down by the aforesaid pestilence, except one little boy, who is known to have been saved from death by the prayers of his spiritual father. For being alive long after, and giving himself to the reading of Scripture, he was told that he had not been regenerated by the water of Baptism, and being then cleansed in the laver of salvation, he was afterwards promoted to the order of priesthood, and was of service to many in the church. I do not doubt that he was delivered at the point of death, as I have said, by the intercession of his father, to whose body he had come for love of him, that so he might himself avoid eternal death, and by teaching, offer the ministry of life and salvation to others of the brethren.

CHAPTER 3.24: HOW WHEN KING PENDA WAS SLAIN, THE PROVINCE OF THE MERCIANS RECEIVED THE FAITH OF CHRIST, AND OSWY GAVE POSSESSIONS AND TERRITORIES TO GOD, FOR BUILDING MONASTERIES, AS A THANK OFFERING FOR THE VICTORY OBTAINED. (AD 655)

At this time, King Oswy was exposed to the cruel and intolerable invasions of Penda, king of the Mercians, whom we have so often mentioned, and who

had slain his brother; at length, compelled by his necessity, he promised to give him countless gifts and royal marks of honour greater than can be believed, to purchase peace; provided that he would return home, and cease to waste and utterly destroy the provinces of his kingdom. The pagan king refused to grant his request, for he had resolved to blot out and extirpate all his nation, from the highest to the lowest; whereupon King Oswy had recourse to the protection of the Divine pity for deliverance from his barbarous and pitiless foe, and binding himself by a vow, said, "If the pagan will not accept our gifts, let us offer them to Him that will, the Lord our God. He then vowed, that if he should win the victory, he would dedicate his daughter to the Lord in holy virginity, and give twelve pieces of land whereon to build monasteries. After this he gave battle with a very small army: indeed, it is reported that the pagans had thirty times the number of men; for they had thirty legions, drawn up under most noted commanders. King Oswy and his son Alchfrid met them with a very small army, as has been said, but trusting in Christ as their Leader; his other son, Egfrid, was then kept as a hostage at the court of Queen Cynwise, in the province of the Mercians.

King Oswald's son Oidilwald, who ought to have supported them, was on the enemy's side, and led them on to fight against his country and his uncle; though, during the battle, he withdrew, and awaited the event in a place of safety. The engagement began, the pagans were put to flight or killed, the thirty royal commanders, who had come to Penda's assistance, were almost all of them slain; among whom was Ethelhere, brother and successor to Anna, king of the East Angles. He had been the occasion of the war, and was now killed, having lost his army and auxiliaries. The battle was fought near the river Winwaed, which then, owing to the great rains, was in flood, and had overflowed its banks, so that many more were drowned in the flight than destroyed in battle by the sword. Then King Oswy, according to the vow he had made to the Lord, returned thanks to God for the victory granted him, and gave his daughter Elfled, who was scarce a year old, to be consecrated to Him in perpetual virginity; bestowing also twelve small estates of land, wherein the practice of earthly warfare should cease, and place and means should be afforded to devout and zealous monks to wage spiritual warfare, and pray for the eternal peace of his nation. Of these estates six were in the province of the Deiri, and the other six in that of the Bernicians. Each of the estates contained ten families, that is, a hundred and twenty in all.

The aforesaid daughter of King Oswy, who was to be dedicated to God, entered the monastery called Heruteu, or, "The Island of the Hart," at that time ruled by the Abbess Hilda, who, two years after, having acquired an estate of ten families, at the place called Streanaeshalch, built a monastery there, in which the aforesaid king's daughter was first trained in the monastic life and afterwards became abbess; till, at the age of fifty-nine, the blessed virgin departed to be united to her Heavenly Bridegroom. In this monastery, she and her father, Oswy, her mother, Eanfled, her mother's father, Edwin, and many other noble persons, are buried in the church of the holy Apostle Peter. King Oswy concluded this war in the district of Loidis, in the thirteenth year of his reign, on the 15th of November, to the great benefit of both nations; for he delivered his own people from the hostile depredations of the pagans, and, having made an end of their heathen chief, converted the Mercians and the adjacent provinces to the grace of the Christian faith.

Diuma was made the first bishop of the Mercians, as also of Lindsey and the Midland Angles, as has been said above, and he died and was buried among the Midland Angles. The second was Ceollach, who, giving up his episcopal office before his death, returned into Scotland. Both these bishops belonged to the nation of the Scots. The third was Trumhere, an Englishman, but educated and ordained by the Scots. He was abbot of the monastery that is called Ingetlingum, and is the place where King Oswin was killed, as has been said above; for Queen Eanfled, his kinswoman, in expiation of his unjust death, begged of King Oswy that he would give Trumhere, the aforesaid servant of God, a place there to build a monastery, because he also was kinsman to the slaughtered king; in which monastery continual prayers should be offered up for the eternal welfare of the kings, both of him that was murdered, and of him that commanded the murder. The same King Oswy governed the Mercians, as also the people of the other southern provinces, three years after he had slain King Penda; and he likewise subdued the greater part of the Picts to the dominion of the English.

At this time he gave to the above-mentioned Peada, son to King Penda, because he was his kinsman, the kingdom of the Southern Mercians, consisting, as is said, of 5,000 families, divided by the river Trent from the Northern Mercians, whose land contains 7,000 families; but Peada was foully slain in the following spring, by the treachery, as is said, of his wife, during the very time of the Easter festival. Three years after the death of King Penda,

the Mercian chiefs, Immin, and Eafa, and Eadbert, rebelled against King Oswy, setting up for their king, Wulfhere, son to the said Penda, a youth whom they had kept concealed; and expelling the ealdormen of the foreign king, they bravely recovered at once their liberty and their lands; and being thus free, together with their king, they rejoiced to serve Christ the true King, for the sake of an everlasting kingdom in heaven. This king governed the Mercians seventeen years, and had for his first bishop Trumhere, above spoken of; the second was Jaruman; the third Ceadda; the fourth Wynfrid. All these, succeeding each other in order under King Wulfhere, discharged episcopal duties to the Mercian nation.

CHAPTER 3.25: HOW THE QUESTION AROSE ABOUT THE DUE TIME OF KEEPING EASTER, WITH THOSE THAT CAME OUT OF SCOTLAND. (AD 664)

In the meantime, Bishop Aidan being taken away from this life, Finan, who was ordained and sent by the Scots, succeeded him in the bishopric, and built a church in the Isle of Lindisfarne, fit for the episcopal see; nevertheless, after the manner of the Scots, he made it, not of stone, but entirely of hewn oak, and covered it with reeds; and it was afterwards dedicated in honour of the blessed Peter the Apostle, by the most reverend Archbishop Theodore. Eadbert, also bishop of that place, took off the thatch, and caused it to be covered entirely, both roof and walls, with plates of lead. At this time, a great and frequently debated question arose about the observance of Easter; those that came from Kent or Gaul affirming, that the Scots celebrated Easter Sunday contrary to the custom of the universal Church. Among them was a most zealous defender of the true Easter, whose name was Ronan, a Scot by nation, but instructed in the rule of ecclesiastical truth in Gaul or Italy. Disputing with Finan, he convinced many, or at least induced them to make a more strict inquiry after the truth; yet he could not prevail upon Finan, but, on the contrary, embittered him the more by reproof, and made him a professed opponent of the truth, for he was of a violent temper. James, formerly the deacon of the venerable Archbishop Paulinus, as has been said above, observed the true and Catholic Easter, with all those that he could instruct in the better way. Queen Eanfled and her followers also observed it as she had seen it practised in Kent, having with her a Kentish priest who followed the Catholic observance, whose name was Romanus. Thus it is said to have sometimes happened in those times that Easter was twice celebrated in one

year; and that when the king, having ended his fast, was keeping Easter, the queen and her followers were still fasting, and celebrating Palm Sunday. Whilst Aidan lived, this difference about the observance of Easter was patiently tolerated by all men, for they well knew, that though he could not keep Easter contrary to the custom of those who had sent him, yet he industriously laboured to practise the works of faith, piety, and love, according to the custom of all holy men; for which reason he was deservedly beloved by all, even by those who differed in opinion concerning Easter, and was held in veneration, not only by less important persons, but even by the bishops, Honorius of Canterbury, and Felix of the East Angles.

But after the death of Finan, who succeeded him, when Colman, who was also sent from Scotland, came to be bishop, a greater controversy arose about the observance of Easter, and other rules of ecclesiastical life. Whereupon this question began naturally to influence the thoughts and hearts of many who feared, lest haply, having received the name of Christians, they might run, or have run, in vain. This reached the ears of the rulers, King Oswy and his son Alchfrid. Now Oswy, having been instructed and baptized by the Scots, and being very perfectly skilled in their language, thought nothing better than what they taught; but Alchfrid, having for his teacher in Christianity the learned Wilfrid, who had formerly gone to Rome to study ecclesiastical doctrine, and spent much time at Lyons with Dalfinus, archbishop of Gaul, from whom also he had received the crown of ecclesiastical tonsure, rightly thought that this man's doctrine ought to be preferred before all the traditions of the Scots. For this reason he had also given him a monastery of forty families, at a place called Inhrypum; which place, not long before, he had given for a monastery to those that were followers of the Scots; but forasmuch as they afterwards, being left to their choice, preferred to quit the place rather than alter their custom, he gave it to him, whose life and doctrine were worthy of it.

Agilbert, bishop of the West Saxons, above-mentioned, a friend of King Alchfrid and of Abbot Wilfrid, had at that time come into the province of the Northumbrians, and was staying some time among them; at the request of Alchfrid, he made Wilfrid a priest in his aforesaid monastery. He had in his company a priest, whose name was Agatho. The question being raised there concerning Easter and the tonsure and other ecclesiastical matters, it was arranged, that a synod should be held in the monastery of Strean-

aeshalch, which signifies the Bay of the Lighthouse, where the Abbess Hilda, a woman devoted to the service of God, then ruled; and that there this question should be decided. The kings, both father and son, came thither, and the bishops, Colman with his Scottish clerks, and Agilbert with the priests Agatho and Wilfrid. James and Romanus were on their side; but the Abbess Hilda and her followers were for the Scots, as was also the venerable Bishop Cedd, long before ordained by the Scots, as has been said above, and he acted in that council as a most careful interpreter for both parties.

King Oswy first made an opening speech, in which he said that it behoved those who served one God to observe one rule of life; and as they all expected the same kingdom in heaven, so they ought not to differ in the celebration of the heavenly mysteries; but rather to inquire which was the truer tradition, that it might be followed by all in common; he then commanded his bishop, Colman, first to declare what the custom was which he observed, and whence it derived its origin. Then Colman said, "The Easter which I keep, I received from my elders, who sent me hither as bishop; all our forefathers, men beloved of God, are known to have celebrated it after the same manner; and that it may not seem to any contemptible and worthy to be rejected, it is the same which the blessed John the Evangelist, the disciple specially beloved of our Lord, with all the churches over which he presided, is recorded to have celebrated." When he had said thus much, and more to the like effect, the king commanded Agilbert to make known the manner of his observance and to show whence it was derived, and on what authority he followed it. Agilbert answered, "I beseech you, let my disciple, the priest Wilfrid, speak in my stead; because we both concur with the other followers of the ecclesiastical tradition that are here present, and he can better and more clearly explain our opinion in the English language, than I can by an interpreter."

Then Wilfrid, being ordered by the king to speak, began thus:—"The Easter which we keep, we saw celebrated by all at Rome, where the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, lived, taught, suffered, and were buried; we saw the same done by all in Italy and in Gaul, when we travelled through those countries for the purpose of study and prayer. We found it observed in Africa, Asia, Egypt, Greece, and all the world, wherever the Church of Christ is spread abroad, among divers nations and tongues, at one and the same time; save only among these and their accomplices in obstinacy, I mean the Picts and the Britons, who foolishly, in these two remote islands of the ocean, and

only in part even of them, strive to oppose all the rest of the world. When he had so said, Colman answered, "It is strange that you choose to call our efforts foolish, wherein we follow the example of so great an Apostle, who was thought worthy to lean on our Lord's bosom, when all the world knows him to have lived most wisely.

Wilfrid replied, "Far be it from us to charge John with folly, for he literally observed the precepts of the Mosaic Law, whilst the Church was still Jewish in many points, and the Apostles, lest they should give cause of offence to the Jews who were among the Gentiles, were not able at once to cast off all the observances of the Law which had been instituted by God, in the same way as it is necessary that all who come to the faith should forsake the idols which were invented by devils. For this reason it was, that Paul circumcised Timothy, that he offered sacrifice in the temple, that he shaved his head with Aquila and Priscilla at Corinth; for no other advantage than to avoid giving offence to the Jews. Hence it was, that James said to the same Paul, 'Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the Law. And yet, at this time, when the light of the Gospel is spreading throughout the world, it is needless, nay, it is not lawful, for the faithful either to be circumcised, or to offer up to God sacrifices of flesh. So John, according to the custom of the Law, began the celebration of the feast of Easter, on the fourteenth day of the first month, in the evening, not regarding whether the same happened on a Saturday, or any other week-day.

But when Peter preached at Rome, being mindful that our Lord arose from the dead, and gave to the world the hope of resurrection, on the first day of the week, he perceived that Easter ought to be kept after this manner: he always awaited the rising of the moon on the fourteenth day of the first month in the evening, according to the custom and precepts of the Law, even as John did. And when that came, if the Lord's day, then called the first day of the week, was the next day, he began that very evening to celebrate Easter, as we all do at the present time. But if the Lord's day did not fall the next morning after the fourteenth moon, but on the sixteenth, or the seventeenth, or any other moon till the twenty-first, he waited for that, and on the Saturday before, in the evening, began to observe the holy solemnity of Easter. Thus it came to pass, that Easter Sunday was only kept from the fifteenth moon to the twenty-first. Nor does this evangelical and apostolic tradition abolish the Law, but rather fulfil it; the command being to keep the

passover from the fourteenth moon of the first month in the evening to the twenty-first moon of the same month in the evening; which observance all the successors of the blessed John in Asia, since his death, and all the Church throughout the world, have since followed;

and that this is the true Easter, and the only one to be celebrated by the faithful, was not newly decreed by the council of Nicaea, but only confirmed afresh; as the history of the Church informs us. "Thus it is plain, that you, Colman, neither follow the example of John, as you imagine, nor that of Peter, whose tradition you oppose with full knowledge, and that you neither agree with the Law nor the Gospel in the keeping of your Easter. For John, keeping the Paschal time according to the decree of the Mosaic Law, had no regard to the first day of the week, which you do not practise, seeing that you celebrate Easter only on the first day after the Sabbath. Peter celebrated Easter Sunday between the fifteenth and the twenty-first moon, which you do not practise, seeing that you observe Easter Sunday from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon; so that you often begin Easter on the thirteenth moon in the evening, whereof neither the Law made any mention, nor did our Lord, the Author and Giver of the Gospel, on that day either eat the old passover in the evening, or deliver the Sacraments of the New Testament, to be celebrated by the Church, in memory of His Passion, but on the fourteenth. Besides, in your celebration of Easter, you utterly exclude the twenty-first moon, which the Law ordered to be specially observed. Thus, as I have said before, you agree neither with John nor Peter, nor with the Law, nor the Gospel, in the celebration of the greatest festival."

To this Colman rejoined: "Did the holy Anatolius, much commended in the history of the Church, judge contrary to the Law and the Gospel, when he wrote, that Easter was to be celebrated from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon? Is it to be believed that our most reverend Father Columba and his successors, men beloved by God, who kept Easter after the same manner, judged or acted contrary to the Divine writings? Whereas there were many among them, whose sanctity was attested by heavenly signs and miracles which they wrought; whom I, for my part, doubt not to be saints, and whose life, customs, and discipline I never cease to follow." "It is evident," said Wilfrid, "that Anatolius was a most holy, learned, and commendable man; but what have you to do with him, since you do not observe his decrees? For he undoubtedly, following the rule of truth in his Easter, appointed a cycle of

nineteen years, which either you are ignorant of, or if you know it, though it is kept by the whole Church of Christ, yet you despise it as a thing of naught. He so computed the fourteenth moon in our Lord's Paschal Feast, that according to the custom of the Egyptians, he acknowledged it to be the fifteenth moon on that same day in the evening; so in like manner he assigned the twentieth to Easter-Sunday, as believing that to be the twenty-first moon, when the sun had set. That you are ignorant of the rule of this distinction is proved by this, that you sometimes manifestly keep Easter before the full moon, that is, on the thirteenth day. Concerning your Father Columba and his followers, whose sanctity you say you imitate, and whose rule and precepts confirmed by signs from Heaven you say that you follow, I might answer, then when many, in the day of judgement, shall say to our Lord, that in His name they have prophesied, and have cast out devils, and done many wonderful works, our Lord will reply, that He never knew them.

But far be it from me to speak thus of your fathers, for it is much more just to believe good than evil of those whom we know not. Wherefore I do not deny those also to have been God's servants, and beloved of God, who with rude simplicity, but pious intentions, have themselves loved Him. Nor do I think that such observance of Easter did them much harm, as long as none came to show them a more perfect rule to follow; for assuredly I believe that, if any teacher, reckoning after the Catholic manner, had come among them, they would have as readily followed his admonitions, as they are known to have kept those commandments of God, which they had learned and knew. "But as for you and your companions, you certainly sin, if, having heard the decrees of the Apostolic see, nay, of the universal Church, confirmed, as they are, by Holy Scripture, you scorn to follow them; for, though your fathers were holy, do you think that those few men, in a corner of the remotest island, are to be preferred before the universal Church of Christ throughout the world? And if that Columba of yours, (and, I may say, ours also, if he was Christ's servant,) was a holy man and powerful in miracles, yet could he be preferred before the most blessed chief of the Apostles, to whom our Lord said, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven?' "

When Wilfrid had ended thus, the king said, "Is it true, Colman, that these words were spoken to Peter by our Lord?" He answered, "It is true, O

king!" Then said he, "Can you show any such power given to your Columba?" Colman answered, "None." Then again the king asked, "Do you both agree in this, without any controversy, that these words were said above all to Peter, and that the keys of the kingdom of Heaven were given to him by our Lord?" They both answered, "Yes." Then the king concluded, "And I also say unto you, that he is the door-keeper, and I will not gainsay him, but I desire, as far as I know and am able, in all things to obey his laws, lest haply when I come to the gates of the kingdom of Heaven, there should be none to open them, he being my adversary who is proved to have the keys." The king having said this, all who were seated there or standing by, both great and small, gave their assent, and renouncing the less perfect custom, hastened to conform to that which they had found to be better.

CHAPTER 3.26: HOW COLMAN, BEING WORSTED, RETURNED HOME; AND TUDA SUCCEEDED HIM IN THE BISHOPRIC; AND OF THE STATE OF THE CHURCH UNDER THOSE TEACHERS. (AD 664)

The disputation being ended, and the assembly broken up, Agilbert returned home. Colman, perceiving that his doctrine was rejected, and his party despised, took with him those who wished to follow him, to wit, such as would not accept the Catholic Easter and the tonsure in the form of a crown, (for there was no small dispute about that also,) and went back into Scotland, to consult with his people what was to be done in this case. Cedd, forsaking the practices of the Scots, returned to his bishopric, having submitted to the Catholic observance of Easter. This debate took place in the year of our Lord 664, which was the twenty-second year of the reign of King Oswy, and the thirtieth of the episcopate of the Scots among the English; for Aidan was bishop seventeen years, Finan ten, and Colman three. When Colman had gone back into his own country, Tuda, the servant of Christ, was made bishop of the Northumbrians in his place, having been instructed and ordained bishop among the Southern Scots, having also the crown of the ecclesiastical tonsure, according to the custom of that province, and observing the Catholic rule with regard to the time of Easter. He was a good and religious man, but he governed the church a very short time; he had come from Scotland whilst Colman was yet bishop, and, both by word and deed, diligently taught all men those things that appertain to the faith and truth. But Eata, who was abbot of the monastery called Mailros, a man most reverend and gentle, was appointed abbot over the brethren that chose to remain in the

church of Lindisfarne, when the Scots went away. It is said that Colman, upon his departure, requested and obtained this of King Oswy, because Eata was one of Aidan's twelve boys of the English nation, whom he received in the early years of his episcopate, to be instructed in Christ; for the king greatly loved Bishop Colman on account of his innate discretion. This is that Eata, who, not long after, was made bishop of the same church of Lindisfarne. Colman carried home with him part of the bones of the most reverend Father Aidan, and left part of them in the church where he had presided, ordering them to be interred in the sacristy.

The place which they governed shows how frugal and temperate he and his predecessors were, for there were very few houses besides the church found at their departure; indeed, no more than were barely sufficient to make civilized life possible; they had also no money, but only cattle; for if they received any money from rich persons, they immediately gave it to the poor; there being no need to gather money, or provide houses for the entertainment of the great men of the world; for such never resorted to the church, except to pray and hear the Word of God. The king himself, when occasion required, came only with five or six servants, and having performed his devotions in the church, departed. But if they happened to take a repast there, they were satisfied with the plain, daily food of the brethren, and required no more. For the whole care of those teachers was to serve God, not the world—to feed the soul, and not the belly.

For this reason the religious habit was at that time held in great veneration; so that wheresoever any clerk or monk went, he was joyfully received by all men, as God's servant; and even if they chanced to meet him upon the way, they ran to him, and with bowed head, were glad to be signed with the cross by his hand, or blessed by his lips. Great attention was also paid to their exhortations; and on Sundays they flocked eagerly to the church, or the monasteries, not to feed their bodies, but to hear the Word of God; and if any priest happened to come into a village, the inhabitants came together and asked of him the Word of life; for the priests and clerks went to the villages for no other reason than to preach, baptize, visit the sick, and, in a word, to take care of souls; and they were so purified from all taint of avarice, that none of them received lands and possessions for building monasteries, unless they were compelled to do so by the temporal authorities; which cus-

tom was for some time after universally observed in the churches of the Northumbrians. But enough has now been said on this subject.

CHAPTER 3.27: HOW EGBERT, A HOLY MAN OF THE ENGLISH NATION, LED A MONASTIC LIFE IN IRELAND. (AD 664)

In the same year of our Lord 664, there happened an eclipse of the sun, on the third day of May, about the tenth hour of the day. In the same year, a sudden pestilence depopulated first the southern parts of Britain, and afterwards attacking the province of the Northumbrians, ravaged the country far and near, and destroyed a great multitude of men. By this plague the aforesaid priest of the Lord, Tuda, was carried off, and was honourably buried in the monastery called Paegnalaech. Moreover, this plague prevailed no less disastrously in the island of Ireland. Many of the nobility, and of the lower ranks of the English nation, were there at that time, who, in the days of the Bishops Finan and Colman, forsaking their native island, retired thither, either for the sake of sacred studies, or of a more ascetic life; and some of them presently devoted themselves faithfully to a monastic life, others chose rather to apply themselves to study, going about from one master's cell to another. The Scots willingly received them all, and took care to supply them with daily food without cost, as also to furnish them with books for their studies, and teaching free of charge.

Among these were Ethelhun and Egbert, two youths of great capacity, of the English nobility. The former of whom was brother to Ethelwin, a man no less beloved by God, who also at a later time went over into Ireland to study, and having been well instructed, returned into his own country, and being made bishop in the province of Lindsey, long and nobly governed the Church. These two being in the monastery which in the language of the Scots is called Rathmelsigi, and having lost all their companions, who were either cut off by the plague, or dispersed into other places, were both seized by the same sickness, and grievously afflicted. Of these, Egbert, (as I was informed by a priest venerable for his age, and of great veracity, who declared he had heard the story from his own lips,) concluding that he was at the point of death, went out of the chamber, where the sick lay, in the morning, and sitting alone in a fitting place, began seriously to reflect upon his past actions, and, being full of compunction at the remembrance of his sins, bedewed his face with tears, and prayed fervently to God that he might not die yet, before he could forthwith more fully make amends for the careless of-

fences which he had committed in his boyhood and infancy, or might further exercise himself in good works. He also made a vow that he would spend all his life abroad and never return into the island of Britain, where he was born;

that besides singing the psalms at the canonical hours, he would, unless prevented by bodily infirmity, repeat the whole Psalter daily to the praise of God; and that he would every week fast one whole day and night. Returning home, after his tears and prayers and vows, he found his companion asleep; and going to bed himself, he began to compose himself to rest. When he had lain quiet awhile, his comrade awaking, looked on him, and said, "Alas! Brother Egbert, what have you done? I was in hopes that we should have entered together into life everlasting; but know that your prayer is granted. For he had learned in a vision what the other had requested, and that he had obtained his request. In brief, Ethelhun died the next night; but Egbert, throwing off his sickness, recovered and lived a long time after to grace the episcopal office, which he received, by deeds worthy of it; and blessed with many virtues, according to his desire, lately, in the year of our Lord 729, being ninety years of age, he departed to the heavenly kingdom. He passed his life in great perfection of humility, gentleness, continence, simplicity, and justice. Thus he was a great benefactor, both to his own people, and to those nations of the Scots and Picts among whom he lived in exile, by the example of his life, his earnestness in teaching, his authority in reproving, and his piety in giving away of those things which he received from the rich. He also added this to the vows which we have mentioned: during Lent, he would eat but one meal a day, allowing himself nothing but bread and thin milk, and even that by measure. The milk, new the day before, he kept in a vessel, and skimming off the cream in the morning, drank the rest, as has been said, with a little bread. Which sort of abstinence he likewise always observed forty days before the Nativity of our Lord, and as many after the solemnity of Pentecost, that is, of the fifty days' festival.

CHAPTER 3.28: HOW, WHEN TUDA WAS DEAD, WILFRID WAS ORDAINED, IN GAUL, AND CEADDA, AMONG THE WEST SAXONS, TO BE BISHOPS FOR THE PROVINCE OF THE NORTHUMBRIANS. (AD 664)

In the meantime, King Alchfrid sent the priest, Wilfrid, to the king of Gaul, in order that he should cause him to be consecrated bishop for himself and his people. That prince sent him to be ordained by Agilbert, of whom we

have before spoken, and who, having left Britain, was made bishop of the city of Paris; and by him Wilfrid was honourably consecrated, several bishops meeting together for that purpose in a village belonging to the king, called In Compendio. He stayed some time in the parts beyond the sea for his ordination, and King Oswy, following the example of his son's zeal, sent into Kent a holy man, of modest character, well read in the Scripture, and diligently practising those things which he had learned therein, to be ordained bishop of the church of York. This was a priest called Ceadda, brother to the most reverend prelate Cedd, of whom mention has been often made, and abbot of the monastery of Laestingaeu. With him the king also sent his priest Eadhaed, who was afterwards, in the reign of Egfrid, made bishop of the church of Ripon. Now when they arrived in Kent, they found that Archbishop Deusdedit had departed this life, and no other bishop was as yet appointed in his place; whereupon they betook themselves to the province of the West Saxons, where Wini was bishop, and by him Ceadda was consecrated; two bishops of the British nation, who kept Easter Sunday, as has been often said, contrary to the canonical manner, from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon, being called in to assist at the ordination; for at that time there was no other bishop in all Britain canonically ordained, except Wini.

So Ceadda, being consecrated bishop, began immediately to labour for ecclesiastical truth and purity of doctrine; to apply himself to humility, self-denial, and study; to travel about, not on horseback, but after the manner of the Apostles, on foot, to preach the Gospel in towns, the open country, cottages, villages, and castles; for he was one of the disciples of Aidan, and endeavoured to instruct his people by the same manner of life and character, after his and his own brother Cedd's example. Wilfrid also having been now made a bishop, came into Britain, and in like manner by his teaching brought into the English Church many rules of Catholic observance. Whence it followed, that the Catholic principles daily gained strength, and all the Scots that dwelt in England either conformed to these, or returned into their own country.

CHAPTER 3.29: HOW THE PRIEST WIGHARD WAS SENT FROM BRITAIN TO ROME, TO BE ORDAINED ARCHBISHOP; OF HIS DEATH THERE, AND OF THE LETTERS OF THE APOSTOLIC POPE GIVING AN ACCOUNT THEREOF. (AD 667)

At this time the most noble kings of the English, Oswy, of the province of the Northumbrians, and Egbert of Kent, consulted together to determine what ought to be done about the state of the English Church, for Oswy, though educated by the Scots, had rightly perceived that the Roman was the Catholic and Apostolic Church. They selected, with the consent and by the choice of the holy Church of the English nation, a priest named Wighard, one of Bishop Deusdedit's clergy, a good man and fitted for the episcopate, and sent him to Rome to be ordained bishop, to the end that, having been raised to the rank of an archbishop, he might ordain Catholic prelates for the Churches of the English nation throughout all Britain. But Wighard, arriving at Rome, was cut off by death, before he could be consecrated bishop, and the following letter was sent back into Britain to King Oswy:—

"To the most excellent lord, our son, Oswy, king of the Saxons, Vitalian, bishop, servant of the servants of God. We have received to our comfort your Excellency's letters; by reading whereof we are acquainted with your most pious devotion and fervent love of the blessed life; and know that by the protecting hand of God you have been converted to the true and Apostolic faith, in hope that even as you reign in your own nation, so you may hereafter reign with Christ. Blessed be the nation, therefore, that has been found worthy to have as its king one so wise and a worshipper of God; forasmuch as he is not himself alone a worshipper of God, but also studies day and night the conversion of all his subjects to the Catholic and Apostolic faith, to the redemption of his own soul. Who would not rejoice at hearing such glad tidings? Who would not exult and be joyful at these good works? For your nation has believed in Christ the Almighty God, according to the words of the Divine prophets, as it is written in Isaiah, 'In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek. And again, 'Listen, O isles, unto me, and hearken ye people from far. And a little after, 'It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the outcast of Israel.

I have given thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my salvation unto the end of the earth. And again, 'Kings shall see, princes also shall

arise and worship. And immediately after, 'I have given thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, and possess the scattered heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves. And again, 'I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and have held thine hand, and have kept thee, and have given thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoner from the prison, and them that sit in darkness from the prison-house.' "Behold, most excellent son, how it is plain as day that it was prophesied not only of you, but also of all the nations, that they should believe in Christ, the Creator of all things. Wherefore it behoves your Highness, as being a member of Christ, in all things continually to follow the pious rule of the chief of the Apostles, in celebrating Easter, and in all things delivered by the holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, whose doctrine daily enlightens the hearts of believers, even as the two lights of heaven illumine the world." And after some lines, wherein he speaks of celebrating the true Easter uniformly throughout all the world,—

"Finally," he adds, "we have not been able now, on account of the length of the journey, to find a man, apt to teach, and qualified in all respects to be a bishop, according to the tenor of your letters. But, assuredly, as soon as such a fit person shall be found, we will send him well instructed to your country, that he may, by word of mouth, and through the Divine oracles, with the blessing of God, root out all the enemy's tares throughout your island. We have received the presents sent by your Highness to the blessed chief of the Apostles, for an eternal memorial of him, and return you thanks, and always pray for your safety with the clergy of Christ. But he that brought these presents has been removed out of this world, and is buried at the threshold of the Apostles, for whom we have been much grieved, because he died here. Nevertheless, we have caused the blessed gifts of the saints, that is, the relics of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, and of the holy martyrs, Laurentius, John, and Paul, and Gregory, and Pancratius, to be given to your servants, the bearers of these our letters, to be by them delivered to your Excellency. And to your consort also, our spiritual daughter, we have by the aforesaid bearers sent a cross, with a gold key to it, made out of the most holy chains of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul; for, hearing of her pious zeal, all the Apostolic see rejoices with us, even as her pious works smell sweet and blossom before God.

"We therefore desire that your Highness should hasten, according to our wish, to dedicate all your island to Christ our God; for assuredly you have for your Protector, the Redeemer of mankind, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who will prosper you in all things, that you may gather together a new people of Christ, establishing there the Catholic and Apostolic faith. For it is written, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.' Truly your Highness seeks, and shall obtain, and all your islands shall be made subject to you, even as we desire. Saluting your Excellency with fatherly affection, we never cease to pray to the Divine Goodness, to vouchsafe to assist you and yours in all good works, that you may reign with Christ in the world to come. May the Heavenly Grace preserve your Excellency in safety!"

In the next book we shall have a more suitable occasion to show who was selected and consecrated in Wighard's place.

CHAPTER 3.30: HOW THE EAST SAXONS, DURING A PESTILENCE, RETURNED TO IDOLATRY, BUT WERE SOON BROUGHT BACK FROM THEIR ERROR BY THE ZEAL OF BISHOP JARUMAN. (AD 665)

At the same time, the Kings Sighere and Sebbi, though themselves subject to Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, governed the province of the East Saxons after Suidhelm, of whom we have spoken above. When that province was suffering from the aforesaid disastrous plague, Sighere, with his part of the people, forsook the mysteries of the Christian faith, and turned apostate. For the king himself, and many of the commons and nobles, loving this life, and not seeking after another, or even not believing in any other, began to restore the temples that had been abandoned, and to adore idols, as if they might by those means be protected against the plague. But Sebbi, his companion and co-heir in the kingdom, with all his people, very devoutly preserved the faith which he had received, and, as we shall show hereafter, ended his faithful life in great felicity. King Wulfhere, hearing that the faith of the province was in part profaned, sent Bishop Jaruman, who was successor to Trumhere, to correct their error, and recall the province to the true faith. He acted with much discretion, as I was informed by a priest who bore him company in that journey, and had been his fellow labourer in the Word, for he was a religious and good man, and travelling through all the country, far and near, brought back both the people and the aforesaid king to the way of righteousness, so that, either forsaking or destroying the temples and altars

which they had erected, they opened the churches, and gladly confessed the Name of Christ, which they had opposed, choosing rather to die in the faith of resurrection in Him, than to live in the abominations of unbelief among their idols. Having thus accomplished their works, the priests and teachers returned home with joy.

Book IV

Chapter 4.1: How when Deusdedit died, Wighard was sent to Rome to receive the episcopate; but he dying there, Theodore was ordained archbishop, and sent into Britain with the abbot Hadrian. (AD 664–669)

In the above-mentioned year of the aforesaid eclipse and of the pestilence which followed it immediately, in which also Bishop Colman, being overcome by the united effort of the Catholics, returned home, Deusdedit, the sixth bishop of the church of Canterbury, died on the 14th of July. Earconbert, also, king of Kent, departed this life the same month and day; leaving his kingdom to his son Egbert, who held it for nine years. The see then became vacant for no small time, until, the priest Wighard, a man of great learning in the teaching of the Church, of the English race, was sent to Rome by King Egbert and Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, as was briefly mentioned in the foregoing book, with a request that he might be ordained Archbishop of the Church of England; and at the same time presents were sent to the Apostolic pope, and many vessels of gold and silver. Arriving at Rome, where Vitalian presided at that time over the Apostolic see, and having made known to the aforesaid Apostolic pope the occasion of his journey, he was not long after carried off, with almost all his companions who had come with him, by a pestilence which fell upon them.

But the Apostolic pope having consulted about that matter, made diligent inquiry for some one to send to be archbishop of the English Churches. There was then in the monastery of Niridanum, which is not far from Naples in Campania, an abbot called Hadrian, by nation an African, well versed in Holy Scripture, trained in monastic and ecclesiastical teaching, and excellently skilled both in the Greek and Latin tongues. The pope, sending for him, commanded him to accept the bishopric and go to Britain. He answered, that he was unworthy of so great a dignity, but said that he could name another, whose learning and age were fitter for the episcopal office. He

proposed to the pope a certain monk named Andrew, belonging to a neighbouring nunnery and he was by all that knew him judged worthy of a bishopric; but the weight of bodily infirmity prevented him from becoming a bishop. Then again Hadrian was urged to accept the episcopate; but he desired a respite, to see whether in time he could find another to be ordained bishop.

There was at that time in Rome, a monk, called Theodore, known to Hadrian, born at Tarsus in Cilicia, a man instructed in secular and Divine writings, as also in Greek and Latin; of high character and venerable age, being sixty-six years old. Hadrian proposed him to the pope to be ordained bishop, and prevailed; but upon the condition that he should himself conduct him into Britain, because he had already travelled through Gaul twice upon different occasions, and was, therefore, better acquainted with the way, and was, moreover, sufficiently provided with men of his own; as also, to the end that, being his fellow labourer in teaching, he might take special care that Theodore should not, according to the custom of the Greeks, introduce any thing contrary to the truth of the faith into the Church where he presided. Theodore, being ordained subdeacon, waited four months for his hair to grow, that it might be shorn into the shape of a crown; for he had before the tonsure of St. Paul, the Apostle, after the manner of the eastern people. He was ordained by Pope Vitalian, in the year of our Lord 668, on Sunday, the 26th of March, and on the 27th of May was sent with Hadrian to Britain.

They proceeded together by sea to Marseilles, and thence by land to Arles, and having there delivered to John, archbishop of that city, Pope Vitalian's letters of recommendation, were by him detained till Ebroin, the king's mayor of the palace, gave them leave to go where they pleased. Having received the same, Theodore went to Agilbert, bishop of Paris, of whom we have spoken above, and was by him kindly received, and long entertained. But Hadrian went first to Emme, Bishop of the Senones, and then to Faro, bishop of the Meldi, and lived in comfort with them a considerable time; for the approach of winter had obliged them to rest wherever they could. King Egbert, being informed by sure messengers that the bishop they had asked of the Roman prelate was in the kingdom of the Franks, sent thither his reeve, Raedfrid, to conduct him. He, having arrived there, with Ebroin's leave took Theodore and conveyed him to the port called Quentavic; where, falling

sick, he stayed some time, and as soon as he began to recover, sailed over into Britain. But Ebroin detained Hadrian, suspecting that he went on some mission from the Emperor to the kings of Britain, to the prejudice of the kingdom of which he at that time had the chief charge; however, when he found that in truth he had never had any such commission, he discharged him, and permitted him to follow Theodore. As soon as he came to him, Theodore gave him the monastery of the blessed Peter the Apostle, where the archbishops of Canterbury are wont to be buried, as I have said before; for at his departure, the Apostolic lord had enjoined upon Theodore that he should provide for him in his province, and give him a suitable place to live in with his followers.

CHAPTER 4.2: HOW THEODORE VISITED ALL PLACES; HOW THE CHURCHES OF THE ENGLISH BEGAN TO BE INSTRUCTED IN THE STUDY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE, AND IN THE CATHOLIC TRUTH; AND HOW PUTTA WAS MADE BISHOP OF THE CHURCH OF ROCHESTER IN THE ROOM OF DAMIANUS. (AD 669)

Theodore came to his Church in the second year after his consecration, on Sunday, the 27th of May, and spent in it twenty-one years, three months, and twenty-six days. Soon after, he visited all the island, wherever the tribes of the English dwelt, for he was gladly received and heard by all persons; and everywhere attended and assisted by Hadrian, he taught the right rule of life, and the canonical custom of celebrating Easter. This was the first archbishop whom all the English Church consented to obey. And forasmuch as both of them were, as has been said before, fully instructed both in sacred and in secular letters, they gathered a crowd of disciples, and rivers of wholesome knowledge daily flowed from them to water the hearts of their hearers; and, together with the books of Holy Scripture, they also taught them the metrical art, astronomy, and ecclesiastical arithmetic. A testimony whereof is, that there are still living at this day some of their scholars, who are as well versed in the Greek and Latin tongues as in their own, in which they were born. Nor were there ever happier times since the English came into Britain; for having brave Christian kings, they were a terror to all barbarous nations, and the minds of all men were bent upon the joys of the heavenly kingdom of which they had but lately heard; and all who desired to be instructed in sacred studies had masters at hand to teach them.

From that time also they began in all the churches of the English to learn Church music, which till then had been only known in Kent. And, except-

ing James, of whom we have spoken above, the first teacher of singing in the churches of the Northumbrians was Eddi, surnamed Stephen, invited from Kent by the most reverend Wilfrid, who was the first of the bishops of the English nation that learned to deliver to the churches of the English the Catholic manner of life. Theodore, journeying through all parts, ordained bishops in fitting places, and with their assistance corrected such things as he found faulty. Among the rest, when he charged Bishop Ceadda with not having been duly consecrated, he, with great humility, answered, "If you know that I have not duly received episcopal ordination, I willingly resign the office, for I never thought myself worthy of it; but, though unworthy, for obedience sake I submitted, when bidden to undertake it." Theodore, hearing his humble answer, said that he should not resign the bishopric, and he himself completed his ordination after the Catholic manner. Now at the time when Deusdedit died, and a bishop for the church of Canterbury was by request ordained and sent, Wilfrid was also sent from Britain into Gaul to be ordained; and because he returned before Theodore, he ordained priests and deacons in Kent till the archbishop should come to his see. But when Theodore came to the city of Rochester, where the bishopric had been long vacant by the death of Damian, he ordained a man named Putta, trained rather in the teaching of the Church and more addicted to simplicity of life than active in worldly affairs, but specially skilful in Church music, after the Roman use, which he had learned from the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory.

CHAPTER 4.3: HOW THE ABOVE-MENTIONED CEADDA WAS MADE BISHOP OF THE PROVINCE OF MERCIANS. OF HIS LIFE, DEATH, AND BURIAL. (AD 669)

At that time, the province of the Mercians was governed by King Wulfhere, who, on the death of Jaruman, desired of Theodore that a bishop should be given to him and his people; but Theodore would not ordain a new one for them, but requested of King Oswy that Ceadda might be their bishop. He then lived in retirement at his monastery, which is at Laestingaeu, while Wilfrid administered the bishopric of York, and of all the Northumbrians, and likewise of the Picts, as far as King Oswy was able to extend his dominions. And, seeing that it was the custom of that most reverend prelate to go about the work of the Gospel everywhere on foot rather than on horseback, Theodore commanded him to ride whenever he had a long journey to un-

dertake; and finding him very unwilling, in his zeal and love for his pious labour, he himself, with his own hands, lifted him on horseback; for he knew him to be a holy man, and therefore obliged him to ride wherever he had need to go. Ceadda having received the bishopric of the Mercians and of Lindsey, took care to administer it with great perfection of life, according to the example of the ancient fathers. King Wulfhere also gave him land of the extent of fifty families, to build a monastery, at the place called Ad Barvae, or "At the Wood," in the province of Lindsey, wherein traces of the monastic life instituted by him continue to this day.

He had his episcopal see in the place called Lyccidfelth, in which he also died, and was buried, and where the see of the succeeding bishops of that province continues to this day. He had built himself a retired habitation not far from the church, wherein he was wont to pray and read in private, with a few, it might be seven or eight of the brethren, as often as he had any spare time from the labour and ministry of the Word. When he had most gloriously governed the church in that province for two years and a half, the Divine Providence so ordaining, there came round a season like that of which Ecclesiastes says, "That there is a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; for a plague fell upon them, sent from Heaven, which, by means of the death of the flesh, translated the living stones of the Church from their earthly places to the heavenly building. And when, after many of the Church of that most reverend prelate had been taken away out of the flesh, his hour also drew near wherein he was to pass out of this world to the Lord, it happened one day that he was in the aforesaid habitation with only one brother, called Owini, his other companions having upon some due occasion returned to the church. Now Owini was a monk of great merit, having forsaken the world with the sole desire of the heavenly reward;

worthy in all respects to have the secrets of the Lord revealed to him in special wise, and worthy to have credit given by his hearers to what he said. For he had come with Queen Ethelthryth from the province of the East Angles, and was the chief of her thegns, and governor of her house. As the fervour of his faith increased, resolving to renounce the secular life, he did not go about it slothfully, but so entirely forsook the things of this world, that, quitting all that he had, clad in a plain garment, and carrying an axe and hatchet in his hand, he came to the monastery of the same most reverend father, which is called Laestingaeu. He said that he was not entering the

monastery in order to live in idleness, as some do, but to labour; which he also confirmed by practice; for as he was less capable of studying the Scriptures, the more earnestly he applied himself to the labour of his hands. So then, forasmuch as he was reverent and devout, he was kept by the bishop in the aforesaid habitation with the brethren, and whilst they were engaged within in reading, he was without, doing such things as were necessary.

One day, when he was thus employed abroad, his companions having gone to the church, as I began to tell, and the bishop was alone reading or praying in the oratory of that place, on a sudden, as he afterwards said, he heard a sweet sound of singing and rejoicing descend from heaven to earth. This sound he said he first heard coming from the sky in the south-east, above the winter sunrise, and that afterwards it drew near him gradually, till it came to the roof of the oratory where the bishop was, and entering therein, filled all the place and encompassed it about. He listened attentively to what he heard, and after about half an hour, perceived the same song of joy to ascend from the roof of the said oratory, and to return to heaven in the same way as it came, with unspeakable sweetness. When he had stood some time amazed, and earnestly considering in his mind what this might be, the bishop opened the window of the oratory, and making a sound with his hand, as he was often wont to do, bade anyone who might be without to come in to him. He went hastily in, and the bishop said to him, "Make haste to the church, and cause those seven brothers to come hither, and do you come with them. When they were come, he first admonished them to preserve the virtue of love and peace among themselves, and towards all the faithful;

and with unwearied earnestness to follow the rules of monastic discipline, which they had either been taught by him, and had seen him observe, or had found in the words and actions of the former fathers. Then he added that the day of his death was at hand; for, said he, "that gracious guest, who was wont to visit our brethren, has vouchsafed also to come to me this day, and to call me out of this world. Return, therefore, to the church, and speak to the brethren, that in their prayers they commend my departure to the Lord, and that they be mindful to prepare for their own, the hour whereof is uncertain, by watching, and prayer, and good works." When he had spoken thus much and more to the same end, and they, having received his blessing, had gone away in great sorrow, he who had heard the heavenly song re-

turned alone, and prostrating himself on the ground, said, "I beseech you, father, may I be permitted to ask a question?"—"Ask what you will," answered the bishop. Then he said, "I beseech you to tell me what was that song which I heard as of a joyful company coming from heaven upon this oratory, and after some time returning to heaven?" The bishop answered: "If you heard the singing, and know of the coming of the heavenly company, I command you, in the Name of the Lord, that you tell it not to any before my death. But in truth they were angelic spirits, who came to call me to my heavenly reward, which I have always loved and longed after, and they promised that they would return seven days hence, and take me away with them." Which was indeed fulfilled, as had been said to him; for being presently seized with bodily infirmity, and the same daily increasing, on the seventh day, as had been promised to him, when he had prepared for death by receiving the Body and Blood of our Lord, his saintly soul being delivered from the prison of the body, led, as may justly be believed, by the attendant angels, he departed to the joys of Heaven.

It is no wonder that he joyfully beheld the day of his death, or rather the day of the Lord, the coming whereof he had always been mindful to await with earnest expectation. For with all his merits of continence, humility, teaching, prayer, voluntary poverty, and other virtues, he was so filled with the fear of the Lord, so mindful of his latter end in all his actions, that, as I was wont to hear from one of the brothers who instructed me in the Scriptures, and who had been bred in his monastery, and under his direction, whose name was Trumbert, if it happened that there blew a sudden strong gust of wind, when he was reading or doing any other thing, he forthwith called upon the Lord for mercy, and begged that it might be granted to all mankind. If the wind grew stronger, he closed his book, and fell on his face, praying still more earnestly. But, if a violent storm of wind or rain came on, or if the earth and air were filled with the terror of thunder and lightning, he would go to the church, and anxiously devote himself with all his heart to prayers and psalms till the weather became calm. Being asked by his brethren why he did so, he answered, "Have not you read—'The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice. Yea, he sent out his arrows and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.

For the Lord moves the air, raises the winds, hurls lightning, and thunders from heaven, to rouse the inhabitants of the earth to fear him; to put

them in mind of judgement to come; to dispel their pride, and confound their boldness, by recalling to their thoughts that dread time, when the heavens and the earth being on fire, He will come in the clouds, with great power and majesty, to judge the quick and the dead. Wherefore," said he, "it behoves us to respond to His heavenly admonition with due fear and love; that, as often as the air is moved and He puts forth His hand threatening to strike, but does not yet let it fall, we may immediately implore His mercy; and searching the recesses of our hearts, and casting out the dregs of our sins, we may carefully so act that we may never deserve to be struck down."

With this revelation and narrative of the aforesaid brother, concerning the death of this prelate, agrees the account of the most reverend Father Egbert, above spoken of, who long and zealously led a monastic life with the same Ceadda, when both were youths, in Ireland, in prayer and self-denial and meditation on the Holy Scriptures. But whereas Ceadda afterwards returned into his own country, Egbert continued to live abroad for the Lord's sake till the end of his life. A long time after, Hygbald, a man of great holiness and continence, who was an abbot in the province of Lindsey, came from Britain to visit him, and whilst, as became holy men, they were discoursing of the life of the former fathers, and rejoicing to imitate the same, mention was made of the most reverend prelate, Ceadda; whereupon Egbert said, "I know a man in this island, still in the flesh, who, when Ceadda passed away from this world, saw the soul of his brother Cedd, with a company of angels, descending from heaven, who, having taken Ceadda's soul along with them, returned again to the heavenly kingdom." Whether he said this of himself, or some other, we do not certainly know; but because it was said by so great a man, there can be no doubt of the truth thereof.

Ceadda died on the 2nd of March, and was first buried by St. Mary's Church, but afterwards, when the church of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, Peter, was built in the same place, his bones were translated into it. In both which places, as a testimony of his virtue, frequent miracles of healing are wont to be wrought. And of late, a certain man that had a frenzy, wandering about everywhere, arrived there in the evening, unperceived or disregarded by the keepers of the place, and having rested there the whole of the night, came forth in his right mind the next morning, to the surprise and joy of all, and told what a cure had been wrought on him through the goodness of God. The place of the sepulchre is a wooden monument, made

like a little house, covered, having a hole in the wall, through which those that go thither for devotion are wont to put in their hand and take out some of the dust. This they put into water and give to sick cattle or men to drink, whereupon they are presently eased of their infirmity, and restored to their desired health.

In his place, Theodore ordained Wynfrid, a man of good and sober life, to preside, like his predecessors, over the bishoprics of the Mercians, the Midland Angles, and Lindsey, of all which, Wulfhere, who was still living, was king. Wynfrid was one of the clergy of the prelate he succeeded, and had for no small time filled the office of deacon under him.

CHAPTER 4.4: HOW BISHOP COLMAN, HAVING LEFT BRITAIN, BUILT TWO MONASTERIES IN THE COUNTRY OF THE SCOTS; THE ONE FOR THE SCOTS, THE OTHER FOR THE ENGLISH WHOM HE HAD TAKEN ALONG WITH HIM. (AD 667)

In the meantime, Colman, the Scottish bishop, departing from Britain, took along with him all the Scots whom he had gathered about him in the isle of Lindisfarne, and also about thirty of the English nation, for both these companies had been trained in duties of the monastic life; and leaving some brothers in his church, he went first to the isle of Hii, whence he had been sent to preach the Word of God to the English nation. Afterwards he retired to a small island, which is to the west of Ireland, and at some distance from it, called in the language of the Scots, Inisboufinde, the Island of the White Heifer. Arriving there, he built a monastery, and placed in it the monks he had brought of both nations. But they could not agree among themselves, by reason that the Scots, in the summer season, when the harvest was to be brought in, leaving the monastery, wandered about through places known to them; but returned again the next winter, and desired to use in common what the English had provided. Colman sought to put an end to this dissension, and travelling about far and near, he found a place in the island of Ireland fitted to be the site of a monastery, which, in the language of the Scots, is called Mageo. He bought a small part of it of the chief to whom it belonged, to build his monastery thereon;

upon condition, that the monks dwelling there should pray to the Lord for him who let them have the place. Then at once building a monastery, with the assistance of the chief and all the neighbouring people, he placed the English there, leaving the Scots in the aforesaid island. This monastery is

to this day occupied by English inhabitants; being the same that, grown from a small beginning to be very large, is commonly called Muigeo; and as all have long since been brought to adopt better customs, it contains a notable society of monks, who are gathered there from the province of the English, and live by the labour of their own hands, after the example of the venerable fathers, under a rule and a canonical abbot, in much continence and singleness of life.

CHAPTER 4.5: OF THE DEATH OF THE KINGS OSWY AND EGBERT, AND OF THE SYNOD HELD AT THE PLACE HERUTFORD, IN WHICH ARCHBISHOP THEODORE PRESIDED. (AD 670–673)

In the year of our Lord 670, being the second year after Theodore arrived in England, Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, fell sick, and died, in the fifty-eighth year of his age. He at that time bore so great affection to the Roman Apostolic usages, that he had designed, if he recovered from his sickness, to go to Rome, and there to end his days at the holy places, having asked Bishop Wilfrid, with a promise of no small gift of money, to conduct him on his journey. He died on the 15th of February, leaving his son Egfrid his successor in the kingdom. In the third year of his reign, Theodore assembled a council of bishops, along with many other teachers of the church, who loved and were acquainted with the canonical statutes of the fathers. When they were met together, he began, in the spirit which became a bishop, to enjoin the observance of such things as were in accordance with the unity and the peace of the Church. The purport of the proceedings of this synod is as follows:—

"In the name of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who reigns for ever and governs His Church, it was thought meet that we should assemble, according to the custom prescribed in the venerable canons, to treat about the necessary affairs of the Church. We met on the 24th day of September, the first indiction, at the place which is called Herutford: I, Theodore, albeit unworthy, appointed by the Apostolic see bishop of the church of Canterbury; our fellow priest and brother, the most reverend Bisi, bishop of the East Angles; and with us also our brother and fellow priest, Wilfrid, bishop of the nation of the Northumbrians, represented by his proxies. There were present also our brothers and fellow priests, Putta, bishop of the Kentish castle, called Rochester; Leutherius, bishop of the West Saxons, and Wynfrid, bishop of the province of the Mercians. When we were all met together, and had sat down in order, I said, 'I beseech you, most dear brothers, for the

fear and love of our Redeemer, that we may all treat in common on behalf of our faith; to the end that whatsoever has been decreed and defined by holy and approved fathers, may be inviolably observed by all of us. This and much more I spoke tending to charity and the preservation of the unity of the Church; and when I had ended my preface, I asked every one of them in order, whether they consented to observe the things that had been of old canonically decreed by the fathers?

To which all our fellow priests answered, 'Most assuredly we are all resolved to observe willingly and heartily whatsoever is laid down in the canons of the holy fathers. Then forthwith I produced the said book of canons, and in the presence of them all showed ten articles in the same, which I had marked in several places, because I knew them to be of the most importance to us, and entreated that these might be most particularly received by them all. "Article I. That we all in common keep the holy day of Easter on the Sunday after the fourteenth moon of the first month. "II. That no bishop intrude into the diocese of another, but be satisfied with the government of the people committed to him. "III. That it shall not be lawful for any bishop to disturb in any matter monasteries dedicated to God, nor to take away forcibly any part of their property. "IV. That the monks themselves do not move from one place to another, that is, from monastery to monastery, unless with the consent of their own abbot; but that they continue in the obedience which they promised at the time of their conversion. "V. That no clerk, forsaking his own bishop, shall wander about, or be anywhere received without commendatory letters from his diocesan. But if he shall be once received, and will not return when summoned, both the receiver, and he that is received shall be under excommunication.

"VI. That bishops and clergy, when travelling, shall be content with the hospitality that is afforded them; and that it be not lawful for any one of them to exercise any priestly function without leave of the bishop in whose diocese he is known to be. "VII. That a synod be assembled twice a year; but on account of divers hindrances, it was approved by all, that we should meet once a year, on the 1st of August, at the place called Clofeshoch. "VIII. That no bishop, through ambition, shall set himself above another; but that they shall all observe the time and order of their consecration. "IX. The ninth Article was discussed in common, to the effect that more bishops should be made, as the number of the faithful increased; but this matter for the present

was passed over. "X. Of marriages; that nothing be allowed but lawful wedlock; that none commit incest; no man leave his own wife, except it be, as the holy Gospel teaches, for fornication. And if any man shall put away his own wife, lawfully joined to him in matrimony, that he take no other, if he wishes to be a true Christian, but continue as he is, or else be reconciled to his own wife.

"These articles being thus discussed and defined in common, to the end, that for the future, no stumbling-block of contention might arise from any one of us, or that things be falsely set forth, it was thought fit that every one of us should, by the subscription of his own hand, confirm all the particulars so defined. Which judgement, as defined by us, I dictated to be written by Titillus our notary. Given in the month and indiction aforesaid. Whosoever, therefore, shall attempt in any way to oppose or infringe this decision, confirmed by our consent, and by the subscription of our hands, according to the decree of the canons, must know, that he is excluded from all sacerdotal functions, and from our fellowship. May the Grace of God keep us in safety, living in the unity of His Holy Church." This synod was held in the year of our Lord 673. In which year Egbert, king of Kent, died in the month of July; his brother Hlothere succeeded him on the throne, which he held eleven years and seven months. Bisi, the bishop of the East Angles, who is said to have been in the aforesaid synod, a man of great saintliness and piety, was successor to Boniface, before spoken of; for when Boniface died, after having been bishop seventeen years, he was ordained by Theodore and made bishop in his place. Whilst he was still alive, but hindered by grievous infirmity from administering his episcopal functions, two bishops, Aecci and Badwin, were elected and consecrated in his place; from which time to the present, that province has had two bishops.

CHAPTER 4.6: HOW WYNFRID BEING DEPOSED, SEXWULF RECEIVED HIS BISHOPRIC, AND EARCONWALD WAS MADE BISHOP OF THE EAST SAXONS. (AD 675)

Not long after these events, Theodore, the archbishop, taking offence at some act of disobedience of Wynfrid, bishop of the Mercians, deposed him from his bishopric when he had held it but a few years, and in his place ordained Sexwulf bishop, who was founder and abbot of the monastery which is called Medeshamstead, in the country of the Gyrwas. Wynfrid, thus deposed, returned to his monastery which is called Ad Barvae, and there ended

his life in holy conversation. Theodore then also appointed Earconwald, bishop of the East Saxons, in the city of London, over whom at that time reigned Sebbi and Sighere, of whom mention has been made above. This Earconwald's life and conversation, as well when he was bishop as before that time, is said to have been most holy, as is even now testified by heavenly miracles; for to this day, his horse-litter, in which he was wont to be carried when sick, is kept by his disciples, and continues to cure many of fevers and other ailments; and not only sick persons who are laid under that litter, or close by it, are cured; but the very splinters cut from it, when carried to the sick, are wont immediately to bring healing to them.

This man, before he was made bishop, had built two famous monasteries, the one for himself, and the other for his sister Ethelburg, and established them both in regular discipline of the best kind. That for himself was in the district of Sudergeona, by the river Thames, at a place called Cerotaesei, that is, the Island of Cerot; that for his sister in the province of the East Saxons, at a place called In Berecingum, wherein she might be a mother and nurse of women devoted to God. Being put into the government of that monastery, she showed herself in all respects worthy of her brother the bishop, by her own holy life and by her regular and pious care of those under her rule, as was also manifested by heavenly miracles.

CHAPTER 4.7: HOW IT WAS INDICATED BY A LIGHT FROM HEAVEN WHERE THE BODIES OF THE NUNS SHOULD BE BURIED IN THE MONASTERY OF BERECINGUM. [675 A.D.?]

In this monastery many miracles were wrought, accounts of which have been committed to writing by those who were acquainted with them, that their memory might be preserved, and succeeding generations edified, and these are in the possession of many persons; some of them we also have taken pains to include in our History of the Church. At the time of the pestilence, already often mentioned, which ravaged all the country far and wide, it had also seized on that part of this monastery where the men abode, and they were daily hurried away to the Lord. The careful mother of the community began often to inquire of the sisters, when they were gathered together; in what part of the monastery they desired to be buried and a cemetery to be made, when the same affliction should fall upon that part of the monastery in which the handmaids of the Lord dwelt together apart from the men, and they should be snatched away out of this world by the same destruction as

the rest. Receiving no certain answer from the sisters, though she often questioned them, she and all of them received a most certain answer from the Divine Providence.

For one night, after matins had been sung, and those handmaids of Christ had gone out of their chapel to the tombs of the brothers who had departed this life before them, and were singing the customary songs of praise to the Lord, on a sudden a light from heaven, like a great sheet, came down upon them all, and struck them with such amazement, that, in consternation, they even left off singing their hymn. But that resplendent light, in comparison wherewith the sun at noon-day might seem dark, soon after, rising from that place, removed to the south side of the monastery, that is, to the westward of the chapel, and having continued there some time, and rested upon those parts, in the sight of them all withdrew itself again to heaven, leaving no doubt in the minds of all, but that the same light, which was to lead or to receive the souls of those handmaids of Christ into Heaven, also showed the place in which their bodies were to rest and await the day of the resurrection. The radiance of this light was so great, that one of the older brethren, who at the same time was in their chapel with another younger than himself, related in the morning, that the rays of light which came in at the crannies of the doors and windows, seemed to exceed the utmost brightness of daylight.

CHAPTER 4.8: HOW A LITTLE BOY, DYING IN THE SAME MONASTERY, CALLED UPON A VIRGIN THAT WAS TO FOLLOW HIM; AND HOW ANOTHER NUN, AT THE POINT OF LEAVING HER BODY, SAW SOME SMALL PART OF THE FUTURE GLORY. [675 A.D.?]

There was, in the same monastery, a boy, not above three years old, called Aesica; who, by reason of his tender age, was being brought up among the virgins dedicated to God, there to learn his lessons. This child being seized by the aforesaid pestilence, when his last hour was come, called three times upon one of the virgins consecrated to Christ, speaking to her by her own name, as if she had been present, Eadgyth! Eadgyth! Eadgyth! and thus ending his temporal life, entered into that which is eternal. The virgin, to whom he called, as he was dying, was immediately seized, where she was, with the same sickness, and departing this life the same day on which she had been summoned, followed him that called her into the heavenly kingdom. Likewise, one of the same handmaids of God, being smitten with the

same disease, and reduced to the last extremity, began on a sudden, about midnight, to cry out to them that ministered to her, desiring they would put out the lamp that was lighted there. And, when she had done this many times, and yet no one did her will, at last she said, "I know that you think I am raving, when I say this, but be assured that it is not so; for I tell you truly, that I see this house filled with so great a light, that that lamp of yours seems to me to be altogether dark." And when still no one replied to what she said, or did her bidding, she added, "Burn your lamp, then, as long as you will; but know, that it is not my light, for my light will come to me at the dawn of day." Then she began to tell, that a certain man of God, who had died that same year, had appeared to her, telling her that at the break of day she should depart to the eternal light. The truth of which vision was speedily proved by the maiden's death as soon as the day appeared.

CHAPTER 4.9: OF THE SIGNS WHICH WERE SHOWN FROM HEAVEN WHEN THE MOTHER OF THAT COMMUNITY DEPARTED THIS LIFE. [675 A.D.?]

Now when Ethelburg herself, the pious mother of that community devoted to God, was about to be taken out of this world, a wonderful vision appeared to one of the sisters, called Tortgyth; who, having lived many years in that monastery, always endeavoured, in all humility and sincerity, to serve God herself, and to help the mother to maintain regular discipline, by instructing and reproving the younger ones. Now, in order that her virtue might, according to the Apostle, be made perfect in weakness, she was suddenly seized with a most grievous bodily disease, under which, through the merciful providence of our Redeemer, she was sorely tried for the space of nine years; to the end, that whatever stain of evil remained amidst her virtues, either through ignorance or neglect, might all be purified in the furnace of long tribulation. This woman, going out of the chamber where she abode one night, at dusk, plainly saw as it were a human body, which was brighter than the sun, wrapped in fine linen, and lifted up on high, being taken out of the house in which the sisters used to sleep. Then looking earnestly to see what it was that drew up that appearance of the glorious body which she beheld, she perceived that it was raised on high as it were by cords brighter than gold, until, entering into the open heavens, it could no longer be seen by her.

Reflecting on this vision, she made no doubt that some one of the community would soon die, and her soul be lifted up to heaven by the good works which she had wrought, as it were by golden cords. And so in truth it

befell; for a few days after, the beloved of God, Ethelburg, mother of that community, was delivered out of the prison of the flesh; and her life is proved to have been such that no one who knew her ought to doubt that an entrance into the heavenly country was open to her, when she departed from this life. There was also, in the same monastery, a certain nun, of noble origin in this world, and still nobler in the love of the world to come; who had, for many years, been so disabled in all her body, that she could not move a single limb. When she heard that the body of the venerable abbess had been carried into the church, till it should be buried, she desired to be carried thither, and to be placed bending towards it, after the manner of one praying; which being done, she spoke to her as if she had been living, and entreated her that she would obtain of the mercy of our pitiful Creator, that she might be delivered from such great and long-continued pains; nor was it long before her prayer was heard: for being delivered from the flesh twelve days after, she exchanged her temporal afflictions for an eternal reward.

For three years after the death of her Superior, the aforesaid handmaid of Christ, Tortgyth, was detained in this life and was so far spent with the sickness before mentioned, that her bones scarce held together. At last, when the time of her release was at hand, she not only lost the use of her other limbs, but also of her tongue; in which state having continued three days and as many nights, she was, on a sudden, restored by a spiritual vision, and opened her lips and eyes, and looking up to heaven, began thus to speak to the vision which she saw: "Very acceptable to me is thy coming, and thou art welcome!" Having so said, she was silent awhile, as it were, waiting for the answer of him whom she saw and to whom she spoke; then, as if somewhat displeased, she said, "I can in no wise gladly suffer this;" then pausing awhile, she said again, "If it can by no means be to-day, I beg that the delay may not be long;" and again holding her peace a short while, she concluded thus; "If it is certainly so determined, and the decree cannot be altered, I beg that it may be no longer deferred than this next night." Having so said, and being asked by those about her with whom she talked, she said, "With my most dear mother, Ethelburg;" by which they understood, that she was come to acquaint her that the time of her departure was at hand; for, as she had desired, after one day and night, she was delivered alike from the bonds of the flesh and of her infirmity and entered into the joys of eternal salvation.

CHAPTER 4.10: HOW A BLIND WOMAN, PRAYING IN THE BURIAL-PLACE OF THAT MONASTERY, WAS RESTORED TO HER SIGHT. [675 A.D.?]

Hildilid, a devout handmaid of God, succeeded Ethelburg in the office of abbess and presided over that monastery with great vigour many years, till she was of an extreme old age, in the observance of regular discipline, and carefully providing all things for the common use. The narrowness of the space where the monastery is built, led her to determine that the bones of the servants and handmaidens of Christ, who had been there buried, should be taken up, and should all be translated into the church of the Blessed Mother of God, and interred in one place. How often a brightness of heavenly light was seen there, when this was done, and a fragrancy of wonderful sweetness arose, and what other signs were revealed, whosoever reads will find in the book from which we have taken these tales. But in truth, I think it by no means fit to pass over the miracle of healing, which the same book informs us was wrought in the cemetery of that community dedicated to God. There lived in that neighbourhood a certain thegn, whose wife was seized with a sudden dimness in her eyes, and as the malady increased daily, it became so burdensome to her, that she could not see the least glimpse of light. Having continued some time wrapped in the night of this blindness, on a sudden she bethought herself that she might recover her lost sight, if she were carried to the monastery of the nuns, and there prayed at the relics of the saints. Nor did she lose any time in fulfilling that which she had conceived in her mind: for being conducted by her maids to the monastery, which was very near, and professing that she had perfect faith that she should be there healed, she was led into the cemetery, and having long prayed there on her knees, she did not fail to be heard, for as she rose from prayer, before she went out of the place, she received the gift of sight which she had desired; and whereas she had been led thither by the hands of her maids, she now returned home joyfully without help: as if she had lost the light of this world to no other end than that she might show by her recovery how great a light is vouchsafed to the saints of Christ in Heaven, and how great a grace of healing power.

CHAPTER 4.11: HOW SEBBI, KING OF THE SAME PROVINCE, ENDED HIS LIFE IN A MONASTERY. (AD 694)

At that time, as the same little book informs us, Sebbi, a very devout man, of whom mention has been made above, governed the kingdom of the East

Saxons. His mind was set on religious acts, frequent prayer and pious fruits of almsgiving; he esteemed a private and monastic life better than all the wealth and honours of his kingdom, and he would have long before left his kingdom and adopted that life, had not his wife firmly refused to be divorced from him; for which reason many were of opinion and often said that a man of such a disposition ought rather to have been made a bishop than a king. When he had spent thirty years as a king and a soldier of the heavenly kingdom, he fell into great bodily infirmity, of which he afterwards died, and he admonished his wife, that they should then at least together devote themselves to the service of God, since they could no longer together enjoy, or rather serve, the world. Having with much difficulty obtained this of her, he went to Waldhere, bishop of London, who had succeeded Earconwald, and with his blessing received the religious habit, which he had long desired. He also carried to him a considerable sum of money, to be given to the poor, reserving nothing to himself, but rather coveting to remain poor in spirit for the sake of the kingdom of Heaven.

When the aforesaid sickness increased, and he perceived the day of his death to be drawing near, being a man of a royal disposition, he began to apprehend lest, when in great pain, at the approach of death, he might commit anything unworthy of his character, either by word or gesture. Wherefore, calling to him the aforesaid bishop of London, in which city he then was, he entreated him that none might be present at his death, besides the bishop himself, and two of his own attendants. The bishop having promised that he would most willingly grant his request, not long after the man of God composed himself to sleep, and saw a consoling vision, which took from him all anxiety concerning the aforesaid uneasiness; and, moreover, showed him on what day he was to end his life. For, as he afterwards related, he saw three men in shining garments come to him; one of whom sat down by his bed, whilst his companions who had come with him stood and inquired about the state of the sick man they had come to visit, and he said that the king's soul should quit his body without any pain, and with a great splendour of light; and told him that he should die the third day after. Both these things came to pass, as he had learnt from the vision; for on the third day after, at the ninth hour, he suddenly fell, as it were, into a light slumber, and without any sense of pain he gave up the ghost.

A stone coffin had been prepared for his burial, but when they came to lay him in it, they found his body a span longer than the coffin. Hereupon they chipped away as much of the stone as they could, and made the coffin about two inches longer; but not even so would it contain the body. Wherefore because of this difficulty of entombing him, they had thoughts either to get another coffin, or else to shorten the body, by bending it at the knees, if they could, so that the coffin might contain it. But Heaven interposed and a miracle prevented the execution of either of those designs; for on a sudden, in the presence of the bishop and Sighard, who was the son of that same king and monk, and who reigned after him jointly with his brother Suefred, and of no small number of men, that coffin was found to fit the length of the body, insomuch that a pillow might even be put in at the head; and at the feet the coffin was four inches longer than the body. He was buried in the church of the blessed teacher of the Gentiles, by whose doctrine he had learned to hope for heavenly things.

CHAPTER 4.12: HOW HAEDDE SUCCEEDED LEUTHERIUS IN THE BISHOPRIC OF THE WEST SAXONS; HOW CUICHELM SUCCEEDED PUTTA IN THE BISHOPRIC OF THE CHURCH OF ROCHESTER, AND WAS HIMSELF SUCCEEDED BY GEBMUND; AND WHO WERE THEN BISHOPS OF THE NORTHUMBRIANS. (AD 673–681)

Leutherius was the fourth bishop of the West Saxons; for Birinus was the first, Agilbert the second, and Wini the third. When Coinwalch, in whose reign the said Leutherius was made bishop, died, the sub-kings took upon them the government of the nation, and dividing it among themselves, held it for about ten years; and during their rule he died, and Haedde succeeded him in the bishopric, having been consecrated by Theodore, in the city of London. During his episcopate, Caedwalla, having subdued and removed the sub-kings, took upon himself the supreme authority. When he had held it for two years, and whilst the same bishop still governed the church, at length impelled by love of the heavenly kingdom, he quitted it and, going away to Rome, ended his days there, as shall be said more fully hereafter. In the year of our Lord 676, when Ethelred, king of the Mercians, ravaged Kent with a hostile army, and profaned churches and monasteries, without regard to pity, or the fear of God, in the general destruction he laid waste the city of Rochester; Putta, who was bishop, was absent at that time, but when he understood that his church was ravaged, and everything taken away from it, he went to Sexwulf, bishop of the Mercians, and having received of him a cer-

tain church, and a small piece of land, ended his days there in peace; in no way endeavouring to restore his bishopric, for, as has been said above, he was more industrious in ecclesiastical than in worldly affairs; serving God only in that church, and going wherever he was desired, to teach Church music. Theodore consecrated Cuichelm bishop of Rochester in his stead; but he, not long after, departing from his bishopric for want of necessaries, and withdrawing to other parts, Gebmund was put in his place by Theodore.

In the year of our Lord 678, which is the eighth of the reign of Egfrid, in the month of August, appeared a star, called a comet, which continued for three months, rising in the morning, and sending forth, as it were, a tall pillar of radiant flame. The same year a dissension broke out between King Egfrid and the most reverend prelate, Wilfrid, who was driven from his see, and two bishops substituted for him, to preside over the nation of the Northumbrians, namely, Bosa, to govern the province of the Deiri; and Eata that of the Bernicians; the former having his episcopal see in the city of York, the latter either in the church of Hagustald, or of Lindisfarne; both of them promoted to the episcopal dignity from a community of monks. With them also Eadhaed was ordained bishop for the province of Lindsey, which King Egfrid had but newly acquired, having defeated Wulfhere and put him to flight; and this was the first bishop of its own which that province had; the second was Ethelwin; the third Edgar; the fourth Cynibert, who is there at present. Before Eadhaed, Sexwulf was bishop as well of that province as of the Mercians and Midland Angles; so that, when expelled from Lindsey, he continued in the government of those provinces. Eadhaed, Bosa, and Eata, were ordained at York by archbishop Theodore; who also, three years after the departure of Wilfrid, added two bishops to their number: Tunbert, appointed to the church of Hagustald, Eata still continuing in that of Lindisfarne; and Trumwine to the province of the Picts, which at that time was subject to English rule. Eadhaed returning from Lindsey, because Ethelred had recovered that province, was placed by Theodore over the church of Ripon.

CHAPTER 4.13: HOW BISHOP WILFRID CONVERTED THE PROVINCE OF THE SOUTH SAXONS TO CHRIST. (AD 681)

But Wilfrid was expelled from his bishopric, and having long travelled in many lands, went to Rome, and afterwards returned to Britain. Though he could not, by reason of the enmity of the aforesaid king, be received into his

own country or diocese, yet he could not be restrained from the ministry of the Gospel; for, taking his way into the province of the South Saxons, which extends from Kent to the south and west, as far as the West Saxons, containing land of 7,000 families, and was at that time still in bondage to pagan rites, he administered to them the Word of faith, and the Baptism of salvation. Ethelwalch, king of that nation, had been, not long before, baptized in the province of the Mercians, at the instance of King Wulfhere, who was present, and received him as his godson when he came forth from the font, and in token of this adoption gave him two provinces, to wit, the Isle of Wight, and the province of the Meanware, in the country of the West Saxons. The bishop, therefore, with the king's consent, or rather to his great joy, cleansed in the sacred font the foremost ealdormen and thegns of that country; and the priests, Eappa, and Padda, and Burghelm, and Oiddi, either then, or afterwards, baptized the rest of the people. The queen, whose name was Eabae, had been baptized in her own country, the province of the Hwiccas. She was the daughter of Eanfrid, the brother of Aenhere, who were both Christians, as were their people;

but all the province of the South Saxons was ignorant of the Name of God and the faith. But there was among them a certain monk of the Scottish nation, whose name was Dicul, who had a very small monastery, at the place called Bosanhamm, encompassed by woods and seas, and in it there were five or six brothers, who served the Lord in humility and poverty; but none of the natives cared either to follow their course of life, or hear their preaching. But Bishop Wilfrid, while preaching the Gospel to the people, not only delivered them from the misery of eternal damnation, but also from a terrible calamity of temporal death. For no rain had fallen in that district for three years before his arrival in the province, whereupon a grievous famine fell upon the people and pitilessly destroyed them; insomuch that it is said that often forty or fifty men, wasted with hunger, would go together to some precipice, or to the sea-shore, and there, hand in hand, in piteous wise cast them themselves down either to perish by the fall, or be swallowed up by the waves. But on the very day on which the nation received the Baptism of the faith, there fell a soft but plentiful rain; the earth revived, the fields grew green again, and the season was pleasant and fruitful. Thus the old superstition was cast away, and idolatry renounced, the heart and flesh of all rejoiced in the living God, for they perceived that He Who is the true God had enriched

them by His heavenly grace with both inward and outward blessings. For the bishop, when he came into the province, and found so great misery from famine there, taught them to get their food by fishing; for their sea and rivers abounded in fish, but the people had no skill to take any of them, except eels alone. The bishop's men having gathered eel-nets everywhere, cast them into the sea, and by the blessing of God took three hundred fishes of divers sorts, which being divided into three parts, they gave a hundred to the poor, a hundred to those of whom they had the nets, and kept a hundred for their own use. By this benefit the bishop gained the affections of them all, and they began more readily at his preaching to hope for heavenly blessings, seeing that by his help they had received those which are temporal.

At this time, King Ethelwalch gave to the most reverend prelate, Wilfrid, land to the extent of eighty-seven families, to maintain his company who were wandering in exile. The place is called Selaeseu, that is, the Island of the Sea-Calf; it is encompassed by the sea on all sides, except the west, where is an entrance about the cast of a sling in width; which sort of place is by the Latins called a peninsula, by the Greeks, a cherronesos. Bishop Wilfrid, having this place given him, founded therein a monastery, chiefly of the brethren he had brought with him, and established a rule of life; and his successors are known to be there to this day. He himself, both in word and deed performed the duties of a bishop in those parts during the space of five years, until the death of King Egfrid, and was justly honoured by all. And forasmuch as the king, together with the said place, gave him all the goods that were therein, with the lands and men, he instructed all the people in the faith of Christ, and cleansed them in the water of Baptism. Among whom were two hundred and fifty bondsmen and bondswomen, all of whom he saved by Baptism from slavery to the Devil, and in like manner, by giving them their liberty, set them free from slavery to man.

CHAPTER 4.14: HOW A PESTILENCE CEASED THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF KING OSWALD. (AD 681–686)

In this monastery, at that time, certain special manifestations of the heavenly grace are said to have been shown forth; in as much as the tyranny of the Devil had been recently cast out and Christ had begun to reign there. Of these I have thought it proper to perpetuate the memory of one which the most reverend Bishop Acca was wont often to relate to me, affirming that it had been told him by most creditable brothers of the same monastery.

About the same time that this province had received the faith of Christ, a grievous pestilence fell upon many provinces of Britain; which, also, by the Divine dispensation, reached to the aforesaid monastery, then governed by the most religious priest of Christ, Eappa; and many, as well of those that had come thither with the bishop, as of those of the same province of the South Saxons who had been lately called to the faith, were snatched away out of this world. The brethren, therefore, thought fit to keep a fast of three days, and humbly to implore the Divine goodness to vouchsafe to have mercy on them, either by delivering from instant death those that were in danger by reason of the disease, or by saving those who were hurried out of this life from the eternal damnation of their souls.

There was at that time in the monastery, a little boy, of the Saxon nation, lately called to the faith, who had been attacked by the same infirmity, and had long kept his bed. On the second day of the aforesaid fasting and prayer, it happened about the second hour of the day, that this boy was left alone in the place where he lay sick, when on a sudden, through the Divine disposition, the most blessed chiefs of the Apostles vouchsafed to appear to him; for he was a boy of a very simple and gentle disposition, and with sincere devotion observed the mysteries of the faith which he had received. The Apostles therefore, greeting him with loving words, said, "My son, fear not death, concerning which thou art troubled; for this day we will bring thee to the kingdom of Heaven; but first thou must needs wait till the Masses are celebrated, that having received thy voyage provision, the Body and Blood of our Lord, and so being set free from sickness and death, thou mayest be taken up to the everlasting joys in Heaven.

"Call therefore to thee the priest, Eappa, and tell him, that the Lord has heard your prayers, and has favourably looked upon your devotion and your fast, and not one more shall die of this plague, either in the monastery or the lands adjacent to it; but all your people who any where labour under this sickness, shall be raised up from their weakness, and restored to their former health, saving thee alone, who art this day to be delivered from death, and to be carried into Heaven, to behold our Lord Christ, whom thou hast faithfully served. This favour the Divine mercy has vouchsafed to grant you, through the intercession of the godly King Oswald, beloved of God, who formerly nobly ruled over the nation of the Northumbrians, with the authority of a temporal kingdom and the devotion of Christian piety which

leads to the eternal kingdom. For this very day that king was killed in body by the infidels in war, and straightway taken up to Heaven to the everlasting joys of souls, and brought into fellowship with the number of the elect. Let them look in their records, wherein the burial of the dead is set down, and they will find that he was, this day, as we have said, taken out of this world. Let them, therefore, celebrate Masses in all the oratories of this monastery, either in thanksgiving because their prayers are heard, or else in memory of the aforesaid King Oswald, who once governed their nation, and therefore humbly prayed to the Lord for them, as for converts of his nation; and let all the brethren assemble in the church, and all communicate in the heavenly Sacrifices, and so let them cease to fast, and refresh the body also with the food that belongs to it."

The boy called the priest, and repeated all these words to him; and the priest carefully inquired after the habit and form of the men that had appeared to him. He answered, "Their habit was altogether noble, and their countenances most pleasant and beautiful, such as I had never seen before, nor did I think there could be any men so fair and comely. One of them indeed was shorn like a clerk, the other had a long beard; and they said that one of them was called Peter, the other Paul; and they were the servants of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, sent by Him from Heaven to protect our monastery." The priest believed what the boy said, and going thence immediately, looked in his chronicle, and found that King Oswald had been killed on that very day. He then called the brethren, ordered dinner to be provided, Masses to be said, and all of them to communicate as usual; causing also a part of the same Sacrifice of the Lord's Oblation to be carried to the sick boy.

Soon after this, the boy died, on that same day; and by his death proved that the words which he had heard from the Apostles of Christ were true. And this moreover bore witness to the truth of his words, that none besides himself, belonging to the same monastery, was taken away at that time. And without doubt, by this vision, many that heard of it were wonderfully excited to implore the Divine mercy in adversity, and to submit to the wholesome remedy of fasting. From that time, the day of commemoration of that king and soldier of Christ began to be yearly honoured with the celebration of Masses, not only in that monastery, but in many other places.

CHAPTER 4.15: HOW KING CAEDWALLA, KING OF THE GEWISSAE, HAVING SLAIN ETHELWALCH, WASTED THAT PROVINCE WITH CRUEL SLAUGHTER AND DEVASTATION. (AD 685)

In the meantime, Caedwalla, a young man of great vigour, of the royal race of the Gewissae, an exile from his country, came with an army, slew Ethelwalch, and wasted that province with cruel slaughter and devastation; but he was soon expelled by Berthun and Andhun, the king's ealdormen, who held in succession the government of the province. The first of them was afterwards killed by the same Caedwalla, when he was king of the Gewissae, and the province was reduced to more grievous slavery: Ini, likewise, who reigned after Caedwalla, oppressed that country with the like servitude for many years; for which reason, during all that time, they could have no bishop of their own; but their first bishop, Wilfrid, having been recalled home, they were subject to the bishop of the Gewissae, that is, the West Saxons, who were in the city of Venta.

CHAPTER 4.16: HOW THE ISLE OF WIGHT RECEIVED CHRISTIAN INHABITANTS, AND TWO ROYAL YOUTHS OF THAT ISLAND WERE KILLED IMMEDIATELY AFTER BAPTISM. (AD 686)

After Caedwalla had obtained possession of the kingdom of the Gewissae, he took also the Isle of Wight, which till then was entirely given over to idolatry, and by merciless slaughter endeavoured to destroy all the inhabitants thereof, and to place in their stead people from his own province; binding himself by a vow, though it is said that he was not yet regenerated in Christ, to give the fourth part of the land and of the spoil to the Lord, if he took the island. He fulfilled this vow by giving the same for the service of the Lord to Bishop Wilfrid, who happened at the time to have come thither from his own people. The measure of that island, according to the computation of the English, is of twelve hundred families, wherefore an estate of three hundred families was given to the Bishop. The part which he received, he committed to one of his clerks called Bernwin, who was his sister's son, assigning to him a priest, whose name was Hiddila, to administer the Word and laver of life to all that would be saved.

Here I think it ought not to be omitted that, as the first fruits of those of that island who believed and were saved, two royal boys, brothers to Arwald, king of the island, were crowned with the special grace of God. For when the enemy approached, they made their escape out of the island, and crossed over

into the neighbouring province of the Jutes. Coming to the place called At the Stone, they thought to be concealed from the victorious king, but they were betrayed and ordered to be killed. This being made known to a certain abbot and priest, whose name was Cynibert, who had a monastery not far from there, at a place called Hreutford, that is, the Ford of Reeds, he came to the king, who then lay in concealment in those parts to be cured of the wounds which he had received whilst he was fighting in the Isle of Wight, and begged of him, that if the boys must needs be killed, he might be allowed first to instruct them in the mysteries of the Christian faith. The king consented, and the bishop having taught them the Word of truth, and cleansed them in the font of salvation, assured to them their entrance into the kingdom of Heaven. Then the executioner came, and they joyfully underwent the temporal death, through which they did not doubt they were to pass to the life of the soul, which is everlasting. Thus, after this manner, when all the provinces of Britain had received the faith of Christ, the Isle of Wight also received the same; yet because it was suffering under the affliction of foreign subjection, no man there received the office or see of a bishop, before Daniel, who is now bishop of the West Saxons.

The island is situated opposite the borders of the South Saxons and the Gewissae, being separated from it by a sea, three miles wide, which is called Solvente. In this sea, the two tides of the ocean, which break upon Britain all round its coasts from the boundless northern ocean, daily meet in conflict beyond the mouth of the river Homelea, which runs into the aforesaid sea, through the lands of the Jutes, belonging to the country of the Gewissae; and after this struggle of the tides, they fall back and return into the ocean whence they come.

CHAPTER 4.17: OF THE SYNOD HELD IN THE PLAIN OF HAETHFELTH, ARCHBISHOP THEODORE BEING PRESIDENT. (AD 680)

About this time, Theodore being informed that the faith of the Church at Constantinople was much perplexed by the heresy of Eutyches, and desiring that the Churches of the English, over which he presided, should remain free from all such taint, convened an assembly of venerable bishops and many learned men, and diligently inquired into the faith of each. He found them all of one mind in the Catholic faith, and this he caused to be committed to writing by the authority of the synod as a memorial, and for the instruction of succeeding generations; the beginning of which document is

as follows: "In the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, under the rule of our most pious lords, Egfrid, king of of the Northumbrians, in the tenth year of his reign, the seventeenth of September, the eighth indiction; Ethelred, king of the Mercians, in the sixth year of his reign; Aldwulf king of the East Angles, in the seventeenth year of his reign; and Hlothere, king of Kent, in the seventh year of his reign; Theodore, by the grace of God, archbishop of the island of Britain, and of the city of Canterbury, being president, and the other venerable bishops of the island of Britain sitting with him, the holy Gospels being laid before them, at the place which, in the Saxon tongue, is called Haethfelth, we conferred together, and set forth the right and orthodox faith, as our Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh delivered the same to His disciples, who beheld His Presence and heard His words, and as it is delivered by the creed of the holy fathers, and by all holy and universal synods in general, and by the consent of all approved doctors of the Catholic Church. We, therefore, following them, in piety and orthodoxy, and professing accordance with their divinely inspired doctrine, do believe agreeably to it, and with the holy fathers confess the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost, to be properly and truly a Trinity consubstantial in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, that is, one God in three Subsistences or consubstantial persons, of equal glory and honour."

And after much more of the same sort, appertaining to the confession of the right faith, this holy synod added to its document, "We acknowledge the five holy and general councils of the blessed fathers acceptable to God; that is, of the 318 assembled at Nicaea, against the most impious Arius and his tenets; and at Constantinople, of 150, against the madness of Macedonius and Eudoxius, and their tenets; and at Ephesus, for the first time, of 200, against the most wicked Nestorius, and his tenets; and at Chalcedon, of 630, against Eutyches and Nestorius, and their tenets; and again, at Constantinople, in a fifth council, in the time of Justinian the younger, against Theodorus, and the epistles of Theodoret and Ibas, and their tenets in opposition to Cyril." And again a little lower, "the synod held in the city of Rome, in the time of the blessed Pope Martin, in the eighth indiction, and in the ninth year of the most pious Emperor Constantine, we also acknowledge. And we glorify our Lord Jesus Christ, as they glorified Him, neither adding aught nor taking away; anathematizing with hearts and lips those whom they anathematized, and receiving those whom they received; glorifying

God the Father, Who is without beginning, and His only-begotten Son, begotten of the Father before the worlds, and the Holy Ghost proceeding ineffably from the Father and the Son, even as those holy Apostles, prophets, and doctors, whom we have above-mentioned, did declare. And all we, who, with Archbishop Theodore, have thus set forth the Catholic faith, thereto subscribe."

CHAPTER 4.18: OF JOHN, THE PRECENTOR OF THE APOSTOLIC SEE, WHO CAME INTO BRITAIN TO TEACH. (AD 680)

Among those who were present at this synod, and confirmed the decrees of the Catholic faith, was the venerable John, archchanter of the church of the holy Apostle Peter, and abbot of the monastery of the blessed Martin, who had come lately from Rome, by order of Pope Agatho, together with the most reverend Abbot Biscop, surnamed Benedict, of whom mention has been made above. For the said Benedict, having built a monastery in Britain, in honour of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, at the mouth of the river Wear, went to Rome with Ceolfrid, his companion and fellow-labourer in that work, who was after him abbot of the same monastery; he had been several times before at Rome, and was now honourably received by Pope Agatho of blessed memory; from whom he also asked and obtained, in order to secure the immunities of the monastery which he had founded, a letter of privilege confirmed by apostolic authority, according to what he knew to be the will and grant of King Egfrid, by whose consent and gift of land he had built that monastery.

He was also allowed to take the aforesaid Abbot John with him into Britain, that he might teach in his monastery the system of singing throughout the year, as it was practised at St. Peter's at Rome. The Abbot John did as he had been commanded by the Pope, teaching the singers of the said monastery the order and manner of singing and reading aloud, and committing to writing all that was requisite throughout the whole course of the year for the celebration of festivals; and these writings are still preserved in that monastery, and have been copied by many others elsewhere. The said John not only taught the brothers of that monastery, but such as had skill in singing resorted from almost all the monasteries of the same province to hear him, and many invited him to teach in other places. Besides his task of singing and reading, he had also received a commission from the Apostolic Pope, carefully to inform himself concerning the faith of the English Church, and to

give an account thereof on his return to Rome. For he also brought with him the decision of the synod of the blessed Pope Martin, held not long before at Rome, with the consent of one hundred and five bishops, chiefly to refute those who taught that there is but one operation and will in Christ, and he gave it to be transcribed in the aforesaid monastery of the most religious Abbot Benedict. The men who followed such opinion greatly perplexed the faith of the Church of Constantinople at that time; but by the help of God they were then discovered and overcome. Wherefore, Pope Agatho, being desirous to be informed concerning the state of the Church in Britain, as well as in other provinces, and to what extent it was clear from the contagion of heretics, gave this matter in charge to the most reverend Abbot John, then appointed to go to Britain. The synod we have spoken of having been called for this purpose in Britain, the Catholic faith was found untainted in all, and a report of the proceedings of the same was given him to carry to Rome.

But in his return to his own country, soon after crossing the sea, he fell sick and died; and his body, for the sake of St. Martin, in whose monastery he presided, was by his friends carried to Tours, and honourably buried; for he had been kindly entertained by the Church there on his way to Britain, and earnestly entreated by the brethren, that in his return to Rome he would take that road, and visit their Church, and moreover he was there supplied with men to conduct him on his way, and assist him in the work enjoined upon him. Though he died by the way, yet the testimony of the Catholic faith of the English nation was carried to Rome, and received with great joy by the Apostolic Pope, and all those that heard or read it.

CHAPTER 4.19: HOW QUEEN ETHELTHRYTH ALWAYS PRESERVED HER VIRGINITY, AND HER BODY SUFFERED NO CORRUPTION IN THE GRAVE. (AD 660–696)

King Egfrid took to wife Ethelthryth, the daughter of Anna, king of the East Angles, of whom mention has been often made; a man of true religion, and altogether noble in mind and deed. She had before been given in marriage to another, to wit, Tondbert, ealdorman of the Southern Gyrwas; but he died soon after he had married her, and she was given to the aforesaid king. Though she lived with him twelve years, yet she preserved the glory of perfect virginity, as I was informed by Bishop Wilfrid, of blessed memory, of whom I inquired, because some questioned the truth thereof; and he told me

that he was an undoubted witness to her virginity, forasmuch as Egfrid promised to give him many lands and much money if he could persuade the queen to consent to fulfil her marriage duty, for he knew the queen loved no man more than himself. And it is not to be doubted that this might take place in our age, which true histories tell us happened sometimes in former ages, by the help of the same Lord who promises to abide with us always, even unto the end of the world. For the divine miracle whereby her flesh, being buried, could not suffer corruption, is a token that she had not been defiled by man.

She had long asked of the king that he would permit her to lay aside worldly cares, and to serve only Christ, the true King, in a monastery; and having at length with difficulty prevailed, she entered the monastery of the Abbess Aebba, who was aunt to King Egfrid, at the place called the city of Coludi, having received the veil of the religious habit from the hands of the aforesaid Bishop Wilfrid; but a year after she was herself made abbess in the district called Elge, where, having built a monastery, she began, by the example of a heavenly life and by her teaching, to be the virgin mother of many virgins dedicated to God. It is told of her that from the time of her entering the monastery, she would never wear any linen but only woollen garments, and would seldom wash in a hot bath, unless just before the greater festivals, as Easter, Whitsuntide, and the Epiphany, and then she did it last of all, when the other handmaids of Christ who were there had been washed, served by her and her attendants. She seldom ate more than once a day, excepting on the greater festivals, or some urgent occasion. Always, except when grievous sickness prevented her, from the time of matins till daybreak, she continued in the church at prayer. Some also say, that by the spirit of prophecy she not only foretold the pestilence of which she was to die, but also, in the presence of all, revealed the number of those that should be then snatched away from this world out of her monastery. She was taken to the Lord, in the midst of her flock, seven years after she had been made abbess; and, as she had ordered, was buried among them in a wooden coffin in her turn, according to the order in which she had passed away.

She was succeeded in the office of abbess by her sister Sexburg, who had been wife to Earconbert, king of Kent. This abbess, when her sister had been buried sixteen years, thought fit to take up her bones, and, putting them into a new coffin, to translate them into the church. Accordingly she ordered

some of the brothers to find a stone whereof to make a coffin for this purpose. They went on board ship, for the district of Ely is on every side encompassed with water and marshes, and has no large stones, and came to a small deserted city, not far from thence, which, in the language of the English, is called Grantacaestir, and presently, near the city walls, they found a white marble coffin, most beautifully wrought, and fitly covered with a lid of the same sort of stone. Perceiving, therefore, that the Lord had prospered their journey, they returned thanks to Him and carried it to the monastery.

When the grave was opened and the body of the holy virgin and bride of Christ was brought into the light of day, it was found as free from corruption as if she had died and been buried on that very day; as the aforesaid Bishop Wilfrid, and many others that know it, testify. But the physician, Cynifrid, who was present at her death, and when she was taken up out of the grave, had more certain knowledge. He was wont to relate that in her sickness she had a very great tumour under her jaw. "And I was ordered," said he, "to lay open that tumour to let out the noxious matter in it, which I did, and she seemed to be somewhat more easy for two days, so that many thought she might recover from her infirmity; but on the third day she was attacked by the former pains, and being soon snatched out of the world, she exchanged all pain and death for everlasting life and health. And when, so many years after, her bones were to be taken out of the grave, a pavilion being spread over it, and all the congregation, the brothers on the one side, and the sisters on the other, standing about it singing, while the abbess, with a few others, had gone within to take up and wash the bones, on a sudden we heard the abbess within cry out with a loud voice, 'Glory be to the name of the Lord.

Not long after they called me in, opening the door of the pavilion, and I found the body of the holy virgin taken out of the grave and laid on a bed, like one asleep; then taking off the veil from the face, they also showed me that the incision which I had made was healed up; so that, in marvellous wise, instead of the open gaping wound with which she had been buried, there then appeared only the slightest trace of a scar. Besides, all the linen clothes in which the body had been wrapped, appeared entire and as fresh as if they had been that very day put about her chaste limbs." It is said that when she was sore troubled with the aforesaid tumour and pain in her jaw and neck, she took great pleasure in that sort of sickness, and was wont to

say, "I know of a surety that I deservedly bear the weight of my trouble on my neck, for I remember that, when I was a young maiden, I bore on it the needless weight of necklaces; and therefore I believe the Divine goodness would have me endure the pain in my neck, that so I may be absolved from the guilt of my needless levity, having now, instead of gold and pearls, the fiery heat of a tumour rising on my neck." It happened also that by the touch of those same linen clothes devils were expelled from bodies possessed, and other diseases were at divers times healed; and the coffin wherein she was first buried is said to have cured some of infirmities of the eyes, who, praying with their heads resting upon that coffin, were presently relieved of the pain or dimness in their eyes. So they washed the virgin's body, and having clothed it in new garments, brought it into the church, and laid it in the sarcophagus that had been brought, where it is held in great veneration to this day. The sarcophagus was found in a wonderful manner to fit the virgin's body as if it had been made purposely for her, and the place for the head, which was fashioned separately, appeared exactly shaped to the measurement of her head.

Elge is in the province of the East Angles, a district of about six hundred families, of the nature of an island, encompassed, as has been said, with marshes or waters, and therefore it has its name from the great plenty of eels taken in those marshes; there the aforesaid handmaid of Christ desired to have a monastery, because, as we have before mentioned, she came, according to the flesh, of that same province of the East Angles.

CHAPTER 4.20: A HYMN CONCERNING HER

It seems fitting to insert in this history a hymn concerning virginity, which we composed in elegiac verse many years ago, in praise and honour of the same queen and bride of Christ, and therefore truly a queen, because the bride of Christ; and to imitate the method of Holy Scripture, wherein many songs are inserted in the history, and these, as is well known, are composed in metre and verse. "Trinity, Gracious, Divine, Who rulest all the ages; favour my task, Trinity, Gracious, Divine. "Let Maro sound the trumpet of war, let us sing the gifts of peace; the gifts of Christ we sing, let Maro sound the trumpet of war. "Chaste is my song, no rape of guilty Helen; light tales shall be told by the wanton, chaste is my song. "I will tell of gifts from Heaven, not wars of hapless Troy; I will tell of gifts from Heaven, wherein the earth is glad.

"Lo! the high God comes to the womb of a holy virgin, to be the Saviour of men, lo! the high God comes. "A hallowed maid gives birth to Him Who gave the world its being; Mary, the gate of God, a maiden gives Him birth. "The company of her fellows rejoices over the Virgin Mother of Him Who wields the thunder; a shining virgin band, the company of her fellows rejoices. "Her honour has made many a blossom to spring from that pure shoot, virgin blossoms her honour has made to spring. "Scorched by the fierce flames, the maiden Agatha yielded not; in like manner Eulalia endures, scorched by the fierce flames. "The lofty soul of chaste Tecla overcomes the wild beasts; chaste Euphemia overcomes the accursed wild beasts. "Agnes joyously laughs at the sword, herself stronger than steel, Cecilia joyously laughs at the foemen's sword. "Many a triumph is mighty throughout the world in temperate hearts; throughout the world love of the temperate life is mighty.

"Yea, and our day likewise a peerless maiden has blessed; peerless our Ethelthryth shines. "Child of a noble sire, and glorious by royal birth, more noble in her Lord's sight, the child of a noble sire. "Thence she receives queenly honour and a sceptre in this world; thence she receives honour, awaiting higher honour above. "What need, gracious lady, to seek an earthly lord, even now given to the Heavenly Bridegroom? "Christ is at hand, the Bridegroom (why seek an earthly lord?) that thou mayst follow even now, methinks, in the steps of the Mother of Heaven's King, that thou too mayst be a mother in God. "Twelve years she had reigned, a bride dedicated to God, then in the cloister dwelt, a bride dedicated to God. "To Heaven all consecrated she lived, abounding in lofty deeds, then to Heaven all consecrated she gave up her soul. "Twice eight Novembers the maid's fair flesh lay in the tomb, nor did the maid's fair flesh see corruption in the tomb.

"This was Thy work, O Christ, that her very garments were bright and undefiled even in the grave; O Christ, this was Thy work. "The dark serpent flies before the honour due to the holy raiment; disease is driven away, and the dark serpent flies. "Rage fills the foe who of old conquered Eve; exultant the maiden triumphs and rage fills the foe. "Behold, O bride of God, thy glory upon earth; the glory that awaits thee in the Heavens behold, O bride of God. "In gladness thou receivest gifts, bright amidst the festal torches; behold! the Bridegroom comes, in gladness thou receivest gifts. "And a new song thou singest to the tuneful harp; a new-made bride, thou exultest in the

tuneful hymn. "None can part her from them which follow the Lamb enthroned on high, whom none had severed from the Love enthroned on high."

CHAPTER 4.21: HOW BISHOP THEODORE MADE PEACE BETWEEN THE KINGS EGFRID AND ETHELRED. (AD 679)

In the ninth year of the reign of King Egfrid, a great battle was fought between him and Ethelred, king of the Mercians, near the river Trent, and Aelfwine, brother to King Egfrid, was slain, a youth about eighteen years of age, and much beloved by both provinces; for King Ethelred had married his sister Osthryth. There was now reason to expect a more bloody war, and more lasting enmity between those kings and their fierce nations; but Theodore, the bishop, beloved of God, relying on the Divine aid, by his wholesome admonitions wholly extinguished the dangerous fire that was breaking out; so that the kings and their people on both sides were appeased, and no man was put to death, but only the due mulct paid to the king who was the avenger for the death of his brother; and this peace continued long after between those kings and between their kingdoms.

CHAPTER 4.22: HOW A CERTAIN CAPTIVE'S CHAINS FELL OFF WHEN MASSES WERE SUNG FOR HIM. (AD 679)

In the aforesaid battle, wherein King Aelfwine was killed, a memorable incident is known to have happened, which I think ought by no means to be passed over in silence; for the story will be profitable to the salvation of many. In that battle a youth called Imma, one of the king's thegns, was struck down, and having lain as if dead all that day and the next night among the bodies of the slain, at length he came to himself and revived, and sitting up, bound his own wounds as best as he could. Then having rested awhile, he stood up, and went away to see if he could find any friends to take care of him; but in so doing he was discovered and taken by some of the enemy's army, and carried before their lord, who was one of King Ethelred's nobles. Being asked by him who he was, and fearing to own himself a thegn, he answered that he was a peasant, a poor man and married, and he declared that he had come to the war with others like himself to bring provisions to the army. The noble entertained him, and ordered his wounds to be dressed, and when he began to recover, to prevent his escaping, he ordered him to be bound at night. But he could not be bound, for as soon as they that bound him were gone, his bonds were loosed.

Now he had a brother called Tunna, who was a priest and abbot of a monastery in the city which is still called Tunnacaestir after him. This man, hearing that his brother had been killed in the battle, went to see if haply he could find his body; and finding another very like him in all respects, he believed it to be his. So he carried it to his monastery, and buried it honourably, and took care often to say Masses for the absolution of his soul; the celebration whereof occasioned what I have said, that none could bind him but he was presently loosed again. In the meantime, the noble that had kept him was amazed, and began to inquire why he could not be bound; whether perchance he had any spells about him, such as are spoken of in stories. He answered that he knew nothing of those arts; "but I have," said he, "a brother who is a priest in my country, and I know that he, supposing me to be killed, is saying frequent Masses for me; and if I were now in the other life, my soul there, through his intercession, would be delivered from penalty."

When he had been a prisoner with the noble some time, those who attentively observed him, by his countenance, habit, and discourse, took notice, that he was not of the meaner sort, as he had said, but of some quality. The noble then privately sending for him, straitly questioned him, whence he came, promising to do him no harm on that account if he would frankly confess who he was. This he did, declaring that he had been a thegn of the king's, and the noble answered, "I perceived by all your answers that you were no peasant. And now you deserve to die, because all my brothers and relations were killed in that fight; yet I will not put you to death, that I may not break my promise." As soon, therefore, as he was recovered, he sold him to a certain Frisian at London, but he could not in any wise be bound either by him, or as he was being led thither. But when his enemies had put all manner of bonds on him, and the buyer perceived that he could in no way be bound, he gave him leave to ransom himself if he could. Now it was at the third hour, when the Masses were wont to be said, that his bonds were most frequently loosed. He, having taken an oath that he would either return, or send his owner the money for the ransom, went into Kent to King Hlothere, who was son to the sister of Queen Ethelthryth, above spoken of, for he had once been that queen's thegn. From him he asked and obtained the price of his freedom, and as he had promised, sent it to his master for his ransom.

Returning afterwards into his own country, and coming to his brother, he gave him an exact account of all his misfortunes, and the consolation af-

forded to him in them; and from what his brother told him he understood, that his bonds had been generally loosed at those times when Masses had been celebrated for him; and he perceived that other advantages and blessings which had fallen to his lot in his time of danger, had been conferred on him from Heaven, through the intercession of his brother, and the Oblation of the saving Sacrifice. Many, on hearing this account from the aforesaid man, were stirred up in faith and pious devotion to prayer, or to alms-giving, or to make an offering to God of the Sacrifice of the holy Oblation, for the deliverance of their friends who had departed this world; for they knew that such saving Sacrifice availed for the eternal redemption both of body and soul. This story was also told me by some of those who had heard it related by the man himself to whom it happened; therefore, since I had a clear understanding of it, I have not hesitated to insert it in my Ecclesiastical History.

CHAPTER 4.23: OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF THE ABBESS HILDA. (AD 614–680)

In the year after this, that is the year of our Lord 680, the most religious handmaid of Christ, Hilda, abbess of the monastery that is called Streanaeshalch, as we mentioned above, after having done many heavenly deeds on earth, passed thence to receive the rewards of the heavenly life, on the 17th of November, at the age of sixty-six years. Her life falls into two equal parts, for the first thirty-three years of it she spent living most nobly in the secular habit; and still more nobly dedicated the remaining half to the Lord in the monastic life. For she was nobly born, being the daughter of Hereric, nephew to King Edwin, and with that king she also received the faith and mysteries of Christ, at the preaching of Paulinus, of blessed memory, the first bishop of the Northumbrians, and preserved the same undefiled till she attained to the vision of our Lord in Heaven.

When she had resolved to quit the secular habit, and to serve Him alone, she withdrew into the province of the East Angles, for she was allied to the king there; being desirous to cross over thence into Gaul, forsaking her native country and all that she had, and so to live a stranger for our Lord's sake in the monastery of Cale, that she might the better attain to the eternal country in heaven. For her sister Heresuid, mother to Aldwulf, king of the East Angles, was at that time living in the same monastery, under regular discipline, waiting for an everlasting crown; and led by her example, she continued a whole year in the aforesaid province, with the design of going

abroad; but afterwards, Bishop Aidan recalled her to her home, and she received land to the extent of one family on the north side of the river Wear; where likewise for a year she led a monastic life, with very few companions.

After this she was made abbess in the monastery called Heruteu, which monastery had been founded, not long before, by the pious handmaid of Christ, Heiu, who is said to have been the first woman in the province of the Northumbrians who took upon her the vows and habit of a nun, being consecrated by Bishop Aidan; but she, soon after she had founded that monastery, retired to the city of Calcaria, which is called Kaelcacaestir by the English, and there fixed her dwelling. Hilda, the handmaid of Christ, being set over that monastery, began immediately to order it in all things under a rule of life, according as she had been instructed by learned men; for Bishop Aidan, and others of the religious that knew her, frequently visited her and loved her heartily, and diligently instructed her, because of her innate wisdom and love of the service of God.

When she had for some years governed this monastery, wholly intent upon establishing a rule of life, it happened that she also undertook either to build or to set in order a monastery in the place called Streanaeshalch, and this work which was laid upon her she industriously performed; for she put this monastery under the same rule of monastic life as the former; and taught there the strict observance of justice, piety, chastity, and other virtues, and particularly of peace and charity; so that, after the example of the primitive Church, no one there was rich, and none poor, for they had all things common, and none had any private property. Her prudence was so great, that not only meaner men in their need, but sometimes even kings and princes, sought and received her counsel; she obliged those who were under her direction to give so much time to reading of the Holy Scriptures, and to exercise themselves so much in works of justice, that many might readily be found there fit for the priesthood and the service of the altar.

Indeed we have seen five from that monastery who afterwards became bishops, and all of them men of singular merit and sanctity, whose names were Bosa, Aetla, Oftfor, John, and Wilfrid. Of the first we have said above that he was consecrated bishop of York; of the second, it may be briefly stated that he was appointed bishop of Dorchester. Of the last two we shall tell hereafter, that the former was ordained bishop of Hagustald, the other of the church of York; of the third, we may here mention that, having ap-

plied himself to the reading and observance of the Scriptures in both the monasteries of the Abbess Hilda, at length being desirous to attain to greater perfection, he went into Kent, to Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory; where having spent some time in sacred studies, he resolved to go to Rome also, which, in those days, was esteemed a very salutary undertaking. Returning thence into Britain, he took his way into the province of the Hwiccas, where King Osric then ruled, and continued there a long time, preaching the Word of faith, and showing an example of good life to all that saw and heard him. At that time, Bosel, the bishop of that province, laboured under such weakness of body, that he could not himself perform episcopal functions; for which reason, Oftfor was, by universal consent, chosen bishop in his stead, and by order of King Ethelred, consecrated by Bishop Wilfrid, of blessed memory, who was then Bishop of the Midland Angles, because Archbishop Theodore was dead, and no other bishop ordained in his place. A little while before, that is, before the election of the aforesaid man of God, Bosel, Tatfrid, a man of great industry and learning, and of excellent ability, had been chosen bishop for that province, from the monastery of the same abbess, but had been snatched away by an untimely death, before he could be ordained.

Thus this handmaid of Christ, the Abbess Hilda, whom all that knew her called Mother, for her singular piety and grace, was not only an example of good life, to those that lived in her monastery, but afforded occasion of amendment and salvation to many who lived at a distance, to whom the blessed fame was brought of her industry and virtue. For it was meet that the dream of her mother, Bregusuid, during her infancy, should be fulfilled. Now Bregusuid, at the time that her husband, Hereric, lived in banishment, under Cerdic, king of the Britons, where he was also poisoned, fancied, in a dream, that he was suddenly taken away from her and she was seeking for him most carefully, but could find no sign of him anywhere. After an anxious search for him, all at once she found a most precious necklace under her garment, and whilst she was looking on it very attentively, it seemed to shine forth with such a blaze of light that it filled all Britain with the glory of its brilliance. This dream was doubtless fulfilled in her daughter that we speak of, whose life was an example of the works of light, not only blessed to herself, but to many who desired to live aright.

When she had governed this monastery many years, it pleased Him Who has made such merciful provision for our salvation, to give her holy soul the trial of a long infirmity of the flesh, to the end that, according to the Apostle's example, her virtue might be made perfect in weakness. Struck down with a fever, she suffered from a burning heat, and was afflicted with the same trouble for six years continually; during all which time she never failed either to return thanks to her Maker, or publicly and privately to instruct the flock committed to her charge; for taught by her own experience she admonished all men to serve the Lord dutifully, when health of body is granted to them, and always to return thanks faithfully to Him in adversity, or bodily infirmity. In the seventh year of her sickness, when the disease turned inwards, her last day came, and about cockcrow, having received the voyage provision of Holy Housel, and called together the handmaids of Christ that were within the same monastery, she admonished them to preserve the peace of the Gospel among themselves, and with all others; and even as she spoke her words of exhortation, she joyfully saw death come, or, in the words of our Lord, passed from death unto life.

That same night it pleased Almighty God, by a manifest vision, to make known her death in another monastery, at a distance from hers, which she had built that same year, and which is called Hacanos. There was in that monastery, a certain nun called Begu, who, having dedicated her virginity to the Lord, had served Him upwards of thirty years in the monastic life. This nun was resting in the dormitory of the sisters, when on a sudden she heard in the air the well-known sound of the bell, which used to awake and call them to prayers, when any one of them was taken out of this world, and opening her eyes, as she thought, she saw the roof of the house open, and a light shed from above filling all the place. Looking earnestly upon that light, she saw the soul of the aforesaid handmaid of God in that same light, being carried to heaven attended and guided by angels. Then awaking, and seeing the other sisters lying round about her, she perceived that what she had seen had been revealed to her either in a dream or a vision;

and rising immediately in great fear, she ran to the virgin who then presided in the monastery in the place of the abbess, and whose name was Frigyth, and, with many tears and lamentations, and heaving deep sighs, told her that the Abbess Hilda, mother of them all, had departed this life, and had in her sight ascended to the gates of eternal light, and to the com-

pany of the citizens of heaven, with a great light, and with angels for her guides. Frigyth having heard it, awoke all the sisters, and calling them to the church, admonished them to give themselves to prayer and singing of psalms, for the soul of their mother; which they did earnestly during the remainder of the night; and at break of day, the brothers came with news of her death, from the place where she had died. They answered that they knew it before, and then related in order how and when they had learnt it, by which it appeared that her death had been revealed to them in a vision that same hour in which the brothers said that she had died. Thus by a fair harmony of events Heaven ordained, that when some saw her departure out of this world, the others should have knowledge of her entrance into the eternal life of souls. These monasteries are about thirteen miles distant from each other.

It is also told, that her death was, in a vision, made known the same night to one of the virgins dedicated to God, who loved her with a great love, in the same monastery where the said handmaid of God died. This nun saw her soul ascend to heaven in the company of angels; and this she openly declared, in the very same hour that it happened, to those handmaids of Christ that were with her; and aroused them to pray for her soul, even before the rest of the community had heard of her death. The truth of which was known to the whole community in the morning. This same nun was at that time with some other handmaids of Christ, in the remotest part of the monastery, where the women who had lately entered the monastic life were wont to pass their time of probation, till they were instructed according to rule, and admitted into the fellowship of the community.

CHAPTER 4.24: THAT THERE WAS IN HER MONASTERY A BROTHER, ON WHOM THE GIFT OF SONG WAS BESTOWED BY HEAVEN. (AD 680)

There was in the monastery of this abbess a certain brother, marked in a special manner by the grace of God, for he was wont to make songs of piety and religion, so that whatever was expounded to him out of Scripture, he turned ere long into verse expressive of much sweetness and penitence, in English, which was his native language. By his songs the minds of many were often fired with contempt of the world, and desire of the heavenly life. Others of the English nation after him attempted to compose religious poems, but none could equal him, for he did not learn the art of poetry from men, neither was he taught by man, but by God's grace he received the free gift of

song, for which reason he never could compose any trivial or vain poem, but only those which concern religion it behoved his religious tongue to utter. For having lived in the secular habit till he was well advanced in years, he had never learned anything of versifying; and for this reason sometimes at a banquet, when it was agreed to make merry by singing in turn, if he saw the harp come towards him, he would rise up from table and go out and return home.

Once having done so and gone out of the house where the banquet was, to the stable, where he had to take care of the cattle that night, he there composed himself to rest at the proper time. Thereupon one stood by him in his sleep, and saluting him, and calling him by his name, said, "Cædmon, sing me something." But he answered, "I cannot sing, and for this cause I left the banquet and retired hither, because I could not sing." Then he who talked to him replied, "Nevertheless thou must needs sing to me." "What must I sing?" he asked. "Sing the beginning of creation," said the other. Having received this answer he straightway began to sing verses to the praise of God the Creator, which he had never heard, the purport whereof was after this manner: "Now must we praise the Maker of the heavenly kingdom, the power of the Creator and His counsel, the deeds of the Father of glory. How He, being the eternal God, became the Author of all wondrous works, Who being the Almighty Guardian of the human race, first created heaven for the sons of men to be the covering of their dwelling place, and next the earth." This is the sense but not the order of the words as he sang them in his sleep; for verses, though never so well composed, cannot be literally translated out of one language into another without loss of their beauty and loftiness. Awaking from his sleep, he remembered all that he had sung in his dream, and soon added more after the same manner, in words which worthily expressed the praise of God.

In the morning he came to the reeve who was over him, and having told him of the gift he had received, was conducted to the abbess, and bidden, in the presence of many learned men, to tell his dream, and repeat the verses, that they might all examine and give their judgement upon the nature and origin of the gift whereof he spoke. And they all judged that heavenly grace had been granted to him by the Lord. They expounded to him a passage of sacred history or doctrine, enjoining upon him, if he could, to put it into verse. Having undertaken this task, he went away, and returning the next

morning, gave them the passage he had been bidden to translate, rendered in most excellent verse. Whereupon the abbess, joyfully recognizing the grace of God in the man, instructed him to quit the secular habit, and take upon him monastic vows; and having received him into the monastery, she and all her people admitted him to the company of the brethren, and ordered that he should be taught the whole course of sacred history. So he, giving ear to all that he could learn, and bearing it in mind, and as it were ruminating, like a clean animal, turned it into most harmonious verse; and sweetly singing it, made his masters in their turn his hearers.

He sang the creation of the world, the origin of man, and all the history of Genesis, the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, their entrance into the promised land, and many other histories from Holy Scripture; the Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection of our Lord, and His Ascension into heaven; the coming of the Holy Ghost, and the teaching of the Apostles; likewise he made many songs concerning the terror of future judgement, the horror of the pains of hell, and the joys of heaven; besides many more about the blessings and the judgements of God, by all of which he endeavoured to draw men away from the love of sin, and to excite in them devotion to well-doing and perseverance therein. For he was a very religious man, humbly submissive to the discipline of monastic rule, but inflamed with fervent zeal against those who chose to do otherwise; for which reason he made a fair ending of his life.

For when the hour of his departure drew near, it was preceded by a bodily infirmity under which he laboured for the space of fourteen days, yet it was of so mild a nature that he could talk and go about the whole time. In his neighbourhood was the house to which those that were sick, and like to die, were wont to be carried. He desired the person that ministered to him, as the evening came on of the night in which he was to depart this life, to make ready a place there for him to take his rest. The man, wondering why he should desire it, because there was as yet no sign of his approaching death, nevertheless did his bidding. When they had lain down there, and had been conversing happily and pleasantly for some time with those that were in the house before, and it was now past midnight, he asked them, whether they had the Eucharist within? They answered, "What need of the Eucharist? for you are not yet appointed to die, since you talk so merrily with us, as if you were in good health. "Nevertheless," said he, "bring me the Eucharist. Hav-

ing received It into his hand, he asked, whether they were all in charity with him, and had no complaint against him, nor any quarrel or grudge. They answered, that they were all in perfect charity with him, and free from all anger; and in their turn they asked him to be of the same mind towards them.

He answered at once, "I am in charity, my children, with all the servants of God. Then strengthening himself with the heavenly Viaticum, he prepared for the entrance into another life, and asked how near the time was when the brothers should be awakened to sing the nightly praises of the Lord? They answered, "It is not far off. Then he said, "It is well, let us await that hour; and signing himself with the sign of the Holy Cross, he laid his head on the pillow, and falling into a slumber for a little while, so ended his life in silence. Thus it came to pass, that as he had served the Lord with a simple and pure mind, and quiet devotion, so he now departed to behold His Presence, leaving the world by a quiet death; and that tongue, which had uttered so many wholesome words in praise of the Creator, spake its last words also in His praise, while he signed himself with the Cross, and commended his spirit into His hands; and by what has been here said, he seems to have had foreknowledge of his death.

CHAPTER 4.25: OF THE VISION THAT APPEARED TO A CERTAIN MAN OF GOD BEFORE THE MONASTERY OF THE CITY COLUDI WAS BURNED DOWN

At this time, the monastery of virgins, called the city of Coludi, above-mentioned, was burned down, through carelessness; and yet all that knew it might have been aware that it happened by reason of the wickedness of those who dwelt in it, and chiefly of those who seemed to be the greatest. But there wanted not a warning of the approaching punishment from the Divine mercy whereby they might have been led to amend their ways, and by fasting and tears and prayers, like the Ninevites, have averted the anger of the just Judge. For there was in that monastery a man of the Scottish race, called Adamnan, leading a life entirely devoted to God in continence and prayer, insomuch that he never took any food or drink, except only on Sundays and Thursdays; and often spent whole nights in watching and prayer. This strictness in austerity of life he had first adopted from the necessity of correcting the evil that was in him; but in process of time the necessity became a custom.

For in his youth he had been guilty of some sin for which, when he came to himself, he conceived a great horror, and dreaded lest he should be punished for the same by the righteous Judge. Betaking himself, therefore, to a priest, who, he hoped, might show him the way of salvation, he confessed his guilt, and desired to be advised how he might escape the wrath to come. The priest having heard his offence, said, "A great wound requires greater care in the healing thereof; wherefore give yourself as far as you are able to fasting and psalms, and prayer, to the end that thus coming before the presence of the Lord in confession," you may find Him merciful. But he, being oppressed with great grief by reason of his guilty conscience, and desiring to be the sooner loosed from the inward fetters of sin, which lay heavy upon him, answered, "I am still young in years and strong of body, and shall, therefore, easily bear all whatsoever you shall enjoin me to do, if so be that I may be saved in the day of the Lord, even though you should bid me spend the whole night standing in prayer, and pass the whole week in abstinence. The priest replied, "It is much for you to continue for a whole week without bodily sustenance; it is enough to observe a fast for two or three days;

do this till I come again to you in a short time, when I will more fully show you what you ought to do, and how long to persevere in your penance. Having so said, and prescribed the measure of his penance, the priest went away, and upon some sudden occasion passed over into Ireland, which was his native country, and returned no more to him, as he had appointed. But the man remembering this injunction and his own promise, gave himself up entirely to tears of penitence, holy vigils and continence; so that he only took food on Thursdays and Sundays, as has been said; and continued fasting all the other days of the week. When he heard that his priest had gone to Ireland, and had died there, he ever after observed this manner of abstinence, which had been appointed for him as we have said; and as he had begun that course through the fear of God, in penitence for his guilt, so he still continued the same unremittingly for the love of God, and through delight in its rewards.

Having practised this carefully for a long time, it happened that he had gone on a certain day to a distance from the monastery, accompanied by one the brothers; and as they were returning from this journey, when they drew near to the monastery, and beheld its lofty buildings, the man of God burst into tears, and his countenance discovered the trouble of his heart. His com-

panion, perceiving it, asked what was the reason, to which he answered: "The time is at hand when a devouring fire shall reduce to ashes all the buildings which you here behold, both public and private. The other, hearing these words, when they presently came into the monastery, told them to Aebba, the mother of the community. She with good cause being much troubled at that prediction, called the man to her, and straitly questioned him concerning the matter and how he came to know it. He answered, "Being engaged one night lately in watching and singing psalms, on a sudden I saw one standing by me whose countenance I did not know, and I was startled at his presence, but he bade me not to fear, and speaking to me like a friend he said, 'You do well in that you have chosen rather at this time of rest not to give yourself up to sleep, but to continue in watching and prayer. I answered, 'I know I have great need to continue in wholesome watching and earnest prayer to the Lord to pardon my transgressions.

He replied, 'You speak truly, for you and many more have need to redeem their sins by good works, and when they cease from temporal labours, then to labour the more eagerly for desire of eternal blessings; but this very few do; for I, having now gone through all this monastery in order, have looked into the huts and beds of all, and found none of them except yourself busy about the health of his soul; but all of them, both men and women, are either sunk in slothful sleep, or are awake in order to commit sin; for even the cells that were built for prayer or reading, are now converted into places of feasting, drinking, talking, and other delights; the very virgins dedicated to God, laying aside the respect due to their profession, whensoever they are at leisure, apply themselves to weaving fine garments, wherewith to adorn themselves like brides, to the danger of their state, or to gain the friendship of strange men; for which reason, as is meet, a heavy judgement from Heaven with raging fire is ready to fall on this place and those that dwell therein.' " The abbess said, "Why did you not sooner reveal to me what you knew? He answered, "I was afraid to do it, out of respect to you, lest you should be too much afflicted; yet you may have this comfort, that the blow will not fall in your days.

This vision being made known, the inhabitants of that place were for a few days in some little fear, and leaving off their sins, began to do penance; but after the death of the abbess they returned to their former defilement, nay, they committed worse sins; and when they said "Peace and safety," the

doom of the aforesaid judgement came suddenly upon them. That all this fell out after this manner, was told me by my most reverend fellow-priest, Aedgils, who then lived in that monastery. Afterwards, when many of the inhabitants had departed thence, on account of the destruction, he lived a long time in our monastery, and died there. We have thought fit to insert this in our History, to admonish the reader of the works of the Lord, how terrible He is in His doing toward the children of men, lest haply we should at some time or other yield to the snares of the flesh, and dreading too little the judgement of God, fall under His sudden wrath, and either in His righteous anger be brought low with temporal losses, or else be more strictly tried and snatched away to eternal perdition.

CHAPTER 4.26: OF THE DEATH OF THE KINGS EGFRID AND HLOTHERE. (AD 684–685)

In the year of our Lord 684, Egfrid, king of the Northumbrians, sending his general, Berct, with an army into Ireland, miserably laid waste that unoffending nation, which had always been most friendly to the English; insomuch that the invading force spared not even the churches or monasteries. But the islanders, while to the utmost of their power they repelled force with force, implored the assistance of the Divine mercy, and with constant imprecations invoked the vengeance of Heaven; and though such as curse cannot inherit the kingdom of God, yet it was believed, that those who were justly cursed on account of their impiety, soon suffered the penalty of their guilt at the avenging hand of God. For the very next year, when that same king had rashly led his army to ravage the province of the Picts, greatly against the advice of his friends, and particularly of Cuthbert, of blessed memory, who had been lately ordained bishop, the enemy made a feigned retreat, and the king was drawn into a narrow pass among remote mountains, and slain, with the greater part of the forces he had led thither, on the 20th of May, in the fortieth year of his age, and the fifteenth of his reign. His friends, as has been said, advised him not to engage in this war; but since he had the year before refused to listen to the most reverend father, Egbert, advising him not to attack the Scots, who were doing him no harm, it was laid upon him as a punishment for his sin, that he should now not listen to those who would have prevented his death.

From that time the hopes and strength of the Anglian kingdom "began to ebb and fall away;" for the Picts recovered their own lands, which had

been held by the English, and so did also the Scots that were in Britain; and some of the Britons regained their liberty, which they have now enjoyed for about forty-six years. Among the many English that then either fell by the sword, or were made slaves, or escaped by flight out of the country of the Picts, the most reverend man of God, Trumwine, who had been made bishop over them, withdrew with his people that were in the monastery of Aebbercurnig, in the country of the English, but close by the arm of the sea which is the boundary between the lands of the English and the Picts. Having commended his followers, wheresoever he could, to his friends in the monasteries, he chose his own place of abode in the monastery, which we have so often mentioned, of servants and handmaids of God, at Streanaeshalch; and there for many years, with a few of his own brethren, he led a life in all monastic austerity, not only to his own benefit, but to the benefit of many others, and dying there, he was buried in the church of the blessed Peter the Apostle, with the honour due to his life and rank. The royal virgin, Elfled, with her mother, Eanfled, whom we have mentioned before, then presided over that monastery; but when the bishop came thither, that devout teacher found in him the greatest help in governing, and comfort in her private life. Aldfrid succeeded Egfrid in the throne, being a man most learned in the Scriptures, said to be brother to Egfrid, and son to King Oswy; he nobly retrieved the ruined state of the kingdom, though within narrower bounds.

The same year, being the 685th from the Incarnation of our Lord, Hlothere, king of Kent, died on the 6th of February, when he had reigned twelve years after his brother Egbert, who had reigned nine years: he was wounded in battle with the South Saxons, whom Edric, the son of Egbert, had raised against him, and died whilst his wound was being dressed. After him, this same Edric reigned a year and a half. On his death, kings of doubtful title, or of foreign origin, for some time wasted the kingdom, till the lawful king, Wictred, the son of Egbert, being settled in the throne, by his piety and zeal delivered his nation from foreign invasion.

CHAPTER 4.27: HOW CUTHBERT, A MAN OF GOD, WAS MADE BISHOP; AND HOW HE LIVED AND TAUGHT WHILST STILL IN THE MONASTIC LIFE. (AD 685)

In the same year in which King Egfrid departed this life, he, as has been said, caused the holy and venerable Cuthbert to be ordained bishop of the church of Lindisfarne. He had for many years led a solitary life, in great continence

of body and mind, in a very small island, called Farne, in the ocean about nine miles distant from that same church. From his earliest childhood he had always been inflamed with the desire of a religious life; and he adopted the name and habit of a monk when he was quite a young man: he first entered the monastery of Mailros, which is on the bank of the river Tweed, and was then governed by the Abbot Eata, a man of great gentleness and simplicity, who was afterward made bishop of the church of Hagustald or Lindisfarne, as has been said above. The provost of the monastery at that time was Boisil, a priest of great virtue and of a prophetic spirit. Cuthbert, humbly submitting himself to this man's direction, from him received both a knowledge of the Scriptures, and an example of good works.

After he had departed to the Lord, Cuthbert became provost of that monastery, where he instructed many in the rule of monastic life, both by the authority of a master, and the example of his own behaviour. Nor did he bestow his teaching and his example in the monastic life on his monastery alone, but laboured far and wide to convert the people dwelling round about from the life of foolish custom, to the love of heavenly joys; for many profaned the faith which they held by their wicked actions; and some also, in the time of a pestilence, neglecting the mysteries of the faith which they had received, had recourse to the false remedies of idolatry, as if they could have put a stop to the plague sent from God, by incantations, amulets, or any other secrets of the Devil's art. In order to correct the error of both sorts, he often went forth from the monastery, sometimes on horseback, but oftener on foot, and went to the neighbouring townships, where he preached the way of truth to such as had gone astray; which Boisil also in his time had been wont to do. It was then the custom of the English people, that when a clerk or priest came to a township, they all, at his summons, flocked together to hear the Word; willingly heard what was said, and still more willingly practised those things that they could hear and understand.

And such was Cuthbert's skill in speaking, so keen his desire to persuade men of what he taught, such a light shone in his angelic face, that no man present dared to conceal from him the secrets of his heart, but all openly revealed in confession what they had done, thinking doubtless that their guilt could in nowise be hidden from him; and having confessed their sins, they wiped them out by fruits worthy of repentance, as he bade them. He was wont chiefly to resort to those places and preach in those villages which were

situated afar off amid steep and wild mountains, so that others dreaded to go thither, and whereof the poverty and barbarity rendered them inaccessible to other teachers. But he, devoting himself entirely to that pious labour, so industriously ministered to them with his wise teaching, that when he went forth from the monastery, he would often stay a whole week, sometimes two or three, or even sometimes a full month, before he returned home, continuing among the hill folk to call that simple people by his preaching and good works to the things of Heaven.

This venerable servant of the Lord, having thus spent many years in the monastery of Mailros, and there become conspicuous by great tokens of virtue, his most reverend abbot, Eata, removed him to the isle of Lindisfarne, that he might there also, by his authority as provost and by the example of his own practice, instruct the brethren in the observance of regular discipline; for the same reverend father then governed that place also as abbot. From ancient times, the bishop was wont to reside there with his clergy, and the abbot with his monks, who were likewise under the paternal care of the bishop; because Aidan, who was the first bishop of the place, being himself a monk, brought monks thither, and settled the monastic institution there; as the blessed Father Augustine is known to have done before in Kent, when the most reverend Pope Gregory wrote to him, as has been said above, to this effect: "But in that you, my brother, having been instructed in monastic rules, must not live apart from your clergy in the Church of the English, which has been lately, by the will of God, converted to the faith, you must establish the manner of conversation of our fathers in the primitive Church, among whom, none said that aught of the things which they possessed was his own; but they had all things common."

CHAPTER 4.28: HOW THE SAME ST. CUTHBERT, LIVING THE LIFE OF AN ANCHORITE, BY HIS PRAYERS OBTAINED A SPRING IN A DRY SOIL, AND HAD A CROP FROM SEED SOWN BY THE LABOUR OF HIS HANDS OUT OF SEASON. (AD 676)

After this, Cuthbert, as he grew in goodness and intensity of devotion, attained also to a hermit's life of contemplation in silence and solitude, as we have mentioned. But forasmuch as many years ago we wrote enough concerning his life and virtues, both in heroic verse and prose, it may suffice at present only to mention this, that when he was about to go to the island, he declared to the brothers, "If by the grace of God it shall be granted to me,

that I may live in that place by the labour of my hands, I will willingly abide there; but if not, God willing, I will very soon return to you. The place was quite destitute of water, corn, and trees; and being infested by evil spirits, was very ill suited for human habitation; but it became in all respects habitable, at the desire of the man of God; for at his coming the wicked spirits departed. When, after expelling the enemy, he had, with the help of the brethren, built himself a narrow dwelling, with a mound about it, and the necessary cells in it, to wit, an oratory and a common living room, he ordered the brothers to dig a pit in the floor of the room, although the ground was hard and stony, and no hopes appeared of any spring.

When they had done this relying upon the faith and prayers of the servant of God, the next day it was found to be full of water, and to this day affords abundance of its heavenly bounty to all that resort thither. He also desired that instruments for husbandry might be brought him, and some wheat; but having prepared the ground and sown the wheat at the proper season, no sign of a blade, not to speak of ears, had sprouted from it by the summer. Hereupon, when the brethren visited him according to custom, he ordered barley to be brought him, if haply it were either the nature of the soil, or the will of God, the Giver of all things, that such grain rather should grow there. He sowed it in the same field, when it was brought him, after the proper time of sowing, and therefore without any likelihood of its bearing fruit; but a plentiful crop immediately sprang up, and afforded the man of God the means which he had desired of supporting himself by his own labour.

When he had here served God in solitude many years, the mound which encompassed his dwelling being so high, that he could see nothing from it but heaven, which he thirsted to enter, it happened that a great synod was assembled in the presence of King Egfrid, near the river Alne, at a place called Adtuifyrdi, which signifies "at the two fords," in which Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, presided, and there Cuthbert was, with one mind and consent of all, chosen bishop of the church of Lindisfarne. They could not, however, draw him from his hermitage, though many messengers and letters were sent to him. At last the aforesaid king himself, with the most holy Bishop Trumwine, and other religious and powerful men, sailed to the island; many also of the brothers from the isle of Lindisfarne itself, assembled together for the same purpose: they all knelt, and conjured him by

the Lord, with tears and entreaties, till they drew him, also in tears, from his beloved retreat, and forced him to go to the synod. When he arrived there, he was very reluctantly overcome by the unanimous resolution of all present, and compelled to take upon himself the duties of the episcopate; being chiefly prevailed upon by the words of Boisil, the servant of God, who, when he had prophetically foretold all things that were to befall him, had also predicted that he should be a bishop. Nevertheless, the consecration was not appointed immediately;

but when the winter, which was then at hand, was over, it was carried out at Easter, in the city of York, and in the presence of the aforesaid King Egfrid; seven bishops coming together for his consecration, among whom, Theodore, of blessed memory, was Primate. He was first elected bishop of the church of Hagustald, in the place of Tunbert, who had been deposed from the episcopate; but because he chose rather to be placed over the church of Lindisfarne, in which he had lived, it was thought fit that Eata should return to the see of the church of Hagustald, to which he had been first ordained, and that Cuthbert should take upon him the government of the church of Lindisfarne. Following the example of the blessed Apostles, he adorned the episcopal dignity by his virtuous deeds; for he both protected the people committed to his charge by constant prayer, and roused them, by wholesome admonitions, to thoughts of Heaven. He first showed in his own life what he taught others to do, a practice which greatly strengthens all teaching; for he was above all things inflamed with the fire of Divine charity, of sober mind and patient, most diligently intent on devout prayers, and kindly to all that came to him for comfort. He thought it stood in the stead of prayer to afford the weak brethren the help of his exhortation, knowing that he who said "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," said likewise, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour." He was noted for penitential abstinence, and was always through the grace of compunction, intent upon heavenly things. And when he offered up to God the Sacrifice of the saving Victim, he commended his prayer to the Lord, not with uplifted voice, but with tears drawn from the bottom of his heart.

CHAPTER 4.29: HOW THIS BISHOP FORETOLD THAT HIS OWN DEATH WAS AT HAND TO THE ANCHORITE HEREBERT. (AD 687)

Having spent two years in his bishopric, he returned to his island and hermitage, being warned of God that the day of his death, or rather of his en-

trance into that life which alone can be called life, was drawing near; as he, at that time, with his wonted candour, signified to certain persons, though in words which were somewhat obscure, but which were nevertheless afterwards plainly understood; while to others he declared the same openly. There was a certain priest, called Herebert, a man of holy life, who had long been united with the man of God, Cuthbert, in the bonds of spiritual friendship. This man leading a solitary life in the island of that great lake from which the river Derwent flows at its beginning, was wont to visit him every year, and to receive from him the teaching of everlasting salvation. Hearing that Bishop Cuthbert was come to the city of Lugubalia, he went thither to him, according to his custom, seeking to be more and more inflamed in heavenly desires through his wholesome admonitions. Whilst they alternately entertained one another with draughts of the celestial life, the bishop, among other things, said, "Brother Herebert, remember at this time to ask me and speak to me concerning all whereof you have need to ask and speak; for, when we part, we shall never again see one another with bodily eyesight in this world. For I know of a surety that the time of my departure is at hand, and that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle." Hearing these words, Herebert fell down at his feet, with tears and lamentations, and said, "I beseech you, by the Lord, not to forsake me; but to remember your most faithful companion, and entreat the mercy of God that, as we have served Him together upon earth, so we may depart together to behold His grace in Heaven. For you know that I have always endeavoured to live according to the words of your lips, and likewise whatsoever faults I have committed, either through ignorance or frailty, I have instantly sought to amend according to the judgement of your will." The bishop applied himself to prayer, and having presently had intimation in the spirit that he had obtained what he asked of the Lord, he said, "Rise, brother, and do not weep, but rejoice greatly because the mercy of Heaven has granted what we desired."

The event established the truth of this promise and prophecy, for after their parting, they never again saw one another in the flesh; but their spirits quitting their bodies on one and the same day, to wit, the 20th of March, were immediately united in fellowship in the blessed vision, and together translated to the heavenly kingdom by the ministry of angels. But Herebert was first wasted by a long-continued infirmity, through the dispensation of the Lord's mercy, as may be believed, to the end that if he was in any wise in-

ferior in merit to the blessed Cuthbert, that which was lacking might be supplied by the chastening pain of a long sickness, that being thus made equal in grace to his intercessor, as he departed out of the body at one and the same time with him, so he might be accounted worthy to be received into the like abode of eternal bliss.

The most reverend father died in the isle of Farne, earnestly entreating the brothers that he might also be buried there, where he had served no small time under the Lord's banner. But at length yielding to their entreaties, he consented to be carried back to the isle of Lindisfarne, and there buried in the church. This being done, the venerable Bishop Wilfrid held the episcopal see of that church one year, till such time as a bishop should be chosen to be ordained in the room of Cuthbert. Afterwards Eadbert was ordained, a man renowned for his knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, as also for his observance of the heavenly precepts, and chiefly for almsgiving, so that, according to the law, he gave every year the tenth part, not only of four-footed beasts, but also of all corn and fruit, as also of his garments, to the poor.

CHAPTER 4.30: HOW HIS BODY WAS FOUND ALTOGETHER UNCORRUPTED AFTER IT HAD BEEN BURIED ELEVEN YEARS; AND HOW HIS SUCCESSOR IN THE BISHOPRIC DEPARTED THIS WORLD NOT LONG AFTER. (AD 698)

In order to show forth the great glory of the life after death of the man of God, Cuthbert, whereas the loftiness of his life before his death had been revealed by the testimony of many miracles, when he had been buried eleven years, Divine Providence put it into the minds of the brethren to take up his bones. They thought to find them dry and all the rest of the body consumed and turned to dust, after the manner of the dead, and they desired to put them into a new coffin, and to lay them in the same place, but above the pavement, for the honour due to him. They made known their resolve to Bishop Eadbert, and he consented to it, and bade them to be mindful to do it on the anniversary of his burial. They did so, and opening the grave, found all the body whole, as if he were still alive, and the joints of the limbs pliable, like one asleep rather than dead; besides, all the vestments in which he was clothed were not only undefiled, but marvellous to behold, being fresh and bright as at the first. The brothers seeing this, were struck with a great dread, and hastened to tell the bishop what they had found; he being then alone in

a place remote from the church, and encompassed on all sides by the shifting waves of the sea. There he always used to spend the time of Lent, and was wont to pass the forty days before the Nativity of our Lord, in great devotion with abstinence and prayer and tears. There also his venerable predecessor, Cuthbert, had for some time served as the soldier of the Lord in solitude before he went to the isle of Farne.

They brought him also some part of the garments that had covered the holy body; which presents he thankfully accepted, and gladly heard of the miracles, and he kissed the garments even, with great affection, as if they had been still upon his father's body, and said, "Let new garments be put upon the body, in place of these you have brought, and so lay it in the coffin which you have prepared; for I know of a surety that the place will not long remain empty, which has been hallowed with so great grace of heavenly miracles; and how happy is he to whom the Lord, the Author and Giver of all bliss, shall vouchsafe to grant the privilege of resting therein." When the bishop had made an end of saying this and more in like manner, with many tears and great compunction and with faltering tongue, the brothers did as he had commanded them, and when they had wrapped the body in new garments, and laid it in a new coffin, they placed it above the pavement of the sanctuary. Soon after, Bishop Eadbert, beloved of God, fell grievously sick, and his fever daily increasing in severity, ere long, that is, on the 6th of May, he also departed to the Lord, and they laid his body in the grave of the blessed father Cuthbert, placing over it the coffin, with the uncorrupted remains of that father. The miracles of healing, sometimes wrought in that place testify to the merits of them both; of some of these we have before preserved the memory in the book of his life. But in this History we have thought fit to add some others which have lately come to our knowledge.

CHAPTER 4.31: OF ONE THAT WAS CURED OF A PALSY AT HIS TOMB

There was in that same monastery a brother whose name was Badudegn, who had for no small time ministered to the guests of the house, and is still living, having the testimony of all the brothers and strangers resorting thither, of being a man of much piety and religion, and serving the office put upon him only for the sake of the heavenly reward. This man, having one day washed in the sea the coverings or blankets which he used in the guest chamber, was returning home, when on the way, he was seized with a sudden infirmity, insomuch that he fell to the ground, and lay there a long time and

could scarce at last rise again. When he got up, he felt one half of his body, from the head to the foot, struck with palsy, and with great trouble made his way home by the help of a staff. The disease increased by degrees, and as night approached, became still worse, so that when day returned, he could scarcely rise or walk alone. Suffering from this trouble, he conceived the wise resolve to go to the church, as best he could, and approach the tomb of the reverend father Cuthbert, and there, on his knees, humbly beseech the mercy of God that he might either be delivered from that disease, if it were well for him, or if by the grace of God it was ordained for him to be chastened longer by this affliction, that he might bear the pain which was laid upon him with patience and a quiet mind.

He did accordingly as he had determined, and supporting his weak limbs with a staff, entered the church. There prostrating himself before the body of the man of God, he prayed with pious earnestness, that, through his intercession, the Lord might be propitious to him. As he prayed, he seemed to fall into a deep sleep, and, as he was afterwards wont to relate, felt a large and broad hand touch his head, where the pain lay, and likewise pass over all that part of his body which had been benumbed by the disease, down to his feet. Gradually the pain departed and health returned. Then he awoke, and rose up in perfect health, and returning thanks to the Lord for his recovery, told the brothers what had been done for him; and to the joy of them all, returned the more zealously, as if chastened by the trial of his affliction, to the service which he was wont before to perform with care.

Moreover, the very garments which had been on Cuthbert's body, dedicated to God, either while he was alive, or after his death, were not without the virtue of healing, as may be seen in the book of his life and miracles, by such as shall read it.

CHAPTER 4.32: OF ONE WHO WAS LATELY CURED OF A DISEASE IN HIS EYE AT THE RELICS OF ST. CUTHBERT

Nor is that cure to be passed over in silence, which was performed by his relics three years ago, and was told me lately by the brother himself, on whom it was wrought. It happened in the monastery, which, being built near the river Dacore, has taken its name from the same, over which, at that time, the religious Suidbert presided as abbot. In that monastery was a youth whose eyelid was disfigured by an unsightly tumour, which growing daily greater, threatened the loss of the eye. The physicians endeavoured to mitigate it by

applying ointments, but in vain. Some said it ought to be cut off; others opposed this course, for fear of greater danger. The brother having long laboured under this malady, when no human means availed to save his eye, but rather, it grew daily worse, on a sudden, through the grace of the mercy of God, it came to pass that he was cured by the relics of the holy father, Cuthbert. For when the brethren found his body uncorrupted, after having been many years buried, they took some part of the hair, to give, as relics, to friends who asked for them, or to show, in testimony of the miracle.

One of the priests of the monastery, named Thruidred, who is now abbot there, had a small part of these relics by him at that time. One day he went into the church and opened the box of relics, to give some part of them to a friend who asked for it, and it happened that the youth who had the diseased eye was then in the church. The priest, having given his friend as much as he thought fit, gave the rest to the youth to put back into its place. But he having received the hairs of the holy head, prompted by some salutary impulse, applied them to the diseased eyelid, and endeavoured for some time, by the application of them, to abate and mitigate the tumour. Having done this, he again laid the relics in the box, as he had been bidden, believing that his eye would soon be cured by the hairs of the man of God, which had touched it; nor did his faith disappoint him. It was then, as he is wont to relate, about the second hour of the day; but while he was occupied with other thoughts and business of the day, on a sudden, about the sixth hour of the same, touching his eye, he found it and the eyelid as sound as if there never had been any disfigurement or tumour on it.

Book V

Chapter 5.1: How Ethelwald, successor to Cuthbert, leading a hermit's life, calmed a tempest by his prayers when the brethren were in danger at sea. (AD 687–699)

The venerable Ethelwald succeeded the man of God, Cuthbert, in the exercise of a solitary life, which he spent in the isle of Farne before he became a bishop. After he had received the priesthood, he consecrated his office by deeds worthy of that degree for many years in the monastery which is called Inhrypum. To the end that his merit and manner of life may be the more certainly made known, I will relate one miracle of his, which was told me by one of the brothers for and on whom the same was wrought; to wit, Guth-

frid, the venerable servant and priest of Christ, who also, afterwards, as abbot, presided over the brethren of the same church of Lindisfarne, in which he was educated. "I came," says he, "to the island of Farne, with two others of the brethren, desiring to speak with the most reverend father, Ethelwald. Having been refreshed with his discourse, and asked for his blessing, as we were returning home, behold on a sudden, when we were in the midst of the sea, the fair weather in which we were sailing, was broken, and there arose so great and terrible a tempest, that neither sails nor oars were of any use to us, nor had we anything to expect but death. After long struggling with the wind and waves to no effect, at last we looked back to see whether it was possible by any means at least to return to the island whence we came, but we found that we were on all sides alike cut off by the storm, and that there was no hope of escape by our own efforts. But looking further, we perceived, on the island of Farne, our father Ethelwald, beloved of God, come out of his retreat to watch our course; for, hearing the noise of the tempest and raging sea, he had come forth to see what would become of us. When he beheld us in distress and despair, he bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in prayer for our life and safety; and as he finished his prayer, he calmed the swelling water, in such sort that the fierceness of the storm ceased on all sides, and fair winds attended us over a smooth sea to the very shore. When we had landed, and had pulled up our small vessel from the waves, the storm, which had ceased a short time for our sake, presently returned, and raged furiously during the whole day; so that it plainly appeared that the brief interval of calm had been granted by Heaven in answer to the prayers of the man of God, to the end that we might escape."

The man of God remained in the isle of Farne twelve years, and died there; but was buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, in the isle of Lindisfarne, beside the bodies of the aforesaid bishops. These things happened in the days of King Aldfrid, who, after his brother Egfrid, ruled the nation of the Northumbrians for nineteen years.

CHAPTER 5.2: HOW BISHOP JOHN CURED A DUMB MAN BY HIS BLESSING. (AD 687)

In the beginning of Aldfrid's reign, Bishop Eata died, and was succeeded in the bishopric of the church of Hagustald by the holy man John, of whom those that knew him well are wont to tell many miracles, and more particularly Berthun, a man worthy of all reverence and of undoubted truthfulness,

and once his deacon, now abbot of the monastery called Inderauuda, that is, "In the wood of the Deiri": some of which miracles we have thought fit to hand on to posterity. There is a certain remote dwelling enclosed by a mound, among scattered trees, not far from the church of Hagustald, being about a mile and a half distant and separated from it by the river Tyne, having an oratory dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel, where the man of God used frequently, as occasion offered, and specially in Lent, to abide with a few companions and in quiet give himself to prayer and study. Having come hither once at the beginning of Lent to stay, he bade his followers find out some poor man labouring under any grievous infirmity, or want, whom they might keep with them during those days, to receive alms, for so he was always used to do.

There was in a township not far off, a certain youth who was dumb, known to the bishop, for he often used to come into his presence to receive alms. He had never been able to speak one word; besides, he had so much scurf and scab on his head, that no hair could ever grow on the top of it, but only some rough hairs stood on end round about it. The bishop caused this young man to be brought, and a little hut to be made for him within the enclosure of the dwelling, in which he might abide, and receive alms from him every day. When one week of Lent was over, the next Sunday he bade the poor man come to him, and when he had come, he bade him put his tongue out of his mouth and show it him; then taking him by the chin, he made the sign of the Holy Cross on his tongue, directing him to draw it back so signed into his mouth and to speak. "Pronounce some word," said he; "say 'gae,' " which, in the language of the English, is the word of affirming and consenting, that is, yes. The youth's tongue was immediately loosed, and he spoke as he was bidden. The bishop then added the names of the letters: "Say A. He said A. "Say B; he said B also.

When he had repeated all the letters after the bishop, the latter proceeded to put syllables and words to him, and when he had repeated them all rightly he bade him utter whole sentences, and he did it. Nor did he cease all that day and the next night, as long as he could keep awake, as those who were present relate, to say something, and to express his private thoughts and wishes to others, which he could never do before; after the manner of the man long lame, who, when he was healed by the Apostles Peter and John, leaping up, stood and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walk-

ing, and leaping, and praising the Lord, rejoicing to have the use of his feet, which he had so long lacked. The bishop, rejoicing with him at his cure, caused the physician to take in hand the healing of the sores of his head. He did as he was bidden, and with the help of the bishop's blessing and prayers, a goodly head of hair grew as the skin was healed. Thus the youth became fair of countenance, ready of speech, with hair curling in comely fashion, whereas before he had been ill-favoured, miserable, and dumb. Thus filled with joy at his recovered health, notwithstanding that the bishop offered to keep him in his own household, he chose rather to return home.

CHAPTER 5.3: HOW HE HEALED A SICK MAIDEN BY HIS PRAYERS. (AD 705)

The same Berthun told another miracle concerning the said bishop. When the most reverend Wilfrid, after a long banishment, was admitted to the bishopric of the church of Hagustald, and the aforesaid John, upon the death of Bosa, a man of great sanctity and humility, was, in his place, appointed bishop of York, he himself came, once upon a time, to the monastery of nuns, at the place called Wetadun, where the Abbess Heriburg then presided. "When we were come thither," said he, "and had been received with great and universal joy, the abbess told us, that one of the nuns, who was her own daughter after the flesh, laboured under a grievous sickness, for she had been lately let blood in the arm, and whilst she was under treatment, was seized with an attack of sudden pain, which speedily increased, while the wounded arm became worse, and so much swollen, that it could scarce be compassed with both hands; and she lay in bed like to die through excess of pain. Wherefore the abbess entreated the bishop that he would vouchsafe to go in and give her his blessing; for she believed that she would soon be better if he blessed her or laid his hands upon her. He asked when the maiden had been let blood, and being told that it was on the fourth day of the moon, said, 'You did very indiscreetly and unskilfully to let blood on the fourth day of the moon; for I remember that Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, said, that blood-letting at that time was very dangerous, when the light of the moon is waxing and the tide of the ocean is rising. And what can I do for the maiden if she is like to die?'

"But the abbess still earnestly entreated for her daughter, whom she dearly loved, and designed to make abbess in her stead, and at last prevailed with him to go in and visit the sick maiden. Wherefore he went in, taking

me with him to the maid, who lay, as I said, in sore anguish, and her arm swelling so greatly that it could not be bent at all at the elbow; and he stood and said a prayer over her, and having given his blessing, went out. Afterwards, as we were sitting at table, at the usual hour, some one came in and called me out, saying, 'Quoenburg' (that was the maid's name) 'desires that you should immediately go back to her.' This I did, and entering the chamber, I found her of more cheerful countenance, and like one in good health. And while I was sitting beside her, she said, 'Shall we call for something to drink?'—'Yes,' said I, 'and right glad am I, if you can.' When the cup was brought, and we had both drunk, she said, 'As soon as the bishop had said the prayer for me and given me his blessing and had gone out, I immediately began to mend; and though I have not yet recovered my former strength, yet all the pain is quite gone both from my arm, where it was most burning, and from all my body, as if the bishop had carried it away with him; notwithstanding the swelling of the arm still seems to remain.' But when we departed thence, the cure of the pain in her limbs was followed by the assuaging of the grievous swelling; and the maiden being thus delivered from pains and death, returned praise to our Lord and Saviour, in company with His other servants who were there."

CHAPTER 5.4: HOW HE HEALED A THEGN'S WIFE THAT WAS SICK, WITH HOLY WATER

The same abbot related another miracle, not unlike the former, of the aforesaid bishop. "Not very far from our monastery," he said, "to wit, about two miles off, was the township of one Puch, a thegn, whose wife had lain sick of a very grievous disease for nearly forty days, insomuch that for three weeks she could not be carried out of the chamber where she lay. It happened that the man of God was, at that time, called thither by the thegn to consecrate a church; and when that was done, the thegn desired him to come into his house and dine. The bishop declined, saying that he must return to the monastery, which was very near. The thegn, entreating him more earnestly, vowed he would also give alms to the poor, if so be that the bishop would vouchsafe to enter his house that day and break his fast. I joined my entreaties to his, promising in like manner to give alms for the relief of the poor, if he would but go and dine at the thegn's house, and give his blessing. Having at length, with much difficulty, prevailed, we went in to refresh ourselves.

The bishop had sent to the woman that lay sick some of the holy water, which he had blessed for the consecration of the church, by one of the brothers who had come with me, ordering him to give her some to drink, and wash that part of her where he found that her pain was greatest, with some of the same water. This being done, the woman immediately got up whole and sound, and perceiving that she had not only been delivered from her long sickness, but at the same time had recovered the strength which she had lost for so great a time, she presented the cup to the bishop and to us, and continued serving us with meat and drink as she had begun, till dinner was over; following the example of the blessed Peter's wife's mother, who, having been sick of a fever, arose at the touch of our Lord's hand, and having forthwith received health and strength, ministered to them."

CHAPTER 5.5: HOW HE LIKEWISE RECALLED BY HIS PRAYERS A THEGN'S SERVANT FROM DEATH

At another time also, being called to consecrate the church of a thegn named Addi, when he had performed the required duty, he was entreated by the thegn to go in to one of his servants, who lay dangerously ill, insomuch that having lost all use of his limbs, he seemed to be at the point of death; and moreover the coffin had been made ready wherein to bury him after his death. The thegn urged his entreaties with tears, earnestly beseeching him that he would go in and pray for the servant, because his life was of great moment to him; and he believed that if the bishop would lay his hand upon him and give him his blessing, he would soon mend. So the bishop went in, and saw him very near death, and by his side the coffin in which he was to be laid for his burial, whilst all mourned. He said a prayer and blessed him, and going out, spake the wonted words of comfort, "Good health be yours and that speedily. Afterwards, when they were sitting at table, the servant sent to his lord, desiring that he would let him have a cup of wine, because he was thirsty. The thegn, rejoicing greatly that he could drink, sent him a cup of wine, blessed by the bishop;

and, as soon as he had drunk it, he immediately got up, and, shaking off the heaviness of his infirmity, dressed himself and went forth, and going in to the bishop, saluted him and the other guests, saying that he also would gladly eat and drink with them. They bade him sit down with them at table, greatly rejoicing at his recovery. He sat down, ate and drank and made merry, and behaved himself like the rest of the company; and living many

years after, continued in the same health which he had gained. The aforesaid abbot says this miracle was not wrought in his presence, but that he had it from those who were present.

CHAPTER 5.6: HOW, BOTH BY HIS PRAYERS AND BLESSING, HE RECALLED FROM DEATH ONE OF HIS CLERKS, WHO HAD BRUISED HIMSELF BY A FALL

Nor do I think that this miracle, which Herebald, the servant of Christ, says was wrought upon himself by the bishop, is to be passed over in silence. He was then one of that bishop's clergy, but now presides as abbot in the monastery at the mouth of the river Tyne. "Living with him," said he, "and being very well acquainted with his course of life, I found it to be in all points worthy of a bishop, as far as it is lawful for men to judge; but I have known by the experience of others, and more particularly by my own, how great his merit was before Him Who seeth the heart; having been by his prayer and blessing recalled from the threshold of death and brought back to the way of life. For, when in the prime of my youth, I lived among his clergy, applying myself to reading and singing, but not having yet altogether withdrawn my heart from youthful pleasures, it happened one day that, as we were travelling with him, we came into a plain and open road, well fitted for galloping. The young men that were with him, and especially the laymen, began to entreat the bishop to give them leave to gallop, and make trial of their horses one with another. He at first refused, saying that it was an idle request; but at last, overcome by the unanimous desire of so many, 'Do so,' said he, 'if you will, but let Herebald have no part in the trial.' Then I earnestly prayed that I might have leave to compete with the rest, for I relied on an excellent horse, which he had himself given me, but I could in no wise obtain my request.

"When they had several times galloped backwards and forwards, the bishop and I looking on, my wanton humour prevailed, and I could no longer refrain, but though he forbade me, I struck in among them at their sport, and began to ride with them at full speed; whereat I heard him call after me with a groan, 'Alas! how much you grieve me by riding after that manner.' Though I heard him, I went on against his command; but immediately the fiery horse taking a great leap over a hollow place in the way, I fell, and at once lost all sense and motion, like one dying; for there was in that place a stone, level with the ground, covered with only a thin coating of turf, and no other stone was to be found in all that expanse of plain; and it happened

by chance, or rather by Divine Providence so ordering it, to punish my disobedience, that my head and my hand, which in falling I had put under my head, struck upon that stone, so that my thumb was broken and my skull fractured, and I became, as I said, like one dead.

"And because I could not move, they stretched a tent there for me to lie in. It was about the seventh hour of the day, and having lain still and as it were dead from that time till the evening, I then revived a little, and was carried home by my companions, and lay speechless all the night, vomiting blood, because something was broken within me by the fall. The bishop was very much grieved at my fall and my misfortune, for he bore me extraordinary affection. Nor would he stay that night, as he was wont, among his clergy; but spent it alone in watching and prayer, imploring the Divine goodness, as I suppose, for my preservation. Coming to me early in the morning, and having said a prayer over me, he called me by my name, and when I awoke as it were out of a heavy sleep, he asked whether I knew who it was that spoke to me? I opened my eyes and said, 'Yes; you are my beloved bishop.'—'Can you live?' said he. I answered, 'I can, through your prayers, if the Lord will.'

"He then laid his hand on my head, with the words of blessing, and returned to prayer; when he came again to see me, in a short time, he found me sitting and able to talk; and, being moved by Divine inspiration, as it soon appeared, began to ask me, whether I knew for certain that I had been baptized? I answered that I knew beyond all doubt that I had been washed in the font of salvation, for the remission of sins, and I named the priest by whom I knew that I had been baptized. He replied, 'If you were baptized by that priest, your baptism is not perfect; for I know him, and that when he was ordained priest, he could in no wise, by reason of the dulness of his understanding, learn the ministry of catechizing and baptizing; for which reason I enjoined upon him altogether to desist from presuming to exercise that ministry, which he could not duly perform.' This said, he set himself to catechize me that same hour; and it came to pass that when he breathed on my face, straightway I felt better. He called the surgeon and ordered him to set and bind up my skull where it was fractured; and presently having received his blessing, I was so much better that I mounted on horseback the next day, and travelled with him to another place; and being soon after perfectly recovered, I was washed in the water of life."

He continued in his bishopric thirty-three years, and then ascending to the heavenly kingdom, was buried in St. Peter's Chapel, in his own monastery, which is called, "In the wood of the Deiri," in the year of our Lord 721. For having, by his great age, become unable to govern his bishopric, he ordained Wilfrid, his priest, bishop of the church of York, and retired to the aforesaid monastery, and there ended his days in godly conversation.

CHAPTER 5.7: HOW CAEDWALLA, KING OF THE WEST SAXONS, WENT TO ROME TO BE BAPTIZED; AND HIS SUCCESSOR INI, ALSO DEVOUTLY JOURNEYED TO THE SAME THRESHOLD OF THE HOLY APOSTLES. (AD 688)

In the third year of the reign of Aldfrid, Caedwalla, king of the West Saxons, having most vigorously governed his nation for two years, quitted his crown for the sake of the Lord and an everlasting kingdom, and went to Rome, being desirous to obtain the peculiar honour of being cleansed in the baptismal font at the threshold of the blessed Apostles, for he had learned that in Baptism alone the entrance into the heavenly life is opened to mankind; and he hoped at the same time, that being made clean by Baptism, he should soon be freed from the bonds of the flesh and pass to the eternal joys of Heaven; both which things, by the help of the Lord, came to pass according as he had conceived in his mind. For coming to Rome, at the time that Sergius was pope, he was baptized on the Holy Saturday before Easter Day, in the year of our Lord 689, and being still in his white garments, he fell sick, and was set free from the bonds of the flesh on the 20th of April, and obtained an entrance into the kingdom of the blessed in Heaven. At his baptism, the aforesaid pope had given him the name of Peter, to the end, that he might be also united in name to the most blessed chief of the Apostles, to whose most holy body his pious love had led him from the utmost bounds of the earth. He was likewise buried in his church, and by the pope's command an epitaph was written on his tomb, wherein the memory of his devotion might be preserved for ever, and the readers or hearers thereof might be stirred up to give themselves to religion by the example of what he had done.

The epitaph was this:— "High estate, wealth, offspring, a mighty kingdom, triumphs, spoils, chieftains, strongholds, the camp, a home; whatsoever the valour of his sires, whatsoever himself had won, Caedwal, mighty in war, left for the love of God, that, a pilgrim king, he might behold Peter and Peter's seat, receive at his font pure waters of life, and in bright draughts

drink of the shining radiance whence a quickening glory streams through all the world. And even as he gained with eager soul the prize of the new life, he laid aside barbaric rage, and, changed in heart, he changed his name with joy. Sergius the Pope bade him be called Peter, himself his father, when he rose born anew from the font, and the grace of Christ, cleansing him, bore him forthwith clothed in white raiment to the heights of Heaven. O wondrous faith of the king, but greatest of all the mercy of Christ, into whose counsels none may enter! For he came in safety from the ends of the earth, even from Britain, through many a nation, over many a sea, by many a path, and saw the city of Romulus and looked upon Peter's sanctuary revered, bearing mystic gifts. He shall walk in white among the sheep of Christ in fellowship with them; for his body is in the tomb, but his soul on high. Thou mightest deem he did but change an earthly for a heavenly sceptre, whom thou seest attain to the kingdom of Christ."

"Here was buried Caedwalla, called also Peter, king of the Saxons, on the twentieth day of April, in the second indiction, aged about thirty years, in the reign of our most pious lord, the Emperor Justinian, in the fourth year of his consulship, in the second year of the pontificate of our Apostolic lord, Pope Sergius." When Caedwalla went to Rome, Ini succeeded to the kingdom, being of the blood royal; and having reigned thirty-seven years over that nation, he in like manner left his kingdom and committed it to younger men, and went away to the threshold of the blessed Apostles, at the time when Gregory was pope, being desirous to spend some part of his pilgrimage upon earth in the neighbourhood of the holy places, that he might obtain to be more readily received into the fellowship of the saints in heaven. This same thing, about that time, was wont to be done most zealously by many of the English nation, nobles and commons, laity and clergy, men and women.

CHAPTER 5.8: HOW, WHEN ARCHBISHOP THEODORE DIED, BERTWALD SUCCEEDED HIM AS ARCHBISHOP, AND, AMONG MANY OTHERS WHOM HE ORDAINED, HE MADE THE LEARNED TOBIAS BISHOP OF THE CHURCH OF ROCHESTER. (AD 690)

The year after that in which Caedwalla died at Rome, that is, 690 after the Incarnation of our Lord, Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, departed this life, being old and full of days, for he was eighty-eight years of age; which number of years he had been wont long before to foretell to his friends that he should live, the same having been revealed to him in a dream.

He held the bishopric twenty-two years, and was buried in St. Peter's church, where all the bodies of the bishops of Canterbury are buried. Of whom, as well as of his fellows of the same degree, it may rightly and truly be said, that their bodies are buried in peace, and their names shall live to all generations. For to say all in few words, the English Churches gained more spiritual increase while he was archbishop, than ever before. His character, life, age, and death, are plainly and manifestly described to all that resort thither, by the epitaph on his tomb, in thirty-four heroic verses. The first whereof are these:

"Here in the tomb rests the body of the holy prelate, called now in the Greek tongue Theodore. Chief pontiff, blest high priest, pure doctrine he set forth to his disciples." The last are as follow: "For September had reached its nineteenth day, when his spirit went forth from the prison-bars of the flesh. Mounting in bliss to the gracious fellowship of the new life, he was united to the angelic citizens in the heights of Heaven." Bertwald succeeded Theodore in the archbishopric, being abbot of the monastery called Racuulfe, which stands at the northern mouth of the river Genlade. He was a man learned in the Scriptures, and perfectly instructed in ecclesiastical and monastic teaching, yet in no wise to be compared to his predecessor. He was chosen bishop in the year of our Lord 692, on the first day of July, when Wictred and Suaebhard were kings in Kent; but he was ordained the next year, on Sunday the 29th of June, by Godwin, metropolitan bishop of Gaul, and was enthroned on Sunday the 31st of August. Among the many bishops whom he ordained was Tobias, a man instructed in the Latin, Greek, and Saxon tongues, and otherwise of manifold learning, whom he consecrated in the stead of Gedmund, bishop of the Church of Rochester, who had died.

CHAPTER 5.9: HOW THE HOLY MAN, EGBERT, WOULD HAVE GONE INTO GERMANY TO PREACH, BUT COULD NOT; AND HOW WICTBERT WENT, BUT BECAUSE HE AVAILED NOTHING, RETURNED INTO IRELAND, WHENCE HE CAME. [CIRC. 688 A.D.]

At that time the venerable servant of Christ, and priest, Egbert, who is to be named with all honour, and who, as was said before, lived as a stranger and pilgrim in Ireland to obtain hereafter a country in heaven, purposed in his mind to profit many, taking upon him the work of an apostle, and, by preaching the Gospel, to bring the Word of God to some of those nations that had not yet heard it; many of which tribes he knew to be in Germany, from whom the Angles or Saxons, who now inhabit Britain, are known to

have derived their race and origin; for which reason they are still corruptly called "Garmans" by the neighbouring nation of the Britons. Such are the Frisians, the Rugini, the Danes, the Huns, the Old Saxons, and the Boructuari. There are also in the same parts many other peoples still enslaved to pagan rites, to whom the aforesaid soldier of Christ determined to go, sailing round Britain, if haply he could deliver any of them from Satan, and bring them to Christ; or if this might not be, he was minded to go to Rome, to see and adore the thresholds of the holy Apostles and martyrs of Christ.

But a revelation from Heaven and the working of God prevented him from achieving either of these enterprises; for when he had made choice of most courageous companions, fit to preach the Word, inasmuch as they were renowned for their good deeds and their learning, and when all things necessary were provided for the voyage, there came to him on a certain day early in the morning one of the brethren, who had been a disciple of the priest, Boisil, beloved of God, and had ministered to him in Britain, when the said Boisil was provost of the monastery of Mailros, under the Abbot Eata, as has been said above. This brother told him a vision which he had seen that night. "When after matins," said he, "I had laid me down in my bed, and was fallen into a light slumber, Boisil, that was sometime my master and brought me up in all love, appeared to me, and asked, whether I knew him? I said, 'Yes, you are Boisil. He answered, 'I am come to bring Egbert a message from our Lord and Saviour, which must nevertheless be delivered to him by you. Tell him, therefore, that he cannot perform the journey he has undertaken;

for it is the will of God that he should rather go to teach the monasteries of Columba.' " Now Columba was the first teacher of the Christian faith to the Picts beyond the mountains northward, and the first founder of the monastery in the island of Hii, which was for a long time much honoured by many tribes of the Scots and Picts. The said Columba is now by some called Columcille, the name being compounded from "Columba" and "Cella. Egbert, having heard the words of the vision, charged the brother that had told it him, not to tell it to any other, lest haply it should be a lying vision. But when he considered the matter secretly with himself, he apprehended that it was true, yet would not desist from preparing for his voyage which he purposed to make to teach those nations. A few days after the aforesaid brother came again to him, saying that Boisil had that night again appeared

to him in a vision after matins, and said, "Why did you tell Egbert so negligently and after so lukewarm a manner that which I enjoined upon you to say? Yet, go now and tell him, that whether he will or no, he must go to Columba's monasteries, because their ploughs are not driven straight; and he must bring them back into the right way." Hearing this, Egbert again charged the brother not to reveal the same to any man. Though now assured of the vision, he nevertheless attempted to set forth upon his intended voyage with the brethren. When they had put aboard all that was requisite for so long a voyage, and had waited some days for fair winds, there arose one night so violent a storm, that part of what was on board was lost, and the ship itself was left lying on its side in the sea. Nevertheless, all that belonged to Egbert and his companions was saved. Then he, saying, in the words of the prophet, "For my sake this great tempest is upon you," withdrew himself from that undertaking and was content to remain at home.

But one of his companions, called Wictbert, notable for his contempt of the world and for his learning and knowledge, for he had lived many years as a stranger and pilgrim in Ireland, leading a hermit's life in great perfection, took ship, and arriving in Frisland, preached the Word of salvation for the space of two whole years to that nation and to its king, Rathbed; but reaped no fruit of all his great labour among his barbarous hearers. Returning then to the chosen place of his pilgrimage, he gave himself up to the Lord in his wonted life of silence, and since he could not be profitable to strangers by teaching them the faith, he took care to be the more profitable to his own people by the example of his virtue.

CHAPTER 5.10: HOW WILBRORD, PREACHING IN FRISLAND, CONVERTED MANY TO CHRIST; AND HOW HIS TWO COMPANIONS, THE HEWALDS, SUFFERED MARTYRDOM. (AD 690)

When the man of God, Egbert, perceived that neither he himself was permitted to go and preach to the nations, being withheld for the sake of some other advantage to the holy Church, whereof he had been forewarned by a revelation; nor that Wictbert, when he went into those parts, had availed to do anything; he nevertheless still attempted to send holy and industrious men to the work of the Word, among whom the most notable was Wilbrord, a man eminent for his merit and rank as priest. They arrived there, twelve in number, and turning aside to Pippin, duke of the Franks, were gladly received by him; and as he had lately subdued the nearer part of Fris-

land, and expelled King Rathbed, he sent them thither to preach, supporting them at the same time with his sovereign authority, that none might molest them in their preaching, and bestowing many favours on those who consented to receive the faith. Thus it came to pass, that with the help of the Divine grace, in a short time they converted many from idolatry to the faith of Christ.

Following their example, two other priests of the English nation, who had long lived as strangers in Ireland, for the sake of the eternal country, went into the province of the Old Saxons, if haply they could there win any to Christ by their preaching. They were alike in name as in devotion, Hewald being the name of both, with this distinction, that, on account of the different colour of their hair, the one was called Black Hewald and the other White Hewald. They were both full of religious piety, but Black Hewald was the more learned of the two in Scripture. When they came into the province, these men took up their lodging in the guesthouse of a certain township-reeve, and asked of him that he would conduct them to the ealdorman who was over him, for that they had a message concerning matters of importance to communicate to him. For those Old Saxons have no king, but many ealdormen set over their nation; and when any war is on the point of breaking out, they cast lots indifferently, and on whomsoever the lot falls, him they all follow and obey during the time of war; but as soon as the war is ended, all those ealdormen are again equal in power. So the reeve received and entertained them in his house some days, promising to send them to the ealdorman who was over him, as they desired.

But when the barbarians perceived that they were of another religion,—for they continually gave themselves to singing of psalms and prayer, and daily offered up to God the Sacrifice of the saving Victim, having with them sacred vessels and a consecrated table for an altar,—they began to grow suspicious of them, lest if they should come into the presence of their ealdorman, and converse with him, they should turn his heart from their gods, and convert him to the new religion of the Christian faith; and thus by degrees all their province should be forced to change its old worship for a new. Wherefore on a sudden they laid hold of them and put them to death; and White Hewald they slew outright with the sword; but they put Black Hewald to lingering torture and tore him limb from limb in horrible fashion, and they threw their bodies into the Rhine. The ealdorman, whom they had de-

sired to see, hearing of it, was very angry that strangers who desired to come to him had not been suffered to come; and therefore he sent and put to death all those villagers and burned their village. The aforesaid priests and servants of Christ suffered on the 3rd of October.

Miracles from Heaven were not lacking at their martyrdom. For their dead bodies, having been cast into the river by the pagans, as has been said, were carried against the stream for the space of almost forty miles, to the place where their companions were. Moreover, a long ray of light, reaching up to heaven, shone every night above them wheresoever they chanced to be, and that too in the sight of the very pagans that had slain them. Moreover, one of them appeared in a vision by night to one of his companions, whose name was Tilmon, a man of renown and of noble birth in this world, who having been a thegn had become a monk, telling him that he might find their bodies in that place, where he should see rays of light reaching from heaven to the earth. And so it befell; and their bodies being found, were buried with the honour due to martyrs; and the day of their passion or of the finding of their bodies, is celebrated in those parts with fitting veneration. Finally, Pippin, the most glorious duke of the Franks, learning these things, caused the bodies to be brought to him, and buried them with much honour in the church of the city of Cologne, on the Rhine. And it is said that a spring burst forth in the place where they were killed, which to this day affords a plentiful stream in that same place.

CHAPTER 5.11: HOW THE VENERABLE SUIDBERT IN BRITAIN, AND WILBRORD AT ROME, WERE ORDAINED BISHOPS FOR FRISLAND. (AD 692)

At their first coming into Frisland, as soon as Wilbrord found that he had leave given him by the prince to preach there, he made haste to go to Rome, where Pope Sergius then presided over the Apostolic see, that he might undertake the desired work of preaching the Gospel to the nations, with his licence and blessing; and hoping to receive of him some relics of the blessed Apostles and martyrs of Christ; to the end, that when he destroyed the idols, and erected churches in the nation to which he preached, he might have the relics of saints at hand to put into them, and having deposited them there, might accordingly dedicate each of those places to the honour of the saint whose relics they were. He desired also there to learn or to receive many oth-

er things needful for so great a work. Having obtained his desire in all these matters, he returned to preach.

At which time, the brothers who were in Frisland, attending on the ministry of the Word, chose out of their own number a man of sober life, and meek of heart, called Suidbert, to be ordained bishop for them. He, being sent into Britain, was consecrated, at their request, by the most reverend Bishop Wilfrid, who, having been driven out of his country, chanced then to be living in banishment among the Mercians; for Kent had no bishop at that time, Theodore being dead, and Bertwald, his successor, who had gone beyond the sea to be ordained, having not yet returned to his episcopal see. The said Suidbert, being made bishop, returned from Britain, and not long after departed to the Boructuari; and by his preaching brought many of them into the way of truth; but the Boructuari being not long after subdued by the Old Saxons, those who had received the Word were dispersed abroad; and the bishop himself with certain others went to Pippin, who, at the request of his wife, Blithryda, gave him a place of abode in a certain island on the Rhine, called in their tongue, Inlitore; there he built a monastery, which his successors still possess, and for a time dwelt in it, leading a most continent life, and there ended his days.

When they who had gone thither had spent some years teaching in Frisland, Pippin, with the consent of them all, sent the venerable Wilbrord to Rome, where Sergius was still pope, desiring that he might be consecrated archbishop over the nation of the Frisians; which was accordingly done, as he had made request, in the year of our Lord 696. He was consecrated in the church of the Holy Martyr Cecilia, on her festival; and the said pope gave him the name of Clement, and forthwith sent him back to his bishopric, to wit, fourteen days after his arrival in the city. Pippin gave him a place for his episcopal see, in his famous fort, which in the ancient language of those people is called Wiltaburg, that is, the town of the Wilts; but, in the Gallic tongue, Trajectum. The most reverend prelate having built a church there, and preaching the Word of faith far and near, drew many from their errors, and built many churches and not a few monasteries. For not long after he himself constituted other bishops in those parts from the number of the brethren that either came with him or after him to preach there; of whom some are now fallen asleep in the Lord; but Wilbrord himself, surnamed Clement, is still living, venerable for his great age, having been thirty-six

years a bishop, and now, after manifold conflicts of the heavenly warfare, he longs with all his heart for the recompense of the reward in Heaven.

CHAPTER 5.12: HOW ONE IN THE PROVINCE OF THE NORTHUMBRIANS, ROSE FROM THE DEAD, AND RELATED MANY THINGS WHICH HE HAD SEEN, SOME TO BE GREATLY DREADED AND SOME TO BE DESIRED. [CIRC. 696 A.D.]

At this time a memorable miracle, and like to those of former days, was wrought in Britain; for, to the end that the living might be roused from the death of the soul, a certain man, who had been some time dead, rose again to the life of the body, and related many memorable things that he had seen; some of which I have thought fit here briefly to describe. There was a certain householder in that district of the Northumbrians which is called Incunen-ingum, who led a godly life, with all his house. This man fell sick, and his sickness daily increasing, he was brought to extremity, and died in the beginning of the night; but at dawn he came to life again, and suddenly sat up, whereat all those that sat about the body weeping fled away in great terror, only his wife, who loved him better, though trembling and greatly afraid, remained with him. And he comforting her, said, "Fear not, for I am now in very deed risen from death whereof I was holden, and permitted again to live among men; nevertheless, hereafter I must not live as I was wont, but after a very different manner. Then rising immediately, he went to the oratory of the little town, and continuing in prayer till day, forthwith divided all his substance into three parts; one whereof he gave to his wife, another to his children, and the third, which he kept himself, he straightway distributed among the poor.

Not long after, being set free from the cares of this world, he came to the monastery of Mailros, which is almost enclosed by the winding of the river Tweed, and having received the tonsure, went apart into a place of abode which the abbot had provided, and there he continued till the day of his death, in so great contrition of mind and mortifying of the body, that even if his tongue had been silent, his life would have declared that he had seen many things either to be dreaded or coveted, which were hidden from other men. Thus he related what he had seen. "He that led me had a countenance full of light, and shining raiment, and we went in silence, as it seemed to me, towards the rising of the summer sun. And as we walked we came to a broad and deep valley of infinite length; it lay on our left, and one side of it

was exceeding terrible with raging flames, the other no less intolerable for violent hail and cold snows drifting and sweeping through all the place. Both sides were full of the souls of men which seemed to be tossed from one side to the other as it were by a violent storm; for when they could no longer endure the fervent heat, the hapless souls leaped into the midst of the deadly cold; and finding no rest there, they leaped back again to be burnt in the midst of the unquenchable flames. Now whereas an innumerable multitude of misshapen spirits were thus tormented far and near with this interchange of misery, as far as I could see, without any interval of rest, I began to think that peradventure this might be Hell, of whose intolerable torments I had often heard men talk. My guide, who went before me, answered to my thought, saying, 'Think not so, for this is not the Hell you believe it to be.'

"When he had led me farther by degrees, sore dismayed by that dread sight, on a sudden I saw the place before us begin to grow dark and filled with shadows. When we entered into them, the shadows by degrees grew so thick, that I could see nothing else, save only the darkness and the shape and garment of him that led me. As we went on 'through the shades in the lone night,' lo! on a sudden there appeared before us masses of foul flame constantly rising as it were out of a great pit, and falling back again into the same. When I had been led thither, my guide suddenly vanished, and left me alone in the midst of darkness and these fearful sights. As those same masses of fire, without intermission, at one time flew up and at another fell back into the bottom of the abyss, I perceived that the summits of all the flames, as they ascended were full of the spirits of men, which, like sparks flying upwards with the smoke, were sometimes thrown on high, and again, when the vapours of the fire fell, dropped down into the depths below. Moreover, a stench, foul beyond compare, burst forth with the vapours, and filled all those dark places.

"Having stood there a long time in much dread, not knowing what to do, which way to turn, or what end awaited me, on a sudden I heard behind me the sound of a mighty and miserable lamentation, and at the same time noisy laughter, as of a rude multitude insulting captured enemies. When that noise, growing plainer, came up to me, I beheld a crowd of evil spirits dragging five souls of men, wailing and shrieking, into the midst of the darkness, whilst they themselves exulted and laughed. Among those human souls, as I could discern, there was one shorn like a clerk, one a layman, and one a wo-

man. The evil spirits that dragged them went down into the midst of the burning pit; and it came to pass that as they went down deeper, I could no longer distinguish between the lamentation of the men and the laughing of the devils, yet I still had a confused sound in my ears. In the meantime, some of the dark spirits ascended from that flaming abyss, and running forward, beset me on all sides, and with their flaming eyes and the noisome fire which they breathed forth from their mouths and nostrils, tried to choke me; and threatened to lay hold on me with fiery tongs, which they had in their hands, yet they durst in no wise touch me, though they assayed to terrify me. Being thus on all sides encompassed with enemies and shades of darkness, and casting my eyes hither and thither if haply anywhere help might be found whereby I might be saved, there appeared behind me, on the way by which I had come, as it were, the brightness of a star shining amidst the darkness; which waxing greater by degrees, came rapidly towards me: and when it drew near, all those evil spirits, that sought to carry me away with their tongs, dispersed and fled.

"Now he, whose approach put them to flight, was the same that led me before; who, then turning towards the right, began to lead me, as it were, towards the rising of the winter sun, and having soon brought me out of the darkness, led me forth into an atmosphere of clear light. While he thus led me in open light, I saw a vast wall before us, the length on either side, and the height whereof, seemed to be altogether boundless. I began to wonder why we went up to the wall, seeing no door in it, nor window, nor any way of ascent. But when we came to the wall, we were presently, I know not by what means, on the top of it, and lo! there was a wide and pleasant plain full of such fragrance of blooming flowers that the marvellous sweetness of the scents immediately dispelled the foul stench of the dark furnace which had filled my nostrils. So great was the light shed over all this place that it seemed to exceed the brightness of the day, or the rays of the noontide sun. In this field were innumerable companies of men clothed in white, and many seats of rejoicing multitudes. As he led me through the midst of bands of happy inhabitants, I began to think that this perchance might be the kingdom of Heaven, of which I had often heard tell. He answered to my thought, saying, 'Nay, this is not the kingdom of Heaven, as you think.'

"When we had also passed those mansions of blessed spirits, and gone farther on, I saw before me a much more beautiful light than before, and

therein heard sweet sounds of singing, and so wonderful a fragrance was shed abroad from the place, that the other which I had perceived before and thought so great, then seemed to me but a small thing; even as that wondrous brightness of the flowery field, compared with this which I now beheld, appeared mean and feeble. When I began to hope that we should enter that delightful place, my guide, on a sudden stood still; and straightway turning, led me back by the way we came. "In our return, when we came to those joyous mansions of the white-robed spirits, he said to me, 'Do you know what all these things are which you have seen? I answered, 'No,' and then he said, 'That valley which you beheld terrible with flaming fire and freezing cold, is the place in which the souls of those are tried and punished, who, delaying to confess and amend their crimes, at length have recourse to repentance at the point of death, and so go forth from the body; but nevertheless because they, even at their death, confessed and repented, they shall all be received into the kingdom of Heaven at the day of judgement; but many are succoured before the day of judgement, by the prayers of the living and their alms and fasting, and more especially by the celebration of Masses. Moreover that foul flaming pit which you saw, is the mouth of Hell, into which whosoever falls shall never be delivered to all eternity. This flowery place, in which you see this fair and youthful company, all bright and joyous, is that into which the souls of those are received who, indeed, when they leave the body have done good works, but who are not so perfect as to deserve to be immediately admitted into the kingdom of Heaven; yet they shall all, at the day of judgement, behold Christ, and enter into the joys of His kingdom;

for such as are perfect in every word and deed and thought, as soon as they quit the body, forthwith enter into the kingdom of Heaven; in the neighbourhood whereof that place is, where you heard the sound of sweet singing amidst the savour of a sweet fragrance and brightness of light. As for you, who must now return to the body, and again live among men, if you will seek diligently to examine your actions, and preserve your manner of living and your words in righteousness and simplicity, you shall, after death, have a place of abode among these joyful troops of blessed souls which you behold. For when I left you for awhile, it was for this purpose, that I might learn what should become of you. When he had said this to me, I much abhorred returning to the body, being delighted with the sweetness and beauty of the

place which I beheld, and with the company of those I saw in it. Nevertheless, I durst not ask my guide anything; but thereupon, on a sudden, I found myself, I know not how, alive among men."

Now these and other things which this man of God had seen, he would not relate to slothful men, and such as lived negligently; but only to those who, being terrified with the dread of torments, or ravished with the hope of everlasting joys, would draw from his words the means to advance in piety. In the neighbourhood of his cell lived one Haemgils, a monk, and eminent in the priesthood, whose good works were worthy of his office: he is still living, and leading a solitary life in Ireland, supporting his declining age with coarse bread and cold water. He often went to that man, and by repeated questioning, heard of him what manner of things he had seen when out of the body; by whose account those few particulars which we have briefly set down came also to our knowledge. And he related his visions to King Aldfrid, a man most learned in all respects, and was by him so willingly and attentively heard, that at his request he was admitted into the monastery above-mentioned, and received the crown of the monastic tonsure; and the said king, whensoever he came into those parts, very often went to hear him. At that time the abbot and priest Ethelwald, a man of godly and sober life, presided over that monastery. He now occupies the episcopal see of the church of Lindisfarne, leading a life worthy of his degree.

He had a place of abode assigned him apart in that monastery, where he might give himself more freely to the service of his Creator in continual prayer. And inasmuch as that place was on the banks of the river, he was wont often to go into the same for the great desire he had to do penance in his body, and oftentimes to plunge in it, and to continue saying psalms or prayers in the same as long as he could endure it, standing still, while the waves flowed over him, sometimes up to the middle, and sometimes even to the neck in water; and when he went ashore, he never took off his cold, wet garments till they grew warm and dry on his body. And when in the winter the cracking pieces of ice were floating about him, which he had himself sometimes broken, to make room to stand or plunge in the river, and those who beheld it would say, "We marvel, brother Drythelm (for so he was called), that you are able to endure such severe cold;" he answered simply, for he was a simple and sober-spirited man, "I have seen greater cold." And when they said, "We marvel that you choose to observe so hard a rule of con-

tinence," he replied, "I have seen harder things." And so, until the day of his calling hence, in his unwearied desire of heavenly bliss, he subdued his aged body with daily fasting, and forwarded the salvation of many by his words and life.

CHAPTER 5.13: HOW ANOTHER CONTRARYWISE BEFORE HIS DEATH SAW A BOOK CONTAINING HIS SINS, WHICH WAS SHOWN HIM BY DEVILS. (AD 704–709)

But contrarywise there was a man in the province of the Mercians, whose visions and words, but not his manner of life, were of profit to others, though not to himself. In the reign of Coenred, who succeeded Ethelred, there was a layman who was a king's thegn, no less acceptable to the king for his outward industry, than displeasing to him for his neglect of his own soul. The king diligently admonished him to confess and amend, and to forsake his evil ways, lest he should lose all time for repentance and amendment by a sudden death. But though frequently warned, he despised the words of salvation, and promised that he would do penance at some future time. In the meantime, falling sick he betook himself to his bed, and was tormented with grievous pains. The king coming to him (for he loved the man much) exhorted him, even then, before death, to repent of his offences. But he answered that he would not then confess his sins, but would do it when he was recovered of his sickness, lest his companions should upbraid him with having done that for fear of death, which he had refused to do in health. He thought he spoke very bravely, but it afterwards appeared that he had been miserably deceived by the wiles of the Devil.

The disease increasing, when the king came again to visit and instruct him, he cried out straightway with a lamentable voice, "What will you now? What are you come for? for you can no longer do aught for my profit or salvation. The king answered, "Say not so; take heed and be of sound mind. "I am not mad," replied he, "but I now know the worst and have it for certain before my eyes. "What is that? said the king. "Not long since," said he, "there came into this room two fair youths, and sat down by me, the one at my head, and the other at my feet. One of them drew forth a book most beautiful, but very small, and gave it me to read; looking into it, I there found all the good actions I had ever done in my life written down, and they were very few and inconsiderable. They took back the book and said nothing to me. Then, on a sudden, appeared an army of evil spirits of hideous coun-

tenance, and they beset this house without, and sitting down filled the greater part of it within. Then he, who by the blackness of his gloomy face, and his sitting above the rest, seemed to be the chief of them, taking out a book terrible to behold, of a monstrous size, and of almost insupportable weight, commanded one of his followers to bring it to me to read.

Having read it, I found therein most plainly written in hideous characters, all the crimes I ever committed, not only in word and deed, but even in the least thought; and he said to those glorious men in white raiment who sat by me, 'Why sit ye here, since ye know of a surety that this man is ours? They answered, 'Ye speak truly; take him and lead him away to fill up the measure of your damnation. This said, they forthwith vanished, and two wicked spirits arose, having in their hands ploughshares, and one of them struck me on the head, and the other on the foot. And these ploughshares are now with great torment creeping into the inward parts of my body, and as soon as they meet I shall die, and the devils being ready to snatch me away, I shall be dragged into the dungeons of hell."

Thus spoke that wretch in his despair, and soon after died, and now in vain suffers in eternal torments that penance which he failed to suffer for a short time with the fruits of forgiveness. Of whom it is manifest, that (as the blessed Pope Gregory writes of certain persons) he did not see these things for his own sake, since they did not avail him, but for the sake of others, who, knowing of his end, should be afraid to put off the time of repentance, whilst they have leisure, lest, being prevented by sudden death, they should perish impenitent. And whereas he saw diverse books laid before him by the good and evil spirits, this was done by Divine dispensation, that we may keep in mind that our deeds and thoughts are not scattered to the winds, but are all kept to be examined by the Supreme Judge, and will in the end be shown us either by friendly angels or by the enemy. And whereas the angels first drew forth a white book, and then the devils a black one; the former a very small one, the latter one very great; it is to be observed, that in his first years he did some good actions, all which he nevertheless obscured by the evil actions of his youth. If, contrarywise, he had taken care in his youth to correct the errors of his boyhood, and by well-doing to put them away from the sight of God, he might have been admitted to the fellowship of those of whom the Psalm says, "Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." This story, as I learned it of the venerable Bishop

Pechthelm, I have thought good to set forth plainly, for the salvation of such as shall read or hear it.

CHAPTER 5.14: HOW ANOTHER IN LIKE MANNER, BEING AT THE POINT OF DEATH, SAW THE PLACE OF PUNISHMENT APPOINTED FOR HIM IN HELL

I myself knew a brother, would to God I had not known him, whose name I could mention if it were of any avail, dwelling in a famous monastery, but himself living infamously. He was oftentimes rebuked by the brethren and elders of the place, and admonished to be converted to a more chastened life; and though he would not give ear to them, they bore with him long and patiently, on account of their need of his outward service, for he was a cunning artificer. But he was much given to drunkenness, and other pleasures of a careless life, and more used to stop in his workshop day and night, than to go to church to sing and pray and hear the Word of life with the brethren. For which reason it befell him according to the saying, that he who will not willingly humble himself and enter the gate of the church must needs be led against his will into the gate of Hell, being damned. For he falling sick, and being brought to extremity, called the brethren, and with much lamentation, like one damned, began to tell them, that he saw Hell opened, and Satan sunk in the depths thereof; and Caiaphas, with the others that slew our Lord, hard by him, delivered up to avenging flames. "In whose neighbourhood," said he, "I see a place of eternal perdition prepared for me, miserable wretch that I am." The brothers, hearing these words, began diligently to exhort him, that he should repent even then, whilst he was still in the flesh. He answered in despair, "There is no time for me now to change my course of life, when I have myself seen my judgement passed."

Whilst uttering these words, he died without having received the saving Viaticum, and his body was buried in the farthest parts of the monastery, nor did any one dare either to say Masses or sing psalms, or even to pray for him. Oh how far asunder hath God put light from darkness! The blessed Stephen, the first martyr, being about to suffer death for the truth, saw the heavens opened, and the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God; and where he was to be after death, there he fixed the eyes of his mind, that he might die the more joyfully. But this workman, of darkened mind and life, when death was at hand, saw Hell opened, and witnessed the damnation of the Devil and his followers; he saw also, unhappy wretch! his own prison

among them, to the end that, despairing of salvation, he might himself die the more miserably, but might by his perdition afford cause of salvation to the living who should hear of it. This befell of late in the province of the Bernicians, and being noised abroad far and near, inclined many to do penance for their sins without delay. Would to God that this also might come to pass through the reading of our words!

CHAPTER 5.15: HOW DIVERS CHURCHES OF THE SCOTS, AT THE INSTANCE OF ADAMNAN, ADOPTED THE CATHOLIC EASTER; AND HOW THE SAME WROTE A BOOK ABOUT THE HOLY PLACES. (AD 703)

At this time a great part of the Scots in Ireland, and some also of the Britons in Britain, by the grace of God, adopted the reasonable and ecclesiastical time of keeping Easter. For when Adamnan, priest and abbot of the monks that were in the island of Hii, was sent by his nation on a mission to Aldfrid, king of the English, he abode some time in that province, and saw the canonical rites of the Church. Moreover, he was earnestly admonished by many of the more learned sort, not to presume to live contrary to the universal custom of the Church, either in regard to the observance of Easter, or any other ordinances whatsoever, with those few followers of his dwelling in the farthest corner of the world. Wherefore he so changed his mind, that he readily preferred those things which he had seen and heard in the English churches, to the customs which he and his people had hitherto followed. For he was a good and wise man, and excellently instructed in knowledge of the Scriptures. Returning home, he endeavoured to bring his own people that were in Hii, or that were subject to that monastery, into the way of truth, which he had embraced with all his heart; but he could not prevail. He sailed over into Ireland, and preaching to those people, and with sober words of exhortation making known to them the lawful time of Easter, he brought back many of them, and almost all that were free from the dominion of those of Hii, from the error of their fathers to the Catholic unity, and taught them to keep the lawful time of Easter.

Returning to his island, after having celebrated the canonical Easter in Ireland, he was instant in preaching the Catholic observance of the season of Easter in his monastery, yet without being able to achieve his end; and it so happened that he departed this life before the next year came round, the Divine goodness so ordaining it, that as he was a great lover of peace and unity, he should be taken away to everlasting life before he should be obliged, on

the return of the season of Easter, to be at greater variance with those that would not follow him into the truth. This same man wrote a book concerning the holy places, of great profit to many readers; his authority was the teaching and dictation of Arculf, a bishop of Gaul, who had gone to Jerusalem for the sake of the holy places; and having wandered over all the Promised Land, travelled also to Damascus, Constantinople, Alexandria, and many islands in the sea, and returning home by ship, was cast upon the western coast of Britain by a great tempest. After many adventures he came to the aforesaid servant of Christ, Adamnan, and being found to be learned in the Scriptures, and acquainted with the holy places, was most gladly received by him and gladly heard, insomuch that whatsoever he said that he had seen worthy of remembrance in the holy places, Adamnan straightway set himself to commit to writing. Thus he composed a work, as I have said, profitable to many, and chiefly to those who, being far removed from those places where the patriarchs and Apostles lived, know no more of them than what they have learnt by reading. Adamnan presented this book to King Aldfrid, and through his bounty it came to be read by lesser persons. The writer thereof was also rewarded by him with many gifts and sent back into his country. I believe it will be of advantage to our readers if we collect some passages from his writings, and insert them in this our History.

CHAPTER 5.16: THE ACCOUNT GIVEN IN THE AFORESAID BOOK OF THE PLACE OF OUR LORD'S NATIVITY, PASSION, AND RESURRECTION

He wrote concerning the place of the Nativity of our Lord, after this manner: "Bethlehem, the city of David, is situated on a narrow ridge, encompassed on all sides with valleys, being a mile in length from west to east, and having a low wall without towers, built along the edge of the level summit. In the eastern corner thereof is a sort of natural half cave, the outward part whereof is said to have been the place where our Lord was born; the inner is called the manger of our Lord. This cave within is all covered with rich marble, and over the particular spot where our Lord is said to have been born, stands the great church of St. Mary. He likewise wrote about the place of His Passion and Resurrection in this manner: "Entering the city of Jerusalem on the north side, the first place to be visited, according to the disposition of the streets, is the church of Constantine, called the Martyrium. It was built by the Emperor Constantine, in a royal and magnificent manner, because the Cross of our Lord was said to have been found there by his mother

Helena. Thence, to the westward, is seen the church of Golgotha, in which is also to be found the rock which once bore the Cross to which the Lord's body was nailed, and now it upholds a large silver cross, having a great brazen wheel with lamps hanging over it.

Under the place of our Lord's Cross, a crypt is hewn out of the rock, in which the Sacrifice is offered on an altar for the dead that are held in honour, their bodies remaining meanwhile in the street. To the westward of this church is the round church of the Anastasis or Resurrection of our Lord, encompassed with three walls, and supported by twelve columns. Between each of the walls is a broad passage, which contains three altars at three different points of the middle wall; to the south, the north, and the west. It has eight doors or entrances in a straight line through the three walls; four whereof face the south-east, and four the east. In the midst of it is the round tomb of our Lord cut out of the rock, the top of of which a man standing within can touch with his hand; on the east is the entrance, against which that great stone was set. To this day the tomb bears the marks of the iron tools within, but on the outside it is all covered with marble to the very top of the roof, which is adorned with gold, and bears a large golden cross. In the north part of the tomb the sepulchre of our Lord is hewn out of the same rock, seven feet in length, and three hand-breadths above the floor; the entrance being on the south side, where twelve lamps burn day and night, four within the sepulchre, and eight above on the edge of the right side.

The stone that was set at the entrance to the tomb is now cleft in two; nevertheless, the lesser part of it stands as an altar of hewn stone before the door of the tomb; the greater part is set up as another altar, four-cornered, at the east end of the same church, and is covered with linen cloths. The colour of the said tomb and sepulchre is white and red mingled together."

CHAPTER 5.17: WHAT HE LIKEWISE WROTE OF THE PLACE OF OUR LORD'S ASCENSION, AND THE TOMBS OF THE PATRIARCHS

Concerning the place of our Lord's Ascension, the aforesaid author writes thus. "The Mount of Olives is equal in height to Mount Sion, but exceeds it in breadth and length; it bears few trees besides vines and olives, and is fruitful in wheat and barley, for the nature of that soil is not such as to yield thickets, but grass and flowers. On the very top of it, where our Lord ascended into heaven, is a large round church, having round about it three chapels with vaulted roofs. For the inner building could not be vaulted and roofed,

by reason of the passage of our Lord's Body; but it has an altar on the east side, sheltered by a narrow roof. In the midst of it are to be seen the last Footprints of our Lord, the place where He ascended being open to the sky; and though the earth is daily carried away by believers, yet still it remains, and retains the same appearance, being marked by the impression of the Feet. Round about these lies a brazen wheel, as high as a man's neck, having an entrance from the west, with a great lamp hanging above it on a pulley and burning night and day. In the western part of the same church are eight windows; and as many lamps, hanging opposite to them by cords, shine through the glass as far as Jerusalem; and the light thereof is said to thrill the hearts of the beholders with a certain zeal and compunction. Every year, on the day of the Ascension of our Lord, when Mass is ended, a strong blast of wind is wont to come down, and to cast to the ground all that are in the church."

Of the situation of Hebron, and the tombs of the fathers, he writes thus. "Hebron, once a habitation and the chief city of David's kingdom, now only showing by its ruins what it then was, has, one furlong to the east of it, a double cave in the valley, where the sepulchres of the patriarchs are encompassed with a wall four-square, their heads lying to the north. Each of the tombs is covered with a single stone, hewn like the stones of a church, and of a white colour, for the three patriarchs. Adam's is of meaner and poorer workmanship, and he lies not far from them at the farthest end of the northern part of that wall. There are also some poorer and smaller monuments of the three women. The hill Mamre is a mile from these tombs, and is covered with grass and flowers, having a level plain on the top. In the northern part of it, the trunk of Abraham's oak, being twice as high as a man, is enclosed in a church."

Thus much, gathered from the works of the aforesaid writer, according to the sense of his words, but more briefly and in fewer words, we have thought fit to insert in our History for the profit of readers. Whosoever desires to know more of the contents of that book, may seek it either in the book itself, or in that abridgement which we have lately made from it.

CHAPTER 5.18: HOW THE SOUTH SAXONS RECEIVED EADBERT AND EOLLA, AND THE WEST SAXONS, DANIEL AND ALDHELM, FOR THEIR BISHOPS; AND OF THE WRITINGS OF THE SAME ALDHELM. (AD 705)

In the year of our Lord 705, Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, died before the end of the twentieth year of his reign. His son Osred, a boy about eight years of age, succeeding him in the throne, reigned eleven years. In the beginning of his reign, Haedde, bishop of the West Saxons, departed to the heavenly life; for he was a good man and a just, and his life and doctrine as a bishop were guided rather by his innate love of virtue, than by what he had gained from books. The most reverend bishop, Pechthelm, of whom we shall speak hereafter in the proper place, and who while still deacon or monk was for a long time with his successor Aldhelm, was wont to relate that many miracles of healing have been wrought in the place where he died, through the merit of his sanctity; and that the men of that province used to carry the dust thence for the sick, and put it into water, and the drinking thereof, or sprinkling with it, brought health to many sick men and beasts; so that the holy dust being frequently carried away, a great hole was made there.

Upon his death, the bishopric of that province was divided into two dioceses. One of them was given to Daniel, which he governs to this day; the other to Aldhelm, wherein he presided most vigorously four years; both of them were fully instructed, as well in matters touching the Church as in the knowledge of the Scriptures. Aldhelm, when he was as yet only a priest and abbot of the monastery which is called the city of Maildufus, by order of a synod of his own nation, wrote a notable book against the error of the Britons, in not celebrating Easter at the due time, and in doing divers other things contrary to the purity of doctrine and the peace of the church; and through the reading of this book many of the Britons, who were subject to the West Saxons, were led by him to adopt the Catholic celebration of our Lord's Paschal Feast. He likewise wrote a famous book on Virginity, which, after the example of Sedulius, he composed in twofold form, in hexameters and in prose. He wrote some other books, being a man most instructed in all respects, for he had a polished style, and was, as I have said, of marvellous learning both in liberal and ecclesiastical studies. On his death, Forthere was made bishop in his stead, and is living at this time, being likewise a man very learned in the Holy Scriptures.

Whilst they administered the bishopric, it was determined by a synodal decree, that the province of the South Saxons, which till that time belonged to the diocese of the city of Winchester, where Daniel then presided, should itself have an episcopal see, and a bishop of its own. Eadbert, at that time abbot of the monastery of Bishop Wilfrid, of blessed memory, called Selaeseu, was consecrated their first bishop. On his death, Eolla succeeded to the office of bishop. He also died some years ago, and the bishopric has been vacant to this day.

CHAPTER 5.19: HOW COINRED, KING OF THE MERCIANS, AND OFFA, KING OF THE EAST SAXONS, ENDED THEIR DAYS AT ROME, IN THE MONASTIC HABIT; AND OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF BISHOP WILFRID. (AD 709)

In the fourth year of the reign of Osred, Coenred, who had for some time nobly governed the kingdom of the Mercians, much more nobly quitted the sceptre of his kingdom. For he went to Rome, and there receiving the tonsure and becoming a monk, when Constantine was pope, he continued to his last hour in prayer and fasting and alms-deeds at the threshold of the Apostles. He was succeeded in the throne by Ceolred, the son of Ethelred, who had governed the kingdom before Coenred. With him went the son of Sighere, the king of the East Saxons whom we mentioned before, by name Offa, a youth of a most pleasing age and comeliness, and greatly desired by all his nation to have and to hold the sceptre of the kingdom. He, with like devotion, quitted wife, and lands, and kindred and country, for Christ and for the Gospel, that he might "receive an hundred-fold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting." He also, when they came to the holy places at Rome, received the tonsure, and ending his life in the monastic habit, attained to the vision of the blessed Apostles in Heaven, as he had long desired.

The same year that they departed from Britain, the great bishop, Wilfrid, ended his days in the province called Inundalum, after he had been bishop forty-five years. His body, being laid in a coffin, was carried to his monastery, which is called Inhrypum, and buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, with the honour due to so great a prelate. Concerning whose manner of life, let us now turn back, and briefly make mention of the things which were done. Being a boy of a good disposition, and virtuous beyond his years, he conducted himself so modestly and discreetly in all points, that he was de-

servedly beloved, respected, and cherished by his elders as one of themselves. At fourteen years of age he chose rather the monastic than the secular life; which, when he had signified to his father, for his mother was dead, he readily consented to his godly wishes and desires, and advised him to persist in that wholesome purpose. Wherefore he came to the isle of Lindisfarne, and there giving himself to the service of the monks, he strove diligently to learn and to practise those things which belong to monastic purity and piety; and being of a ready wit, he speedily learned the psalms and some other books, having not yet received the tonsure, but being in no small measure marked by those virtues of humility and obedience which are more important than the tonsure; for which reason he was justly loved by his elders and his equals.

Having served God some years in that monastery, and being a youth of a good understanding, he perceived that the way of virtue delivered by the Scots was in no wise perfect, and he resolved to go to Rome, to see what ecclesiastical or monastic rites were in use at the Apostolic see. When he told the brethren, they commended his design, and advised him to carry out that which he purposed. He forthwith went to Queen Eanfled, for he was known to her, and it was by her counsel and support that he had been admitted into the aforesaid monastery, and he told her of his desire to visit the threshold of the blessed Apostles. She, being pleased with the youth's good purpose, sent him into Kent, to King Earconbert, who was her uncle's son, requesting that he would send him to Rome in an honourable manner. At that time, Honorius, one of the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory, a man very highly instructed in ecclesiastical learning, was archbishop there. When he had tarried there for a space, and, being a youth of an active spirit, was diligently applying himself to learn those things which came under his notice, another youth, called Biscop, surnamed Benedict, of the English nobility, arrived there, being likewise desirous to go to Rome, of whom we have before made mention.

The king gave him Wilfrid for a companion, and bade Wilfrid conduct him to Rome. When they came to Lyons, Wilfrid was detained there by Dalfinus, the bishop of that city; but Benedict hastened on to Rome. For the bishop was delighted with the youth's prudent discourse, the grace of his comely countenance, his eager activity, and the consistency and maturity of his thoughts; for which reason he plentifully supplied him and his companions with all necessaries, as long as they stayed with him; and further offered,

if he would have it, to commit to him the government of no small part of Gaul, to give him a maiden daughter of his own brother to wife, and to regard him always as his adopted son. But Wilfrid thanked him for the loving-kindness which he was pleased to show to a stranger, and answered, that he had resolved upon another course of life, and for that reason had left his country and set out for Rome.

Hereupon the bishop sent him to Rome, furnishing him with a guide and supplying plenty of all things requisite for his journey, earnestly requesting that he would come that way, when he returned into his own country. Wilfrid arriving at Rome, and daily giving himself with all earnestness to prayer and the study of ecclesiastical matters, as he had purposed in his mind, gained the friendship of the most holy and learned Boniface, the archdeacon, who was also counsellor to the Apostolic Pope, by whose instruction he learned in their order the four Gospels, and the true computation of Easter; and many other things appertaining to ecclesiastical discipline, which he could not learn in his own country, he acquired from the teaching of that same master. When he had spent some months there, in successful study, he returned into Gaul, to Dalfinus; and having stayed with him three years, received from him the tonsure, and Dalfinus esteemed him so highly in love that he had thoughts of making him his heir; but this was prevented by the bishop's cruel death, and Wilfrid was reserved to be a bishop of his own, that is, the English, nation. For Queen Baldhild sent soldiers with orders to put the bishop to death; whom Wilfrid, as his clerk, attended to the place where he was to be beheaded, being very desirous, though the bishop strongly opposed it, to die with him; but the executioners, understanding that he was a stranger, and of the English nation, spared him, and would not put him to death with his bishop.

Returning to Britain, he won the friendship of King Alchfrid, who had learnt to follow always and love the catholic rules of the Church; and therefore finding him to be a Catholic, he gave him presently land of ten families at the place called Stanford; and not long after, the monastery, with land of thirty families, at the place called Inhrypum; which place he had formerly given to those that followed the doctrine of the Scots, to build a monastery there. But, forasmuch as they afterwards, being given the choice, had rather quit the place than adopt the Catholic Easter and other canonical rites, according to the custom of the Roman Apostolic Church, he gave the same to

him whom he found to be instructed in better discipline and better customs. At the same time, by the said king's command, he was ordained priest in the same monastery, by Agilbert, bishop of the Gewissae above-mentioned, the king being desirous that a man of so much learning and piety should attend him constantly as his special priest and teacher; and not long after, when the Scottish sect had been exposed and banished, as was said above, he, with the advice and consent of his father Oswy, sent him into Gaul, to be consecrated as his bishop, when he was about thirty years of age, the same Agilbert being then bishop of the city of Paris. Eleven other bishops met at the consecration of the new bishop, and that function was most honourably performed. Whilst he yet tarried beyond the sea, the holy man, Ceadda, was consecrated bishop of York by command of King Oswy, as has been said above; and having nobly ruled that church three years, he retired to take charge of his monastery of Laestingaeu, and Wilfrid was made bishop of all the province of the Northumbrians.

Afterwards, in the reign of Egfrid, he was expelled from his bishopric, and others were consecrated bishops in his stead, of whom mention has been made above. Designing to go to Rome, to plead his cause before the Apostolic Pope, he took ship, and was driven by a west wind into Frisland, and honourably received by that barbarous people and their King Aldgils, to whom he preached Christ, and he instructed many thousands of them in the Word of truth, washing them from the defilement of their sins in the Saviour's font. Thus he began there the work of the Gospel which was afterwards finished with great devotion by the most reverend bishop of Christ, Wilbrord. Having spent the winter there successfully among this new people of God, he set out again on his way to Rome, where his cause being tried before Pope Agatho and many bishops, he was by the judgement of them all acquitted of all blame, and declared worthy of his bishopric.

At the same time, the said Pope Agatho assembling a synod at Rome, of one hundred and twenty-five bishops, against those who asserted that there was only one will and operation in our Lord and Saviour, ordered Wilfrid also to be summoned, and, sitting among the bishops, to declare his own faith and the faith of the province or island whence he came; and he and his people being found orthodox in their faith, it was thought fit to record the same among the acts of that synod, which was done in in this manner: "Wilfrid, the beloved of God, bishop of the city of York, appealing to the

Apostolic see, and being by that authority acquitted of every thing, whether specified against him or not, and being appointed to sit in judgement with one hundred and twenty-five other bishops in the synod, made confession of the true and catholic faith, and confirmed the same with his subscription in the name of all the northern part of Britain and Ireland, and the islands inhabited by the nations of the English and Britons, as also by the Scots and Picts."

After this, returning into Britain, he converted the province of the South Saxons from their idolatrous worship to the faith of Christ. He also sent ministers of the Word to the Isle of Wight; and in the second year of Aldfrid, who reigned after Egfrid, was restored to his see and bishopric by that king's invitation. Nevertheless, five years after, being again accused, he was deprived of his bishopric by the same king and certain bishops. Coming to Rome, he was allowed to make his defence in the presence of his accusers, before a number of bishops and the Apostolic Pope John. It was shown by the judgement of them all, that his accusers had in part laid false accusations to his charge; and the aforesaid Pope wrote to the kings of the English, Ethelred and Aldfrid, to cause him to be restored to his bishopric, because he had been unjustly condemned.

His acquittal was much forwarded by the reading of the acts of the synod of Pope Agatho, of blessed memory, which had been formerly held, when Wilfrid was in Rome and sat in council among the bishops, as has been said before. For the acts of that synod being, as the case required, read, by order of the Apostolic Pope, before the nobility and a great number of the people for some days, they came to the place where it was written, "Wilfrid, the beloved of God, bishop of the city of York, appealing to the Apostolic see, and being by that authority acquitted of everything, whether specified against him or not," and the rest as above stated. This being read, the hearers were amazed, and the reader ceasing, they began to ask of one another, who that Bishop Wilfrid was. Then Boniface, the Pope's counsellor, and many others, who had seen him there in the days of Pope Agatho, said that he was the same bishop that lately came to Rome, to be tried by the Apostolic see, being accused by his people, and "who, said they, having long since come here upon the like accusation, the cause and contention of both parties being heard and examined, was proved by Pope Agatho, of blessed memory, to have been wrongfully expelled from his bishopric, and was held in such hon-

our by him, that he commanded him to sit in the council of bishops which he had assembled, as a man of untainted faith and an upright mind." This being heard, the Pope and all the rest said, that a man of so great authority, who had held the office of a bishop for nearly forty years, ought by no means to be condemned, but being altogether cleared of the faults laid to his charge, should return home with honour.

When he came to Gaul, on his way back to Britain, on a sudden he fell sick, and the sickness increasing, he was so weighed down by it, that he could not ride, but was carried in his bed by the hands of his servants. Being thus come to the city of Maeldum, in Gaul, he lay four days and nights, as if he had been dead, and only by his faint breathing showed that he had any life in him. Having continued thus four days, without meat or drink, without speech or hearing, at length, on the fifth day, at daybreak, as it were awakening out of a deep sleep, he raised himself and sat up, and opening his eyes, saw round about him a company of brethren singing psalms and weeping. Sighing gently, he asked where Acca, the priest, was. This man, straightway being called, came in, and seeing him somewhat recovered and able to speak, knelt down, and gave thanks to God, with all the brethren there present. When they had sat awhile and begun to discourse, with great awe, of the judgements of heaven, the bishop bade the rest go out for a time, and spoke to the priest, Acca, after this manner:

"A dread vision has even now appeared to me, which I would have you hear and keep secret, till I know what God will please to do with me. There stood by me a certain one, glorious in white raiment, and he told me that he was Michael, the Archangel, and said, 'I am sent to call you back from death: for the Lord has granted you life, through the prayers and tears of your disciples and brethren, and the intercession of His Blessed Mother Mary, of perpetual virginity; wherefore I tell you, that you shall now recover from this sickness; but be ready, for I will return and visit you at the end of four years. And when you come into your country, you shall recover the greater part of the possessions that have been taken from you, and shall end your days in peace and quiet.' " The bishop accordingly recovered, whereat all men rejoiced and gave thanks to God, and setting forward on his journey, he arrived in Britain.

Having read the letters which he brought from the Apostolic Pope, Bertwald, the archbishop, and Ethelred, sometime king, but then abbot, readily

took his part; for the said Ethelred, calling to him Coenred, whom he had made king in his own stead, begged him to be friends with Wilfrid, in which request he prevailed; nevertheless Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, disdained to receive him. But he died soon after, and so it came to pass that, during the reign of his son Osred, when a synod was assembled before long by the river Nidd, after some contention on both sides, at length, by the consent of all, he was restored to the government of his own church; and thus he lived in peace four years, till the day of his death. He died in his monastery, which he had in the province of Undalum, under the government of the Abbot Cuthbald; and by the ministry of the brethren, he was carried to his first monastery which is called Inhrypum, and buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, hard by the altar on the south side, as has been mentioned above, and this epitaph was written over him:

"Here rests the body of the great Bishop Wilfrid, who, for love of piety, built these courts and consecrated them with the noble name of Peter, to whom Christ, the Judge of all the earth, gave the keys of Heaven. And devoutly he clothed them with gold and Tyrian purple; yea, and he placed here the trophy of the Cross, of shining ore, uplifted high; moreover he caused the four books of the Gospel to be written in gold in their order, and he gave a case meet for them of ruddy gold. And he also brought the holy season of Easter, returning in its course, to accord with the true teaching of the catholic rule which the Fathers fixed, and, banishing all doubt and error, gave his nation sure guidance in their worship. And in this place he gathered a great throng of monks, and with all diligence safeguarded the precepts which the Fathers' rule enjoined. And long time sore vexed by many a peril at home and abroad, when he had held the office of a bishop forty-five years, he passed away and with joy departed to the heavenly kingdom. Grant, O Jesus, that the flock may follow in the path of the shepherd."

CHAPTER 5.20: HOW ALBINUS SUCCEEDED TO THE GODLY ABBOT HADRIAN, AND ACCA TO BISHOP WILFRID. (AD 709)

The next year after the death of the aforesaid father, which was the fifth year of King Osred, the most reverend father, Abbot Hadrian, fellow labourer in the Word of God with Bishop Theodore of blessed memory, died, and was buried in the church of the Blessed Mother of God, in his own monastery, this being the forty-first year after he was sent by Pope Vitalian with Theodore, and the thirty-ninth after his arrival in England. Among other

proofs of his learning, as well as Theodore's, there is this testimony, that Albinus, his disciple, who succeeded him in the government of his monastery, was so well instructed in literary studies, that he had no small knowledge of the Greek tongue, and knew the Latin as well as the English, which was his native language. Acca, his priest, succeeded Wilfrid in the bishopric of the church of Hagustald, being likewise a man of zeal and great in noble works in the sight of God and man. He enriched the structure of his church, which is dedicated in honour of the blessed Apostle Andrew with manifold adornments and marvellous workmanship. For he gave all diligence, as he does to this day, to procure relics of the blessed Apostles and martyrs of Christ from all parts, and to raise altars in their honour in separate side-chapels built for the purpose within the walls of the same church. Besides which, he industriously gathered the histories of their martyrdom, together with other ecclesiastical writings, and erected there a large and noble library. He likewise carefully provided holy vessels, lamps, and other such things as appertain to the adorning of the house of God. He in like manner invited to him a notable singer called Maban, who had been taught to sing by the successors of the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory in Kent, to instruct himself and his clergy, and kept him twelve years, to the end that he might teach such Church music as they did not know, and by his teaching restore to its former state that which was corrupted either by long use, or through neglect. For Bishop Acca himself was a most skilful singer, as well as most learned in Holy Writ, sound in the confession of the catholic faith, and well versed in the rules of ecclesiastical custom;

nor does he cease to walk after this manner, till he receive the rewards of his pious devotion. For he was brought up from boyhood and instructed among the clergy of the most holy and beloved of God, Bosa, bishop of York. Afterwards, coming to Bishop Wilfrid in the hope of a better plan of life, he spent the rest of his days in attendance on him till that bishop's death, and going with him to Rome, learned there many profitable things concerning the ordinances of the Holy Church, which he could not have learned in his own country.

CHAPTER 5.21: HOW THE ABBOT CEOLFRID SENT MASTER-BUILDERS TO THE KING OF THE PICTS TO BUILD A CHURCH, AND WITH THEM AN EPISTLE CONCERNING THE CATHOLIC EASTER AND THE TONSURE. (AD 710)

At that time, Naiton, King of the Picts, who inhabit the northern parts of Britain, taught by frequent meditation on the ecclesiastical writings, renounced the error whereby he and his nation had been holden till then, touching the observance of Easter, and brought himself and all his people to celebrate the catholic time of our Lord's Resurrection. To the end that he might bring this to pass with the more ease and greater authority, he sought aid from the English, whom he knew to have long since framed their religion after the example of the holy Roman Apostolic Church. Accordingly, he sent messengers to the venerable Ceolfrid, abbot of the monastery of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, which stands at the mouth of the river Wear, and near the river Tyne, at the place called Ingyruum, which he gloriously governed after Benedict, of whom we have before spoken; desiring, that he would send him a letter of exhortation, by the help of which he might the better confute those that presumed to keep Easter out of the due time; as also concerning the form and manner of tonsure whereby the clergy should be distinguished, notwithstanding that he himself had no small knowledge of these things. He also prayed to have master-builders sent him to build a church of stone in his nation after the Roman manner, promising to dedicate the same in honour of the blessed chief of the Apostles. Moreover, he and all his people, he said, would always follow the custom of the holy Roman Apostolic Church, in so far as men so distant from the speech and nation of the Romans could learn it. The most reverend Abbot Ceolfrid favourably receiving his godly desires and requests, sent the builders he desired, and likewise the following letter:

"To the most excellent lord, and glorious King Naiton, Abbot Ceolfrid, greeting in the Lord. We most readily and willingly endeavour, according to your desire, to make known to you the catholic observance of holy Easter, according to what we have learned of the Apostolic see, even as you, most devout king, in your godly zeal, have requested of us. For we know, that whensoever the lords of this world labour to learn, and to teach and to guard the truth, it is a gift of God to his Holy Church. For a certain profane writer has most truly said, that the world would be most happy if either kings were

philosophers, or philosophers were kings. Now if a man of this world could judge truly of the philosophy of this world, and form a right choice concerning the state of this world, how much more is it to be desired, and most earnestly to be prayed for by such as are citizens of the heavenly country, and strangers and pilgrims in this world, that the more powerful any are in the world the more they may strive to hearken to the commands of Him who is the Supreme Judge, and by their example and authority may teach those that are committed to their charge, to keep the same, together with themselves.

"There are then three rules given in the Sacred Writings, whereby the time of keeping Easter has been appointed for us and may in no wise be changed by any authority of man; two whereof are divinely established in the law of Moses; the third is added in the Gospel by reason of the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord. For the law enjoined, that the Passover should be kept in the first month of the year, and the third week of that month, that is, from the fifteenth day to the one-and-twentieth. It is added, by Apostolic institution, from the Gospel, that we are to wait for the Lord's day in that third week, and to keep the beginning of the Paschal season on the same. Which threefold rule whosoever shall rightly observe, will never err in fixing the Paschal feast. But if you desire to be more plainly and fully informed in all these particulars, it is written in Exodus, where the people of Israel, being about to be delivered out of Egypt, are commanded to keep the first Passover, that the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying, 'This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house.

And a little after, 'And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. By which words it most plainly appears, that in the Paschal observance, though mention is made of the fourteenth day, yet it is not commanded that the Passover be kept on that day; but on the evening of the fourteenth day, that is, when the fifteenth moon, which is the beginning of the third week, appears in the sky, it is commanded that the lamb be killed; and that it was the night of the fifteenth moon, when the Egyptians were smitten and Israel was redeemed from long captivity. He says, 'Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread. By which words all the third week of that same

first month is appointed to be a solemn feast. But lest we should think that those same seven days were to be reckoned from the fourteenth to the twentieth, He forthwith adds, 'Even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses; for whosoever eateth leavened bread, from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel; and so on, till he says, 'For in this selfsame day I will bring your army out of the land of Egypt.'

"Thus he calls that the first day of unleavened bread, in which he was to bring their army out of Egypt. Now it is evident, that they were not brought out of Egypt on the fourteenth day, in the evening whereof the lamb was killed, and which is properly called the Passover or Phase, but on the fifteenth day, as is most plainly written in the book of Numbers: 'and they departed from Rameses on the fifteenth day of the first month, on the morrow after the Passover the Israelites went out with an high hand. Thus the seven days of unleavened bread, on the first whereof the people of the Lord were brought out of Egypt, are to be reckoned from the beginning of the third week, as has been said, that is, from the fifteenth day of the first month, till the end of the one-and-twentieth of the same month. But the fourteenth day is named apart from this number, by the title of the Passover, as is plainly shown by that which follows in Exodus: where, after it is said, 'For in this self-same day I will bring your army out of the land of Egypt; it is forthwith added, 'And ye shall observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one-and-twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses.

Now, who is there that does not perceive, that there are not only seven days, but rather eight, from the fourteenth to the one-and-twentieth, if the fourteenth be also reckoned in the number? But if, as appears by diligent study of the truth of the Scriptures, we reckon from the evening of the fourteenth day to the evening of the one-and-twentieth, we shall certainly find, that, while the Paschal feast begins on the evening of the fourteenth day, yet the whole sacred solemnity contains no more than only seven nights and as many days. Wherefore the rule which we laid down is proved to be true, when we said that the Paschal season is to be celebrated in the first month of the year, and the third week of the same. For it is in truth the third week, because it begins on the evening of the fourteenth day, and ends on the evening of the one-and-twentieth.

"But since Christ our Passover is sacrificed, and has made the Lord's day, which among the ancients was called the first day of the week, a solemn day to us for the joy of His Resurrection, the Apostolic tradition has included it in the Paschal festival; yet has decreed that the time of the legal Passover be in no wise anticipated or diminished; but rather ordains, that according to the precept of the law, that same first month of the year, and the fourteenth day of the same, and the evening thereof be awaited. And when this day should chance to fall on a Saturday, every man should take to him a lamb, according to the house of his fathers, a lamb for an house, and he should kill it in the evening, that is, that all the Churches throughout the world, making one Catholic Church, should provide Bread and Wine for the Mystery of the Flesh and Blood of the spotless Lamb 'that hath taken away the sins of the world; and after a fitting solemn service of lessons and prayers and Paschal ceremonies, they should offer up these to the Lord, in hope of redemption to come. For this is that same night in which the people of Israel were delivered out of Egypt by the blood of the lamb; this is the same in which all the people of God were, by Christ's Resurrection, set free from eternal death.

Then, in the morning, when the Lord's day dawns, they should celebrate the first day of the Paschal festival; for that is the day on which our Lord made known the glory of His Resurrection to His disciples, to their manifold joy at the merciful revelation. The same is the first day of unleavened bread, concerning which it is plainly written in Leviticus, 'In the fourteenth day of the first month, at even, is the Lord's Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord; seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation.' "If therefore it could be that the Lord's day should always happen on the fifteenth day of the first month, that is, on the fifteenth moon, we might always celebrate the Passover at one and the same time with the ancient people of God, though the nature of the mystery be different, as we do it with one and the same faith. But inasmuch as the day of the week does not keep pace exactly with the moon, the Apostolic tradition, which was preached at Rome by the blessed Peter, and confirmed at Alexandria by Mark the Evangelist, his interpreter, appointed that when the first month was come, and in it the evening of the fourteenth day, we should also wait for the Lord's day, between the fifteenth and the one-and-twentieth day of

the same month. For on whichever of those days it shall fall, Easter will be rightly kept on the same; seeing that it is one of those seven days on which the feast of unleavened bread is commanded to be kept. Thus it comes to pass that our Easter never falls either before or after the third week of the first month, but has for its observance either the whole of it, to wit, the seven days of unleavened bread appointed by the law, or at least some of them. For though it comprises but one of them, that is, the seventh, which the Scripture so highly commends, saying, 'But the seventh day shall be a more holy convocation, ye shall do no servile work therein,' none can lay it to our charge, that we do not rightly keep Easter Sunday, which we received from the Gospel, in the third week of the first month, as the Law prescribes.

"The catholic reason of this observance being thus explained, the unreasonable error, on the other hand, of those who, without any necessity, presume either to anticipate, or to go beyond the term appointed in the Law, is manifest. For they that think Easter Sunday is to be observed from the fourteenth day of the first month till the twentieth moon, anticipate the time prescribed in the law, without any necessary reason; for when they begin to celebrate the vigil of the holy night from the evening of the thirteenth day, it is plain that they make that day the beginning of their Easter, whereof they find no mention in the commandment of the Law; and when they avoid celebrating our Lord's Easter on the one-and-twentieth day of the month, it is surely manifest that they wholly exclude that day from their solemnity, which the Law many times commends to be observed as a greater festival than the rest; and thus, perverting the proper order, they sometimes keep Easter Day entirely in the second week, and never place it on the seventh day of the third week. And again, they who think that Easter is to be kept from the sixteenth day of the said month till the two-and-twentieth no less erroneously, though on the other side, deviate from the right way of truth, and as it were avoiding shipwreck on Scylla, they fall into the whirlpool of Charybdis to be drowned.

For when they teach that Easter is to be begun at the rising of the sixteenth moon of the first month, that is, from the evening of the fifteenth day, it is certain that they altogether exclude from their solemnity the fourteenth day of the same month, which the Law first and chiefly commends; so that they scarce touch the evening of the fifteenth day, on which the people of God were redeemed from Egyptian bondage, and on which our

Lord, by His Blood, rescued the world from the darkness of sin, and on which being also buried, He gave us the hope of a blessed rest after death. "And these men, receiving in themselves the recompense of their error, when they place Easter Sunday on the twenty-second day of the month, openly transgress and do violence to the term of Easter appointed by the Law, seeing that they begin Easter on the evening of that day in which the Law commanded it to be completed and brought to an end; and appoint that to be the first day of Easter, whereof no mention is any where found in the Law, to wit, the first of the fourth week. And both sorts are mistaken, not only in fixing and computing the moon's age, but also sometimes in finding the first month; but this controversy is longer than can be or ought to be contained in this letter. I will only say thus much, that by the vernal equinox, it may always be found, without the chance of an error, which must be the first month of the year, according to the lunar computation, and which the last. But the equinox, according to the opinion of all the Eastern nations, and particularly of the Egyptians, who surpass all other learned men in calculation, falls on the twenty-first day of March, as we also prove by horological observation. Whatsoever moon therefore is at the full before the equinox, being on the fourteenth or fifteenth day, the same belongs to the last month of the foregoing year, and consequently is not meet for the celebration of Easter;

but that moon which is full after the equinox, or at the very time of the equinox, belongs to the first month, and on that day, without a doubt, we must understand that the ancients were wont to celebrate the Passover; and that we also ought to keep Easter when the Sunday comes. And that this must be so, there is this cogent reason. It is written in Genesis, 'And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. Or, as another edition has it, 'The greater light to begin the day, and the lesser to begin the night. As, therefore, the sun, coming forth from the midst of the east, fixed the vernal equinox by his rising, and afterwards the moon at the full, when the sun set in the evening, followed from the midst of the east; so every year the same first lunar month must be observed in the like order, so that its full moon must not be before the equinox; but either on the very day of the equinox, as it was in the beginning, or after it is past. But if the full moon shall happen to be but one day before the time of the equinox, the aforesaid reason proves that such moon is not to be

assigned to the first month of the new year, but rather to the last of the preceding, and that it is therefore not meet for the celebration of the Paschal festival.

"Now if it please you likewise to hear the mystical reason in this matter, we are commanded to keep Easter in the first month of the year, which is also called the month of new things, because we ought to celebrate the mysteries of our Lord's Resurrection and our deliverance, with the spirit of our minds renewed to the love of heavenly things. We are commanded to keep it in the third week of the same month, because Christ Himself, who had been promised before the Law, and under the Law, came with grace, in the third age of the world, to be sacrificed as our Passover; and because rising from the dead the third day after the offering of His Passion, He wished this to be called the Lord's day, and the Paschal feast of His Resurrection to be yearly celebrated on the same; because, also, we do then only truly celebrate His solemn festival, if we endeavour with Him to keep the Passover, that is, the passing from this world to the Father, by faith, hope, and charity. We are commanded to observe the full moon of the Paschal month after the vernal equinox, to the end, that the sun may first make the day longer than the night, and then the moon may show to the world her full orb of light; inasmuch as first 'the Sun of righteousness, with healing in His wings,' that is, our Lord Jesus, by the triumph of His Resurrection, dispelled all the darkness of death, and so ascending into Heaven, filled His Church, which is often signified by the name of the moon, with the light of inward grace, by sending down upon her His Spirit. Which order of our salvation the prophet had in his mind, when he said 'The sun was exalted and the moon stood in her order.'

"He, therefore, who shall contend that the full Paschal moon can happen before the equinox, disagrees with the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, in the celebration of the greatest mysteries, and agrees with those who trust that they may be saved without the grace of Christ preventing them, and who presume to teach that they might have attained to perfect righteousness, though the true Light had never by death and resurrection vanquished the darkness of the world. Thus, after the rising of the sun at the equinox, and after the full moon of the first month following in her order, that is, after the end of the fourteenth day of the same month, all which we have received by the Law to be observed, we still, as we are taught in the Gospel, wait in the

third week for the Lord's day; and so, at length, we celebrate the offering of our Easter solemnity, to show that we are not, with the ancients, doing honour to the casting off of the yoke of Egyptian bondage; but that, with devout faith and love, we worship the Redemption of the whole world, which having been prefigured in the deliverance of the ancient people of God, was fulfilled in Christ's Resurrection, and that we may signify that we rejoice in the sure and certain hope of our own resurrection, which we believe will likewise happen on the Lord's day.

"Now this computation of Easter, which we set forth to you to be followed, is contained in a cycle of nineteen years, which began long since to be observed in the Church, to wit, even in the time of the Apostles, especially at Rome and in Egypt, as has been said above. But by the industry of Eusebius, who took his surname from the blessed martyr Pamphilus, it was reduced to a plainer system; insomuch that what till then used to be enjoined every year throughout all the Churches by the Bishop of Alexandria, might, from that time forward, be most easily known by all men, the occurrence of the fourteenth moon being regularly set forth in its course. This Paschal computation, Theophilus, Bishop of Alexandria, made for the Emperor Theodosius, for a hundred years to come. Cyril also, his successor, comprised a series of ninety-five years in five cycles of nineteen years. After whom, Dionysius Exiguus added as many more, in order, after the same manner, reaching down to our own time. The expiration of these is now drawing near, but there is at the present day so great a number of calculators, that even in our Churches throughout Britain, there are many who, having learned the ancient rules of the Egyptians, can with great ease carry on the Paschal cycles for any length of time, even to five hundred and thirty-two years, if they will; after the expiration of which, all that appertains to the succession of sun and moon, month and week, returns in the same order as before. We therefore forbear to send you these same cycles of the times to come, because, desiring only to be instructed respecting the reason for the Paschal time, you show that you have enough of those catholic cycles concerning Easter.

"But having said thus much briefly and succinctly, as you required, concerning Easter, I also exhort you to take heed that the tonsure, concerning which likewise you desired me to write to you, be in accordance with the use of the Church and the Christian Faith. And we know indeed that the Apostles were not all shorn after the same manner, nor does the Catholic

Church now, as it agrees in one faith, hope, and charity towards God, use one and the same form of tonsure throughout the world. Moreover, to look back to former times, to wit, the times of the patriarchs, Job, the pattern of patience, when tribulation came upon him, shaved his head, and thus made it appear that he had used, in time of prosperity, to let his hair grow. But concerning Joseph, who more than other men practised and taught chastity, humility, piety, and the other virtues, we read that he was shorn when he was to be delivered from bondage, by which it appears, that during the time of his bondage, he was in the prison with unshorn hair. Behold then how each of these men of God differed in the manner of their appearance abroad, though their inward consciences agreed in a like grace of virtue.

But though we may be free to confess, that the difference of tonsure is not hurtful to those whose faith is pure towards God, and their charity sincere towards their neighbour, especially since we do not read that there was ever any controversy among the Catholic fathers about the difference of tonsure, as there has been a contention about the diversity in keeping Easter, and in matters of faith; nevertheless, among all the forms of tonsure that are to be found in the Church, or among mankind at large, I think none more meet to be followed and received by us than that which that disciple wore on his head, to whom, after his confession of Himself, our Lord said, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven. Nor do I think that any is more rightly to be abhorred and detested by all the faithful, than that which that man used, to whom that same Peter, when he would have bought the grace of the Holy Ghost, said, 'Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this word. Nor do we shave ourselves in the form of a crown only because Peter was so shorn;

but because Peter was so shorn in memory of the Passion of our Lord, therefore we also, who desire to be saved by the same Passion, do with him bear the sign of the same Passion on the top of our head, which is the highest part of our body. For as all the Church, because it was made a Church by the death of Him that gave it life, is wont to bear the sign of His Holy Cross on the forehead, to the end, that it may, by the constant protection of His banner, be defended from the assaults of evil spirits, and by the frequent admonition of the same be taught, in like manner, to crucify the

flesh with its affections and lusts; so also it behoves those, who having either taken the vows of a monk, or having the degree of a clerk, must needs curb themselves the more strictly by continence, for the Lord's sake, to bear each one of them on his head, by the tonsure, the form of the crown of thorns which He bore on His head in His Passion, that He might bear the thorns and thistles of our sins, that is, that he might bear them away and take them from us; to the end that they may show on their foreheads that they also willingly, and readily, endure all scoffing and reproach for his sake;

and that they may signify that they await always 'the crown of eternal life, which God hath promised to them that love him,' and that for the sake of attaining thereto they despise both the evil and the good of this world. But as for the tonsure which Simon Magus is said to have used, who is there of the faithful, I ask you, who does not straightway detest and reject it at the first sight of it, together with his magic? Above the forehead it does seem indeed to resemble a crown; but when you come to look at the neck, you will find the crown cut short which you thought you saw; so that you may perceive that such a use properly belongs not to Christians but to Simoniacs, such as were indeed in this life by erring men thought worthy of the glory of an everlasting crown; but in that which is to follow this life are not only deprived of all hope of a crown, but are moreover condemned to eternal punishment.

"But do not think that I have said thus much, as though I judged them worthy to be condemned who use this tonsure, if they uphold the catholic unity by their faith and works; nay, I confidently declare, that many of them have been holy men and worthy servants of God. Of which number is Adamnan, the notable abbot and priest of the followers of Columba, who, when sent on a mission by his nation to King Aldfrid, desired to see our monastery, and forasmuch as he showed wonderful wisdom, humility, and piety in his words and behaviour, I said to him among other things, when I talked with him, 'I beseech you, holy brother, how is it that you, who believe that you are advancing to the crown of life, which knows no end, wear on your head, after a fashion ill-suited to your belief, the likeness of a crown that has an end? And if you seek the fellowship of the blessed Peter, why do you imitate the likeness of the tonsure of him whom St. Peter anathematized? and why do you not rather even now show that you choose with all your heart the fashion of him with whom you desire to live in bliss for ever.

He answered, 'Be assured, my dear brother, that though I wear the tonsure of Simon, according to the custom of my country, yet I detest and abhor with all my soul the heresy of Simon;

and I desire, as far as lies in my small power, to follow the footsteps of the most blessed chief of the Apostles. I replied, 'I verily believe it; nevertheless it is a token that you embrace in your inmost heart whatever is of Peter the Apostle, if you also observe in outward form that which you know to be his. For I think your wisdom easily discerns that it is much better to estrange from your countenance, already dedicated to God, the fashion of his countenance whom with all your heart you abhor, and of whose hideous face you would shun the sight; and, on the other hand, that it beseems you to imitate the manner of his appearance, whom you seek to have for your advocate before God, even as you desire to follow his actions and his teaching.' "This I said at that time to Adamnan, who indeed showed how much he had profited by seeing the ordinances of our Churches, when, returning into Scotland, he afterwards by his preaching led great numbers of that nation to the catholic observance of the Paschal time; though he was not yet able to bring back to the way of the better ordinance the monks that lived in the island of Hii over whom he presided with the special authority of a superior. He would also have been mindful to amend the tonsure, if his influence had availed so far. "But I now also admonish your wisdom, O king, that together with the nation, over which the King of kings, and Lord of lords, has placed you, you strive to observe in all points those things which are in accord with the unity of the Catholic and Apostolic Church; for so it will come to pass, that after you have held sway in a temporal kingdom, the blessed chief of the Apostles will also willingly open to you and yours with all the elect the entrance into the heavenly kingdom. The grace of the eternal King preserve you in safety, long reigning for the peace of us all, my dearly beloved son in Christ."

This letter having been read in the presence of King Naiton and many learned men, and carefully interpreted into his own language by those who could understand it, he is said to have much rejoiced at the exhortation thereof; insomuch that, rising from among his nobles that sat about him, he knelt on the ground, giving thanks to God that he had been found worthy to receive such a gift from the land of the English. "And indeed," he said, "I knew before, that this was the true celebration of Easter, but now I so fully

learn the reason for observing this time, that I seem in all points to have known but little before concerning these matters. Therefore I publicly declare and protest to you that are here present, that I will for ever observe this time of Easter, together with all my nation; and I do decree that this tonsure, which we have heard to be reasonable, shall be received by all clerks in my kingdom." Without delay he accomplished by his royal authority what he had said. For straightway the Paschal cycles of nineteen years were sent by command of the State throughout all the provinces of the Picts to be transcribed, learned, and observed, the erroneous cycles of eighty-four years being everywhere blotted out. All the ministers of the altar and monks were shorn after the fashion of the crown; and the nation thus reformed, rejoiced, as being newly put under the guidance of Peter, the most blessed chief of the Apostles, and committed to his protection.

CHAPTER 5.22: HOW THE MONKS OF HII, AND THE MONASTERIES SUBJECT TO THEM, BEGAN TO CELEBRATE THE CANONICAL EASTER AT THE PREACHING OF EGBERT. (AD 716)

Not long after, those monks also of the Scottish nation, who lived in the isle of Hii, with the other monasteries that were subject to them, were by the Lord's doing brought to the canonical observance with regard to Easter, and the tonsure. For in the year of our Lord 716, when Osred was slain, and Coenred took upon him the government of the kingdom of the Northumbrians, the father and priest, Egbert, beloved of God, and worthy to be named with all honour, whom we have before often mentioned, came to them from Ireland, and was honourably and joyfully received. Being a most gracious teacher, and most devout in practising those things which he taught, and being willingly heard by all, by his pious and diligent exhortations, he converted them from that deep-rooted tradition of their fathers, of whom may be said those words of the Apostle, "That they had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. He taught them to celebrate the principal solemnity after the catholic and apostolic manner, as has been said, wearing on their heads the figure of an unending crown. It is manifest that this came to pass by a wonderful dispensation of the Divine goodness; to the end, that the same nation which had willingly, and without grudging, taken heed to impart to the English people that learning which it had in the knowledge of God, should afterwards, by means of the English nation, be brought, in those things which it had not, to a perfect rule of life.

Even as, contrarywise, the Britons, who would not reveal to the English the knowledge which they had of the Christian faith, now, when the English people believe, and are in all points instructed in the rule of the Catholic faith, still persist in their errors, halting and turned aside from the true path, expose their heads without a crown, and keep the Feast of Christ apart from the fellowship of the Church of Christ. The monks of Hii, at the teaching of Egbert, adopted the catholic manner of conversation, under Abbot Dunchad, about eighty years after they had sent Bishop Aidan to preach to the English nation. The man of God, Egbert, remained thirteen years in the aforesaid island, which he had thus consecrated to Christ, as it were, by a new ray of the grace of fellowship and peace in the Church; and in the year of our Lord 729, in which Easter was celebrated on the 24th of April, when he had celebrated the solemnity of the Mass, in memory of the Resurrection of our Lord, that same day he departed to the Lord and thus finished, or rather never ceases endlessly to celebrate, with our Lord, and the Apostles, and the other citizens of heaven, the joy of that greatest festival, which he had begun with the brethren, whom he had converted to the grace of unity. And it was a wonderful dispensation of the Divine Providence, that the venerable man passed from this world to the Father, not only at Easter, but also when Easter was celebrated on that day, on which it had never been wont to be celebrated in those parts. The brethren rejoiced in the sure and catholic knowledge of the time of Easter, and were glad in that their father, by whom they had been brought into the right way, passing hence to the Lord should plead for them. He also gave thanks that he had so long continued in the flesh, till he saw his hearers accept and keep with him as Easter that day which they had ever before avoided. Thus the most reverend father being assured of their amendment, rejoiced to see the day of the Lord, and he saw it and was glad.

CHAPTER 5.23: OF THE PRESENT STATE OF THE ENGLISH NATION, OR OF ALL BRITAIN. (AD 725–731)

In the year of our Lord 725, being the seventh year of Osric, king of the Northumbrians, who had succeeded Coenred, Wictred, the son of Egbert, king of Kent, died on the 23rd of April, and left his three sons, Ethelbert, Eadbert, and Alric, heirs of that kingdom, which he had governed thirty-four years and a half. The next year Tobias, bishop of the church of Rochester, died, a most learned man, as has been said before; for he was dis-

ciple to those masters of blessed memory, Theodore, the archbishop, and Abbot Hadrian, wherefore, as has been said, besides having a great knowledge of letters both ecclesiastical and general, he learned both the Greek and Latin tongues to such perfection, that they were as well known and familiar to him as his native language. He was buried in the chapel of St. Paul the Apostle, which he had built within the church of St. Andrew for his own place of burial. After him Aldwulf took upon him the office of bishop, having been consecrated by Archbishop Bertwald.

In the year of our Lord 729, two comets appeared about the sun, to the great terror of the beholders. One of them went before the sun in the morning at his rising, the other followed him when he set in the evening, as it were presaging dire disaster to both east and west; or without doubt one was the forerunner of the day, and the other of the night, to signify that mortals were threatened with calamities at both times. They carried their flaming brands towards the north, as it were ready to kindle a conflagration. They appeared in January, and continued nearly a fortnight. At which time a grievous blight fell upon Gaul, in that it was laid waste by the Saracens with cruel bloodshed; but not long after in that country they received the due reward of their unbelief. In that year the holy man of God, Egbert, departed to the Lord, as has been said above, on Easter day; and immediately after Easter, that is, on the 9th of May, Osric, king of the Northumbrians, departed this life, after he had reigned eleven years, and appointed Ceolwulf, brother to Coenred, who had reigned before him, his successor; the beginning and progress of whose reign have been so filled with many and great commotions and conflicts, that it cannot yet be known what is to be said concerning them, or what end they will have.

In the year of our Lord 731, Archbishop Bertwald died of old age, on the 13th of January, having held his see thirty-seven years, six months and fourteen days. In his stead, the same year, Tatwine, of the province of the Mercians, was made archbishop, having been a priest in the monastery called Briudun. He was consecrated in the city of Canterbury by the venerable men, Daniel, bishop of Winchester, Ingwald of London, Aldwin of Lichfield, and Aldwulf of Rochester, on Sunday, the 10th of June, being a man renowned for piety and wisdom, and of notable learning in Holy Scripture. Thus at the present time, the bishops Tatwine and Aldwulf preside in the churches of Kent; Ingwald is bishop in the province of the East Saxons. In the province of

the East Angles, the bishops are Aldbert and Hadulac; in the province of the West Saxons, Daniel and Forthere; in the province of the Mercians, Aldwin. Among those peoples who dwell beyond the river Severn to the westward, Walhstod is bishop; in the province of the Hwiccas, Wilfrid; in the province of Lindsey, Bishop Cynibert presides; the bishopric of the Isle of Wight belongs to Daniel, bishop of the city of Winchester. The province of the South Saxons, having now continued some years without a bishop, receives episcopal ministrations from the prelate of the West Saxons. All these provinces, and the other southern provinces, as far as the boundary formed by the river Humber, with their several kings, are subject to King Ethelbald.

But in the province of the Northumbrians, where King Ceolwulf reigns, four bishops now preside; Wilfrid in the church of York, Ethelwald in that of Lindisfarne, Acca in that of Hagustald, Pecthelm in that which is called the White House, which, as the number of the faithful has increased, has lately become an episcopal see, and has him for its first prelate. The Pictish people also at this time are at peace with the English nation, and rejoice in having their part in Catholic peace and truth with the universal Church. The Scots that inhabit Britain, content with their own territories, devise no plots nor hostilities against the English nation. The Britons, though they, for the most part, as a nation hate and oppose the English nation, and wrongfully, and from wicked lewdness, set themselves against the appointed Easter of the whole Catholic Church; yet, inasmuch as both Divine and human power withstand them, they can in neither purpose prevail as they desire; for though in part they are their own masters, yet part of them are brought under subjection to the English. In these favourable times of peace and calm, many of the Northumbrians, as well of the nobility as private persons, laying aside their weapons, and receiving the tonsure, desire rather both for themselves and their children to take upon them monastic vows, than to practise the pursuit of war. What will be the end hereof, the next age will see. This is for the present the state of all Britain; about two hundred and eighty-five years after the coming of the English into Britain, and in the 731st year of our Lord, in Whose kingdom that shall have no end let the earth rejoice; and Britain being one with them in the joy of His faith, let the multitude of isles be glad, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness.

CHAPTER 5.24: CHRONOLOGICAL RECAPITULATION OF THE WHOLE WORK: ALSO CONCERNING THE AUTHOR HIMSELF

I have thought fit briefly to sum up those things which have been related at length under their particular dates, that they may be the better kept in memory. In the sixtieth year before the Incarnation of our Lord, Caius Julius Cæsar, first of the Romans invaded Britain, and was victorious, yet could not maintain the supreme power there. [I, 2.] In the year of our Lord, 46, Claudius, being the second of the Romans who came to Britain, received the surrender of a great part of the island, and added the Orkney islands to the Roman empire. [I, 3.] In the year of our Lord 167, Eleuther, being made bishop at Rome, governed the Church most gloriously fifteen years. To whom Lucius, king of Britain, sent a letter, asking to be made a Christian, and succeeded in obtaining his request. [I, 4.] In the year of our Lord 189, Severus, being made emperor, reigned seventeen years; he fortified Britain with a rampart from sea to sea. [I, 5.]

In the year 381, Maximus, being made emperor in Britain, crossed over into Gaul, and slew Gratian. [I, 9.] In the year 409, Rome was overthrown by the Goths, from which time the Romans ceased to rule in Britain. [I, 11.] In the year 430, Palladius was sent by Pope Celestine to the Scots that believed in Christ to be their first bishop. [I, 13.] In the year 449, Marcian being made emperor with Valentinian, reigned seven years; in whose time the English, being called in by the Britons, came into Britain. [I, 15.] In the year 538, an eclipse of the sun came to pass on the 16th of February, from the first hour until the third. In the year 540, an eclipse of the sun came to pass on the 20th of June, and the stars appeared during almost half an hour after the third hour of the day.

In the year 547, Ida began to reign; he was the founder of the royal family of the Northumbrians, and he reigned twelve years. In the year 565, the priest, Columba, came out of Scotland, into Britain, to teach the Picts, and he built a monastery in the isle of Hii. [III, 4.] In the year 596, Pope Gregory sent Augustine with monks into Britain, to preach the good tidings of the Word of God to the English nation. [I, 23.] In the year 597, the aforesaid teachers arrived in Britain; being about the 150th year from the coming of the English into Britain. [I, 25.] In the year 601, Pope Gregory sent the pall into Britain to Augustine, who was already made bishop; he sent also several

ministers of the Word, among whom was Paulinus. [I, 29.] In the year 603, a battle was fought at Degsastan. [I, 34.]

In the year 604, the East Saxons received the faith of Christ, under King Sabert, Mellitus being bishop. [II, 3.] In the year 605, Gregory died. [II, 1.] In the year 616, Ethelbert, king of Kent died. [II, 5.] In the year 625, Paulinus was ordained bishop of the Northumbrians by Archbishop Justus. [II, 9.] In the year 626, Eanfled, daughter of King Edwin, was baptized with twelve others, on the eve of Whitsunday. [Ib.] In the year 627, King Edwin was baptized, with his nation, at Easter. [II, 14.] In the year 633, King Edwin being killed, Paulinus returned to Kent. [II, 20.] In the year 640, Eadbald, king of Kent, died. [III, 8.] In the year 642, King Oswald was slain. [III, 9.] In the year 644, Paulinus, formerly bishop of York, but then of the city of Rochester, departed to the Lord. [III, 14.] In the year 651, King Oswin was killed, and Bishop Aidan died. [Ibid.]

In the year 653, the Middle Angles, under their prince, Penda, were admitted to the mysteries of the faith. [III, 21.] In the year 655, Penda was slain, and the Mercians became Christians. [III, 24.] In the year 664, an eclipse came to pass; Earconbert, king of Kent, died; and Colman with the Scots returned to his people; a pestilence arose; Ceadda and Wilfrid were ordained bishops of the Northumbrians. [III, 26-28, IV, 1.] In the year 668, Theodore was ordained bishop. [IV, 1.] In the year 670, Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, died. [IV, 5.] In the year 673, Egbert, king of Kent, died; and a synod was held at Hertford, in the presence of King Egfrid, Archbishop Theodore presiding: the synod was of great profit, and its decrees are contained in ten articles. [Ibid.] In the year 675, Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, when he had reigned seventeen years, died and left the government to his brother Ethelred.

In the year 676, Ethelred ravaged Kent. [IV, 12.] In the year 678, a comet appeared; Bishop Wilfrid was driven from his see by King Egfrid; and Bosa, Eata, and Eadhaed were consecrated bishops in his stead. [Ibid.; V, 19.] In the year 679, Aelfwine was killed. [IV, 21.] In the year 680, a synod was held in the plain of Haethfelth, concerning the Catholic faith, Archbishop Theodore presiding; John, the Roman abbot, was also present. The same year also the Abbess Hilda died at Streanaeshalch. [IV, 17, 18, 23.] In the year 685, Egfrid, king of the Northumbrians, was slain. The same year Hlothere, king of Kent, died. [IV, 26.] In the year 688, Caedwald, king of the West Saxons,

went to Rome from Britain. [V, 7.] In the year 690, Archbishop Theodore died. [V, 8.] In the year 697, Queen Osthryth was murdered by her own nobles, to wit, the nobles of the Mercians.

In the year 698, Berctred, an ealdorman of the king of the Northumbrians, was slain by the Picts. In the year 704, Ethelred, after he had reigned thirty-one years over the nation of the Mercians, became a monk, and gave up the kingdom to Coenred. [V, 19.] In the year 705, Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, died. [V, 18.] In the year 709, Coenred, king of the Mercians, having reigned five years, went to Rome. [V, 19.] In the year 711, the commander Bertfrid fought with the Picts. In the year 716, Osred, king of the Northumbrians, was killed; and Ceolred, king of the Mercians, died; and the man of God, Egbert, brought the monks of Hii to observe the Catholic Easter and the ecclesiastical tonsure. [V, 22.] In the year 725, Wictred, king of Kent, died. [V, 23.] In the year 729, comets appeared; the holy Egbert passed away; and Osric died. [Ibid.]

In the year 731, Archbishop Bertwald died. [Ibid.] The same year Tatwine was consecrated ninth archbishop of the church of Canterbury, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Ethelbald, king of the Mercians. [Ibid.] Thus much of the Ecclesiastical History of Britain, and more especially of the English nation, as far as I could learn either from the writings of the ancients, or the tradition of our forefathers, or of my own knowledge, with the help of the Lord, I, Bede, the servant of Christ, and priest of the monastery of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, which is at Wearmouth and Jarrow, have set forth. Having been born in the territory of that same monastery, I was given, by the care of kinsmen, at seven years of age, to be educated by the most reverend Abbot Benedict, and afterwards by Ceolfrid, and spending all the remaining time of my life a dweller in that monastery, I wholly applied myself to the study of Scripture; and amidst the observance of monastic rule, and the daily charge of singing in the church, I always took delight in learning, or teaching, or writing. In the nineteenth year of my age, I received deacon's orders; in the thirtieth, those of the priesthood, both of them by the ministry of the most reverend Bishop John, and at the bidding of the Abbot Ceolfrid. From the time when I received priest's orders, till the fifty-ninth year of my age, I have made it my business, for my own needs and those of my brethren, to compile out of the works of the venerable Fathers,

the following brief notes on the Holy Scriptures, and also to make some additions after the manner of the meaning and interpretation given by them:

On the Beginning of Genesis, to the birth of Isaac and the casting out of Ishmael, four books. Concerning the Tabernacle and its Vessels, and of the Vestments of the Priests, three books. On the first part of Samuel, to the Death of Saul, three books. Concerning the Building of the Temple, of Allegorical Exposition, and other matters, two books. Likewise on the Book of Kings, thirty Questions. On the Proverbs of Solomon, three books. On the Song of Songs, seven books. On Isaiah, Daniel, the twelve Prophets, and Part of Jeremiah, Divisions of Chapters, collected from the Treatise of the blessed Jerome. On Ezra and Nehemiah, three books. On the song of Habakkuk, one book. On the Book of the blessed Father Tobias, one Book of Allegorical Explanation concerning Christ and the Church. Also, Chapters of Readings on the Pentateuch of Moses, Joshua, and Judges; On the Books of Kings and Chronicles;

On the Book of the blessed Father Job; On the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs; On the Prophets Isaiah, Ezra, and Nehemiah. On the Gospel of Mark, four books. On the Gospel of Luke, six books. Of Homilies on the Gospel, two books. On the Apostle, whatsoever I have found in the works of St. Augustine I have taken heed to transcribe in order. On the Acts of the Apostles, two books. On the seven Catholic Epistles, a book on each. On the Revelation of St. John, three books. Likewise, Chapters of Lessons on all the New Testament, except the Gospel. Likewise a book of Epistles to divers Persons, of which one is of the Six Ages of the world; one of the Halting-places of the Children of Israel; one on the words of Isaiah, "And they shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited"; one of the Reason of Leap-Year, and one of the Equinox, according to Anatolius.

Likewise concerning the Histories of Saints: I translated the Book of the Life and Passion of St. Felix, Confessor, from the metrical work of Paulinus, into prose; the Book of the Life and Passion of St. Anastasius, which was ill translated from the Greek, and worse amended by some ignorant person, I have corrected as to the sense as far as I could; I have written the Life of the Holy Father Cuthbert, who was both monk and bishop, first in heroic verse, and afterwards in prose. The History of the Abbots of this monastery, in which I rejoice to serve the Divine Goodness, to wit, Benedict, Ceolfrid, and Huaetbert, in two books. The Ecclesiastical History of our Island and Na-

tion, in five books. The Martyrology of the Festivals of the Holy Martyrs, in which I have carefully endeavoured to set down all whom I could find, and not only on what day, but also by what sort of combat, and under what judge they overcame the world.

A Book of Hymns in divers sorts of metre, or rhythm. A Book of Epigrams in heroic or elegiac verse. Of the Nature of Things, and of the Times, one book of each; likewise, of the Times, one larger book. A book of Orthography arranged in Alphabetical Order. Likewise a Book of the Art of Poetry, and to it I have added another little Book of Figures of Speech or Tropes; that is, of the Figures and Modes of Speech in which the Holy Scriptures are written. And I beseech Thee, good Jesus, that to whom Thou hast graciously granted sweetly to drink in the words of Thy knowledge, Thou wilt also vouchsafe in Thy loving-kindness that he may one day come to Thee, the Fountain of all wisdom, and appear for ever before Thy face.

THE CONTINUATION, BY A LATER HAND

The Continuation of Bede. In the year 731 King Ceolwulf was taken prisoner, and tonsured, and sent back to his kingdom; Bishop Acca was driven from his see. In the year 732, Egbert was made Bishop of York, in the room of Wilfrid. [Cynibert Bishop of Lindsey died.] [In the year of our Lord 733, Archbishop Tatwine, having received the pall by Apostolic authority, ordained Alwic and Sigfrid, bishops.] In the year 733, there was an eclipse of the sun on the 14th day of August about the third hour, in such wise that the whole orb of the sun seemed to be covered with a black and gloomy shield. In the year 734, the moon, on the 31st of January, about the time of cock-crowing, was, for about a whole hour, coloured blood-red, after which a blackness followed, and she regained her wonted light. In the year from the Incarnation of Christ, 734, bishop Tatwine died.

In the year 735, Nothelm was ordained archbishop; and bishop Egbert, having received the pall from the Apostolic see, was the first to be established as archbishop after Paulinus, and he ordained Frithbert, and Frithwald bishops; and the priest Bede died. In the year 737, an excessive drought rendered the land unfruitful; and Ceolwulf, voluntarily receiving the tonsure, left the kingdom to Eadbert. In the year 739, Edilhart, king of the West-Saxons, died, as did Archbishop Nothelm. In the year 740, Cuthbert was consecrated in Nothelm's stead. Ethelbald, king of the Mercians, cruelly and wrongfully wasted part of Northumbria, their king, Eadbert, with his army, being em-

ployed against the Picts. Bishop Ethelwald died also, and Conwulf, was consecrated in his stead. Arnwin and Eadbert were slain. In the year 741, a great drought came upon the country. Charles, king of the Franks, died; and his sons, Caroloman and Pippin, reigned in his stead.

In the year 745, Bishop Wilfrid and Ingwald, Bishop of London, departed to the Lord. In the year 747, the man of God, Herefrid, died. In the year 750, Cuthred, king of the West Saxons, rose up against king Ethelbald and Oengus; Theudor and Eanred died; Eadbert added the plain of Kyle and other places to his dominions. In the year 753, in the fifth year of King Eadbert, on the 9th of January, an eclipse of the sun came to pass; afterwards, in the same year and month, on the 24th day of January, the moon suffered an eclipse, being covered with a gloomy, black shield, in like manner as was the sun a little while before. In the year 754, Boniface, called also Winfrid, Bishop of the Franks, received the crown of martyrdom, together with fifty-three others; and Redger was consecrated archbishop in his stead, by pope Stephen.

In the year 757, Ethelbald, king of the Mercians, was treacherously and miserably murdered, in the night, by his own guards; Beornred began his reign; Cyniwulf, king of the West Saxons, died; and the same year, Offa, having put Beornred to flight, sought to gain the kingdom of the Mercians by bloodshed. In the year 758, Eadbert, king of the Northumbrians, receiving St. Peter's tonsure for the love of God, and to the end that he might take the heavenly country by force, left the kingdom to his son Oswulf. In the year 755, Oswulf was wickedly murdered by his own thegns; and Ethelwald, being chosen the same year by his people, entered upon the kingdom; in whose second year there was great tribulation by reason of pestilence, which continued almost two years, divers grievous sicknesses raging, but more especially the disease of dysentery. In the year 761, Oengus, king of the Picts, died; who, from the beginning to the end of his reign, continued to be a blood-stained and tyrannical butcher; Oswin was also slain.

In the year 765, King Aluchred came to the throne. In the year 766 a.d., Archbishop Egbert, of the royal race, and endued with divine knowledge, as also Frithbert, both of them truly faithful bishops, departed to the Lord.

PART TWO

Homilies on the Gospels

Twenty-five homilies from Advent to Holy Week.

Homilies on the Gospels, Book I

The Venerable Bede

AD 673–735

Bede preached these homilies on the Gospel readings of the church year, and they were gathered into two books. This is the first book: twenty-five homilies from the feast of the Annunciation and the season of Advent through Christmas, Epiphany and Lent to Palm Sunday and the Lord's Supper. Each begins with the Gospel reading and then explains it, verse by verse.

Homily 1: On the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Mary

Luke 1

At that time, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary, etc. The beginning of our redemption, dearest brothers, is commended to us in today's reading of the holy Gospel, which narrates the angel sent by God from heaven to the Virgin, to proclaim the new birth of the Son of God in the flesh, through which we, casting aside harmful oldness, might be renewed and counted among the Sons of God. Therefore, that we may be worthy to attain the gifts of the promised salvation, let us diligently endeavor to hear the beginnings thereof with attentive ears. It says, "The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph." Indeed, a fitting beginning for human restoration, that an angel was sent by God to the virgin consecrated by divine birth, because the first cause of human perdition was when the serpent was sent by the devil to deceive the woman with the spirit of pride: indeed, the devil himself came in the serpent, who stripped the human race of the glory of immortality by deceiving the first parents. Therefore, as death entered through a woman, fittingly also life returns through a woman. The former, seduced by the devil through the ser-

pent, offered the taste of death to the man; the latter, instructed by God through the angel, brought forth the author of salvation to the world.

Therefore, the angel Gabriel was sent by God. However, we rarely read that angels appearing to humans are designated by name. But whenever that happens, it is indeed so that even by the name itself they may insinuate what they come to minister. For Gabriel means the power of God. And rightly does he shine forth by such a name, because he bears testimony to God about to be born in the flesh. Concerning whom the Prophet says in the Psalm: "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle" (Ps. 24). Namely, that battle in which he came to conquer the aerial powers and to deliver the world from their tyranny. To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. What is said of the house of David pertains not only to Joseph, but also to Mary. For it was commanded by the law that each should take a wife from his own tribe and family, as also the Apostle attests, who, writing to Timothy, says: "Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel" (II Tim. II). For truly Christ was born of the seed of David, because His mother's incorrupt origin descended truly from the stock of David. But why did the Lord choose to be conceived and born not from a simple virgin, but from one espoused to a man? Many reasonable causes are advanced by the fathers, among which the greatest is that she might not be condemned as guilty of unchastity, if, having no husband, she had given birth to a son: and further, that she might be supported by a husband's assistance in those things which domestic care naturally required. It was fitting, therefore, for the blessed Mary to have a husband, who would be both the most certain witness of her integrity and the most faithful guardian of our Lord and Savior, born of her: and who would offer sacrifices at the temple according to the law for Him, and would take Him to Egypt with His mother and bring Him back when the time of persecution was at hand.

There are many other things, as well, which the fragility of the assumed humanity required to be minstered. Nor did it greatly harm if someone for a time believed Him to be her son, since, after His ascension, with the Apostles preaching and everyone believing publicly that He was born of a virgin, it became clear. Nor should it be overlooked that the blessed mother of God also gave testimony by her very name to her eminent merits. For it is interpreted as "star of the sea. And she herself, as an illustrious star, shone with the

grace of a special privilege amid the waves of this fleeting world. And the angel having entered to her, said: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you, blessed are you among women. This greeting, as unusual as it was in human custom, was as fitting to the dignity of blessed Mary. Truly she was full of grace, to whom it was granted by divine gift, that she might be the first among women to offer to God the most glorious gift of virginity. Therefore, she rightly deserved to enjoy at once the sight and speech of an angel, who strove to imitate the angelic life. Truly she was full of grace, to whom it was granted to bear Jesus Christ Himself, through whom grace and truth came into being, and afterwards, through the human nature, consecrated all fullness of divinity. Truly also blessed among women was she who, without example of female condition, rejoiced with the honor of motherhood along with the beauty of virginity, and who, as befitted a virgin mother, bore God the Son. When she was troubled after the manner of human frailty by the vision of the angel and the unusual greeting, the same angel soon encouraged her not to be afraid with repeated speech, and as is most accustomed to dispel fear, he called her by her own name as one well-known and familiar, and diligently explained why he called her full of grace.

Do not be afraid, he said, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a Son, and you will call His name Jesus: He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High. The sequence of words is to be noted carefully, and it is to be impressed upon the heart all the more firmly because it is manifestly evident that in it the whole sum of our redemption consists. For it most manifestly proclaims the Lord Jesus, that is, our Savior, as both true Son of God the Father and true Son of a human mother. Behold, he said, you will conceive in your womb and bear a Son. Acknowledge this true man, having assumed from the virgin's flesh the substance of flesh. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High. Confess Him also as the true God from true God, and the Son of the eternal Father to be always coeternal. But when it is said in future time, He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, let no one understand it in such a way that the Lord Christ did not exist before the birth from the virgin, but rather let us understand this to be said, because the power of the divine majesty which the Son of God had eternally, this same man born in time received, so that there would be one person in two natures of our mediator and Redeemer.

And the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father. The throne of David signifies the kingdom of the Israelite people, which David, by the command and assistance of the Lord, governed with faithful devotion in his time. Therefore, the Lord gave our Redeemer the throne of David his father, when He willed that He would be incarnate from the lineage of David, so that the people whom David ruled with temporal authority, He might elevate with spiritual grace to the eternal kingdom, about which the Apostle says: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love (Colossians 1). Hence it is that this same people, prompted by divine instruction, as He was approaching Jerusalem to suffer, joyfully sang in His praise: Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel (John 12). And according to another evangelist: Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David (Mark 11). For the time had come when the world would recognize the King who redeemed them by His blood, not only the house of David, but also the entire Church, indeed the Creator and Ruler of all ages. Hence rightly the angel, after saying, And the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, immediately added, And he will reign over the house of Jacob forever.

For Jacob's house refers to the entire Church, which through faith and confession of Christ belongs to the heritage of the patriarchs, whether in those who derived their origin in the flesh from the line of the patriarchs, or in those who, born carnally from other nations, have been reborn in Christ through spiritual washing. In this house, He will indeed reign forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end. He reigns in it in the present life, directing the hearts of the elect through faith and His love, and continuously guiding them with protection to receive the rewards of the heavenly retribution. He reigns in the future, when He brings the same ones, after the state of temporal exile is ended, to the dwelling place of the heavenly homeland: in which, always rejoicing in the vision of Him, they delight in doing nothing else than devoting themselves to His praises.

But Mary said to the angel: How will this be, since I do not know a man? How, she said, can it be that I will conceive and bear a son, I who have decided to complete my life in the chastity of virginity? Not, however, as an unbeliever in the words of the angel does she inquire how these things could be fulfilled, but certain that it must be fulfilled what she then heard from the angel, and had previously read was said by the prophet, she asks in what

manner it should be fulfilled: because evidently the prophet who predicted this future event did not say how it could be, but reserved it to be told by the angel. Then the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the child to be born of you will be called holy, the Son of God. The Holy Spirit coming upon the virgin in two ways demonstrated the efficacy of His divine power: because He purified her mind so much, as human fragility permits, from all stain of vice, that she was worthy of the heavenly birth; and in her womb, by His sole operation, created the holy and venerable body of our Redeemer: that is, without any male touch, He formed sacred flesh from the flesh of the unblemished virgin. For He who first plainly called Him the Holy Spirit, also called Him the power of the Most High: according to what the Lord said, when He promised the coming of the same Spirit to His disciples: "And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you: but stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24). The power of the Most High overshadowed the blessed Mother of God: because the Holy Spirit, when He filled her heart, tempered all the heat of carnal desire, purified her from temporal desires, and consecrated both her mind and body with heavenly gifts. Therefore, the child to be born of you will be called holy, the Son of God: because what you conceive by the sanctification of the Spirit will be holy.

The birth corresponds to the conception, so that you who conceive as a virgin against the custom of human condition, give birth to the Son of God beyond the measure of human custom. For all men are conceived in iniquity and are born in sins: but as many of us as are predestined by God to eternal life are reborn from water and the Holy Spirit. But our Redeemer alone, who deigned to be incarnate for us, was born holy at once: because He was conceived without iniquity. Indeed, in what is said, "And the power of the Most High will overshadow you," we can understand something deeper about the mystery of the Lord's incarnation. For we say we are overshadowed when, the midday sun burning, we place a tree's middle or any other type of shade between us and the sun, in order to make its heat or light more tolerable for us. Therefore, our Redeemer is not wrongly represented by the light or heat of the sun, who illuminates us with the knowledge of truth and enflames us with love; hence He himself says through the prophet: "But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise" (Malachi 4). The Blessed Virgin

received the rays of this very sun when she conceived the Lord. But this same sun, that is, the divinity of our Redeemer, covered itself with the veil of human nature as with some shade, so that the womb of the Virgin could bear Him:

and thus the power of the Most High overshadowed her, while the divine power of Christ both filled her with His presence and, so that He could be contained by her, obscured itself with our fragility. And behold, thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age. Not as though he encourages to faith with examples as an unbeliever, but that she who had already well believed what she heard, might recall greater miracles of the divine dispensation, so that she, a virgin about to bear the Lord, would also know that the precursor of the Lord would be born from an old and long barren parent. Nor is it to be wondered at according to history, that Elizabeth is called the cousin of Mary, since it is narrated above that she is of the house of David, and that woman is said to be descended from the daughters of Aaron. We read that Aaron himself, from the tribe of Judah, from which David sprang, took a wife, namely Elizabeth, the daughter of Amminadab, the sister of Naashon, who was the chief of the tribe of Judah in the desert, when they went out of Egypt. Again, when the descendants of David were reigning, we read that the high priest Jehoiada had a wife from the royal tribe, that is, Jehoshabeath, the daughter of king Joram. This Jehoiada was whose son Zachariah, a likewise very holy man, was stoned between the temple and the altar, as even the Lord Himself, mentioning the blessed martyrs, testifies in the Gospel. Hence both tribes, that is, the royal and the priestly, are always proved to be connected by kinship.

However, such a union could also occur in more recent times, given that women were given in marriage from tribe to tribe, so that manifestly the blessed Mother of God, who descended from the royal tribe, would be shown to have kinship with the priestly tribe, which most aptly aligns with heavenly services. For it was fitting that the mediator of God and men, appearing in the world, would have the origin of His flesh from both tribes, since indeed He was to have both the persona of a priest and a king in assumed humanity. Certainly, about His royal power, by which He grants His elect an everlasting kingdom, the present reading of the holy Gospel testifies: because He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end. Moreover, concerning His pontifical dignity, in which for

our redemption He deigned to offer the sacrifice of His flesh, the Prophet bears witness, who says: Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek (Psalm CX). Having received so great a grace, let us see in what height of humility the blessed Mary persists.

Behold, she says, the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word. Indeed, she holds great constancy of humility, who, while she is chosen as the mother of her Creator, calls herself his handmaid. She is proclaimed blessed among women by the angelic oracle, yet the mysteries of our redemption are still unknown to other mortals. However, she does not exalt herself singularly due to the uniqueness of her distinguished merit, but rather, mindful in all things of her condition and divine condescension, she humbly joins herself to the company of the handmaids of Christ. She devotes herself and performs what is commanded, saying: Let it be done to me according to your word. Let it be done that the Holy Spirit may come upon me and make me worthy of heavenly mysteries. Let it be done that the Son of God may take on the form of human substance in my womb and proceed as a bridegroom from his chamber for the redemption of the world. Following, as best we can, the voice and mind of her, dearest brothers, let us recall in all our actions and movements that we are servants of Christ. Let us ever commit all the members of our body to his service, and direct the whole attention of our mind to fulfill his will. Thus, gratefully acknowledging the gifts we have received, let us render thanks rightly, so that we may be deemed worthy to receive greater things.

Let us pray diligently with the blessed Mother of God that it may be done to us according to his word, that very word, whereby he, expounding the reason for his incarnation, says: For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John III). Nor should we doubt that he will deign to hear us more quickly as we cry out from the depths, for it was for our sake, even when we did not yet know him, that Jesus Christ our Lord deigned to descend into this deep valley of tears, who lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY 2: ON THE FEAST OF THE VISITATION OF THE BLESSED MARY

Luke 1

At that time, Mary arose and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah, and entered into the house of Zacharias, and greeted Eliza-

beth, etc. The reading which we have heard from the holy Gospel proclaims to us the venerable beginnings of our redemption, and commends to us always the salutary remedies of imitable humility. For since the human race, touched by the pestilence of pride, had perished, it was fitting that immediately the first times of incipient salvation should foretell the medicine of humility by which it would be healed. And because through the recklessness of the deceived woman death had entered into the world, it was suitable that, as a sign of returning life, women should anticipate one another with the services of devoted humility and piety. Therefore, the blessed Mother of God shows us the path to the loftiness of the heavenly homeland by the example of humility, no less venerable for religion than for chastity. Indeed, the glory of a virginal and undefiled body hints at what the life of the heavenly city, to which we aspire, is like, where they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels of God in heaven, and indicates the extraordinary strength of mind by which we ought to attain it.

For, as we learned from the preceding reading of the holy Gospel, after she was deemed worthy to be elevated by an angelic vision and address, after she learned that she was to bear a divine child, she did not lift herself up with pride as if due to heavenly gifts, but rather fixed her mind on the path of humility, so as to be more and more suited to divine gifts, responding to the archangel announcing to her: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to your word. But as we heard from today's reading, she also took care to show the same humility to people as she had displayed to the angel, and what is of greater virtue, even to those of lower rank. For who does not know that a virgin consecrated to God holds a higher rank than a woman devoted to God? Who doubts that the mother of the eternal King is to be preferred by right to the mother of a soldier? Nevertheless, she, mindful of the Scripture commanding, "The greater you are, humble yourself in all things" (Ecclus. 3), soon after the angel who spoke to her returned to heavenly matters, she arose and went into the hill country, bearing God in her womb, seeking the dwellings and conversations of the servants of God. And fittingly after the vision of the angel, she ascended into the hill country, which, having tasted the sweetness of the heavenly citizens, transferred herself to the heights of virtues with steps of humility.

Therefore, she enters the house of Zechariah and Elizabeth, whom she knew was to bear the servant and forerunner of the Lord, greets them, not as

doubting the oracle she had received, but as one who would congratulate on the gift, which she had learned her fellow servant had received: not to test the word of the angel by the testimony of a woman, but that a young virgin should diligently offer her services to a woman advanced in age. But when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. As the blessed Mary opened her mouth to greet, Elizabeth was immediately filled with the Holy Spirit, and John too was filled. Both being taught by the same Spirit, Elizabeth recognized who was greeting her and venerated with proper blessing as the mother of her Lord; John understood that it was the Lord himself who was carried in the womb of the virgin. And because his tongue was not yet able, he greeted with a rejoicing heart and indicated with the signs he could, the devotion and willingness with which he would fulfill his role as forerunner even before he was born at the coming of the Lord. For the time was at hand to fulfill the angel's word which had said: That he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb (Luke 1).

Elizabeth was therefore filled with the Holy Spirit, and exclaimed with a loud voice. Rightly with a loud voice, because she recognized the great gifts of God; rightly with a loud voice, because she felt that he who is known to be present everywhere was also physically present. For the loud voice is to be understood not so much as clamorous, but as devout. For she, who was burning with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, could not praise the Lord with a small voice of devotion: she who carried in her womb the one than whom no one born of women is greater. And she rejoiced that he had come, who conceived from the flesh of the virgin mother would be called the Son of the Most High and would be. He exclaimed and said: Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Not only blessed among women, but among the blessed women, distinguished by a special greater blessing. Blessed is the fruit of your womb. He is not blessed merely in the general manner of saints, but as the Apostle says: Whose fathers, and of whom Christ came according to the flesh, who is over all God blessed forever (Rom. IX). The Psalmist also bears witness to His birth with mystical speech, saying: Indeed the Lord will bestow kindness, and our land will yield its fruit (Ps. LXXXIV). For the Lord bestowed kindness because He purposed to free the human race from the guilt of transgression through His only begotten: He bestowed kindness when He consecrated the temple of the virginal womb for

its entry by the grace of the Holy Spirit. And our land yielded its fruit, for the same virgin who had a body from the earth, gave birth to a Son who was indeed divine and coequal with God the Father in divinity, but consubstantial with her in the reality of flesh. Regarding this, and foreseeing the time of human redemption, Isaiah says: In that day the branch of the Lord will be in majesty and glory, and the fruit of the earth will be exalted (Is. IV). For the branch of the Lord was in majesty and glory when the eternal Son of God, appearing temporally in flesh, shined brightly with the greatness of heavenly virtues upon the world.

The fruit of the earth was also exalted when the flesh, which God had taken from our nature to be mortal, was raised to the heavens, made immortal by the power of the resurrection. Properly it is said, Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. For she is incomparably blessed, who received the glory of the divine offspring, and preserved the crown of integrity. Blessed are you among women, through whose virginal birth the curse of the first mother among the offspring of women was excluded. Blessed is the fruit of your womb, through whom we have received the fruit both of incorruption and of the heavenly inheritance which we had lost in Adam. And truly and singularly blessed is He who, unlike us who receive the grace of blessing from the Lord after we are born, was blessed Himself to save the world, He who came in the name of the Lord.

And how is it to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? O how great in the mind of the prophetess is humility, how true is the word of the Lord which he spoke: Upon whom will my Spirit rest, if not upon the humble and quiet and one who trembles at my words? (Isa. LXVI.) Indeed the mother of the Lord, who had come to her, was soon recognized by her as she saw her: but finding no such merit in herself that she might be worthy to be visited by such a great guest, she said, "How is it to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" because certainly the same Spirit, who granted her the gift of prophecy, equally bestowed the gift of humility. Filled with the prophetic spirit, she understood that the mother of the Savior had come to her, but being circumspect with the spirit of humility, she deemed herself less worthy of his coming.

Behold, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the infant leaped for joy in my womb. Elizabeth understood, by the same Spirit with which she was filled revealing, what that exultation of her infant signi-

fied, that namely the mother of him of whom he would be the precursor and herald had arrived. And how wondrous, how swift is the operation of the Holy Spirit! For there is no delay in learning, where the Holy Spirit is the teacher. In one and the same moment, with the greeting voice, the joy of the infant is born, because while the voice reaches the bodily ears, the spiritual power entered the heart of the hearer, and inflamed both the mother and the offspring with the love of the coming Lord. Hence soon afterward, the mother of the preceptor of the Lord took care to openly proclaim to those who were present and listening the things which she had known in secret.

And blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment for those things which were told her from the Lord. For Elizabeth also learned from the Spirit what the angel had spoken to Mary, because she believed the one who immediately evangelized, that divine power was working such that everything would be fulfilled without any doubt. And in a miraculous way, the same Spirit, when it filled her, also endowed her with knowledge of present, past, and future things. She showed that she was informed about present things, for she called Mary blessed and the mother of her Lord, because she was carrying the Redeemer of the human race in her womb. Therefore, she also declared the fruit of her womb to be uniquely blessed. She indicated that she had received knowledge of past events as well, revealing that she knew both the angel's words to Mary and Mary's consenting belief. She also conveyed that the knowledge of future things was not denied to her, revealing that the things said to her would be accomplished by the Lord. But, my brothers, who can sufficiently describe or estimate the grace of the Spirit of God that filled the mother at that time, when such great light of heavenly gift shone in the mother of the forerunner? Let us indeed hear the words she said, if by any chance we may slightly discern what she held inside.

Having heard the response of Elizabeth, where she proclaimed her blessed among women, recognizing her as the mother of her Lord, praised her strong faith, marked herself as filled with the Holy Spirit along with her son at her entrance, she could no longer remain silent about the gifts she had received, but disclosed with devout confession of the mouth what she always carried in her mind whenever she found the right time. For as befits virginal modesty, she covered the divine oracle she received with silence for a while; she venerated the hidden mystery of heaven in the secret of her heart, waiting reverently until the distributor of gifts would show what special gifts he

had bestowed on her and what secrets he had revealed, whenever he wanted. But after she saw that the same graces bestowed on her were also revealed to others by the Spirit, she immediately disclosed the treasure of heaven which she had kept in her heart. Therefore:

My soul magnifies the Lord. And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. With these words, she truly first confesses the gifts especially granted to her, then she enumerates the general blessings of God by which He ceaselessly cares for the human race forever. But her soul magnifies the Lord, who dedicates all the affections of her inner man to divine praises and services, who constantly, by the observance of God's commandments, demonstrates that she is mindful of His power and majesty. Her spirit rejoices in God her Savior, who desires nothing earthly, is softened by no abundance of fleeting things, is broken by no adversity, but is delighted only by the memory of Him from whom eternal salvation is hoped, her Creator. Although these words rightly apply to all the perfect, it was above all fitting for the blessed Mother of God to utter them, who, by the privilege of singular merit, burned with the love of the Spirit, rejoiced in His bodily conception. Who rightly could exult in Jesus, that is, in her special Savior with special joy above all other saints, because she knew that He, the eternal author of salvation, would be born from her flesh in time, so that in one and the same person He might truly be both her Son and her Lord. She also teaches with the following words how lowly she considered herself, and that she received every good merit through heavenly grace, saying:

Because He has regarded the humility of His handmaid: for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. She indeed demonstrates that she was humble, yet by the judgment of Christ, she declares that she was suddenly exalted by heavenly grace, and was glorified to the extent that her distinguished blessedness deservedly astonishes the voice of all nations. She added still the gifts of divine mercy, which she received miraculously, deserving of grateful praise. For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name. Therefore, she attributes nothing to her own merits, ascribing the entire greatness to His gift, who, being essentially mighty and great, is accustomed to making His faithful strong out of the small and weak, and great. She rightly added, And holy is His name, to remind those listening, indeed all to whom her words would reach, instructing them to fly to the faith and invocation of the same name, so that they too might be par-

ticipants in eternal holiness and true salvation, according to the prophetic word: And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved (Joel 2). For it is the name about which she said above, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. Hence she even more clearly adds:

And his mercy is on those who fear him from generation to generation. He calls the lineage both of the Jewish people and the Gentiles, or certainly of all the nations throughout the world, whom he foresaw would believe in Christ: because, as Peter says, God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation anyone who fears him and works righteousness is accepted by him (Acts X). These words of the blessed Mary are in harmony with the Lord's own words, by which he declared not only his mother, who deserved to bear him physically, but also all who would keep his commandments, to be blessed. For while he was teaching the people in a certain place and performing miracles, and all were astonished at his wisdom and powers, a certain woman in the crowd, raising her voice, said to him: Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts that nursed you (Luke XI). But he, willingly accepting the testimony of truth that was spoken, immediately responded: Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it, so that that woman, indeed everyone who was listening, might be confident they would be blessed if they chose to obey the divine commands. As if to say openly: Although she has the singular privilege of blessedness, having been deemed worthy to carry, give birth to, and nurse the incarnate Son of God as a virgin, yet in that same eternal life blessedness will also be granted in an eminent way to those who conceive his faith and love in a pure heart, who bear in their minds the memory of his precepts with diligent care, who strive to nourish this in the minds of others with diligent exhortation. Moreover, since the venerable Mother of God taught that his mercy would be present to all throughout the world who fear him, it remains to indicate what the proud and those who despise the warnings of truth deserve.

He has performed mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who are proud in the thoughts of their hearts. By His arm, it signifies within the authority of His own power. For He does not need assistance from another to act, for as it is written, "to accomplish when He wills" is under His control. This pertains to our acts of good operation, not within the rights of our free will, but we perform virtue in God, and as it is written elsewhere: And their arm did not save them, but Your right hand, and Your arm, and the light of

Your face (Psalm 43). And He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts, because the beginning of all sin is pride, by whose merit the Lord, casting out the human race from the stable habitation of the heavenly homeland, dispersed far and wide into the exile pilgrimage of this world: but also to those who do not fear to persevere in sins, He has reserved a heavier punishment of future dispersion.

He has brought down rulers from their thrones. He calls the same rulers whom He previously called proud. They are indeed called proud because they elevate themselves above the measure of their condition; rulers, however, not because they are truly powerful, but because they, confident in their own power, refuse to seek the help of the Creator. However, those are truly powerful who know to say with the Apostle: "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me" (Philippians IV). Concerning whom it is written: God does not reject the powerful, even though He Himself is powerful (Job XXXVI). Therefore, He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and has exalted the humble, because everyone who exalts himself will be humbled; and he who humbles himself will be exalted. Although it can also be rightly understood that sometimes those who by the merit of their pride were cast down by the Lord, through His mercy return to the grace of humility, and thus by the merit of devoted humility are raised to glory. Finally, Saul was brought down from the throne of legal teaching due to pride, but soon, because of the submission of humility, was raised to preach the faith of Christ.

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. Those who now perfectly hunger for the eternal, and ceaselessly strive with tireless diligence of righteous works to attain these things, will surely be satisfied when the glory of their Redeemer, which they desire, will appear. But whoever delights in preferring earthly riches over heavenly ones, at the time of the final judgment they are sent away by the Lord empty of all happiness, and hence are punished with the perpetual misery alongside the devil. This we see fulfilled to a large extent even in this life: that the humble, evidently, are filled with the nourishment of heavenly goodness and become rich with the abundance of celestial virtues; and those who, either boasting of earthly riches or exalted by the possessions as if they have them intrinsically, internally become empty of the light of truth. To each of these verses, which the blessed Mary uttered about the contrasting states of the proud and the

humble, it must be added what she prefixed, "From generation to generation," because indeed, through all time of the passing age, the just and merciful Creator has been accustomed both to resist the proud and to give grace to the humble. Hence, after the general commemoration of divine mercy and justice, she rightly turns the words of her confession to the special dispensation of the new incarnation, by which he deigned to redeem the world, saying:

He has helped Israel his servant, in remembrance of his mercy. Israel, indeed, means "man seeing God." By this name, the entire assembly of redeemed men is designated, for whom, so that they may be able to see God, God himself appeared as a visible man among men. He took up Israel as a physician would take up a sick man to heal him, as a king would take up a people to defend them from the incursion of enemies, nay, to restore them free after defeating the enemy, and to grant them to reign with him perpetually. And he aptly added "his servant," signifying the humble and obedient, because no one can attain the lot of redemption except through the virtue of humility. Hence the Lord also said: "Unless you are converted, and become as little children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. XVIII). He also aptly added, "in remembrance of his mercy," because that which God assumed to redeem man was not the merit of human condition, but the gift of divine mercy. For what did we merit after the sin of transgression, if not the just wrath of the Creator? Hence, it follows that as many as are recovered to salvation and eternal life, we attribute this not to ourselves, but to his grace, to whom it is said: "In wrath remember mercy" (Hab. III).

Just as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his seed forever. Making remembrance of the fathers, blessed Mary rightly names Abraham specifically, because although many fathers and saints mystically bore witness to the Lord's incarnation, they (the fathers) were the first to openly predict the same incarnation and the arcana of our redemption. To them specifically was said: And in you all the nations of the earth shall be blessed (Gen. XII): which pertains to the Lord Savior whom no faithful doubt that he, to grant us eternal blessing, deigned to come to us from the offspring of Abraham. The seed of Abraham does not only denote those chosen who are bodily born of Abraham's progeny but also us who, gathered to Christ from the gentiles, are joined to those fathers by the bond of faith from whom we are separated by a great distance of carnal lineage. For we too are the seed and

children of Abraham when we are reborn with the sacraments of our Redeemer who took flesh from the lineage of Abraham. We are children of Abraham when we diligently seek to see Him intently, whose day Abraham himself rejoiced to see, and saw and was glad. Hence the Apostle says: If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise. Rightly, it is added in conclusion, In saecula (forever), because the aforementioned promise of the heavenly inheritance will never be enclosed by any end.

For even until the end of this age, there will be those who by believing in Christ will become the seed of Abraham, and the glory of future happiness will remain perpetual to that same seed. Whence it is necessary for us, dearest brothers, to whom an eternal reward is promised by the Lord, to strive with indefatigable effort of mind for its attainment. It is necessary that we endeavor to obtain the good which we desire to have without end, without any interruption until we receive it. Let us then frequently meditate on the words of the evangelical reading; let us always retain in our minds the examples of the blessed mother of God, Mary, so that being found humble in the sight of God and also submitted to our neighbors with due honor, we may merit to be elevated perpetually together with her. Let us be diligently careful that the undue favor of those who praise us does not exalt us, seeing that she maintained unwavering constancy in humility among words of true praise. If the immoderate desire for temporal things delights us, let us remember that our judge sends the rich away empty; if temporal affliction disturbs the mind strongly, let us think that He also exalts the humble. Let us never despair of obtaining pardon for sins because his mercy is from generation to generation on those who fear him.

Let no one under the evils he has done be overcome by the heavier fault of impenitence, for God resists the proud and separates them from the lot of the blessed, dispersing them through various places of punishment according to the variety of their sins. It happens, through the Lord's bounty, that if we always recall the actions and words of blessed Mary in us, both the observance of chastity and the works of virtue may persevere. And indeed the most excellent and salutary custom has grown in the holy Church that her hymn is daily sung by all with the psalmody of vespers praise, so that from this the minds of the faithful are kindled to the affection of devotion by the more frequent remembrance of the Lord's incarnation, and the examples of that

mother often recalled confirm them in the solidity of virtues. And this has been fittingly arranged to be done at vespers, so that our minds, wearied and stretched with various thoughts during the day, might collect themselves at the time of approaching rest into the unity of their own contemplation; being healthily admonished, whatever superfluous or harmful things they had contracted by daily business, they might cleanse wholly through nocturnal prayers and tears anew at that time.

But as we have prolonged our speech, now turned to the Lord, let us ask His clemency that we may both venerate the memory of blessed Mary with fitting offices and merit to come with purified minds to the celebration of the Lord's nativity solemnities, he assisting us to perform spiritual works and receive heavenly gifts, who, for us willed to be incarnate, and to give a form of living among men to his only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom he lives and reigns God in the unity of the Holy Spirit through all ages of ages. Amen.

HOMILY 3: ON THE COMING OF THE LORD

Mark 1

At that time John was in the desert baptizing and preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. John, preceding the advent of the Lord's preaching, as you have heard from the reading of the holy Gospel, dearest brothers, was in the desert baptizing and preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Where we should attentively observe the distinction of the words where it is said that he was baptizing and preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. For he indeed baptized with the baptism of repentance for the confession and amendment of sins, and preached the baptism of repentance to come in Christ for the remission of sins: in whose Baptism alone the remission of sins is granted to us, as the Apostle testifies, who says: One Lord, one faith, one Baptism, one God (Eph. IV). It is rightly called the baptism of repentance because no one desires to be baptized in the fountain of life for any other reason than that he repents of being bound by the guilt of the first transgression with the death of both soul and body. But if we ask why John baptized, whose baptized could not have their sins forgiven; the reason is clear and open, because he was keeping the office of his precursor, just as he was to be born, preach, and die before the Lord; so he also ought to baptize: lest an envious contention of the Pharisees and scribes should carp at the Lord's dispensation, if he first gave bap-

tism to men: but if they wanted to ask in what power he baptized, they would immediately hear:

The baptism of John, whence was it? From heaven, or from men? (Mark II.) Because when they did not dare to deny it was from heaven, they would be compelled to acknowledge the works of him whom John preached as done from heaven. Yet, the baptism of John, although it did not forgive sins, was not wholly fruitless for those receiving it, because it was given, if not for the remission of sins, for a sign of faith and repentance: so that surely all who were initiated in this might remember to abstain from sins, to insist on almsgiving, to believe in Christ, and to hasten to His Baptism wherein they would be cleansed for the remission of sins as soon as He appeared. But that John gave his baptism in the desert, and preached the baptism of Christ, indeed, he lived his whole life in the deserts from a boy: therefore, it is so that the highest teacher might confirm by example what he preached by words; and he who urged his listeners to depart from sins by repenting, might himself avoid the vices of sinners, not only by the purity of mind but also by the position of the body.

Typically, however, the desert in which John dwelt signifies the life of the saints separated from the allurements of the world, who, whether they live alone or mixed among crowds, always entirely scorn the desires of the present age with a watchful mind, prefer to cling to God in the hiddenness of the heart, and delight to place their hope in Him: which the Prophet, desirous of reaching the solitude of the mind most cherished by God, with the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit, said: Who will give me wings like a dove? and I will fly and be at rest (Ps. LV); and having immediately attained it with God's help, rejoicing, as if mocking the common entanglements of earthly desires, he adds: Behold, I have fled far away and lodged in the wilderness (Ibid.). Finally, the Lord, having freed the people by the blood of the lamb from Egypt, and led them through the Red Sea, first instructed them in the desert for forty years, and then led them into the promised land: because indeed the faithful people cannot immediately after baptism enjoy the heavenly homeland's joys, but first, having been exercised in the long struggles of virtues, must afterwards be rewarded with the perpetual gifts of heavenly beatitude. But the fruit with which John preached is shown by what follows, when it is said:

And all the region of Judea and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem went out to him, and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. The sense of the letter is evident, for those who were closer or more learned were the first to abundantly accept the word of salvation. But since Judea means confession, and Jerusalem means vision of peace, we can understand mystically those who have learned the confession of true faith, who have loved the vision of heavenly peace, to be designated under the appellations of Judea and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. For such people are mostly to be believed to have gone out to John in the desert for receiving baptism. Such people also now, upon hearing the word of God, depart from their former way of life and undertake the solitude of a spiritual life after the example of faithful teachers; for evidently, chastised daily by the new way of life, as if daily baptized in the Jordan by the tears of their compunction, they are purified from every contagion of creeping vices, according to him who says: I will wash my bed every night, I will water my couch with my tears (Psalm VI). Hence rightly the stream of the Jordan is interpreted as judgment: for the elect, the more diligently they examine their conscience by scrutinizing it, the more they pour out broader streams of tears from the depths of their heart, so that, finding themselves to be less perfect, they wash away the filth of their frailty with the waves of repentance.

And John was clothed with camel's hair, and a leather girdle around his loins, and he ate locusts and wild honey. As for the literal meaning of his garment and food, the humility fitting for a solitary and a herald of penance is shown. But figuratively, the camel's hair, from which sackcloth is made, represents penance or continence, which he himself practiced and taught others. The leather girdle, taken from a dead animal, signifies that he mortified his earthly members and taught his hearers to do the same. It is well known that loins often signify lust: hence the Lord's command concerning this and for acquiring the glory of chastity is: "Let your loins be girded, and lamps burning in your hands" (Luke 12). He who has utterly vanquished lustful desires has surely girded his loins with a leather girdle. By the locusts, which quickly fly from the ground but soon return to it, and the wild honey which he ate with them, the brevity and sweetness of his preaching are intimated, for he was listened to gladly by the people when he preached, and quickly ended his preaching and baptizing with the coming of the Lord. If anyone wishes to interpret John's attire and diet as prefiguring the Lord Sa-

vior, believing it is appropriate that he signified by his life what he proclaimed by prophecy, this intention is to be gladly followed; understanding that camel's hair, on account of sackcloth, signifies those who cleanse their sins by penance, fasting, and weeping;

the leather girdle, on account of the death of the animal from which it is made, signifies those who have crucified their flesh with its vices and desires. And because it is written: "As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3), when such people adhere to Christ with diligent love, they are clothed as it were with camel's hair and girded with a leather belt around their loins. The locust, because of its brief flight, suggests the fickle mind of the Jewish people, who wavered between the Lord and idols. Wild honey signifies the sweetness of natural talent by which the uncultivated people of foreign nations were refreshed. And while the Lord selects from both peoples those whom he teaches to join into the unity of his body, which is the Church, he is indeed fed by locusts and wild honey; for from those who eagerly sought heavenly things despite their instability, and those who only knew the taste of earthly philosophy, he converted many into his members. After describing John's place, ministry, attire, and food, the form of his preaching is immediately added.

And he preached saying: There comes one mightier than I after me. Indeed, he is very strong who confesses sins, stronger who baptizes in forgiveness; strong, who is worthy to have the Holy Spirit; strong, who bestows: strong, in whom no one born of women is greater; stronger, to whom a little lower than the angels, all things are subjected under his feet: strong, who first came to preach the kingdom of heaven; stronger, who alone could give it: Whose shoe latchet I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose (Mark I). And if he confessed himself worthy of this only ministry whereby he stoops to unloose the shoe latchet, it would indeed be an indication of great devotion; but now, because of the virtue of remarkable humility, he testifies that he is not even worthy to perform this ministry. But if we intend this in mystery, the decree of the law is clear: because he who, by the right of kinship, did not wish to take his owed wife himself, but allowed another to take her, was commanded to give his shoe loosed from his foot to the one who would take her as a sign of permission. And since the people rightly believed John to be Christ by his virtues, they believed him to be the bride-

groom of the Church. But John himself, to show who he is, says: He who has the bride is the bridegroom;

but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and listens to him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice (John III). Therefore he does not suffer himself to be believed the bridegroom, lest he lose the friendship of the bridegroom, which is to testify that he is not worthy to unloose his shoe latchets. Finally, when Moses and Joshua were set as leaders of the synagogue, they were commanded to loose their shoes, that they might understand that he who commanded these things should be believed to be the bridegroom, that is, the Lord of the synagogue, but themselves to be friends of the bridegroom, in that they were set over the same synagogue, they both should be called and should be. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit. According to the evangelist Matthew, it is said that John said: "I indeed baptize you in water for repentance" (Mt. III). Therefore, John baptized with water so that all whom he could persuade to repent and believe in Christ, he might separate from the crowd of unbelievers and unrepentant with the mark of his Baptism: so that they would not think that this martyrdom would suffice for salvation, but rather hasten to the Baptism of Christ, he added: "But he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit. Indeed, he baptizes with the Holy Spirit who forgives sins by the gift of the Holy Spirit; and upon receiving the remission of sins, he also bestows the grace of the same Spirit. For the very giving of the charismata in the baptism of the Spirit is rightly called the baptism of the Spirit, as testified by him who, about to ascend into heaven, promises his disciples, saying: "John indeed baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence" (Acts I), signifying that the Holy Spirit would come down upon them on the tenth day of his ascension in flaming tongues. It is rightly asked whether the Lord, who baptizes all believers with the Spirit, also baptized anyone with water.

Neither should the ministry of baptizing be deemed unworthy of such majesty, which he might have exhibited through some of his disciples, by whom he propagated the gifts of baptism to the rest of his members, since he did not disdain the memorable office of washing the disciples' feet. But whether he then baptized with water personally or subsequently through his own, he alone baptizes with the Holy Spirit, who gives us the Spirit and works virtues in us. Let us always strive to keep his grace in us intact and un-

corrupted, my brothers, always persisting in good works, but especially now when we must soon celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, being more diligent than usual, so that whatever negligence we find creeping into us, we may quickly strive to remove; whatever virtue we lack, we may more quickly seek to acquire, uprooting the thorns of discord, reproach, quarrels, murmuring, and other vices; and plant in ourselves charity, joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness, faith, gentleness, self-control, and other fruits of the Spirit, so that on that day we may approach the Lord's altar with pure bodies and clear consciences and be deemed worthy to partake of his holy mysteries, who lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY 4: ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

John 1

At that time John bore witness concerning the Lord and cried out, saying: This was he of whom I spoke, he who is coming after me was made before me, because he existed before me. The forerunner of our Redeemer, bearing witness about him, proclaims with a clear voice the certainty of his humanity and the eternity of his divinity. For he cries out, saying, as your fraternity heard when the Gospel was read: This was he of whom I spoke, he who is coming after me was made before me, because he existed before me. For in saying, he who is coming after me, he alludes to the order of human dispensation in which he was born after him, was to preach after him, baptize, perform signs, and suffer death. But in what he adds, He was made before me, he designates the sublimity of that same humanity, which deservedly was to be preferred to all other creatures. For when he says, Before me, it pertains not to the order of time, but to a distance in dignity, just as it is written concerning Joseph's sons when Jacob was blessing them: And he put Ephraim before Manasseh (Gen. XLVIII), where it could rightly be said: Manasseh, who came after me, was made before me. That is, who was born after me surpassed me in the power of the kingdom. Therefore John says of the Lord, He who is coming after me was made before me: that is, who was coming after me to preach, excelled me in the summit of the eternal kingdom and priesthood. And why he who was to come after him would surpass him in dignity, he revealed when he added, because he existed before me, that is, because as the eternal God before the ages, he surpasses me in the glory of majesty even in assumed humanity, although born later. But with the testimony that the

forerunner of the Lord gave about him having been explained, the evangelist immediately provides the testimony of his own assertion which he began to give to him.

And from His fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For he had said above, because the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth (John I). When He had confirmed it with the testimony of His forerunner, who said: This was He of whom I said, He who comes after me has surpassed me, because He was before me (Ibid.); He again follows through what He had begun, saying: And from His fullness we have all received, grace upon grace (Ibid.). The Lord was indeed full of the Holy Spirit, full of grace and truth, because, as the Apostle says, In Him dwells the whole fullness of the deity bodily (Col.II); from whose fullness we have all received according to the measure of our capacity, because grace has been given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. For it could truly be said only of the mediator of God and men, the man Jesus Christ: And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and piety, and He shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord (Is. XI). But all the saints receive from His fullness not the fullness of His Spirit, but as much as He grants. For through the Spirit, to some is given the word of wisdom;

to others, the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another, faith by the same Spirit; to another, the gifts of healing by the one Spirit; to another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, the discernment of spirits; to another, various kinds of tongues; to another, the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, distributing to each one individually as He wills (1 Cor. XII). Because, therefore, from the fullness of our Creator we have received everything good that we have, it must be carefully guarded that no one presumptuously exalts himself because of a good deed or thought; lest, remaining ungrateful to the Giver, he loses the good he has received, and is justly reproved by this apostolic reprimand: What do you have that you did not receive? And if you received it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? (1 Cor. IV). Therefore, the Apostle himself, since he could know or do nothing worthy if he did not receive from the fullness of Christ, elsewhere clearly testifies, saying: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as being from ourselves, but our suf-

ficiency is from God (II Cor. III). And in another place: And His grace towards me was not in vain, but I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me (1 Cor. XV). This very thought he diligently inculcates in his hearers to consider humbly; hence it is said:

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure (Phil. II). But when the evangelist said that we all have received from the fullness of Christ, he immediately added and said: Grace for grace. Therefore, he testifies that we have received a double grace, one namely in the present, the other in the future: in the present indeed faith which works through love, in the future however eternal life. For the faith which works through the love of God is a grace of God; because as we believe, as we love, as we work good which we know, not through any preceding merits of ours, but we receive from Him, who says: You did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide (John XV). And that we may receive eternal life because of faith, love, and good works is a grace of God, because we always need Him as the guide lest we depart from the good way, who says: Lead me in your way, and I will walk in your truth (Psalm LXXXVI); as if it were clearly said: Unless you, guiding, I enter the way of truth which I have begun, I am by no means sufficient to hold. That we may not fail in good works, we ought always to lean on His help, who says: Because without me you can do nothing; whence well the Psalmist, to indicate that both the beginning of faith and good action is given to us by the Lord, says:

My God, His mercy will go before me (Psalm LIX). And to teach that the good things we do are to be completed with His help, he again says: And your mercy will follow me all the days of my life (Psalm XXIII). To show that the reward of eternal life, which is given for good works, is generously bestowed to us, he says: Who crowns you with mercy and compassion (Psalm CIII). By mercy and compassion indeed He crowns us, when for good works which He Himself mercifully granted us to perform, He gives the rewards of heavenly blessedness. And this is what is meant by receiving grace for grace, for surely for the grace of good conduct which He gave, and lest it might fail, He Himself preserving helps, He will give the grace of blessed remuneration, in which we may sing His mercies forever. Finally, the Apostle did not

doubt to call the very reception of eternal life, which certainly is given for preceding merits, a grace: who when he had first said that the wages of sin is death, he did not want to say on the contrary the wages of justice is eternal life; but said: The grace of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. VI). Not because it is not justly given for good merits by a just judge, but because those merits by which they are given are first freely granted by a gracious Savior.

For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. The law was indeed given through Moses, in which it is divinely ordained what must be done and avoided; but what it commands is only fulfilled through the grace of Christ. It could indeed show sin, teach righteousness, and point out its transgressors as guilty; moreover, the grace of Christ, poured out by the Spirit of love in the hearts of the faithful, enables what the law commands to be fulfilled; hence what is written: You shall not covet (Deut. 5), through Moses it is law because it is commanded, but through Christ it becomes grace when what is commanded is fulfilled. But truth came through Christ, for the law had a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of things. And as the Apostle says elsewhere: All these things happened to them as a figure (1 Cor. 10); but instead of a shadow, Christ has shown the light of truth, instead of the figure of the law, the very image of the things foreshadowed, when he gave the grace of the Spirit, and opened the minds of his disciples to understand the Scriptures. The law was given through Moses when the people were commanded to be purified by the sprinkling of the blood of a lamb; grace and truth, prefigured in the law, came through Jesus Christ, when he himself suffered on the cross and washed us from our sins in his blood.

The law was given through Moses, who instructed the people with salutary precepts, declaring that if they observed them, they would enter the promised land and live there perpetually; otherwise, they would be overthrown by enemies. Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ, for he gave the gift of his Spirit, enabling both the spiritual understanding and observance of the law, and introducing those who keep it into the true blessedness of heavenly life, signified by the promised land. But the evangelist manifests the sum of the grace and truth which came through Jesus Christ by adding: No one has ever seen God. The only begotten, who is at the bosom of the Father, he has told us. For no greater grace can be given to men, no higher

truth can be known by men, than that of which the only begotten Son of God narrates to his faithful: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Mt. V); and of which he prays to the Father, saying: "And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (John XVII). Indeed, this most blessed perception of grace and truth, since it cannot occur in the life of this world, is rightly stated: "No one has ever seen God" (1 John IV), that is, no one still surrounded by corruptible and mortal flesh can behold the inexpressible light of divinity; whence the Apostle more clearly says: "Whom no one has seen or can see" (1 Tim. VI). For it is said that no man, no one yet burdened with human condition, fleeting in human conversation. Consequently, Moses, who saw God in the angel, desiring to see him in his very nature, prayed: "If I have found grace in your sight, show me your glory" (Ex. XXXIII), and he heard: "You cannot see my face, for no man shall see me and live" (Ibid.). Nor should it be thought contrary to this assertion that sometimes the patriarchs or prophets are reported to have seen God.

For the Lord appeared to Abraham in the valley of Mamre. And Jacob said: "I have seen the Lord face to face" (Gen. XXXII). Similarly, Isaiah: "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up" (Isa. VI). But it is rightly understood in all such visions that holy men saw God not through the very aspect of his nature, but through certain images. Hence, the saints saw God through the created subjects, for instance, fire, angel, cloud, electrum; yet John truly testifies that "No one has ever seen God" (1 John IV). It is truthfully said to Moses: "For no man shall see me and live" (Ex. XXXIII); for enclosed in the fragile vessel of flesh, they can see him through defined images of things, but by no means are they able to see him through the indeterminate light of his eternity.

By what reason the evangelist must reach the vision of the unchangeable and eternal light, he explained as follows, saying: "The Only Begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him" (John XIV). Which is similar to what the Lord himself said: "No one comes to the Father except through me" (Mt. XI). And elsewhere: "No one knows the Son except the Father, nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him." Certainly, by his guidance we must come to the Father, by his teaching we must know the Father and the Son, as well as the Holy Spirit, one God and Lord; because indeed he, made man for

us, speaking in human form, clearly revealed to us by the bright light what should be rightly thought about the unity of the Holy Trinity, how to be appropriated towards its contemplation by the faithful, and by which acts to reach this. He, clothing us with the sacraments of his incarnation, sanctifying us with the gifts of his Spirit, so that we may be able to come to this, he assists. He, completing the final judgment in human form, will sublimely introduce us to the vision of the divine majesty, and will wonderfully explain to us the secrets of the heavenly kingdom.

Indeed, what He says: "He who is in the bosom of the Father," signifies the secret of the Father. For the bosom of the Father is not to be thought of childishly, in the likeness of our own bosom which we have in our garments; nor is God, who is not bound together in the form of human members, to be thought of as sitting in the same manner as we do; but because our bosom is within, speaking in our manner, Scripture says that "He is in the bosom of the Father" to signify He who always remains in the secret of the Father, where the human gaze cannot reach. The only begotten Son will not only reveal God then, that is, the glory of the holy and undivided Trinity, which is one God, to men when He will introduce all the elect to the vision of His brightness after the universal judgment. But He also narrates daily, when He begins to fulfill what He promised to each of the faithful freed from the corruption of the flesh: "Whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him, and manifest myself to him" (John XIV). "I will manifest myself," he says, "to my lovers, so that they who know me in my mortal state can already see me in my nature equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit. But it must be believed that this happens with apostles, martyrs, confessors, and others of a more austere and perfect life;

among whom one, conscious of his struggles, did not hesitate to testify about himself: "I desire to depart and be with Christ" (Phil. I). Moreover, there are many righteous in the Church who, after the dissolution of their flesh, are immediately received into the blessed rest of paradise, waiting in great joy, in the choirs of the rejoicing, when they will return with their bodies and appear before the face of God. But indeed some, although preordained to the lot of the elect because of good works, are severely punished by purifying flames after death because of certain evils with which they were stained when they departed from the body. And either until the day of judgment, they are cleansed from the filth of their vices by this prolonged test-

ing; or certainly, sooner, through the prayers of the faithful friends, alms, fasts, tears, and offerings of the saving sacrifice, freed from their punishments, they too reach the rest of the blessed: to all of whom, however, the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, will reveal God according to their capacity when He grants them the blessing at the time of the resurrection, that, following the law given to them, they who walk from the virtue of faith and hope to the virtue of contemplation may see the God of gods in Zion, that is, in unchangeable contemplation, whose benefits and eternal gifts merit praise and thanksgiving for all ages upon ages. Amen.

HOMILY 5: ON THE VIGIL OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

Matthew 1

At that time, when his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. The birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, by which the eternal Son of God, who existed before all ages, appeared as the son of man in time, is described briefly yet with complete truth by the evangelist Matthew. After tracing the generations of the fathers from Abraham to Joseph, the husband of Mary, and showing all those begotten and begetting in the common order of human creation, he immediately speaks of him whose birth is distinct from the others in a revealing manner; because, indeed, others were born through the usual union of man and woman, but he was to be born through a virgin, fittingly since he is the Son of God entering the world. And indeed, it was wholly fitting that when God willed to become man for the sake of humanity, he would be born of no other than a virgin mother; just as it was fitting for the virgin to bear no other than the Son who is God.

He says, when his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. In what order or in what city this conception took place, the evangelist Luke sufficiently explains; since this is well known to your holiness, it is thus needful to speak briefly of what Matthew writes and to note first in that word which he says: Before they came together, the word "coming together" does not insinuate carnal union but the time usually preceding nuptials, when she who was first betrothed begins to be united in marriage. Therefore, "before they came together" signifies before they celebrated the nuptial solemnities in customary rite, she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, they later came together in the mentioned order, when Joseph, at the command of the

angel, took his wife, but they did not consummate, because it follows, and he did not know her. But she was found with child by none other than Joseph, who, having marital rights of a future wife, knew almost everything, therefore, with a curious look he immediately detected her swelling womb.

But Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not willing to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Seeing that his betrothed had conceived, which he knew well had not been by any man, and being just and wishing to act justly in all things, he thought it best neither to disclose this to others nor to take her as his wife, but, with a secretly altered intention of marriage, to allow her to remain in the condition of a betrothed as she was. For he had read in Isaiah that a virgin would conceive and bring forth the Lord from the house of David, and he also knew that Mary was descended from that house, and therefore did not doubt that this prophecy was to be fulfilled in her. But if he were to quietly dismiss her and not take her as his wife and she, being betrothed, were to give birth, very few would believe that she was a virgin and not rather think that she was a harlot. Hence, Joseph's plan suddenly changed into a better plan, namely that he would, to preserve Mary's reputation, take her as his wife in a celebrated marriage feast, but he would keep her chaste perpetually. For the Lord preferred that some might be ignorant of the manner of His generation rather than dishonor the chastity of His mother.

While he was considering this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying: Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a Son, and you will call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins. These words indeed teach the manner of conception and the dignity of birth; namely, because she conceived by the Holy Spirit and is going to give birth to Christ, whom the angel does not explicitly call Christ, but in explaining the etymology of the name Jesus, he shows Him to be the author of salvation and the Savior of the people, as he calls them His people. This clearly implies that He is Christ, to teach Joseph what he did not know, and to wholly remove any intention of contact with the Mother of God. However, he is ordered to take her as his wife for just reasons of necessity, so that she would not be stoned by the Jews as an adulteress, and that she would have a male companion while fleeing to Egypt, who, with domestic care, would be both protector of her female frailty and witness to her perpetual virginity.

Catholic commentators also disclose other reasons why Joseph had to accept the Mother of God as his wife, which can be found in their proper places.

Additionally, the evangelist attributes an example of prophetic speech to the virginal birth, so that the miracle of such majesty would be more confidently believed, since it was proclaimed not only by him but also predicted by the prophet. For it is Matthew's custom to affirm everything he narrates with prophetic testimonies, having written his Gospel mainly for the sake of those who believed from among the Jews, but who, though reborn in Christ, could not be detangled from the ceremonies of the law; and he therefore endeavored to uplift them from the carnal sense of the law and prophets to the spiritual sense concerning Christ, so that they would more securely receive the sacraments of the Christian faith, recognizing these as being what the prophets had foretold. Behold, a virgin will conceive, and will bear a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which is interpreted, God with us (Isa. VII). The name of the Savior, which the prophet calls God with us, signifies both natures in one person of Himself. For He who was born of the Father before time, God, is in the fullness of time Emmanuel, that is, God with us, made in the womb of the mother, because He deigned to take the frailty of our nature into the unity of His person, when the Word was made flesh and dwelled among us: marvelously beginning to be what we are, without ceasing to be what He was, thus assuming our nature without losing what He Himself was.

Rising from sleep, Joseph did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took his wife, but did not know her. He took her as his wife for the reasons we have previously stated, and did not know her in a conjugal act due to the mysteries he had learned. But if someone wishes to oppose this explanation and contend that the blessed mother of God was never taken as a wife by Joseph through a celebrated marriage, let him offer a better explanation of this passage of the holy Gospel, and equally show that it was lawful for Jews that anyone should cohabit carnally with his betrothed, and we will readily concede to his sound understanding: as long as we do not believe anything occurred towards the mother of the Lord that could be publicly defamatory. But what is added, "Until she gave birth to her firstborn son," should not be understood as if he knew her after she bore the son, as some perversely believe. Your fraternity should indeed know that there were heretics who believed Mary was known by Joseph after the birth of the Lord,

interpreting this from the phrase "he did not know her until she gave birth to a son," and from there arose those whom the Scripture calls the brothers of the Lord, and they support their error with this, that the Lord is called the firstborn.

May God avert this blasphemy from the faith of all of us, and grant us to understand with catholic piety that the parents of our Savior were always illustrious for their intact virginity, and that not sons, but cousins, of theirs are called the brothers of the Lord by customary Scriptural usage; but the evangelist did not care to say whether he knew her after she bore a son, because he thought it should be questioned by none. And indeed it should be questioned by no one that the just spouses, to whom, while remaining in the purity of virginity, it was granted by singular grace for the Son of God to be born, could in no way transgress the laws of chastity because of it, and defile the sacred temple of God with the corruption of their seed. It is also to be noted that according to Scripture authority, all who open the womb first are called first-born, regardless of whether they are followed by other brothers or none. Yet the Lord can be understood as called the firstborn for a special reason, according to what John says of him in Revelation: who is the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth (Rev. 1:5). And the apostle Paul: for those he foreknew and predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brothers (Rom. 8:29).

He is called the firstborn of the dead indeed, because although he followed many brothers in the flesh, he was the first of all to rise from the dead and opened the way from death to heavenly life for believers. He is the firstborn among many brothers, because to those who received him, he gave the power to become children of God, and he is rightly called the firstborn of them all, for, though they are adopted children, he even takes precedence in dignity over those who were born before his incarnation. Indeed, they can most truthfully testify with John because he who comes after us has been made before us, that is, though born in the world after us, he is rightly called the firstborn of all of us due to the merit of virtue and kingdom. And in the divine nativity itself, he can not improperly be called the firstborn, for before he begot any creature by making, the eternal Father begot the Son coeternal with himself; before engendering some by redeeming them through the word of truth, the eternal Father begot for himself the Word coeternal

with him: whence the Word, the Son of God, namely virtue and wisdom, speaks: I came forth from the mouth of the Most High, the firstborn before all creatures (Eccl. 24:5). Therefore Mary gave birth to her firstborn Son, that is, the son of her substance;

she bore him who was born God from God before any creature, and in the nature in which he was created, he rightfully precedes all creation. And you shall call, he says, his name Jesus. Jesus in Hebrew is called Savior or Soter in Latin; whose calling by this name is made most certain by the prophets, from which are those sung with great desire of his vision: But my soul shall exult in the Lord, and shall delight in his salvation (Psalm XXXV). My soul has fainted for your salvation. But I will glory in the Lord (Psalm CXVIII). I will rejoice in the God of my salvation (Habakkuk III). And especially that: Save me, O God, by your name (Psalm LIII), as if saying: Glorify the glory of your name which is called Savior by saving me. Therefore, Jesus is the name of the son who was born of the virgin, as the angel explained, meaning that he himself saves the people from their sins. And the one who saves from sins will indeed also save from the corruptions of mind and body, which happened because of sins. But Christ is the term of priestly or royal dignity. For even priests and kings in the law were called Christ, from the chrism, that is, the anointing of holy oil, signifying him who appearing in the world as the true king and high priest was anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows. From which anointing, that is chrism, Christ himself; and the partakers of the same anointing, that is, spiritual grace, are called Christians. Who by the fact that he is the Savior, saves us from sins; by the fact that he is the high priest, reconciles us to God the Father; by the fact that he is the king, he deigns to give us the eternal kingdom of his Father, Jesus Christ our Lord, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns God through all ages of ages. Amen.

HOMILY 6: ON THE DAWN OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

Luke 2

At that time the shepherds spoke to one another: Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made and shown to us, etc. When the Lord and Savior was born in Bethlehem, as the sacred history of the Gospel records, an angel of the Lord appeared with great light to the shepherds who were in the same region, keeping watch and guarding their flocks by night, declaring the rising of the Sun of righteous-

ness upon the world not only by the heavenly voice of speech but also by the brightness of divine light. For nowhere in the entire series of the Old Testament do we find angels who appeared to the fathers with light, but this privilege was rightly reserved for the present time when a light arose in the darkness for the upright in heart, merciful and just is the Lord. To avoid the authority of one angel appearing small, after one taught the mystery of the new birth, immediately a multitude of heavenly hosts appeared, singing glory to God and also proclaiming peace to men, openly showing that through this birth men would be converted to the peace of one faith, hope, and love, and to the glory of divine praise. The shepherds mystically signify the teachers and rulers of the faithful souls. The night, during which they kept watch over their flock, indicates the dangers of temptations, from which all those who vigilantly keep watch do not cease to guard themselves and their subjects. And it is fitting that the Lord was born when shepherds were keeping watch over their flock. For He was born who says: I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep (John 10). But the time also approached when this most good shepherd, having sent shepherds into the world, would call back his scattered sheep, which were wandering far and wide, to the ever-green pastures of heavenly life. He entrusted their care to the supreme shepherd: If you love me, feed my sheep (John 21). Explaining this more clearly, he said: Strengthen your brothers (Luke 22).

And it came to pass, as the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another: Let us go to Bethlehem and see this word that has come to pass, which the Lord has made and shown to us. And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. Those shepherds indeed hurried with joyful happiness to see what they had heard: and because they sought with ardent love, they deserved to find immediately the Savior whom they sought. But also the shepherds of the intellectual flocks, indeed all the faithful ought to show with their words and deeds how with the diligence of the mind they should seek Christ. Let us go, they say, to Bethlehem and see this word which has come to pass. Let us also go, most dear brothers, in our thoughts to Bethlehem, the city of David, and let us with love recall that the Word was made flesh in it, and let us celebrate His incarnation with fitting honors. Let us go, with carnal desires cast aside, with the full desire of the mind to the heavenly Bethlehem, that is, the house

of the living bread not made by hands, but eternal in the heavens, and let us with love recall that the Word was made flesh. He ascended there in the flesh, there He sits at the right hand of God the Father. Let us follow Him there with all the diligence of virtues, and let us procure with earnest chastisement of the heart and body, so that whom they saw crying in the manger, we may deserve to see reigning on the throne of the Father.

And let us see, they say, this word that has come to pass. What a right and pure confession of the holy faith, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God! This word born of the Father, was not made, for God is not a creature. In this divine birth, He could not be seen by men; but so that He could be seen, the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Let us therefore see, they say, this Word that has been made, because before it was made, we could not see it. This the Lord has made and shown to us, that the Lord caused to be incarnate, and through this made visible to us. And they came hastening and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. The shepherds came hastening and found God born as man, along with the attendants of His birth. Let us hasten too, my brothers, not by the steps of our feet but by the progress of good works to see that same glorified humanity with His attendants, rewarded with the worthy recompense of their service; let us hasten to see Him shining in the divine majesty of the Father and His own. Let us hasten, I say, for such great blessedness is not to be sought with idleness and sloth, but the footsteps of Christ are to be followed zealously. For He Himself desires to help our course with His hand extended, and delights to hear from us: Draw us after you, we will run in the fragrance of your ointments. Therefore, let us more quickly follow with the steps of virtues, so that we may merit to attain. Let no one delay in turning to the Lord, let no one defer from day to day, praying to Him in all things and before all things, that He may direct our steps according to His word, and that no injustice may have dominion over us.

Seeing this, they recognized concerning the word which had been spoken to them about this child. And we, dearly beloved brothers, let us, for now, earnestly perceive with pious faith and hasten to embrace with full love the things that have been spoken to us about our Savior, the true God and man, so that we may be able to grasp them with the vision of perfect knowledge in the future. For this alone is the true life of the blessed, not only of humans but also of angels, to perpetually behold the face of their Creator, which the

Psalmist ardently longed for, who said: "My soul has thirsted for the living God; when shall I come and appear before the face of God?" (Psalm 42). He indicated that his desire could not be satisfied by any abundance of earthly things, saying: "I will be satisfied when your glory is manifested" (Psalm 17). Truly, because not the idle and sluggish, but those who labor in works of virtue, are worthy of divine contemplation, he carefully prefaced: "But I shall appear before you with justice." Therefore, the shepherds, seeing, recognized concerning the word that had been spoken to them about Christ, because the vision of God is knowledge of Him, and this is the sole blessed life of man, the very man himself saying and testifying, who, commending us to the Father, says among other things: "And this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (John 17).

And all who heard marveled at those things which were spoken by the shepherds to them. The shepherds did not conceal in silence the secrets they had divinely learned, but told them to whomever they could; for indeed the spiritual shepherds of the Church are especially ordained for this, that they may proclaim the mysteries of the Word of God and show to their listeners the wondrous things they have learned in the Scriptures. Furthermore, it is not only the shepherds, bishops, priests, and deacons, or even the heads of monasteries, who should be understood, but also all the faithful who undertake the guardianship of their own little household; they are rightly called shepherds, insofar as they watch over their own household with diligent vigilance. And whoever among you presides over at least one or two brothers with daily governance, should fulfill the duty of shepherd. For as far as it suffices, they are commanded to feed these with the feasts of the word: indeed every one of you, brothers, who even believes themselves to live a private life, holds the office of shepherd and feeds a spiritual flock, and keeps vigil over it by night, if he gathers to himself a multitude of good deeds and pure thoughts, endeavors to govern them with just moderation, nourish them with the heavenly pastures of the Scriptures, and to guard against the snares of unclean spirits with vigilant zeal.

But Mary kept all these words, pondering them in her heart. Mary, preserving the laws of virgin modesty, chose not to reveal to anyone the secrets of Christ that she knew, but reverently waited for Him to divulge them when He wished and how He wished. Meanwhile, she diligently pondered these same secrets with a silent mouth but a vigilant heart. And this is what

is meant by "pondering them in her heart. She compared what she saw happening with what she had read was to happen. For she saw herself conceived by the Holy Spirit in Nazareth, from the lineage of David, with the Son of God. She had read in the prophet: "A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. And the Spirit of the Lord will rest on him. (Isaiah 11) She also read: "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times. (Micah 5:2) She saw that she had given birth in Bethlehem to the ruler of Israel, who is eternal God born from the Father before the ages; she saw that as a virgin she had conceived and borne a Son, and that she had called his name Jesus. She had read in the prophets: "Behold, a virgin will conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14) She had read:

"The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib. She saw the Lord placed in a manger, where ox and donkey came to be fed. She remembered what the angel had said to her: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:35) She had read that the manner of His birth could only be known by angelic revelation, as Isaiah said: "Who can speak of his descendants? (Isaiah 53:8) She had read: "And you, O Tower of the Flock, the fortified stronghold of Daughter Zion, the former dominion will be restored to you; kingship will come to Daughter Jerusalem. (Micah 4:8) She heard that the angelic hosts, which are the daughters of the heavenly city, appeared to the shepherds in a place that from ancient times was called the Tower of the Flock, and is one mile to the east of Bethlehem, where even now the monuments of those shepherds are shown in a church. She knew that the Lord had come in the flesh, to whom belongs one and eternal power with the Father, who would give a kingdom to the Church, that is, the daughter of the heavenly Jerusalem. Therefore, Mary compared what she had read would happen with what she already knew had happened: yet she did not speak of these things with her mouth, but kept them closed in her heart.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told to them. Let us also, most beloved brothers, learn from the contemplation of the Lord's plan, by which He deigned

to mercifully come to our aid, to always turn back giving thanks for His benefits. For if they, having known only His birth, returned glorifying and praising God in all they had heard and seen, how much more ought we, who have come to know the entire series of His incarnation, who have been imbued with His sacraments, glorify and praise Him in all things not only with words but also with deeds; nor ever forget that God was born as man so that by being reborn He could recreate us in the image and likeness of His divinity: for He was baptized in water, that He might fertilize the streams of water for the washing away of all our iniquities; He was tempted in the desert, that by overcoming the tempter He might grant us also the skill and strength to conquer; He died, that He might destroy the dominion of death; He rose again and ascended into heaven, that He might give us the hope and example of rising from the dead and reigning perpetually in the heavens. For each of these things, let us, returning to the contemplation of His most pious plan, glorify and praise God Himself and our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for all the ages of ages. Amen.

HOMILY 7: ON THE LORD'S NATIVITY

John 1

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, etc. Because we have recognized the temporal birth of the mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ, which took place on this very day, as manifested by the holy words of the evangelists, namely Matthew and Luke, it is also fitting to scrutinize the sayings of the blessed evangelist John about the eternity of the Word, that is, his divinity, in which he remains always equal to the Father. John, through his unique privilege of chastity, deserved to grasp and simultaneously reveal the mystery of his divinity more profoundly than other writers of divine Scripture. For it is not in vain that he is said to have reclined upon the breast of the Lord Jesus at the supper, but this typifies that he drank more excellently than the others from the holiest fountain of the wisdom of that same breast. Hence he is deservedly compared to the flying eagle in the figure of the four animals. Indeed, the eagle is accustomed to fly higher than all birds and to fix its gaze more brilliantly than all living creatures upon the rays of the sun. And the other evangelists, as it were, walk on earth with the Lord, adequately describing his temporal gen-

eration and deeds and saying little of his divinity; but this one, as it were, flies to heaven with the Lord.

By recounting very little about his temporal deeds, he more sublimely recognized and more clearly contemplated the eternal power of his divinity, through which all things were made, mentally soaring and observing directly, and handed down to us in writing for our understanding. Therefore, the other evangelists describe Christ born in time, while John testifies that he was already in the beginning, saying: "In the beginning was the Word. The others recall that he suddenly appeared among men, while he declares that he was always with God, saying: "And the Word was with God. The others say that he was a true man, while he confirms that he is truly God, saying: "And the Word was God. The others describe him as living temporally among men, while he shows him as remaining with God from the beginning, saying: "He was in the beginning with God. The others recount the great deeds he performed as a man, while he reveals that God the Father made every visible and invisible creature through him, saying: "All things were made through him, and without him nothing was made. And beautifully, blessed John at the beginning of his Gospel sublimely instructs the faithful about the divinity of the Savior, and powerfully surpasses the perfidiousness of heretics. For there were heretics who said: "If Christ was born, there was a time when he was not. He refutes them with his first words when he says:

In the beginning was the Word. He did not say, In the beginning the Word began to be, but in the beginning was the Word: so that he might show that the Word was not born in time, but was already existing in the origin of times, and thus was born of the Father without any beginning of time, according to what he Himself speaks in Proverbs: The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His ways, before He did anything from the beginning, from eternity I was established (Prov. VIII). There were also heretics who, denying the three persons of the holy Trinity, said: The same God is the Father when He wills; when He wills, He is the Son; when He wills, He is the Holy Spirit; yet He is one and the same. Refuting their error, he adds: And the Word was with God. For if one was with another, there are certainly two, the Father and the Son, and not one. The same is now the Father, now the Son, now also the Holy Spirit: as if the nature of the divine substance is changeable, whereas the apostle James most clearly says: With whom there is

no change, nor shadow of change. (James I). There were also some authors of wicked doctrine, who, confessing that Christ was only a man, did not believe Him to be God at all: whom he strongly expresses (or oppresses), when he says:

And the Word was God. There were others who thought He was God indeed, but made God from the time of the incarnation, not eternal, born of the Father before the ages. Hence, it is remembered that one of such people said: I do not envy Christ made God, because I also, if I wish, can become like Him. And the evangelist refutes their wicked opinion when he says, This was in the beginning with God. That is, this Word, which is God, did not begin in time, but was God with God in the beginning. There were also enemies of the truth who did not deny that Christ existed before His birth from the Virgin, yet did not believe He was born of the Father as God, but made by the Father, and therefore lesser than the Father, because a creature. The Gospel speech also condemns these, which says:

All things were made through him, and without him nothing was made. For if nothing in creation was made without him, it clearly follows that he is not a creature through whom all creatures were made. The evangelist plainly teaches that creation, made indeed in time, was always ordained in the eternal wisdom of the Creator as to when and what kind of creation it would be. And this is what he says: What was made, in him was life. That is, what appeared in time, whether living or lacking life, all existed in the spiritual reason of the maker as if it always lived and lives. Not because what was created is co-eternal with the Creator, but because the reason of his will, in which he has eternally had and has what and when he creates, how he governs the created so that it remains, to what end he leads each created thing, is co-eternal with him. Thus follows:

And life was the light of men. By this word it is clearly taught that this very reason of life, through which all things were ordered and governed, illuminates not every creature, but only the rational one so that it can gain wisdom. For humans, who were made in the image of God, can perceive wisdom, animals cannot. But even any human who is animalistic does not perceive the things of the Spirit of God. Hence, it rightly follows that when he said: And life was the light of men, he added, And of those who, by distancing themselves far from the honor of human condition, are compared to foolish beasts and have become like them, thus they are rightly deprived of

the light of truth. And the light, he says, shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not comprehended it. For the light of men is Christ, who illuminates, by his presence of knowledge, all the hearts of men that deserve to be enlightened. The darkness, however, are the foolish and wicked, whose blind hearts the light of eternal wisdom clearly recognizes for what they are, although they cannot at all grasp the rays of the same light through understanding: just as if some blind person were bathed in the sunlight, yet cannot see the sun, whose light bathes him. But divine compassion has not wholly disregarded such people; rather, it has offered them the remedy of salvation, by which they might come to see the light. For the same invisible light, the same wisdom of God, assumed flesh, in which it could be seen, appearing in the form of man and speaking to men, gradually, through purified faith, leading their hearts to the knowledge of its divine vision. Before him was sent a man of great merit, whose testimony would prepare all to hear, as soon as it appeared, the wisdom of God itself, to see the very sun of righteousness, now covered with the cloud of the body; that is, to see and hear the man who was God, full of grace and truth.

There was, he says, a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He did not say, that all might believe in him, for cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his arm (Jeremiah XVII): but that all might believe through him, that is, that by his testimony they might believe in the light which they had not yet known how to see, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ, who testifies of himself: I am the light of the world: he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life (John VIII). He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. And indeed holy men are rightly called light, as the Lord says to them: You are the light of the world (Mt. V), and the apostle Paul: You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord (Eph. V). But there is a great difference between the light that is illuminated and the light that illuminates; between those who receive the light by participation in the true light so that they may shine, and the perpetual light itself, which not only shines in itself, but also by its presence is sufficient to enlighten whoever it touches. Compared to the true light, not only are any of the least elect, but even John himself, than whom no greater has risen among those born of women, asserted not to be light, to

show that Christ is not what he was thought to be. For it is written: He was a burning and shining lamp (John V). Burning with faith and love, shining with word and action. The grace of light to pour into sinners belongs to him alone of whom it is said:

The true light which enlightens everyone was coming into the world. Everyone, that is, who is illuminated either by natural intellect or by divine wisdom. For just as no one can be from themselves, so no one can be wise from themselves, but by that one who illuminates, of whom it is written: All wisdom is from the Lord God (Ecclus. II). The evangelist describes both his natures, divine, in which he always remains whole everywhere, and human, in which he appeared born in time and included in a place, saying: He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world did not know him. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. For he was in the world, and the world was made through him, because he was God, because he was wholly present everywhere, governing by the presence of his majesty without labor, and holding together without burden what he made. And the world did not know him, because the light shines in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. By 'world' in this place he means those men deceived by the love of the world and clinging to the creature, turned away from knowing the majesty of their Creator. He came unto his own, because in the world, which he made through divinity, he appeared born through humanity: he came unto his own, because in the Jewish people he deigned to be incarnate, whom he had united to himself by special grace above other nations. Therefore, he was in the world, and came into the world. He was in the world through divinity, he came into the world through incarnation. To come or to go belongs to humanity, to remain and to be belongs to divinity. But let us see what follows:

He came unto his own, and his own received him not. For those who did not know him creating and governing all things in the power of his deity, did not want to receive him shining with miracles in the weakness of the flesh. And what is graver, his own did not receive him, namely, the men whom he himself created. The Jews, whom he had chosen as his peculiar people, to whom he had revealed the mystery of his knowledge, whom he had glorified by the wondrous acts of their fathers, to whom he had granted the doctrine of his law, from whom he had promised to be incarnated, and in whom he showed himself incarnate as he had promised, they for the most

part refused to receive him coming. For not all refused, otherwise none would be saved. But now many have received him through faith from both peoples, of whom the evangelist following insinuates saying:

As many as received Him, He gave them the power to become the sons of God, to those who believe in His name. Let us consider, dearest brothers, how great is the grace of our Redeemer, how great is the multitude of His sweetness. The only one born from the Father did not want to remain alone; He descended to earth where He might acquire brothers for Himself to whom He could give the kingdom of His Father: God was born from God, and He did not want to remain only the Son of God; He also deigned to become the son of man, not losing what He was, but assuming what He was not, so that by this means He could transfer men into sons of God and make them co-heirs of His glory: so that what He always had by nature, they might begin to have by grace. Let us consider how great is the power of faith, by whose merit the power is given to men to become the sons of God. Hence it is well written, Because the just man lives by faith (Hab. II). For the just man lives by faith, not the faith that is only professed by the lips, but that which works through love; otherwise, faith without works is dead in itself. Let no one despise himself; let no one despair of his own salvation: let us all run, each one of us, so that we who were far away may deserve to come near by the blood of Christ.

Let us see what is said, Because as many as received Him, He gave them the power to become the sons of God. As many as, he says, received Him: For God is not a respecter of persons, but in every nation, he who fears God and works righteousness is acceptable to Him (Acts X). And in what order believers might become the sons of God, and how much this generation differs from the carnal one, the evangelist subsequently designates. Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. For our carnal generation of each individual took its origin from blood, that is, from the nature [alternative, seed] of male and female, from the union of marriage: but the spiritual one is administered by the grace of the Holy Spirit, which the Lord distinguishing from the carnal said: Unless one is born of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God (John III). What is born of the flesh is flesh; and what is born of the spirit is spirit, so that they may be made partakers of His virtue.

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. Which is to say: And the Son of God was made man, and dwelt among men. For Scripture is accustomed sometimes to designate the whole man by the term soul, sometimes by the term flesh. By soul indeed, as it is written: For Jacob went down into Egypt with seventy souls (Gen. XLVI); by flesh, as it is again written: And all flesh shall see the salvation of God (Luke III). For neither could souls descend into Egypt without bodies, nor could flesh see anything without the soul; but here by soul the whole man is signified, there by flesh. So therefore in this place where it is said: And the Word was made flesh, nothing else should be understood than if it were said: God was made man, by putting on flesh and soul; so that just as each one of us consists of flesh and soul as one man, so Christ from the time of the incarnation consists of flesh [alternative, flesh of divinity] and soul as one man: God from eternity existing eternally as He was, the man assumed in time into the unity of His person as true, which He had not.

And we saw his glory, the glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. The glory of Christ which men could not see before the incarnation, they saw after the incarnation, beholding the humanity resplendent in miracles, and understanding the divinity lying hidden within, especially those who were deemed worthy to observe his brightness before the passion, transfigured on the holy mountain, with a voice descending to him from such magnificent glory: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased (Mt. XVII): and after the passion, with the glory of his resurrection and ascension being beheld, they were wonderfully refreshed with the gift of his Spirit; by all of which they clearly understood that such glory was not suitable for any saint, but only for that man who was the only begotten in divinity from the Father. And what follows: Full of grace and truth. Full of grace was the same man Christ Jesus, to whom it was given by a singular gift beyond other mortals, that immediately from the time he was conceived in the womb of the virgin, and began to be man, he was truly God; hence also the same glorious ever-virgin Mary is rightly to be believed and confessed not only as the mother of the man Christ, but also of God. The same was full of truth, manifestly because of the divinity of the Word, which graciously assumed that uniquely chosen man, with whom he was one person in Christ, without changing any part of his divine substance into making the nature of man, as heretics claim; but remaining with the Father, assuming

all that he was, taking upon himself the entire nature of true man from the seed of David, which he did not have. Hence, most dear brothers, it is necessary that we who today with annual devotion recite the human birth of our Redeemer, embrace with continuous and always love both his divine and human nature. The divine, through which we were created when we were not; the human, through which we were recreated when we were lost. And indeed the divine power of our Creator was sufficient to recreate us without assuming humanity; but the human weakness of the same our Redeemer could not without assuming it, and having divinity dwelling and working through it, recreate us.

And thus the Word became flesh, that is, God became man, and dwelt among us, so that by living with us in the known form of a man, conversing with us, instructing us by speaking to us, offering us the way of life, he could battle against the enemy for us, and by dying and rising again destroy our death: through the coeternal divine nature with the Father, he might inwardly raise us to divine things by vivifying us, grant us remission of sins together with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and after the perfecting of good works, not only bring us to see the glory of his glorified humanity, but also show us the immutable essence of his divine majesty, in which he lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit through all ages of ages. Amen.

HOMILY 8: ON THE BIRTHDAY OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

John 21

At that time Jesus said to Peter, Follow me. Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His chest at the supper and said: Lord, who is the one who will betray you? etc. The reading of the Holy Gospel which was read to us, my brothers, ought to be considered by us with so much greater attention to each word, as it overflows with the great sweetness of heavenly grace. For the most blessed evangelist and apostle John commends to us the privilege of special love, by which he deserved to be honored more than the others by the Lord: he commends the testimony of the evangelical account, which, supported by divine truth, no believer is allowed to doubt: he commends the peaceful dissolution of his flesh, which he perceived with the Lord visiting him in a special way. But in order that we may be able to consider the beginnings of this perfect reading, it is pleasing to briefly attend to the earlier parts. The Lord appeared after the resurrection

to seven disciples, among whom were Peter and John, who had labored in vain fishing all night, and standing on the shore, he filled their nets with a large multitude of fish, and soon invited them, having come to land, to breakfast, and during breakfast, he asked Peter for the third time if he loved him; and to the third confession of love, because he had denied him three times, he entrusted him three times with feeding his sheep: and then, because he would reach martyrdom on the cross for the pastoral care of those same sheep, that is, the faithful souls, he intimated, saying:

Amen, amen, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and lead you where you do not wish. In the stretching out of the hands, he designated that he would be crowned with martyrdom through the death of the cross; in the girding by another, that he would be bound by the persecutor; in the leading where he did not wish, that he would suffer the torments of passion against the will of human frailty. But lest the foretold passion of the cross from the Lord should seem heavy to Peter, he immediately sought to alleviate it by his own example, so that the torment of martyrdom would be the lighter, the more he would remember to receive a sentence of death similar to his Redeemer. For after he indicated to him by what death he would glorify God, he immediately adds what we heard at the beginning of this reading.

And he says to him: Follow me. As if to say openly: Since I did not fear the sudden punishment of the cross for your redemption first, why do you dread to suffer the cross for the confession of my name? You will be glorified with a more illustrious palm of martyrdom because in earning this you follow the path of the master. Now indeed the evangelist does not add what the Lord and the disciples did after these words, but it is nevertheless implied from what he adds, Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following. It is clear that when he said to Peter, Follow me, that is, imitate me by enduring the cross, he rose from the place of the feast and began to depart. Peter followed him even with his steps, desiring to fulfill what he heard, Follow me. The beloved disciple whom Jesus loved also followed. For he did not consider himself to be excluded from following Christ, who knew that he was embraced by Christ with no lesser grace of love. Nor is it unbelievable that both disciples followed the Lord's steps with their physical steps, for they had not yet understood what it meant when he commanded Peter [or, to

Peter] to follow him. However, it is known to your fraternity who that disciple whom Jesus loved was, namely John himself, whose birthday feast we celebrate today, who wrote this Gospel, and therefore preferred to indicate his person by the signs of events, rather than by his own name.

However, Jesus loved him not uniquely to the exclusion of the others, but more familiarly above the others whom he loved, made worthy of greater affection by the special prerogative of chastity. For he proves that he loves all indeed, to whom he speaks before his passion: As the Father has loved me, I also have loved you. Abide in my love (John XV). But he loves this one above all, who, chosen by him as a virgin, remained a virgin forever. For histories record that he called him from the weddings when he wanted to marry; and therefore, because he turned him away from carnal desire, he gave him the sweeter gift of his own love. Finally, dying on the cross, he commended his mother to this one, so that a virgin might care for a virgin, and after his death and resurrection ascending into heaven, there would not be lacking to his mother a son, whose chaste life would care for her with chaste service. Blessed John also gives another sign of his person, adding: Who also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, who is it that will betray you? How this happened, earlier parts of this Gospel show more fully; because indeed at the supper, which the Savior had with the disciples before his passion, in which he washed their feet, and handed over the mysteries of his body and blood to be celebrated, that disciple whom he loved reclined upon his breast.

And when he had said to them, Amen, amen, I say to you, one of you will betray me, that disciple responded, indicating to Peter to ask and say to him, Lord, who is it? The Lord said [Or, At], it is he whom I shall give the dipped bread. But that disciple who reclined upon the master's breast, was not only a sign of present affection, but also of the mystery of the future. For the Gospel that the same disciple was to write was already foreshadowed, which would comprehend more fully and loftily the secrets of divine majesty than the other pages of sacred Scripture. For in the breast of Jesus are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, he deservedly reclines upon his breast whom he endowed with the singular gift of greater wisdom and knowledge. For we know the other evangelists spoke more of the miracles of our Savior, fewer of his divinity: but John, writing very little of human acts, rather devoted himself to explaining the divine mysteries, clearly implying how great

a flow of heavenly doctrine he had drawn from the breast of Jesus, which he expressed to us.

When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about him?" Because blessed Peter had heard that he was to glorify God by suffering on the cross, he also wished to know about his brother and fellow disciple, by what kind of death he himself would pass into eternal life. Jesus said to him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me. He said, that he did not wish him to be perfected by the suffering of martyrdom, but to wait for the last day without the violence of a persecutor, when He Himself, coming, would receive him into the abode of eternal happiness. And what is that to you? Just remember that you should follow me by undergoing the suffering of the cross. Indeed, the brethren at that time interpreted the Lord's response as if John would never die. But John himself took care to explain that it should not be understood in this way, who, having remarked that this saying went out among the brothers, that the disciple would not die, carefully added and said: "And Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, 'If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?'" Therefore, it should not be thought that the disciple did not die in the flesh, because neither did the Lord predict this about him. And the Psalmist said: "What man can live and not see death? (Psalm 89). It should rather be understood that, while the other disciples of Christ were perfected by suffering, he awaited in the peace of the Church for the coming of his calling. This is what the Lord said:

"If I want him to remain until I come," not that he did not endure many labors and pressures of evils for the Lord beforehand, but because he completed his old age in peace, having founded the churches of Christ through Asia far and wide. For in the Acts of the Apostles, he is also found to have been whipped along with the other apostles, when they went away rejoicing from the presence of the council, because they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name of Jesus. And, thrown into a vat of boiling oil by Emperor Domitian, as narrated in ecclesiastical history, he yet emerged as unscathed, protected by divine grace, as he was free from the corruption of carnal desire. Not long afterward, the same prince exiled him to the island of Patmos due to his unstoppable perseverance in preaching the gospel. Though deprived of human comfort there, he was frequently consoled by divine visions and conversations: hence, on the same island, he wrote down the Apo-

calypse by his own hand, which the Lord revealed to him about the present or future state of the Church. Thus, it is clear that the promise that he would remain until the Lord came does not pertain to him living in the world without the toil of struggle, but rather that he would pass out of the world without the pain of suffering.

For, as we find in the writings of the Fathers, when he knew that the day of his departure was near, exhausted by long old age, having summoned his disciples, giving them final exhortations and celebrating Mass, he bid them farewell: then, descending into the grave he had dug for himself, and having offered a prayer, he was placed with his fathers, found as free from the pain of death as from the corruption of the flesh. And thus, the truthful sentence of the Savior was fulfilled: that he wished him to remain until He Himself came. Moreover, we can mystically understand in the things predicted by the Lord about Peter and John, and what happened in them, the two lives of the Church in which she is exercised at present: namely, the active and the contemplative life, of which the active life is the common way of living for the people of God. However, to the contemplative life, very few ascend, eminent after the resurrection of holy action. For active life is for the diligent servant of Christ to persist in just labors, first keeping himself unspotted from this world, restraining mind, hand, tongue, and other members of the body from every act of wrongful temptation, and perpetually subjecting them to divine services.

Then also addressing the needs of his neighbor according to his abilities, providing food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, clothing to the cold, receiving the needy and the wandering into the house, visiting the sick, burying the dead, delivering the oppressed from the hand of the stronger, protecting the poor and needy from their robbers; but also showing the way of truth to those in error, and dedicating himself to the services of brotherly love, and even contending for justice unto death. But the contemplative life is when someone, having been taught by long practice of good action, fortified by the sweetness of prolonged prayer, accustomed by the frequent contrition of tears, learns to be free from all the affairs of the world, and to focus the eye of the mind on love alone, and to begin to taste ardently in the present life the joy of everlasting beatitude which he is to experience in the future; and sometimes also, as far as is permitted to mortals, sublimely to soar in the contemplation of the rapture of the mind. This contemplative

life of divine speculation most especially embraces those who, after long preliminary training in monastic virtue, know how to live secluded from men, having a mind freer to meditate upon heavenly things as they are separated from earthly disturbances. For indeed, as we have said, the active life proposes to be entered upon not only by monks in the monastery but by the entire people of God in general.

Both apostles, namely Peter and John, while placed among men, were perfect in both lives because of the summit of their excellence in grace, yet one life is designated by Peter and the other by John. For in what the Lord says to Peter, "You will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and lead you where you do not wish to go," the perfection of the active life is expressed, which is usually tested by the fire of temptations. Whence He says elsewhere more clearly: "Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice's sake. Fittingly he adds, saying: "Follow Me," because undoubtedly, according to Peter's own words, Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow His steps. But what He says about John, "So I want him to remain until I come," indicates the state of contemplative virtue, which is not to be ended by death like the active life, but is to be perfectly completed with the Lord coming after death. For indeed, active labor ceases with death, going to receive the eternal reward after death. Who in that life gives bread to the hungry, where no one is hungry? Who gives water to the thirsty, where no one thirsts? Who buries the dead, where the land is of the living? Who performs other works of mercy, where no one is miserable? There is therefore no labor of action there, but only the perpetual fruit of past action remains.

The contemplative happiness, which begins here, is perfected endlessly there, when the presence of the heavenly citizens and of the Lord Himself will be seen not through a glass nor in a riddle, as now, but face to face. Whence aptly about it, under the figure of the disciple whom He loved, and who leaned on His bosom, the Lord says: "So I want him to remain until I come. As if He openly says: I do not want the taste of the sweetness of contemplation, which I especially love in my saints, those hoping in the protection of my wings, those made drunk with the abundance of my house, to end with the condition of death like the laborious use of action, but after death to be more sublimely completed by my appearing and bringing them into the sight of my majesty. This is that disciple who testifies about these things

and wrote these things. And we know that his testimony is true. Now clearly blessed John designates himself by office, which he avoids designating by name. However, it should not be passed by what is said: He who testifies about these things and wrote these things. Indeed, he bore testimony by preaching the word of God, he bore testimony by writing, he bore testimony again in teaching the same things he had written: he also testifies now by the Gospel, which he described for the churches to be read, by explaining. From the time of the Lord's passion, resurrection, and ascension into heaven until the last times of the principate of Domitian, over about sixty-five years, he preached the word of God without any written aid. But when he was sent into exile by Domitian, who was the second persecutor of Christians after Nero, heretics burst into the Church, like wolves into the sheepfolds deserted by the shepherd, Marcion, Cerinthus, and Ebion, and other Antichrists, who denied that Christ existed before Mary, tarnished the simplicity of the evangelical faith with perverse doctrine.

But when he, after the death of Domitian, permitted by the pious prince Nerva, returned to Ephesus, he was compelled by almost all the bishops of Asia at that time and the delegations of many churches to speak more deeply about the coeternal divinity of Christ with the Father, because in the writings of the three evangelists, namely Matthew, Mark, and Luke, they seemed to have sufficient testimony about his humanity and the things he performed as a man. To this, he responded that he would not do otherwise unless all in common would fast and pray to the Lord, so that he might be able to write worthily. And having done this, instructed by revelation and inebriated with the grace of the Holy Spirit, he dispelled all the darkness of the heretics with the light of the unveiled truth. "In the beginning," he said, "was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And making his entire speech similar to the beginnings, he taught our Lord Jesus Christ with very clear assertion, both true man, truly made from man temporally, and also true God, truly born from God the Father eternally, truly always existing with the Father and the Holy Spirit, indeed he revealed the secrets of divine truth and true divinity as no other mortal was permitted. And this privilege was rightly reserved for the virgin, so that he himself might reveal the mysteries of the incorruptible Word with an incorrupt heart and body.

He himself also took care to show how no one should doubt the truth of his words, who having said, "This is the disciple who testifies about these things and wrote these things," immediately added, "And we know that his testimony is true. Therefore, because we also know with the other faithful that his testimony is true, let us strive in every way to understand rightly by faith, and to practice rightly by action what he taught, in order to reach the eternal gifts which he promised, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY 9: ON THE FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS

Matthew 2

At that time, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph, saying: Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, etc. The sacred reading of the Gospel just recited to us, dearest brothers, is about the precious death of Christ's innocent martyrs, in which nevertheless the precious death of all Christ's martyrs is foreshadowed. For the fact that infants were killed signifies that through the merit of humility, one comes to the glory of martyrdom, and because unless a person is converted and becomes like a little child, they cannot give their soul for Christ. That they were killed in Bethlehem and in all its borders shows that not only in Judea, where the origin of the Church began, but also in all the borders of that same Church, wherever it has spread throughout the world, there will be persecutions by the wicked, and the patience of the pious is to be crowned. They who were killed from two years old and under signify those perfected in doctrine and action; they who were killed below that age indicate the simple or unlearned, yet having steadfast constancy in true faith. That they indeed were killed, but Christ, who was sought, escaped alive, implies that although the bodies of martyrs can be killed by the impious, Christ, for whom the whole persecution rages, cannot be taken away from them, either while they live or after they are killed, but they truly attest that whether we live, we live to the Lord, or whether we die, we die to the Lord. For whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

That, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, a voice was heard in Rama, that is, high up, lamentation and great mourning (Jer. XXXI), plainly announces the grief of the holy Church, which grieves over the unjust death of its members, not as enemies murmur in vain yielding to empty despair, but

rising up to the throne of the supreme Judge; and just as the blood of the protomartyr Abel, so too the blood of other martyrs cries from the ground to the Lord, according to the words of the wise man: Do not scorn the prayers of the orphan, nor the widow when she pours out her complaint. Do not the tears of the widow run down her cheek, and her cry against him that causes them to fall? From the cheek they ascend even to heaven, and the Lord the hearer does not rejoice in them (Ecclus. XXXV). That Rachel is said to have wept for her children and would not be comforted because they were not, signifies the Church mourning the removal of the saints from this world, but not wanting to be consoled in such a way as to bring back to the struggles of this world those who have conquered it through death, because they cannot be called back to this world, from whose trials they have once escaped, crowned with Christ. For Rachel, who is said to mean 'sheep' or 'seeing God,' figuratively demonstrates the Church, whose whole intent watches to be worthy to see God.

And she is the hundredth sheep which the good shepherd, leaving the ninety-nine sheep of angelic virtues in heaven, went to seek on earth, and found placed on his shoulders, and so brought it back to the fold. It may be questioned, however, how Rachel is said to have wept for her children, since the tribe of Judah, which held Bethlehem, was not from Rachel but from her sister Leah. Here the answer is easy, for not only in Bethlehem, but in all its borders, all the infants were slaughtered. The tribe of Benjamin, which was from Rachel, was close to the tribe of Judah. Hence it is rightly believed that the blow of the most cruel slaughter involved not a few children of Benjaminitic lineage, whom the offspring of Rachel, raised with a loud cry, wept for. It may also be understood differently because Rachel was buried near Bethlehem, as indicated by the title of her monument remaining to this day, to the west of the city, beyond the road leading to Hebron: hence it is rightly said that she who was present in body and name in that place prophetically cried out for what was happening there. The fact that the Lord Himself was taken by His parents to Egypt to avoid being killed by Herod signifies that the elect must often be taken away from their homes due to the wickedness of evil men or even condemned to exile.

This also serves as an example to the faithful, so that they do not hesitate to evade the rage of persecutors by fleeing when it is opportune, remembering that their God and Lord did this. For He who was to command them,

"When they persecute you in this city, flee to another," first did what He commanded by fleeing as a man, like a man on earth, whom shortly before a star from heaven had shown [to be divine]. The fact that Herod died not long after he had killed the children for the sake of the Lord, and that Joseph, warned by an angel, brought the Lord and His mother back to the land of Israel, signifies that all persecutions launched against the Church will be avenged by the death of the persecutors. When these persecutors are dealt with, peace will be restored to the Church, and the saints who had been hiding will return to their own places. Herod also, as a figure of the devil, rages and groans over losing the kingdom of his iniquity when people convert to Christ. Thus, if he kills infants, he seems to himself to be killing Jesus. He continuously tries to accomplish this by seizing the Holy Spirit from the newly reborn and attempting to extinguish the infancy of tender faith.

We can also understand Herod's hatred in wanting to destroy Jesus as representing the persecutions in Judea during the times of the apostles, especially when the preachers of the word, due to the great power of envy, were nearly all expelled from the province and scattered far and wide to preach among the gentiles. Thus, it happened that the gentiles, symbolized by Egypt, which was once darkened by sins, received the light of the word. This signifies that taking the child Jesus and His mother to Egypt through Joseph means that the faith in the Lord's incarnation and the fellowship of the Church were entrusted to the gentiles through the holy teachers. The fact that they stayed in Egypt until the death of Herod figuratively indicates that the faith of Christ would remain among the gentiles until the fullness of the gentiles comes in, and so all Israel will be saved. Indeed, Herod's death marks the end of the malicious intent that now rages against the Church by the Jews. The slaughter of the infants signifies the death of the lowly in spirit, whom the Jews killed after driving away Christ. But when Herod died, and [the Lord] returned to the land of Israel, it denotes the end of the world when, with Enoch and Elijah preaching, the Jews, the flame of modern envy extinguished, will accept the faith of the truth.

It is fitting that when He departs from Judea, it is said to be at night, but when He returns, no mention of night or flight is made, because those whom He once left due to the darkness of their sins, He now revisits because of the light of their faith, seeking Him. Even though Herod is dead, Joseph, fearing Archelaus, Herod's son, dared not go to Judea, where he had his met-

ropolis. Warned by an angel, he withdrew to Nazareth in Galilee. This signifies the end times of the present Church when, due to the present universal blindness of that nation, which persecutes Christians to the utmost of its power, a fiercer persecution by the Antichrist will arise in some places. And indeed, many, through the preaching of Enoch and Elijah, will turn from perfidy, but others, under the influence of Antichrist, will fight against the faith with all their might. Therefore, the part of Judea where Archelaus ruled represents the followers of Antichrist, while Nazareth in Galilee, where the Lord was taken, represents that part of the nation that will then embrace the faith of Christ. Hence, the transfer to Galilee is well executed, and Nazareth, meaning "flower" or "shoot," symbolizes it. Because as the holy Church migrates with greater ardor from worldly things to achieve heavenly ones, it flourishes more abundantly in the bloom and sprout of spiritual virtues. Therefore, beloved brothers, since we venerate the first martyrs in today's feast, let us diligently think about the eternal feast of martyrs in heaven.

By following their footsteps as much as we can, let us also strive to be participants in that heavenly feast, as the Apostle testifies: "If we are partners in sufferings, we will also be partners in consolation. Let us not mourn their [unjust] death as much as we rejoice in their just reception of the palm [of martyrdom]. Each one of them, when driven by torment from this life, was followed with lament and tears by Rachel, that is, the holy Church that mourns, but departing from here, they were soon received by the heavenly Jerusalem, our mother, with joyful ministers, and were introduced into the eternal joy of their Lord, to be crowned perpetually. Thus says John: "They stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands" (Rev. 7). For now, those who once lay tormented before the thrones of earthly judges now stand crowned before the throne of God. They stand before the Lamb, unable to be separated from the sight of His glory, from whose love here they could not be torn away by any punishment. They shine in white robes and have palms in their hands, because they have rewards in their deeds, while the bodies which were torn for the Lord by fire and beasts, consumed by lashes, dissolved by precipices, scraped by claws, suffered by every kind of severe punishment, receive glorified bodies through the resurrection. And they cried out, he says, with a loud voice saying:

Salvation to our God, who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb (Rev. VII). With a loud voice they sing of salvation to God, who with great thanksgiving they recall, not by their own strength but with His help, they overcame the struggles of attacking tribulations. He again describes their past combats and eternal crowns: These are the ones who came out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes, and whitened them in the blood of the Lamb (Ibid). For the martyrs washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, while their bodies, which to the eyes of the unwise seemed to be defiled by the squalor of punishment, rather thus by the blood poured out for Christ, cleansed from all impurities: moreover, they made them worthy of the blessed light of immortality, which is to have washed and also whitened the robes in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are, he says, before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. The service is not laborious, but loving and desirable, to always stand in the praises of God: for day and night do not signify the alternation of time properly, but symbolically signify perpetuity. For night will not be there, but one day in the courts of Christ better than thousands, in which Rachel does not weep for her children, but God wipes every tear from their eyes;

giving the voice of joy and eternal salvation in the dwellings of the righteous to Him who lives and reigns God forever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY 10: ON THE FESTIVAL DAY OF THE CIRCUMCISION OF THE LORD

Luke 2

At that time, when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the child, he was named Jesus, as was spoken. The evangelist comprehends the holy and venerable memory of the present feast in a few words indeed, but he left it pregnant with the power of heavenly mystery. For having set forth the birth of the Lord, whose joys the angels immediately celebrated with worthy praises, the shepherds celebrated with devout visitation, and all who heard at that time marveled, we also, according to our measure, as much as we could, with Christ the Lord granting, performed with solemn hymns of the masses, he added and said: And after eight days were completed for his circumcision, his name was called Jesus, which was called by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. These are the venerable joys of today's festival, this is the sacred solemnity of the day, these are the most sacred gifts of divine piety, which the Apostle commending to the hearts of the faithful says: Because,

when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons (Galatians IV). For with great dispensation of piety for the redemption of the human race, God the Father deigned to send not an angel, nor an archangel, but his only-begotten Son. Whom we cannot see in the form of his divinity, he again with great art of love provided that he was made of a woman, that is from the substance of maternal flesh, conceived without male admixture, to be brought forth as true man to human sight: who, remaining in divine power and substance through all things he was, assumed true weakness of mortal nature, which he did not have. And to commend to us the necessary virtue of obedience by the supreme example, God sent his Son into the world, made under the law:

not because he owed anything to the law, who alone is our teacher, alone is legislator and judge, but that he might aid those who were placed under the law who could not bear the burdens of the law, with his compassion, and might lead those who were rescued from the condition of servitude under the law to the adoption of sons, which is through grace, with his own generosity. Therefore, he accepted circumcision ordained by the law in the flesh, who appeared without any stain in the flesh at all, and who came in the likeness of sinful flesh, not in the flesh of sin itself, did not reject the remedy by which the sinful flesh used to be cleansed: just as he also underwent the wave of Baptism, by which he wanted to cleanse the peoples from the filth of sins with the grace of the new law, not out of necessity, but as an example. For your fraternity ought to know that circumcision in the law acted against the wound of original sin in the same way as Baptism now in the time of revealed grace customarily acts, except that they could not yet enter the gate of the heavenly kingdom until he who gave the law would come and give the blessing, so that God of gods might appear in Zion, as they, consoled by blessed rest in Abraham's bosom after death, would await the entry into heavenly peace with happy hope. For the same one who now cries out terribly and salutarily through his Gospel:

Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God (John III); he the same one long ago through his law cried out: A male whose foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant (Genesis XVII), that is, because the covenant of life commanded to men in paradise was broken by Adam's trans-

gression, in which all sinned: he will perish from the assembly of the saints, unless he is aided by a saving remedy. Therefore, both purifications, namely of circumcision in the law and of Baptism in the Gospel, were established for the grace of removing the first transgression. Those also who from the beginning of the world until the time of given circumcision or after given circumcision, from other nations were pleasing to God, either by offerings of sacrifices, or certainly by the virtue of faith alone, commending their souls and those of their people to the Creator, took care to loosen them from the bonds of the initial guilt. For without faith it is impossible to please God: and as it is written elsewhere: The just shall live by faith (Habakkuk II). But coming in the flesh, the Son of God, who contracted only the nature of the flesh, but no contagion of sin from Adam, and since conceived and born of the Virgin by the power of the Holy Spirit, stood in need of no renewing grace:

He deigned to accept both types of purification, being circumcised by His parents on the eighth day of His birth, and baptized by John in the thirtieth year of His age. Indeed, He did not refuse the third service of the sacrificial victim, being offered up in the temple by the Lord of the temple Himself. Whose thirty-third day, with the help of the Lord, your charity is about to hear and celebrate the mystery. All, I say, both legal and evangelical purification, which He did not need, the Lord did not despise to undertake, so that He might teach the decrees of the law already to be most beneficial, and show to all the faithful the remedies of the coming Gospel as equally necessary to undergo. And in this, too, that on the same day of His circumcision He received the name of Jesus, He did it in imitation of the ancient observance, which we believe was taken from the fact that the patriarch Abraham, who first received the sacrament of circumcision as a witness to his great faith and the divine promise to him, was also on the same day of his circumcision and that of his people blessed with an enlargement of name along with his wife, so that he who was formerly called Abram, exalted father, was then called Abraham, that is, father of many nations: "because," as it says, "I have made you the father of many nations.

This most faithful promise has now been so widely fulfilled throughout the world that even we ourselves, called from the Gentiles to the devotion of his faith, rejoice to have him as our spiritual father, the Apostle saying to us: "If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, heirs according to the

promise" (Galatians 3). And Sarai, your wife, you shall not call Sarai, but Sarah, that is, not my princess, but princess: manifestly teaching that she who became a participant and companion of such great faith should not be properly called the princess of her own household, but absolutely the princess, that is, of all rightly believing women, and be recognized as their parent. Therefore, the blessed Apostle Peter, addressing believing women from the Gentiles to the virtue of humility, chastity, and modesty, makes fitting mention of our same mother Sarah with due praise. "As Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror" (1 Peter 3). These things, brothers, I have taken care to remind your love, so that each of you may remember that you also, having received the faith of Christ, have merited the fellowship of a noble name with the patriarchs if, having received purification in Christ, you rejoice in having borrowed the surname derived from Christ's saving name and strive to keep it firm and unblemished to the end, rejoicing that in you Isaiah's prophecy has been fulfilled:

"And His servants shall be called by another name" (Isaiah 65), that is, by the name Christian, with which all the servants of Christ now delight to be distinguished. For there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. Wherefore the prophet continues: "In whom he blesseth himself on earth shall bless himself in the God of truth" (Acts 4). He also elsewhere speaks of the same, addressing the Church to be multiplied even from the Gentiles: "The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, and all kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name which the mouth of the Lord will name" (Isaiah 62). The reason the child who was born to us and the Son who was given to us received the name Jesus, that is, Saviour, is not to be understood by our reasoning but requires careful and vigilant meditation, so that we too may be saved by participation in the same name. For we read, as interpreted by the angel: "For He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1). And we undoubtably believe and hope that He who saves us from sins will also save us from the implications resulting from sins and from death itself, as the Psalmist testifies, who says: "Who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases" (Psalm 103). For our complete healing will come with the forgiveness of all our iniquities and the manifestation of resurrection glory, when the last enemy, death, will be destroyed.

And this is our true and complete circumcision when, in the Day of Judgment, being stripped of all the corruptions of soul and body, having completed the judgment, we shall enter to see forever the Creator's face, signifying the typical presentation of circumcised infants to the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem with acceptable offerings of praise. For he who is cleansed by true circumcision enters the temple of the Lord with gifts, and being purged from all stain of mortality by the glory of the resurrection, ascends with the fruits of good works to the everlasting joys of the heavenly city. "You have broken my bonds," he says, "I will offer you the sacrifice of praise. I will pay my vows to the Lord in the courts of the house of the Lord, in the presence of all his people, in the midst of you, Jerusalem" (Psalm 115). The most desired time of celestial entrance is indicated by that eighth day on which circumcision is celebrated. For there are six ages of this world distinguished by the well-known intervals of the times, in which it is necessary to labor for God and to work temporarily for the attainment of eternal rest. But the eighth age is the day of the resurrection, blessed without any end of time, when the true glory of circumcision shines forth in all ways, and the body, which corrupts, no longer burdens the soul;

earthly habitation does not depress the mind thinking of many things, but the already incorruptible body gladdens the soul, and the heavenly habitation lifts up the whole man cleaving to the vision of his Creator. The Prophet expounds the blessedness of this eternal day in that Psalm which we mentioned above, stirring up his soul and all the affections of his inner man to bless the Lord and to remember all His rewards: "Who redeems your life from ruin," he says, "who satisfies your desire with good things, who crowns you with compassion and mercy, your youth will be renewed like the eagle's. Therefore, dearest brothers, it is necessary that we, who desire to reach the rewards of this most beautiful renewal, as the ultimate circumcision, in the meantime care for the preliminary circumcision and renewal, which must be undergone daily in the exercise of virtues as in a form of remedy. Let us lay down the old man, according to the former conduct, who is corrupted according to deceitful desires, and be renewed in the spirit of our mind, and put on the new man, who is created according to God in justice and holiness of truth. Neither let us believe that it is sufficient to chasten ourselves by hearing circumcision only in one member of our body: but as the Apostle

warns elsewhere: "Let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement and pollution of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (II Cor. VII);

let us read the Acts of the Apostles, see the most blessed proto-martyr Stephen thundering terribly at the Jews who are persecuting him with the Lord: "You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. Therefore, if the uncircumcised in heart and ears are those who resist the Holy Spirit's admonitions, there is certainly a circumcision of the heart and ears. And if there is a circumcision of the heart and ears, there is also one of all the senses of our outer and inner man. For he who has seen a woman to covet her, who has lofty eyes, has uncircumcised sight: to whom it is said by the voice of Truth: "He who is of God hears the words of God. Therefore, you do not hear, because you are not of God" (John VIII). They are uncircumcised in ears, uncircumcised in tongue and hands are those whose mouth has spoken vanity, and their right hand is the right hand of iniquity: "who speak peace to their neighbor, but evil is in their hearts, and their right hand is filled with bribes. They are uncircumcised in taste, whom the prophet rebukes, saying: "Woe to those who are strong to drink wine, and men of strength to mix drunkenness" (Isaiah V). Uncircumcised by smell and touch, who are smeared with ointment and various perfumes; who follow the embraces of a harlot, sprinkling their bed with myrrh, and aloes, and cinnamon. Uncircumcised in their steps, of whom the Psalmist mentions:

Destruction and misery are in their ways, and the way of peace they have not known (Psalm XI). But those who with all guard keep their heart, who turn their eyes away so that they do not see vanity, who fence their ears with thorns so that they do not hear the evil tongue, who taste and see how sweet the Lord is, how blessed are the men who trust in Him, who keep their paths so that they do not sin with their tongue, who, as long as there is breath in them, and the Spirit of God in their nostrils, do not speak with iniquitous lips, nor does their tongue meditate deceit, who lift up their hands to the commands of God which they love, who prevent their feet from every evil way so that they keep the word of God, all these show that they have their senses circumcised by the spiritual rock of exercise. For we read that circumcision is done with flint knives: but the rock was Christ, by whose faith, hope, and love, not only in baptism but in every truly devoted action, the hearts of the good are purified.

And this continuous circumcision of ours, which is the daily purification of the heart, never ceases to celebrate the sacrament of the eighth day, because it customarily sanctifies us in the example of the Lord's resurrection, which took place on the eighth day, that is, after the seventh of the Sabbath, so that as Christ rose from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we may also walk in newness of life, provided by God who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY 11: ON THE FEAST DAY OF THEOPHANY

Matthew 3; Mark 1; Luke 3; John 1

At that time, Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him, etc. The reading of the Holy Gospel, which we have just now heard, brothers, gives us a great example of perfect humility both in the Lord and in the servant. In the Lord indeed, because, although he is the Lord, he deigned not only to be baptized by a human servant but also himself to come to this one to be baptized. In the servant, however, because although he knew that he was designated to be the forerunner and baptizer of his Savior, mindful nevertheless of his own frailty, he humbly excused the office enjoined upon him, saying: I ought to be baptized by you, and do you come to me? But because everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and everyone who humbles himself will be exalted, and the Lord, who in the form of a man appeared humble for the instruction of mankind, was soon exalted by God the Father above men, nay even above angels, and above all that is created, as it was made manifest by the voice descending upon him from magnificent glory: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And that most faithful and humble servant John, who preferred to be baptized by the Lord rather than to baptize the Lord, and who was deemed worthy to see the Spirit descending upon him with the eyes of his mind opened above other mortals. But since we have briefly touched upon these matters, let us now consider at greater length the very beginning of the sacred reading.

Then Jesus came, he said, from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. The Son of God came to be baptized by a man, not out of an anxious necessity of washing away any of his own sin—He who did no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth—but out of a pious dispensation to wash away the contagion of all our sin, we who all offend in many ways, and if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. He came to be baptized in the waters, the creator of the waters themselves, so

that to us who are conceived in iniquities and born in sins, He might insinuate the mystery of the second birth, which is celebrated through water and spirit. He deigned to be washed in the waters of the Jordan, He who was clean from all stains, so that He might sanctify the streams of the waters for washing away all the stains of our sins. But since we have recognized the most humble dispensation of the Lord from the gospel reading, let us also intently observe the most humble obedience of the servant.

But John forbade Him, saying: I need to be baptized by You, and You come to me? He was terrified that He, who had no fault to be washed away by baptism, would come to him to be baptized with water, indeed He who by the grace of His Spirit would take away the entire fault of the world for believers. Hence it is rightly understood that what John says here, I need to be baptized by You, is that which is narrated in the Evangelist John when he says: Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who takes away the sins of the world (John 1). For we all ought to be baptized by Him who came into the world for this purpose, to take away the sins of the world. Even John himself needed to be baptized by Him, that is, to be cleansed from the contamination of original sin, who, although no one born of women was greater [or, none were greater], nevertheless, as born of a woman, did not lack the stain of sin. Therefore, with other children of women, he needed to be washed by Him who was born of a Virgin, who appeared as God in the flesh. For it is written: What is man that he should be clean, and he who is born of a woman that he should appear pure (Job 15)? Justly, therefore, the man, although holy but born of a woman and not immune from the stain of guilt, feared to baptize the Lord, whom he knew to be born of a virgin and to have no stain of guilt whatsoever. But because true humility is itself that which obedience does not desert, what he first feared to do, he humbly fulfilled.

But Jesus answering said to him: Allow it now, for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness: then he allowed him. That is, then he finally allowed, then he agreed, then he permitted him to be baptized by him, when he understood that all righteousness ought to be fulfilled in such an order. Allow it now, he said, allow me now, as commanded, to be baptized by you in water, and afterward you will be baptized by me in the spirit for what you seek. For thus it becomes us to set an example of fulfilling all righteousness, so that the faithful may learn that no human can exist perfectly just without the wave of Baptism, and that the duty of life-giving regeneration is neces-

sary for all living innocently and justly, knowing that I, who was conceived and born by the work of the Holy Spirit, underwent the second birth, or rather that I consecrated the washing to myself. Let no greater person disdains to be baptized by my humble self in remission of sins, when he remembers that the Lord, who usually forgives sins by baptizing in the Holy Spirit, submitted his head to the hands of the servant to be baptized in water.

But Jesus, having been baptized, immediately went up from the water: and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and coming upon Him. And this pertains to the fulfillment of all righteousness, as the heavens were opened to the baptized Lord, and the Spirit descended upon Him, so that our faith may surely be confirmed through the mystery of sacred Baptism, opening to us the entrance of the heavenly fatherland, and the grace of the Holy Spirit being granted. For is it to be believed that the secrets of heaven were first revealed to the Lord, when true faith holds that He had remained in the bosom of the Father, and held the heavenly throne, not less in the time when He conversed with men, than before and after that? Or, did He receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit from the thirtieth year of His age, when He was baptized, who from His conception was always full of the Holy Spirit? Therefore, beloved brothers, these mysteries were celebrated for us. Because the Lord dedicated the washing of Baptism to us by the sacred immersion of His body, He also showed to us that, after receiving Baptism, the entrance to the heavens is open, and the Holy Spirit is given. And fittingly so, because the first Adam, deceived by an unclean spirit through the serpent, lost the joys of the heavenly kingdom;

the second Adam, glorified by the Holy Spirit through the dove, unlocked the gates of that same kingdom, and extinguished the flaming sword, by which the Cherubim, the guardians, had shut off the entrance to paradise after the first Adam was expelled. The second Adam on this day showed that through the water of the regenerating washing it should be extinguished, so that where he (the first Adam) was defeated by the enemy along with his spouse, the second Adam would return victorious over the enemy with His holy Church, namely His bride, and even bestow more significant gifts of immortal life redeemed from sin, as the father of the future world, the prince of peace, gave gifts that the father of our present world, the prince of discord, having been sold under sin, lost for himself and his offspring. For

that most blessed life that Adam abandoned, though glorified in incomparable light and peace and frequent vision and conversation of God and the angels, was nevertheless established in earthly places of this earth, though nourished by fruits procured without labor: but this life which Christ grants is in the fortress of the heavens, eternal life, not in frequent but in continuous light of divine contemplation. The first blessed life of man was thus immortal, so that man could not die in it, if he cautiously kept himself from the seduction of sin; but the second life will be thus immortal, so that man cannot die in it, nor be tempted by any seduction of attacking sin.

But rightly, the reconciling Spirit appeared in the dove, which is a very simple bird, to show through the nature of this animal the simplicity of His own nature. For the Holy Spirit of discipline will flee deceit, so that He teaches the one upon whom He descends to be mild, gentle, and a minister proclaiming heavenly mercy to the world; and simultaneously, He admonishes all who are to be renewed by His grace to be simple and pure in heart, according to what is written: Think of the Lord with goodness, and seek Him in the simplicity of heart. For into a malicious soul wisdom will not enter, nor dwell in a body subject to sins (Wisdom 1). Hence Simon, who chose to remain in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity, could not have a part and lot in this Spirit. Indeed, he was full of that spirit who appeared to men in the serpent, infecting hearts with the pestilence of malice and deceit. But as the Spirit descended upon the Lord, let us see what follows:

And behold, a voice from the heavens said: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. The Son of God is baptized in human form, the Spirit of God descends as a dove, God the Father is declared in the voice of the holy and undivided Trinity in the mystery of the Baptism. Indeed, it is fitting that He who would command His ministers to teach all nations and baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, should first personally reveal the entire Trinity at His own baptism. When the paternal voice says, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," it speaks in contrast to the earthly man, suggesting that God the Creator was, in some way, displeased with man when he sinned, as it is said: "It repents Me that I have made man on the earth" (Gen. VI). Repentance does not indeed befall God, but He speaks in our way, we who are accustomed to remorse when we see our works turn against our wish. He said it repented Him to have made man on earth, seeing him deviating from the

rectitude of His creation by sinning. But in His only begotten Son, He was singularly well pleased, for He knew that this man whom He had assumed would be kept free from sin. And in this voice of the Father, as in the other mysteries of our Lord's baptism, the completion of all righteousness is declared.

The co-eternal and consubstantial Son to the Father, with the Spirit descending upon Him, is revealed to men, so that by this they may learn that through the grace of baptism, having received the Holy Spirit, they can move from being children of the devil to being children of God, as the Apostle teaches, speaking thus to the faithful: "You have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Romans VIII). And the evangelist John says: "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name" (John I). Therefore, beloved brothers, recalling as He Himself granted, the baptism of our Savior, let us return to ourselves, and since we have heard the humility and obedience of both the baptizer and the baptized, let us strive to preserve the baptism we received through humble obedience, cleansing ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Thus, humbly urging those who have not yet been initiated into these mysteries to undergo and keep them, and all of us who have been promoted by priestly rank to dispense these sacraments, let us humbly fulfill the office enjoined upon us. Let us all diligently strive so that we do not close against ourselves the gate of the heavenly homeland, which has been opened to us by divine mysteries, through human enticements.

For the Lord is not recounted by the evangelist Luke as having prayed after being baptized by John, and thus with the heavens opened, the Spirit and the voice of the Father could be heard, who also, after being baptized by three concurring evangelists, immediately undertook a solitary fast of forty days; but he surely taught and informed us by his example that after receiving remission of sins in baptism, we should devote ourselves to vigils, fasts, prayers, and the other fruits of the Spirit, lest the unclean spirit, which was expelled from our hearts at baptism, should find us sluggish and less vigilant, return, and finding us empty of spiritual wealth, suppress us with a sevenfold plague, and our last state becomes worse than the first. Let us be extremely careful not to kindle a fire for ourselves, which may obstruct our path of life, frequently igniting kindling of our vices. For the flaming sword, whatever it

may be, which guards the gates of paradise, is extinguished for every faithful person at the font of baptism, so they might return. However, it remains ever immovable for the unfaithful. Even for the falsely called faithful, who are not elected, as they do not fear to entangle themselves in crimes after baptism, it is as if the same fire is rekindled after extinction;

so they do not deserve to enter the kingdom sought with a deceitful and double heart, more fraudulent with a serpent's tooth than with the simplicity of the dove's eye, which the Lord has shown he greatly loves in his church, who in the Song of Love says: "Behold, you are beautiful, my friend, behold you are beautiful: your eyes are doves" (Songs 1). Hence, because the form of the dove is proposed to us to learn the simplicity pleasing to God, let us more diligently observe its nature, so that by the examples of its innocence, we may adopt principles for a more correct life. This bird is entirely free from the malice of gall. Likewise, let us be alienated from the gall of malice, and let all bitterness, wrath, and indignation be taken away from us, along with all malice. Thus, it harms none with either beak or claws, nor does it seek even the smallest fish or worms, on which almost all other birds feed themselves and their chicks. Let us observe whether our teeth are weapons and arrows, lest by biting and devouring one another, we be consumed by each other. Let us restrain our hands from plunder; let him who stole, no longer steal. But rather, let him labor, working with his hands what is good, so that he may have something to give to those in need. For the dove is often found to feed the young of others as if they were its own.

It feeds on the fruits and seed of the earth. Let us hear the apostle: "It is good not to eat meat, and not to drink wine" (Romans 14). And the apostle Peter says: "supply virtue in your faith; and in virtue, knowledge; and in knowledge, self-control; and in self-control, perseverance; and in perseverance, piety; and in piety, brotherly love" (2 Peter 1). It substitutes a coo for a song. Let us be miserable, and mourn, and weep before the Lord who made us. Let our laughter be turned to mourning, and our joy to gloom. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. It is accustomed to sit upon the waters, so that, foreseeing the shadow of an approaching hawk reflected in the waters, it avoids it. And let us be clean and purified, diligently attending to the streams of the Scriptures, by the mirrors of which we can learn to discern and guard against the traps of the ancient enemy. The Church indeed, which is the bride of Christ, loves the Scriptures, singing in

the praises of her beloved: "His eyes are like doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set" (Song of Solomon 5:12). The dove is accustomed to nesting in the hollows of the rock, in the crevice of the wall. The rock is Christ, whose hands were pierced with nails, and his side with a spear while on the cross, from which immediately flowed blood and water—the mystery of our sanctification and cleansing.

The wall is his strength collected from the saints, the crevice in it is the bosom of paternal affection, where, fostering the tender souls of the faithful for the perfection of faith, hope, and love, they open up a place for nesting doves as it were. Hence, let us, who are still small in faith, humbly come under the protection of these stronger aids, always striving to be sanctified by the sacraments of the Lord's Passion. The Lord seeks such a manner of living for all of us, wishing to see the life of each of us devoted to such pursuits, rejoicing to have his praises proclaimed and sung by such voices. "Arise," he says, "my friend, my beautiful one, and come, my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the hollow places of the wall. Show me your face, let your voice sound in my ears" (Song of Solomon 2). Let it suffice to have recounted these seven virtues of the dove. And it is rightly so, perhaps, because the grace of the Holy Spirit, who descended in the form of a dove, is sevenfold. However, from all that human ingenuity can morally interpret from its nature, one remains that sacred history narrates of its mystical act.

For when the Lord, by means of the waters of the flood, washed away the crimes of the original world in the figure of future baptism, after the purification had been accomplished and desiring Noah to know how the face of the earth was, He sent out a raven, which scorned to return to the ark, signifying those who, although washed by the water of baptism, yet negligently persist in the blackest habit of the old man by not serving better, and not deserving to be renewed by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, they immediately depart from the inner unity of catholic peace and quiet, following outward things, that is, the desires of the world. He sent out after it a dove; she came to him in the evening, carrying a branch of olive with green leaves in her beak. I believe you notice, brothers, and anticipate my speech with your understanding, that the branch of olive with green leaves is the grace of the Holy Spirit abounding with the words of life: of whose fullness resting upon Christ, the Psalm says: "God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions" (Psalm 45). Of whose gift given to the companions of

Christ John speaks: "You have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things" (1 John 2). And with a very beautiful comparison, the shadow of truth harmonizes. The dove of flesh carried the olive branch washed by the waters of the flood into the ark;

the Holy Spirit in the form of a bodily dove descended on the Lord baptized by the water of the Jordan. We also, members of Christ and the Church, whom not only the men who were in the ark with Noah but also the animals which the ark contained, and even the woods from which the ark itself was made, represent, after having received the washing of the water of regeneration: by the anointing of the sacred chrism we are sealed with the grace of the Holy Spirit, which may He who gave it, Jesus Christ our Lord, deem worthy to keep inviolate in us, who lives and reigns eternally. Amen.

HOMILY 12: ON THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Luke 2

At that time, when Jesus was twelve years old, ascended with them to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast day, and having completed the days, when they were returning, the boy Jesus remained in Jerusalem, etc. The reading of the holy Gospel has been recited to us, dearest brothers, and there is no need for us to speak in explanation of it. For it describes the infancy and childhood of our Redeemer, by which He deigned to become a partaker of our humanity: it recalls the eternity of the divine majesty, in which He has always remained equal to the Father; so that, with the humility of His incarnation brought to mind, we might also strive to practice the medicine of true humility against all the wounds of sin, always remembering with a pious soul how much we ought to humble ourselves for divine love, and for our own salvation, we who are earth and ashes, if that highest Power did not disdain to humble Himself for us in order to descend to receiving the weaknesses of our frailty. Also, having heard, believed, and confessed the divinity of the Lord Savior, by which He always remains consubstantial and coeternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit, let us hope that through the sacraments of His humanity with which we have been imbued, we might be able to reach the contemplation of His divine glory, which He Himself promises to His faithful servants with faithful piety, saying: He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me: and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him (John XIV).

"I will manifest Myself," He says, that is, not as I appear to everyone, as even unbelievers can see and crucify Me, but as in His own beauty the King of ages can be seen only by the pure eyes of the saints, I will show Myself in this manner to those who love Me, as a return of love. Therefore, let us hope, as we have said, that through the sacraments of His humanity we might ascend to see the form of His divinity, if indeed we keep those sacraments unstained with the worthy honor of justice and holiness and truth, as we have received them, if we humbly follow the examples of His human life, and the teachings which He delivered to us through man. For who, if he disdains to follow the footsteps of His humility, with what temerity does he hope to penetrate to the joys of His glory? Therefore, what the Lord did every year with His parents, coming to Jerusalem for the Passover, is undoubtedly a sign of human humility. For it is for man to hasten to offer spiritual sacrifices to God, and to reconcile himself to his Creator with prayers and tears profusely poured out. Therefore, the Lord, born as a man among men, did what God had commanded men to do through angels. He himself observed the law he gave, so that he might show us, who are mere men, that everything God commands must be observed in all things.

Therefore, let us follow the path of his human conversation, if we delight in beholding the glory of divinity, if we desire to dwell in his eternal house in the heavens all the days of our life, if we find joy in seeing the delight of the Lord, and being protected by his holy temple (Psalm 26). And, that we may not be struck by any wind of evil in eternity, let us remember to frequent the house of the present Church with the necessary gifts of pure prayers. That he sat in the temple at the age of twelve in the midst of the doctors, listening to and questioning them, is an indication of human humility, or rather, an eminent example of learnable humility. Indeed, the power of God, the eternal wisdom of God, which speaks divinely: "I, wisdom, dwell in counsel, and I am among learned thoughts. Counsel and justice are mine, prudence is mine, strength is mine; by me kings reign, and law-makers decree what is just. Blessed is the man who listens to me, who watches daily at my doors, who waits at the posts of my doors" (Proverbs 8). Clad in human form, she deigned to come to listen to humans, to undoubtedly provide the form necessary for learning the word to people, however gifted they may be with supreme talent: lest any who refuse to become disciples of truth turn out to be teachers of error.

And fittingly, he who was to undertake the office of teaching while young, even as a little boy, listens and questions the elders, so that by their provident dispensation he curbs the audacity of those who, not only unlearned but even immature, rush to teach rather than submitting themselves to learning. Let us follow the path of his humanity, if the dwelling of divine vision delights us, always mindful of that precept: "Listen, my son, to the discipline of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother, so that grace may be added to your head, and chains around your neck" (Proverbs 1). Through the listening to paternal discipline and the observance of maternal law, grace is indeed added to our head, and chains to our neck: because the more one is attentive to listening to divine precepts, the more diligently one strives to observe them in the unity of Mother Church, the more worthily one will ascend now to the honor of preaching, and in the future, to the highest beatitude of reigning with Christ without end. But lest anyone suppose that the Lord and Savior resorted to listen and question the teachers due to any need of ignorance, let us see what follows:

All who heard him were amazed at his prudence and responses, and seeing him, they were astonished. For the same one who was truly man and truly God, to show that he was man, humbly listened to human teachers, and to prove that he was God, responded to them loftily. His mother seeking and saying: "Son, why have you done this to us? Behold, your father and I were searching for you in sorrow. He responded: "And why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in the things of my Father? This was a sign of divine majesty, of which he says elsewhere: "All things that the Father has are mine"; and therefore he rightly testifies that the temple pertains to him no less than to the Father. Found in the temple, he says that he must be in his Father's things: because indeed, of those whose majesty and glory are one, their seat and house are also one; not only the material house of God, which is made temporarily for worshiping Him, but also the intellectual house which is built for praising Him eternally, belongs equally to the Father and the Son, indeed even to the Holy Spirit. Hence, the same Son of God who promises to his beloved about himself and the Father: "We will come to him and make our home with him (John 14)," says of the Spirit: "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever, the Spirit of truth, who will remain with you and will be in you (Ibid.). Because, indeed, the dwelling of the same Holy Trinity, whose nature

of divinity is one and indivisible, cannot be otherwise within the hearts of the elect.

Therefore, what the Lord says while sitting in the temple, "I must be in my Father's things," is a declaration of coeternal power and glory with God the Father. But what he was submissive to his parents when returning to Nazareth, is a sign of human truth, as well as an example of humility. For in that nature he was subject to men, in which he is lesser than the Father. Hence, he himself says: "I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I"; in which he is also made a little lower than the angels (John 14). But in that in which he and the Father are one, in which he does not go to the Father in time, but always is in him, all things were made through him, and he is before all. Greatly to be admired is the dispensation of his great mercy, who, seeing that his parents could not yet grasp the mystery of his divine majesty, showed to them the humility of human subjection, so that through this, he might gradually lead them to the recognition of his divinity. For when he said, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's things? and they did not understand the word that he spoke to them, as the evangelist following insinuates:

He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was submissive to them. Thus He revealed the secret of His divine power to His parents through His human frailty, to His true mother of His flesh, and to His most chaste guardian of His chastity, who at that time, not yet enlightened by the light of the Gospel, was almost universally estimated and called by those who knew them both as her husband by carnal union, and as the carnal father and guardian of the Lord and Savior Himself. He said to them, I must be about My Father's business. When they could not comprehend the heights of such a mystery, nor could they understand Him being involved in what truly belonged to His Father, He came down to accompany them in their ordinary conversation, and began to dwell in the things that were theirs: and He was submissive to them for pious reasons, until they could recognize how much He was to be preferred above all creatures. Let us consider briefly what our pride does in this regard. Certainly, when we realize that simpler brothers cannot understand the mysteries of Scripture we speak of, which we have learned with the Lord's help over time and not eternity, we tend to become proud and look down on them, and boast about our unique and extensive knowledge, as if there were not many much more learned than us.

And although we do not want to be despised by the more learned, we ourselves enjoy despising and even mocking those less learned than us. We do not care to remember that it is not to those who only comprehend the mysteries of faith or the commandments of their Creator by meditation, but rather to those who exercise what they have been able to learn through action, that the gates of the heavenly kingdom are open. Furthermore, it is sin for one who knows to do good and does not do it. And as the Lord Himself witnesses, to whom much is given, much is required from them (Luke 12). Therefore, let knowledge not inflate us, but let charity rather edify us: let us follow the example of the Son of God appearing as a human, who submitted Himself with benign humility to those He saw were not yet able to follow Him to the heights of knowledge, so that by His example, their minds imbued with heavenly grace would be made capable of receiving the heavenly mysteries.

And his mother, he said, kept all these words, pondering them in her heart. All the things that the Virgin Mother knew were said or done concerning the Lord or by the Lord, she diligently kept in her heart, carefully committing all things to memory, so that when the time finally came to preach or write about His incarnation, she would be able to fully explain everything as it happened to those who sought to know. Let us also, my brothers, imitate the pious mother of the Lord, keeping all the words and deeds of our Lord and Savior fixed in our hearts, repelling the troublesome incursions of worthless and harmful thoughts through daily and nightly meditation on them: through frequent reflection on them, let us also endeavor to chastise ourselves and our neighbors from useless and ill-sweetened conversations of detraction and to incite to the frequenting of divine praise. For if, dearest brothers, we desire to dwell in the house of the Lord in the blessedness of the world to come and praise Him forever, it is certainly necessary that we diligently show in this world what we seek in the future by frequently visiting the thresholds of the Church, not only by singing the praises of the Lord in it but also by striving through words and deeds in every place of His dominion for those things that contribute to the praise and glory of our Creator.

And Jesus, it says, increased in wisdom, age, and grace before God and men. It indicates the nature of true humanity, in which He desired to grow over time, who in divinity is the same, and His years will not fail. According

to the nature of man, He increased in wisdom, not by becoming wiser over time, who from the very hour of conception remained full of the spirit of wisdom, but by gradually demonstrating to others over time the same wisdom of which He was full. According to the nature of man, He increased in age, because He advanced from infancy to childhood, from childhood to youth, through the customary order of human growth. According to the nature of man, He increased in grace, not by receiving what He did not have through the passage of time, but by revealing the gift of grace which He had. And rightly, when it was said that Jesus increased in wisdom, age, and grace, it was added, before God and men; because as He increased in age, He gradually revealed to men the gifts of wisdom and grace inherent in Him, and so He took care to always rouse them to the praise of God the Father, fulfilling what He commanded others to do: Let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven (Matthew V). And thus He is said to have increased in grace and wisdom not only among men, in so much as they could recognize His wisdom and grace, but also before God, in so much as they reported the wisdom and grace which they recognized in Him to His praise and glory: to whose eternal blessings and gifts be praise and thanksgiving forever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY 13: ON THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

John 2

At that time there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there, etc. Our Lord and Savior, having been invited to the wedding, not only deigned to come but also to perform a miracle there to gladden the guests, confirming rightly the faith of believers by means of the figures of heavenly sacraments, even according to the letter. Furthermore, it indicates how damnable the disbelief of Tatian, Marcion, and others who disparage marriage is. For if there were guilt in an undefiled bed and marriages celebrated with due chastity, the Lord would by no means have wished to come to these, or to consecrate them with the beginnings of His signs. But now, because conjugal chastity is good, widowhood's continence is better, and virginal perfection is the best, He deigned to be born from the inviolate womb of the Virgin Mary to validate the chosen status of all degrees while distinguishing the merit of each. Immediately after His birth, He is blessed by the prophetic lips of the widow Anna; as a youth, He is invited by those celebrating weddings and honors them with the presence of His power. But now let

us return to the higher joy of the heavenly figures. For the Son of God came to the wedding to perform miracles on earth, to indicate that He Himself is the one of whom the Psalmist foretold under the symbol of the sun: "And He like a bridegroom coming out of His chamber rejoiced as a giant to run His course; His going forth is from the end of heaven" (Ps. 19:5-6). He also said elsewhere concerning Himself and His faithful:

"Can the children of the bridechamber mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them, and then they will fast" (Matt. 9:15). For indeed from the time when the incarnation of our Savior began to be promised to the patriarchs, it was awaited with many tears and mourning of the saints until it came. Similarly, since His ascension to the Father after the resurrection, all the hope of the saints depends on His return. But in the time He lived among men, they could not weep and mourn because they had Him with them physically whom they loved spiritually. Therefore, Christ is the bridegroom, His Church is the bride, and the children of the bridegroom or the wedding are each of His faithful: the time of the wedding is that time when through the mystery of the incarnation He united to Himself a holy Church. Thus, by no accident but by the grace of a certain mystery, He came to a wedding celebrated in a carnal manner on earth, Who descended from heaven to earth to bind the Church to Himself with spiritual love; whose chamber indeed was the unstained womb of the mother, in which God was joined to human nature and from which He proceeded as a bridegroom to associate with His Church.

The first site of the wedding was in Judea, where the Son of God deigned to become man, to consecrate the Church with the participation of His body, and to confirm it in faith with the pledge of His Spirit. But when the Gentiles were called to faith, the joyous celebration of these same weddings extended to the ends of the earth. Nor is it without mystery that it is reported that the wedding took place on the third day after the events previously described by the Evangelist, but it designates that in the third age of the world the Lord came to unite the Church to Himself. For the first age of the world was under the exemplars of the patriarchs before the law, the second under the writings of the prophets within the law, and the third under the grace proclaimed by the evangelists, shining upon the world as the light of the third day, in which our Lord and Savior appeared born in the flesh for

the redemption of humanity. But even the fact that the wedding took place in Cana of Galilee, that is, in the zeal of a completed transmigration, typically announces that those are especially worthy of Christ's grace who burn with the zeal of pious devotion, and emulate greater charisms, and know to migrate from vices to virtues, from earthly to eternal desires, by good deeds, hoping and loving.

As the Lord reclined at the wedding, the wine ran out, so that with the wine made better by His miraculous order, the glory of the hidden God in the man might be manifested, and the faith of believers in Him might grow stronger. And if we seek the mystery: at the manifestation of the Lord in the flesh, the sweet meaning of the old law began to gradually fail due to the carnal interpretation of the Pharisees, which He soon converted to spiritual doctrine, and by the power of evangelical heavenly grace altered the entire surface of the legal letter, which is to make wine from water. But first let us attempt to understand what it means when the wine ran out, and the mother of Jesus said to Him: "They have no wine." He replied: "What is that to you and to me, woman? My hour has not yet come." For He would neither dishonor His mother, who commands us to honor father and mother, nor deny that she is His mother, from whose virginal flesh He did not disdain to take flesh, even with the Apostle as a witness who says: "Who was made to him from the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. 1:3). How could He be from the seed of David according to the flesh, if not from the body of Mary according to the flesh, who descended from the seed of David? But in saying, while about to perform a miracle, "What is that to you and to me, woman?" He signifies that He did not receive the beginning of His divinity, by which the miracle was to be accomplished, from His mother temporally, but always had eternity from the Father. "What is that to you and to me, woman?" He says, when the divinity, which I always had from the Father, is not shared with your flesh, from which I took flesh. But the hour will come when He will show what He had in common with His mother, when, dying on the cross, He took care to commend the virgin to the virgin disciple. For suffering the weakness of the flesh, He piously commended His mother, known by this, to the disciple whom He loved most, while pretending not to recognize her as if unknown when about to perform divine things, because He acknowledges that she is not the author of His divine birth.

There were, however, six stone water jars set there for the purification of the Jews, each holding two or three measures. Water jars are called vessels prepared to receive water: for in Greek, ὕδωρ is called water. Water, however, designates the knowledge of the sacred Scriptures, which is accustomed both to cleanse its listeners from the filth of sins and to quench them from the fountain of divine knowledge. The six vessels in which the water was contained are the devoted hearts of the saints, whose perfection of life and faith has been proposed as an example for right living and believing to the human race through the six ages of the passing world, that is, up to the time of the Lord's Passion. And well are the vessels stone: because the hearts of the just are strong, as it were solidified by the faith and love of that stone which Daniel saw cut out of the mountain without hands, made into a great mountain, and filled the whole earth, and of which Zechariah says: "In one stone, seven eyes are fixed" (Zech. III); that is, in Christ the entirety of spiritual knowledge dwells: to whom also the Apostle Peter refers, saying: "Coming to Him, a living stone, you are being built up as living stones" (1 Pet. II). Well were the water jars placed according to the purification of the Jews only, because to the people of the Jews only was the law given through Moses.

For the grace of the Gospel and the truth were made not less to the Gentiles than to the Jews through Jesus Christ. He says, each holding two or three measures, because the authors and ministers of the sacred Scriptures, the prophets, sometimes speak only of the Father and Son, as in: "You have made all things in wisdom" (Psalm 104). The power of God in wisdom is Christ: sometimes they also make mention of the Holy Spirit, as in the Psalmist's word: "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made firm, and all their power by the spirit of His mouth" (Psalm 33). Understand by the word of the Lord and the spirit, the whole Trinity, who is one God. But as much as the difference between water and wine, so much is the difference between the understanding by which the Scriptures were comprehended before the advent of the Savior, and that which He Himself revealed to the apostles when He came, and which their disciples were left to follow perpetually. Indeed, the Lord could have filled the jars with wine, who at the beginning of human creation made all things from nothing; but He preferred to make wine from water, typically teaching that He had come not to dissolve and disapprove the law and the prophets, but rather to fulfill them, and to do

and teach nothing through the grace of the Gospel other than what the legal and prophetic Scriptures indicated He would do and teach.

Therefore let us see, brothers, six water jars filled with the saving water of the Scriptures, and let us see that same water turned into the most delightful smell and taste of wine. In the first age of the world, the righteous Abel was killed by the envy of his brother: and for this very reason, blessed with the eternal glory of martyrdom, he received the praise of righteousness even in the Gospel and Apostolic writings, and the impious fratricide suffered the penalties of eternal curse. Whoever, hearing these things, fears to be condemned with the wicked, desiring to be blessed with the righteous, will cast away the spark of all hatred and envy, and take care to please God through the sacrifice of righteousness, modesty, innocence, and patience, they find a vessel full of water in the Scripture from which they may rejoice to be washed and quenched wholesomely. But if they understand that Cain, the murderer, is the perfidy of the Jews, and the killing of Abel is the passion of the Savior, and the earth that opened its mouth and received his blood from the hand of Cain is the Church, which received the blood of Christ shed by the Jews in the mystery of its renewal, they surely find water turned into wine, because they understand the sacred sayings of the law more sacredly.

In the second age of the world, the world was destroyed by the waters of the flood because of the magnitude of sins, but only Noah was saved because of his righteousness with his household in the ark. Upon hearing about the horrible devastation of this plague and the marvelous liberation of the few, whoever begins to live more uprightly, desiring to be freed with the elect and fearing to be exterminated with the reprobate, surely finds the water jar by which he would be cleansed or refreshed. But indeed, when he begins to look more deeply, and understands the Church in the ark, Christ in Noah, the water that deluged the sinners as the water of Baptism, which washes away sins, the various differences of those baptized in the men and animals the ark contained, the dove, which after the flood brought the olive branch into the ark, as the anointing of the Holy Spirit with which the baptized are imbued, he marvels indeed at the wine made from water, because in the old history of the event he contemplates his own cleansing, sanctification, justification being prophesied. In the third age of the world, God, testing Abraham's obedience, commanded his only son whom he loved to be offered as a burnt offering to Himself. Abraham does not delay to do what he is com-

manded, but a ram is sacrificed instead of his son, yet he is endowed with the inheritance of eternal blessing because of his extraordinary virtue of obedience. Behold you have the third jar.

Hearing how great the virtue of obedience is, how great the reward it receives, you yourself strive to learn and have obedience. But if you understand the sacrifice of the beloved only son as His passion, about whom the Father says: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased (Mt. III); in which, because the divinity remained impassible, only the humanity suffered death and pain, the son is as if offered, but the ram is slaughtered. If you understand the blessing which was promised to Abraham, to be fulfilled in you through the faith of the nations, surely for you He has made wine from water, because He has opened the spiritual sense, the new fragrance of which inebriates you. At the beginnings of the fourth age, David is chosen for the salvation of the kingdom of the Israelite people, humble, innocent, and meek, an exile for him whose unjust persecution he endured for a long time. Behold, the fourth jar is filled with the fountain of salvation. Anyone hearing this and striving to humility and innocence, and beginning to repel pride and envy from his own heart, finds it like a draft of the clearest water, by which he is refreshed. But if he understands that Saul represents the Jews persecuting, and David represents Christ and the Church, perceiving that due to their infidelity both their carnal and spiritual kingdom has been destroyed, but the kingdom of Christ and the Church is always to remain, surely he senses the cup of wine made from water;

since he knows himself and his life and kingdom, but even the very king, where previously he read it as if of others in the old history. In the fifth age of the world, the sinning people are carried off into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon: but after seventy years, penitently and corrected, they are led back to their homeland by Jesus the great priest, where they rebuild the house of God that was burned and the holy city that was destroyed. Reading or hearing this, anyone who takes heed of the fear of sinning and runs to the remedy of penance, is washed with the purifying water of the jar. But if he has learned to understand Jerusalem and the temple of God as the Church of Christ, Babylon as the confusion of sins, Nebuchadnezzar as the devil, Jesus the great priest as Jesus Christ the true and eternal high priest, seventy years as the fullness of good works which are granted through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, namely for the sake of the Decalogue and the sevenfold grace of the

same Spirit, and sees this happening daily, some being snatched from the Church by the devil through sin, others being reconciled through Christ by the grace of the Holy Spirit through repentance, he has wine made from water;

because, understanding that what is written pertains to him, he immediately, with great fervor of contrition, as if heated by new wine, demands to be liberated through the grace of Christ from whatever sin of captivity he finds in himself. At the beginning of the sixth age of the world, the Lord appearing in the flesh, on the eighth day of his birth according to the law He was circumcised, and on the thirty-third day after this He was brought to the temple, and the legal offerings were made for Him. Intuiting these things to the letter, we openly learn with how great diligence the mysteries of evangelical faith are to be undertaken by us, when He Himself, bringing the blessing of grace, who gave the law of the letter, first cares to be consecrated by the ritual ceremonies of old, by which He consecrates all things divinely, and thus to simultaneously undertake and deliver the new sacraments of grace. Behold, the sixth jar brings water purer than the others, to wash away the contagions of sin, to drink the joys of life.

But if in the circumcision of the eighth day you understand baptism, which in the mystery of the Lord's resurrection redeemed us from the death of sins, and you recognize it as prefigured in the presentation in the temple and the offering of a cleansing sacrifice, you know that the faithful are to enter from the baptistery to the holy altar and should be consecrated with the unique victim of the Lord's body and blood, symbolized by the wine made from water, a most excellent gift indeed. Furthermore, if you interpret the day of circumcision as the general resurrection of the human race, when the mortal offspring will cease, and all mortality will be changed into immortality, and you understand that the circumcised are brought into the temple with sacrifices, then after the resurrection, when the universal judgment is fulfilled, the saints, now made incorrupt, will enter to contemplate perpetually the visage of divine majesty with the gifts of good works: indeed, you will marvel that wine is made from water, whose creator you rightfully proclaim and say: And your cup inebriating, how splendid it is! Therefore, the Lord did not wish to make wine for the joys of the wedding out of nothing, but commanding that the six jars be filled with water, He miraculously converted this into wine, because He granted the six ages of the world the

largesse of saving wisdom, which however, He himself, coming, enriched with the power of superior understanding. For what the carnal minded carnally understood, He revealed to be understood spiritually.

Do you want to hear, brothers, how He made wine from water? He appeared after His resurrection to two disciples walking on the road, and He went with them, and beginning from Moses and all the prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Do you want to hear again how they were inebriated with the same wine? Later, recognizing who it was who imparted to them the word of life, they said to each other: Was not our heart burning within us while He spoke on the road and opened the Scriptures to us? (Luke 24). Jesus then says to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. What do the servants who are commanded to do these things signify, if not the disciples of Christ, who filled the jars with water? Indeed, they did not themselves fill past ages of the world with legal and prophetic writings, but by wisely understanding and faithfully revealing, because the Scripture, which was ministered by the prophets, was both beneficial for drawing heavenly wisdom and useful for the correction of actions. They filled them up to the brim because they rightly understood that no age of the world was devoid of holy teachers, who by words, examples, or even Scriptures, would open the way of life to mortals. And he says to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." And they took it. The master of the banquet is someone learned in the law of that time, perhaps Nicodemus or Gamaliel, or his disciple then Saul, but now Paul the apostle, the teacher of the whole Church. And when the word of the Gospel, which was hidden in the letter of the law and the prophecy, is entrusted to such people, wine made from water is indeed offered to the master of the banquet. Hence it is fittingly stated that the master of the banquet, having called the bridegroom, said:

"Every man sets out the good wine first, and when they have become drunk, then that which is worse. But you have kept the good wine until now." Because it is the mark of teachers to know the distinction between the law and the Gospel, between truth and shadow, and to offer the new grace of evangelical faith and the eternal gifts of the heavenly homeland, in comparison to all old institutions and all earthly kingdom promises. This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory. He manifested by this sign that He was the King of Glory, and therefore the Bride-

groom of the Church, who would come to the marriage as an ordinary man, but as the Lord of Heaven and Earth, would change the elements as He willed. The beautiful harmony of events is that He, at the beginning of the signs which He was to show to mortals while He was still mortal, changed water into wine: He, by the beginning of the signs which He, having become immortal through the resurrection, was to show to those pursuing the studies of immortal life alone, imbued their previously carnal and as it were insipid minds with the flavor of heavenly knowledge. For at first remaining on earth, by the gift of His Spirit, He opened their understanding so that they might understand the Scriptures: and afterwards, sending the same Spirit from Heaven, He infused their hearts with greater fervor of heavenly love and spiritual wisdom, additionally giving them the knowledge of all languages, by which they might adequately offer to the whole world the grace of life which they had received. These, therefore, are the nuptials of Christ and the Church, dearest brothers, which were then prefigured in one city, and are now celebrated throughout the whole world, let us love with all our mind, and let us diligently unite ourselves with the heavenly joys of these, by intent of indefatigable good works.

Since by faith we have been called into the world of love, let us strive to celebrate, and let us carefully wash away the stains of our actions and thoughts before the day of the final judgment by examining them; lest perchance the King entering then, who made the marriage feast for His Son, if He sees us not having the wedding garment of love, cast us out, and binding our feet and hands from good actions, send us into outer darkness. Let us cleanse the strong vessels of our hearts by faith according to the purification of the heavenly precepts, let us fill them with the water of saving knowledge, by frequently attending to sacred reading. Let us ask the Lord to warm with the fervor of His love the very grace of knowledge He has bestowed upon us (lest perhaps it puff up), and to convert it to the seeking of higher things alone and wisdom, so that being spiritually intoxicated, we too may with the Prophet sing: You have made us drink wine of compunction (Psalm 59). Thus it comes to pass that, as we too make good progress, both now partially as we are able to contain it, and in the future perfectly, Jesus may manifest His glory to us, in which He lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, through all ages of ages. Amen.

HOMILY 14: ON THE THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

John 1; Matthew 3; Mark 1; Luke 3

At that time, John saw Jesus coming to him and said: Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who takes away the sins of the world, etc. John the Baptist, the forerunner of our Lord and Savior, whom he had long predicted by word to the people as coming, now, as you heard from the reading of the holy Gospel, brothers, as it was being read, immediately pointed out with his finger, saying: Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who takes away the sins of the world. Behold the Lamb of God, behold the innocent one and free from all sin, as indeed the bone from the bones of Adam and flesh from the flesh of Adam, but who took not any stain of guilt from sinful flesh. Behold Him who takes away the sins of the world, behold Him who is righteous among sinners, meek among the impious, that is, appearing as a lamb among wolves, who has the power to justify even sinners and wicked. And how He takes away the sins of the world, in what order He justifies the ungodly, the apostle Peter shows, who says: You were not redeemed with corruptible things like silver or gold from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot (1 Peter 1). And in the Apocalypse, the apostle John, whose Gospel this is: Who loved us, he says, and washed us from our sins in His own blood (Rev. 1). Not only did He wash us from our sins in His blood, when He gave His blood on the cross for us, or when each of us was washed in the water of Baptism by the mystery of His sacred passion, but He also takes away the sins of the world daily.

He therefore washes us from our sins daily in His blood when the memory of His blessed passion is repeated at the altar, when the creation of bread and wine is transferred into the Sacrament of His body and blood by an ineffable sanctification of the Spirit: and thus His body and blood are not poured out and slain by the hands of infidels to their own destruction, but are taken by the mouth of the faithful to their salvation. The paschal lamb in the law rightly showed the figure of this, who, having once liberated the people from the Egyptian bondage, through the annual sacrifice in memory of that same liberation, used to sanctify the same people, until He came to whom such a witness was given by this sacrifice, and offered to the Father for us as a sacrifice and a sweet-smelling savor, transferring the mystery of His

passion into the creation of bread and wine by being offered as a lamb, made a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

John, bearing witness about the Lord, says, "This is he of whom I said: After me comes a man who ranks before me because he was before me." After me comes a man, born after me in the world, who will begin to preach to the world after me, who was made before me, who surpasses me in the majesty of power as much as the sun outshines the morning star, though appearing after, because he was before me, because 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' After me comes a man, understand the time of human birth in which he comes later than John. Who was made before me, consider the primacy of royal power, in which he also presides over angels. Because he was before me, understand the eternity of divine majesty, in which he is equal to the Father. After me comes a man who was made before me, because he was before me. After me comes in humanity, who therefore surpasses me in dignity, because he was before me in divinity.

And I did not know him, he says. It is certain that John knew the Lord, to whom he was sent to bear witness, whom he proclaimed coming as the judge of all, saying: "His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will thoroughly clear his threshing floor" (Mt. III); he testified that the Holy Spirit would be given by him, saying, "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit," from whom he desired to be cleansed, saying: "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" How then does he say: "And I did not know him," unless it be that he whom he had known before he recognized more perfectly when he was baptized? Whom he had known as the Savior and judge of the world, he recognized more deeply the power of his majesty when the Holy Spirit descended upon him. For it is not to be doubted that blessed John, when he deserved to see the Holy Spirit in bodily form, when he deserved to hear the voice of the Father sounding corporally, gained much from this vision and hearing, and received much of the excellence of divine power revealed to the eyes of his mind from heavenly knowledge from God, so that in comparison with the understanding with which he began to be illuminated, it seemed to him that he had altogether been ignorant of how great he was before. Bearing witness to the Lord diligently, he adds:

"But that it might be made manifest in Israel, therefore I came baptizing in water. Which is to say openly: I did not come baptizing in water because I

could take away the sins of the world by baptizing, but that by baptizing and preaching I might make manifest to the people of Israel him who baptizes in the Holy Spirit for the taking away of sins not only of Israel but of the whole world, if they are willing to believe in him, who baptizes in repentance, that by thus baptizing I might prepare the way for him who baptizes in the remission of sins. And John bore testimony, saying: Because I saw the Spirit descending like a dove from heaven, and it remained upon him. Well did the Spirit descend in the form of a dove upon the Lord, so that the faithful might learn that they cannot otherwise be filled with his Spirit unless they are simple, unless they have true peace with their brothers, which the kisses of the doves signify. Yet ravens also kiss, but they wound, which the dove never does: signifying those who speak peace with their neighbor, but evil is in their hearts. The nature of the dove, which is innocent of wounding, well fits those innocent ones who follow peace with all and holiness, being careful to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. And therefore the Spirit descending as a dove not only denotes his own innocence and simplicity, or that of him upon whom he descended, but also equally of those who in goodness feel of him, and in simplicity of heart seek him. The Lord himself, praising such unanimous piety and gentleness bestowed by spiritual grace, speaks: My dove is one, my perfect one, unique to her mother, elect to her who bore her (Cant. VI). For the Spirit calls the mother and parent of the Church by grace, by which she was inspired to rightly also be called a dove. Finally, in the Hebrew language in which the holy Scripture was written, spirit is called by a feminine gender. Therefore it is fitting that the Church, one dove of Christ, is called chosen for her mother and parent: because evidently, just as it is gathered into the unity of the Christian faith from many peoples, just as it rejoices in mutual dove-like peace, just as it is blessed among the elect, it has not of its own merit, but received it as a gift of spiritual grace."

And I, he says, did not know him. One understands as subtly as the Spirit descending upon him, I recognized. But he who sent me to baptize with water, he said to me: Upon whom you will see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. The Lord baptizes with the Holy Spirit by the grace of the Holy Spirit, forgiving sins. For whether he himself first baptized some of his disciples with water, through whom the river of the Baptist would flow to other faithful ones, he also bap-

tized them with the Spirit, forgiving their sins and bestowing the gifts of the Spirit, or whether his faithful ones, invoking his name, baptized the chosen ones with water, and anointed them with sacred chrism, he nonetheless baptizes the same with the Holy Spirit because no one besides him can loosen the bonds of sins or bestow the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Hence, the evangelist John, after saying: The Pharisees heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John, immediately added: (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but his disciples), clearly saying [or explaining] that even if Jesus' disciples baptize with water in his name, he is to be understood as the one who truly baptizes, who forgives sins. Moreover, the Lord baptizes with the Holy Spirit when, through the inspiration of the same Spirit, he enkindles the hearts of his faithful with the fervor of his [or their] brotherly love. For love, he says, is diffused in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

He baptizes with the Holy Spirit when he gives to any of the chosen ones the manifestation of the Spirit unto the profit of working virtues. Thus, before his ascension into heaven, he said to his disciples: But you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence (Acts I). However, it is worth contemplating carefully because when he said: Upon whom you will see the Spirit descending, he added, And remaining on him; for indeed the Spirit descends upon his saints. But because, as long as they are in the body, they cannot be free from sin, because they cannot always fix the eye of their mind on heavenly contemplation but often turn it to the care of earthly conversation, undoubtedly the Spirit comes to and leaves their hearts at times. Hence it is said: The Spirit breathes where he wills, and you hear his voice, but you do not know where he comes from or where he goes (John III). For indeed the Spirit comes to and goes from the saints so that, not being able to have him always, they may be refreshed by the frequent light of his returning presence. However, in the only mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ, the Spirit truly and perpetually remains, in whom he finds no stain of impure thought that he would avoid. Moreover, he remained entirely in him not only from the time when John saw him descending upon him but from the time he began to be conceived through his ministry and work.

Hence, he has the power of giving the Spirit to men no less than the Father himself, as attested by him who says: But the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit,

whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things (John XIV). And in another place, he shows that he himself sends him, saying: For if I do not go, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you (John XVI). For indeed, one is the substance in divinity, the inseparable operation of the Father, and the Son, and the same Holy Spirit. For concerning the Holy Spirit himself, that he comes where he wills at his own will and operates what he wills by his own power, the Son bears witness when he says, as I mentioned above: The Spirit breathes where he wills. Moreover, all these things, says the Apostle, are worked by one and the same Spirit, distributing to each one individually as he wills (I Cor. XII). Therefore, the Spirit is shown to descend upon him who is always to remain in him at baptism, so that both the Baptist himself might now recognize him more clearly whom he proclaimed [or predicted], and he might give a sign to the believers that they could not merit the martyr without being baptized by the same Spirit.

Meanwhile, it must be examined how it could be a special sign of recognizing the Son of God that the Spirit descended and remained upon him, when he even promises to the disciples, saying: And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Paraclete, to remain with you forever, the Spirit of truth (John XIV). And shortly thereafter: For he will remain with you and will be in you. If indeed he remains with God's chosen servants and will be in them, what great thing is it for the Son of God that the Spirit is affirmed to remain in him? And it should be noted that the Holy Spirit always remained in the Lord, but in holy men, as long as they bear the mortal body, he remains partly forever, partly withdrawing to return. For he indeed remains with them so that they may persist in good deeds, love voluntary poverty, acquire meekness, mourn for eternal desire, hunger and thirst for righteousness, embrace mercy, purity of heart, and the tranquillity of peace: and also they do not fear to suffer persecution for the sake of observing justice, desiring to persist in almsgiving, prayers, and fastings, and other fruits of the Spirit. However, he withdraws for a time, so they may not always have the power to heal the sick, raise the dead, cast out demons, or even prophesy. He remains always so they may have the virtue to live marvellously;

he comes for a time so that through signs of miracles he may shine forth to others as such within. And I saw, he said, and I bore witness that this is the Son of God. Above he said, After me comes a man who was made before me, now he bears witness that this is the Son of God, clearly indicating the truth

of both natures, namely human and divine, in one and the same person of Christ. Let the Manichean blush hearing, A man comes; let Photinus be silent hearing, This is the Son of God. Let the meek hear and rejoice, for a man comes after John stronger than John, who baptizes in the Holy Spirit, and because this is the Son of God. For because we humans withdrew from God through pride, the Son of God through mercy was made man, so that in the same person he might be suitable both to the Father through divinity, and to us through humanity: through humanity like us, to fight for us against the enemy, through divinity consubstantial to the Father to worthily recreate us to the image and likeness of God, which we lost by sinning: to destroy through the death of our fragility him who had the power of death, and through the impassible power of his divinity to reconcile us to God the Father, with whom he lives and reigns as God in the unity of the Holy Spirit, through all ages of ages. Amen.

HOMILY 15: ON THE PURIFICATION OF BLESSED MARY

Luke 2

At that time, after the days of Mary's purification according to the law of Moses were fulfilled, they brought Jesus, etc. The solemnity of today's celebration, which we venerate on the fortieth day of the Lord's nativity with due offices, is especially significant in its dedication to the humility of the same Lord our Savior and His undefiled mother, as pointed out by the sacred reading of the Gospel. It explains that those who were not indebted to the law submitted themselves in all things to fulfill the legal decrees. For as we heard when the Gospel was read, "When the days of her purification were fulfilled (that is, of His mother) according to the law of Moses, they took Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord, as it is written in the law of the Lord, that every male opening the womb shall be called holy to the Lord. The law commanded that a woman who had received seed and given birth to a son would be unclean for seven days, and on the eighth day should circumcise the boy and give him a name. After that, she should abstain from the temple and from her husband's bed for thirty-three more days, until on the fortieth day of the nativity she would bring her son to the Temple of the Lord with offerings. Every firstborn male was to be called holy to the Lord, and thus all pure things should be offered to God, while impure ones should be exchanged for or killed in place of the pure, and every firstborn human must be redeemed with five shekels of silver.

If a woman gave birth to a female, she was commanded to be unclean for fourteen days, and for sixty-six more days to stay away from the temple, until on the eightieth day of the nativity, which was called the day of her purification, she would come to sanctify herself and her offspring with offerings, and thus finally return to her husband's bed free. Let us, dearest brothers, ponder more diligently the words of the law that we have proposed, and we will see very clearly how the most blessed Mother of God and perpetual Virgin Mary, together with the Son she bore, were entirely free from all subjection to the law. For when the law states that a woman who has conceived seed and given birth is declared unclean, and for long periods must be cleansed with the progeny she bore through offerings of sacrifices, it indeed shows clearly that the one who bore as a virgin without receiving male seed, together with the Son who was born to her, is neither declared unclean nor taught to be cleansed through the saving sacrifices. But just as our Lord and Savior, who gave the law of divinity, appearing as a man, chose to be under the law so that He might redeem those who were under the law and that we might receive adoption as sons; so too, His blessed Mother, who by singular privilege was above the law, did not shun to submit to the legal institutions, to show an example of humility, according to the wise man's saying:

"The greater you are, the more humble yourself in all things" (Eccli. III). "And to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons. This was the offering of the poor. For the Lord indeed commanded in the law that whoever could afford it, should offer a lamb for a son or daughter, along with a turtledove or a pigeon; but whoever could not afford a lamb, should offer two turtledoves or two young pigeons. Therefore the Lord, ever mindful of our salvation, not only became man, though he was God, but also, though he was rich, he deigned to become poor for us, so that through his poverty and humanity, he might make us partakers of his wealth and divinity. But it is fitting to consider briefly why these particular birds are commanded to be offered as a sacrifice to the Lord. For it is read that even the patriarch Abraham, long before the time of the law, offered these birds in a holocaust to the Lord, and in several ceremonies of the law, he who was to be cleansed was commanded to be purified through these birds. Hence, the dove signifies simplicity, and the turtledove indicates chastity; for the dove is a lover of simplicity, and the turtledove of chastity, to such an extent that if it accidentally loses its mate,

it does not care to seek another. Therefore in the praises of the Church the Lord says: 'Thy cheeks are comely as a turtledove's' (Cant. I). And again: 'Behold, thou art fair, my love;

behold, thou art fair, thine eyes are as doves.' (Cant. IV). One has cheeks like those of a turtledove, who keeps himself pure and free from every stain of unchastity; and has eyes like those of doves, who, desiring to harm no one, regards even his enemies with simple love. But both mentioned birds, because they are accustomed to produce a cooing sound for their song, designate the weeping of the saints in this world, of which the Lord remembers, saying: 'Amen, amen, I say to you, that you shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and you shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.' (John XVI). And again: 'Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.' (Matthew V). Thus deservedly are the turtledove and the dove offered to the Lord as a sacrifice: because the simple and chaste conduct of the faithful is indeed a pleasing sacrifice of righteousness to Him; for he who toils in his groaning, who washes his couch with tears every night, indeed sacrifices the most acceptable victim to God. Moreover, since both these birds, on account of their habit of mourning, represent the present laments and heavenly desires of the saints, yet they differ in that the turtledove is accustomed to mourn solitary, while the dove mourns in flocks; and therefore the former indicates private tears of prayer, the latter public assemblies of the Church. And rightly was the boy Jesus circumcised first, and then after some days brought to Jerusalem with a sacrifice;

for He, now a young man, first overcame every corruption of the flesh by dying and rising again, and then after some days ascended to the joys of the heavenly city with the same now immortal flesh which He had offered as a sacrifice to God for our salvation. And each one of us is first washed of all sins in the true circumcision of baptism, and thus with the advancing grace of the new light, enters the holy altar to be consecrated by the life-giving sacrifice of the Lord's body and blood. For even the singularly simple and chaste humanity of our Savior, offered to God the Father for us, can be fittingly expressed figura-tively by the sacrifice of a dove or turtle-dove. At the end of the world, the whole Church too, after the common resurrection, will cast off all the dross of earthly mortality and corruption, and thenceforth, commended to the Lord by the sacrifices of good works, will be transferred into the kingdom of the heavenly Jerusalem. Now, that Simeon and Anna, that

venerable man and woman of advanced age, received the Lord with devout acts of confession, recognizing Him as small in body but great in divinity, surely symbolizes the synagogue of the Jewish people;

which, having been long fatigued by the expectation of His incarnation, promptly received Him as He came, exalting and magnifying Him with pious actions and sincere voices, crying out to Him saying: 'Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation, and I have waited for you all day long.' (Psalm XXV). But this too must be said, that rightly both sexes rejoiced at His coming, who appeared as the Redeemer of both. Indeed, my brothers, the words with which the same Simeon prophesies to the Lord and speaks to His mother must be listened to with great fear:" Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against. And a sword shall pierce through your own soul also, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. For it is much desired to be heard, that the Lord is set for the resurrection of many, because as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive; for he also says: I am the resurrection and the life, he who believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die (John XI). But it sounds no less terrifying what is said before, Behold, this child is set for the fall. For it is quite unfortunate, who after recognizing the glory of the resurrection falls more grievously, who after seeing the light of truth is blinded by heavier clouds of sins. Therefore, it must be our utmost concern to always remember to practice in our deeds what we know to be right, lest it be said of us that which was said by the apostle Peter: For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

And for a sign, he adds, which shall be spoken against. Many of the Jews often oppose the sign of the cross outwardly, many of the Gentiles contradict it; many, which is more serious, false brethren follow this inwardly under the pretense of profession, but through the truth of perverse actions deeply persecute it, saying that they know God, but denying Him by their deeds. And a sword shall pierce through your own soul also. He calls the sword the effect of the Lord's passion and death on the cross, which pierced Mary's soul: for she could not see her crucified and dying son without bitter grief, though she never doubted that he would rise again as God, yet she grieved, fearing his death as if he were born from her flesh. So that the thoughts of many

hearts may be revealed. Before the Lord's incarnation, the thoughts of many were veiled, nor was it widely apparent who burned with love for the eternal, who preferred temporal goods in mind over heavenly: but with the birth of the King of heaven on earth, each pious person immediately rejoiced, but Herod was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. While preaching and performing miracles, all the crowds both feared and glorified the God of Israel: but the Pharisees and the Scribes rabidly attacked his saving words and deeds. When he suffered on the cross, the impious were filled with foolish joy, the pious with just sadness; but upon rising from the dead and ascending into heaven, the joy of these was turned from mourning, and the sadness of those was changed to eternal joy: and thus, according to the prophecy of blessed Simeon, with the Lord appearing in the flesh, the thoughts of many hearts were revealed. This revelation of different thoughts was not only carried out then in Judea, but even now it is believed to occur among us. Even now, with the appearance of the Lord, the thoughts of many hearts are revealed, as when the word of salvation is read or preached, some of the listeners gladly listen, rejoicing to complete in action what they learned by hearing; others, disdaining what they hear, strive not to carry it out but rather to insult and counter it.

Therefore, it is fitting, brothers, that whenever we feel that some contrary thing suffers from hard [our] listeners, we imitate the sadness of heart of those who held the word of God in the flesh with worthy pain of compassion: and whenever we see the same word rise in the minds of faithful listeners through love, and advance to the glory of our Creator through good works, let us rejoice with those who happily saw Christ rise from the dead and ascend into heaven. Indeed, as we have known that chaste, simple, and lamenting birds were accustomed to be offered to the Lord, which signifies our sobriety, simplicity, and heart compunction always to be offered to our Author, one must look more diligently: for it is not by chance that two turtledoves or two young pigeons, with one from these to be offered for a sin, and the other as a burnt offering, are commanded. There are indeed two kinds of compunctions, with which the faithful sacrifice themselves to the Lord on the altar of the heart: for surely, as we have received from the sayings of the Fathers, the soul thirsting for God is first pierced with fear, then with love. First, it afflicts itself with tears, because when it recalls its evils, it

greatly fears to suffer eternal punishments, which is to offer one turtledove or young pigeon for sins;

but when the prolonged anxiety of sorrow has consumed the fear, a certain security from the assurance of pardon is born, and the mind is inflamed with the love of heavenly joys. And he who wept first lest he be led to punishment begins afterward to weep most bitterly because he is delayed from the kingdom, which is to make a burnt offering from the other turtledove or young pigeon: for burnt offering is called entirely burnt. And he makes himself a burnt offering to the Lord, who, having despised all earthly things, finds it sweet to seek this alone through mourning and tears, to burn with the desire alone for supernal beatitude. For the mind contemplates what those choirs of angels are, what that society of blessed spirits is, what majesty of the eternal vision of God is, and weeps more because it lacks the eternal good things than it wept before when it feared eternal evils. May he deign to accept both of our compunction offerings gratefully, who both mercifully forgives errors to those who mourn and are afflicted for sin, and refreshes with the light of his eternal vision those fervently intent for the entry into heavenly life, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY 16: ON LENT

John 5

There was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. The reading of the holy Gospel today gives us two miracles of human healing together; one invisibly through angelic administration, the other through the visible exhibition of the Lord's presence: but we must briefly explain the mysteries of both, lest a lengthy explanation of a lengthy reading may perhaps be burdensome to anyone. The pool called Bethesda, which was surrounded by five porches, represents the Jewish people, fortified on all sides by the custody of the law, lest they should sin. For the law described in the five books of Moses is aptly represented by the number five: and the people who in some respects preserved the purity of life, but in others were accustomed to be agitated by the temptations of unclean spirits, are appropriately signified by the water of the pool, which sometimes was calm and still, and at other times used to be stirred up by the winds. And it is fitting that the same pool is called Bethesda. For in Greek probaton means sheep: because in that people who knew how to say to the Lord: We, however, thy people and the sheep of thy flock, will give

thanks to thee for ages (Ps. 79). Commonsensically, however, the pool is called Bethesda, i.e., the sheep's pool, because in it the priests used to wash the sacrifices.

The multitude of the sick lying in the mentioned porches signifies the crowds of those who, hearing the words of the law, lamented that they could not accomplish it by their own strength, and therefore implored the help of the Lord's grace with all the affections of their soul. They were blind who did not yet have the perfect light of faith; lame who could not fulfill the good that they knew by their steps of action; withered who, although having the eye of knowledge, were nevertheless lacking in the nourishment of hope and love. Such lay in the five porches, but none were healed except in the pool when an angel descended, because through the law comes the knowledge of sin, but the grace of remission is made not otherwise than through Jesus Christ. For the angel clothed in flesh, that is, the messenger of the Father's will, came down among the Jewish people and moved the sinners by his deeds and doctrine, so that he himself, by his own bodily death, could not only heal the spiritually sick but also revive the dead. The stirring of the water signifies the Lord's passion, which was accomplished when the people of the Jews were stirred and agitated. And because believers were redeemed from the curse of the law through that same passion, they were, as it were, healed by descending into the stirred water of the pool, who had lain sick in the porches.

Indeed, the letter of the law, which taught those ignorant of what was to be done and avoided, but still did not help the instructed to accomplish its decrees, kept them, as if brought out of the seats of former ignorance, within its porches, and did not heal the sick. However, the grace of the Gospel, which through faith and the mystery of the Lord's passion heals all the ailments of our iniquities, from which we could not be justified in the law of Moses, casts the sick thrown out of the porches of the law into the stirred water of the pool, so that they could be healed: because from the sins which the law showed through the water of Baptism, it washes, as the Apostle testifies, because as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into his death. For we are buried with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so, we also should walk in newness of life (Rom. 6). It is well said that whoever first descended after the stirring of the water was made whole from whatever

sickness he was held by, because one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God is present: and whoever is imbued with the mysteries of Christ in Catholic unity is made whole from whatever sickness of sins he is held by: whoever, however, disagrees with this unity cannot attain the salvation which is from one.

Having spoken of the first miracle of the Gospel reading which the Lord gave, let us now speak of the second which he gave to your fraternity: in which also a person healed is commended, not because the omnipotent goodness of the Savior could not heal all those found sick there, but to teach that outside the unity of the Catholic faith, no place of salvation is open to anyone. There was a certain man there, it is said, who had been in his infirmity for thirty-eight years. This man, detained by infirmity for many years, represents any sinner oppressed by the enormity or multitude of sins, whose guilt the duration of the time he was ill fittingly signifies. For he had been in his infirmity for thirty-eight years. The number forty, however, which is accomplished by multiplying ten by four, is commonly received in the Scriptures for perfect right conduct; because whoever has performed the works of perfect conduct certainly fulfills the decalogue of the law through the four books of the Holy Gospel: two of which perfection he lacks, who, void of the love of God and neighbor which the writings of the law and the Gospel alike commend, walks. This the Lord also mystically taught by healing the infirm man, when he said: Arise, take up your bed, and walk. When it is said, Arise, shake off the lethargy of sins in which you have long lain, and rise to the exercise of virtues, by which you may be saved perpetually. Take up your bed: carry your neighbor diligently, patiently tolerating his weaknesses, as he, still oppressed by the burden of temptations, long and patiently bore you. For one another's burdens bear, and thus you will fulfill the law of Christ (Gal. VI). And as it says elsewhere: Bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. IV). But walk:

love God with all your heart, soul, and strength; and that you may be worthy to attain to his vision, progress daily in good works, from virtue to virtue, not abandoning your brother whom you lead by enduring, out of love for Him to whom you are going, nor letting the love of your brother cause you to deviate in your pursuit of Him with whom you desire to dwell; but that you may be perfectly saved, Arise, take up your bed and walk, that is,

leave your former sins, assist the needs of your brothers, and in all that you do, take care not to fix your mind on this world, but hasten to see the face of your Redeemer. Arise by doing good deeds, carry the bed by loving your neighbor, and walk by expecting the blessed hope and the coming of the glory of the great God. But the madness of the faithless is astonishing, who, at such an unexpected healing of one who had long languished, should have believed and been spiritually healed, yet instead were scandalized, and contrived slanders against both the healed and the Healer: against the healed, because he carried his bed on the Sabbath; against the Healer, because he commanded healing and carrying the bed on the Sabbath, as if they knew better concerning the Sabbath than such great power of divinity.

Therefore, the Jews said to the one who had been healed: "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed. They foolishly defended the letter of the law, ignoring the dispensation of Him who, once decreeing the edicts of the law through His servant, now coming Himself, intended to change the same law by grace, so that what carnally-minded people observed carnally according to the letter, spiritual-minded people might henceforth recognize should be observed spiritually. Indeed, under the carnal Sabbath, which was kept according to the letter, the people were commanded to rest from all servile work on the seventh day; the spiritual Sabbath, however, is in the light of spiritual grace, which is considered septiform (sevenfold), not on one but on every day, we are commanded to rest from all disturbance of vices. For if according to the word of the Lord, everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin, it is clear that sins are rightly understood as servile works, from which, as on the seventh day in the perception of spiritual grace, we are commanded to walk immune: not only refraining from evil but also persisting in good works. This the Lord also typologically showed in this reading, when He commanded him who had languished for thirty-eight years to rise on the Sabbath day, not only to rise but also to carry his bed and walk:

evidently insinuating that those who wither away long with the languor of vices, and void of the love of God and neighbor, as if they lack two from the perfect sum of virtues, can through the gift of the Holy Spirit rise up from vices, and having cast off their sluggishness, should with the burden of fraternal love draw close to the vision of their Creator. Moreover, the fact that he who was healed recognizes Jesus, not while still among the crowd, but later in the temple, mystically instructs us that if we truly wish to recog-

nize the grace of our Creator, if we wish to be strengthened by His love, if we wish to reach His vision, we must diligently flee the crowd not only of disturbing thoughts and depraved affections but also of wicked people who can hinder our sincere intention, either by showing their evil example or by ridiculing or even preventing our good works. We should assiduously seek refuge in the house of prayer, where, invoking the Lord in secret liberty, we both give thanks for the benefits received from Him and humbly pray for those yet to be received: indeed, let us also take care to exist as a holy temple of God, in which He may deign to come and make His abode, hearing from the Apostle that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you (1 Cor. 6).

Among these, my brothers, we should most diligently consider that when the Lord found the healed man in the temple, He said to him: "Behold, you have been made well, sin no more, lest something worse happens to you. By these words, it is openly shown that he languished because of sins, and could not be healed unless they were forgiven: but He who healed from the infirmity outside also saved within from wickedness: whence He cautiously admonished that by sinning no more, he should not bring upon himself a sentence of more severe condemnation. This is not to be understood as if everyone who is infirmed is infirmed because of sins, for indeed, in five ways in Scripture, bodily infirmity is found to be given: to sinners, that they may either be corrected through penance, or if they don't merit correction, it may also appear in this life how they are to be condemned to eternal death; to the righteous, that they may either receive a greater palm of patience or instructed by infirmities they may guard more humbly the merit of justice. To many, however, bodily infirmity is given at times so that in their healing either the glory of the Lord Savior or of His saints or of both may be more widely manifested. For that sinners are punished with bodily infirmity to seek the health of the mind, today's reading bears witness, where the healed man who was languishing heard: "Behold, you have been made well, sin no more, lest something worse happens to you.

This also bears witness when the Lord, healing the paralytic, said: "Take heart, son, your sins are forgiven you. That those ensnared in more serious crimes, deserving not to attain pardon, sometimes also in the present receive the beginning of eternal condemnation, is indicated by the punishment of King Herod, who for the sin of blasphemy, consumed by worms before the

eyes of the living, expired, evidently appropriating afterward where his worm does not die and the fire is not quenched. That the righteous are afflicted with bodily pains to amplify the palm of their patience is indicated by the blessed Job's story, whom, with none like him on the earth, endured the severest bodily pains the cruel adversary could devise, not for discharging sins but for augmenting merits, overcoming with wondrous constancy of virtue. That the righteous are also struck with illness as a discipline to guard humility is shown by the Apostle who said: "And lest I be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me" (2 Cor. 12). Wherefore, again he says: "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. (ibid. 9). That some often languish to show forth the glory of the Creator and His saints, Christ Himself manifests when, concerning the man born blind, to the disciples asking, He said:

"Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him" (John 9). And concerning Lazarus's sickness to the sisters, He said: "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby" (John 11). However, because it is uncertain to us whether we are punished to augment our good merits or to diminish our evils, it must be most carefully regarded that whenever we are struck by bodily distress, we immediately return to examine the internal matters of our mind, and whatever we find we have done against the will of our Creator, let us cleanse with a fitting penance; nor should we seek healing for the body before we know we have reached the purity of the inner man, lest perhaps external healing of the flesh should be hindered by the latent internal faults of the mind. Let us learn to humbly submit to the scourges of the pious Creator, considering that we suffer less than we deserve, always remembering the sentence: "Blessed is the man whom the Lord corrects" (Job 5). And He said in Revelation: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten" (Rev 3).

However, after the old man, sick inwardly and outwardly, was healed, being saved both from the whips of open punishment and from the sins that deserved these, the Jews, contrarily, now began to fall into a worse sickness in their opposition, persecuting Jesus because He did these things on the Sabbath. They were persecuting Him, as if following both the authority of the law and the examples of divine operation: for both the Lord completed the

creation of the world in six days and rested on the seventh day from all His works, and commanded the people to work for six days and to rest on the seventh, not understanding that the carnal decrees of the law were gradually to be changed by a spiritual interpreter, with Him appearing who is not only the lawgiver but also the end of the law, Christ, for righteousness to everyone who believes: nor considering that the Creator on the seventh day ceased not from the work of worldly governance and annual, rather everyday, maintenance of created things, but from a new creation of beings; nor understanding that great mystery of the Sabbath, in which, either the Lord Himself, having been crucified on the sixth day and having worked our salvation in the midst of the earth, that is, the flesh He had assumed, was to rest in the tomb on the seventh, until He rose on the eighth, or in which the saints, after the six ages of this world in which they labor by doing good works, perceive the seventh of the rest of souls in another life, until they are endowed with the incorruptible reception of bodies also in the eighth of the resurrection. But let us hear what the Author of grace and the law Himself responds to these unlearned defenders of the law, by which He may break their stubbornness with the strength of His reason.

My Father, he said, works until now, and I also work. Which is not to say, as though with the Father working, he would then begin to work after the Father; but rather that from the beginning of creation, with the Father always working, he himself likewise always works the same deeds together with him. For to know that God the Father works not only in the first six days, but until now, read that which is written to the prophet: Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you (Jerem. I). And in the Psalm: He who fashions their hearts individually (Psalm XXXIII). And elsewhere: Who covers the heavens with clouds, prepares rain for the earth, makes grass grow on the mountains (Psalm CXLVII), and similar others. Indeed, note that he did not use past tense verbs by saying: Who covered, prepared, produced, but present, covers, prepares, produces, to show that the Father works daily, no less on the Sabbath than on other days. So that you do not doubt that the Son works all things together, recall that of the Psalmist: He spoke, and gnats and flies came. He spoke, and locusts and caterpillars came. He spoke, and the stormy wind stood (Psalm CV). For if he spoke and they were made, he indeed made them through the word. The word of the Father is the Son, of whom John says: All things were made through him (John. I).

Likewise, the Psalmist, when attributing not only the original creation of the world but also the daily governance of creation to the praise of the Creator, said among other things: You made all things in wisdom (Psalm CIV). But if we confess Christ as the power of God and the wisdom of God rightly, and God made and rules all things in wisdom, it is certainly evident that the Father works until now, and so does the Son. Therefore, my Father, he said, not only worked previously during six days as you suppose, but he works until now (John V), not by instituting a new kind of creation, but by propagating what he created in the beginning so that they may not fail. And I too work, it is understood until now, governing, guiding, increasing all those things, as if plainly saying: Why do you envy me? Why do you criticize me, blind legislators, for having performed the salvation of one man on the Sabbath in human form, when in the nature of divinity, together with God the Father, I always quietly work the entire human race, indeed the whole machinery of the world, and all visible and invisible things? But they themselves were less capable of understanding such a great mystery, therefore they sought all the more to kill him, because not only did he break the Sabbath, but also called God his Father, making himself equal to God. They were especially upset because, to those who recognized him truly as a man in the weakness of the flesh;

he wished to be believed as truly the Son of God, that is, not adopted by grace like the other saints, to whom the Prophet says: I said, you are gods, and sons of the Most High all of you (Psalm LXXXII); but by nature equal in all things to the Father, namely the one about whom the Father himself speaks in the presence of his children, that is, the prophets, adopted into sons by grace. He called upon me: You are my Father, my God, and the support of my salvation. And I will make him my firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth (Psalm LXXXIX). For the Jewish slayers of Christ understood what the confessors of the name of Christ, the Arians, cannot understand when Christ said: My Father works until now, and I work (John V), that he declared himself equal to God the Father, because those whose work is the same, their majesty is also equal. Truly, the impiety of both tends to one end, of those who, understanding what the Lord said, denied he spoke the truth: the others indeed admit that the Lord testified truly about himself, but refuse to follow and understand the sense of the truth in these words. To avoid their dreadful end, it is necessary for us, most beloved brothers, to both be-

lieve the words of our Savior as full of truth, and strive to understand them rightly, moreover to place all our hope of salvation in them.

Truly let us believe he proclaimed himself equal to the Father in power, glory, eternity, and kingdom; and by living well, let us strive to come to the one vision of both: about which, when Philip asked and said: Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us (John XIV), the Lord himself answered, saying: He who sees me, sees my Father also. Certainly, it should be noted that the phrase making himself equal to God is said from the perspective of the Jews, who thought the Lord Jesus was proclaiming himself to be what he was not, and not truly intimating what he was. But we, brothers, who are imbued with the teachings and sacraments of the Catholic faith, let us believe and confess our Lord Jesus Christ, made in humanity equal to us by nature, and in divinity always equal to the Father. Neither in either nature did he pretend to be what he was not; but in both, he truly proclaimed what he was, who may deign to lead us to see perpetually the glory of his majesty, in which he lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY 17: AFTER THE EPIPHANY

John 1

At that time Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and he found Philip, and Jesus said to him, Follow me. We have heard from the reading of the Gospel, dearest brothers, the kind grace of our Redeemer, for he not only mercifully calls us to follow him, but also graciously receives those who come and piously guides them to the knowledge of the brightness of his divinity. We have heard the devoted faith, charity, and actions of the disciples, in which indeed the entire perfection of the present Church consists, for without faith it is impossible to please God, and faith without works is idle; and whatever virtues one may possess, however much he may advance in faith, if he has not charity, it profits him nothing. For Philip not only followed Jesus who called him, but also preached to Nathanael to follow him. This is surely faith working through love: it is faith, because he did not delay to believe in Jesus, whom he recognized as Christ; it is the work of love, because he immediately showed by following how much he loved him whom he recognized; he also taught how much he burned with love for his neighbor by evangelizing to him. Likewise, his neighbor Nathanael showed how much care and love he had towards the master of truth. Immediately called, he did not delay to

come; he intimated how much his faith comprehended the perfection of greatness: he confessed with an open voice that he was the Son of God and king of Israel, that is, Christ.

Jesus wanted, he said, to go into Galilee, and he found Philip, and said to him, Follow me. It is already evident from the preceding passages why Jesus wanted to go into Galilee, namely from Judea, where John was baptizing and bearing witness to him as the Lamb of God. He encouraged two of his disciples to follow him, one of whom, Andrew, also brought his brother Peter to him. It is clear in a spiritual sense, and your fraternity's frequent exposition has already recognized what it means to follow the Lord. For one who imitates follows the Lord; one who, as much as human frailty allows, does not abandon the examples of humility shown by the Son of God in his humanity, follows the Lord. One who, by becoming a companion in suffering, diligently desires to attain fellowship in his resurrection and ascension follows the Lord. But it is not without a certain reason for the mystery that it is said Jesus wanted to go into Galilee, saying to Philip, Follow me. For Galilee is called a place of migration, signifying the progress of the faithful, either migrating from vices to the height of virtues or gradually making progress in virtues themselves, and striving day by day from lesser to greater things until they reach the summit of heavenly joy from this valley of tears with the Lord's help.

In that it signifies revelation, it suggests the very blessedness of eternal life, for which they labor at present, both of which interpretations the Psalmist encompasses in one verse, where he says: They shall walk from strength to strength, the God of gods shall be seen in Zion (Psalm 84). This vision is also referred to by the Apostle: But we, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, as from the Lord, the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3). Therefore, it is fitting that when he was about to call a disciple to follow him, he wanted to go into Galilee, that is, into a place of migration or revelation, so that just as he, as the Gospel testifies, advanced in age and wisdom and grace before God and men, just as he suffered and rose again and thus entered into his glory, so also he might show his followers that they should advance in virtues and, through transitory sufferings, migrate to the gifts of eternal joys.

Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. The evangelist is not to be thought to have mentioned the name of the city from which

Philip came without reason or mysteriously, and to have shown that it was the same for Andrew and Peter as well; but through the name of the city, he typified what kind of soul Philip would have then, what kind of duty he was going to undertake, and what kind of persons Peter and Andrew also would be. Bethsaida indeed is called the house of fishermen, and they were surely fishermen who heard from the Lord: "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men" (Mt. IV). He who was so intent on catching souls for life even before he was appointed to the office of preaching by the Lord, soon showed his intent by preaching voluntarily. For he found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth. Let us see how much the net of faith, woven with the meshes of devoted preaching, encircles his found brother, whom he eagerly desires to capture for eternal salvation. He says they have found him whom Moses and the prophets marked as to come in their writings, so that it is understood by all following him that he is the one to whose coming all the writings of the ancients served in proclaiming. Therefore he names him, because the oracles of the prophets foretold the name of Christ to come.

Habakkuk, wishing to be saved by his grace, says, "But I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation" (Habak. III). And Zechariah, making mention of the trial in which he overcame the devil, also showed, "And he showed me Jesus the great priest, standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right to oppose him" (Zach. III). Also Jacob the patriarch, greeting the mystery of his incarnation from afar and expecting it, says, "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord" (Gen. XLVIII). For in Hebrew, "Jesus" means "Savior" or "Salvation" in Latin. Likewise, the Psalmist, promising his eternal vision to the faithful people, says in the person of God the Father, "With length of days I will satisfy him, and show him my salvation" (Ps. XC). Also, Simeon, that venerable old man and prophet of the New Testament, when he took him in his arms as a small child, but with his mind recognized him great in divinity, instructed by the same spirit, gave thanks thus: "Now let thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for my eyes have seen thy salvation" (Luke II). He calls him the son of Joseph, not to assert that he was born from the union of a man and a woman, whom he had learned from the prophets would be born of a virgin; but he teaches that he came from the house and family of David where he knew Joseph was born according to the prophecies of the prophets.

Nor is it surprising if Philip calls him the son of Joseph whom he knew was the husband of his immaculate mother, since even the immaculate mother herself, always a virgin following popular custom, is recorded to have spoken thus: "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been looking for you sorrowing" (Luke II). He also adds the homeland of Nazareth to indicate that he is the one about whom they had read in the prophets that he would be called a Nazarene. Therefore, it is no wonder that Philip quickly captivated Nathanael to believe and come to Christ, surrounded by so many nets of truth, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets wrote, Jesus, son of Joseph, from Nazareth" (John I). Nor is it undeservedly asserted that he was from Bethsaida, that is, the house of fishermen, who is shown to have received such care and grace of the dearly loved hunting by God.

And Nathanael said to him: Can anything good come out of Nazareth? Nazareth means cleanliness, or its flower, or separated. Therefore, agreeing with the words of the evangelist Philip to him, Nathanael said, Can anything good come out of Nazareth? As if he were openly saying: Can it be that something of great grace is arising for us from a city of such a name? Or it is indeed the Savior of the world, the Lord who is singularly holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and who speaks in the Song of Songs, I am the flower of the field and the lily of the valleys; and of whom the prophet said, a rod shall come forth from the root of Jesse (Isaiah 11:1), and the Nazarene, that is, a flower from its root, shall spring forth, or certainly some exceptional teacher, who was sent to proclaim to us the flower of virtues and purity of holiness. We can also rightly understand this passage in such a way that, with Philip saying, whom Moses wrote about in the law and the prophets we have found Jesus, son of Joseph from Nazareth, Nathanael properly understood, but wondered how he could say that Christ had come from Nazareth, whom the prophets had proclaimed would come from the house of David and from Bethlehem, the city where David was; and therefore he answered with amazement from Nazareth; but immediately recalling how even the name Nazareth corresponded with the mysteries of Christ, he cautiously agreed with the preacher, saying, Can something good be from there? What follows may fit both meanings:

Philip said to him: Come and see. For he was urging him to come and see for himself, so that if any ambiguity remained in his heart regarding the

words of the preacher, this would be entirely dispelled by the sight and conversation of the one whom he was preaching. And the pious listener did not delay in diligently seeking the preached light of truth and earnestly knocking, so that he might deserve to receive it by perseverance: whereupon the Lord, hastening to satisfy his desire for blessings, rewarded his wholesome beginnings with provident praise, so that he would gradually raise him to seek and grasp higher things. He saw him coming to him and said of him: Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit. It should be noted here that God, who knows the hearts, praises not the man as sinless but as without deceit. For there is no just man upon earth that does good and sins not: many, however, are read to have walked without deceit, that is, to have lived with a simple and pure heart: indeed, all the faithful are taught to live in such a manner, as the Scripture says, "Think of the Lord in goodness, and seek him in simplicity of heart" (Wis. I). And the Lord himself says, "Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Mt. X). Such was the example of patience Job, of whom it is written: "That man was simple and upright" (Job I). Such was the patriarch Jacob, of whom it is said: "Jacob was a simple man, dwelling in tents" (Gen. XXV); because he deserved by the purity of a simple conscience to see God, he was also called Israel, that is, a man seeing God. Behold one who truly draws his lineage from the God-seeing patriarch, in whom, as in the patriarch himself, no duplicity of deceit is found. O how beautiful an omen for one coming to God and desiring to see Him! Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Mt. V).

And this one, desiring to see God, is praised as pure in heart and an Israelite, that is, declared to be descended from a man seeing God, not by another but by God himself, who examines the reins and hearts. O how great a hope of salvation is opened to us too in this saying of our Redeemer, we who come to the faith from the Gentiles! For if he is truly an Israelite who walks without deceit, then the Jews have already lost the name of Israelites, however much they may be carnally born of Israel, insofar as they have degenerated from the simplicity of their patriarch with deceitful hearts, and we ourselves have been adopted into the seed of Israelites who, although having the fleshly lineage from other nations, yet follow in the faith of truth and the purity of mind and body the footsteps of Israel, according to the Apostle: "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither, because they are the

seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Rom. IX), that is, not those who are children of the flesh are children of God; but those who are children of promise are counted as seed.

Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me? Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you. Nathanael answered him and said, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God, you are the King of Israel. Because Nathanael recognized that the Lord saw and knew what was happening elsewhere, that is, how and where he was called by Philip when he himself was not physically there, considering here the insight of divine majesty, he immediately confessed him not only as Rabbi, that is, teacher, but also as the Son of God and the King of Israel, that is, Christ. And it is pleasing to observe how prudent a confession responds to the Lord's praise of the servant. He, having truly affirmed this Israelite, that is, a man capable of seeing God, because he was without deceit; this one acknowledges him not only as a teacher who commands useful things, but also as the Son of God who grants heavenly gifts, and the King of Israel, that is, of the people seeing God, with religious devotion, so that by this confession he also signifies this as his king and himself as a soldier of his kingdom.

However, this saying of the Lord, where he said he saw Nathanael under the fig tree before he was called by Philip, can be mystically understood concerning the chosen of spiritual Israel, that is, the Christian people, whom the Lord, not yet seeing him, not yet called to the grace of faith through his apostles, but still hidden under the covering of pressing sin, condescended to see mercifully, as Paul attests, who said: "Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ, just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him in love" (Eph. I). And indeed, the fig tree sometimes in Scriptures insinuates the sweetness of heavenly love, whence it is written: "He who keeps the fig tree eats its fruit; and he who guards his master will be honored" (Prov. XXVII); but because our first parents, confused by the guilt of transgression, made for themselves coverings of fig leaves, the fig tree can not incongruously signify the sweetened habit of sinning in humanity, under which his chosen ones are still placed, but not yet recognizing the grace of their election, almost as if placed under the fig tree, the Lord saw Nathanael who did not yet see himself. For the Lord knows those who are his; to whose salvation also the name of Nathanael fittingly applies.

For Nathanael means "gift of God," and unless someone is called by the gift of God, he can never escape the guilt of the first transgression, never the deceitful shades of daily sins enticing him, never deserves to come to Christ for salvation. Whence the Apostle says: "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, so that no one may boast" (Eph. II). Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." What is greater, of which he speaks, he himself later reveals by promising the opening of the heavenly kingdom to those who believe and foretelling to the world both natures of his one person, which indeed is a much greater mystery than that which he foresaw, that we, still placed in the shadow of sin, would be enlightened by him. For it is greater that he filled us with the grace of his knowledge, that he opens to us the joys of heaven, that he spread preachers of his faith throughout the world, than that he foresaw us to be saved by the power of his majesty before the ages.

Amen, amen, I say to you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. Filled with the fulfillment of this promise of marmalade, we have seen heaven opened, for after heaven, God made man penetrated, even we, believing in His name, acknowledge that the way to the heavenly homeland is opened to us. We see the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man, because we know that holy preachers proclaim both the sublimity of Christ's divinity and the weaknesses of his humanity. Angels ascend upon the Son of Man when teachers teach that in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John I). Angels descend upon the Son of Man when they proclaim that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. It is not without reason that holy preachers are typified as angels, who are usually given the name of evangelists derived from angels, so that just as these are messengers, so are those who are called good messengers because of the supreme duty of preaching. And it should be noted that the Lord calls Himself the Son of Man, while Nathanael proclaims Him the Son of God. This is similar to what is recorded in other evangelists, when the Lord asks His disciples whom men say the Son of Man is; and Peter answered, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matt. XVI).

And indeed it was done by the proper administration of dispensation, that while both substances of the same mediator, God and our Lord, ought to be mentioned either by the Lord Himself or by a pure man, God, man would declare the frailty of the humanity He assumed, and the pure man would assert the strength of the eternal divinity in Him; He declared His humility, and the man declared His exaltation. It is also to be noted that the Lord, who calls the blessed Nathanael a true Israelite, in this word which He says, "You will see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man" (John I), recalls the vision of the patriarch Jacob who was called Israel by blessing. For when he wished to rest in a certain place and had put a stone under his head, he saw in his dreams a ladder standing upon the earth, and its top reaching to heaven; and the angels of God ascending and descending upon it, and the Lord leaning upon the ladder, saying to him, I am the God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac; and rising in the morning, and with due reverence giving praise to the Lord, he took the stone and set it up as a pillar, pouring oil over it. The Lord therefore makes mention of this place, and manifestly testifies that it prefigured Himself and His faithful ones.

The ladder seen is the Church, born from the earth, yet having its conversation in heaven, by which angels ascend and descend as the evangelists sometimes announce to perfect listeners the secrets of His divinity's superiority, and sometimes to the still unlearned the frailties of His humanity. Or indeed they ascend when they pass in mind to contemplate heavenly things. They descend indeed when they instruct their listeners on how they ought to live on earth. The stone under Jacob's head is the Lord, on whom we ought to lean all the more intently, as it is clear to us that without Him we can do nothing. Jacob anointed the stone and set it up as a pillar, for the true Israelite understands that our Redeemer was anointed by the Father with the oil of gladness above His companions; from which anointing, that is, the chrism, Christ derives His name, whose mystery of incarnation is indeed the title of our redemption. And it is rightly stated that when the stone is anointed on earth and set up as a pillar, the Lord is revealed in heaven, because certainly He appeared in time among men as a man, who remains eternal with the Father as God; who, having conquered death, ascended above the heavens to the East, He remains as the symbol of our salvation with us all the days until the consummation of the world, transferring from the earth to heaven the

body he assumed, but encompassing both earth and heaven with the presence of His divinity.

Therefore, the Lord, expounding to us the ancient history of Israel, shows that the simplicity of the faithful people represented by Nathanael was prefigured; He reveals that in the stone upon which the angels ascended and descended, He Himself was signified, whose dual nature is in turn proclaimed by spiritual teachers. For Israel as if anoints the stone with oil when Nathanael confesses how God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and power, saying, Rabbi, you are the Son of God, you are the King of Israel (John I). It is now clear, after the reading of the holy Gospel has been explained, my brothers, that it was not without reason the great mystery was foretold at the beginning of it that Jesus wanted to go out to Galilee, and then it was added how he called Philip and how Nathanael, called by him, accepted and was instructed by the light of truth. For indeed, as we said, Galilee is interpreted as Transfiguration or Revelation. And it is rightly said that He wanted to go out to Galilee when He deigned to reveal the sacraments of His majesty to the faithful:

to whose perfect knowledge, which is the only blessed life of man, we will then ascend all the more sublimely, since we now diligently strive to migrate from earthly things to heavenly things, and to advance by the steps of virtues, with the aid of Him who is accustomed to ascend, promote, and crown the desires of the good, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY 18: ON THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Matthew 17; Mark 9; Luke 9

At that time, Jesus took with Him Peter, James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain alone, and He was transfigured before them. Since our Lord and Redeemer has intended to lead His chosen ones through the labors of this life to that life of future blessedness which knows no labor, He sometimes describes in His Gospel the efforts of temporal struggles, and sometimes the reward of eternal victories: so that, having heard the necessity of struggles, they may remember not to seek rest in this life; and having heard again the sweetness of the future recompense, they may more lightly bear the passing evils, which they hope to be rewarded by eternal good. For when He had just mentioned His and His followers' sufferings a little earlier, He immediately added what we have now heard as it was being read, saying:

For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works. Where most aptly [some manuscripts: most openly] He designates the day of the final judgment, when He will come in great power and majesty to judge the world, who once came in humility and lowliness to be judged by the world. When with judicial scrutiny He will seek the perfection of works from those to whom, by the generosity of His mercy, He has granted the grace of His gifts. When He will reward each according to his works, He will lead the chosen into the kingdom of His Father and will cast the reprobates with the devil into eternal fire. And it is beautifully said that the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father. For the Son of Man will come in the glory of God the Father, because He who is lesser than the Father in human nature is in divinity of one and the same glory with the Father, true man in every respect and true God. Rightly, therefore, He delights the pious and rightly terrifies the obstinate with what follows. And then He will reward each according to his works: because those who now doing good are afflicted by the injustices of the wicked, eagerly await that time when through a just judge they will not only be freed from the injuries of the unjust but also receive the reward of their righteousness and patience.

But those who live wickedly and consider the patience of the judge as negligence, rightly [some manuscripts: righteous] when they repent too late, are struck by the sentence of eternal damnation. This evangelical sentiment is in harmony with what the Psalmist says: I will sing of mercy and judgment to you, O Lord (Psalm 101). First, he declares that he will sing of mercy, and then of judgment: because indeed the Lord, who in His first coming generously bestowed mercy upon us, will strictly exact it in His second coming. But any perverse person who despises the mercy of the generous One justly fears the judgment of the scrutinizing Lord. But he who gratefully remembers to have received the grace of mercy, joyfully awaits the trial of judgment, and thus with free modulation sings of mercy and judgment to his judge. However, since the time of universal judgment is uncertain to all, and the hour of each one's departure is uncertain, and the present affliction might seem long to those not knowing when the promised rest will come, the merciful teacher wished to premonstrate the joys of the eternal promise to some of His disciples still living on earth: so that those who had seen it and all who could

hear might more readily endure present adversities by often recalling to mind the promised reward they await. Following this:

Amen, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom. For the disciples saw him coming in his kingdom, because they saw him shining on the mountain in that brightness, in which he will be seen by all the saints in his kingdom after the judgment has been carried out. But what the mortal and bodily eyes of the disciples could not yet bear, then through the resurrection made incorruptible, the whole Church of the saints will be able to powerfully behold, of which it is written: "Their eyes will see the king in his beauty" (Isaiah 33). And after six days Jesus took Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain. To show His glory to the disciples, He leads them up a high mountain, to teach all who desire to see this, not to lie in low pleasures, not to serve carnal allurements, not to cling to earthly desires, but always to be raised to the heights by the love of eternal things: angelic purity, piety, peace, love, and the life of justice, as far as is possible for mortals, should always be imitated according to Him who said: But our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ (Phil. III). To show the glory of His majesty, He leads the disciples to the mountain, so that they might learn themselves, and that all who thirst to see this might learn, not to seek it in the depth of this world, but in the kingdom of heavenly blessedness. And well He said, because He leads them up a high mountain, He added separately: because the just, although now oppressed by the proximity of the wicked, are in soul and with full intent of faith separated from them, and in the future are completely separated from them, when He will hide them in the secret of His face from the disturbance of men, He will protect them in His tabernacle from the strife of tongues.

But the six days after which He promised the disciples the revelation of His vision of glory, signifies that the saints in the day of judgment will receive the kingdom that was promised to them by Him who does not lie, before the secular ages. Indeed, the secular ages consist of six periods, which being completed, they will hear Him saying: Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world (Mt. XXV). The six days of the promised vision of the Lord and the glory of good works can signify [other: denote] the perfection [other: perfectionment] of

good works, without which no one can attain to the contemplation of the majesty of his Maker. For as the Lord created the world in six days and rested on the seventh day from His works, rightly through six days good works are expressed, through which we must reach rest. And because he who desires to see God, who longs to reach the glory of the blessed resurrection, ought to do good which he knows, rightly after six days He shows the glory of His kingdom, which He promised to the disciples.

And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun: and his garments became white as snow. The Lord was transfigured before the disciples and signified the glory of his body which was to be illuminated by the resurrection, and he manifested how great the brightness of the bodies of all the elect will be after the resurrection. For elsewhere, he also says of these: Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Mt. XIII), and here in example of the future glorification, his face shone like the sun. Not because the brightness and glory of the Lord and his saints can be equal, as the Apostle says of these same saints: One star differs from another star in brightness, so also is the resurrection of the dead (I Cor. XV): but because we know nothing brighter than the sun, the glory of the Lord's resurrection, and that of the saints, is compared to the appearance of the sun, since something brighter than the sun from which an example could be given to men could not be found. However, no one in the judgment of the reprobate is thought to see this glorious majesty of the Lord's body, this brightness of the bodies of the saints. They will only see the one whom they pierced, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over him.

But when judgment is completed, the wicked being removed so that they do not see the glory of God, then the righteous, transfigured in the light of incorruption to the extent of their capacity, will enter to the perpetual contemplation of the glory of his kingdom: whence the Apostle says: He will transform our humble body to be like his glorious body (Philip. III). But if anyone inquires what the garments of the Lord, which became white as snow, typically signify, it is reasonable to understand that his saints' Church is shown through these, about which Isaiah says: You will put them all on as an ornament (Isa. XLIX): and the Apostle: For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ (Galat. III). In the time of the resurrection, they are purified from all stains of iniquity and from all obscurity of mortality. Hence the evangelist Mark fittingly says about the garments of

the Lord: That they became radiant, extraordinarily white as snow, such as no fuller on earth can make white (Marc. IX); because it is evident to all, no one can live without corruption and pain on earth. It is clear to all wise men, though heretics contradict. No one can live without the touch of any sin on earth.

But what no fuller, that is, teacher of souls or someone of exceptional bodily purity can effect on earth, the Lord will accomplish in heaven, cleansing the Church, namely his garment, from all defilements of flesh and spirit, and refashioning it with eternal beatitude and light of flesh and spirit. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, speaking with him. What they appeared like, and what they spoke with him, Luke writes more clearly, saying: But Moses and Elijah appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke 9:31). Therefore, Moses and Elijah, who spoke with the Lord on the mountain and discussed his passion and resurrection, represent the prophecies of the law and prophets which are fulfilled in the Lord and now are evident to the learned, and will be more manifest to all the elect in the future. They are rightly said to be seen in glory, because at that time the full dignity of all the divine utterances will be openly seen, not only in meaning but also in word: although in Moses and Elijah all who will reign with the Lord can be rightly understood. In Moses who died and was buried, those who will be resurrected from death at the judgment; in Elijah, who has not yet paid the debt of death, those who will be found alive in the flesh at the coming of the judge. Both groups will together be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air at the same moment, and, once judgment is completed, they will be led into eternal life. It is fitting that Moses and Elijah are said to have been seen in glory; for through the excellence of the glory, the honor of the reward by which they are to be crowned is shown.

It is also fitting that they are remembered to have spoken of his departure, which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem: because the passion of the Redeemer universally serves as a matter of praise for his faithful; the more they have deserved to be redeemed by his grace, the more they continually remember their restoration with devoted minds and testify with devout confession. Truly, as anyone tastes more of the sweetness of heavenly life, they become more disdainful of all things that delighted them in the lower world, and therefore Peter, having seen the glory of the Lord and his saints,

suddenly forgets all the earthly things he knew and desires to adhere perpetually to what he has seen, saying: Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, let us make here three tabernacles, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. And indeed blessed Peter, as another evangelist testifies (Luke 9), did not know what he was saying, in that he thought tabernacles should be made for the heavenly conversation. For in that glory of heavenly life, a house will not be necessary, where, with the light of divine contemplation making all things peaceful, no aura of any adversity will remain to be feared, as the Apostle John testifies, who describing the clarity of that same heavenly city, among other things says: "And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple" (Rev. 21). But he well knew what he was saying when he said: "Lord, it is good for us to be here," because truly the only good for man is to enter into the joy of his Lord, and to stand by contemplating Him forever. Hence deservedly we must think that he never had any true good, who by his demanding guilt happens never to see the face of his Creator. If then blessed Peter, having contemplated the glorified humanity of Christ, is so affected with joy that he never wants to be separated from His sight, what do we think, dearest brothers, of the blessedness of those who have merited to see the height of His divinity?

And if he judged it the greatest good to see the transfigured form of Christ on the mountain with only two holy men, Moses and Elijah, what words can explain, what mind can comprehend, how great the joys of the just must be when they draw near to Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, Jerusalem, and the company of many thousands of angels, and behold the very Maker and Founder of that same city, not through a glass in enigmas as now, but face to face? About this vision, Peter himself says, speaking to the faithful of the Lord: "In whom, though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter 1). While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice from the cloud said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; listen to him. Because they sought to build tabernacles, they were reminded by the overshadowing bright cloud that in that heavenly abode of life, houses are not necessary, where the Lord protects all things eternally with the shadowing of his light. For He who spread a cloud for forty years to protect the people walking through the desert, so that neither the sun by day nor the moon by night would strike them, how much more

will He protect those dwelling in the tabernacle of the heavenly kingdom through the ages under the covering of His holy wings? For we know, as the Apostle teaches: "For if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. 5). Because they desired to see the resplendent face of the Son of Man, the Father was present in the voice, teaching that the same is His beloved Son, in whom He is well pleased: so that from the glory of His humanity, which they saw, they might learn to yearn for the contemplation of the presence of His divinity, equal to that of the Father. And the Father's voice said about the Son, "In whom I am well pleased," signifying what the Son elsewhere testifies: "And He who sent me is with me;

he has not left me alone, because I always do what pleases Him" (John 8). And when He added, "Listen to him," it reminded them that He is the one about whom Moses, giving the law to the same people, had forewarned: "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your brothers; you shall listen to him in everything he tells you" (Deut. 18). He does not forbid listening to Moses and Elijah, that is, the law and the prophets, but He suggests that the listening to the Son, who came to fulfill the law and the prophets, should be preferred, implying that the light of the evangelical truth should be set above all the figures and enigmas of the Old Testament. And indeed by a pious dispensation, the faith of the disciples, so that they might not stumble when the Lord is crucified, is strengthened, while at the very moment of the impending cross His humanity is shown to be lifted up by heavenly light through the resurrection: and because the Son is coeternal in divinity with the Father, it is proved by the heavenly voice of the same Father, so that when the hour of passion arrives they might grieve less for Him dying, remembering that after death He would be immediately glorified in humanity, and that in divinity He is always glorified by God the Father. However, the disciples, still as if carnal and of fragile substance, being frightened by the voice of God, fell on their faces.

But the Lord, as the compassionate teacher in all things, consoled and lifted them up with both word and touch. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying: Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is risen from the dead. He commanded the vision of His revealed majesty to be kept silent for a time, lest, if it were openly spread among the people, they might either oppose His passion's dispensation by

resisting, which would delay the effect of human salvation that was to come through His blood, or those who believed the vision after hearing it might be scandalized at the reproach of the cross. After His passion, resurrection, and ascension into heaven were accomplished, and the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit, it was preached so that all who wished to be initiated into His sacraments might not only believe in the effect of the resurrection but also learn the manner of the same resurrection from those who had seen [or, had seen it], and also that they might unanimously preach and love the eternity of the divine nativity which they had heard from the Father, as something to be believed and loved by all. Therefore, having expounded the reading on the Lord's transfiguration, let us return, most beloved brothers, to our own conscience, and if it pleases us to see the glory of the Lord, let us, transcending carnal desires, ascend the mountain of virtues. If we wish to be counted among the white-clad of the Lord's raiment, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

If we desire to hear the voice of God the Father, if we wish to behold the majesty of His consubstantial Son, let us strive diligently to avoid perverse and useless words of mortals; let us strive to turn our eyes away from the superfluous spectacles of the world, so that in the shining glory of our resurrection, we may also be fit to see and speak of the marvels of our Creator, who grants this, who lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

HOMILY 19: ON THE SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Matthew 15; Mark 7

At that time Jesus went out and withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman came from those borders, and cried out, saying to him: Have mercy on me, Lord, son of David: my daughter is badly vexed by a demon, etc. In the reading of the holy Gospel, which has now been read to us, dearest brothers, we have heard of the great faith, patience, constancy, and humility of the woman. Whose devotion of mind is all the more admirable, whereby although she indeed, as a Gentile, was utterly secluded from the teachings of divine words, yet she is not deprived of the virtues which the same words proclaim. For she had a great perfection of faith, who, imploring the mercy of the Savior, said: Have mercy on me, Lord, son of David. For when she calls Him Lord, son of David, it is clearly evident that she believes He is truly man and truly God. When she prays for her

daughter, she does not bring her with her, nor does she ask the Lord to come to her, it is very clear that she trusts that He can give salvation by His word, without requiring His physical presence. But in this, that she finally adores Him prostrate after many tears, saying: Lord, help me, she shows herself in no way uncertain about His divine majesty, the power of which she learned to be worshipped as of God. She has no small virtue of patience, who does not cease from her prayers when the Lord does not respond to her first petition, but with greater urgency implores the help of His piety that she had begun. The Lord delays responding to her, not because the merciful doctor despises the prayers of the wretched, of whom it is very truly written: The Lord has heard the desire of the poor (Psalm IX), but to show us the endurance of the woman, always to be imitated, who the more she seemed to be scorned by the Lord, the more fervently she persisted in her prayers. He delays responding, to provoke the merciful hearts of His own disciples (who, as men, were embarrassed by the public cries of the woman following them) to pray together with her. For He Himself knew the measure of His mercy, who has arranged all things in measure, and number, and weight. He delayed responding, lest an occasion be given to the Jews for slander, that He preferred the Gentiles in teaching or healing; therefore they might justly refuse to accept His faith. And this is what He means when He says:

I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Because by himself alone he taught the Jews, who through his disciples also called the Gentiles to the grace of faith, of whom he says elsewhere: And I have other sheep that are not of this fold, and I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock, one shepherd (John X). Hence it is that he was about to heal a single Gentile girl in person, but he did not do this before the unparalleled faith of the mother was proven to all. This same mother also has a remarkable distinction of steadfastness and humility, who, though compared to dogs by the Lord, did not desist from her persistence in prayer, nor did she withdraw her mind from hoping for the gift of mercy, but having willingly embraced the insult she received, she not only did not deny herself similar to dogs, but even equated herself to the little dogs, and by a prudent argument confirms the Lord's statement, and does not desist from the persistence of her request which she had begun. For she confirms the Lord's statement, to whom he says:

It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs, she replied: Yes, Lord. That is, truly as you say, it is so: because it is not good to take the salvation destined from heaven for the people of Israel and give it to the Gentiles; but when she adds: For even the little dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table. She most wisely demonstrates how much humility, how much inner steadfastness of heart she bears, who is indeed unworthy to be refreshed by the whole teachings of the Lord, which the Jews used as a feast, but she thought that any small grace imparted to her by the Lord could profit her for salvation. Hence rightly by the pious Savior, who did not dismiss her prayers with proud disdain, but wisely deferred them for a time, she deserved to hear: O woman, great is your faith; let it be done for you as you desire. For she indeed had great faith, who, knowing neither the ancient prophecies nor the recent miracles of the Lord himself, commands or promises, yet perseveres in her prayers despite being repeatedly ignored by the Lord: and whom she had learned to be the Savior only from public rumor, she does not cease to implore by pleading. Therefore, she also achieves the great effect of her petition, for the Lord says, "Let it be done for you as you wish," and her daughter is healed from that hour. Moreover, with good reason, this woman, though a Gentile by nature but steadfast and credulous in heart, signifies the faith and devotion of the Church gathered from the Gentiles, which the holy preachers expelled from Judea imbued with the word and mysteries of divine grace. For if we reread the earlier passage of the holy Gospel, we will find that the scribes and Pharisees coming from Jerusalem violently attacked the Lord and his disciples with their infidel tumult, whom he soon left after reproaching them with well-deserved invective. And having left there, he withdrew to the regions of Tyre and Sidon. Here, it is clearly prefigured that after his passion and resurrection, the Lord would leave behind the faithless hearts of the Jews in his preachers and withdraw to the regions of the Gentiles. Tyre and Sidon, which were cities of the Gentiles, signify the monuments of Gentile doctrine and life, in which fools trust.

Hence, it is fitting that the woman who faithfully implores the Lord is said to have come from those regions, for unless she had abandoned the empty dwellings of old behavior, she would never have joined the Church of Christ; unless she had anathematized the dogmas of ancient error, she could in no way receive the new grace of faith. Thus, the blessed Paul, having ad-

vanced in Judaism, afterward, when called, progressed further in the Church of God than his contemporaries. The demon-possessed daughter, for whom she petitions, represents any soul in the Church, more enslaved by the deceptions of evil spirits than obedient to the precepts of its Creator: for whom it is necessary that the mother Church diligently intercede with the Lord, that what she herself cannot correct externally by advising, beseeching, and reproaching, he may correct internally by inspiring, and turning it from the darkness of errors to the recognition of true light. Indeed, even if at the first tears of the beseeching Church, the Lord delays to respond, that is, to grant the requested health of mind to the erring ones, yet one must not desist from asking, seeking, and knocking, nor should despair be undertaken in obtaining; but rather, one should persevere with such insistence, frequenting the Savior with such obstinate clamor, and seeking the intercessions of his saints with such entreaties, until they too plead with the Lord from heaven for the Church to be heard.

Thus, it happens that if the mind does not change from its fixed purpose, it will not be deprived of the fruit of its petition; but whether one intervenes for his own frailty or for others, he will attain the desired effect. For if any of us has a conscience polluted by the filth of avarice, pride, vain glory, indignation, wrath, or envy, or the uncleanness of other vices, indeed he has a daughter badly harassed by a demon, for whose healing he must run suppliantly to the Lord: because the thought begotten from the heart endures madness by the devil's art, whose correction must be beseeched from the merciful Creator with frequent, indeed continual laments and prayers. If anyone has defiled the good he has done with the pestilence of perjury, theft, blasphemy, detraction, quarrel, or even bodily impurity, or other suchlike, he has a daughter tormented by the furies of an unclean spirit, because the action that he had rightly performed by laboring well, he has now foolishly ruined by serving the deceits of the devil. Therefore, it is necessary that, when one recognizes their guilt, they should immediately flee to prayers and tears, frequently seeking the help of the intercessions of saints, who, praying to the Lord for [the soul's] salvation, might say: "We pray, Lord, compassionate and merciful, patient and of great mercy (Psalm 85), forgive it, for it cries after us: forgive the guilt, and grant grace, [they seek] our innermost support with intimate affection.

It is necessary, with due submissive humility, that they no longer judge themselves worthy of the company of Israelite sheep, that is, of pure souls, but rather should consider themselves comparable to and unworthy of heavenly gifts. Yet nevertheless, in hope, they should not desist from the persistence of praying, but with an undoubting mind, have confidence in the goodness of the highest giver: for the one who could make a confessor out of a thief, an apostle out of a persecutor, an evangelist out of a publican, and sons of Abraham out of stones, can also convert the most shameless dog into an Israelite sheep: to whom He graciously grants the pasture of eternal life along with the gift of chastity, that is, He deems worthy to make the sinner turned away from his evil path righteous, whom He, by the merit of good action, leads to the heavenly kingdom. And seeing such fervor of our faith, such persistent perseverance in praying, the Lord will finally have mercy, and grant us what we desire: namely, that with the disturbances of vicious thoughts expelled, the chains of sins abandoned, and pure serenity of mind and perfection of good deeds may be restored to us. In the meantime, it should be noted that this persistence in praying deserves to be fruitful only if what we pray for with our mouth, we also meditate in our mind, and neither the clamor of our lips is split from the focus of our thoughts.

For there are those who, entering the church, recite many words of psalmody or prayer, but with their heart attentive elsewhere, they neither recall what they say: praying indeed with their mouth, but wandering outside in their mind, they deprive themselves of all fruit of the prayer: thinking their prayer is heard by God when they themselves, who utter it, do not hear it, a fact which no one can fail to observe is done by the instigation of the ancient enemy. For knowing the utility of praying and envying humans the grace of obtaining it, he throws many kinds of light and sometimes even vile and harmful fantasies at humans, with which he impedes prayer, so much so that sometimes we endure such great waves of wandering thoughts while prostrated in prayer, as we would not know how to endure lying on our backs in bed. Hence, dearly beloved brothers, it is necessary to overcome the recognized malice of the devil; and that we guard our minds as much as we can from those clouds which the enemy delights to scatter, and solicit the perpetual aid of the pious Defender, who is powerful to grant the grace of pure and perfect praying even to unworthy sinners [or, petitioners]. The purity of prayer greatly helps, however, if we abstain from illicit acts in every place and

time; if we always discipline both our hearing and language from idle talk; if we habituate ourselves to walk in the law of God, and to search His testimonies with all our heart.

For whatever things we are accustomed to do, speak or hear often, it is necessary that the same frequently recur to the mind as if to their usual and proper seat; and as pigs frequent muddy wallows and doves clear springs, so impure thoughts disturb an unclean mind, while pure ones enrich a chaste mind with sanctifying spirit. Certainly if we persist in praying and remain steadfast like the Canaanite woman, the grace of our Creator will be present, which will correct all our errors, sanctify the unclean, and calm the turbulent within us. For He is faithful and just, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, if we cry out to Him with the constant voice of our mind, who lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY 20: ON THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

John 8

At that time Jesus went to the Mount of Olives, and early in the morning he again went to the temple, and all the people came to him, and sitting down, he taught them. We must consider this reading from the holy Gospel with great attention, dearest brothers, and always remember how greatly it commends the grace of our Creator to us. Behold, as we have heard, when the impious accusers brought before him a sinful woman, instead of immediately stoning her as prescribed by the law, he first instructed the accusers to consider themselves, and then to give a judgment against the sinner, so that by recognizing their own fragility, they might understand how they ought to show mercy to others. But since it is customary in the Scriptures for some things to be expressed from the state of time, others from the state of place, and others from both, the Evangelist, about to relate the tempering of the law's strictness by the mercy of the Redeemer, first stated that Jesus went to the Mount of Olives, and early in the morning he again went to the temple. Indeed, the Mount of Olives signifies the height of the Lord's piety and mercy because in Greek, olive means mercy, and an olive grove is called oleon, and the very anointing of oil used to bring relief to weary and aching limbs. Likewise, because oil both surpasses in strength and purity, and whatever liquid you pour upon it, it immediately repels and rises above it, it not inappropriately symbolizes the grace of heavenly mercy, of which it is

written, "The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works" (Ps. 144).

The time of early morning also indicates the rise of this same grace, by which the shadow of the law being removed, the light of evangelical truth was to be revealed. Therefore, Jesus goes to the Mount of Olives to declare that the citadel of mercy consists in him; he then comes again early in the morning to the temple, to signify that this same mercy was to be dispensed and offered to the faithful with the dawning light of the New Testament, namely in his temple. And all the people came to him, and sitting, he taught them. The sitting of the Lord indicates the humility of his incarnation, for which he deigned to have mercy on us; hence it is also commanded to us: Arise after you have sat down (Psalm 126), as if it is said openly: Not before, but after you have humbled yourselves truly, hope to receive the reward of heavenly exaltation. It is well said that when Jesus taught sitting, all the people came to him: because after he became close to humans by the humility of his incarnation, his word was more willingly received by many: by many, I say, his word was received, for it was scorned by many with proud impiety. For the meek heard and rejoiced, magnifying the Lord with the Psalmist, and exalting his name together. The envious heard, and were dissolved, but they were not pierced; they tested him and mocked him, gnashing their teeth at him in derision. Thus, testing him, they brought a woman caught in adultery, asking what he would command to be done to her; because Moses had ordered such a one to be stoned, so that if he too decided that she should be stoned, they would mock him as though he had forgotten the mercy he always taught; if he forbade stoning, they would gnash their teeth at him and condemn him as a supporter of crimes and as contrary to the law, as though deservedly. But far be it that earthly foolishness should find what to say, and heavenly wisdom should lack what to answer. Far be it that the blind justice fulfilled should resist so that the sun of justice would not shine over the world.

But Jesus, bending down, wrote on the ground with his finger. Through Jesus' inclination, humility is expressed; through the finger, which is flexible due to the joints' arrangement, subtlety of discernment is expressed; moreover, the ground signifies the human heart, which is accustomed to yielding the fruits of either good or evil actions. Therefore, when the Lord was asked to judge the adulteress, he did not immediately give a judgment,

but first, bending down, he wrote on the ground with his finger, and only afterward, because he is earnestly asked, does he judge: teaching us symbolically that when we see any errors of our neighbors, we should not immediately judge by condemning them, but first, humbly returning to our conscience, we should skillfully carve it with the finger of discernment, and diligently weigh what is pleasing or displeasing to our Creator in it, according to the Apostle's statement, "Brothers, if a man be overtaken in a fault, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of meekness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted" (Galatians 6).

But when they persisted in questioning Him, He straightened up and said to them: "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." Because on this side and on that the Scribes and Pharisees were laying snares of traps for the Lord, thinking He would either be unmerciful in judging or unjust: He, foreseeing their deceits, as if passing through the threads of a spider's web, and showing the judgment of justice in all things, and the gentleness of mercy: it was fulfilled in them that which we have said of the Psalmist, that they were dissolved, and were not pricked at heart (Psalm 35). They were dissolved, indeed because they could not trap the Lord in their snares; nor were they pricked at heart to follow Him in the duties of love. Do you want to hear the temperance of mercy? "Let him who is without sin among you." Do you want again to hear the justice of judging? "Let him be the first to throw a stone at her." If Moses, he says, commanded you to stone such a woman, see that it was not sinners but the just whom he ordered to do this. First, fulfill the justice of the law yourselves, and so, innocent in hands and pure in heart, go forth to stone the guilty. First, perfect the spiritual edicts of the law—faith, mercy, and love—and then divert to judging the carnal.

Having given judgment, the Lord again bent down and wrote on the ground. Indeed, according to the custom of human practice, it can be understood that the Lord wished to bend down and write on the ground before the wicked tempters, so that by turning His face elsewhere, He might give them the free will to leave, whom He had foreseen would depart more quickly struck by His response rather than were He to question them further. Finally, hearing this, they went out one by one, starting with the eldest. He symbolically reminds us in that which he, before and after pronouncing judgment, bends down and writes on the ground, that before we rebuke a

sinning neighbor and after we have given the duty of rightful chastisement, we should examine ourselves with a worthy investigator of humility, lest perhaps we be entangled in the same offenses which we reprehend in them, or in other offenses whatsoever. For it often happens that those who judge a murderer for publicly sinning, do not feel the worse evil of hatred by which they are devoured in secret; those who accuse a fornicator, do not understand the plague of pride by which they are exalted about their own chastity; those who condemn a drunkard, do not see the venom of envy by which they themselves are consumed. What remedy, therefore, remains for us in such dangers, what means of salvation? Except that when we see another sinning, we immediately bow down, that is, humbly recognize how low we are, based on the frailty of our condition, if divine mercy does not sustain us. Let us write with our finger on the ground, that is, accurately deliberate with judgment whether we can say with blessed Job, "for neither does our heart reproach us in our whole life" (Job 27); and remember diligently that if our heart reproaches us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.

We can also rightly understand that the Lord, about to grant forgiveness to the sinner, wants to write on the ground with his finger to show that He is the same one who once wrote the Decalogue on stone with his finger, that is, with the work of the Holy Spirit. And well was the law written on stone, which was given to subdue the hearts of a hard and stubborn people. Well did the Lord write on the ground, about to grant the grace of remission to the contrite and humble of heart, who could bear the fruit of salvation. Well did He bend down and write on the ground with His finger, who once showing Himself high on the mountain wrote with His finger on the stone, because through the humbling undertaken in humanity, He infused the Spirit of grace into the fruitful hearts of the faithful, who once appearing exalted in an angel, gave hard commands to hard peoples. Well He who bent down to write on the ground, stood up to proclaim words of mercy, because what He promised through the companionship of human infirmity, by the power of divine virtue He bestowed upon men the gift of piety.

Rising up, Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they who accused you? Has no one condemned you?" She said, "No one, Lord." No one dared to condemn the sinner, because each one had begun to see in themselves what they recognized should be more condemned. But let us see with what gift of mercy He, who drove away the crowd of accusers by the weight of justice,

lifts up the accused. Thus: Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on sin no more." Here is fulfilled the sentence of the Psalmist, who sings in the praises of the Lord: "Prosper and reign, because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and your right hand shall guide you wondrously" (Psalm 45). For He reigns for the sake of truth, because by preaching the way of truth to the world, He enlarges the glory of His kingdom to the multitude of believers. He reigns for the sake of meekness and righteousness, because more people subject themselves to His kingdom because they know Him to be meek in liberating those repenting of sin, and just in condemning the stubborn for sin: meek in granting the grace of faith and heavenly virtues, just in rendering an eternal reward for the struggle of faith and heavenly virtues. His right hand guided Him wondrously, because God dwelling in a man showed Him to be wondrous in all He did and taught; but He always showed Himself to lead with wondrous prudence against the traps that the cunning enemies could devise. Neither do I, investigate, condemn you. Go, and sin no more with contradictions. Since He is merciful and gracious and loves righteousness, He forbids sinning further. However, because some might doubt whether Jesus, whom they knew to be truly man, could forgive sins, He deigns to show more openly that He divinely holds this power. For after repelling the wickedness of the tempters, after loosing the guilt of the sinner, He speaks to them again saying:

I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. Where it clearly teaches, not only by what authority he forgave the sins of the woman; but also what he figuratively expressed by going up to the Mount of Olives, by coming again to the temple at dawn, by writing on the ground with his finger: namely that he is the citadel of mercies, and the God of all consolation, at once the herald and bestower of unending light, the giver of the law and of grace. I am, he says, the light of the world. As if he were openly saying: I am the true light, which illuminates every man coming into the world: I am the sun of righteousness who rises for those who fear God, though I seem to be covered for a time by the cloud of flesh. For I am covered by the cloud of flesh, not to be hidden from those who seek, but to be tempered for the weak. Let them heal the eyes of their mind, let them purify their hearts with faith, so that they may deserve to see me: Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Mt. V).

Who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. Whoever now obeys my commands and examples will not fear the future darkness of damnation, but rather will have the light of life, where he will never die at all, by nature. Therefore, let us follow, brothers, now the light of righteousness by faith which works through love, so that we may then be worthy to attain it by sight, which the merit of love both rewards and adds, attesting himself, who said: But whoever loves me, will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him (John XIV). Let us come with all attentive mind to him who has a place on the invisible Mount of Olives: for God, his God, anointed him with the oil of gladness above his companions, so that he may also deem us worthy to be partakers of the same anointing, that is, of spiritual grace. This we will indeed not deserve to attain any other way than by loving justice and hating iniquity.For also concerning him, the Psalm which speaks of these things preceded: You have loved righteousness and hated iniquity (Ps. XLIV), so that by proclaiming the glory of the head, he might show how the members should conduct themselves to pertain to this. Let us remember that he himself came to the temple at dawn, and while teaching, absolved the sinner from guilt, and let us strive to be a temple of our Creator, let us strive to advance in the light of virtues by dispelling the darkness of vices, so that even our hearts may be visited by the Lord, that he may instruct us with heavenly disciplines, and deign immediately to cleanse whatever he finds filthy in us, who lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for all ages of ages.

HOMILY 21: IN LENT

John 6; Luke 9; Mark 6; Matthew 19

At that time Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee, which is of Tiberias. And a great multitude followed him, because they saw the signs which he did on those who were diseased, etc. Those who read or hear the signs and miracles of the Lord and Savior correctly do not pay attention so much to what externally amazes them but rather look at what they should do internally by the example of these things, and what they should perceive as mystical in them. Behold, as Passover was approaching, the feast day of the Jews, the Lord was uplifting the multitude following Him with the word of salvation and likewise with the help of healing. For as another evangelist writes, He was speaking to them about the kingdom of God, and He was healing those who were in need of care, and having completed this teaching and healing,

He abundantly fed them from a small amount of food. And so, dearest brothers, following this example as Passover, the feast day of our redemption approaches, let us follow the Lord with our whole heart along with the gathered crowd of brothers, and let us carefully observe the path of His actions so that we may deserve to follow His footsteps. For he who says he abides in Christ ought to walk as He walked. Whatever harmful ignorance we find in ourselves, let us wash away with frequent hearing of His word, and whatever vices of the tempting disease, namely spiritual, we feel to be internally ravaging us, let us ask to be cleansed by the usual gift of His mercy.

But even if we behold ourselves united to Him by the sweetness of heavenly life, let us request His grace that He may deign to satisfy us with the gifts of necessary contrition and other spiritual virtues so that at the time of His most holy resurrection, adorned appropriately inside and out, we may partake of the sacraments of our salvation with pure body and heart together. But since we have briefly touched upon these matters, let us more diligently look at the entire sequence of the holy reading and let us uncover whatever mystical insight we can investigate in it for your charity. Jesus crossed over the Sea of Galilee, which is Tiberias. First, it must be said, according to history, that the Sea of Galilee, which is distinguished by many names due to the diversity of the surrounding regions, is called Tiberias only in those places where it displays the city of Tiberias to the west, as they say, inhabited with beneficial hot waters. Indeed, with the Jordan flowing through it, it extends eighteen thousand paces in length and five in width. Mystically, however, the sea signifies the turbulent and swelling waves of this age, in which any wicked, unjustly delighted, like fish immersed in deep waters, do not uplift the mind to heavenly joys. Hence, this same Sea of Galilee is aptly named, that is, the wheel; because surely the allure [or labor] of the passing age sends hearts into a whirl, which prevents them from being uplifted to the desires of eternal life. Concerning these matters, the Psalmist says: "In the round, the wicked walk" (Psalm XI). But a great multitude was following Jesus as He crossed the Sea of Galilee, because they were receiving the supreme gifts of heavenly teaching, healing, and nourishment from Him. For before the Lord appeared in the flesh, only the Jewish nation followed Him by believing; but after He came by the dispensation of His incarnation, He approached, trampled, and crossed over the waves of mortal life, and immediately a great multitude of nations followed Him, desiring to be spiritu-

ally instructed, healed, and satisfied, praying with the Psalmist: "Lord, I have fled to You;

teach me to do Your will"; and "Have mercy on me, Lord, for I am weak; heal me, Lord, for my bones are troubled" (Psalm I, II). And again, confident of receiving from Him the nourishment of eternal life, "The Lord is my shepherd, and I shall not want; He makes me lie down in green pastures" (Psalm XXIII). But when Jesus went up the mountain, there He sat with His disciples, and when the multitude came to Him, He descended and refreshed those in the lower places whom He had shortly before healed in the higher places. Let us by no means believe this happened in vain, but to signify mystically that the Lord distributes His teachings and gifts according to the capacity of the recipients. To the spiritually weak and immature, indeed, He gives simpler sacraments; to the more advanced, He reveals more profound mysteries and secrets of higher wisdom. Promising higher rewards of heavenly gifts. Finally, to a certain person asking what he should do to gain eternal life, as if to someone still on a lower level, he bestowed common gifts of his generosity, saying: "You shall not kill, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, honor your father and mother.

To the same person, when later seeking greater things, and as if wishing to ascend to the mountain of virtues, he said, "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell all that you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven, and come follow me. The Lord not only taught this in the flesh through his own moderation, but even now continues to display it through the ministers of his word. Hence, concerning these things under the persona of a good servant, it is testified that there should be given to fellow-servants the appropriate measure of wheat in due time, that is, to wisely and timely dispense the food of the word according to the capacity of the listeners. The fact that the Lord teaches, heals, and feeds the crowds as Passover approaches can be mystically interpreted this way: Passover signifies "passage," and whoever the Lord recovers with the internal sweetness of his gifts, he indeed prepares for a healthy passage, so that they transcend the lusts of the flesh with the sublime nature of the mind, and trample the vain desires of the world, both favorable and adverse, with heavenly hope and love.

Even though the soul and flesh might not yet fully reach the heights above, since this is clearly promised in the future, whatever those bound by

the flesh appear to grasp as lofty things, they regard them as almost nothing in comparison to the eternal, emulating the one who, seeing the dominion elevated and exalted above the cedars of Lebanon, overlooked temporal things by contemplation and saw them as not existing, foreseeing their quick removal. That Jesus lifted up his eyes and saw the multitude coming to him is a sign of divine compassion, because for all those seeking to come to him, he is accustomed to grant the grace of heavenly mercy if they seek it truthfully. And to prevent them from erring in their search, he habitually illuminates those seeking with the light of his Spirit, the seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent into all the earth (Revelation 5). When the Lord tested Philip, saying, "Where shall we buy bread so these may eat? he did this with provident dispensation, not to learn what he did not already know, but to make Philip recognize his own lack of faith by being tested, and be corrected by the miracle performed.

For surely he should not have doubted, in the presence of the creator of all things, who brings forth bread from the earth and wine that gladdens the heart of man, that the bread of a few denarii could suffice for the thousands in the crowd, so that each could take adequately and go away satisfied. The five loaves with which he fed the multitude are the five books of Moses, opened with spiritual understanding, and with an increasingly abundant sense and multiplied, daily refresh the faithful hearts of the listeners. Those who are deemed to have been good barley, evidently because of the harsher edicts of the law and the coarse coverings of the letter, which concealed the inner spiritual sense as if it were marrow [hidden]. The two fish he added, without difficulty, signify the writings of the psalmists and the prophets, one of which sang and the other spoke to their listeners about the future sacraments of Christ and the Church. And rightly are the preachers of that age represented by aquatic animals, in which the faithful people could not live at all without the waters of baptism. The boy who had five loaves and two fish, but did not distribute them to the hungry crowds, but offered them to the Lord to distribute, represents the Jewish people with a childish literal sense, who kept the sayings of the Scriptures closed among themselves.

These, however, the Lord appearing in the flesh took, and showed what utility and sweetness they had inside, revealed how they overflowed with the multiple grace of the Spirit, which appeared few and despicable, and handed these over to all nations through his apostles and the successors of the

apostles, by ministering them. Hence, well do some evangelists report that the Lord gave the loaves and fish to the disciples, and the disciples ministered to the crowds. For when the mystery [or ministry] of human salvation began to be narrated by the Lord from those who heard it, it was confirmed in us by them. The disciples set before the crowds, when they went forth and preached everywhere, with the Lord working with them and confirming the word through accompanying signs. The grass on which the crowd is reclining and is refreshed represents the desire of the flesh, which should be trodden down and pressed by anyone who desires to be satisfied with spiritual nourishment. For all flesh is grass, and all its glory is like the flower of grass. Therefore, let everyone who desires to be refreshed by the sweetness of the living bread and to be renewed by the heavenly banquet, lest they perish in the lowest state of old, strive to crush the flower of the grass, that is, to subdue their body and bring it into service, subdue the pleasures of the flesh, and restrain the wantonness of luxury.

The five thousand men who ate signify the perfection of those who are refreshed by the word of life. For by the name of men those in the Scriptures are typically represented who are more perfect, and whom no effeminacy corrupts, such as the Apostle desires them to be when he says: Watch, stand firm in the faith, act manfully and be strong (1 Cor. 16:13). Moreover, the number of a thousand, beyond which no further calculation of ours extends, is usually used to indicate the fullness of the matters discussed; and the number five expresses our five well-known bodily senses, namely, sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. In each of these, those who strive to act manfully and be strengthened, living soberly, righteously, and piously, that they might be worthy to be refreshed by the sweetness of heavenly wisdom, are typified as the five thousand men whom the Lord satisfied with mystical feasts. Nor should it be overlooked that he gave thanks before feeding the multitude. For he gave thanks to teach us always to give thanks for the heavenly [or divinely] received gifts, and to intimate how much he rejoices in our advancements, and rejoices in our spiritual refreshment. Do you wish to know, brothers, how much he rejoices in our salvation?

The Evangelist Luke recounts that he gave the disciples the authority to tread on all the power of the enemy and indicated that their names are written in the heavens, and immediately adds, "In that very hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that

you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children.'" It is therefore clear that he rejoices in the salvation and life of the faithful, for he praises the Father, giving thanks, because he has revealed the secrets hidden from the proud to the humble in spirit. And when he ordered the disciples to gather the leftover fragments after the multitude was satisfied, lest they perish, it clearly signifies that many things in the divine words are hidden from the senses of the common people, some of which the less learned cannot reach by themselves, but can understand when explained by the more learned. Therefore, it is necessary that those who are able to diligently gather these things by careful examination should bring them to the education of their lesser brothers through speech or writing, lest the nourishment of the word perish through their neglect and be taken away from the people. They gathered them, he says, and filled twelve baskets with fragments.

Because the number twelve is usually used to signify any sum of perfection, it is rightly expressed by the twelve baskets full of fragments, representing the whole chorus of spiritual doctors, who are commanded to gather the obscure things of Scriptures, which the crowd cannot reach by themselves, and to keep what they have gathered by meditation and written word for their own use and the use of the crowd. The apostles and evangelists did this, inserting many mystical sayings of the law and prophets into their writings with explanations added by their interpreters. The Church teachers in the whole world, who followed them, also discussed some entire books of both Testaments with more diligent explanation—even if they are despised by men, they are fruitful with the bread of heavenly grace. For servile works are usually done with baskets. Hence, about the people who once served in clay and bricks in Egypt, the Psalmist says, "His hands served in the basket" (Psalm 80). Therefore, those people, when they saw what sign he had done, said, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world. They rightly said that the Lord was a great prophet, the herald of great salvation about to come to the world. For he himself deigned to call himself a prophet, where he says, "For it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem. But they were not yet advancing in full faith, for they did not know to call him Lord.

Therefore, those seeing the sign that Jesus had done, said, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world. We, with more certain know-

ledge of the truth and faith, seeing the world that Jesus made and the signs with which he filled it, let us say, "This is indeed the mediator of God and men, who fills the world with divinity, and the world was made through him, who came to his own to seek and save the human race that perished, and to renew the world that he made, who is with his faithful in the world through the presence of divinity all days until the end of the age, who at the end of the age will come through humanity into the world to render to each according to their works: casting the impious and sinners into eternal fire, and bringing the just into eternal life, in which he lives with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, through all ages of ages. Amen.

HOMILY 22: ON THE SECOND MONDAY OF LENT

John 2

At that time Jesus went down to Capernaum, He, and His mother, and His brethren, and His disciples, and they continued there not many days. It is often a cause of perplexity to some that in the beginning of this reading from the Gospel it is said that when the Lord went down to Capernaum, not only His mother and disciples followed Him, but also His brethren. Nor have heretics been lacking who believed that Joseph, the husband of the ever-blessed Virgin Mary, had begotten those who the Scripture calls the brethren of the Lord by another wife. Others, in even greater perfidy, thought that these were begotten by Mary herself after the Lord was born. But we, most beloved brethren, must know and confess without any scruple of doubt that not only the blessed Mother of God, but also Joseph, the most blessed witness and keeper of her chastity, always remained wholly free from any conjugal act; and that those called the brothers and sisters of the Savior, in the customary manner of the Scriptures, are actually called relatives. Finally, Abraham speaks to Lot in this way: 'I pray that there be no strife between me and thee, and between my shepherds and thine; for we are brethren.' And Laban to Jacob: 'Because thou art my brother, shouldst thou serve me for nothing?' (Gen. XXIX.) And indeed it is certain that Lot was the son of Aran, Abraham's brother, and Jacob was the son of Rebecca, Laban's sister, but because of kinship they were called brothers. Therefore, by this rule, common in the holy Scriptures, as I said, it must be understood that the relatives of Mary or Joseph are called the brothers of the Lord.

And he found, it says, in the temple those selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money-changers sitting. And when he had made a kind of

whip out of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, including the oxen and the sheep, and he poured out the money of the money-changers and overturned their tables. Oxen, sheep, and doves were bought for the purpose of being offered in the temple. The money-changers sat at the tables so that there might be a ready exchange of money between buyers and sellers of the offerings. Therefore, it seemed lawful to sell in the temple what was bought for the purpose of being offered in the same temple to the Lord; but the Lord himself, unwilling that any earthly business, not even that which might be considered honest, should be conducted in his house, drove out the unjust traders and expelled them all along with the things they traded. What then, my brothers, what do you think the Lord would do if he found dissenters in disputes, those indulging in idle talk, those dissolving in laughter, or entangled in any other crime, who saw buyers in the temple purchasing sacrifices to be offered to him, and hastened to eliminate them? We say this because of those who, having entered the church, not only neglect to be intent on prayer but even increase the matters for which they ought to pray, and moreover follow those who argue with foolishness, insults, and hatreds, or even slanders:

thus adding sin to sin, weaving as it were a very long cord by their reckless augmentation, not fearing to be condemned by the judgment of the strict judge. For twice indeed in the holy Gospel we read that the Lord, coming into the temple, drove out such traders, now, that is, in the third year before his passion, as we recognize from the subsequent writings of the Gospel, and in the very year he suffered, when five days before Passover, sitting on a donkey, he entered Jerusalem. But whoever is wise understands that he performs the same action in the temple of the holy Church through daily examination: hence these things are very dreadful, dearest ones, and must be feared with due reverence, and must be carefully avoided with diligent effort, lest, coming unexpectedly, he find any perverse thing in us for which we should rightly be scourged and expelled from the church: and especially in that which is particularly called the house of prayer, we must observe that we do not perform anything inappropriate, lest we hear with the Corinthians from the Apostle, "Do you not have houses to eat and drink in, or do you despise the church of God? And from the prophet with the Jews: "My beloved has committed many crimes in my house" (Jeremiah 11). And indeed it is to be rejoiced that we ourselves have become the temple of God through baptism,

as the Apostle testifies who says: "For the temple of God is holy, which you are" (1 Corinthians 3).

We are the city of the great king, of which it is sung: "Its foundations are in the holy mountains" (Psalm 87), that is, the foundations of the Church in the solidity of the faith of the apostles and prophets; but it is very dreadful, because the Apostle has said beforehand: "If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him" (1 Corinthians 3). And the just Judge himself says, "I will destroy from the city of the Lord those who work iniquity" (Psalm 100). It is to be rejoiced, because in us the solemnity of Passover is celebrated, when we strive to pass from vices to virtues. Easter indeed is called the Passover. We must rejoice because the Lord is visiting our hearts, that is, His own city; because it is fitting that He illuminates the presence of our good deeds with His piety. But we must fear sufficiently lest He finds us in His city doing something other than what He loves, and He shows Himself to us as a stern judge, rendering us what we do not love, lest He finds in His temple money changers or sellers of oxen, sheep, or doves and condemns us. For oxen signify the doctrine of the heavenly life, sheep signify works of purity and piety, and doves signify the gifts of the Holy Spirit. For surely, with the help of oxen, the field is accustomed to being plowed.

The field, however, is the heart of the Lord cultivated with heavenly doctrine and duly prepared for the seeds of God's word. Innocent sheep provide their wool for clothing men. The Spirit descended upon the Lord in the form of a dove. But they sell oxen, who dispense the word of the Gospel to listeners not out of divine love, but for the purpose of earthly gain, the kind of people whom the Apostle reproached because they preached Christ insincerely. They sell sheep, who perform acts of piety for the sake of human praise, about whom the Lord said: because they have received their reward (Mt. 6). They sell doves, who give the received grace of the Spirit not freely, as commanded, but for a price, who grant the laying on of hands by which the Spirit is received, if not for financial gain, yet for public favor, who conferring sacred orders not for the merit of life, but for the granting of favors. They give money in exchange in the temple, who serve not heavenly matters, but openly serve earthly matters in the Church, seeking their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But the Lord shows what reward awaits these deceitful workers when He drove them all out of the temple, having made a whip of cords. For they are cast out from the lot of the saints, who act

either deceitfully or openly do evil works. He also drove out the sheep and oxen, showing that the life and doctrine of such people are alike reprobate.

The cords with which He drove out the impious from the temple are the small pieces of their wicked actions, from which the material for the severe condemnation of reprobates is given to the strict judge. Hence Isaiah also says: Woe to those who draw iniquity with cords of vanity (Isa. 5). And in Proverbs Solomon says: His own iniquities capture the wicked, and he is bound with the cords of his sins (Prov. 5). For he who accumulates sins upon sins for which he will be severely condemned, extends as it were the cords by which he is bound and scourged, increasing them little by little. He also poured out the money of the money lenders and overturned the tables, because in the end, He will also take away from the reprobate the very essence of the things they loved, according to what is written: and the world passed away and its lust.

And to those who sold doves, he said: Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade. He commanded the selling of doves to be removed from the temple, because the grace of the Spirit, which is received without payment, should be given freely: hence Simon Magus, who wanted to buy this with money, so that he could sell it for a higher price, heard: May your money perish with you, you have no part or share in this matter. However, it should be noted that not only those who sell doves and turn the house of God into a house of trade are condemned, but also those who seek the sacred orders by giving money or inquiring about the price in terms of praise or even honor. Moreover, those who exercise the spiritual grade or grace in the Church, which they have received through the generosity of the Lord, not with simplicity but for any human reward, go against the word of the apostle Peter: Whoever speaks, as one who utters oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies, so that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 4). Therefore, whoever such people may be, if they do not want to be driven out of the Church by the coming Lord, they should cast these things out of their actions, so that they do not make the house of God a house of trade.

And it should not be overlooked that Scripture diligently commends to us both natures of our Savior, both human and divine. To understand that he is truly the Son of God, let us hear what he says: Do not make my Father's house a house of trade. Clearly, he shows himself to be the Son of God the

Father, who calls the temple of God his Father's house. And again, to recognize that he is truly the Son of Man, let us recall that at the beginning of this reading, descending to Capernaum, he is said to have a mother. His disciples remembered that it was written: "Zeal for your house will consume me." With zeal for the house of the Father, the Savior drove the impious out of the temple. Let us also, dearest brothers, be zealous for the house of God, and as much as we can, strive that nothing corrupt happens in it. If we see a brother who belongs to the house of God swollen with pride, habituated to detraction, serving drunkenness, weakened by luxury, troubled by anger, or subjected to any other vice, let us strive as much as our ability allows to correct, to rectify the corrupt and perverse, and if we cannot amend anything of such, endure it not without the sharpest pain of mind, and especially in the very house of prayer, where the body of the Lord is consecrated, where the presence of angels is always undoubtedly present, let us ensure with all our might that nothing improper is done, nothing that would impede our or our brother's prayer.

The Jews then answered and said to him: "What sign do you show us, seeing that you do these things?" Jesus answered and said to them: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Evangelist revealed of what temple he spoke, evidently of the temple of his body, which was destroyed by them through his passion but which he raised up from death after three days. Therefore, because they sought a sign from the Lord as to why he ought to cast out the usual trade from the temple, he responded that he rightly expelled the impious from the temple because that temple symbolized the temple of his body, in which there would be no stain of sin at all. Nor did he undeservedly cleanse the typical temple from crimes, who could by divine power raise the true temple of God, dissolved by men through death, from the dead.

The Jews therefore said: This temple has been built in forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days? As they understood, so they responded: but lest we also should understand the Lord's spiritual word carnally, the Evangelist explained the temple he was speaking of: What they say, the temple was built in forty-six years, signifies not the first, but the second building of it. Solomon first perfected the temple in seven years of work in the great peace of his kingdom, which, having been destroyed by the Chaldeans, began to be rebuilt after seventy years at the command of Cyrus the Persian,

the captivity having been relaxed: but the sons of the captivity, the work they were doing under the leaders Zerubbabel and Joshua, could not complete in forty-six years because of the attack of neighboring nations. This number of years appropriately matches the formation of the Lord's body. For natural writers say that the form of the human body is completed in the same number of days, because in the first six days from conception it has the semblance of milk; in the following nine days it converts to blood, then in twelve days it solidifies; in the remaining eighteen days it forms until all the features of the members are perfected; and then in the remaining time up to the moment of birth it increases in size.

Six, nine, twelve, and eighteen make up forty-five, to which if we add one, that is, the day on which the body begins to take shape through the separated members, there are just as many days in the construction of the Lord's body as years were found in the building of the temple. And because that temple built by hands prefigured the Lord's most holy flesh which he took from the Virgin, as we learn from this place; because equally his body, which is the Church, signifies the body and soul of each of the faithful, as we find in many places of the Scriptures, it is fitting to recall something of the building of that temple, by which your fraternity may recognize how all things written about it pertain to Christ and the Church. It was oriented towards the east, having a door facing the sunrise, which immediately upon rising bathed all its interior with its light. And the holy Church directs the whole intention of its mind to his grace, of whom Zechariah says: The sunrise from on high has visited us to shine on those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death (Luke 1). And always mindful of his promise when he says, Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it (Psalm 80); gladly responds: I opened my mouth and panted, for I longed for your commandments (Psalm 119); which means:

I opened the devotion of my heart, and I deserved to draw in the light of your spirit, because I learned to observe nothing else in the world than the observance of your commandments. Outside, it appeared built of white stone; inside, the ceilings, walls, floor, beams, doors, and whatever vessels there were, were covered with overlaid gold. And the Church indeed outwardly shows to all the strength of perfect action; but it teaches only those who have learned to consider it piously to understand how much it excels inwardly in the virtues of each soul, how greatly each of these is adorned with

the light of charity. The gold plates themselves are attached to cedar boards or fir, or certainly prepared from olive wood: all of which are clearly considered excellent woods. And the splendor of the Lord's love, through the memory of His most holy passion which was completed on the precious wood of the cross, is imprinted in the hearts of the faithful, lest it be forgotten. The temple itself is divided by a veil of the middle wall, and it is called the sanctuary on the outside, but on the inside where the ark of the covenant was placed, it was called the holy of holies. And the Church partly journeys on Earth away from the Lord, partly reigns with the Lord in the heavens.

For the middle wall itself is understood to be heaven, the ark of the covenant is the Lord, who alone, conscious of the secret things of the fathers, has penetrated the innermost parts of heaven. The ascent that led to the upper and third room was made through the recesses of the southern wall as if by an invisible step, so that only the beginning of the same ascent from the eastern corner of the mentioned wall was seen, but the progress of the ascent itself was known only to the one who ascended it, of which Scripture thus remembers: "The door for the middle chamber was in the right side of the house: and they went up with winding stairs into the middle chamber, and out of the middle into the third" (1 Kings 6). With the Lord suffering on the cross, one of the soldiers opened His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. This is the water of Baptism by which we are washed, and this is the blood of the Lord's chalice by which we are sanctified. Through these sacred mysteries of the side, by the merit of invisible faith, we ascend from the present life of the Church, which sojourns on Earth, into the life of heavenly blessedness, in which the souls of the just enjoy, freed from bodies. But also from that life, with bodies received back in the resurrection, up to the supreme glory of eternal happiness, we pass by the guiding faith of the same Lord's passion;

of which glory indeed Isaiah speaks: "In their own land they shall possess double; everlasting joy shall be theirs" (Isaiah 61), that is, in the land of the living, which alone is the land of the saints, with the eternal joys of both flesh and soul enjoying happiness. Therefore, the lower house signifies the present conversation of the saints, the upper the rest of souls which is received after this life, and the highest glory of the resurrection which will never ever be changed; the door of the middle side, situated on the right side of the house and opening the way to the upper parts, is the faith in the pas-

sion of Christ, whose right side pierced on the cross emanated the sacraments for us, by which imbued we may ascend to the joys of heavenly life. In seven years and as many months the first structure of the temple was completed, but in the eighth year, and in the eighth month from when it began to be built, the dedication ceremony followed; and the Church throughout the entire present age, which revolves in seven days, continues to take spiritual increases of its members until the times of the future eternal resurrection, when with the peaceful King it will enter the feast of its dedication. For since the Lord rose on the eighth day, that is, after the seventh of the Sabbath, from death, rightly does this number also designate the future joys of our resurrection.

It is sufficient to have mentioned these few things out of many regarding the creation, so that it may appear more clearly how all things shine with spiritual understanding. But as we conclude the discourse, let us return to the Lord's statement, where he says to the Jews seeking a sign: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John II), and let us give thanks to his mercy, who has revealed the mystery of his passion and resurrection from the dead, which he expressed in veiled terms to the unbelievers who tested him, now in clear light to us who already believe in him. And because the time is near when we desire to celebrate with an annual solemnity both the destruction of this venerable temple by the faithless and the resurrection, which he miraculously exhibited on the third day as he promised, let us cleanse the temples of our bodies and hearts, so that the Spirit of God may deign to dwell in us, and according to the Apostle's admonition, let us cast aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light, walking honestly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envy, but clothed with the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. XIII), who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, God before all ages. Amen.

HOMILY 23: ON PALM SUNDAY

Matthew 21; Mark 11; Luke 19; John 12

At that time, when Jesus came near to Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage at the Mount of Olives, he then sent two of his disciples, saying to them: Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me, etc. Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who came down from heaven

to earth to suffer for the salvation of the human race, as the hour of his passion approached, desired to approach the place of his passion, so that it would be clear that he suffered not unwillingly but willingly. He desired to come on a donkey and to be called and praised by the crowds as king, so that anyone who was taught this would recognize him as the Christ, whom the prophecy had long foretold would come in this way. He wished to come five days before Passover, as we learn from the Gospel of John, to show that he is the spotless Lamb who takes away the sins of the world. Indeed, the paschal lamb, whose sacrifice freed the people of Israel from Egyptian servitude, was commanded to be sacrificed five days before Passover, on the fourteenth day of the moon, in the evening. This signified Him who, redeeming us with his blood, five days before Passover, that is, on this very day, came into the temple of God with great joy and praise from the crowds preceding and following. Daily he was teaching in the temple. On the fifth day, having completed the observance of the old Passover, he gave to his disciples the new sacraments to be observed thereafter.

Having gone out to the Mount of Olives, he was seized by the Jews, and crucified in the morning, redeeming us on that very day from the dominion of the devil, the same day the ancient Hebrew people were freed from Egyptian servitude by the sacrifice of the lamb. Therefore, like the paschal lamb, the Lord went to the place of his passion five days before he began to suffer, to show that he is the one of whom Isaiah prophesied: "He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth" (Is. 53). And a little above: "But he was wounded for our transgressions, and by his stripes we are healed. Yet, the envious hearts of the leaders preferred to persecute him in all the things he justly did, rather than to believe in him, and they were more miserable in giving the author of life to death than in seeking life through him. However, leaving aside the blindness of the faithless, let us rather follow the examples of those who faithfully praised the Lord, and, as is fitting, let us mystically examine his mystical journey. The donkey and its colt on which he rode to Jerusalem signify the simple hearts of both peoples, the Jew and the Gentile, over whom he presides, leading them from harmful situations to the vision of heavenly peace by his command. For Jerusalem is interpreted as the vision of peace.

And it is fitting that when the Lord came to the Mount of Olives, he sent disciples to bring these animals, because we reach him not by our own merits

but by his grace alone, as John testifies, saying: "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us first" (1 John 4). The Mount of Olives suggests the height of the Lord's love, by which he mercifully deigned to enlighten and save us; not only because in its nature it is a minister of light and solace in labors and pains, but also because, whatever it is mixed with, it excels all other liquids. And the Apostle, when speaking about love, says: "And yet I will show you a more excellent way" (1 Cor. 12). So the Lord, coming to the Mount of Olives, commanded that donkeys be brought for him on which he might go to Jerusalem, figuratively indicating what he says elsewhere openly: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3). He sent two disciples to bring the animals to signify that preachers would be sent to both peoples, the circumcised and the uncircumcised. Or certainly he sent two to warn that the same preachers must be perfect in both doctrine and action: so that neither would ignorant words mix error with truth, nor would they negate what they rightly taught by living perversely.

You will find, he said, a donkey tied and a colt with her, untie and bring them to me. Other evangelists also attest that the colt was tied. For both peoples were encompassed by the ropes of sins and needed divine release; one by misusing the law he received, the other by never receiving it had sinned. Hence the Apostle rightly says: Because there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, justified freely by his grace. And fittingly, the other three evangelists, who wrote to the Gentiles, mention only the colt brought to the Lord. But Matthew the evangelist, who wrote the Gospel from the Hebrews and in Hebrew language, adds mention of the donkey, with provident dispensation for both, so that by writing they may seek the salvation of those, and mystically teach that they are foreshadowed to be saved by the Lord.

And if anyone says anything to you, he said, say that the Lord needs them, and immediately he will send them. And it is instructed to the teachers that if any adversity opposes them, if anyone prohibits sinners from being released from the snares of the devil and brought to the Lord through the confession of faith, they should not desist from preaching, but steadily indicate that the Lord needs such people for building the Church. For though the persecutor is cruel and brutal, he cannot prevent the salvation of those

whom the Lord knows as his own, for he has preordained them to eternal life. The testimony of the prophet is also applied to this fact, to show that the Lord indeed fulfilled all that was written about him, but the scribes and Pharisees, blinded by envy, were unable to understand what they were reading. Say to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your king comes to you, meek, and sitting upon a donkey, and a colt the foal of a donkey. The daughter of Zion is the Church of the faithful, pertaining to the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all, of which a not insignificant portion was among the people of Israel, having a meek king: for he does not customarily give earthly things to the cruel, but heavenly kingdoms to the meek, saying: Learn from me, for I am meek and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls (Mt. XI). Of whom the Psalmist says: The meek, he says, shall possess the land, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace (Psalm XXXVI). The meek king indeed grants the land of peace to the meek, that is, to those humble in heart, whom once a cruel king, that is, the devil, laid low with the wound of pride in the land of war and tribulations. Sitting, he says (Isaiah LXVI), upon a donkey and a colt the foal of a donkey, because he rests in the hearts of the humble and quiet and those who tremble at his words, whether they who in the synagogue know how to bear the yoke of the law: or those who, long lawless in pagan freedom, are turned by the urgency of the same synagogue to the grace of faith and truth.

However, the disciples, bringing the donkey and the colt, placed their garments on them, and made the Lord sit above them. The garments of the disciples are works of justice, with the Psalmist as witness, who says: Let Your priests be clothed with righteousness (Psalm CXXXI). The disciples pave the donkeys, which they find naked, with their own garments, and thus place the Lord above, when the holy preachers find anyone empty of the habit of holiness, and with examples of their virtues, they instruct them to receive the faith and love of their creator. For the Lord did not wish to ascend a naked donkey, nor a naked colt, because whether Jew or Gentile, unless adorned by the words and deeds of the saints, cannot have the Lord as guide, but rather sin reigns in his mortal body to obey its desires. A very large crowd spread their garments on the road. This large crowd designates the innumerable army of martyrs, who gave their bodies, the coverings of their souls, for the Lord, so that they might make smoother the path of righteous living for the elect who follow: so that those indeed might not hesitate to place the foot of

good action in peace, where they saw many have already gone before in the battle of martyrdom.

Others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The branches of the trees are said to be the examples of the preceding Fathers. And whoever discloses what the prophets, apostles, or other saints said or did, as an example of right believing or working, truly cuts branches from the trees, with which he smooths the path of the Lord bearing the donkey, because he extracts sentences from the books of the saints, through which he builds up the hearts of Christ's simple ones in the way of truth so that they may not wander. The crowds that went ahead and those that followed shouted, saying: Hosanna to the Son of David! With one and the same voice of confession and praise, they exalt the Lord, both those who go before and those who follow: because there is indeed one faith of those who were proven before the Lord's incarnation and those afterward, although they had different sacraments according to the times, as Peter attests, who says: But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus we shall be saved, even as they (Acts 15). And what they say, Hosanna to the Son of David, this is what is read in the psalm: The salvation of the Lord is, and upon your people is your blessing (Psalm 3), this is, what in great devotion of praise the chorus of saints resonates in the Revelation: Salvation to our God who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb (Rev. 7).

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. In the name of the Lord signifies in the name of God the Father, which He elsewhere says to the unbelieving Jews: I have come in the name of My Father, and you did not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive (John V). For Christ came in the name of God the Father, because in all that He did and said He took care to glorify the Father and proclaim Him as to be glorified by men. The Antichrist will come in his own name, who, although the most wicked of all men and full of the devil as his companion, will not disdain to call himself the Son of God: for he opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped. But the crowds take up a verse of praise from the one hundred and seventeenth psalm, which no one doubts is sung about the Lord. Whence it is beautifully stated about Him in the same psalm: The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; because indeed Christ, whom the Jewish builders rejected with their decrees of traditions, has become the foundation of the believing people, namely the

Jews and the Gentiles. For what is called the cornerstone in the psalm is Christ, who is praised in the Gospel by the voices of the preceding and following crowds.

And what is furthermore added in the prosecution of the same praise, Hosanna, that is, salvation or save, in the highest, clearly teaches that the advent of the Lord in the flesh is the salvation not only of the human race on earth but also of the angels in heaven: because while we, being redeemed, are led to the heights, their number, which was diminished by the fall of Satan, is surely filled. For this Paul says that all things in heaven and on earth are restored in Christ (Eph. I). Therefore, rightly is Hosanna in the highest sung in His praise, whose whole dispensation of incarnation was present for the fulfillment of the glory of the heavenly fatherland. Hence it is necessary, my brothers, that with full devotion of mind we strive toward the promised fatherland, always remembering that, although the way by which we enter is difficult, the dwelling place to which we hasten is blessed. For it is more fortunate to be led through a rough path to the kingdom than through a pleasant and smooth one to punishment. It is happier to earn everlasting joy through the restraint of the flesh than to achieve eternal punishment for a brief period of lasciviousness. Behold, with the Lord's help, we have already mostly completed the Lenten fast, as each one's conscience bears witness; for as much as one remembers having more strictly dedicated themselves to the Lord during these holy days, so much more joyfully does one expect the holy time of the Lord's resurrection.

But if perhaps someone feels that their conscience accuses them of being less perfectly chastised, there is no doubt that they await the arrival of such a great solemnity in fear and trembling. Yet, let such a one not despair of salvation, nor be confounded by the multitude or enormity of their sins, lest they fall into the abyss of despair, according to that word of Solomon: "When the wicked man comes into the depth of evil, he despises" (Prov. XVIII); but let them consider carefully that if the time of the annual festival of the resurrection of our Creator affects the chaste with joy and the impure with fear and confusion, much more so will the time of the strict judgment, when the general resurrection of all is celebrated, and the sentence of the judge is already heard, bring joy to those with a clear conscience and condemn forever those whose guilty conscience accuses them. Therefore, dearest brothers, whoever, armed with the weapons of the restraint of the flesh,

began to struggle against the proud tempter at the beginning of Lent, let them watch carefully not to abandon what they have begun, until, having overthrown the enemy, they are rewarded with the ministries of angels. But those who have not yet donned the armor of virtues, let them begin today;

today let them join with those faithful crowds in taking up the works of faith, implore the mercy of Him who brought blessing to the world in the name of the Father, proclaiming "Hosanna in the highest," and beg to be saved in the heavenly homeland. Let them spread their garments on the way, that is, humble the members of their body in the present, that God may exalt them in the future, remembering that Davidic word: "The bones that have been humbled will rejoice. Let them cut branches from the trees and spread them on the way, that is, earnestly recall to memory the writings of the saints, which encourage those standing to not fall, exhort the fallen to not lie prostrate any longer, instruct those rising to be exercised in virtues, and uplift those exercised in virtues to hope for heavenly rewards. Thus, let them protect their actions so that they do not strike against the stone of offense and the rock of scandal, and thus follow the footsteps of their Redeemer with the other faithful, and with a pure mind worthy of honoring the mysteries of His passion and resurrection, He who granted to all His chosen members a remedy for their wounds and also a pledge of heavenly joys, our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for all ages of ages. Amen.

HOMILY 24: ON MONDAY AFTER PALM SUNDAY

John 12

At that time, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus had been dead, whom Jesus had raised, etc. It is the custom of the wise not only to learn the virtue of prudence from those things which they have rightly and prudently understood but also to learn it from those things they have known to be done or said otherwise, so that they may imitate these by following and avoid those by shunning. Which indeed, beloved brothers, reason compels us to do in today's reading of the holy Gospel, not only to learn by example the devotion of those who love Christ but also to consider the faithlessness of the persecutors and avoid it more quickly by considering it. For it is necessary for us to follow the prudence of those women whom we have known to have adhered to the Lord with such faith and love; let us flee the foolishness of the chief priests and Pharisees, who sought to circumvent

and kill the wisdom of God with treachery; let us beware of the madness of those who went up to Jerusalem to be sanctified for the Passover, but, forgetful of sanctification, were plotting the death of the Savior in the very house of prayer. The Passover was approaching, at which it was necessary for everyone who had been sanctified and purified to come to the eating of the lamb: and those who had gone up to the temple to be sanctified came down more defiled by the conspiracy to shed blood. Let us carefully attend, for the time of our Passover is approaching.

When it comes, let us, being sanctified, approach the Lord's altar, not to eat the flesh of the lamb, but to partake of the holy mysteries of our Redeemer. Let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Let no one turn the house of prayer into a den of thieves, let no one lay snares of death for the members of Christ, let no one who still remains in death presume to approach to receive the mysteries of life: for he who does not love remains in death. Let us love Christ in himself, and let us love him in his members, let us seek the Lord, and our soul shall live, but let us seek him, not as the wicked do to kill, but as the faithful do to enjoy forever. For it is said, they sought Jesus and spoke among themselves standing in the temple. What do you think, that he will not come to the feast day? For the Jews sought Jesus, but wrongly: they sought him to kill him coming to the feast day. But let us seek him standing in the temple of God, and persisting unanimously in prayer, and let us speak among ourselves in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, asking in grace for him to come to our feast day, and deign to illuminate us with his presence, and sanctify us with his own gifts.

But the chief priests and Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where he was, they should inform them, so that they might arrest him. Let us also, brothers, give each other orders, that if any one of us knows in whose heart more abundant are the bowels of mercy, greater humility, kindness, modesty, power, and a more abundant supply of other virtues — the evident signs of Christ present — let him immediately inform where such a person is, so that by faithfully imitating we may hold to the footsteps of Christ found in him. But knowing that the Jews had conspired to kill him, the Lord did not flee the hands of the plotters, but certain of the glory of the resurrection, he first came to Bethany, a town near Jerusalem, where he had raised Lazarus from the dead, and then to Jerusalem where he would suffer

and die: that he himself might die there. But he came to Bethany so that the memory of the resurrection of Lazarus might be more closely impressed upon everyone's memory, and so that the impious rulers, who did not fear to kill him who could raise from the dead, would be more and more confounded and proven inexcusable, since, neither provoked by the benefits of the resurrection nor terrified by the divine power of the one raising, they did not draw back their minds from unjust murder.

And lest the plotters of slanders say that Lazarus had been fantastically raised, a dinner was made there for the Lord, and he himself was one of those reclining at the table with him, so that while they saw or heard him living, speaking, feasting, and conversing familiarly with his own, they might either recognize the power of the one raising and receive grace, or, refusing to assent to the truth with an obdurate heart, incur punishment. Mystically, however, this dinner of the Lord, where Martha served and Lazarus reclined with others, is the faith of the Church which operates through love: whence elsewhere the Lord says to the disciples of the people who would believe in him: I have food to eat which you do not know about (John IV). And explaining this, he added: My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to finish his work. In this dinner Martha serves when each faithful soul offers the labor of their devotion to the Lord; Lazarus, however, becomes one of those reclining with the Lord, when even those who have been raised to righteousness after the death of sins, along with those who have remained in their righteousness, exult in the presence of the truth, penitents together with the innocent are nourished by the gifts of heavenly grace. And this dinner is well celebrated in Bethany, which is a city on the side of the Mount of Olives, and means house of obedience.

The house of obedience indeed is the Church, which faithfully obeys the commands of the Lord: and it is the city, which situated on the mount of mercy, can never be hidden, and also constructed from the side of the Redeemer, that is, imbued with the water of washing and the blood of sanctification, which flowed from the side of the one dying for it: where also the other sister of Lazarus, Mary, as a sign of great love, as the following passages of the evangelical reading show, took a pound of costly pure nard ointment, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair. By this action, she not only gives an indication of her own devotion but also marks the piety and service of other faithful souls to God. But it should be noted

first that, as we have learned from the narrations of Matthew and Mark, Mary anointed not only the feet of the Lord but also His head with nard. Nor should it be doubted that she is the same woman who, as the Evangelist Luke reports (Luke 7), came to the Lord with an alabaster flask of ointment, once a sinner, and standing behind Him at His feet, began to wet His feet with her tears, wiping them with her hair, kissing His feet, and anointing them with the ointment.

Thus, she is the same woman, but there she only anointed the feet of the Lord, bowing in repentance and amidst sorrowful tears, whereas here she does not hesitate to anoint His feet and even to raise herself to anoint His head amidst the joys of righteous action. Therefore, there it signifies the beginnings of repentance, here it designates the justice of perfected souls, from which it is rightly said the amount of ointment is not mentioned then, but now it is said to be a pound. For what is expressed by a pound of ointment if not the perfection of justice? Then, the type of ointment was kept silent; now it is indicated as being of pure nard, that is, faithful and not adulterated with foreign substances but precious, so that the chastity of perfect faith and action may be intimated. Through the head of the Lord which Mary anointed, the sublimity of His divinity is expressed; through the feet, the humility of His incarnation. We anoint His feet when we rightly proclaim with due praise the mystery of the received incarnation; we anoint His head when we reverently venerate the excellence of His divinity with a worthy expression of word. For what is signified by ointment if not the good fragrance of opinion? As Paul attests, who says: "Thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ Jesus and manifests the aroma of His knowledge through us in every place" (2 Corinthians 2).

The head of the Lord, who is the mediator between God and humans and who is the head of the Church, may also be rightly signified; the feet can be understood, without inconsistency, as any of His least members, about whom He will say at the end: "As long as you did it to one of these least brothers of mine, you did it to me" (Matthew 25). We anoint the head of the Lord when we embrace the glory of His divinity and humanity with the sweetness of worthy faith, hope, and charity, when we expand the praise of His name by living well. We anoint the feet of the Lord when we console His poor with the word of consolation so that they may not despair in tribula-

tions. We wipe the same with our hair when we share what is surplus to us with the needy: and it happens to us as follows.

And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. Because in our measure the world is filled with the reputation of devotion, in which we are proven to worship and affectionately love God and our neighbor with a simple and pure heart: and so it happens what the bride in the Song of Love boasts, while the king was at his table, my nard gave its fragrance. Where it is clearly shown what Mary did once, typically however what the whole Church, what every perfect soul always does. Therefore one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was to betray him, said: Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor? Woe to the wicked traitor, woe to the accomplices of his wickedness, even now persecuting the members of Christ, who do not cease to envy their neighbors for the reputation of virtue which they do not deserve to have! And indeed we might think that Judas spoke out of concern for the poor, but a truthful witness unmasked his mind, saying:

He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having the money box, he carried what was put in it. Therefore Judas did not perish only when he betrayed the Lord for money, but already lost he was following the Lord, having the Lord's money bag, not only carrying what was put in it for ministry, but also accustomed to stealing from it. For seeing the Lord that Judas's heart was polluted with the foul stain of greed, foreseeing it would be further stained with the fouler stain of betrayal, entrusted to his care whatever was in the bags, and allowed him to do what he wished with it, that either the honor given or the memory of the money held might recall his mind from selling him. But because a greedy person is always in want, and never remembers benefits, the wicked person advanced from stealing the money that he carried to betraying the Lord who entrusted him.

Jesus therefore said: Let her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial. To Judas, who was questioning innocently, the Lord explained simply and meekly where Mary's service belonged: because he was to die and be anointed with spices for burial. Therefore, it was granted to Mary, who although she greatly desired it, could not arrive to anoint his dead body, to offer the service to him while he was still alive, which she could not do after his death, as she was prevented by his quick resurrection. Hence Mark rightly

testifies that the Lord said about her: She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial (Mark 14). Which is openly to say: Because she could not touch my body when it was already deceased, she did what she could now, she anticipated giving the office of burial to me while still alive.

For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me. And here, with great moderation and patience, the Lord did not accuse Judas of avarice, nor of speaking about money for the sake of the poor, but reasonably showed that those who ministered to him from their resources when he was living among men should not be blamed, since he would remain corporally in the Church for such a short time, but the poor, to whom alms could be given, would always be there. A great crowd of Jews knew therefore that he was there, and they came not only for Jesus, but so that they might see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. Curiosity brought them to Jesus, not love. But we, brethren most beloved, if we know where Jesus is, where he dwells, where Bethany is, that is, the house of the obedient soul in which he resides, let us come there through contemplation, not only for the man whom he has raised from the death of the soul and granted to live spiritually, but so that by imitating the good life of the man we may through this merit to reach the vision of Jesus: because we have certainly known where Jesus is. For he has risen after death and ascended into heaven, there he has a perpetual dwelling. This is the true Bethany, the heavenly city, which no one can enter except the obedient. Let us strive therefore to come there with the inward affections of the heart, let us yearn there for the same founder of that house, let us all ask, each of us ask, that we may dwell in his house all the days of our life, not so that we might see Lazarus whom he has raised from the dead there, but so that we, raised from the dead with Lazarus and the other saints, may see the will of the Lord, and be protected in his holy temple.

Moreover, the chief priests thought to kill Lazarus also; because many went away on account of him from the Jews, and believed in Jesus. O wretched craftiness of the blind, to wish to kill the one who was raised, as if he who could raise the dead could not raise the slain! And indeed he proved that he could do both, who raised both Lazarus who was dead and himself who was slain. But we, brethren, leaving behind the malice of the faithless, let us follow the devotion of the faithful, let us depart from the company of

the impious, let us not sit in the council of vanity, and let us not enter with those who do wicked deeds; let us believe in him who not only saves the body but also the soul from death, and let us hold to what we believe by our works, so that believing we may have eternal life in his name, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.

HOMILY 25: ON THE LORD'S SUPPER

John 13

Before the feast day of the Passover, Jesus knowing that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, etc. The evangelist John, about to write about that memorable mystery of the Lord, wherein he deigned to wash the feet of his disciples during the Passover before he went to his passion, first took care to explain what the very name Passover mystically signified, thus beginning: Before the feast day of the Passover, Jesus knowing that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. For Passover indeed means passage, having an old name from this, that the Lord passed through Egypt, striking the firstborn of Egypt and liberating the children of Israel, and because the children of Israel themselves passed that night from Egyptian servitude to come to the land of the promised inheritance and peace. Mystically, however, it signifies that in it the Lord would pass from this world to the Father, and that by his example the faithful ought to pass with continuous efforts of virtues, having cast away temporal desires and the servitude of vices, to the promise of the heavenly country. And how Jesus passed from this world to the Father, the evangelist John beautifully shows, when he says: Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end, that is, he loved them so much that by that very love he would temporarily end his corporeal life, immediately to pass from death to life, from this world to the Father. For no one has greater love than this:

to lay down one's life for one's friends. Wherefore rightly both the legal and the evangelical passage were consecrated by blood. The former by the blood of the paschal lamb, the latter by the blood of him of whom the Apostle says: For even Christ our passover is sacrificed (I Cor. V). The latter being shed on the cross, the former sprinkled on the doorposts and lintel in

the manner of a cross. And, during the supper, he says, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas, Simon Iscariot, to betray him, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come forth from God and was going to God, he rises from supper, and lays aside his garments. Speaking about the greatest humility assumed by humanity, he first recalls the eternity of divine power, so that he may show that he is both true God and man, and remind us of this precept, that the greater we are, the more humble we should be in all things. For he was truly man, who could touch and wash the feet of men, be betrayed by a man, and be crucified by men: he was truly God, to whom the Father had given all things into his hands, because he had come forth from God and was returning to God. The Lord therefore knew that the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas to betray him; he knew that the Father had given all things into his hands: among all these things, both the betrayer himself and those to whom he was to be betrayed, and the death he was to suffer, so that of all these things he might do what he wished, and by his power turn their evil into good.

He knew that through the humility of the incarnation he had come forth from God, and through the victory of the resurrection he was about to return to God, not leaving God when he came forth, nor deserting us when he returned. He indeed knew all these things, and yet, as an indication of his great piety and as an example of our great humility, he rises from supper, lays aside his garments, and washes the disciples' feet, fulfilling the office not of a Lord God, but of a servant man, so that he might also wash humbly the feet of the one whose hands he knew would be brazenly polluted in betraying him. But if it delights to explore this very humble mystery of our Savior with a higher investigation, this sacred supper, at which the Lord reclined with the disciples, signifies the whole time during which, corporally abiding in the Church, he fed all far and wide with the feast of the saving word and the sweetness of his miracles, and he himself was fed by the faith and love of the listeners: for as many as he converted to the grace of truth, he indeed made increase of his own body, which is the Church, as in the manner of those eating. He, however, rose from supper and laid aside his garments when, ceasing to converse temporally with men, he laid down the members of the assumed body on the cross.

He girded himself with a towel when, having taken the command from the Father to suffer, he surrounded his members in the exercise of that suffering for us. For a towel, which is made through various labors of torment, represents suffering through affliction. And the Lord, laying aside his garments, girds himself with a towel, to signify that the habit of the body he had put on, he would lay down not without the pressure of pains, but with the prolonged tribulation of the cross. He poured water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which he was girded, when, dead on the cross, he poured water together with blood from his side onto the earth, by which he would cleanse the works of believers, and he deigned to sanctify those works not only by the sacraments of his passion but also to confirm them by its examples. But as for the saying, when the washing of feet had begun, he then came to Simon Peter, it is not to be understood as if he came to him after others, but because he began with him who was first among the apostles, and he did not want to frustrate such a ministry with horror, because he did not know the mystery. Indeed, it is not doubted that any one of them would have acted in this way if they had not been terrified by that sentence which was spoken to Peter:

If I do not wash you, you will have no part with me. Here it is openly shown that this washing of the feet signifies a spiritual purification of the body and soul, without which one cannot reach communion with Christ. Therefore, Peter, hearing this, immediately seized with his customary fervor of divine love, responded, Lord, not only my feet but also my hands and my head. As if to say openly: Because, now I understand, as you teach, that by washing my feet you signify cleansing my sins, I offer you not only my feet but also my hands and head to be washed; for I do not doubt that I commit many things by walking, acting, seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and touching, that ought to be forgiven by you. But let us hear what the Lord replies to the fervent lover, and how He gradually brings him to an understanding of the mystical washing.

He who is bathed, he says, does not need to wash except for his feet, but is entirely clean. He clearly announces that the washing of feet signifies indeed the remission of sins, but not the kind given once in baptism, rather the kind by which the daily guilt of the faithful, without which one does not live in this life, is cleansed by his daily grace. For the feet, with which we walk and touch the earth, and for which we cannot keep them free from the

contamination of dust unlike the rest of the body, signify the very necessity of earthly habitation, by which daily sloth and negligence affect us, just as even the greatest men of the highest conduct are diverted from the heavenly contemplation they cherish most, so that if we say, "We have no sin," we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us (1 John 1). He who is bathed, therefore, does not need to wash except for his feet, but is entirely clean; for he who is washed by the font of baptism for the remission of all sins does not need to be washed again in the same way, but only the daily contaminations of worldly conduct need to be cleansed by the daily indulgence of his Redeemer.

For he is clean in the whole of his actions, except for those which cling to the mind out of the necessity of temporal care, on account of whose daily defilement and simultaneous cleansing we daily say in prayer, "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (Matt. 6, Luke 11). Indeed, this was said of the apostles and their like: "Blessed and immaculate are they who walk in the way of the Lord, fearing God" (Ps. 119). But for us, who often forget divine fear and walk in the crooked path, we cannot be freed from the filth of our errors by the mere daily formality of prayers, but a greater stain must be cleansed by a greater practice of prayers, vigils, fasting, tears, and alms; namely, by Him who internally cleanses the vestiges of our heart, who sits at the right hand of God and daily intercedes for us in the habit of assumed humanity. After the Lord washed the disciples' feet, he took his garments and, having reclined again, further explained by word the ministry of washing, which he had just shown to them in deed without their yet understanding. For after he consecrated for us the washing of remission by suffering on the cross, he took up again the immortal members which he had laid down as mortal;

and having appeared to the disciples after the resurrection, and having conversed familiarly with them in companionship for forty days, he explained to them the utility of his passion, the mystical power of which they did not know but whose outcome they greatly feared (Acts 1). If therefore, he says, I, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you ought also to wash one another's feet. This statement indeed is correctly understood and should be devoutly fulfilled both in the literal and mystical sense: literally, that through charity we serve one another, not only in washing the feet of our brothers but also in helping them in any of their needs; mystically, that just

as the Lord used to forgive our sins when we repented, so too we should hasten to forgive the sins of our brothers against us (Mt. VI, Mark XI). Just as He washed us from our sins by interceding with the Father for us, so too, if we know that our brother sins a sin not leading to death, let us ask that life may be given to him who sins not unto death (1 John. V). And as the Apostle James admonishes us, Let us confess our sins to one another, and pray for one another, that we may be saved (James V): just as He laid down His life for us, so too we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers when the moment demands it (1 John. III). It follows, Amen, I say to you, the servant is not greater than his master, nor is the apostle greater than the one who sent him. He said this because the Lord had washed the feet of His servants, and He who sent was the same as the one who sent those whom He sent.

Apostle in Greek, in Latin means sent, to show that what the exalted one did in humility, the humble and weak ought much more to do in humility. But as in this place He warned of the spiritual understanding, because if He who did no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth (1 Pet. II, Isa. LIII), intercedes for our transgressions, much more ought we to pray for one another. But even if He forgives us, He to whom we have nothing to forgive, much more ought we to forgive one another our debts. This the Apostle also commands, saying, Be kind to one another, merciful, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you (Eph. IV). If you know these things, he said, you will be blessed if you do them. This saying of our Savior is very salutary and ought to be thought about diligently, because we will be blessed by knowing heavenly precepts, if, however, we follow by doing what we have come to know. For he who neglects to keep His known commandments cannot be blessed; he who even scorns to recognize these things is much further shut out from the lot of the blessed. It agrees with its Psalmist who, weighing the hearts of mortals, perceiving equally that all love beatitude, but seeing few seek it where it is, has himself clearly declared what the greatest beatitude of man is in this life, saying, Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord (Ps. 119). And lest it be thought that this way of the undefiled and blessed could be comprehended haphazardly by the unskilled and unlearned, he has added and said, Blessed are those who search out His testimonies; who seek Him with all their heart. Therefore, dearest ones, let us ask His clemency, who commanded His commandments to be kept exceedingly, that He may direct our ways to keep His justifications, and after keeping His

commandments, Jesus Christ our Lord may lead us to the blessedness of His perpetual vision, who lives and reigns with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen.

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