Homilies on Matthew (part 2 of 3)

John Chrysostom (c. AD 349–407)

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Homily 33

Matthew Chapter 10, Verse 16
”Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.”

Having made them feel confident about their necessary food, and opened unto them all men’s houses, and having invested their entrance with an appearance to attract veneration, charging them not to come in as wanderers, and beggars, but as much more venerable than those who received them (for this He signifies by His saying, ”the workman is worthy of his hire; and by His commanding them to inquire, who was worthy, and there to remain, and enjoining them to salute such as receive them; and by His threatening such as receive them not with those incurable evils): having I say, in this way cast out their anxiety, and armed them with the display of miracles, and made them as it were all iron and adamant, by delivering them from all worldly things, and enfranchising them from all temporal care: He speaks in what follows of the evils also that were to befall them; not only those that were to happen soon after, but those too that were to be in long course of time; from the first, even long beforehand, preparing them for the war against the devil Yea, and many advantages were hence secured; and first, that they learnt the power of His foreknowledge; secondly, that no one should suspect, that through weakness of their Master came these evils upon them; thirdly, that such as undergo these things should not be dismayed by their falling out unexpectedly, and against hope; fourthly, that they might not at the very time of the cross be troubled on hearing these things.

For indeed, they were just so affected at that time; when also He upbraided them, saying, ”Because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your hearts; and none of you asketh me, whither goest Thou? And yet He had said nothing as yet touching Himself, as that He should be bound, and scourged, and put to death, that He might not hereby also confound their minds; but for the present He announces before what should happen to themselves.

Then, that they might learn that this system of war is new, and the manner of the array unwonted; as He sends them bare, and with one coat, and unshod, and without staff, and without girdle or scrip, and bids them be maintained by such as receive them; so neither here did He stay His speech, but to signify His unspeakable power, He saith, ”Even thus

setting out, exhibit the gentleness of "sheep," and this, though ye are to go unto "wolves;" and not simply unto wolves, but "into the midst of wolves." And He bids them have not only gentleness as sheep, but also the harmlessness of the dove. "For thus shall I best show forth my might, when sheep get the better of wolves, and being in the midst of wolves, and receiving a thousand bites, so far from being consumed, do even work a change on them a thing far greater and more marvellous than killing them, to alter their spirit, and to reform their mind; and this, being only twelve, while the whole world is filled with the wolves."

Let us then be ashamed, who do the contrary, who set like wolves upon our enemies. For so long as we are sheep, we conquer: though ten thousand wolves prowl around, we overcome and prevail. But if we become wolves, we are worsted, for the help of our Shepherd departs from us: for He feeds not wolves, but sheep: and He forsakes thee, and retires, for neither dost thou allow His might to be shown. Because, as He accounts the whole triumph His own, if thou being ill used, show forth gentleness; so if thou follow it up and give blows, thou obscurest His victory. 2. But do thou consider, I pray thee, who they are that hear these injunctions, so hard and laborious: the timid and ignorant; the unlettered and uninstructed; such as are in every respect obscure, who have never been trained up in the Gentile laws, who do not readily present themselves in the public, places; the fishermen, the publicans, men full of innumerable deficiencies. For if these things were enough to confound even the lofty and great, how were they not enough to cast down and dismay them that were in all respects untried, and had never entertained any noble imagination? But they did not cast them down.

"And very naturally," some one may perhaps say; "because He gave them power to cleanse lepers, to drive out devils." I would answer as follows: Nay, this very thing was enough especially to perplex them, that for all their raising the dead, they were to undergo these intolerable evils, both judgments, and executions, and the wars which all would wage on them, and the common hatred of the world; and that such terrors await them, while themselves are working miracles. 3. What then is their consolation for all these things? The power of Him that sends them. Wherefore also He puts this before all, saying, "Behold, I send you." This suffices for your encouragement, this for confidence, and fearing none of your assailants. Seest thou authority? seest thou prerogative? seest thou invincible might? Now His meaning is like this: "Be not troubled" (so He speaks), "that sending you among wolves, I command you to be like sheep and like doves. For I might indeed have done the contrary, and have suffered you to undergo nothing terrible, nor as sheep to be exposed to wolves; I might have rendered you more formidable than lions; but it is expedient that so it should be. This makes you also more glorious; this proclaims also my power."

This He said also unto Paul: "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness." "It is I, now mark it, who have caused you so to be." For in saying, "I send you forth as sheep," He intimates this. "Do not therefore despond, for I know, I know certainly, that in this way more than any other ye will be invincible to all." After this, that they may contribute something on their own part also, and that all might not seem to be of His grace,

nor they supposed to be crowned at random, and vainly, He saith, "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." "But what," it might be said, "will our wisdom avail in so great dangers? nay, how shall we be able to have wisdom at all, when so many waves are drenching us all over? For let a sheep be ever so wise, when it is in the midst of wolves, and so many wolves, what will it be able to do? Let the dove be ever so harmless, what will it profit, when so many hawks are assailing it?" In the brutes indeed, not at all: but in you as much as possible.

But let us see what manner of wisdom He here requires. That of the serpent, He saith. For even as that animal gives up everything, and if its very body must be cut off, doth not very earnestly defend it, so that it may save its head; in like manner do thou also, saith He, give up every thing but the faith; though goods, body, life itself, must be yielded. For that is the head and the root; and if that be preserved, though thou lose all, thou wilt recover all with so much the more splendor. On this account then He neither commanded to be merely a simple and single-hearted sort of person, nor merely wise; but hath mixed up both these, so that they may become virtue; taking in the wisdom of the serpent that we may not be wounded in our vitals; and the harmlessness of the dove, that we may not retaliate on our wrongdoers, nor avenge ourselves on them that lay snares; since wisdom again is useless, except this be added. Now what, I ask, could be more strict than these injunctions? Why, was it not enough to suffer wrong? Nay, saith He, but I do not permit thee so much as to be indignant. For this is "the dove." As though one should cast a reed into fire, and command it not to be burnt by the fire, but to quench it.

However, let us not be troubled; nay, for these things have come to pass, and have had an accomplishment, and have been shown in very deed, and men became wise as serpents, and harmless as doves; not being of another nature, but of the same with us. Let not then any one account His injunctions impracticable. For He beyond all others knows the nature of things; He knows that fierceness is not quenched by fierceness, but by gentleness. And if in men's actual deeds too thou wouldest see this result, read the book of the Acts of the Apostles, and thou wilt see how often, when the people of the Jews had risen up against them and were sharpening their teeth, these men, imitating the dove, and answering with suitable meekness, did away with their wrath, quenched their madness, broke their impetuosity. As when they said, "Did not we straitly command you, that ye should not speak in this name?" although able to work any number of miracles, they neither said nor did anything harsh, but answered for themselves with all meekness, saying, "Whether it be right to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye."

Hast thou seen the harmlessness of the dove? Behold the wisdom of the serpent. "For we cannot but speak the things, whichwe know and have heard." Seest thou how we must be perfect on all points, so as neither to be abased by dangers, nor provoked by anger? 4. Therefore He said also, "Beware of men, for they shall deliver you up to councils, and they shall scourge you in their synagogues: and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony to them and the Gentiles." Thus again is He preparing them

to be vigilant, in every case assigning to them the sufferance of wrong, and permitting the infliction of it to others; to teach thee that the victory is in suffering evil, and that His glorious trophies are thereby set up. For He said not at all, "Fight ye also, and resist them that would vex you," but only, "Ye shall suffer the utmost ills."

O how great is the power of Him that speaks! How great the self-command of them that hear! For indeed we have great cause to marvel, how they did not straightway dart away from Him on hearing these things, apt as they were to be startled at every sound, and such as had never gone further than that lake, around which they used to fish; and how they did not reflect, and say to themselves, "And whither after all this are we to flee? The courts of justice against us, the kings against us, the governors, the synagogues of the Jews, the nations of the Gentiles, the rulers, and the ruled." (For hereby He not only forewarned them of Palestine, and the ills therein, but discovered also the wars throughout the world, saying, "Ye shall be brought before kings and governors;" signifying that to the Gentiles also He was afterwards to send them as heralds.) "Thou hast made the world our enemy, Thou hast armed against us all them that dwell on the earth, peoples, tyrants, kings."

And what follows again is much more fearful, since men are to become on our account murderers of brothers, of children, of fathers. "For the brother," saith He, "shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; and children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death." "How, then," one might say, "will the rest of men believe, when they see on our account, children slain by their fathers, and brethren by brethren, and all things filled with abominations?" What? will not men, as though we were destructive demons, will they not, as though we were devoted, and pests of the world, drive us out from every quarter, seeing the earth filled with blood of kinsmen, and with so many murderers? Surely fair is the peace (is it not?) which we are to bring into men's houses and give them, while we are filling those houses with so many slaughters. Why, had we been some great number of us, instead of twelve; had we been, instead of "unlearned and ignorant," wise, and skilled in rhetoric, and mighty in speech; nay more, had we been even kings, and in possession of armies and abundance of wealth; how could we have persuaded any, while kindling up civil wars, yea, and other wars far worse than they? Why, though we were to despise our own safety, which of all other men will give heed to us?"

But none of these things did they either think or say, neither did they require any account of His injunctions, but simply yielded and obeyed. And this came not from their own virtue only, but also of the wisdom of their Teacher. For see how to each of the fearful things He annexed an encouragement; as in the ease of such as received them not, He said, "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city;" so here again, when He had said, "Ye shall be brought before governors and kings," He added, "for my sake, for a testimony to them, and the Gentiles." And this is no small consolation, that they are suffering these things both for Christ, and for the Gentiles' conviction. Thus God, though no one regard, is found to be everywhere doing His own works. Now these things were a comfort to them, not that they desired the punishment of

other men, but that they might have ground of confidence, as sure to have Him everywhere present with them, who had both foretold and foreknown these things; and because not as wicked men, and as pests, were they to suffer all this.

And together with these, He adds another, and that no small consolation for them, saying, "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." For lest they should say, "How shall we be able to persuade men, when such things are taking place?" He bids them be confident as to their defense also. And elsewhere indeed He saith, "I will give you a mouth and wisdom;" but here, "It is the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you," advancing them unto the dignity of the prophets. Therefore, when He had spoken of the power that was given, then He added also the terrors, the murders, and the slaughters. "For the brother shall deliver up the brother," saith He, "to death, and the father the child, and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death."

And not even at this did He stop, but added also what was greatly more fearful, and enough to shiver a rock to pieces: "And ye shall be hated of all men." And here again the consolation is at the doors, for, "For my name's sake," saith He, "ye shall suffer these things." And with this again another, "But he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." And these things in another point of view likewise were sufficient to rouse up their spirits; since at any rate the power of their gospel was to blaze up so high, as that nature should be despised, and kindred rejected, and the Word preferred to all, chasing all mightily away. For if no tyranny of nature is strong enough to withstand your sayings, but it is dissolved and trodden under foot, what else shall be able to get the better of you? Not, however, that your life will be in security, because these things shall be; but rather ye will have for your common enemies and foes them that dwell in the whole world.

5. Where now is Plato? Where Pythagoras? Where the long chain of the Stoics? For the first, after having enjoyed great honor, was so practically refuted, as even to be sold out of the country, and to succeed in none of his objects, no, not go much as in respect of one tyrant: yea, he betrayed his disciples, and ended his life miserably. And the Cynics, mere pollutions as they were, have all passed by like a dream and a shadow. And yet assuredly no such thing ever befell them, but rather they were accounted glorious for their heathen philosophy, and the Athenians made a public monument of the epistles of Plato, sent them by Dion; and they passed all their time at ease, and abounded in wealth not a little. Thus, for instance, Aristippus was used to purchase costly harlots; and another made a will, leaving no common inheritance; and another, when his disciples had laid themselves down like a bridge, walked on them; and he of Sinope, they say, even behaved himself unseemly in the market place.

Yea, these are their honorable things. But there is no such thing here, but a strict temperance, and a perfect decency, and a war against the whole world in behalf of truth and godliness, and to be slain every day, and not until hereafter their glorious trophies. But

there are some also, one may say, skilled in war amongst them; as Themistocles, Pericles. But these things too are children's toys, compared with the acts of the fishermen. For what canst thou say? That he persuaded the Athenians to embark in their ships, when Xerxes was marching upon Greece? Why in this case, when it is not Xerxes marching, but the devil with the whole world, and his evil spirits innumerable assailing these twelve men, not at one crisis only, but throughout their whole life, they prevailed and vanquished; and what was truly marvellous, not by slaying their adversaries, but by converting and reforming them.

For this especially you should observe throughout, that they slew not, nor destroyed such as were plotting against them, but having found them as bad as devils, they made them rivals of angels, enfranchising human nature from this evil tyranny, while as to those execrable demons that were confounding all things, they drave them out of the midst of markets, and houses, or rather even from the very wilderness. And to this the choirs of the monks bear witness, whom they have planted everywhere, clearing out not the habitable only, but even the uninhabitable land. And what is yet more marvellous, they did not this in fair conflict, but in the enduring of evil they accomplished it all. Since men actually had them in the midst, twelve unlearned persons, binding, scourging, dragging them about, and were not able to stop their mouths; but as it is impossible to bind the sunbeam, so also their tongue. And the reason was, "it was not they" themselves "that spake," but the power of the Spirit. Thus for instance did Paul overcome Agrippa, and Nero, who surpassed all men in wickedness. "For the Lord," saith he, "stood with me, and strengthened me, and delivered me out of the mouth of the lion."

But do thou also admire them, how when it was said to them, "Take no thought," they yet believed, and accepted it, and none of the terrors amazed them. And if thou say, He gave them encouragement enough, by saying, "It shall be the Spirit of your Father that shall speak;" even for this am I most amazed at them, that they doubted not, nor sought deliverance from their perils; and this, when not for two or three years were they to suffer these things, but all their life long. For the saying, "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved," is an intimation of this. For His will is, that not His part only should be contributed, but that the good deeds should be also done of them. Mark, for instance, how from the first, part is His, part His disciples'. Thus, to do miracles is His, but to provide nothing is theirs. Again, to open all men's houses, was of the grace from above; but to require no more than was needful, of their own self-denial. "For the workman is worthy of his hire." Their bestowing peace was of the gift of God, their inquiring for the worthy, and not entering in without distinction unto all, of their own self command. Again, to punish such as received them not was His, but to retire with gentleness from them, without reviling or insulting them, was of the apostles' meekness. To give the Spirit, and cause them not to take thought, was of Him that sent them, but to become like sheep and doves, and to bear all things nobly, was of their calmness and prudence. To be hated and not to despond, and to endure, was their own; to save them that endured, was of Him who sent them.

Wherefore also He said, "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." That is, because the more part are wont at the beginning indeed to be vehement, but afterwards to faint, therefore saith He, "I require the end." For what is the use of seeds, flourishing indeed at first, but a little after fading away? Therefore it is continued patience that He requires of them. I mean, lest any say, He wrought the whole Himself, and it was no wonder that they should prove such, suffering as they did nothing intolerable; therefore He saith unto them, "There is need also of patience on your part. For though I should rescue you from the first dangers, I am reserving you for others more grievous, and after these again others will succeed; and ye shall not cease to have snares laid for you, so long as ye have breath. For this He intimated in saying, "But he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved."

For this cause then, though He said, "Take no thought what ye shall speak;" yet elsewhere He saith, "Be ready to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." That is, as long as the contest is among friends, He commands us also to take thought; but when there is a terrible tribunal, and frantic assemblies, and terrors on all sides, He bestows the influence from Himself, that they may take courage and speak out, and not be discouraged, nor betray the righteous cause.

For in truth it was a very great thing, for a man occupied about lakes, and skins, and receipt of custom, when tyrants were on their thrones, and satraps, and guards standing by them, and the swords drawn, and all standing on their side; to enter in alone, bound, hanging down his head, and yet be able to open his mouth. For indeed they allowed them neither speech nor defense with respect to their doctrines, but set about torturing them to death, as common pests of the world. For "They," it is said, "that have turned the world upside down, are come hither also;" and again, "They preach things contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that Jesus Christ is king." And everywhere the courts of justice were preoccupied by such suspicions, and much influence from above was needed, for their showing both the truth of the doctrine they preached, and that they are not violating the common laws; so that they should neither, while earnest to speak of the doctrine, fall under suspicion of overturning the laws; nor again, while earnest to show that they were not overturning the common government, corrupt the perfection of their doctrines: all which thou wilt see accomplished with all due consideration, both in Peter and in Paul, and in all the rest. Yea, and as rebels and innovators, and revolutionists, they were accused all over the world; yet nevertheless they both repelled this impression, and invested themselves with the contrary, all men celebrating them as saviors, and guardians, and benefactors. And all this they achieved by their much patience. Wherefore also Paul said, "I die daily;" and he continued to "stand in jeopardy" unto the end.

6. What then must we deserve, having such high patterns, and in peace giving way to effeminacy, and remissness? With none to make war (it is too evident) we are slain; we faint when no man pursues, in peace we are required to be saved, and even for this we are not sufficient. And they indeed, when the world was on fire, and the pile was being kindled over the whole earth, entering, snatched from within, out of the midst of the flame, such as were

burning; but thou art not able so much as to preserve thyself. What confidence then will there be for us? What favor? There are no stripes, no prisons, no rulers, no synagogues, nor aught else of that kind to set upon us; yea, quite on the contrary we rule and prevail. For both kings are godly, and there are many honors for Christians, and precedences, and distinctions, and immunities, and not even so do we prevail. And whereas they being daily led to execution, both teachers and disciples, and bearing innumerable stripes, and continual brandings, were in greater luxury than such as abide in Paradise; we who have endured no such thing, not even in a dream, are softer than any wax. "But they," it will be said, "wrought miracles." Did this then keep them from the scourge? did it free them from persecution? Nay, for this is the strange thing, that they suffered such things often even at the hands of them whom they benefited, and not even so were they confounded, receiving only evil for good. But thou if thou bestow on any one any little benefit, and then be requited with anything unpleasant, art confounded, art troubled, and repentest of that which thou hast done.

If now it should happen, as I pray it may not happen nor at any time fall out, that there be a war against churches, and a persecution, imagine how great will be the ridicule, how sore the reproaches. And very naturally; for when no one exercises himself in the wrestling school, how shall he be distinguished in the contests? What champion, not being used to the trainer, will be able, when summoned by the Olympic contests, to show forth anything great and noble against his antagonist? Ought we not every day to wrestle and fight and run? See ye not them that are called Pentathli, when they have no antagonists, how they fill a sack with much sand, and hanging it up try their full strength thereupon? And they that are still younger, practise the fight against their enemies upon the persons of their companions. These do thou also emulate, and practise the wrestlings of self denial. For indeed there are many that provoke to anger, and incite to lust, and kindle a great flame. Stand therefore against thy passions, bear nobly the mental pangs, that thou mayest endure also those of the body.

7. For so the blessed Job, if he had not exercised himself well before his conflicts, would not have shone so brightly in the same. Unless he had practised freedom from all despondency, he would have uttered some rash word, when his children died. But as it was he stood against all the assaults, against ruin of fortune, and destruction of so great affluence: against loss of children, against his wife's commiseration, against plagues in body, against reproaches of friends, against revilings of servants. And if thou wouldest see his ways of exercise also, hear him saying, how he used to despise wealth: "If I did but rejoice," saith he. "because my wealth was great: if I set gold up for a heap, if I put my trust in a precious stone." Therefore neither was he confounded at their being taken away, since he desired them not when present. Hear how he also managed what related to his children, not giving way to undue softness, as we do, but requiring of them all circumspection. For he who offered sacrifice even for their secret sins, imagine how strict a judge he was of such as were manifest.

And if thou wouldest also hear of his strivings after continence, hearken to him when he saith, "I made a covenant with mine eyes. that I should not think upon a maid." For this cause his wife did not break his spirit, for he loved her even before this, not however immoderately, but as is due to a wife. Wherefore I am led even to marvel, whence it came into the devil's thought to stir up the contest, knowing as he did of his previous training. Whence then did it occur to him? The monster is wicked, and never despairs: and this turns out to us a very great condemnation that he indeed never gives up the hope of our destruction, but we despair of our own salvation. But for bodily mutilation and indignity, mark how he practised himself. Why, inasmuch as he himself had never undergone any such thing, trot had continued to live in wealth and luxury, and in all other splendor, he used to divine other men's calamities, one by one. And this he declared, when he said, "For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me; and that which I was afraid of is come unto me." And again, "But I wept for every helpless man, and groaned when I saw a man in distress."

So because of this, nothing of what happened confounded him, none of those great and intolerable ills. For I bid thee not look at the ruin of his substance, nor at the loss of his children, nor at that incurable plague, nor at his wife's device against him; but at those things which are far more grievous than these. "And what," saith one, "did Job suffer more grievous than these? for from his history there is nothing more than these for us to learn." Because we are asleep, we do not learn, since he surely that is anxious, and searches well for the pearl, will know of many more particulars than these. For the more grievous, and apt to infuse greater perplexity, were different. And first, his knowing nothing certain about the kingdom of heaven, and the resurrection; which indeed he also spoke of, lamenting. "For I shall not live alway, that I should suffer long." Next, his being conscious to himself of many good works. Thirdly, his being conscious of no evil thing. Fourthly, his supposing that at God's hands he was undergoing it; or if at the devil's, this again was enough to offend him. Fifthly, his hearing his friends accusing him of wickedness, "For thou hast not been scourged," say they, "according to what thy sins deserve." Sixthly, his seeing such as lived in wickedness prospering, and exulting over him. Seventhly, not having any other to whom he might look as even having ever suffered such things.

8. And if thou wouldest learn how great these things are, consider our present state. For if now, when we are looking for a kingdom, and hoping for a resurrection, and for the unutterable blessings, and are conscious to ourselves of countless evil deeds, and when we have so many examples, and are partakers of so high a philosophy; should any persons lose a little gold, and this often, after hating taken it by violence, they deem life not to be lived in, having no wife to lay sore on them, nor bereaved of children, nor reproached by friends, nor insulted by servants, but rather having many to comfort them, some by words, some by deeds; of how noble crowns must not he be worthy, who seeing what he had gotten together by honest labor, snatched away from him for nought and at random, and after all that, undergoing temptations without number, like sleet, yet throughout all abides unmoved, and offers to the Lord his due thanksgiving for it all?

Why, though no one had spoken any of the other taunts, yet his wife's words alone were sufficient utterly to shake a very rock. Look, for example, at her craft. No mention of money, none of camels, and flocks, and herds, (for she was conscious of her husband's self command with regard to these), but of what was harder to bear than all these, I mean, their children; and she deepens the tragedy, and adds to it her own influence. Now if when men were in wealth, and suffering no distress, in many things and oft have women prevailed on them: imagine how courageous was that soul, which repulsed her, assaulting him with such powerful weapons, and which trod under foot the two most tyrannical passions, desire and pity. And yet many having conquered desire, have yielded to pity. That noble Joseph, for instance, held in subjection the most tyrannical of pleasures, and repulsed that strange woman, plying him as she did with innumerable devices; but his tears he contained not, but when he saw his brethren that had wronged him, he was all on fire with that passion, and quickly cast off the mask, and discovered the part he had been playing. But when first of all she is his wife, and when her words are piteous, and the moment favorable for her, as well as his wounds and his stripes, and those countless waves of calamities; how can one otherwise than rightly pronounce the soul impassive to so great a storm to be firmer than any adamant?

Allow me freely to say, that the very apostles, if not inferior to this blessed man, are at least not greater than he was. For they indeed were comforted by the suffering for Christ; and this medicine was so sufficient daily to relieve them, that the Lord puts it everywhere, saying, "for me, for my sake," and, "If they call me, the master of the house, Beelzebub." But he was destitute of this encouragement, and of that from miracles, and of that from grace; for neither had he so great power of the Spirit. And what is yet greater, nourished in much delicacy, not from amongst fishermen, and publicans, and such as lived frugally, but after enjoyment of so much honor, he suffered all that he did suffer. And what seemed hardest to bear in the case of the apostles, this same he also underwent, being hated of friends, of servants, of enemies, of them who had received kindness of him: and the sacred anchor, the harbor without waves, namely, that which was said to the apostles, "for my sake," of this he had no sight.

I admire again the three children, for that they dared the furnace, that they stood up against a tyrant. But hear what they say, "We serve not thy Gods, nor worship the image which thou hast set up." A thing which was the greatest encouragement to them, to know of a certainty that for God they are suffering all whatsoever they suffer. But this man knew not that it was all conflicts, and a wrestling; for had he known it, he would not have felt what was happening. At any rate, when he heard, "Thinkest thou that I have uttered to thee mine oracles for nought, or that thou mightest be proved righteous?" consider how straightway, at a bare word, he breathed again, how he made himself of no account, how he accounted himself not so much as to have suffered what he had suffered, thus saying, "Why do I plead any more, being admonished and reproved of the Lord, hearing such things, I being nothing?" And again, "I have heard of Thee before, as far as hearing of the ear; but

now mine eye hath seen Thee; wherefore I have made myself vile, and have melted away; and I accounted myself earth and ashes."

This fortitude then, this moderation, of him that was before law and grace, let us also emulate, who are after law and grace; that we may also be able to share with him the eternal tabernacles; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory and the victory forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 34

Matthew Chapter 10, Verse 23

”But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into the other; for verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come.” Having spoken of those fearful and horrible things, enough to melt very adamant, which after His cross, and resurrection, and assumption, were to befall them, He directs again His discourse to what was of more tranquil character, allowing those whom He is training to recover breath, and affording them full security. For He did not at all command them, when persecuted, to close with the enemy, but to fly. That is, it being so far but a beginning, and a prelude, He gave His discourse a very condescending turn. For not now of the ensuing persecutions is He speaking, but of those before the cross and the passion. And this He showed by saying, ”Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come.” That is, lest they should say, ”What then, if when persecuted we flee, and there again they overtake us, and drive us out?”-to destroy this fear, He saith, ”Ye shall not have gone round Palestine first, but I will straightway Conic upon you.”And see how here again He doeth not away with the terrors, but stands by them in their perils. For He said not, ”I will snatch you out, and will put an end to the persecutions;’ but what? ”Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come.” Yea, for it sufficed for their consolation, simply to see Him.

But do thou observe, I pray thee, how He doth not on every occasion leave all to grace, but requires something also to be contributed on their part. ”For if ye fear,” saith He, ”flee,” for this He signified by saying, ”flee ye,” and ”fear not.” And He did not command them to flee at first, but when persecuted to withdraw; neither is it a great distance that He allows them, but so much as to go about the cities of Israel. Then again, He trains them for another branch of self-command; first, casting out all care for their food: secondly, all fear of their perils; and now, that of calumny. Since from that first anxiety He freed them, by saying, ”The workman is worthy of his hire,” and by signifying that many would receive them; and from their distress about their dangers, by saying, ”Take no thought how or what ye shall speak,” and, ”He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved.”

But since withal it was likely that they should also bring upon themselves an evil report, which to many seems harder to bear than all; see whence He comforts them even in this case, deriving the encouragement from Himself, and from all that had been said touching

Himself; to which nothing else was equal. For as He said in that other place, "Ye shall be hated of all men," and added, "for my name's sake," so also here. And in another way He mitigates it, joining a fresh topic to that former. What kind of one then is it? "The disciple," saith He, "is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord It is enough for the disciple that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord. If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of His household? Fear them not therefore."

See how He discovers Himself to be the Lord and God and Creator of all things. What then? Is there not any disciple above his Master, or servant above his Lord? So long as he is a disciple, and a servant, he is not, by the nature of that honor. For tell me not here of the rare instances, but take the principle from the majority. And He saith not, "How much more His servants," but "them of His household," to show how very near He felt them to be to Him. And elsewhere too He said, "Henceforth I call you not servants; ye are my friends." And He said not, If they have insulted the Master of the houses and calumniated Him; but states also the very form of the insult, that they "called Him Beelzebub." Then He gives also another consolation, not inferior to this: for this indeed is the greatest; but because for them who were not yet living strictly, there was need also of another, such as might have special power to refresh them, He states it likewise. And the saying seems indeed in form to be an universal proposition, nevertheless not of all matters, but of those in hand only, is it spoken. For what saith He?

"There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; nor hid, that shall not be known." Now what He saith is like this. It is indeed sufficient for your encouragement, that I also shared with you in the same reproach; I who am your Master and Lord. But if it still grieve you to hear these words, consider this other thing too, that even from this suspicion ye will soon be released. For why do ye grieve? At their calling you sorcerers and deceivers? But wait a little, and all men will address you as saviors, and benefactors of the world. Yea, for time discovers all things that are concealed, it will both refute their false accusation, and make manifest your virtue. For when the event shows you saviors, and benefactors, and examples of all virtue, men will not give heed to their words, but to the real state of the case; and they will appear false accusers, and liars, and slanderers, but ye brighter than the sun, length of time revealing and proclaiming you, and uttering a voice clearer than a trumpet, and making all men witnesses of your virtue. Let not therefore what is now said humble you, but let the hope of the good things to come raise you up. For it cannot be, that what relates to you should be hid.

2. Then, having rid them of all distress, and fears, and anxiety, and set them above men's reproaches, then, and not till then, He seasonably discourses to them also of boldness in their preaching. For, "What I tell you," saith He, "in darkness, that speak ye in light; and what ye have heard in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops." Yet it was not at all darkness, when He was saying these things; neither was He discoursing unto them in the ear; but He used a strong figure, thus speaking. That is, because He was conversing with

them alone, and in a small corner of Palestine, therefore He said, "in darkness," and "in the ear;" contrasting the boldness of speech, which He was hereafter to confer on them, with the tone of the conversation which was then going on. "For not to one, or two, or three cities, but to the whole world ye shall preach," saith He, "traversing land and sea, the inhabited country, and the desert; to princes alike and tribes, to philosophers and orators, saying all with open face, and with all boldness of speech." Therefore, He said, "On the house tops," and, "In the light," without any shrinking, and with all freedom.

And wherefore said He not only, "Preach on the housetops." and "Speak in the light," but added also, "What I tell you in darkness," and "What ye hear in the ear"? It was to raise up their spirits. As therefore when He said, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do;" even so here too, to signify that He will do it all by them, and more than by Himself, He inserted this. For "the beginning indeed," saith He, "I have given, and the prelude; but the greater part it is my will to effect through you." Now this is the language of one not commanding only, but also declaring beforehand what was to be, and encouraging them with His sayings, and implying that they should prevail over all, and quietly also removing again their distress at the evil report. For as this doctrine, after lying hid for a while, shall overspread all things, so also the evil suspicion of the Jews shall quickly perish.

Then, because He had lifted them up on high, He again gives warning of the perils also, adding wings to their mind, and exalting them high above all. For what saith He? "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Seest thou how He set them far above all things, persuading them to despise not anxiety only and calumny, dangers and plots, but even that which is esteemed of all things most terrible, death? And not death alone, but by violence too? And He said not, "ye shall be slain," but with the dignity that became Him, He set this before them, saying, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell;" bringing round the argument, as He ever doth, to its opposite. For what? is your fear, saith He, of death? and are ye therefore slow to preach? Nay for this very cause I bid you preach, that ye fear death: for this shall deliver you from that which is really death. What though they shall slay you? yet over the better part they shall not prevail, though they strive ten thousand ways. Therefore He said not, "Who do not kill the soul," but, who "are not able to kill." For wish it as they may, they shall not prevail. Wherefore, if thou fear punishment, fear that, the more grievous by far.

Seest thou how again He doth not promise them deliverance from death, but permits them to die, granting them more than if He had not allowed them to suffer it? Because deliverance from death is not near so great as persuading men to despise death. You see now, He doth not push them into dangers, but sets them above dangers, and in a short sentence fixes in their mind the doctrines that relate to the immortality of the soul, and having in two or three words implanted a saving doctrine, He comforts them also by other considerations.

Thus, lest they should think, when killed and butchered, that as men forsaken they suffered this, He introduces again the argument of God's providence, saying on this wise: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall into a snare without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered." "For what is viler than they?" saith He; "nevertheless, not even these shall be taken without God's knowledge." For He means not this, "by His operation they fall," for this were unworthy of God; but, "nothing that is done is hid from Him." If then He is not ignorant of anything that befalls us, and loves us more truly than a father, and so loves us, as to have numbered our very hairs; we ought not to be afraid. And this He said, not that God numbers our hairs, but that He might indicate His perfect knowledge, and His great providence over them. If therefore He both knows all the things that are done, and is able to save you, and willing; whatever ye may have to suffer, think not that as persons forsaken ye suffer. For neither is it His will to deliver you from the terrors, but to persuade you to despise them, since this is, more than anything, deliverance from the terrors.

3. "Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows." Seest thou that the fear had already prevailed over them? Yea, for He knew the secrets of the heart; therefore He added, "Fear them not therefore;" for even should they prevail, it will be over the inferior part, I mean, the body; which though they should not kill, nature will surely take with her and depart. So that not even this depends on them, but men have it from nature. And if thou fear this, much more shouldest thou fear what is greater, and dread "Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." And He saith not openly now, that it is Himself, "Who is able to destroy both soul and body," but where He before declared Himself to be judge, He made it manifest. But now the contrary takes place: Him, namely, who is able to destroy the soul, that is, to punish it, we fear not, but those who slay the body, we shudder at. Yet surely while He together with the soul punishes the body also, they cannot even chasten the body, much less the soul: and though they chasten it ever so severely, yet in that way they rather make it more glorious.

Seest thou how He signifies the conflicts to be easy? Because in truth, death did exceedingly agitate their souls, inspiring terror for a time, for that it had not as yet been made easy to overcome, neither had they that were to despise it partaken of the grace of the Spirit. Having, you see, cast out the fear and distress that was agitating their soul; by what follows He also encourages them again, casting out fear by fear; and not by fear only, but also by the hope of great prizes; and He threatens with much authority, in both ways urging them to speak boldly for the truth; and saith further, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in Heaven. But whosoever shah deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven." Thus not from the good things only, but also from the opposites, doth He urge them; and He concludes with the dismal part.

And mark His exact care; He said not "me," but "in me," implying that not by a power of his own, but by the help of grace from above, the confessor makes his confession. But of

him that denies, He said not, "in me," but "me;" for he having become destitute of the gift, his denial ensues. "Why then is he blamed," one may say, "if being forsaken, he denies?" Because the being forsaken is the fault of the forsaken person himself.

But why is He not satisfied with the faith in the mind, but requires also the confession with the mouth? To train us up to boldness in speech, and a more abundant love and determination, and to raise us on high. Wherefore also He addresses Himself to all. Nor doth He at all apply this to the disciples only in person, for not them, but their disciples too, He is now rendering noble hearted. Because he that hath learnt this lesson will not only teach with boldness, but will likewise suffer all things easily, and with ready mind. This at any rate brought over many to the apostles, even their belief in this word. Because both in the punishment the infliction is heavier, and in the good things the recompense greater. I mean, whereas he that doeth right hath the advantage in time, and the delay of the penalty is counted for gain by the sinner: He hath introduced an equivalent, or rather a much greater advantage, the increase of the recompenses. "Hast thou the advantage," saith He, "by having first confessed me here? I also will have the advantage of thee, by giving thee greater things, and unspeakably greater; for I will confess thee there." Seest thou that both the good things and the evil things are there to be dispensed? Why then hasten and hurry thyself? and why seek thy rewards here, thou who art "saved by hope?" Wherefore, whether thou hast done anything good, and not received its recompense here, be not troubled (for with increase, in the time to come, the reward thereof awaits thee): or whether thou hast done any evil, and not paid the penalty, be not easy; for there will vengeance receive thee, if thou turn not and amend.

But if thou believe it not, from the things here form thy conjecture about things to come also. Why, if in the season of the conflicts they that confess are so glorious, imagine what they will be in the season of the crowns. If the enemies here applaud, how shall that tenderest of all fathers fail to admire and proclaim thee? Yea, then shall we have both our gifts for the good, and our punishments for the evil. So that such as deny shall suffer harm, both here and there; here living with an evil conscience, though they were never to die, they shall be surely dead; and there, undergoing the last penalty: but the other sort will profit both here and there, both here making a gain of their death, and in this way becoming more glorious than the living, and there enjoying those unspeakable blessings. God then is in no wise prompt to punish only, but also to confer benefits; and for this last more than for the first. But why hath He put the reward once only, the punishment twice? He knows that this would be more apt to correct us. For this cause when He had said, "Fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell," He saith again, "Him will I also deny." So doth Paul also, continually making mention of hell.

Thus we see that He, having by all ways trained on His scholar (both by opening Heaven to him, and by setting before him that fearful judgment-seat, and by pointing to the amphitheatre of angels, and how in the midst of them the crowns shall be proclaimed, which thing would thenceforth prepare the way for the word of godliness to be very easily received); in

what follows, lest they grow timid and the word be hindered, He bids them be prepared even for slaughter itself; to make them aware that such as continue in their error, will have to suffer (among other things) for plotting against them. 4. Let us therefore despise death, although the time be not come that requires it of us; for indeed it will translate us to a far better life. "But the body decays." Why, on this account most especially we ought to rejoice, because death decays, and mortality perishes, not the substance of the body. For neither, shouldest thou see a statue being cast, wouldest thou call the process destruction, but an improved formation. Just so do thou reason also concerning the body, and do not bewail. Then it were right to bewail, had it remained in its chastisement.

"But," saith one, "this ought to take place without the decay of our bodies; they should continue entire." And what would this have advantaged either the living or the departed? How long are ye lovers of the body? How long are ye rivetted to the earth and gaping after shadows? Why, what good would this have done? or rather, what harm would it not have done? For did our bodies not decay, in the first place the greatest of all evils, pride, would have continued with many. For if even while this is going on, and worms gushing out, many have earnestly sought to be gods; what would not have been the result did the body continue?

In the second place, it would not be believed to be of earth; for if, its end witnessing this, some yet doubt; what would they not have suspected if they did not see this? Thirdly, the bodies would have been excessively loved; and most men would have become more carnal and gross; and if even now some cleave to men's tombs and coffins, after that themselves have perished, what would they not have done, if they had even their image preserved? Fourthly, they would not have earnestly desired the things to come. Fifthly, they that say the world is eternal, would have been more confirmed, and would have denied God as Creator. Sixthly, they would not have known the excellence of the soul, and how great a thing is the presence of a soul in a body. Seventhly, many of them that lose their relations would have left their cities, and have dwelt in the tombs, and have become frantic, conversing continually with their own dead. For if even now men form to themselves images, since they cannot keep the body (for neither is it possible, but whether they will or no it glides and hurries from them), and are rivetted to the planks of wood; what monstrous thing would they not then have devised? To my thinking, the generality would have even built temples for such bodies, and they that are skilled in such sorceries would have persuaded evil spirits to speak through them; since at least even now, they that venture on the arts of necromancy attempt many things more out of the way than these. And how many idolatries would not have arisen from hence? when men even after the dust and ashes, are yet eager in those practices.

God therefore, to take away all our extravagances, and to teach us to stand off from all earthly things, destroys the bodies before our eyes. For even he that is enamored of bodies, and is greatly affected at the sight of a beautiful damsel, if he will not learn by discourse the deformity of that substance, shall know it by the very sight. Yea, many of the like age with her whom he loves, and oftentimes also fairer, being dead, after the first or second day, have emitted an ill savor, and foul matter, and decay with worms. Imagine then what sort

of beauty thou lovest, and what sort of elegance has power so to disturb thee. But if bodies did not decay, this would not be well known: but as evil spirits run unto men's graves, so also many of our lovers, continually sitting by the tombs, would have received evil spirits in their soul, and would quickly have perished in this grievous madness. But as it is, together with all other things this also comforts the soul, that the form is not seen: it brings men to forgetfulness of their affliction. Indeed, if this were not so, there would be no tombs at all, but thou wouldest see our cities having corpses instead of statues, each man desiring to look upon his own dead. And much confusion would arise hence, and none of the ordinary sort would attend to his soul, nor would give room to the doctrine of immortality to enter in: and many other things too, more shocking than these, would have resulted, which even to speak of were unseemly. Wherefore it decays presently, that thou mightest see unveiled the beauty of the soul. For if she be the procurer of all that beauty and life, much more excellent must she herself be. And if she preserve that which is so deformed and unsightly, much more herself.

5. For it is not the body wherein the beauty lies, but the expression, and the bloom which is shed over its substance by the soul. Now then, I bid thee love that which makes the body also to appear such as it is. And why speak I of death? Nay even in life itself, I would have thee mark how all is hers that is beautiful. For whether she be pleased, she showers roses over the cheeks; or whether she be pained, she takes that beauty, and involves it all in a dark robe. And if she be continually in mirth, the body improves in condition; if in grief, she renders the same thinner and weaker than a spider's web; if in wrath, she hath made it again abominable and foul; if she show the eye calm, great is the beauty that she bestows; if she express envy, very pale and livid is the hue she sheds over us; if love, abundant the gracefulness she at once confers. Thus in fact many women, not being beautiful in feature, have derived much grace from the soul; others again of brilliant bloom, by having an ungracious soul, have marred their beauty. Consider how a face that is pale grows red, and by the variation of color produces great delight, when there is need of shame and blushing. As, on the other hand, if it be shameless, it makes the countenance more unpleasing than any monster.

For nothing is fairer, nothing sweeter than a beauteous soul. For while as to bodies, the longing is with pain, in the case of souls the pleasure is pure and calm. Why then let go the king, and be wild about the herald? Why leave the philosopher, and gape after his interpreter? Hast thou seen a beautiful eye? acquaint thyself with that which is within; and if that be not beautiful, despise this likewise. For surely, didst thou see an ill-favored woman wearing a beautiful mask, she would make no impression on thee: just as on the other hand, neither wouldest thou suffer one fair and beautiful to be disguised by the mask, but wouldest take it away, as choosing to see her beauty unveiled. This then I bid thee do in regard of the soul also, and acquaint thyself with it first; for this is clad with the body instead of a mask; wherefore also that abides such as it is; but the other, though it be mishapen, may quickly become beautiful. Though it have an eye that is unsightly, and harsh, and fierce, it may become beautiful, mild, calm, sweet-tempered, gentle.

This beauty therefore let us seek, this countenance let us adorn; that God also may ”have pleasure in our beauty,” and impart to us of His everlasting blessings, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 35

Matthew Chapter 10, Verse 34

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I am not come to send peace, but a sword." Again, He sets forth the things that are more painful, and that with great aggravation: and the objection they were sure to meet Him with, He prevents them by stating. I mean, lest hearing this, they should say, "For, this then art Thou come, to destroy both us, and them that obey us, and to fill the earth with war?" He first saith Himself, "I am not come to send peace on earth." How then did He enjoin them to pronounce peace on entering into each house? And again, how did the angels say, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace"? And how came all the prophets too to publish it for good tidings? Because this more than anything is peace, when the diseased is cut off, when the mutinous is removed. For thus it is possible for Heaven to be united to earth. Since the physician too in this way preserves the rest of the body, when he amputates the incurable part; and the general, when he has brought to a separation them that were agreed in mischief. Thus it came to pass also in the case of that famous tower; for their evil peace was ended by their good discord, and peace made thereby. Thus Paul also divided them that were conspiring against him. And in Naboth's case that agreement was at the same time more grievous than any war. For concord is not in every case a good thing, since even robbers agree together.

The war is not then the effect of His purpose, but of their temper. For His will indeed was that all should agree in the word of godliness; but because they fell to dissension, war arises. Yet He spake not so; but what saith He? "I am not come to send peace;" comforting them. As if He said, For think not that ye are to blame for these things; it is I who order them so, because men are so disposed. Be not ye therefore confounded, as though the events happened against expectation. To this end am I come, to send war among men; for this is my will. Be not ye therefore troubled, when the earth is at war, as though it were subject to some hostile device. For when the worse part is rent away, then after that Heaven is knit unto the better. And these things He saith, as strengthening them against the evil suspicion of the multitude.

And He said not "war," but what was more grievous than it, "a sword." And if there be somewhat painful in these expressions, and of an alarming emphasis, marvel not. For, it being His will to train their ears by the severity of His words, lest in their difficult circum-

stances they should start aside, He fashioned His discourse accordingly; lest any one should say it was by flattery He persuaded them, and by concealing the hardships; therefore even to those things which merited to be otherwise expressed, He gave by His words the more gal?ing and painful turn. For it is better to see persons' gentleness in things, than in words. 2. Wherefore neither with this was He satisfied, but unfolds also the very nature of the war, signifying it to be far more grievous even than a civil war; and He saith, "I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

For not friends only, saith He, nor fellow citizens, but even kinsmen shall stand against one another, and nature shall be divided against herself. "For I am come," saith He, "to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." That is, not merely among those of the same household is the war, but among those that are dearest, and extremely near to each other. And this more than anything signifies His power, that hearing these things, they both accepted Him, and set about persuading all others. Yet was it not He that did this: of course not: but the wickedness of the other sort: nevertheless He saith it is His own doing. For such is the custom of the Scripture. Yea, and elsewhere also He saith, "God hath given them eyes that they should not see:" and here He speaks in this way, in order that having, as I said before, exercised themselves in these words, they might not be confounded on suffering reproaches and insults.

But if any think these things intolerable, let them be reminded of an ancient history. For in times of old also this came to pass, which thing especially shows the old covenant to be akin to the new, and Him who is here speaking, the same with the giver of those commands. I mean that in the case of the Jews also, when each had slain his neighbor, then He laid aside His anger against them; both when they made the calf, and when they were joined to Baal Peor. Where then are they that say, "That God is evil, and this good?" For behold He hath filled the world with blood, shed by kinsmen. Nevertheless even this we affirm to be a work of great love towards man. Therefore, you see, implying that it was He who approved those other acts also, He makes mention also of a prophecy, which if not spoken for this end, yet involves the same meaning. And what is this?

"A man's foes shall be they of his own household." For indeed among the Jews also something of the kind took place. That is, there were prophets, and false prophets, and the people was divided, and families were in dissension; and some believed the one, and some the other. Wherefore the prophet admonishes, saying, "Trust ye not in friends, have not hope in guides; yea, even of her that lieth in thy bosom beware, in respect of communicating aught to her:" and, "A man's enemies are the men that are in his own house." And this He said, preparing him that should receive the word to be above all. For to die is not evil, but to die an evil death. On this account He said moreover, "I am come to cast fire upon the earth." And this He said, to declare the vehemence and warmth of the love which He required. For, because He loved us very much, so He will likewise be loved of us. And these sayings would

strengthen the persons present also, and lift them higher. "For if those others," saith He, "are to despise kinsmen, and children, and parents, imagine what manner of men ye their teachers ought to be. Since neither will the hardships stop with you, but will also pass on to the rest. For since I am come bringing great blessings, I demand also great obedience, and purpose of heart."

3. "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy Of me." Seest thou a teacher's dignity? Seest thou, how He signifies himself a true Son of Him that begat Him, commanding us to let go all things beneath, and to take in preference the love of Him?

"And why speak I," saith He, "of friends and kinsmen? Even if it be thine own life which thou preferrest to my love, thy place is far from my disciples." What then? Are not these things contrary to the Old Testament? Far from it, rather they are very much in harmony therewith. For there too He commands not only to hate the worshippers of idols, but even to stone them; and in Deuteronomy again, admiring these, He saith, "Who said unto his father, and to his mother, I have not seen thee; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, and his own sons he disowned: he kept Thy oracles." And if Paul gives many directions touching parents, commanding us to obey them in all things, marvel not; for in those things only doth he mean us to obey, as many as do not hinder godliness. For indeed it is a sacred duty to render them all other honors: but when they demand more than is due, one ought not to obey. For this reason Luke saith, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple;" not commanding simply to hate them, since this were even quite contrary to the law; but "when one desires to be loved more than I am, hate him in this respect. For this ruins both the beloved himself, and the lover." And these things He said, both to render the children more determined, and to make the fathers more gentle, that would hinder them. For when they saw He had such strength and power as to sever their children from them, they, as attempting things impossible, would even desist. Wherefore also He leaves the fathers, and addresses His discourse to the children, instructing the former not to make the attempt, as attempting things impracticable.

Then lest they should be indignant, or count it hard, see which way He makes His argument tend: in that having said, "Who hateth not father and mother," He adds, "and his own life." For why dost thou speak to me of parents, saith He, and brothers, and sisters, and wife? Nothing is nearer than the life to any man: yet if thou hate not this also, thou must bear in all things the opposite of his lot who loveth me. And not even simply to hate it was His command, but so as to expose it to war, and to battles, and to slaughters, and blood. "For he that beareth not his cross, and cometh after me, cannot be my disciple." Thus He said not merely that we must stand against death, but also against a violent death; and not violent only, but ignominious too. And He discourses nothing as yet of His own passion, that when they had been for a time instructed in these things, they might more easily receive

His word concerning it. Is there not, therefore, cause for amazement, how on their hearing these things, their soul did not wing its way from the body, the hardships being everywhere at hand, and the good things in expectation? How then did it not flee away? Great was both the power of the speaker, and the love of the hearers. Wherefore though hearing things far more intolerable and galling than those great men, Moses and Jeremiah, they continued to obey, and to say nothing against it.

"He that findeth his life," saith He, "shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it." Seest thou how great the damage to such as love it unduly? how great the gain to them that hate it? I mean, because the injunctions were disagreeable, when He was bidding them set themselves against parents, and children, and nature, and kindred, and the world, and their very soul, He sets forth the profit also, being very great. Thus, "These things," saith He, "so far from harming, will very greatly profit; and their opposites will injure;" urging them, as He ever doth, by the very things which they desire. For why art thou willing to despise thy life? Because thou lovest it? Then for that very reason despise it, and so thou wilt advantage it in the highest degree, and do the part of one that loves it.

And mark an instance of unspeakable consideration. For not in respect of our parents only doth He practise this reasoning, nor of our children, but with regard to our life, which is nearer than all; that the other point may thenceforth become unquestionable, and they may learn that they will in this way profit those of their kindred likewise, as much as may be; since so it is in the case even of our life, which is more essential to us than all. 4. Now these things were enough to recommend men to receive them, their appointed healers. Yea, who would choose but receive with all readiness them that were so noble, such true heroes, and as lions running about the earth, and despising all that pertained to themselves, so that others might be saved? Yet nevertheless He proffers also another reward, indicating that He is caring here for the entertainers more than for the guests.

And the first honor He confers is by saying, "He that receiveth you, receiveth me, and he that receiveth me, receiveth Him that sent me." With this, what may compare? that one should receive the Father and the Son! But He holds out herewith another rewardalso. " He," saith He, "that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward." And as before He threatens punishment to such as do not receive them, here He defines also a certain refreshments for the good. And to teach thee His greater care for them, He said not simply, "He that receiveth a prophet," or "He that receiveth a righteous man," but subjoined, "in the name of a prophet," and, "in the name of a righteous man;" that is, if not for any worldly preferment, nor for any other temporal thing, he receive him, but because he is either a prophet or a righteous man, he shall receive a prophet's reward, and a righteous man's reward; such as it were meet for him to have, that hath received a prophet, or a righteous man; or, such as that other is himself to receive. Which kind of thing Paul also said: "That your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want."

Then, lest any one should allege poverty, He saith, "Or whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." "Though a cup of cold water be thy gift, on which there is nothing laid out, even of this shall a reward be stored up for thee. For I do all things for the sake of you the receivers." Seest thou what mighty persuasions He used, and how He opened to them the houses of the whole world? Yea, He signified that men are their debtors: first, by saying, "The workman is worthy of his hire;" secondly, by sending them forth having nothing; thirdly, by giving them up to wars and fightings in behalf of them that receive them; fourthly, by committing to them miracles also; fifthly, in that He did by their lips introduce peace, the cause of all blessings, into the houses of such as receive them; sixthly, by threatening things more grievous than Sodom to such as receive them not: seventhly, by signifying that as many as welcome them are receiving both Himself and the Father; eighthly, by promising both a prophet's and a righteous man's reward: ninthly, by undertaking that the recompenses shall be great, even for a cup of cold water. Now each one of these things, even by itself, were enough to attract them. For who, tell me, when a leader of armies wounded in innumerable places, and dyed in blood, came in sight, returning after many trophies from war and conflict, would not receive him, throwing open every door in his house?

5. But who now is like this? one may say. Therefore He added, "In the name of a disciple, and of a prophet, and of a righteous man;" to instruct thee that not for the worthiness of the visitor, but for the purpose of him that gives welcome, is His reward appointed. For though here He speak of prophets, and righteous men, and disciples, yet elsewhere He bids men receive the veriest outcasts, and punishes such as fail to do so. For, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me; " and the converse again He affirms with respect to the same persons.

Since though he may be doing no such great work, he is a man, inhabiting the same world with thee, beholding the same sun having the same soul, the same Lord, a partaker with thee of the same mysteries, called to the same heaven with thee; having a strong claim, his poverty, and his want of necessary food. But now they that waken thee with flutes and pipes in the winter season, and disturb thee without purpose or fruit, depart from thee receiving many gifts. And they that carry about swallows, and smut themselves over, and abuse every one, receive a reward for this their conjuration. But if there come to thee a poor man wanting bread, there is no end of revilings, and reproaches, and charges of idleness, and upbraidings, and insults, and jeers; and thou considerest not with thyself, that thou too art idle, and yet God giveth thee His gifts. For tell me not this, that thou too art doing somewhat, but point me out this rather, if it be anything really needful that thou doest, and art busy about. But if thou tellest one of money-getting, and of traffic, and of the care and increase of thy goods, I also would say unto thee, Not these, but alms, and prayers, and the protection of the injured, and all such things, are truly works, with respect to which we live in thorough idleness. Yet God never told us, "Because thou art idle, I light not up the sun for thee; because thou doest nothing of real consequence, I quench the moon, I paralyze the

womb of the earth, I restrain the lakes, the fountains, the rivers, I blot out the atmosphere: I withhold the annual rains:" but He gives us all abundantly. And to some that are not merely idle, but even doing evil, He freely gives the benefit of these things.

When therefore thou seest a poor man, and sayest, "It stops my breath that this fellow, young as he is and healthy, having nothing, would fain be fed in idleness; he is surely some slave and runaway, and hath deserted his proper master:" I bid thee speak these same words to thyself; or rather, permit him freely to speak them unto thee, and he will say with more justice, "It stops my breath that thou, being healthy, art idle, and practisest none of the things which God hath commanded, but having run away from the commandments of thy Lord, goest about dwelling in wickedness, as in a strange land, in drunkenness, in surfeiting, in theft, in extortion, in subverting other men's houses." And thou indeed imputest idleness, but I evil works; in thy plotting, in thy swearing, in thy lying, in thy spoiling, in thy doing innumerable such things. And this I say, not as making a law in favor of idleness, far from it; but rather very earnestly wishing all to be employed; for sloth is the teacher of all wickedness: but I beseech you not to be unmerciful, nor cruel. Since Paul also, having made infinite complaints, and said, "If any will not work, neither let him eat," stopped not at this, but added, "But ye, be not weary in well doing." "Nay, but these things are contradictory. For if thou hast commanded for them not to eat, how exhortest thou us to give?" I do so, saith He, for I have also commanded to avoid them, and "to have no company with them;" and again I said, "Count them not as enemies, but admonish them; " not making contradictory laws, but such as are quite in unison with each other. Because, if thou art prompt to mercy, both he, the poor man, will soon be rid of his idleness, and thou of thy cruelty.

"But he hath many lies and inventions," you reply. Well, hence again is he pitiable, for that he hath fallen into such distress, as to be hardened even in such doings. But we, so far from pitying, add even those cruel words, "Hast thou not received once and again?" so we talk. What then? because he was once fed, hath he no need to be fed again? Why dost thou not make these laws for thine own belly also, and say to it likewise, Thou wert filled yesterday, and the day before, seek it not now? But while thou fillest that beyond measure, even to bursting, from him thou turnest away, when he asks but what is moderate; whereas thou oughtest therefore to pity him, because he is constrained to come to thee every day. Yea, if nought else incline thee to him, thou shouldest pity him because of this; for by the constraint of his poverty he is forced on these things, and doeth them. And thou dost not pity him, because, being so spoken to, he feels no shame: the reason being, that his want is too strong for him.

Nay, thou instead of pitying, dost even make a show of him; and whereas God hath commanded to give secretly, thou standest exposing publicly him that hath accosted thee, and upbraiding him, for what ought to move thy pity. Why, if thou art not minded to give, to what end add reproach, and bruise that weary and wretched soul? He came as into a harbor, seeking help at thine hands; why stir up waves, and make the storm more grievous? Why dost thou condemn him of meanness? What? had he thought to hear such things, would he

have come to thee? Or if he actually came foreseeing this, good cause therefore both to pity him, and to shudder at thine own cruelty, that not even so, when thou seest an inexorable necessity laid upon him, dost thou become more gentle, nor judgest him to have a sufficient excuse for his importunity in the dread of hunger, but accusest him of impudence: and yet hast thou often thyself practised greater impudence, yea in respect of grievous matters. For while here the very impudence brings with it ground of pardon, we, often doing things punishable, brazen it out: and when we ought to bear all that in mind, and be humble, we even trample on those miserable men, and when they ask medicines, we add to their wounds. I say, if thou wilt not give, yet why dost thou strike? If thou wilt not be bounteous, yet why be insolent?

"But he submits not to be put off in any other way." Well then, as that wise man commanded,' so do. "Answer him peaceable words with meekness." For not of his own accord, surely, is he so very importunate. For there is not, there cannot be, any man desiring to be put to shame for its own sake. How much soever any may contend, I cannot yield ever to be convinced that a man who was living in plenty would choose to beg. 6. Let no man then beguile us with arguments. But although Paul saith, "If any will not work, neither let him eat," to them he saith it; but to us he saith not this, but, on the contrary, "Be not weary in well doing." Even thus do we at home; when any two are striving with each other, we take each apart, and give them the opposite advice. This did God also, and Moses. For while to God he said, "If thou wilt forgive them their sin, forgive it; else blot me out also; " them on the contrary he commanded to slay one another, and all that pertained to them. Yet these things are contrary; nevertheless, both looked to one end.

Again, God said to Moses in the hearing of the Jews, "Let me alone, that I may consume the people," (for though they were not present when God was saying this, yet they were to hear it afterwards): but privately He gives him directions of the opposite tenor. And this, Moses upon constraint revealed afterwards, thus saying, "What? did I conceive them, that thou sayest to me, Carry them, as a nurse would carry the sucking child in her bosom?" These things are done also in houses, and often a father while he blames the tutor in private for having used his child reproachfully, saying, "Be not rough, nor hard," to the youth speaks in the contrary way, "Though thou be reproached unjustly, bear it;" out of those opposites making up some one wholesome result. Thus also Paul said to such as are in health and beg, "If any man will not work, neither let him eat," that he may urge them into employment: but to such as can show mercy, "Ye, for your part, be not weary in well doing:" that he may lead them to give aims.

So also, when he was admonishing those of the Gentiles, in his Epistle to the Romans, not to be highminded against the Jews, he brought forward also the wild olive, and he seems to be saying one thing to these, another to those. Let us not therefore fall away into cruelty, but let us listen to Paul, saying, "Be not weary in well doing;" let us listen to the Lord, who saith, "Give to every man that asketh of thee," and, "Be ye merciful as your Father." And though He hath spoken of many things, He hath nowhere used this expression, but

with regard to our deeds of mercy only. For nothing so equals us with God, as doing good. "But nothing is more shameless," saith one, "than a poor man." Why, I pray thee? Because he runs up, and cries out after thee? Wilt thou then let me point out, how we are more importunate than they, and very shameless? Remember, I say, now at the season of the fast, how often, when thy table was spread at eventide, and thou hadst called thy ministering servant; on his moving rather leisurely, thou hast overset everything, kicking, insulting, reviling, merely about a little delay; although fully assured, that if not immediately, yet a little after thou shalt enjoy thy victuals. Upon which thou dost not call thyself impudent, changed as thou art into a wild beast for nothing; but the poor man, alarmed and trembling about his greater interests (for not about delay, but about famine, is all his fear), him dost thou call audacious, and shameless, and impudent, and all the most opprobrious names? Nay, how is this anything but extreme impudence.

But these things We do not consider: therefore we account such men troublesome: since if we at all searched into our own doings, and compared them with theirs, we should not have thought them intolerable. Be not then a severe judge. Why, if thou wert clear of all sins, not even then would the law of God permit thee to be strict in searching out other men's sins. And if the Pharisee perished on this account, what defense are we to find? If He suffer not such as have done well to be bitter in searching out other men's doings, much less them that have offended. 7. Let us not then be savage, nor cruel, not without natural feeling, not implacable, not worse than wild beasts. For I know many to have gone even so far in brutishness, as for a little trouble to slight famishing persons, and to say these words: "I have no servant now with me; we are far from home; there is no money-changer that I know." Oh cruelty! Didst thou promise the greater, and dost thou not fulfill the less? To save thy walking a little way, doth he perish with hunger? Oh insolence! Oh pride! Why, if it were ten furlongs to be walked, oughtest thou to be backward? both it not even come into thy mind that so thy reward is made greater? For whereas, when thou givest, thou receivest reward for the gift only: when thou thyself also goest, for this again is appointed thee a recompense.

Yea, the patriarch himself we admire for this, that in his own person be ran to the herd, and snatched up the calf, and that, when he had three hundred and eighteen servants born in his house. But now some are filled with so much pride, as to do these things by servants, and not to be ashamed. "But dost thou require me to do these things myself?" one may say. "How then shall I not seem to be vainglorious?" Nay, but as it is, thou art led by another kind of vainglory to do this, being ashamed to be seen talking with a poor man. But I am in no respect strict about this; only give, whether by thyself or by another thou art minded to do so; and do not accuse, do not smite, do not revile. For medicines, not wounds. cloth he need who comes unto thee; mercy, not a sword. For tell me, if any one who had been smitten with a stone, and had received a wound in his head, were to let go all others, and run unto thy knees, drenched in his blood; wouldest thou indeed smite him with another stone, and add unto him another wound? I, for my part, think not; but even as it was, thou wouldest endeavor to cure it. Why then doest thou the contrary with respect to the poor? Knowest

thou not how much power a word hath, both to raise up, and to cast down? "For a word," it is said, "is better than a gift."

Dost thou not consider that thou art thrusting the sword into thyself, and art receiving a more grievous wound, when he, being reviled, silently withdraws, with groans and many tears? Since indeed of God he is sent unto thee. Consider then, in insulting him, upon whom thou art causing the insult to pass; when God indeed sends him unto thee, and commands thee to give, but thou, so far from giving, dost even insult him on his comIng. And if thou art not aware how exceedingly amiss this is, look at it as among men, and then thou wilt fully know the greatness of the sin. As thus: if a servant of thine had been commanded by thee to go to another servant, who had money of thine, to receive it, and were to come back not only with empty hands, but also with despiteful usage; what wouldest thou not do to him that had wrought the insult? What penalty wouldest thou not exact, as though, after this, it were thyself that had been ill used?

This reckoning do thou make in regard of God also; for truly it is He that sends the poor to us, and of His we give, if indeed we do give. But if, besides not giving, we also send them away insulted, consider how many bolts, how many thunders, that which we are doing deserves. Duly considering then all these things, let us both bridle our tongue, and put away inhumanity, and let us stretch forth the hand to give alms, and not with money only, but with words also, let us relieve such as are in need; that we may both escape the punishment for reviling, and may inherit the kingdom which is for blessing arid almsgiving, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 36

Matthew Chapter 11, Verse 1

”And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding His twelve disciples, He departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.” That is, after He had sent them, He proceeded to withdraw Himself, to give them room and opportunity to do what He had enjoined. For while He was present and healing, no one would be willing to approach them. ”Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Jesus, he sent two of his disciples, and asked Him, saying, Art thou He that should come? or do we look for another?” But Luke saith, they also told John of the miracles, and then he sent them. However, this contains no matter of difficulty, but of consideration only; for this, among other things, indicates their jealousy towards Him.

But what follows is completely among the. controverted points. Of what nature then is this? Their saying, ”Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?” That is, he that knew Him before His miracles, he that had learned it of the Spirit, he that heard it of the Father, he who had proclaimed Him before all men; doth he now send to learn of Him, whether it be Himself or no? And if yet thou didst not know that it is surely He, how thinkest thou thyself credible, affirming as thou dost concerning things, whereof thou art ignorant? For he that is to bear witness to others, must be first worthy of credit himself. Didst thou not say, ”I am not meet to loose the latchet of His shoe? ” Didst thou not say, ”I knew Him not, but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and resting upon Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost?” Didst thou not see the Spirit in form of a dove? didst thou not hear the voice? Didst thou not utterly forbid Him, saying, ”I have need to be baptized of Thee?” Didst thou not say even to thy disciples, ”He must increase, I must decrease?” Didst thou not teach all the people, that ”He should baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire?” and that He ”is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world?” Didst thou not before His signs and miracles proclaim all these things? How then now, when He hath been made manifest to all, and the fame of Him hath gone out everywhere, and dead men have been raised, and devils driven away, and a display made of so great miracles, dost thou after this send to learn of Him?

What then is the fact? Were all these sayings a kind of fraud: a stage play and fables? Nay, who that hath any understanding would say so? I say not, John, who leaped in the womb, who before his own birth proclaimed Him, the citizen of the wilderness, the exhibitor of the conversation of angels; but even though he were one of the common sort, and of them that are utterly outcast, he would not have hesitated, after so many testimonies, both on his own part and on the part of others.

Whence it is evident, that neither did he send as being himself in doubt, nor did he ask in ignorance. Since no one surely could say this, that though he knew it fully, yet on account of his prison he was become rather timid: for neither was he looking to be delivered therefrom, nor if he did look for it, would he have betrayed his duty to God, armed as he was against various kinds of death. For unless he had been prepared for this, he would not have evinced so great courage towards a whole people, practised in shedding blood of prophets; nor would he have rebuked that savage tyrant with so much boldness in the midst of the city and the forum, severely chiding him, as though he were a little child, in hearing of all men. And even if he were grown more timid, how was he not ashamed before his own disciples, in whose presence he had so often borne witness unto Him, but asked his question by them, which he should have done by others? And yet surely he knew full well, that they too were jealous of Christ, and desired to find some handle against Him. And how could he but be abashed before the Jewish people, in whose presence he had proclaimed such high things? Or what advantage accrued to him thereby, towards deliverance from his bonds? For not for Christ's sake had he been cast into prison, nor for having proclaimed His power, but for his own rebuke touching the unlawful marriage. And what child so silly, what person so frantic, but that so he would have put on himself their character?

2. What then is it which he is bringing about? For that it belongs not to John to have doubt hereupon, no nor to any ordinary person, nor even to one extremely foolish and frenzied; so much is evident from what we have said.And now we have only to add the solution. For what intent then did he send to ask? John's disciples were starting aside from Jesus, and this surely any one may see, and they had always a jealous feeling towards Him. And it is plain, from what they said to their master: "He that was with thee," it is said, "beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come unto Him." And again, "There arose a question between John's disciples and the Jews about purifying." And again they came unto Him, and said, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but Thy disciples fast not? " For as yet they knew not who Christ was, but imagining Jesus to be a mere man, but John greater than after the manner of man, were vexed at seeing the former held in estimation, but the latter, as he had said, now ceasing. And this hindered them from coming unto Him, their jealousy quite blocking up the access. Now so long as John was with them, he was exhorting them continually and instructing them, and not even so did he persuade them; but when he was now on the point of dying, he uses the more diligence: fearing as he did lest he might leave a foundation for bad doctrine, and they continue broken off from Christ. For as he was diligent even at first to bring to Christ all

that pertained to himself; so on his failing to persuade them, now towards his end he does but exert the more zeal.

Now if he had said, "Go ye away unto Him, He is better than I," he would not have persuaded them, minded as they were not easily to be separated from him, but rather he would have been thought to say it out of modesty, and they would have been the more rivetted to him; or if he had held his peace, then again nothing was gained. What then doth he? He waits to hear from them that Christ is working miracles, and not even so doth he admonish them, nor doth he send all, but some two (whom he perhaps knew to be more teachable than the rest); that the inquiry might be made without suspicion, in order that from His acts they might learn the difference between Jesus and himself. And he saith, Go ye, and say, "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another? "

But Christ knowing the purpose of John, did not say, I am He; for this would again have offended the hearers, although this was what it naturally followed for Him to say, but He leaves them to learn it from His acts. For it saith, "when these were come to Him, then "He cured many." And yet what congruity was there, that being asked, "Art thou He," He should say nothing to that, but should presently cure them that were sick; unless it had been His mind to establish this which I have mentioned? Because they of course would account the testimony of His deeds surer, and more above suspicion than that of His words. Knowing therefore, as being God, the mind with which John had sent them, He straightway cured blind, lame, and many others; not to teach him (for how should He him that was convinced), but these that were doubting: and having healed them, He saith,

"Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see; the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, and the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them." And he added, "And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me;" implying that He knows even their unuttered thoughts. For if He had said, "I am He," both this would have offended them, as I have already said; and they would have thought, even if they had not spoken, much as the Jews said to Him, "Thou bearest record of Thyself." Wherefore He saith not this Himself, but leaves them to learn all from the miracles, freeing what He taught from suspicion, and making it plainer. Wherefore also He covertly added His reproof of them. That is, because they were "offended in Him," He by setting forth their case and leaving it to their own conscience alone, and by calling no witness of this His accusation, but only themselves that knew it all, did thus also draw them the more unto Himself, in saying, Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." For indeed His secret meaning was of them when He said this.

3. But in order to our making the truth more evident to you by the comparison of the several statements, producing not only our own sayings, but also what is stated by others; we must needs add some account of them. What then do some affirm? That this which we have stated was not the cause, but that John was in ignorance, yet not in ignorance of all; but that He was the Christ, he knew, but whether He was also to die for mankind, he knew not, therefore he said, "Art Thou He that should come?" that is, He that is to descend into hell.

But this is not tenable; for neither of this was John ignorant. This at least he proclaimed even before all the others, and bare record of this first, ”Behold,” saith he, ”the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” Now he called Him a lamb, as proclaiming the cross, and again in saying, ”That taketh away the sin of the world,” he declared this same thing. For not otherwise than by the cross did He effect this; as Paul likewise said: ”And the handwriting which was contrary to us, even it He took out of the way, nailing it to His cross.” And his saying too, ”He shall baptize you with the Spirit,” is that of one who was foretelling the events after the resurrection.

Well: that He was to rise again, he knew, say they, and that He was to give the Holy Ghost; but that He should likewise be crucified, he knew not. How then was He to rise again, who had not suffered, nor been crucified? And how was this man greater than a prophet, who knew not even what the prophets knew? For that he was greater than a prophet, even Christ Himself bare record, but that the prophets knew of the passion is surely plain to every one. For so Isaiah saith, ”He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearer is dumb. And before this testimony also he saith, ”There shall be a root of Jesse, and He that shall rise again to rule the Gentiles, in Him shall the Gentiles trust. Then speaking of His passion, and of the ensuing glory, he added. ”And His rest shall be honor. And this prophet foretold not only that He should be crucified, but also with whom. ”For,” saith he, ”He was numbered with the transgressors. And not this only, but that He should not even plead For Himself; ”For this man,” he saith, ”openeth not His mouth: and that He should be unjustly condemned; ”For in His humiliation,” saith he, ”His judgment was taken away. And before this again, David both saith this, and describes the judgment hall. ”Why,” saith he, ”do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers are gathered together against the Lord, and against His anointed. And elsewhere he mentions also the image of the cross, saying on this wise, ”They pierced my hand and my feet,” and those things which the soldiers were emboldened to do, he adds with all exactness, ”For they parted my garments,” saith he, ”among them, and for my vesture they did east lots. And elsewhere again he saith, that they also offered Him vinegar; For they gave me,” saith He, ”gall for my meat, and for my thirst they made me drink Vinegar.”

So then the prophets, so many years before, speak of the hall of judgment, and of the condemnation, and of them that were crucified with Him, and of the division of the garments, and of the lot cast upon them, and of many more things besides (for indeed it is unnecessary to allege all now, lest we make our discourse long): and was this man, greater than them all, ignorant of all these things? Nay, how should this be reasonable? And why did he not say, ”Art thou He that should come to hell,” but simply, ”He that should come?” Although this were far more absurd than the others, I mean their saying, ”he therefore said these things, that he might preach there also after his departure.” To whom it were seasonable to say, ”Brethren, be not children in understanding, howbeit in malice be ye children.” For

the present life indeed is the season for right conversation, but after death is judgment and punishment. "For in hell," it is said, "who will confess unto thee?"

How then were "the gates of brass burst, and the bars of iron broken in sunder"? By His body; for then first was a body shown, immortal, and destroying the tyranny of death. And besides, this indicates the destruction of the might of death, not the loosing of the sins of those who had died before His coming. And if this were not so, but He have delivered all that were before Him from hell, how saith He, "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah?" For this saying supposes that those are also to be punished; more mildly indeed, yet still that they are to be punished. And yet they did also suffer here the most extreme punishment, nevertheless not even this will deliver them. And if it is so with them, much more with such as have suffered nothing. "What then?" one may say, "were they wronged, who lived before His coming?" By no means, for men might then be saved, even though they had not confessed Christ. For this was not required of them, but not to worship idols, and to know the true God. "For the Lord thy God," it is said, "is one Lord." Therefore the Maccabees were admired, because for the observance of the law they suffered what they did suffer; and the three children, and many others too amongst the Jews, having shown forth a very virtuous life, and having maintained the standard of this their knowledge, had nothing more required of them. For then it was sufficient for salvation, as I have said already, to know God only; but now it is so no more, but there is need also of the knowledge of Christ. Therefore He said, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin."

So likewise with regard to the rule of practice. Then murder was the destruction of him that committed it, but now even to be angry. And then to commit adultery, and to lie with another man's wife, brought punishment, but now even to look with unchaste eyes. For as the knowledge, so also the rule of life is now made stricter. So that there was no need of a forerunner there. And besides, if unbelievers are after death to be saved on their believing, no man shall ever perish. For all will then repent and adore. And in proof that this is true, hear Paul saying, "Every tongue shall confess, and every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth." And, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." But there is no advantage in that submission, for it comes not of a rightly disposed choice, but of the necessity of things, as one may say, thenceforth taking place.

Let us not then any more bring in such old wives' doctrines, and Jewish fables. Hear at least what Paul saith touching these things. "For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law;" where his discourse is of those who lived in the time before the law; and, "As many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law." speaking of all after Moses. And, "That the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men," and, "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that worketh evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile." And yet countless were the evils which the Gentiles have suffered in this world, and this is declared alike

by the histories of the heathens, and by the Scriptures that are in our hands. For who could recount the tragic calamities of the Babylon-fans, or those of the Egyptians? But in proof that they who, not having known Christ before His coming in the flesh, yet refrained from idolatry and worshipped God only, and showed forth an excellent life, shall enjoy all the blessings; hear what is said: "But glory, and honor, and peace to every one that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile." Seest thou that for their good deeds there are many rewards, and chastisements again, and penalties for such as have done the contrary?

4. Where now, tell me, are the utter unbelievers in hell? Why, if those before Christ's coming, who had not so much as heard the name of hell, nor of a resurrection, and were punished here, shall suffer punishment there also; how much more we that have been nurtured in so many lessons of strict virtue? And how is it reasonable, asks one, that they that have never heard of hell? should fall into hell, For they will say, "If thou hadst threatened hell, we should have feared more, and have been sobered." To be sure; (is it not so?) at our rate of living now, who hear daily the sayings about hell, and give no heed at all. And besides, there is this also to be said; that he who is not restrained by the judgments in sight, much less will he be restrained by those others. For the less reasonable sort, and those of a grosset disposition, are wont to be sobered rather by things which are at hand, and straightway to happen, than by such as will come to pass a long time after. "But over us," one may say, "a greater fear is suspended, and herein were they wronged." By no means. For first, there are not the same measures set to us as to them, but much greater for us. Now they that have undertaken greater labors, ought to enjoy greater help. And it is no little help, that our fear has been increased. And if we have an advantage over them in knowing things to come, they have an advantage over us m that the severe punishments are presently laid upon them.

But there is something else, which the multitude say with respect to this also. For "where," say they, "is God's justice, when any one for sinning here, is punished both here and there?" Would ye then I should put you in mind of your own sayings, that ye may no longer give us trouble, but furnish the solution from within yourselves. I have heard many of our people, if haply they were told of a murderer cut off in a court of justice, how they had indignation, and talked in this way: "This unholy and accursed wretch, having perpetrated thirty murders, or even many more, hath himself undergone one death only; and where is the justice of it?" So that ye yourselves confess, that one death is not sufficient for punishment; how give ye then an opposite sentence now. Because not others but yourselves are the objects of your judgment: so great a hindrance is self-love to our perceiving what is just. Because of this, when we are judging others, we search out all things with strictness, but when we are sitting in judgment on ourselves, we are blinded. Since if we were to search into these things in our own case too, as we do with regard to other men, we should give an uncorrupt sentence. For we also have sins, deserving not two or three, but ten thousand deaths. And to pass over all the rest, let us recollect ourselves, as many of us as partake unworthily of the mysteries; such men being guilty of the body and blood of Christ. Wherefore, when thou art talking of the murderer, take account of thyself also. For he indeed hath murdered a man, but thou

art under the guilt of slaying the Lord; and he, not having partaken of mysteries, but we, while enjoying the benefit of the sacred table.

And what are they that bite and devour their brethren, and pour out such abundance of venom? What is he that robs the poor of their food? For if he who imparts not of his own, is such as I have said, much more he that takes the things of others. How many robbers do the covetous surpass in wickedness! how many murderers and robbers of tombs, the rapacious! and how many after spoiling men are desirous even of their blood! "Nay," saith he, "God forbid." Now thou sayest, God forbid. When thou hast an enemy, then say, God forbid, and call to mind what hath been said, and show forth a life full of great strictness; lest the portion of Sodom await us also, lest we suffer the lot of Gomorrha, lest we undergo the ills of the Tyrians and Sidonians; or rather, test we offend Christ, which were a thing more grievous and more to be feared than all.

For though to many hell seem to be a fearful thing, yet I for my part will not cease continually to say, that this is more grievous and fearful than any hell; and you I entreat to be of the same mind. For so shall we both be delivered from hell, and enjoy the glory that is bestowed of Christ; unto which may we all attain,by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 37

Matthew Chapter 10, Verse 7 And Matthew Chapter 10, Verse 8 And Matthew Chapter 10, Verse 9

"And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment; behold, they that wear soft clothing are makings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet." For the matter indeed of John's disciples had been ordered well, and they were gone away assured by the miracles which had just been performed; but there was need after that of remedy as regarded the people. For although they could not suspect anything of the kind of their own master, the common people might from the inquiry of John's disciples form many strange suspicions, not knowing the mind with which he sent his disciples. And it was natural for them to reason with themselves, and say, "He that bore such abundant witness, hath he now changed his persuasion, and doth he doubt whether this or another be He that should come? Can it be, that in dissension with Jesus he saith this? that the prison hath made him more timid? that his former words were spoken vainly, and at random?" It being then natural for them to suspect many such things, see how He corrects their weakness, and removes these their suspicions. For "as they departed, He began to say to the multitudes." Why, "as they departed?" That He might not seem to be flattering the man.

And in correcting the people, He doth not publish their suspicion, but adds only the solution of the thoughts that were mentally disturbing them: signifying that He knew the secrets of all men. For He saith not, as unto the Jews, "Wherefore think ye evil?" Because if they had it in their minds, not of wickedness did they so reason, but of ignorance on the points that had been spoken of. Wherefore neither doth He discourse unto them in the way of rebuke, but merely sets right their understanding, and defends John, and signifies that he is not fallen away from his former opinion, neither is he changed, not being at all a man easily swayed and fickle, but steadfast and sure, and far from being such as to betray the things committed unto him. And in establishing this, He employs not at first his own sentence, but their former testimony, pointing out how they bare record of his firmness, not by their words only, but also by their deeds.

Wherefore He saith, "What went ye out into the wilderness to see?" as though He had said, Wherefore did ye leave your cities, and your houses, and come together all of you into the wilderness? To see a pitiful and flexible kind of person? Nay, this were out of all reason, this is not what is indicated by that earnestness, and the concourse of all men unto the wilderness. So much people and so many cities would not have poured themselves out with so great zeal towards the wilderness and the river Jordan at that time, had ye not expected to see some great and marvellous one, one firmer than any rock. Yea, it was not "a reed" surely, that "ye went out to see shaken by the wind:" for the flexible and such as are lightly brought round, and now say one thing, now another, and stand firm in nothing, are most like that.

And see how He omits all wickedness, and mentions this, which then especially haunted them; and removes the suspicion of lightness. "But what went ye out for to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses." Now His meaning is like this: He was not of himself a waverer; and this ye yourselves showed by your earnestness. Much less could any one say this, that he was indeed firm, but having made himself a slave to luxury, he afterwards became languid. For among men, some are such as they are of themselves, others become so; for instance, one man is passionate by nature, and another from having fallen into a long illness gets this infirmity. Again, some men are flexible and fickle by nature, while others become so by being slaves to luxury, and by living effeminately. "But John," saith He, "neither was such a character by nature, for neither was it a reed that ye went out to see; nor by giving himself to luxury did he lose the advantage he possessed." For that he did not make himself a slave to luxury, his garb shows, and the wilderness, and the prison. Since, had he been minded to wear soft raiment, he would not have lived in the wilderness, nor in the prison, but in the king's courts: it being in his power, merely by keeping silence, to have enjoyed honor without limit. For since Herod so reverenced him, even when he had rebuked him, and was in chains, much more would he have courted him, had he held his peace. You see, he had indeed given proof of his firmness and fortitude; and how could he justly incur suspicions of that kind?

2. When therefore as well by the place, as by his garments, and by their concourse unto Him, He had delineated his character, He proceeds to bring in the prophet. For having said, "Why went ye out? To see a prophet? Yea I say unto you, and more than a prophet;" He goes on, "For this is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before Thy face, which shall prepare Thy way before Thee." Having before set down the testimony of the Jews, He then applies that of the prophets; or rather, He puts in the first place the sentence of the Jews, which must have been a very strong demonstration, the witness being borne by his enemies; secondly, the man's life; thirdly, His own judgment; fourthly, the prophet; by all means stopping their mouths. Then lest they should say, "But what if at that time indeed he were such an one, but now is changed?" He added also what follows; his garments, his prison, and together with these the prophecy.

Then having said, that he is greater than a prophet, He signifies also in what he is greater. And in what is he greater? In being near Him that was come. For, "I send," saith He, "my messenger before Thy face;" that is, nigh Thee. For as with kings, they who ride near the chariot, these are more illustrious than the rest, just so John also appears in his course near the advent itself. See how He signified John's excellency by this also; and not even here doth He stop, but adds afterwards His own suffrage as well, saying, "Verily I say unto you, among them that rare born of women, there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist." Now what He said is like this: "woman hath not borne a greater than this man." And His very sentence is indeed sufficient; but if thou art minded to learn from facts also, consider his table, his manner of life, the height of his soul. For he so lived as though he were in heaven: and having got above the necessities of nature, he travelled as it were a new way, spending all his time in hymns and prayers, and holding inter course with none among men, but with God alone continually. For he did not so much as see any of his fellow-servants, neither was he seen by any one of them; he fed not on milk, he enjoyed not the comfort of bed, or roof, or market, or any other of the things of men; and yet he was at once mild and earnest. Hear, for example, how considerately he reasons with his own disciples, courageously with the people of the Jews, how openly with the king. For this cause He said also, "There hath not risen among them that are born of women a greater than John the Baptist."

3. But lest the exceeding greatness of His praises should produce a sort of extravagant feeling, the Jews honoring John above Christ; mark how He corrects this also. For as the things which edified His own disciples did harm to the multitudes, they supposing Him an easy kind of person; so again the remedies employed for the multitudes might have proved more mischievous, they deriving from Christ's words a more reverential opinion of John than of Himself. Wherefore this also, in an unsuspected way, He corrects by saying, "He that is less, in the kingdom of Heaven is greater than he." Less in age, and according to the opinion of the multitude, since they even called Him "a gluttonous man and a winebibber;" and, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" and on every occasion they used to make light of Him. "What then?" it may be said, is it by comparison that He is greater than John?" Far from it. For neither when John saith, He is mightier than I," doth he say it as comparing them; nor Paul, when remembering Moses he writes, For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses," doth he so write by way of comparison; and He Himself too, in saying, Behold, a greater than Solomon is here," speaks not as making a comparison.

Or if we should even grant that this was said by Him in the way of comparison, this was done in condescension, because of the weakness of the hearers. For the men really had their gaze very much fixed upon John; and then he was rendered the more illustrious both by his imprisonment, and by his plainness of speech to the king; and it was a great point for the present, that even so much should be received among the multitude. And so too, the Old Testament uses in the same way to correct the souls of the erring, by putting together in a way of comparison things that cannot be compared; as when it saith, "Among the gods there is none like unto Thee, O Lord:" and again, "There is no god like our God." Now

some affirm, that Christ said this of the apostles, others again, of angels. Thus, when any have turned aside from the truth, they are wont to wander many ways. For what sort of connexion hath it, to speak either of angels or of apostles? And besides, if He were speaking of the apostles, what hindered his bringing them forward by name? whereas, when He is speaking of Himself, He naturally conceals His person, because of the still prevailing suspicion, and that He may not seem to say anything great of Himself; yea, and we often find Him doing so.

But what is, "In the kingdom of heaven?" Among spiritual beings, and all them that are in heaven. And moreover His saying, "There hath not risen among them that are born of women a greater than John," suited one contrasting John with Himself, and thus tacitly excepting Himself. For though He too were born of a woman, yet not as John, for He was not a mere man, neither was He born in like manner as a man, but by a strange and wondrous kind of birth. 4. "And from the days of John the Baptist," saith He, "until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." And what sort of connexion may this have with what was said before? Much, assuredly, and in full accordance therewith. Yea, by this topic also He proceeds to urge and press them into the faith of Himself; and at the same time likewise, He is speaking in agreement with what had been before said by John. "For if all things are fulfilled even down to John, I am "He that should come."

"For all the prophets," saith He, "and the law prophesied until John." For the prophets would not have ceased, unless I were come. Expect therefore nothing further, neither wait for any one else. For that I am He is manifest both from the prophets ceasing, and from those that every day "take by force" the faith that is in me. For so manifest is it and certain, that many even take it by force. Why, who hath so taken it? tell me. All who approach it with earnestness of mind. Then He states also another infallible sign, saying, "If ye will receive it, he is Elias, which was for to come." For "I will send you," it is said, "Elias the Tishbite, who shall turn the heart of the father to the children." This man then is Elias, if ye attend exactly, saith He. For "I will send," saith He, "my messenger before Thy face."

And well hath He said, "If ye will receive it," to show the absence of force. For I do not constrain, saith He. And this He said, as requiring a candid mind, and showing that John is Elias, and Elias John. For both of them received one ministry, and both of them became forerunners. Wherefore neither did He simply say, "This is Elias," but, "If ye are willing to receive it, this is he," that is, if with a candid mind ye give heed to what is going on. And He did not stop even at this, but to the words, "This is Elias, which was for to come," He added, to show that understanding is needed,He that hathears to hear, let him hear."

Now He used so many dark sayings, to stir them up to inquiry. And if not even so were they awakened, much more, had all been plain and clear. For this surely no man could say, that they dared not ask Him, and that He was difficult of approach. For they that were asking him questions, and tempting Him about common matters, and whose mouths were stopped a thousand times, yet they did not withdraw from Him; how should they but have inquired of Him, and besought Him touching the indispensable things, had they indeed

been desirous to learn? For if concerning the matters of the law they asked, "Which is the first commandment," and all such questions, although there was of course no need of His telling them that; how should they but ask the meaning of what He Himself said, for which also He was bound to give account in His answers? And especially when it was He Himself that was encouraging and drawing them on to do this. For by saying, "The violent take it by force," He stirs them up to earnestness of mind; and by saying, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," He doth just the same thing.

5. "But whereunto shall I liken this generation?" saith He," "It is like unto children sitting in the market place, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented." This again seems to be unconnected with what came before, but it is the most natural consequence thereof. Yea, He still keeps to the same point, the showing that John is acting in harmony with Himself, although the results were opposite; as indeed with respect to his inquiry also. And He implies that there was nothing that ought to have been done for their salvation, and was omitted; which thing the prophet saith of the vineyard; "What ought I to have done to this vineyard, and have not done it? For whereunto," saith He, "shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the market, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced, we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners."

Now what He saith is like this: We have come each of us an opposite way, I and John; and we have done just as if it were some hunters with a wild beast that was hard to catch, and which might by two ways fall into the toils; as if each of the two were to cut it off his several way, and drive it, taking his stand opposite to the other; so that it must needs fall into one of the two snares. Mark, for instance, the whole race of man, how it is astonished at the wonder of men's fasting, and at this hard and self-denying life. For this reason it had been so ordered, that John should be thus brought up from his earliest youth, so that hereby (among other things) his sayings might obtain credit. But wherefore, it may be asked, did not He Himself choose that way? In the first place He did also Himself proceed by it, when He fasted the forty days, and went about teaching, and not having where to lay His head. Nevertheless He did also in another mode accomplish this same object, and provide for the advantage thence accruing. For to be testified of by him that came this way was the same thing, or even a much greater thing than to have come this way Himself.

And besides, John indeed exhibited no more than his life and conversation; for "John," it is said, "did no sign," but He Himself had the testimony also from signs and from miracles. Leaving therefore John to be illustrious by his fasting, He Himself came the opposite way, both coming unto publicans' tables, and eating and drinking.

Let us ask the Jews then, "Is fasting a good thing, and to be admired? you should then have obeyed John, and received him, and believed his sayings. For so would those sayings have led you towards Jesus. Is fasting, on the other hand, a thing grievous, and burdensome? then

should you have obeyed Jesus, and have believed in Him that came the opposite way. Thus, either way, ye would have found yourselves in the kingdom." But, like an intractable wild beast, they were speaking evil of both. The fault is not then theirs who were not believed, but they are to be blamed who did not believe. For no man would ever choose to speak evil of opposite things, any more than he would on the other hand commend them. I mean thus: he that approves the cheerful and free character, will not approve him that is sad and grave; he that commends the man of a sad countenance will not commend the cheerful man. For it is a thing impossible to give your vote both ways at once. Therefore also He saith, "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced;" that is, "I have exhibited the freer kind of life, and ye obeyed not:" and, "We have mourned, and ye have not lamented;" that is, "John followed the rugged and grave life, and ye took no heed." And He saith not, "he this, I that," but the purpose of both being one, although their modes of life were opposite, for this cause He speaks of their doings as common. Yea, for even their coming by opposite ways arose out of a most exact accordance, such as continued looking to one and the same end. What sort of excuse then can ye have after all this?

Wherefore He subjoined, "And wisdom is justified of her children;" that is, though ye be not persuaded, yet with me after this ye cannot find fault. As the prophet saith touching the Father, "That Thou mightest be justified in Thy sayings." For God, though He should effect nothing more by His care over us, fulfills all His part, so as to leave to them that will be shameless not so much as a shadow of excuse for uncandid doubt. And if the similitudes be mean, and of an ill sound, marvel not, for He was discoursing with a view to the weakness of His hearers. Since Ezekiel too mentions many similitudes like them, and unworthy of God's majesty. But this too especially becomes His tender care. And mark them, how in another respect also they are carried about into contradictory opinions. For whereas they had said of John, "he hath a devil," they stopped not at this, but said the very same again concerning Him, taking as He did the opposite course; thus were they forever carried about into conflicting opinions.

But Luke herewith sets down also another and a heavier charge against them, saying, "For the publicans justified God, having received the baptism of John." 6. Then He proceeds to upbraid the cities now that wisdom hath been justified; now that He hath shown all to be fully performed. That is, having failed to persuade them, He now doth but lament over them; which is more than terrifying For He had exhibited both His teaching by His words, and His wonder-working power by His signs. But forasmuch as they abode in their own unbelief, He now does but upbraid. For "then," it is said, "began Jesus to upbraid the cities, wherein most of His mighty works were done, because they repented not; saying, Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida Then, to show thee that they are not such by nature, He states also the name of the city out of which proceeded five apostles. For both Philip, and those two pairs of the chief apostles, were from thence.

"For if," saith He, "the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more

tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell, for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee." And He adds not Sodom with the others for nought, but to aggravate the charge against them. Yea, for it is a very great proof of wickedness, when not only of them that now are, but even of all those that ever were wicked, none are found so bad as they.

Thus elsewhere also He makes a comparison, condemning them by the Ninevites, and by the Queen of the south; there, however, it was by them that did right, here, even by them that sinned; a thing far more grievous. With this law of condemnation, Ezekiel too was acquainted: wherefore also he said to Jerusalem, "Thou hast justified thy sisters in all thy sins." Thus everywhere is He wont to linger in the Old Testament, as in a favored place. And not even at this doth He stay His speech, but makes their fears yet more intense, by saying, that they should suffer things more grievous than Sodomites and Tyrians, so as by every means to gather them in, both by bewailing, and by alarming them. 7. To these same things let us also listen: since not for the unbelievers only, but for us also, hath He appointed a punishment more grievous than that of the Sodomites, if we will not receive the strangers that come in unto us; I mean, when He commanded to shake off the very dust: and very fitly. For as to the Sodomites, although they committed a great transgression, yet it was before the law and grace; but we, after so much care shown towards us, of what indulgence should we be worthy, showing so much inhospitality, and shutting our doors against them that are in need, and before our doors our ears? or rather not against the poor only, but against the apostles themselves? For therefore we do it to the poor, because we do it to the very apostles. For whereas Paul is read, and thou attendest not; whereas John preaches, and thou hearest not: when wilt thou receive a poor man, who wilt not receive an apostle?

In order then that both our houses may be continually open to the one, and our ears to the others, let us purge away the filth from the ears of our soul. For as filth and mud close up the ears of our flesh, so do the hatlot's songs, and worldly news, and debts, and the business of usury and loans, close up the ear of the mind, worse than any filth; nay rather, they do not close it up only, but also make it unclean. And they are putting dung in your ears, who tell you of these things. And that which the barbarian threatened, saying, "Ye shall eat your own dung," and what follows; this do these men also make you undergo, not in word, but in deeds; or rather, somewhat even much worse. For truly those songs are more loathsome even than all this; and what is yet worse, so far from feeling annoyance when ye hear them, ye rather laugh, when ye ought to abominate them and fly.

But if they be not abominable, go down unto the stage, imitate that which thou praisest; or rather, do thou merely take a walk with him that is exciting that laugh. Nay, thou couldest not bear it. Why then bestow on him so great honor? Yea, while the laws that are enacted by the Gentiles would have them to be dishonored, thou receivest them with thy whole city, like ambassadors and generals, and dost convoke all men, to receive dung in their ears. And thy

servant, if he say anything filthy in thy hearing, will receive stripes in abundance; and be it a son, a wife, whoever it may, that doth as I have said, thou callest the act an affront; but if worthless fellows, that deserve the scourge, should invite thee to hear the filthy words, not only art thou not indignant, thou dost even rejoice and applaud. And what could be equal to this folly?

But dost thou thyself never utter these base words? Why what is the profit? or rather, this very fact, whence is it manifest? For if thou didst not utter these things, neither wouldest thou at all laugh at hearing them, nor wouldest thou run with such zeal to the voice that makes thee ashamed. For tell me, art thou pleased at hearing men blaspheme? Dost thou not rather shudder, and stop thine ears? Surely I think thou dost. Why so? Because thou blasphemest not thyself. Just so do thou act with respect to filthy talking also; and if thou wouldest show us clearly, that thou hast no pleasure in filthy speaking, endure not so much as to hear them. For when wilt thou be able to become good, bred up as thou art with such sounds in thine ears? When wilt thou venture to undergo such labors as chastity requires, now that thou art falling gradually away through this laughter, these songs, and filthy words? Yea, it is a great thing for a soul that keeps itself pure from all this, to be able to become grave and chaste; how much more for one that is nourished up in such hearings? Know ye not, that we are of the two more inclined to evil? While then we make it even an art, and a business, when shall we escape that furnace?

8. Heardest thou not what Paul saith, "Rejoice in the Lord?" He said not, "in the devil." When then wilt thou be able to hear Paul? when, to gain a sense of thy wrong actions? drunken as thou art, ever and incessantly, with the spectacle I was speaking of. For thy having come here is nothing wonderful nor great; or rather it is wonderful. For here thou comest any how, and so as just to satisfy a scruple, but there with diligence and speed, and great readiness. And it is evident from what thou bringest home, on returning thence. For even all the mire that is there poured out for you, by the speeches, by the songs, by the laughter, ye collect and take every man to his home, or rather not to his home only, but every man even into his own mind. And from things not worthy of abhorrence thou turnest away; while others which are to be abhorred, so far from hating, thou dost even court. Many, for instance, on coming back from tombs, are used to wash themselves, but on returning from theatres they have never groaned, nor poured forth any fountains of tears; yet surely the dead man is no unclean thing, whereas sin induces such a blot, that not even with ten thousand fountains could one purge it away, but with tears only, and with confessions. But no one hath any sense of this blot. Thus because we fear not what we ought, therefore we shrink from what we ought not.

And what again is the applause? what the tumult, and the satanical cries, and the devilish gestures? For first one, being a young man, wears his hair long behind, and changing his nature into that of a woman, is striving both in aspect, and in gesture, and in garments, and generally in all ways, to pass into the likeness of a tender damsel. Then another who is grown old, in the opposite way to this, having his hair shaven, and with his loins girt about,

his shame cut off before his hair, stands ready to be smitten with the rod, prepared both to say and do anything. The women again, their heads uncovered, stand without a blush, discoursing with a whole people, so complete is their practice in shamelessness; and thus pour forth all effrontery and impurity into the souls of their hearers. And their one study is, to pluck up all chastity from the foundations, to disgrace our nature, to satiate the desire of the wicked demon. Yea, and there are both foul sayings, and gestures yet fouler; and the dressing of the hair tends that way, and the gait, and apparel, and voice, and flexure of the limbs; and there are turnings of the eyes, and flutes, and pipes, and dramas, and plots; and all things, in short, full of the most extreme impurity. When then wilt thou be sober again, I pray thee, now that the devil is pouring out for theeso much of the strong wine of whoredom, mingling so many cups of unchastity? For indeed both adulteries and stolen marriages are there. and there are women playing the harlot, men prostituting, youths corrupting themselves: all there is iniquity to the full, all sorcery, all shame. Wherefore they that sit by should not laugh at these things, but weep and groan bitterly.

"What then? Are we to shut up the stage?" it will be said, "and are all things to be turned upside down at thy word?" Nay, but as it is, all things are turned upside down. For whence are they, tell me, that plot against our marriages? Is it not from this theatre? Whence are they that dig through into chambers? Is it not from that stage? Comes it not of this, when husbands are insupportable to their wives? of this, when the wives are contemptible to their husbands? of this, that the more part are adulterers? So that the subverter of all things is he that goes to the theatre; it is he that brings in a grievous tyranny. "Nay," thou wilt say, "this is appointed by the good order of the laws." Why, to tear away men's wives, and to insult young boys, and to overthrow houses, is proper to those who have seized on citadels. "And what adulterer," wilt thou say, "hath been made such by these spectacles?" Nay, who hath not been made an adulterer? And if one might but mention them now by name, I could point out how many husbands those harlots have severed from their wives, how many they have taken captive, drawing some even from the marriage bed itself, not suffering others so much as to live at all in marriage.

"What then? I pray thee, are we to overthrow all the laws?" Nay, but it is overthrowing lawlessness, if we do away with these spectacles, For hence are they that make havoc in our cities; hence, for example, are seditions and tumults. For they that are maintained by the dancers, and who sell their own voice to the belly, whose work it is to shout, and to practise everything that is monstrous, these especially are the men that stir up the populace, that make the tumults in our cities. For youth, when it hath joined hands with idleness, and is brought up in so great evils, becomes fiercer than any wild beast. The necromancers too, I pray thee, whence are they? Is it not from hence, that in order to excite the people who are idling without object, and make the dancing men have the benefit of much and loud applause, and fortify the harlot women against the chaste, they proceed so far in sorcery, as not even to shrink from disturbing the bones of the dead? Comes it not hence, when men are forced to spend without limit on that wicked choir of the devil? And lasciviousness, whence

is that, and its innumerable mischiefs? Thou seest, it is thou who art subverting our life, by drawing men to these things, while I am recruiting it by putting them down.

"Let us then pull down the stage," say they. Would that it were possible to pull it down; or rather, if ye be willing, as far as regards us, it is pulled down, and digged up. Nevertheless, I enjoin no such thing. Standing as these places are, I bid you make them of no effect; which thing were a greater praise than pulling them down. 9. Imitate at least the barbarians, if no one else; for they verily are altogether clean from seeking such sights. What excuse then can we have after all this, we, the citizens of Heaven, and partners in the choirs of the cherubim, and in fellowship with the angels, making ourselves in this respect worse even than the barbarians, and this, when innumerable other pleasures, better than these, are within our reach? Why, if thou desirest that thy soul may find delight, go to pleasure grounds, to a river flowing by, and to lakes, take notice of gardens, listen to grasshoppers as they sing, be continually by the coffins of martyrs, where is health of body and benefit of soul, and no hurt, no remorse after the pleasure, as there is here.

Thou hast a wife, thou hast children; what is equal to this pleasure? Thou hast a house, thou hast friends, these are the true delights: besides their purity, great is the advantage they bestow. For what, I pray thee, is sweeter than children? what sweeter than a wife, to him that will be chaste in mind? To this purpose, we are told, that the barbarians uttered on some occasion a saying full of wise severity. I mean, that having heard of these wicked spectacles, and the unseasonable delight of them; "why the Romans," say they, "have devised these pleasures, as though they had not wives and children;" implying that nothing is sweeter than children and wife, if thou art willing to live honestly. "What then," one may say, "if I point to some, who are nothing hurt by their pastime in that place?" In the first place, even this is a hurt, to spend one's time without object or fruit, and to become an offense to others For even if thou shouldest not be hurt, thou makest some other more eager herein. And how canst thou but be thyself hurt, giving occasion to what goes on? Yea, both the fortune-teller, and the prostitute boy, and the harlot woman, and all those choirs of the devil, cast upon thy head the blame of their proceedings. For as surely as, if there were no spectators, there would be none to follow these employments; so, since there are, they too have their share of the fire due to such deeds. So that even if in chastity thou weft quite unhurt (a thing impossible), yet for others' ruin thou wilt render a grievous account; both the spectators', and that of those who assemble them.

And in chastity too thou wouldest profit more, didst thou refrain from going thither. For if even now thou art chaste, thou wouldest have become chaster by avoiding such sights. Let us not then delight in useless argument, nor devise unprofitable apologies: there being but one apology, to flee from the Babylonian furnace, to keep far from the Egyptian harlot, though one must escape her hands naked. For so shall we both enjoy much delight, our conscience not accusing us, and we shall live this present life with chastity, and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory and might, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 38

Matthew Chapter 11, Verse 25Matthew Chapter 11, Verse 26

"At that time Jesus answered and said, I make acknowledgment unto Thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth; because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight." Seest thou, how many ways He leads them on to the faith? First, by His praises of John. For by pointing to him as a great and marvellous one, He proved likewise all his sayings credible, whereby he used to draw them on to the knowledge of Him. Secondly, by saying, "The kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force;" for this is the language of one who is pressing and urging them. Thirdly, by signifying that the number of the prophets was finished; for this too manifested Himself to be the person that was announced beforehand by them. Fourthly, by pointing out that whatsoever things should be done by him, were all accomplished; at which time also He made mention of the parable of the children. Fifthly, by His upbraiding them that had not believed, and by His alarming and threatening them greatly. Sixthly, by His giving thanks for them that believed. For the expression, "I make acknowledgment to Thee," here is, "I thank Thee." "I thank Thee," He saith, "because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent."

What then? doth He rejoice in destruction, and in the others not having received this knowledge? By no means; but this is a most excellent way of His to save men, His not forcing them that utterly reject, and are not willing to receive His sayings; that, since they were not bettered by His call, but fell back, and despised it, His casting them out might cause them to fall into a longing for these things. And so likewise the attentive would grow more earnest. And while His being revealed to these was fit matter of joy, His concealment from those was no more of joy but of tears. Thus at any rate He acts, where He weeps for the city. Not therefore because of this doth He rejoice, but because what wise men knew not, was known to these. As when Paul saith, "I thank God, that ye were servants of sin, but ye obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine which was delivered unto

You see, neither doth Paul therefore rejoice, because they were "servants of sin," but because being such, they had been so highly favored. Now by the "wise," here, He means the Scribes, and the Pharisees. And these things He saith, to make the disciples more earnest, and to show what had been vouchsafed to the fishermen, when all those others had missed of

it. And in calling them "wise," He means not the true and commendable wisdom, but this which they seemed to have through natural shrewdness. Wherefore neither did He say, "thou hast revealed it to fools." but "to babes;" to unsophisticated, that is, to simple-minded men; and He implies that so far from their missing these privileges contrary to their desert, it was just what might be expected. And He instructs us throughout, to be free from pride, and to follow after simplicity. For this cause Paul also expressed it with more exceeding earnestness, writing on this wise: "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." For thus is God's grace manifested.

But wherefore doth He give thanks to the Father, although of course it was Himself who wrought this? As He prays and intercedes with God, showing His great love towards us, in the same way doth He this too: for this also is of much love. And He signifies, that not from Him only had they fallen away, but also from the Father. Thus, what He said, speaking to His disciples, "Cast not the holy things unto dogs," this He Himself anticipated them in performing. Moreover He signifies hereby both His own principal will, and that of the Father; His own, I say, by His giving thanks and rejoicing at what had taken place; His Father's, by intimating that neither had He done this upon entreaty, but of Himself upon His own will; "For so," saith He, "it seemed good in Thy sight:" that is, "so it pleased Thee."

And wherefore was it hidden from them? Hear Paul, saying, that "Seeking to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." Consider now how it was likely the disciples should be affected, hearing this; that what wise men knew not, these knew, and knew it continuing babes, and knew it by God's revelation. But Luke saith, that "at the very hour," when the seventy came telling Him about the devils, then He "rejoiced" and spake these things, which, besides increasing their diligence, would also dispose them to be modest. That is, since it was natural for them to pride themselves on their driving away devils, on this among other grounds He refrains them; that it was a revelation, whatever had been done, no diligence on their part. Wherefore also the scribes, and the wise men, thinking to be intelligent for themselves, fell away through their own vanity. Well then, if for this cause it was hidden from them, "do you also," saith He, "fear, and continue babes." For this caused you to have the benefit of the revelation, as indeed on the other hand the contrary made them be deprived of it. For by no means, when He saith, "Thou hast hid," doth He mean that it is all God's doing: but as when Paul saith, "He gave them over to a reprobate mind," and, "He hath blinded their minds," it is not meant to bring Him in as the doer of it, but those who gave the occasion: so here also He uses the expression, "Thou hast hid."

For since He had said, "I thank Thee, because Thou hast hid them, and hast revealed them unto babes;" to hinder thy supposing that as being Himself deprived of this power, and unable to effect it, so He offers thanks, He saith, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father." And to them that are rejoicing, because the devils obey them, "Nay, why marvel," saith He. "that devils yield to you? All things are mine; "All things are delivered unto me." But when thou hearest, "they are delivered," do not surmise anything human. For He uses

this expression, to prevent thine imagining two unoriginate Gods. Since, that He was at the same time both begotten, and Lord of all, He declares in many ways, and in other places also. 2. Then He saith what is even greater than this, lifting up thy mind; "And no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, but the Son." Which seems indeed to the ignorant unconnected with what went before, but hath full accordance therewith. As thus: having said, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father," He adds, "And what marvel," so He speaks, "if I be Lord of all? I who have also another greater privilege, the knowing the Father, and being of the same substance." Yea, for this too He covertly signifies by His being the only one who so knew Him. For this is His meaning, when He saith, "No man knoweth the Father but the Son."

And see at what time He saith this. When they by His works had received the certain proof of His might, not only seeing Him work miracles, but endowed also in His name with so great powers. Then, since He had said, "Thou hast revealed them unto babes," He signifies this also to pertain to Himself; for "neither knoweth any man the Father," saith He, "save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son is willing to reveal Him; not "to whomsoever He may be enjoined," "to whomsoever He may be commanded." But if He reveals Him, then Himself too. This however He let pass as acknowledged, but the other He hath set down. And everywhere He affirms this; as when He saith, "No man cometh unto the Father, but byme." And thereby he establishes another point also, His being in harmony and of one mind with Him. "Why," saith He, "I am so far from fighting and warring with Him, that no one can even come to Him but by me." For because this most offended them, His seeming to be a rival God, He by all means doth away with this; and interested Himself about this not less earnestly, but even more so, than about His miracles.

But when He saith, "Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son," He means not this, that all men were ignorant of Him, but that with the knowledge wherewith He knows Him, no man is acquainted with Him; which may be said of the Son too. For it was not of some God unknown, and revealed to no man, that He was so speaking, as Marcion saith; but it is the perfection of knowledge that He is here intimating, since neither do we know the Son as He should be known; and this very thing, to add no more, Paul was declaring, when he said, "We know in part, and we prophesy in part." 3. Next, having brought them by His words to an earnest desire, and having signified His unspeakable power, He after that invites them, saying. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Not this or that person, but all that are in anxiety, in sorrows, in sins. Come, not that I may call you to account, but that I may do away your sins; come, not that I want your honor, but that I want your salvation. "For I," saith He, "will give you rest." He said not, "I will save you," only; but what was much more, "I will place you in all security."

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Thus, "be not afraid," saith He, "hearing of a yoke, for it is easy: fear not, because I said, "a burden," for it is light. And how said He before, "The gate is narrow and the way strait?" Whilst thou art careless,

whilst thou art supine; whereas, if thou duly perform His words, the burden will be light; wherefore also He hath now called it so. But how are they duly performed? If thou art become lowly, and meek, and gentle. For this virtue is the mother of all strictness of life. Wherefore also, when beginning those divine laws, with this He began. And here again He doeth the very same, and exceeding great is the reward He appoints. "For not to another only dost thou become serviceable; but thyself also above all thou refreshest," saith He."For ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Even before the things to come, He gives thee here thy recompense, and bestows the prize already, making the saying acceptable, both hereby, and by setting Himself forward as an example. For, "Of what art thou afraid?" saith He, "lest thou shouldest be a loser by thy low estate? Look to me, and to all that is mine; learn of me, and then shalt thou know distinctly how great thy blessing." Seest thou how in all ways He is leading them to humility? By His own doings: "Learn of me, for I am meek." By what themselves are to gain; for, "Ye shall find," saith He," rest unto your souls." By what He bestows on them; for, "I too will refresh you," saith He. By rendering it light; "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." So likewise doth Paul, saying, "For the present light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

And how, some one may say, is the burden light, when He saith, "Except one hate father and mother;" and, "Whosoever taketh not up his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me:" and, "Whosoever forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my disciple:" when He commands even to give up our very life? Let Paul teach thee, saying, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? " And that, "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." Let those teach thee, who return from the council of the Jews after plenty of stripes, and "rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ." And if thou art still afraid and tremblest at hearing of the yoke and the burden, the fear comes not of the nature of the thing, but of thy remissness; since if thou art prepared, and in earnest, all will be easy to thee and light. Since for this cause Christ also, to signify that we too must needs labor ourselves, did not mention the gracious things only, and then hold His peace, nor the painful things only, but set down both. Thus He both spake of "a yoke," and called it "easy;" both named a burden, and added that it was "light;" that thou shouldest neither flee from them as toilsome, nor despise them as over easy.

But if even after all this, virtue seem to thee an irksome thing, consider that vice is more irksome. And this very thing He was intimating, in that He said not first, "Take my yoke upon you," but before that, "Come, ye that labor and are heavy laden;" implying that sin too hath labor, and a burden that is heavy and hard to bear. For He said not only, "Ye that labor," but also, "that are heavy laden." This the prophet too was speaking of, when in that description of her nature, "As an heavy burden they weighed heavy upon me." And Zacharias too, describing her, saith she is "A talent of lead." And this moreover experience

itself proves. For nothing so weighs upon the soul, and presses it down, as consciousness of sin; nothing so much gives it wings, and raises it on high, as the attainment of righteousness and virtue.

And mark it: what is more grievous, I pray thee, than to have no possessions? to turn the cheek, and when smitten not to smite again? to die by a violent death? Yet nevertheless, if we practise self-command, all these things are light and easy, and pleasurable. But be not disturbed; rather let us take up each of these, and inquire about it accurately; and if ye will, that first which many count most painful. Which then of the two, tell me, is grievous and burdensome, to be in care for one belly, or to be anxious about ten thousand? To be clothed with one outer garment, and seek for nothing more; or having many in one's house, to bemoan one's self every day and night in fear, in trembling, about the preservation of them, grieved, and ready to choke about the loss of them; lest one should be moth-eaten, lest a servant purloin and go off with them?

4. But whatever I may say, my speech will present no such proof as the actual trial. Wherefore I would there were present here with us some one of those who have attained unto that summit of self-restraint, and then you would know assuredly the delight thereof; and that none of those that are enamored of voluntary poverty would accept wealth, though ten thousand were to offer it. But would these, say you, ever consent to become poor, and to cast away the anxieties which they have? And what of that? This is but a proof of their madness and grievous disease, not of anything very pleasurable in the thing. And this even themselves would testify to us, who are daily lamenting over these their anxieties, and accounting their life to be not worth living. But not so those others; rather they laugh, leap for joy, and the wearers of the diadem do not so glory, as they do in their poverty.

Again, to turn the cheek is, to him that gives heed, a less grievous thing than to smite another; for from this the contest hath beginning, in that termination: and whereas by the former thou hast kindled the other's pile too, by the latter thou hast quenched even thine own flames. But that not to be burnt is a pleasanter thing than to be burnt, surely plain to every man. And if this hold in regard of bodies, much more in a soul. And whether is lighter, to contend, or to be crowned? to fight, or to have the prize? and to endure waves, or to run into harbor? Therefore also, to die is better than to live. For the one withdraws us from waves and dangers, while the other adds unto them, and makes a man subject to numberless plots and distresses, which have made life not worth living in thine account.

And if thou disbelievest our sayings, hearken to them that have seen the countenances of the martyrs in the time of their conflicts, how when scourged and flayed, they were exceeding joyful and glad, and when exposed upon hot irons, rejoiced, and were glad of heart, more than such as lie upon a bed of roses. Wherefore Paul also said, when he was at the point of departing hence, and closing his life by a violent death, joy, and rejoice with you all; for the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me." Seest thou with what exceeding strength of language he invites the whole world to partake in his gladness? So great a good did he know his departure hence to be, so desirable, and lovely, and worthy of prayer, that formidable

thing, death. 5. But that virtue's yoke is sweet and light, is manifest many other ways also; but to conclude, if you please, let us look also at the burdens of sin. Let us then bring forward the covetous, the retailers and second-hand dealers in shameless bargains. What now could be a heavier burden than such transactions? how many sorrows, how many anxieties, how many disappointments, how many dangers, how many plots and wars, daily spring up from these gains? how many troubles and disturbances? For as one can never see the sea without waves, so neither such a soul without anxiety, and despondency, and fear, and disturbance; yea, the second overtakes the first, and again others come up, and when these are not yet ceased, others come to a head.

Or wouldest thou see the souls of the revilers, and of the passionate? Why, what is worse than this torture? what, than the wounds they have within? what, than the furnace that is continually burning, and the flame that is never quenched? Or of the sensual, and of such as cleave unto this present life? Why, what more grievous than this bondage? They live the life of Cain, dwelling in continual trembling and fear at every death that happens; the kinsmen of the dead mourn not so much, as these do for their own end. What again fuller of turmoil, and more frantic, than such as are puffed up with pride? "For learn," saith He, "of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Because long-suffering is the mother of all good things. Fear thou not therefore, neither start away from the yoke that lightens thee of all these things, but put thyself under it with all forwardness, and then thou shalt know well the pleasure thereof. For it doth not at all bruise thy neck, but is put on thee for good order's sake only, and to persuade thee to walk seemly, and to lead thee unto the royal road, and to deliver thee from the precipices on either side, and to make thee walk with ease in the narrow way.

Since then so great are its benefits, so great its security, so great its gladness, let us with all our soul, with all our diligence, draw this yoke; that we may both here "find rest unto our souls," and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 39

Matthew Chapter 12, Verse 1

"At that time Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the corn; and His disciples were a hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat." But Luke saith, "On a double Sabbath." Now what is a double Sabbath? When the cessation from toil is twofold, both that of the regular Sabbath, and that of another feast coming upon it. For they call every cessation from toil, a sabbath. But why could He have led them away from it, who foreknew all, unless it had been His will that the Sabbath should be broken? It was His will indeed, but not simply so; wherefore He never breaks it without a cause, but giving reasonable excuses: that He might at once bring the law to an end, and not startle them. But there are occasions on which He even repeals it directly, and not with circumstance: as when He anoints with the clay the eyes of the blind man; as when He saith, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." And He doth so, by this to glorify His own Father, by the other to soothe the infirmity of the Jews. At which last He is laboring here, putting forward as a plea the necessity of nature; although in the case of acknowledged sins, that could not of course ever be an excuse. For neither may the murderer make his anger a plea, nor the adulterer allege his lust, no, nor any other excuse; but here, by mentioning their hunger, He freed them from all blame.

But do thou, I pray thee, admire the disciples, how entirely they control themselves, and make no account of the things of the body, but esteem the table of the flesh a secondary thing, and though they have to struggle with continual hunger, do not even so withdraw themselves. For except hunger had sorely constrained them, they would not have done so much as this. What then do the Pharisees? "When they saw it," it is said, "they said unto Him, Behold, Thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day." Now here indeed with no great vehemence yet surely that would have been consistent in them),-nevertheless they are not vehemently provoked, but simply find fault. But when He stretched out the withered hand and healed it, then they were so infuriated, as even to consult together about slaying and destroying Him. For where nothing great and noble is done, they are calm; but where they see any made whole, they are savage, and fret themselves, and none so intolerable as they are: such enemies are they of the salvation of men.

How then doth Jesus defend His disciples? "Have ye not read," saith He, "what David did in the temple, when he was an hungered, himself and all they that were with him? how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the show-bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?" Thus, whereas in pleading for His disciples, He brings forward David; for Himself, it is the Father. And observe His reproving manner: "Have ye not read what David did?" For great indeed was that prophet's glory, so that Peter also afterwards pleading with the Jews, spake on this wise, "Let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried." But wherefore doth He not call him by the name of his rank, either on this occasion or afterwards? Perhaps because He derived His race from him.

Now had they been a candid sort of persons, He would have turned His discourse to the disciples' suffering from hunger; but abominable as they were and inhuman, He rather rehearses unto them a history. But Mark saith, "In the days of Abiathar the High Priest:" not stating what was contrary to the history, but implying that he had two names; and adds that "he gave unto him," indicating that herein also David had much to say for himself, since even the very priest suffered him; and not only suffered, but even ministered unto him. For tell me not that David was a prophet, for not even so was it lawful, but the privilege was the priests': wherefore also He added, "but for the priests only." For though he were ten thousand times a prophet, yet was he not a priest; and though he were himself a prophet, yet not so they that were with him; since to them too we know that he gave.

"What then," it might be said, "were they all one with David?" Why talk to me of dignity, where there seems to be a transgression of the law, even though it be the constraint of nature? Yea, and in this way too He hath the more entirely acquitted them of the charges, in that he who is greater is found to have done the same. "And what is this to the question," one may say; "for it was not surely the Sabbath, that he transgressed?" Thou tellest me of that which is greater, and which especially shows the wisdom of Christ, that letting go the Sabbath, He brings another example greater than the Sabbath. For it is by no means the same, to break in upon a day, and to touch that holy table, which it was not lawful for any man to touch. Since the Sabbath indeed hath been violated, and that often; nay rather it is continually being violated, both by circumcision, and by many other works; and at Jericho too one may see the same to have happened; but this happened then only. So that He more than obtains the victory. How then did no man blame David, although there was yet another ground of charge heavier than this, that of the priests' murder, which had its origin from this? But He states it not, as applying himself to the present subject only.

2. Afterwards again He refutes it in another way also. For as at first He brought in David, by the dignity of the person quelling their pride; so when He had stopped their mouths, and had put down their boasting, then He adds also the more appropriate refutation. And of what sort is this? "Know ye not, that in the temple the priests profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?" For in that other instance indeed, saith He, the emergency made the relaxation, but here is the relaxation even without emergency. He did not however at once thus refute

them but first by way of permission, afterwards as insisting upon his argument. Because it was meet to draw the stronger inference last, although the former argument also had of course its proper weight. For tell me not, that it is not freeing one's self from blame, to bring forward another who is committing the same sin. For when the doer incurs no blame, the act on which he hath ventured becomes a rule for others to plead.

Nevertheless He was not satisfied with this, but subjoins also what is more decisive, saying that the deed is no sin at all; and this more than anything was the sign of a glorious victory, to point to the law repealing itself, and in two ways doing so, first by the place, then by the Sabbath; or rather even in three ways, in that both the work is twofold. that is done, and with it goes also another thing, its being done by the priests; and what is yet more, that it is not even brought as a charge. "For they," saith He, "are blameless." Seest thou how many points He hath stated? the place; for He saith, "In the temple;" the persons, for they are "the priests;" the time, for He saith, "the Sabbath;" the act itself, for "they profane;" (He not having said, "they break," but what is more grievous, "they profane;") that they not only escape punishment, but are even free from blame, "for they," saith He, "are blameless."

Do not ye therefore account this, He saith, like the former instance. For that indeed was done both but once, and not by a priest, and was of necessity; wherefore also they were deserving of excuse; but this last is both done every Sabbath, and by priests, and in the temple, and according to the law. And therefore again not by favor, but in a legal way, they are acquitted of the charges. For not at all as blaming them did I so speak, saith He, nor yet as freeing them from blame in the way of indulgence, but according to the principle of justice. And He seems indeed to be defending them, but it is His disciples whom He is clearing of the alleged faults. For when He saith, "those are blameless," He means, "much more are these." "But they are not priests." Nay, they are greater than priests. For the Lord of the temple Himself is here: the truth, not the type. Wherefore He said also,

"But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple." Nevertheless, great as the sayings were which they heard, they made no reply, for the salvation of men was not their object. Then, because to the hearers it would seem harsh, He quickly draws a veil over it, giving His discourse, as before, a lenient turn, yet even so expressing Himself with a rebuke. "But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have: mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless." Seest thou how again He inclines His speech to lenity, yet again shows them to be out of the reach of lenity? "For ye would not have condemned," saith He, "the guiltless." Before indeed He inferred the same from what is said of the priests, in the words, "they are guiltless;" but here He states it on His own authority; or rather, this too is out of the law, for He was quoting a prophetic saying.

3. After this He mentions another reason likewise; "For the Son of man," saith He, "is Lord of the Sabbath day;" speaking it of Himself. But Mark relates Him to have said this of our common nature also; for He said, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." Wherefore then was he punished that was gathering the sticks? Because if the laws were to be despised even at the beginning, of course they would scarcely be observed afterwards.

For indeed the Sabbath did at the first confer many and great benefits; for instance, it made them gentle towards those of their household, and humane; it taught them God's providence and the creation, as Ezekiel saith; it trained them by degrees to abstain from wickedness, and disposed them to regard the things of the Spirit. For because they could not have borne it, if when He was giving the law for the Sabbath, He had said, "Do your good works on the Sabbath, but do not the works which are evil," therefore He restrained them from all alike for, "Ye must do nothing at all," saith He: and not even so were they kept in order. But He Himself, in the very act of giving the law of the Sabbath, did even therein darkly signify that He will have them refrain from the evil works only, by the saying, "Ye must do no work, except what shall be done for your life." And in the temple too all went on, and with more diligence and double toil. Thus even by the very shadow He was secretly opening unto them the truth.

Did Christ then, it will be said, repeal a thing so highly profitable? Far from it; nay, He greatly enhanced it. For it was time for them to be trained in all things by the higher rules, and it was unnecessary that his hands should be bound, who was freed from wickedness, winged for all good works; or that men should hereby learn that God made all things; or that they should so be made gentle, who are called to imitate God's own love to mankind (for He saith, "Be ye merciful, as your Heavenly Father"); or that they should make one day a festival, who are commanded to keep a feast all their life long; ("For let us keep the feast," it is said, "not with old leaven, neither with leaven of malice and wickedness; but with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth"); as neither need they stand by an ark and a golden altar, who have the very Lord of all for their inmate, and in all things hold communion with Him; by prayer, and by oblation, and by scriptures, and by almsgiving, and by having Him within them. Lo now, wily is any Sabbath required, by him who is always keeping the feast, whose conversation is in Heaven?

4. Let us keep the feast then continually, and do no evil thing; for this is a feast: and let our spiritual things be made intense, while our earthly things give place: and let us rest a spiritual rest, refraining our hands from covetousness; withdrawing our body from our superfluous and unprofitable toils, from such as the people of the Hebrews did of old endure in Egypt. For there is no difference betwixt us who are gathering gold, and those that were bound in the mire, working at those bricks, and gathering stubble, and being beaten. Yea, for now too the devil bids us make bricks, as Pharaoh did then. For what else is gold, than mire? and what else is silver, than stubble? Like stubble, at least, it kindles the flame of desire; like mire, so doth gold defile him that possesses it. Wherefore He sent us, not Moses from the wilderness, but His Son from Heaven. If then, after He is come, thou abide in Egypt, thou wilt suffer with the Egyptians: but if leaving that land thou go up with the spiritual Israel, thou shalt see all the miracles.

Yet not even this suffices for salvation. For we must not only be delivered out of Egypt, but we must also enter into the promise. Since the Jews too, as Paul saith, both went through the Red Sea, and ate manna, and drank spiritual drink, but nevertheless they all perished. Lest

then the same befall us also, let us not be slow, neither draw back; but when thou hearest wicked spies even now bringing up an evil report against the strait and narrow way, and uttering the same kind of talk as those spies of old, let not the multitude, but Joshua, be our pattern, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh; and do not thou give up, until thou have attained the promise, and entered into the Heavens. Neither account the journey to be difficult. "For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved." "But this way," it will be said, "is strait and narrow." Well, but the former, through which thou hast come, is not strait and narrow only, but even impassable, and full of savage wild beasts. And as there was no passing through the Red Sea, unless that miracle had been wrought, so neither could we, abiding in our former life, have gone up into Heaven, but only by baptism intervening. Now if the impossible hath become possible, much more will the difficult be easy.

"But that," it will be said, "was of grace only." Why, for this reason especially thou hast just cause to take courage. For if, where it was grace alone, He wrought with you; will He not much more be your aid, where ye also show forth laborious works? If He saved thee, doing nothing, will He not much more help thee, working? Above indeed I was saying, that from the impossibilities thou oughtest to take courage about the difficulties also; but now I add this, that if we are vigilant, these will not be so much as difficult. For mark it: death is trodden under foot, the devil hath fallen, the law of sin is extinguished, the grace of the Spirit is given, life is contracted into a small space, the heavy burdens are abridged. And to convince thee hereof by the actual results, see how many have overshot the injunctions of Christ; and art thou afraid of that which is just their measure? What plea then wilt thou have, when others are leaping beyond the bounds, and thou thyself too slothful for what is enacted?

Thus, thee we admonish to give alms of such things as thou hast, but another hath even stripped himself of all his possessions: thee we require to live chastely with thy wife, but another hath not so much as entered into marriage: and thee we entreat not to be envious, but another we find giving up even his own life for charity: thee again we entreat to be lenient in judgments, and not severe to them that sin, but another, even when smitten, hath turned the other cheek also. What then shall we say, I pray thee? What excuse shall we make, not doing even these things, when others go so far beyond us? And they would not have gone beyond us, had not the thing been very easy. For which pines away, he who envies other men's blessings, or he who takes pleasure with them, and rejoices? Which eyes all things with suspicion and continual trembling, the chaste man, or the adulterer? Which is cheered by good hopes, he that spoils by violence, or he that shows mercy, and imparts of his own to the needy?

Let us then bear in mind these things, and not be torpid in our career for virtue's sake; but having stripped ourselves with all readiness for these glorious wrestlings, let us labor for a little while, that we may win the perpetual and imperishable crowns; unto which may we

all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 40

Matthew Chapter 12, Verse 9 And Matthew Chapter 12, Verse 10

"And when He was departed thence, He went into their synagogue: and, behold, a man which had his hand withered." Again He heals on a Sabbath day, vindicating what had been done by His disciples. And the other evangelists indeed say, that He "set" the man "in the midst," and asked them, "If it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath days." See the tender bowels of the Lord. "He set him in the midst," that by the sight He might subdue them; that overcome by the spectacle they might cast away their wickedness, and out of a kind of shame towards the man, cease from their savage ways. But they, ungentle and inhuman, choose rather to hurt the fame of Christ, than to see this person made whole: in both ways betraying their wickedness; by their warring against Christ, and by their doing so with such contentiousness, as even to treat with despite His mercies to other men.

And while the other evangelists say, He asked the question, this one saith, it was asked of Him. "And they asked Him," so it stands, "saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days? that they might accuse Him." And it is likely that both took place. For being unholy wretches, and well assured that He would doubtless proceed to the healing, they hastened to take Him beforehand with their question, thinking in this way to hinder Him. And this is why they asked, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days?" not for information, but that "they might accuse Him." Yet surely the work was enough, if it were really their wish to accuse Him; but they desired to find a handle in His words too, preparing for themselves beforehand an abundance of arguments. But He in His love towards man doth this also: He answers them, teaching His own meekness, and turning it all back upon them; and points out their inhumanity. And He "setteth" the man "in the midst;" not in fear of them, but endeavoring to profit them, and move them to pity.

But when not even so did He prevail with them, then was He grieved, it is said, and wroth with them for the hardness of their heart, and He saith, "What man is there among you that shall have one sheep, and if this fall into a pit on the Sabbath days, will he not lay hold of it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days." Thus, lest they have ground of obstinacy, and of accusing him again of transgression, He convicts them by this example. And do thou mark, I pray thee, how variously and suitably in each case, He introduces His pleas for the breaking of the

sabbath. Thus, first, in the case of the blind man, He cloth not so much as defend Himself to them, when He made the clay: and yet then also were they blaming Him; but the manner of the creation was enough to indicate the Lord and Owner of the law. Next, in the case of the paralytic, when he carried his bed, and they were finding fault, He defends Himself, now as God, and now as man; as man, when He saith, "If a man on the Sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law should not be broken;" (and He said not "that a man should be profiled"); "are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whir whole on the Sabbath day?" As God again, when He saith, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

But when blamed for His disciples, He said, "Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungered, himself and they that were with him, how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the show-bread? He brings forward the priests also. And here again; "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil? Which of you shall have one sheep?" For He knew their love of wealth, that they were all taken up with it, rather than with love of mankind. And indeed the other evangelist. saith, that He also looked about upon them when asking these questions, that by His very eye He might win them over; but not even so did they become better. And yet here He speaks only; whereas elsewhere in many cases He heals by laying on of hands also. But nevertheless none of these things made them meek; rather, while the man was healed, they by his health became worse.

For His desire indeed was to cure them before him, and He tried innumerable ways of healing, both by what He did in their presence, and by what He said: but since their malady after all was incurable, He proceeded to the work. "Then saith He to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth, and it was restored whole, like as the other." 2. What then did they? They go forth, it is said, and take counsel together to slay Him. For "the Pharisees," saith the Scripture, "went out and held a council against Him, how they might destroy Him." They had received no injury, yet they went about to slay Him. So great an evil is envy. For not against strangers only, but even against our own, is it ever warring. And Mark saith, they took this counsel with the Herodians. What then doth the gentle and meek One? He withdrew, on being aware of it. "But when Jesus knew their devices, He withdrew Himself," it is said, "from them" Where now are they who say, miracles ought to be done? Nay, by these things He signified, that the uncandid soul is not even thereby persuaded; and He made it plain that His disciples too were blamed by them without cause. This however we should observe, that they grow fierce especially at the benefits done to their neighbors; and when they see any one delivered either from disease or from wickedness, then is the time for them to find fault, and become wild beasts. Thus did they calumniate Him, both when He was about to save the harlot, and when He was eating with publicans, and now again, when they saw the hand restored.

But do thou observe, I pray thee, how He neither desists from His tender care over the infirm, and yet allays their envy. "And great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them all; and He charged them that were healed, that they should make Him known to no man." Because, while the multitudes everywhere both admire and follow Him, they desist not

from their wickedness. Then, lest thou shouldest be confounded at what is going on, and at their strange frenzy, He introduces the prophet also, foretelling all this. For so great was the accuracy of the prophets, that they omit not even these things, but foretell His very journeyings, and changes of place, and the intent with which He acted therein; that thou mightest learn, how they spake all by the Spirit. For if the secrets of men cannot by any art be known, much more were it impossible to learn Christ's purpose, except the Spirit revealed it.

What then saith the prophet? Nay, it is subjoined: "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the Prophet, saying, Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon Him, and He shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench, till He send forth judgment unto victory. And in His name shall the Gentiles trust." The prophet celebrates His meekness, and His unspeakable power, and opens to the Gentiles "a great door and effectual;" he foretells also the ills that are to overtake the Jews, and signifies His unanimity with the Father. For "behold," saith He, "my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased." Now if He chose Him, not as an adversary doth Christ set aside the law, nor as being an enemy of the lawgiver, but as having the same mind with Him, and the same objects.

Then proclaiming His meekness, he saith, "He shall not strive nor cry." For His desire indeed was to heal in their presence; but since they thrust Him away, not even against this did He contend. And intimating both His might, and their weakness, he saith, "A bruised reed shall He not break." For indeed it was easy to break them all to pieces like a reed, and not a reed merely, but one already bruised. "And smoking flax shall He not quench." Here he sets forth both their anger that is kindled, and His might that is able to put down their anger, and to quench it with all ease; whereby His great mildness is signified. What then? Shall these things always be? And will He endure them perpetually, forming such frantic plots against Him? Far from it; but when He hath performed His part, then shall He execute the other purposes also. For this He declared by saying "Till He send forth judgment unto victory: and in His name shall the Gentiles trust." As Paul likewise saith, "Having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled."

But what is, "when He sends forth judgment unto victory?" When He hath fulfilled all His own part, then, we are told, He will bring down upon them His vengeance also, and that a perfect vengeance. Then shall they suffer His terrors, when His trophy is gloriously set up, and the ordinances that proceed from Him have prevailed, and He hath left them no plea of contradiction, however shameless. For He is wont to call righteousness, "judgment." But not to this will His dispensation be confined, to the punishment of unbelievers only, but He will also win to Himself the whole world. Wherefore He added, "And in His name shall the Gentiles trust." Then, to inform thee that this too is according to the purpose of the Father, in the beginning the prophet had assured us of this likewise, together with what had gone

before; saying, "My well-beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased." For of the well-beloved it is quite evident that He did these things also according to the mind of the beloved.

3. "Then they brought unto Him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb, and He healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw." O wickedness of the evil spirit! he had barred up both entrances, whereby that person should have believed, as well sight as hearing; nevertheless, both did Christ open. "And all the people were amazed, saying, Is not this the Son of David? But the Pharisees said, This fellow doths not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils." And yet what great thing had been said? Nevertheless, not even this did they endure: to such a degree, as I have already remarked, are they ever stung by the good works done to their neighbors, and nothing grieves them so much as the salvation of men. And yet He had actually retired, and had given room for their passion to subside; but the evil was again rekindled, because a benefit was again conferred; and the evil spirit was not so indignant as they. For he indeed departed from the body, and gave place and fled away, uttering no sound; but these were endeavoring now to slay, now to defame Him. That is, their first aim not succeeding, they would fain hurt His good name.

Such a thing is envy, than which no worse evil can exist. For the adulterer indeed enjoys some pleasure, such as it is, and in a short time accomplishes his proper sin; but the envious man punishes himself, and takes vengeance upon himself more than on the person whom he envies, and never ceases from his sin, but is continually engaged in the commission thereof. For as a sow in mire, and evil spirits in our hurt, so also doth he delight in his neighbor's ills; and if anything painful take place, then is he refreshed, and takes breath; accounting the calamities of others his own joys, and the blessings of others his own ills; and he considers not what pleasure may accrue to himself, but what pain to his neighbor. These men therefore were it not meet to stone and beat to death, like mad dogs, like destroying demons, like the very furies?

For as beetles feed on dung, so do these men on the calamities of others, being a sort of common foes and enemies of our nature. And whereas the rest of mankind pity even a brute when it is killed, dost thou, on seeing a man receive benefits, become like a wild beast, tremble, and turn pale? Why, what can be worse than this madness? Therefore, you see, whoremongers and publicans were able to enter into the kingdom, but the envious, being within it, went out: For "the children of the kingdom," it is said, "shall be cast out." And the former, once freed from their present wickedness, attained to things which they never looked for, while these latter lost even the good things which they had; and very reasonably. For this turns a man into a devil, this renders one a savage demon. Thus did the first murder arise; thus was nature forgotten; thus the earth defiled; thus afterwards did it open its mouth, to receive yet living, and utterly destroy, Dathan, and Korah, and Abiram, and all that multitude.

4. But to declaim against envy, one may say, is easy; but we ought to consider also how men are to be freed from the disease. How then are we to be rid of this wickedness? If we bear in mind, that as he who hath committed fornication cannot lawfully enter the church,

so neither he that envies; nay, and much less the latter than the former. For as things are, it is accounted even an indifferent thing; wherefore also it is little thought of; but if its real badness be made evident, we should easily refrain from it. Weep then, and groan; lament, and entreat God. Learn to feel and to repent for it, as for a grievous sin. And if thou be of this mind, thou wilt quickly be rid of the disease. And who knows not, one may say, that envy is an evil thing? No one indeed is ignorant of it: yet they have not the same estimation of this passion as of adultery and fornication. When, at least, did any one condemn himself bitterly for having envied? when did he entreat God concerning this pest, that He would be merciful to him? No man at any time: but if he shall fast and give a little money to a poor man, though he be envious to the thousandth degree, he counts himself to have done nothing horrid, held as he is in subjection by the most accursed passion of all. Whence, for example, did Cain become such as he was? Whence Esau? Whence the children of Laban? Whence the sons of Jacob? Whence Korah Dathan, and Abiram, with their company? Whence Miriam? Whence Aaron? Whence the devil himself?

Herewith consider this also; that thou injurest not him whom thou enviest, but into thyself thou art thrusting the sword. For wherein did Cain injure Abel? Did he not even against his own will send him the more quickly into the kingdom? but himself he pierced through with innumerable evils. Wherein did Esau harm Jacob? Did not Jacob grow wealthy, and enjoy unnumbered blessings; while he himself both became an outcast from his father's house, and wandered in a strange land, after that plot of his? And wherein did Jacob's sons again make Joseph the worse, and this, though they proceeded even unto blood? had not they to endure famine, and encounter peril to the utmost, whereas he became king of all Egypt? For the more thou enviest, the more dost thou become a procurer of greater blessing to the object of thine envy. For there is a God who beholds these things; and when He sees him injured, that doeth no injury, him He exalts the more, and so makes him glorious, but thee He punishes.

For if them that exult over their enemies, He suffer not to go unpunished ("For rejoice not," it is said, "when thine enemies fall, lest at any time the Lord see it, and it displease Him"); much more such as envy those who have done no wrong. Let us then extirpate the many-headed wild beast. For in truth many are the kinds of envy. Thus, if he that loves one that is a friend to him hath no more than the publican, where shall he stand who hates him that doeth him no wrong? and how shall he escape hell, becoming worse than the heathens? Wherefore also I do exceedingly grieve, that we who are commanded to copy the angels, or rather the Lord of the angels, emulate the devil. For indeed there is much envy, even in the church; and more among us, than among those under authority. Wherefore we must even discourse unto ourselves.

5. Tell me then, why dost thou envy thy neighbor? Because thou seest him reaping honor, and words of good report? Then dost thou not bear in mind how much evil honors bring on the unguarded? lifting them up to pride, to vainglory, to arrogance, to contemptuousness; making them more careless? and besides these evils, they wither also lightly away. For

the most grievous thing is this, that the evils arising therefrom abide immortal, but the pleasure at the moment of its appearing, is flown away. For these things then dost thou envy? tell me. "But he hath great influence with the Ruler, and leads and drives all things which way he will, and inflicts pain on them that offend him, and benefits his flatterers, and hath much power." These are the sayings of secular persons, and of men that are riveted to the earth. For the spiritual man nothing shall be able to hurt.

For what serious harm shall he do to him? vote him out of his office? And what of that? For if it be justly done, he is even profited; for nothing so provokes God, as for one to hold the priest's office unworthily. But if unjustly, the blame again falls on the other, not on him; for he who hath suffered anything unjustly, and borne it nobly, obtains in this way the greater confidence towards God. Let us not then aim at this, how we may be in places of power, and honor, and authority, but that we may live in virtue and self denial. For indeed places of authority persuade men to do many things which are not approved of God; and great vigor of soul is needed, in order to use authority aright. For as he that is deprived thereof, practises self restraint, whether with or against his will, so he that enjoys it is in some such condition, as if any one living with a graceful and beautiful damsel were to receive rules never to look upon her unchastely. For authority is that kind of thing. Wherefore many, even against their will, hath it induced to show insolence; it awakens wrath, and removes the bridle from the tongue, and tears off the door of the lips; fanning the soul as with a wind, and sinking the bark in the lowest depth of evils. Him then who is in so great danger dost thou admire, and sayest thou he is to be envied? Nay, how great madness is here! Consider, at any rate (besides what we have mentioned), how many enemies and accusers, and how many flatterers this person hath besieging him. Are these then, I pray thee, reasons for calling a man happy? Nay, who can say so?

"But the people," you say, "hold high account of him." And what is this? For the people surely is not God, to whom he is to render account: so that in naming the people, thou art speaking of nothing else than of other breakers, and rocks, and shoals, and sunken ridges. For to be in favor with the people, the more it makes a man illustrious, the greater the dangers, the cares, the despondencies it brings with it. For such an one has no power at all to take breath or stand still, having so severe a master. And why say I, "stand still and take breath"? Though such an one have never so many good works, hardly doth he enter into the kingdom. For nothing is so wont to overthrow men, as the honor which comes of the multitude, making them cowardly, ignoble, flatterers, hypocrites. Why, for instance, did the Pharisees say that Christ was possessed? Was it not because they were greedy of the honor of the multitude?

And whence did the multitude pass the right judgment on Him? Was it not because this disease had no hold on them? For nothing, nothing so much tends to make men lawless and foolish, as gaping after the honor of the multitude. Nothing makes them glorious and immoveable, like despising the same. Wherefore also great vigor of soul is needed for him who is to hold out against such an impulse, and so violent a blast. For as when things

are prosperous, he prefers himself to all, so when he undergoes the contrary, he would fain bury himself alive: and this is to him both hell, and the kingdom, when he hath come to be overwhelmed by this passion. Is all this then, I pray thee, matter of envyings, and not rather of lamentations and tears? Every one surely can see. But thou doest the same, in envying one in that kind of credit, as if a person, seeing another bound and scourged and torn by innumerable wild beasts, were to envy him his wounds and stripes. For in fact, as many men as the multitude comprises, so many bonds also, so many tyrants hath he: and, what is yet more grievous, each of these hath a different mind: and they all judge whatever comes into their heads concerning him that is a slave to them, without examining into anything; but whatever is the decision of this or that person, this they also confirm.

What manner of waves then, what tempest so grievous as this? Yea, such a one is both puffed up in a moment by the pleasure, and is under water again easily, being ever in fluctuation, in tranquillity never. Thus, before the time of the assembly, and of the contests in speaking, he is possessed with anxiety and fear; but after the assembly he is either dead with despondency, or rejoices on the contrary without measure; a worse thing than sorrow. For that pleasure is not a less evil than sorrow is plain from the effect it has on the soul; how light it makes it, and unsteady, and fluttering. And this one may see even from those of former times. When, for instance, was David to be admired; when he rejoiced, or when he was in anguish? When, the people of the Jews? groaning and calling upon God, or exulting in the wilderness, and worshipping the calf? Wherefore Solomon too, who best of all men knew what pleasure is, saith, "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of laughter." Wherefore Christ also blesses the one, saying, "Blessed are they that mourn," but the other sort He bewails, saying, "Woe unto you that laugh, for ye shall weep." And very fitly. For in delight the soul is more relaxed and effeminate, but in mourning it is braced up, and grows sober, and is delivered from the whole swarm of passions, and becomes higher and stronger.

Knowing then all these things, let us shun the glory that comes from the multitude, and the pleasure that springs therefrom, that we may win the real and everlasting glory; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 41

Matthew Chapter 12, Verse 25 And Matthew Chapter 12, Verse 26

"And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself, shall not stand: and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?" Even before now they had accused Him of this, that "by Beelzebub He casteth out the devils." But whereas then He did not rebuke them, allowing them both to know His power by His more numerous miracles, and by His teaching to learn His majesty: now, since they continued saying the same, He proceeds also to rebuke them, showing His Godhead by this first, that He made their secrets public; and secondly, by the very act of casting out the devils with ease. And indeed the accusation too was very shameless. Because, as I have said, envy seeks not what to say, but only that it may say somewhat. Yet for all that, not even so did Christ despise them, but defends Himself with the forbearance proper to Him, teaching us to be meek to our enemies; and though they say such things, as we are neither conscious of, nor have they any the least probability, not to be disturbed, nor troubled, but with all long suffering to render them an account. This then He did most especially on that very occasion, affording the strongest proof, that the things were false that were said by them. For neither was it a demoniac's part to exhibit so much meekness; it was not a demoniac's part to know men's secrets.

For, in truth, both because of the exceeding impudence of such a suspicion, and because of the fear of the multitude, they durst not publicly make these charges, but were turning them in their mind. But He, to show them that He knew all that likewise, doth not set down the accusation, nor doth He expose their wickedness; but the refutation He adds, leaving it to the conscience of them that bad said it to convict them. For on one thing only was He bent, to do good to them that were sinning, not to expose them. Yet surely, if He had been minded to extend his speech in length, and to make them ridiculous, and withal to have exacted of them also the most extreme penalty, there was nothing to hinder Him. Nevertheless He put aside all these things, and looked to one object only, not to render them more contentious, but more candid, and so to dispose them better toward amendment.

How then doth He plead with them? Not by allegation out of the Scriptures (for they would not so much as attend, but were sure rather to distort their meaning), but by the events of

ordinary life. For "every kingdom," saith He, "divided against itself shall not stand; and a city and a house, if it be divided, is soon dissolved." For the wars from without are not so ruinous as the civil ones. Yea, and this is the case in bodies too; it is the case even in all things; but for this time He takes His illustration from those that are more publicly known. And yet, what is there more powerful on earth than a kingdom? Nothing, but nevertheless it perishes if in dissension. And if in that case one throw the blame on the great burden of the affairs thereof, as breaking down by its own weight; what wouldest thou say of a city? and what of a house? Thus, Whether it be a small thing, or a great, if at dissension with itself, it perishes. If then I, having a devil, do by him cast out the devils, there is dissension and fighting among devils, and they take their stand one against another. But if they stand one against another, their strength is wasted and destroyed. "For if Satan cast out Satan" (and He said not "the devils," implying their great unanimity one with another), "he is then divided against himself;" so He speaks. But if he be divided, he is become weaker, and is ruined; and if he be ruined, how can he cast out another?

Seest thou how great the absurdity of the accusation, how great the folly, the inconsistency? Since it is not for the same persons to say first, that He stands, and casts out devils, and then to say, that He stands by that, which it was likely would be the cause of His undoing. 2. This then being the first refutation, the next after it is that which relates to the disciples. For not always in one way only, but also in a second and third, He solves their objections, being minded most abundantly to silence their shamelessness. Which sort of thing He did also with respect to the Sabbath, bringing forward David, the priests, the testimony that saith, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice," the cause of the Sabbath, for which it was ordained; "for the Sabbath," saith He," was for man." This then He doth in the present case also: where after the first He proceeds to a second refutation, plainer than the former.

"For if I," saith He, "by Belezebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out?" See here too His gentleness. For He said not, "my disciples," nor, "the apostles," but "your sons;" to the end that if indeed they were minded to return to the same nobleness with them, they might derive hence a powerful spring that way; but if they were uncandid, and continued in the same course, they might not thenceforth be able to allege any plea, though ever so shameless. But what He saith is like this, "By whom do the apostles cast them out?" For in fact they were doing so already, because they had received authority from Him, and these men brought no charge against them; their quarrel not being with the acts, but with the person only. As then it was His will to show that their. sayings arose only from their envy against Him, He brings forward the apostles; thus: If I so cast them out, much more those, who have received their authority from me. Nevertheless, no such thing have ye said to them. How then bring ye these charges against me, the author of their doings, while acquitting them of the accusations? This, however, will not free you from your punishment, rather it will condemn you the more. Therefore also He added, "They shall be your judges." For when persons from among you, and having been practised in these things, both believe me and obey, it is most clear that they will also condemn those who are against me both in deed and word.

"But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is come unto you." What means "the Kingdom"? "My coming." See how again He conciliates and soothes them, and draws them to the knowledge of Himself, and signifies that they are warring with their own good, and contentious against their own salvation. "For whereas ye ought to rejoice," saith He, "and leap for joy, that One is come bestowing those great and unutterable blessings, hymned of old by the prophets, and that the time of your prosperity is at hand; ye do the contrary; so far from receiving the blessings, you do even speak ill of them, and frame accusations that have no real being." Now Matthew indeed saith, "If I by the Spirit of God cast out"; but Luke, "If I by the finger of God cast out the devils:" implying that to cast out devils is a work of the greatest power, and not of any ordinary grace. And He means indeed that from these things they should infer and say, If this be so, then the Son of God is come. This, however, He saith not, but in a reserved way, and so as not to be galling to them, He darkly intimates it by saying, "Then the kingdom of God is Come unto you."

Seest thou exceeding wisdom? By the very things which they were blaming, He showed His presence shining forth. Then, to conciliate them, He said not simply, "The Kingdom is come," but, "unto you," as though He had said, To you the good things are come; wherefore then feel displeased at your proper blessings? why war against your own salvation? This is that time, which the prophets long ago foretold: this, the sign of that advent which was celebrated by them, even these things being wrought by divine power. For the fact indeed, that they are wrought, yourselves know; but that they are wrought by divine power, the deeds themselves cry out. Yea, and it is impossible that Satan should be stronger now; rather he must of absolute necessity be weak. But it cannot be, that he who is weak should, as though he were strong, cast out the strong devil.

Now thus speaking He signified the power of charity, and the weakness of separation and contentiousness. Wherefore He was Himself also continually charging His disciples, on every occasion, concerning charity, and teaching them that the devil, to subvert it, leaves nothing undone. 3. Having then uttered His second refutation, He adds also a third, thus saying: "How can one enter into the strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man, and then spoil his goods?" For that Satan cannot possibly cast out Satan is evident from what hath been said; but that neither in any other way is it possible to cast him out, except one first get the better of him, this too is acknowledged by all. What then is established hereby? The former statement, with more abundant evidence. "Why, I am so far," saith He, "from using the devil as an ally, that I make war upon him, and bind him; and an infallible proof thereof is the plundering of his goods." See how the contrary is proved, of what they were attempting to establish. For whereas they wished to show, that not by His own power doth He cast out devils, He shows that not only the devils, but even their very chief leader is held by Him bound with all authority; and that over him, before them, did He prevail by His own power. And this is evident from the things that are done. For if he be the prince, and they subjects, how, except he were worsted, and made to bow down, could they have been spoiled?

And here His saying seems to me to be a prophecy likewise. For not only, I suppose, are the evil spirits the goods of the devil, but also the men that are doing his works. Therefore to declare that He doth not only cast out devils, but also will drive away all error from the world, and will put down his sorceries, and make all his arts useless, He said these things. And He said not, He will take away, but "He will spoil," to express what is done with authority. But He calls him "strong," not because he is so by nature, God forbid, but declaring his former tyranny, which arose from our remissness. 4. "He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Behold also a fourth refutation. For what is my desire? saith He. To bring men to God, to teach virtue, to proclaim the kingdom. What, that of the devil, and the evil spirits? The contrary to these. How then should he that gathers not with me, nor is at all with me, be likely to co-operate with me? And why do I say co-operate? Nay, on the contrary, his desire is rather to scatter abroad my goods. He then who is so far from cooperating that he even scatters abroad, how should he have exhited such unanimity with me, as with me to cast out the devils?

Now it is a natural surmise that He said this not of the devil only, but Himself also of Himself, as being for His part against the devil, and scattering abroad his goods. And how, one may say, is he that is not with me against me? By this very fact, of his not gathering. But if this be true, much more he that is against him. For if he that doth not co-operate is an enemy, much more he that wages war. But all these things He saith, to indicate His enmity against the devil, how great and unspeakable it is. For tell me, if thou must go to war with any one, he that is not willing to fight on thy side, by this very fact is he not against thee? And if elsewhere He saith, "He that is not against you is for you," it is not contrary to this. For here He signified one actually against them, but there He points to one who in part is on their side: "For they cast out devils," it is said "in Thy name."

But to me He seems here to be hinting also at the Jews, setting them on the devil's side. For they too were against Him, and were scattering what He gathered. As to the fact that He was hinting at them also, He declared it by speaking thus, "Therefore I say unto you, that all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men." 5. Thus having defended Himself, and refuted their objection, and proved the vanity of their shameless dealings, He proceeds to alarm them. For this too is no small part of advice and correction, not only to plead and persuade, but to threaten also; which He doth in many passages, when making laws and giving counsel. And though the saying seem to have much obscurity, yet if we attend, its solution will prove easy. First then it were well to listen to the very words: "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto them. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world toCome. "

What now is it that He affirms? Many things have ye spoken against me; that I am a deceiver, an adversary of God. These things I forgive you on your repentance, and exact no peualty of you; but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven, no, not to those who repent. And

how can this be right? For even this was forgiven upon repentance. Many at least of those who said these words believed afterward, and all was forgiven them. What is it then that He saith? That this sin is above all things unpardonable. Why so? Because Himself indeed they knew not, who He might be, but of the Spirit they received ample experience. For the prophets also by the Spirit said whatever they said; and indeed all in the Old Testament had a very high notion of Him. What He saith, then, is this: Be it so: ye are offended at me, because of the flesh with which I am encompassed: can ye say of the Spirit also, We know it not? And therefore is your blasphemy unpardonable, and both here and hereafter shall ye suffer punishment. For many indeed have been punished here only (as he who had committed fornication, as they who partook unworthily of the mysteries, amongst the Corinthians); but ye, both here and hereafter.

Now as to your blasphemies against me, before the cross, I forgive them: and the daring crime too of the cross itself; neither shall ye be condemned for your unbelief alone. (For neither had they, that believed before the cross, perfect faith. And on many occasions He even charges them to make Him known to no man before the Passion; and on the cross He said that this sin was forgiven them.) But as to your words touching the Spirit, they wilt have no excuse. For in proof that He is speaking of what was said of Him before the crucifixion, He added, "Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Ghost," there is no more forgiveness. Wherefore? Because this is known to you; and the truths are notorious which you harden yourselves against. For though ye say that ye know not me; yet of this surely ye are not ignorant, that to cast out devils, and to do cures, is a work of the Holy Ghost. It is not then I only whom ye are insulting, but the Holy Ghost also. Wherefore your punishment can be averted by no prayers, neither here nor there.

For so of men, some are punished both here, and there, some here only, some there only, others neither here nor there. Here and there, as these very men (for both here did they pay a penalty, when they suffered those incurable ills at the taking of their city, and there shall they undergo a very grievous one), as the inhabitants of Sodom; as many others. There only, as the rich man who endured the flames, and had not at his command so much as a drop of water. Here, as he that had committed fornication amongst the Corinthians. Neither here nor there, as the apostles, as the prophets, as the blessed Job; for their sufferings were not surely in the way of punishment, but as contests and wrestlings. Let us labor, therefore, to be of the same part with these: or if not with these, at least with them that wash away their sins here. For fearful indeed is that other judgment, and inexorable the vengeance, and incurable the punishment.

6. But if thou desire not to be punished even here, pass judgment on thyself, exact thine own penalty. Listen to Paul, when he saith, "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." If thou do this, proceeding in order thou shall even arrive at a crown. But how are we to exact our own penalty? one may ask.

Lament, groan bitterly, humble, afflict thyself, call to remembrance thy sins in their particulars. This thing is no small torture to a man's soul. If any man hath been in a state of contrition, he knows that the soul is punished by this more than anything. If any hath been living in remembrance of sins, he knows the anguish thence arising. Therefore doth God appoint righteousness as a reward for such repentance, saying, "Be thou first to tell thy sins, that thou mayest be justified." For it is not, it is not indeed, a small step towards amendment, to lay together all our sins, and to be continually revolving and reckoning them up with their particulars. For he that is doing this will be so heart-broken, as not to think himself worthy so much as to live; and he that thinks thus, will be tenderer than any wax. For tell me not of acts of fornication only, nor of adulteries, nor of these things that are manifest, and acknowledged amongst all men: but lay together also thy secret crafts, and thy false accusations, and thine evil speakings, and thy vain gloryings, and thine envy, and all such things. For neither will these bring a trifling punishment. For the reviler too shall fall into hell; and the drunkard hath no part in the kingdom; and he that lovest not his neighbor so offends God, as to find no help even in his own martyrdom; and he that neglects his own hath denied the faith, and he who overlooks the poor is sent into the fire.

Account not then these things to be little, but put all together, and write them as in a book. For if thou write them down, God blots them out; even as on the other hand, if thou omit writing them, God both inscribes them, and exacts their penalty. It were then far better for them to be written by us, and blotted out above, than on the contrary, when we have forgotten them, for God to bring them before our eyes in that day. Therefore that this may not be so, let us reckon up all with strictness, and we shall find ourselves answerable for much. For who is clear from covetousness? Nay, tell me not of the quantity, but since even in a small amount we shall pay the same penalty, consider this and repent. Who is rid of all insolence? Yet this casts into hell. Who hath not secretly spoken evil of his neighbor? Yet this deprives one of the Kingdom. Who hath not been self-willed? Yet this man is more unclean than all. Who hath not looked with unchaste eyes? Yet this is a complete adulterer. Who hath not been "angry with his brother without a cause"? Yet such an one is "in danger of the council." Who hath not sworn? Yet this thing is of the evil one. Who hath not forsworn himself? but this man is something more than of the evil one. Who hath not served mammon? but this man is fallen away from the genuine service of Christ.

I have also other things greater than these to mention: but even these are enough, and able, if a man be not made of stone, nor utterly past feeling, to bring him to compunction. For if each one of them casts into hell, what will they not bring to pass when all are met together? How then can one be saved? it may be asked. By application of the countervailing remedies: alms, prayers, compunction, repentance, humility, a contrite heart, contempt of possessions. For God hath marked out for us innumerable ways of salvation, if we be willing to attend. Let us then attend, and let us every way cleanse out our wounds, showing mercy, remitting our anger against them that have displeased us, giving thanks for all things to God, fasting according to our power, praying sincerely, "making unto ourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness." For so shall we be able to obtain pardon for our offenses, and to win the

promised good things; whereof may we all be counted worthy, by the grace and love toward man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 42

Matthew, Chapter 12, Verse 33

"Either make the tree good, and his fruit good, or else make the tree corrupt, and hisfruit corrupt; for the tree is known by his fruit." Again in another way He shames them, and is not content with His former refutations. But this He doth, not freeing Himself from accusations, (for what went before was quite enough), but as wishing to amend them. Now His meaning is like this: none of you hath either found fault about the persons healed, as not being healed; nor hath said, that it is an evil thing to deliver one from a devil. For though they had been ever so shameless, they could not have said this. Since therefore they brought no charge against the works, but were defaming the Doer of them, He signifies that this accusation is against both the common modes of reasoning, and the congruity of the circumstances. A thing of aggravated shamelessness, not only to interpret maliciously, but also to make up such charges as are contrary to men's common notions.

And see how free He is from contentiousness. For He said not, "Make the tree good, forasmuch as the fruit also is good;" but, most entirely stopping their mouths, and exhibiting His own considerateness, and their insolence, He saith, Even if ye are minded to find fault with my works, I forbid it not at all, only bring not inconsistent and contradictory charges. For thus were they sure to be most clearly detected, persisting against what was too palpable. Wherefore to no purpose is your maliciousness, saith He, and your self-contradictory statements. Because in truth the distinction of the tree is shown by the fruit, not the fruit by the tree; but ye do the contrary. For what if the tree be the origin of the fruit; yet it is the fruit that makes the tree to be known. And it were consistent, either in blaming us to find fault with our works too, or praising these, to set us who do them free from these charges. But now ye do the contrary; for having no fault to find with the works, which is the fruit, ye pass the opposite judgment upon the tree, calling me a demoniac; which is utter insanity.

Yea, and what He had said before, this He establishes now also; that a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, nor again can the converse be. So that their charges were against all consistency and nature. Then since He is arguing not for Himself, but for the Spirit, He hath dealt out His reproof even as a torrent, saying, "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things?" Now this is at once to accuse, and to give demonstration of His own sayings from their case. For behold, saith He, ye being evil trees, cannot bring forth

good fruit. I do not then marvel at your talking thus: for ye were both ill nurtured, being of wicked ancestors, and ye have acquired a bad mind. And see how carefully, and without any hold for exception, He hath expressed His accusations: in that He said not, "How can ye speak good things, being a generation of vipers? (for this latter is nothing to the former): but, "How can ye, being evil, speak good things?"

But He called them "broods of vipers," because they prided themselves on their forefathers. To signify therefore that they had no advantage thereby, He both casts them out from their relationship to Abraham, and assigns them forefathers of kindred disposition, having stripped them of that ground of illustriousness. "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Here again He indicates His Godhead, which knew their secrets: and that not for words only, but also for wicked thoughts, they shall suffer punishment; and that He knows it all, as God. And He saith, that it is possible even for men to know these things; for this is a natural consequence, that when wickedness is overflowing within, its words should be poured forth through the lips. So that when thou hearest a man speak wicked words, do not suppose only so much wickedness to be in him as the words display, but conjecture the fountain to be much more abundant; for that which is spoken outwardly, is the superabundance of that which is within.

See how vehemently He reprehends them. For if what they had said is so evil, and is of the very mind of the devil, consider the root and well-spring of their words, how far that must reach. And this is naturally the case; for while the tongue through shame often pours not forth all its wickedness at once, the heart having no human witness, fearlessly gives birth to whatever evils it will; for of God it hath not much regard. Since then men's sayings come to examination: and are set before all, but the heart is concealed; therefore the evils of the former grow less, while those of the latter increase. But when that within is multiplied, all that hath been awhile hidden comes forth with a violent gushing. And as persons vomiting strive at first to keep down the humors that force their way out, but, when they are overcome, cast forth much abomination; so do they that devise evil things, and speak ill of their neighbors.

"A good man out of his good treasure," saith He, "bringeth forth good things, and an evil man out of his evil treasure bringeth forth evil things." For think not by any means, saith He, that it is so in respect of wickedness only, for in goodness also the same occurs: for there too the virtue within is more than the words without. By which He signified, that both they were to be accounted more wicked than their words indicated, and Himself more perfectly good than His sayings declared. And He calls it "a treasure," indicating its abundance. Then again He fences them in with great terror. For think not at all, saith He, that the thing stops at this, that is, at the condemnation of the multitude; nay, for all that do wickedly in such things shall suffer the utmost punishment. And He said not, "ye," partly in order to instruct our whole race, partly to make His saying the less burdensome."But I say unto you," this is His word, "that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."

And that is idle, which is not according to the fact, which is false, which hath in it unjust accusation; and some say, that which is vain also, for instance, provoking inordinate laughter, or what is filthy, and immodest, and coarse. "For by thy words thou shall be justified, and by thy words thou shall be condemned." Seest thou how far the tribunal is from invidiousness? how favorable the account required? For not upon what another hath said of thee, but from what thou hast thyself spoken, will the Judge give His sentence; which is of all things the very fairest: since surely with thee it rests, either to speak, or not to speak. 2. Wherefore not those that are slandered, but the slanderers, have need to be anxious and to tremble. For the former are not constrained to answer for themselves touching the evil things which are said of them, but the latter will, for the evil they have spoken; and over these impends the whole danger. So that the persons censured should be without anxiety, not being to give account of the evil that others have said; but the censurers have cause to be in anxiety, and to tremble, as being themselves to be dragged before the judgment-seat in that behalf. For this is indeed a diabolical snare, and a sin having in it no pleasure, but harm only. Yea, and such an one is laying up an evil treasure in his soul. And if he that hath an evil humor in him doth himself first reap the fruits of the malady, much more he that is treasuring up in himself what is more bitter than any bile, I mean, wickedness, will suffer the utmost evils, gathering unto himself a grievous disease. And it is evident from the things that He vomits out. For if they pain others so much, far more the soul that gives them birth.

Thus the plotter destroys himself first; just as he that treads on fire burns up himself, and he that smites adamant spites himself, and he that kicks against the pricks draws blood from himself. For somewhat of this kind is he that knows how to suffer wrong, and to bear it manfully; he is adamant, and the pricks, and fire; but he that hath used himself to do wrong is feebler than any clay.

Not therefore to suffer wrong is evil, but to do it, and not to know how to bear being wronged. For instance, how great wrongs did David endure! How great wrongs did Saul commit! Which then was the stronger and happier? which the more wretched and miserable? was it not he that did wrong? And mark it. Saul had promised, if David should slay the Philistine, to take him for his son-in law, and to give him his daughter with great favor. He slew the Philistine; the other broke his engagements, and so far from bestowing her, did even go about to slay him. Which then became the more glorious? Was not the one choking with despair and the evil demon, while the other shone brighter than the sun with his trophies, and his loyalty to God? Again, before the choir of the women, was not me one suffocated with envy, while the other enduring all in silence, won all men, and bound them unto himself? And when he had even gotten him into his hands, and spared him, which again was happy? and which wretched? which was the weaker? which the more powerful? Was it not this man, who did not avenge himself even justly? And very naturally. For the one had armed soldiers, but the other, righteousness, that is more mighty than ten thousand armies, for his ally and helper. And for this reason, though unjustly conspired against, he endured not to slay him even justly. For he knew by what had taken place before, that not to do evil, but

to suffer evil, this is what makes men more powerful. So it is with bodies also, so also with trees.

And what did Jacob? Was he not injured by Laban, and suffered evil? Which then was the stronger? he that had gotten the other into his hands, and durst not touch him, but was afraid and trembling; or he whom we see without arms and soldiers proving more terrible to him than innumerable kings? But that I may give you another demonstration of what I have said, greater than this, let us again in the instance of David himself try the reasoning on the opposite side. For this man who being injured was so strong, afterwards upon committing an injury became on the contrary the weaker party. At least, when he had wronged Uriah, his position was changed again, and the weakness passed to the wrong doer, and the might to the injured; for he being dead laid waste the other's house. And the one being a king, and alive, could do nothing, but the other, being but a soldier, and slain, turned upside down all that pertained to his adversary.

Would ye that in another way also I should make what I say plainer? Let us look into their case, who avenge themselves even justly. For as to the wrong doers, that they are the most worthless of all men, warring against their own soul; this is surely plain to every one. But who avenged himself justly, yet kindled innumerable ills, and pierced himself through with many calamities and sorrows? The captain of David's host. For he both stirred up a grievous war, and suffered unnumbered evils; not one whereof would have happened, had he but known how to command himself. Let us flee therefore from this sin, and neither in words nor deeds do our neighbors wrong. For He said not, If thou slander, and summon a court of justice, but simply, If thou speak evil, though within thyself, even so shall thou suffer the utmost punishment. Though it be true which thou hast said, though thou have spoken upon conviction, even so shall vengeance come upon thee. For not according to what the other hath done, but according to what thou hast spoken, will God pass sentence; "for by thy words thou shall be condemned," saith He. Art thou not told that the Pharisee also spake the truth, and affirmed what was manifest to all men, without discovering what was hidden? Nevertheless, he paid the utmost penalty.

But if we ought not to accuse men of things which are acknowledged, much less of those which are disputed; nay, for the offender hath a judge. Do not now, I warn thee, seize upon the privilege of the Only Begotten. For Him is the throne of judgment reserved. 3. Wouldest thou however be a judge? Thou hast a court of judgment which hath great profit, and bears no blame. Make consideration, as judge, to sit down upon thy conscience, and bring before it all thy transgressions, search out the sins of thy soul, and exact with strictness the account thereof, and say, "wherefore didst thou dare to do this and that?" And if she shun these, and be searching into other men's matters, say to her, "Not about these am I judging thee, not for these art thou come here to plead. For what, if such a one be a wicked man? Thou, why didst thou commit this and that offense? Answer for thyself, not to accuse; look to thine own matters, do not those of others." And be thou continually urging her to this anxious trial. Then, if she have nothing to say, but shrink back, wear her out with the scourge, like

some restless and unchaste handmaid. And this tribunal do thou cause to sit every day, and picture the river of fire, the venomous worm, the rest of the torments.

And permit her not to be with the devil any more, nor bear with her shameless sayings, "he comes to me, he plots against me, he tempts me;" but tell her, "If thou weft not willing, all that would be to no purpose." And if she say again, "I am entangled with a body, I am clothed with flesh, I dwell in the world, I abide on earth;" tell her, "All these are excuses and pretexts. For such an one too was encompassed with flesh, and such another dwelling in the world, and abiding on earth, is approved; and thou thyself too, when thou doest well, doest it encompassed with flesh." And if she be pained at hearing this, take not off thine hand; for she will not die, if thou smite her, but thou wilt save her from death. And if she say again, "Such an one provoked me," tell her, "But it is in thy power not to be provoked; often at least thou hast restrained thine anger." And if she say, "The beauty of such a woman moved me;" tell her, "Yet wast thou able to have mastered thyself." Bring forward those that have got the better, bring forward the first woman, who said, "The serpent beguiled me, and yet was not acquitted of the blame.

And when thou art searching out these things, let no man be present, let no man disturb thee; but as the judges sit under curtains to judge, so do thou too, instead of curtains, seek a time and place of quiet. And when after thy supper thou art risen up, and art about to lie down, then hold this thy judgment; this is the time convenient for thee, and the place, thy bed, and thy chamber. This the prophet likewise commanded, saying, "For the things which ye say in your hearts, be ye moved to compunction upon your beds." And for small offenses require great satisfaction, that unto the great thou mayest never even approach. If thou do this every day, thou wilt with confidence stand at that fearful judgment-seat. In this way Paul became clean; therefore also he said, "For if we judged ourselves, we should not be judged." Thus did Job cleanse his sons. For he that offered sacrifices for secret sins, much more did he require an account of such as were manifest.

4. But we do not so, but altogether the contrary. For as soon as we are laid down to rest, we rather think over all our worldly maters; and some introduce unclean thoughts, some usuries, and contracts, and temporal cares. And if we have a daughter, a virgin, we watch her strictly; but that which is more precious to us than a daughter, our soul, her we suffer to play the harlot and defile herself, introducing to her innumerable wicked thoughts. And whether it be the love of covetousness, or that of luxury, or that of fair persons, or that of wrath, or be it what you will else that is minded to come in, we throw open the doors, and attract and invite it, and help it to defile our soul at its leisure. And what can be more barbarous than this, to overlook our soul that is more precious than all, abused by so many adulterers, and so long companying with them, even until they are sated? which will never be. So it is, therefore, that when sleep overtakes us, then only do they depart from her; or rather not even then, for our dreams and imaginations furnish her with the same images. Whence also, when day is come, the soul stored with such images often falls away to the actual performance of those fancies.

And thou, while into the apple of thine eye thou sufferest not so much as a grain of dust to enter, dost thou pass unnoticed thy soul, gathering to itself a heap of so great evils? When shall we then be able to clear out this filth, which we are daily laying up within us? when to cut up the thorns? when to sow the seed? Knowest thou not that henceforth the time of harvest is at hand? But we have not yet so much as ploughed our fields. If then the husbandman should come and find fault, what shall we say? and what answer shall we make? That no man gave us the seed? Nay, this is sown daily. That no man, then, hath cut up the thorns? Nay, every day we are sharpening the sickle. But do the necessary engagements of life distract thee? And why hast thou not crucified thyself to the world? For if he that repays that only, which is given him, is wicked, because he did not double it; he that hath wasted even this, what will be said to him? If that person was bound, and cast out where is gnashing of teeth, what shall we have to suffer, who, when numberless motives are drawing us toward virtue, shrink back and are unwilling?

For what is there, that hath not enough in it to persuade thee? Seest thou not the vileness of the world, the uncertainty of life, the toil, the sweat, for things present? What? is it the case that virtue must be toiled for, but may vice be had without toil? If then both in the one and in the other there is toil, why didst thou not choose this, which hath so great profit? Or rather, there are some parts of virtue, which are free even from toil. For what kind of toil is it, not to calumniate, not to lie, not to swear, to lay aside our anger against our neighbor? Nay, on the contrary, to do these things is toilsome, and brings much anxiety. What plea then shall we have, what excuse, not doing right even in these matters? For hereby it is plain, that out of remissness and sloth the more toilsome duties also altogether escape us.

All these things let us consider; let us flee vice, let us choose virtue, that we may attain both unto the good things that are present, and unto those that are to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 43

Matthew Chapter 12, Verse 38 And Matthew Chapter 12, Verse 39

"Then certain of the Scribes and Pharisees answered Him, saying, Master, we would see a sign from Thee. But He answered and said; An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonas." Could then anything be more foolish than these men (not more impious only), who after so many miracles, as though none had been wrought, say, "We would see a sign from Thee?" With what intent then did they so speak? That they might lay hold of Him again. For since by His words He had stopped their mouths, once and twice and often, and had checked their shameless tongue, they come to His works again. At which also the evangelist marvelling again, said, "Then certain of the scribes answered Him, asking a sign." "Then," when? When they ought to be stooping before Him, to admire, to be amazed and give way, "then" they desist not from their wickedness.

And see their words too, teeming with flattery and dissimulation. For they thought to draw Him towards them in that way. And now they insult, now they flatter Him; now calling Him a demoniac, now again "Master," both out of an evil mind, how contrary soever the words they speak. Wherefore also He rebukes them severely. And when they were questioning Him roughly and insulting Him, He reasoned with them gently; when they were flattering; reproachfully, and with great severity; implying that He is superior to either passion, and is neither at the one time moved to anger, nor at the other softened by flattery. And see His reproach, that it is not merely hard words, but contains a demonstration of their wickedness. For what saith He? "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign." Now what He saith is to this effect: What marvel if ye behave so to me who have been hitherto unknown to you when even to the Father, of whom ye have had so much experience, ye have done the very same? forsaking Him, ye have run unto the devils, drawing to yourselves wicked lovers. With this Ezekiel too was continually upbraiding them.

Now by these sayings He signified Himself to be of one accord with His Father, and them to be doing nothing new; He was also unfolding their secrets, how with hypocrisy and as enemies they were making their demand. Therefore He called them "an evil generation," because they have been always ungrateful towards their benefactors; because upon favors they become worse, which belongs to extreme wickedness. And He called it "adulterous,"

declaring both their former and their present unbelief; whereby He implies Himself again to be equal to the Father, if at least the not believing Him makes it "adulterous." 2. Then, after His reproach, what saith He? "There shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet." Now is He striking the first note of the doctrine of His resurrection, and confirming it by the type.

What then? one may say; was no sign given it? None was given to it on asking. For not to bring in them did He work His signs (for He knew them to be hardened), but in order to amend others. Either then this may be said, or that they were not to receive such a sign as that was. For a sign did befall them, when by their own punishment they learnt His power. Here then He speaks as threatening, and with this very meaning obscurely conveyed: as if He said, innumerable benefits have I showed forth, none of these hath drawn you to me, neither were ye willing to adore my power. Ye shall know therefore my might by the contrary tokens, when ye shall see your city cast down to the ground, the walls also dismantled, the temple become a ruin; when ye shall be cast out both from your former citizenship and freedom, and shall again go about everywhere, houseless and in exile. (For all these things came to pass after the cross.) These things therefore shall be to you for great signs. And indeed it is an exceeding great sign, that their ills remain unchanged; that although ten thousand have attempted it, no one hath been able to reverse the judgment once gone forth against them.

All this however He saith not, but leaves it to after time to make it clear to them, but for the present He is making trial of the doctrine of His resurrection, which they were to come to know by the things which they should afterwards suffer. "For as Jonas," saith He, "was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Thus, He said not indeed openly that He should rise again, since they would have even laughed Him to scorn, but He intimated it in such manner, that they might believe Him to have foreknown it. For as to their being aware of it, they say to Pilate, "That deceiver said," these are their words, "while He was yet alive, After three days I will rise again;" and yet we know His disciples were ignorant of this; even as they had been beforehand more void of understanding than these: wherefore also these became self-condemned.

But see how exactly He expresses it, even though in a dark saying. For He said not, "In the earth," but, "In the heart of the earth;" that He might designate His very sepulchre, and that no one might suspect a mere semblance. And for this intent too did He allow three days, that the fact of His death might be believed. For not by the cross only doth He make it certain, and by the sight of all men, but also by the time of those days. For to the resurrection indeed all succeeding time was to bear witness; but the cross, unless it had at the time many signs bearing witness to it, would have been disbelieved; and with this disbelief would have gone utter disbelief of the resurrection also. Therefore He calls it also a sign. But had He not been crucified, the sign would not have been given. For this cause too He brings forward the type, that the truth may be believed. For tell me, was Jonah in the

whale's belly a mere appearance? Nay, thou canst not say so. Therefore neither was Christ in the heart of the earth such. For surely the type is not in truth, and the truth in mere appearance. For this cause we every where show forth His death, both in the mysteries, and in baptism, and in all the rest. Therefore Paul also cries with a clear voice, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Whence it is clear, that they who are diseased in Marcion's way are children of the devil, blotting out these truths, to avoid the annulling whereof Christ did so many things, while to have them annulled the devil took such manifold pains: I mean, His cross and His passion. 3. Therefore He said elsewhere also, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up:" and, "The days will come when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them: and here, "There shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet:" declaring both that He should die for them, and that they would profit nothing; for this He afterwards declared. Nevertheless, even with this knowledge He died: so great was His tender care. For to hinder thy supposing that the result would be such with the Jews as with the Ninevites; that they would be converted, and that as in their case He established the tottering city, and converted the barbarians, so these too should turn unto Him after His resurrection; hear how He declares altogether the contrary. For that they should reap no good from hence in respect of their own benefit, but rather suffer incurable ills, this too He went on to declare by the parable of the evil spirit.

But for the present He is justifying their future sufferings, signifying that they would suffer justly. For their calamities and their desolation He represents by that similitude; but up to this time He is indicating the justice of their having to suffer all these things: which also in the Old Testament was His wont. Thus when about to destroy Sodom, He first defended Himself to Abraham, by showing the desolation and rareness of virtue, when indeed not even ten men were found in so many cities, who had made it their rule to live chastely. And to Lot also in like manner, He first signifies their inhospitality and their unnatural lusts, and then He brings the fire on them. And with regard to the deluge again He did the self-same thing, by His acts excusing Himself to Noah. And also to Ezekiel s in like manner, when He caused him dwelling in Babylon to see men's evil deeds in Jerusalem. And yet again to Jeremiah, when He said, "Pray not," excusing Himself He added, "Seest thou not what they do?" And everywhere He doeth the selfsame thing, as here also.

For what saith He? "The men of Nineveh shall rise up, and shall condemn this generation, because they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here." For he was a servant, but I am the Master; and he came forth from the whale, but I rose from death; and he proclaimed destruction, but I am come preaching the good tidings of the kingdom. And they indeed believed without a sign, but I have exhibited many signs. And they indeed heard nothing more than those words, but I have given a spring to every kind of self-denial. And he came being ministered unto, but I the very Master and Lord of all am come not threatening, not demanding an account, but bringing pardon. And they were barbarians, but these have conversed with unnumbered prophets. And of him no man had

foretold, but of me all, and the facts agreed with their words. And he indeed, when he was to go forth, ran away that he might not be ridiculed; but I, knowing that I am both to be crucified and mocked, am come. And while he did not endure so much as to be reproached for them that were saved, I underwent even death, and that the most shameful death, and after this I sent others again. And he was a strange sort of person, and an alien, and unknown; but I a kinsman after the flesh, and of the same forefathers. And many more topics too might any one collect, were he to seek diligently for more.

But He stops not even at this, but adds also another example, saying, "And the queen of the south shall rise up in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn them, because she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon is here." This was more than the former. For Jonah went unto them, but the queen of the south waited not for Solomon to come to her, but went herself unto him, although she was both a woman, and a barbarian, and at so great a distance, no threat laid upon her, nor being in fear of death, but simply through the love of wise words. "But behold even a greater than Solomon is here." For in that case the woman came, but here I have come. And she indeed rose up from the uttermost pans of the earth, but I go about cities and villages. And his discourse was of trees and various kinds of wood, which could do no great good to his visitor: but mine, of secret things, and most awful mysteries.

4. When therefore He had condemned them, having proved most amply that they were sinning inexcusably, and that their disobedience arose from their own perverseness not from their Teacher's inability, and when He had demonstrated this as well by many other arguments, as also by the Ninevites, and by the queen: then He speaks also of the punishment that should overtake them, darkly indeed, yet He doth speak of it, interweaving an intense fear in His narration. "For when," saith He, "the unclean spirit is gone out of the man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return to my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, and swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there, and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this generation."

By this He signifies, that not only in the world to come, but here too they should suffer most grievously. For since He had said, "The men of Nineveh shall rise up in judgment, and shall condemn this generation;" lest, on account of the postponement of the time, they should despise and grow more careless, by this He brings His terror close upon them. Wherewith the prophet Hosea likewise threatening them said, that they should be "even as the prophet that is beside himself, the man that is carried away by a spirit;", that is to say, as the madmen, and distracted by evil spirits, even the false prophets. For here, by "a prophet that is beside himself," he means the false prophet, such as are the augurs. Much to the same effect Christ also tells them, that they shall suffer the utmost evils. Seest thou how from everything He urges them to attend to His sayings; from things present, from things to come; by those who had approved themselves (the Ninevites, I mean, and that queen), and

by the offending Tyrians and Sodomites? This did the prophets likewise, bringing forward the sons of the Rechabites, and the bride that forgetteth not her proper ornament and her girdle, and "the ox that knoweth his owner, and the ass that remembereth his crib." Even so here too, when He had by a comparison set forth their perverseness, He speaks afterwards of their punishment also.

What then can the saying mean? As the possessed, saith He, when delivered from that infirmity, should they be at all remiss, draw upon themselves their delusion more grievous than ever: even so is it with you. For before also ye were possessed by a devil, when ye were worshipping idols, and were slaying your sons to the devils, exhibiting great madness; nevertheless I forsook you not, but cast out that devil by the prophets; and again in my own person I am come, willing to cleanse you more entirely. Since then you will not attend, but have wrecked yourselves in greater wickedness (for to kill prophets was a crime not nearly so great and grievous as to slay Him); therefore your sufferings will be more grievous than the former, those at Babylon, I mean, and in Egypt, and under the first Antiochus. Because what things befell them in the time of Vespasian and Titus, were very far more grievous than those. Wherefore also He said, "There shall be great tribulation, such as never was, neither shall be." But not this only doth the illustration declare, but that they should be also utterly destitute of all virtue, and more assailable by the power of the devils, than at that time. For then even although they sinned, yet were there also among them such as acted uprightly, and God's providence was present with them, and the grace of the Spirit, tending, correcting, fulfilling all its part; but now of this guardianship too they shall be utterly deprived; so He tells them; so that there is now both a greater scarcity of virtue, and a more intense affliction, and a more tyrannical operation of the devils.

Ye know accordingly even in our generation, when he who surpassed all in impiety, I mean Julian, was transported with his fury, how they ranged themselves with the heathens, how they courted their party. So that, even if they seem to be in some small degree chastened now, the fear of the emperors makes them quiet; since, if it were not for that, far worse than the former had been their daring. For in all their other evil works they surpass their predecessors; sorceries, magic arts, impurities, they exhibit in great excess. And amongst the rest, moreover, strong as is the curb which holds them down, they have often made seditions, and risen up against kings, which has resulted in their being pierced through with the worst of evils. Where now are they that seek after signs? Let them hear that a considerate mind is needed, and if this be wanting, signs are of no profit. See, for instance, how the Ninevites without signs believed, while these, after so many miracles, grew worse, and made themselves an habitation of innumerable devils, and brought on themselves ten thousand calamities; and very naturally. For when a man, being once delivered from his ills, fails to be corrected, he will suffer far worse than before. Yea, therefore He said, "he finds no rest," to indicate, that positively and of necessity such an one will be overtaken by the ambush of the devils. Since surely by these two things he ought to have been sobered, by his former sufferings, and by his deliverance; or rather a third thing also is added, the threat of having still worse to endure. But yet by none of these were they made better.

5. All this might be seasonably said, not of them only, but of us also, when after having been enlightened, and delivered from our former ills, we again cleave unto the same wickedness, for more grievous also thenceforth will be the punishment of our subsequent sins. Therefore to the sick of the palsy also Christ said, "Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee;" and this to a man who was thirty-eight years in his infirmity. And what, one might ask, was he to suffer worse than this? Something far worse, and more intolerable. For far be it from us, that we should endure as much as we are capable of enduring. For God is at no loss for inflictions. For according to the greatness of His mercy, so also is His wrath. With this He charges Jerusalem also by Ezekiel. "I saw thee," saith He, "polluted in blood; and I washed thee, and anointed thee; and thou hadst renown for thy beauty; and thou pouredst out thy fornications," saith He, "on those who dwell near thee," wherefore also the more grievous are His threatenings to thee when thou sinnest.

But from hence infer not thy punishment only, but also the boundless longsuffering of God. How often at least have we put our hands to the same evil deeds, and yet He suffers long! But let us not be sanguine, but fear; since Pharaoh too, had he been taught by the first plague, would not have experienced the later ones; he would not afterwards have been drowned, his host and all together. And this I say, because I know many, who like Pharaoh are even now saying, "I know not God," and making those that are in their power cleave to the clay and to the bricks. How many, though God bids them assauge their "threatening," cannot bear so much as to relax the toil! "But we have no Red Sea now, to pass through afterwards." But we have a sea of fire, a sea not like that, either in kind or in size, but far greater and fiercer, having its waves of fire, of some strange and horrible fire. A great abyss is there, of most intolerable flame, Since everywhere fire may be seen roving quickly round, like some savage wild beast. And if here this sensible and material fire leaped like a wild beast out of the furnace, and sprang upon those who were sitting without, what will not that other fire do to such as have fallen into it?

Concerning that day, hear the prophets, saying, "The day of the Lord is incurable, full of anger and wrath." For there will be none to stand by, none to rescue, nowhere the face of Christ, so mild and calm. But as those who work in the mines are delivered over to certain cruel men, and see none of their friends, but those only that are set over them; so will it be then also: or rather not so, but even far more grievous. For here it is possible to go unto the king, and entreat, and free the condemned person: but there, no longer; for He permits it not, but they continue in the scorching torment, and in so great anguish, as it is not possible for words to tell. For if, when any are in flames here, no speech can describe their sharp pangs, much less theirs, who suffer it in that place: since here indeed all is over in a brief point of time, but in that place there is burning indeed, but what is burnt is not consumed.

What then shall we do there? For to my self also do I say these things. 6. "But if thou," saith one, "who art our teacher, speakest so of thyself, I care no more; for what wonder, should I be punished?" Nay, I entreat, let no man seek this consolation; for this is no refreshment at all. For tell me; was not the devil an incorporeal power? Was he not superior to men? Yet

he fell away. Is there any one who will derive consolation from being punished along with him? By no means. What of all who were in Egypt? did they not see those also punished who were in high places, and every. house in mourning? Were they then hereby refreshed, and comforted? No surely; and it is manifest by what they did afterwards, as men tortured by some kind of fire, rising up together against the king, and compelling him to cast out the people of the Hebrews.

Yea, and very unmeaning is this saying, to suppose that it gives comfort to be punished with all men, to say, "As all, so I too." For why should I speak of hell? Think, I pray you, of those that are seized with gout, how, when they are racked by sharp pain, though you show them ten thousand suffering worse, they do not so much as take it into their mind. For the intensity of their anguish allows not their reason any leisure for thinking of others, and so finding consolation. Let us not then feed ourselves with these cold hopes. For to receive consolation from the ills of our neighbors, takes place in ordinary sufferings; but when the torment is excessive, and all our inward parts full of tempest, and the soul is now come to be unable so much as to know itself, whence shall it derive consolation? So that all these sayings are an absurdity, and fables of foolish children. For this, of which thou speakest, takes place in dejection, and in moderate dejection, when we are told, "the same thing hath befallen such an one;" but sometimes not even in dejection: now if in that case it hath no strength, much less in the anguish and burden unspeakable, which "the gnashing of teeth" indicates.

And I know that I am galling you, and giving you pain by these words; but what can I do? For I would fain not speak thus, but be conscious of virtue both in myself, and in all of you; but since we are in sins, the more part of us, who will grant me ability to pain you indeed, and to penetrate the understanding of them that hear me? Then might I so be i at rest. But now I fear lest any despise my sayings, and their punishments become the greater for their indifferent way of hearing. Since, when a master utters a threat, should one of the fellow-servants hear and make light of his menace, not without punishment would he hasten by him, provoked as he is, but rather it would be a ground for increasing his chastisement. Wherefore I entreat you, let us pierce our own hearts, when we hear His sayings regarding hell. For nothing is more delightful than this discourse, by how much nothing is more bitter than the reality. But how delightful to be told of hell? one may ask. Because it were so far from delight to fall into hell, which result, our words that appear so galling, keep off. And before this they furnish another pleasure: in that they brace up our souls, and make us more reverent, and elevate the mind, and give wings to the thoughts, and cast out the desires that so mischievously beset us; and the thing becomes a cure.

7. Wherefore, to proceed, together with the punishment let me speak also of the shame. For as the Jews shall then be condemned by the Ninevites, so we too by many that seem beneath us now. Let us imagine then how great the mockery, how great the condemnation; let us imagine, and cast some foundation at length, some door of repentance. To myself I say these things, to myself first I give this advice, and let no one be angry, as though he

were condemned. Let us enter upon the narrow way. How long shall it be luxury? how long sloth? Have we not had enough of indolence, mirth, procrastination? Will it not be the same over again, feasting, and surfeiting, and expense, and wealth, and acquisitions, and buildings? And what is the end? Death. What is the end? Ashes, and dust, and coffins, and worms.

Let us show forth then a new kind of life. Let us make earth, heaven; let us hereby show the Greeks, of how great blessings they are deprived. For when they behold in us good conversation, they will look upon the very face of the kingdom of Heaven. Yea, when they see us gentle, pure from wrath, from evil desire, from envy, from covetousness, rightly fulfilling all our other duties, they will say, "If the Christians are become angels here, what will they be after their departure hence? if where they are strangers they shine so bright, how great will they become when they shall have won their native land!" Thus they too will be reformed, and the word of godliness "will have free course, not less than in the apostles' times. For if they, being twelve, converted entire cities and countries; were we all to become teachers by our careful conduct, imagine how high our cause will be exalted. For not even a dead man raised so powerfully attracts the Greek, as a person practising self-denial. At that indeed he will be amazed, but by this he will be profited. That is done, and is past away; but this abides, and is constant culture to his soul.

Let us take heed therefore to ourselves, that we may gain them also. I say nothing burdensome. I say not, do not marry. I say not, forsake cities, and withdraw thyself from public affairs; but being engaged in them, show virtue. Yea, and such as are busy in the midst of cities, I would fain have more approved than such as have occupied the mountains. Wherefore? Because great is the profit thence arising. "For no man lighteth a candle, and setteth it under the bushel." Therefore I would that all the candles were set upon the candlestick, that the light might wax great.

Let us kindle then His fire; let us cause them that are sitting in darkness to be delivered from their error. And tell me not, "I have a wife, and children belonging to me, and am master of a household, and cannot duly practise all this." For though thou hadst none of these, yet if thou be careless, all is lost; though thou art encompassed with all these, yet if thou be earnest, thou shall attain unto virtue. For there is but one thing that is wanted, the preparation of a generous mind; and neither age, nor poverty, nor wealth, nor reverse of fortune, nor anything else, will be able to impede thee. Since in fact both old and young, and men having wives, and bringing up children, and working at crafts, and serving as soldiers, have duly performed all that is enjoined. For so Daniel was young, and Joseph a slave, and Aquila wrought at a craft, and the woman who sold purple was over a workshop, and another was the keeper of a prison, and another a centurion, as Cornelius; and another in ill health, as Timothy; and another a runaway, as Onesimus; but nothing proved an hindrance to any of these, but all were approved, both men and women, both young and old, both slaves and free, both soldiers and people.

Let us not then make vain pretexts, but let us provide a thoroughly good mind, and whatsoever we may be, we shall surely attain to virtue, and arrive at the good things to come; by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be unto the Father, together with the Holy Ghost. glory, might, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 44

Matthew Chapter 12, Verse 46-Matthew Chapter 12, Verse 49

"While He yet talked to the people, behold, His mother and His brethren stood without, desiring to speak with Him. Then one said unto Him, Behold, Thy mother and Thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with Thee. But He answered and said unto him that told Him, Who is my mother, and my brethren? And He stretched forth His hand towards His disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren." That which I was lately saying, that when virtue is wanting all things are vain, this is now also pointed out very abundantly. For I indeed was saying, that age and nature, and to dwell in the wilderness, and all such things, are alike unprofitable, where there is not a good mind; but to-day we learn in addition another thing, that even to have borne Christ in the womb, and to have brought forth that marvellous birth, hath no profit, if there be not virtue.

And this is hence especially manifest. "For while He yet talked to the people," it is said, "one told Him, Thy mother and Thy brethren seek Thee. But He saith, who is my mother, and who are my brethren?"And this He said, not as being ashamed of His mother, nor denying her that bare Him; for if He had been ashamed of her, He would not have passed through that womb; but as declaring that she hath no advantage from this, unless she do all that is required to be done. For in fact that which she had essayed to do, was of superfluous vanity; in that she wanted to show the people that she hath power and authority over her Son, imagining not as yet anything great concerning Him; whence also her unseasonable approach. See at all events both her self-confidence and theirs. Since when they ought to have gone in, and listened with the multitude; or if they were not so minded, to have waited for His bringing His discourse to an end, and then to have come near; they call Him out, and do this before all, evincing a superfluous vanity, and wishing to make it appear, that with much authority they enjoin Him. And this too the evangelist shows that he is blaming, for with this very allusion did he thus express himself, "While He yet talked to the people;" as if he should say, What? was there no other opportunity? Why, was it not possible to speak with Him in private?

And what was it they wished to say? For if it were touching the doctrines of the truth, they ought to have propounded these things publicly, and stated them before all, that the rest also might have the benefit: but if about other matters that concerned themselves, they ought

not to have been so urgent. For if He suffered not the burial of a father, lest the attendance on Him should be interrupted, much less ought they to have stopped His discourse to the people, for things that were of no importance. Whence it is clear, that nothing but vainglory led them to do this; which John too declares, by saying, "Neither did His brethren believe on Him;" and some sayings too of theirs he reports, full of great folly; telling us that they were for dragging Him to Jerusalem, for no other purpose, but that they themselves might reap glory from His miracles. "For if thou do these things," it is said, "show Thyself to the world. For there is no man that doeth anything in secret, and seeketh himself to be manifest;" when also He Himself rebuked them, attributing it to their carnal mind. That is, because the Jews were reproaching Him, and saying, "Is not this the carpenter's son, whose father and mother we know? and His brethren, are not they with us?" they, willing to throw off the disparagement caused by His birth, were calling Him to the display of His miracles.

For this cause He quite repels them, being minded to heal their infirmity; since surely, had it been His will to deny His mother, He would have denied her then, when the Jews were reproaching Him. But as it is, we see that He takes so great care of her, as even at the very cross to commit her to the disciple whom He loved most of all, and to give him a great charge concerning her. But now He doth not so, out of care for her, and for His brethren. I mean, because their regard for Him was as towards a mere man, and they were vainglorious, He casts out the disease, not insulting, but correcting them.

But do thou, I pray, examine not the words only, which contain a moderate reproof, but also the unbecoming conduct of His brethren, and the boldness wherewith they had been bold and who was the person reproving it, no mere man, but the only-begotten Son of God; and with what purpose He reproved; that it was not with intent to drive them to perplexity, but to deliver them from the most tyrannical passion and to lead them on by little and little to the right idea concerning Himself, and to convince her that He was not her Son only, but also her Lord: so wilt thou perceive that the reproof is in the highest degree both becoming Him and profitable to her, and withal having in it much gentleness. For He said not, "Go thy way, tell my mother, thou art not my mother," but He addresses Himself to the person that told Him; saying, "Who is my mother?" together with the things that have been mentioned providing for another object also. What then is that? That neither they nor others confiding in their kindred, should neglect virtue. For if she is nothing profited by being His mother, were it not for that quality in her, hardly will any one else be saved by his kindred. For there is one only nobleness, to do the will of God. This kind of noble birth is better than the other, and more real.

2. Knowing therefore these things, let us neither pride ourselves on children that are of good report, unless we have their virtue; nor upon noble fathers, unless we be like them in disposition. For it is possible, both that he who begat a man should not be his father, and that he who did not beget him should be. Therefore in another place also, when some woman had said, "Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the paps which Thou hast sucked;" He said not, "The womb bare me not, neither did I suck the paps," but this, "Yea rather, blessed

are they that do the will of my Father." Seest thou how on every occasion He denies not the affinity by nature, but adds that by virtue? And His forerunner too, in saying, "O generation of vipers, think not to say, We have Abraham to our father," means not this, that they were not naturally of Abraham, but that it profits them nothing to be of Abraham, unless they had the affinity by character; which Christ also declared, when He said, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham;" not depriving them of their kindred according to the flesh, but teaching them to seek after that affinity which is greater than it, and more real.

This then He establishes here also, but in a manner less invidious, and more measured, as became Him speaking to His mother. For He said not at all, "She is not my mother, nor are those my brethren, because they do not my will;" neither did He declare and pronounce judgment against them; but He yet left in it their own power to choose, speaking with the gentleness that becomes Him. "For he that doeth," saith He, "the will of my Father, this is my brother, and sister, and mother." Wherefore if they desire to be such, let them come this way. And when the woman again cried out, saying, "Blessed is the womb that bare Thee," He said not, "She is not my mother," but, "If she wishes to be blessed, let her do the will of my Father. For such a one is both brother, and sister, and mother."

Oh honor! oh virtue! Unto what a height doth she lead up him that follows after her! How many women have blessed that holy Virgin, and her womb, and prayed that they might become such mothers, and give up all! What then is there to hinder? For behold, He hath marked out a spacious road for us; and it is granted not to women only, but to men also, to be of this rank, or rather of one yet far higher. For this makes one His mother much more, than those pangs did. So that if that were a subject for blessing, much more this, inasmuch as it is also more real. Do not therefore merely desire, but also in the way that leads thee to thy desire walk thou with much diligence. 3. Having then said these words, "He came out of the house." Seest thou, how He both rebuked them, and did what they desired? Which He did also at the marriage. For there too He at once reproved her asking unseasonably, and nevertheless did not gainsay her; by the former correcting her weakness. by the latter showing His kindly feeling toward His mother. So likewise on this occasion too, He both healed the disease of vainglory, and rendered the due honor to His mother, even though her request was unseasonable. For, "in the same day," it is said, "went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side."

Why, if ye desire, saith He, to see and hear, behold I come forth and discourse. Thus having wrought many miracles, He affords again the benefit of His doctrine. And He "sits by the sea," fishing and getting into His net them that are on the land. But He "sat by the sea," not without a purpose; and this very thing the evangelist has darkly expressed. For to indicate that the cause of His doing this was a desire to order His auditory with exactness, and to leave no one behind His back, but to have all face to face, "And great multitudes," saith He, "were gathered together unto Him, so that He went into a ship and sat, and the whole multitude stood on the shore." And having sat down there, He speaks by parables. "And He

spake," it says, "many things unto them in parables." And yet on the mount, we know, He did no such thing, neither did He weave His discourse with so many parables, for then there were multitudes only, and a simple people; but here are also Scribes and Pharisees.

But do thou mark, I pray thee, what kind of parable He speaks first, and how Matthew puts them in their order. Which then doth He speak first? That which it was most necessary to speak first, that which makes the hearer more attentive. For because He was to discourse unto them in dark sayings, He thoroughly rouses His hearers' mind first by His parable. Therefore also another evangelist saith that He reproved them, because they do not understand; saying, "How knew ye not the parable?" But not for this cause only doth He speak in parables, but that He may also make His discourse more vivid, and fix the memory of it in them more perfectly, and bring the things before their sight. In like manner do the prophets also. 4. What then is the parable? "Behold," saith He, "a sower went forth to sow." Whence went He forth, who is present everywhere, who fills all things? or how went He forth? Not in place, but in condition and dispensation to usward, coming nearer to us by His clothing Himself with flesh. For because we could not enter, our sins fencing us out from the entrance, He comes forth unto us. And wherefore came He forth? to destroy the ground teeming with thorns? to take vengeance upon the husbandmen? By no means; but to till and tend it, and to sow the word of godliness. For by seed here He means His doctrine, and by land, the souls of men, and by the sower, Himself.

What then comes of this seed? Three parts perish, and one is saved. "And when He sowed, some seeds fell," He saith, "by the way side; and the fowls came and devoured them up." He said not, that He cast them, but that "they fell." "And some upon the rock, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprang up, because they had no deepness of earth; and when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among the thorns, and the thorns sprang up, and choked them. But others fell on the good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear let him hear." A fourth part is saved; and not this all alike, but even here great is the difference. Now these things He said, manifesting that He discoursed to all without grudging. For as the sower makes no distinction in the land submitted to him, but simply and indifferently casts his seed; so He Himself too makes no distinction of rich and poor, of wise and unwise, of slothful or diligent, of brave or cowardly; but He discourses unto all, fulfilling His part, although foreknowing the results; that it may be in His power to say, "What ought I to have done, that I have not done?" And the prophets speak of the people as of a vine; "For my beloved," it is said, "had a vineyard;" and, "He brought a vine out of Egypt;" but He, as of seed. What could this be to show? That obedience now will be quick and easier, and will presently yield its fruit.

But when thou hearest, "The sower went forth to sow," think it not a needless repetition. For the sower frequently goes forth for some other act also, either to plough, or to cut out the evil herbs, or to pluck up thorns, or to attend to some such matter; but He went forth to sow. Whence then, tell me, was the greater part of the seed lost? Not through the sower, but

through the ground that received it; that is, the soul that did not hearken. And wherefore doth He not say, Some the careless received, and lost it; some the rich, and choked it, and some the superficial, and betrayed it? It is not His will to rebuke them severely, lest He should cast them into despair, but He leaves the reproof to the conscience of His hearers. And this was not the case with the seed only, but also with the net; for that too produced many that were unprofitable.

5. But this parable He speaks, as anointing His disciples, and to teach them, that even though the lost be more than such as receive the word yet they are not to despond. For this was the ease even with their Lord, and He who fully foreknew that these things should be, did not desist from sowing. And how can it be reasonable, saith one, to sow among the thorns, on the rock, on the wayside? With regard to the seeds and the earth it cannot be reasonable; but in the case of men's souls and their instructions, it hath its praise, and that abundantly. For the husbandman indeed would reasonably be blamed for doing this; it being impossible for the rock to become earth, or the wayside not to be a wayside, or the thorns, thorns; but in the things that have reason it is not so. There is such a thing as the rock changing, and becoming rich land; and the wayside being no longer trampled on, nor lying open to all that pass by, but that it may be a fertile field; and the thorns may be destroyed, and the seed enjoy full security. For had it been impossible, this Sower would not have sown. And if the change did not take place in all, this is no fault of the Sower, but of them who are unwilling to be changed: He having done His part: and if they betrayed what they received of Him, He is blameless, the exhibitor of such love to man.

But do thou mark this, I pray thee; that the way of destruction is not one only, but there are differing ones, and wide apart from one another. For they that are like the wayside are the coarse-minded, and indifferent, and careless; but those on the rock such as fail from weakness only. For "that which is sown upon the stony places," saith He, "the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it. Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; but when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended! When any one," so He saith, "heareth the word of truth and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth that which was sown out of his heart. This is he that is sown by the wayside." Now it is not the same thing for the doctrine to wither away, when no man is evil entreating, or disturbing its foundations, as when temptations press upon one. But they that are likened to the thorns, are much more inexcusable than these.

6. In order then that none of these things may befall us, let us by zeal and continual remembrance cover up the things that are told us. For though the devil do catch them away, yet it rests with us, whether they be caught away; though the plants wither, yet it is not from the heat this takes place (for He did not say, because of the heat it withered, but, "because it had no root"); although His sayings are choked, it is not because of the thorns, but of them who suffer them to spring up. For there is a way, if thou wilt, to check this evil growth, and to make the right use of our wealth. Therefore He said not, "the world," but "the care of the

world;" nor "riches," but "the deceitfulness of riches." Let us not then blame the things, but the corrupt mind. For it is possible to be rich and not to be deceived; and to be in this world, and not to be choked with its cares. For indeed riches have two contrary disadvantages; one, care, wearing us out, and bringing a darkness over us; the other, luxury, making us effeminate.

And well hath He said, "The deceitfulness of riches." For all that pertains to riches is deceit; they are names only, not attached to things. For so pleasure and glory, and splendid array, and all these things, are a sort of vain show, not a reality. Having therefore spoken of the ways of destruction, afterwards He mentions the good ground, not suffering them to despair, but giving a hope of repentance, and indicating that it is possible to change from the things before mentioned into this. And yet if both the land be good, and the Sower one, and the seed the same, wherefore did one bear a hundred, one sixty, one thirty? Here again the difference is from the nature of the ground, for even where the ground is good, great even therein is the difference. Seest thou, that not the husbandman is to be blamed, nor the seed, but the land that receives it? not for its nature, but for its disposition. And herein too, great is His mercy to man, that He doth not require one measure of virtue, but while He receives the first, and casts not out the second, He gives also a place to the third.

And these things He saith, least they that followed Him should suppose that hearing is sufficient for salvation. And wherefore, one may say, did He not put the other vices also, such as lust, vainglory? In speaking of "the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches," He set down all. Yea, both vainglory and all the rest belong to this world, and to the deceitfulness of riches; such as pleasure, and gluttony, and envy, and vainglory, and all the like. But He added also the "way" and the "rock," signifying that it is not enough to be freed from riches only, but we must cultivate also the other parts of virtue. For what if thou art free indeed from riches, yet are soft and unmanly? and what if thou art not indeed unmanly, but art remiss and careless about the hearing of the word? Nay, no one part is sufficient for our salvation, but there is required first a careful hearing, and a continual recollection; then fortitude, then contempt of riches, and deliverance from all worldly things.

In fact, His reason for putting this before the other, is because the one is first required (for "How shall they believe except they hear?" just as we too, except we mind what is said, shall not be able so much as to learn what we ought to do): after that, fortitude, and the contempt of things present. 7. Hearing therefore these things, let us fortify ourselves on all sides, regarding His instructions, and striking our roots deep, and cleansing ourselves from all worldly things. But if we do the one, neglecting the other, we shall be nothing bettered; for though we perish not in one way, yet shall we in some other. For what signifies our not being ruined by riches, if we are by indolence: or not by indolence, if we are by softness. For so the husbandman, whether this way or that way he lose his crop, equally bewails himself. Let us not then soothe ourselves upon our not perishing in all these ways, but let it be our grief, in whichever way we are perishing.

And let us burn up the thorns, for they choke the word. And this is known to those rich men, who not for these matters alone, but for others also prove unprofitable. For having become slaves and captives of their pleasures, they are useless even for civil affairs, and if for them, much more for those of Heaven. Yea, and in two ways hereby our thoughts are corrupted; both by the luxury, and by the anxiety too. For either of these by itself were enough to overwhelm the bark; but when even both concur, imagine how high the billow swells.

And marvel not at His calling our luxury, "thorns." For thou indeed art not aware of it, being intoxicated with thy passion, but they that are in sound health know that it pricks sharper than any thorn, and that luxury wastes the soul worse than care, and causes more grievous pains both to body and soul. For one is not so sorely smitten by anxiety, as by surfeiting. Since when watchings, and throbbings of the temples, and heaviness in the head, and pangs of the bowels, lay hold of such a man, you may imagine how many thorns these surpass in grievousness. And as the thorns, on whichever side they are laid hold of, draw blood from the hands that seize them, just so doth luxury plague both feet, and hands, and head, and eyes, and in general all our members; and it is withered also, and unfruitful, like the thorn, and hurts much more than it, and in our vital parts. Yea, it brings on premature old age, and dulls the senses, and darkens our reasoning, and blinds the keen-sighted mind, and makes the body tumid, rendering excessive the deposition of that which is cast away, and gathering together a great accumulation of evils; and it makes the burden too great, and the load overwhelming; whence our falls are many and continual, and our shipwrecks frequent.

For tell me, why pamper thy body? What? are we to slay thee in sacrifice, to set thee on the table? The birds it is well for thee to pamper: or rather, not so well even for them; for when they are fattened, they are unprofitable for wholesome food. So great an evil is luxury, that its mischief is shown even in irrational beings. For even them by luxury we make unprofitable, both to themselves and to us. For their superfluous flesh is indigestible, and the moister kind of corruption is engendered by that kind of fatness. Whereas the creatures that are not so fed, but live, as one may say, in abstinence, and moderate diet, and in labor and hardship, these are most serviceable both to themselves and to others, as well for food, as for everything else. Those, at any rate, who live on them, are in better health; but such as are fed on the others are like them, growing dull and sickly, and rendering their chain more grievous. For nothing is so hostile and hurtful to the body, as luxury; nothing so tears it in pieces, and overloads and corrupts it, as intemperance.

Wherefore above all may this circumstance make one amazed at them for their folly, that not even so much care as others show towards their wine skins, are these willing to evince towards themselves. For those the wine merchants do not allow to receive more than is fit, lest they should burst; but to their own wretched belly these men do not vouchsafe even so much forethought, but when they have stuffed it and distended it, they fill all, up to the ears, up to the nostrils, to the very throat itself, thereby pressing into half its room the spirit, and the power that directs the living being. What? was thy throat given thee for this end, that thou shouldest fill it up to the very mouth, with wine turned sour, and all other

corruption? Not for this, O man, but that thou shouldest above all things sing to God, and offer up the holy prayers, and read out the divine laws, and give to thy neighbors profitable counsel. But thou, as if thou hadst received it for this end, dost not suffer it to have leisure for that ministry, so much as for a short season, but for all thy life subjectest it to this evil slavery. And as if any man having had a lyre given him with golden strings, and beautifully constructed, instead of awakening with it the most harmonious music, were to cover it over with much dung and clay; even so do these men.

Now the word, dung, I use not of living, but of luxurious living, and of that great wantonness. Because what is more than necessary is not nourishment, but merely injurious. For in truth the belly alone was made merely for the reception of food; but the month, and the throat, and tongue, for other things also, far more necessary than these: or rather, not even the belly for the reception of food simply, but for the reception of moderate food. And this it makes manifest by crying out loudly against us, when we tease it by this greediness; nor doth it clamor against us only, but also avenging that wrong exacts of us the severest penalty. And first it punishes the feet, that bear and conduct us to those wicked revels, then the hands that minister to it, binding them together for having brought unto it such quantities and kinds of provisions; and many have distorted even their very mouth, and eyes, and head. And as a servant receiving an order beyond his power, not seldom out of desperation becomes insolent to the giver of the order: so the belly too, together with these members, often ruins and destroys, from being over-strained, the very brain itself. And this God hath well ordered, that from excess so much mischief should arise; that when of thine own will thou dost not practise self-restraint, at least against thy will, for fear of so great ruin, thou mayest learn to be moderate.

Knowing then these things, let us flee luxury, let us study moderation, that we may both enjoy health of body, and having delivered our soul from all infirmity, may attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 45

Matthew Chapter 13, Verse 10

”And the disciples came and said unto Him, Why speakest Thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you’ to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given.” We have good cause to admire the disciples, how, longing as they do to learn, they know when they ought to ask. For they do it not before all: and this Matthew shows by saying, ”And they came.” And, as to this assertion not being conjecture, Mark hath expressed it more distinctly, by saying, that ”they came to Him privately.” This then His brethren and His mother should also have done, and not have called Him out, and made a display. But mark their kindly affection also, how they have much regard for the others, and seek their good first, and then their own. ”For why,” it is said, ”speakest Thou unto them in parables?” They did not say, why speakest thou unto us in parables? Yea, and on other occasions also their kindliness towards men appears in many ways; as when they say, ”Send the multitude away;”3 and, ”Knowest thou that they were offended ?”

What then saith Christ? ”Because it is given unto you,” so He speaks, ”to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not given.” But this He said, not bringing in necessity, or any allotment made causelessly and at random, but implying them to be the authors of all their own evils, and wishing to represent that the thing is a gift, and a grace bestowed from above. It by no means follows, however, because it is a gift, that therefore free will is taken away; and this is evident from what comes after. To this purpose, in order that neither the one sort may despair, nor the other grow careless, upon being told that ”it is given,” He signifies the beginning to be with ourselves. ”For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away, even that which he seemeth to have.”

And although the saying be full of much obscurity, yet it indicates unspeakable justice. For what He saith is like this: When any one hath forwardness and zeal, there shall be given unto him all things on God’s part also: but if he be void of these, and contribute not his own share, neither are God’s gifts bestowed. For even ”what he seemeth to have,” so He saith, ”shall be taken away from him;” God not so much taking it away, as counting him unworthy of His gifts. This we also do; when we see any one listening carelessly, and when with much

entreaty we cannot persuade him to attend, it remains for us to be silent. For if we are still to go on, his carelessness is aggravated. But him that is striving to learn, we lead on, and pour in much. And well said He, "Even that which he seemeth to have." For he hath not really even this.

Then He also made what He had said more distinct, pointing out the meaning of, "To him that hath, shall be given, but from him that hath not, even that which he seemeth to have, shall be taken away." "Therefore," saith He, "speak I to them in parables; because they seeing see not." "It were meet then," one may say, "to have opened their eyes, if they see not." Nay, if the blindness were natural, it were meet to open them; but because it was a voluntary and self-chosen blindness, therefore He said not simply, "They see not," but, "seeing, they see not;" so that the blindness is of their own wickedness. For they saw even devils cast out, and said, "By Beelzebub, prince of the devils, He casteth out the devils." They heard Him guiding them unto God, and evincing His great unanimity with Him, and they say, "This man is not of God." Since then the judgment they pronounced was contrary both to their sight and hearing, therefore, saith He, the very hearing do I take away from them. For they derive thence no advantage, but rather greater condemnation. For they not only disbelieved, but found fault also, and accused, and laid snares. However, He saith not this, for it is not His will to give disgust in accusing them. Therefore neither at the beginning did He so discourse to them, but with much plainness; but because they perverted themselves, thenceforth He speaks in parables.

2. After this, lest any one should suppose His words to be a mere accusation, and lest men should say, Being our enemy He is bringing these charges and calumnies against us; He introduces the prophet also, pronouncing the same judgment as Himself. "For in them is fulfilled," saith He, "the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive." Seest thou the prophet likewise, accusing them with this same accuracy? for neither did He say, Ye see not, but "Ye shall see and not perceive;" nor again, Ye shall not hear, but "Ye shall hear and not understand." So that they first inflicted the loss on themselves, by stopping their ears, by closing their eyes, by making their heart fat. For they not only failed to hear, but also "heard heavily," and they did this, He saith,

"Lest at any time they should be converted, and I should heal them;" describing their aggravated wickedness, and their determined defection from Him. And this He saith to draw them unto Him, and to provoke them, and to signify that if they would convert He would heal them: much as if one should say, "He would not look at me, and I thank him; for if he had vouchsafed me this, I should straightway have given in:" and this he saith, to signify how he would have been reconciled. Even so then here too it is said, "Lest at any time they should convert, and I should heal them;" implying that both their conversion was possible, and that upon their repentance they might be saved, and that not for His own glory, but for their salvation, He was doing all things. For if it had not been His will that they should hear and be saved, He ought to have been silent, not to have spoken in parables; but now by

this very thing He stirs them up, even by speaking under a veil. "For God willeth not the death of the sinner, but that he should turn unto Him and live."

For in proof that our sin belongs not to nature, nor to necessity and compulsion, hear what He saith to the apostles, "But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear;" not meaning this kind of sight nor hearing, but that of the mind. For indeed these too were Jews, and brought up in the same circumstances; but nevertheless they took no hurt from the prophecy, because they had the root of His blessings well settled in them, their principle of choice, I mean, and their judgment. Seest thou that, "unto you it is given," was not of necessity? For neither would they have been blessed, unless the well-doing had been their own. For tell me not this, that it was spoken obscurely; for they might have come and asked Him, as the disciples did: but they would not, being careless and supine. Why say I, they would not? nay, they were doing the very opposite, not only disbelieving, not only not hearkening, but even waging war, and disposed to be very bitter against all He said: which He brings in the prophet laying to their charge, in the words, "They heard heavily."

But not such were these; wherefore He also blessed them. And in another way too He assures them again, saying, "For verily I say unto you, many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them;" my coming, He means; my very miracles, my voice, my teaching. For here He prefers them not to these depraved only, but even to such as have done virtuously; yea, and He affirms them to be more blessed even than they. Why can this be? Because not only do these see what the Jews saw not, but even what those of old desired to see. For they indeed beheld by faith only: but these by sight too, and much more distinctly. Seest thou how again He connects the old dispensation with the new, signifying that those of old not only knew the things to come but also greatly desired them? But had they pertained to some strange and opposing God, they would never have desired them.

"Hear ye therefore the parable of the sewer," saith He; and He speaks what we before mentioned, of carelessness and attention, of cowardice and fortitude, of wealth and voluntary poverty; pointing out the hun from the one, and the benefit from the other. Then of virtue also He brings forward different forms. For being full of love to man, He marked out not one only way, nor did He say, "unless one bring forth an hundred, he is an outcast;" but he that brings forth sixty is saved also, and not he only, but also the producer of thirty. And this He said, making out salvation to be easy.

3. And thou then, art thou unable to practise virginity? Be chaste in marriage. Art thou unable to strip thyself of thy possessions? Give of thy substance. Canst thou not bear that burden? Share thy goods with Christ. Art thou unwilling to yield Him up all? Give Him but the half, but the third part. He is thy brother, and joint-heir, make Him joint-heir with thee here too. Whatsoever thou givest Him, thou wilt give to thyself. Hearest thou not what saith the prophet? "Them that pertain to thy seed thou shalt not overlook." But if we must not overlook our kinsmen, much less our Lord, having towards thee, together with His

authority as Lord, the claim also of kindred, and many more besides. Yea, for He too hath made thee a sharer in His goods, having received nothing of thee, but having begun with this unspeakable benefit. What then can it be but extreme senselessness, not even by this gift to be made kind towards men, not even to give a return for a free gift, and less things for greater? Thus whereas He hath made thee heir of Heaven, impartest thou not to Him even of the things on earth? He, when thou hadst done no good work, but wert even an enemy, reconciled thee: and dost thou not requite Him, being even a friend and benefactor?

Yet surely, even antecedently to the kingdom, and to all the rest, even for the very fact of His giving, we ought to feel bound to Him. For so servants too, when bidding their masters to a meal, account themselves not to be giving but receiving; but here the contrary hath taken place: not the servant the Lord, but the Lord hath first bidden the servant unto His own table; and dost thou not bid Him, no not even after this? He first hath introduced thee under His own roof; dost thou not take Him in, so much as in the second place? He clad thee, being naked; and dost thou not even after this receive Him being a stranger? He first gave thee to drink out of His own cup, and dost thou not impart to Him so much as cold water? He hath made thee drink of the Holy Spirit, and dost thou not even soothe His bodily thirst? He hath made thee drink of the Spirit, when thou wast deserving of punishment; and dost thou neglect Him even when thirsty, and this when it is out of His own, that thou art to do all these things? Dost thou not then esteem it a great thing, to hold the cup out of which Christ is to drink, and to put it to His lips? Seest thou not that for the priest alone is it lawful to give the cup of His blood? But I am by no means strict about this, saith He;

but though thyself should give, I receive; though thou be a layman, I refuse it not. And I do not require such as I have given: for not blood do I seek, but cold water. Consider to whom thou art giving drink, and tremble. Consider, thou art become a priest of Christ, giving with thine own hand, not flesh but bread, not blood, but a cup of cold water. He clothed thee with a garment of salvation, and clothed thee by Himself; do thou at least by thy servant clothe Him. He made thee glorious in Heaven, do thou deliver Him from shivering, and nakedness, and shame. He made thee a fellow-citizen of angels, do thou impart to Him at least of the covering of thy roof, give house-room to Him at least as to thine own servant. "I refuse not this lodging and that, having opened to thee the whole Heaven. I have delivered thee from a most grievous prison; this I do not require again, nor do I say, deliver me; but if thou wouldest look upon me only, when I am bound, this suffices me for refreshment. When thou wert dead, I raised thee; I require not this again of thee, but I say, visit me only when sick."

Now when His gifts are so great, and His demands exceeding easy, and we do not supply even these; what deep of hell must we not deserve? Justly shall we depart into the fire that is prepared for the devil and his angels, being more insensible than any rock. For how great insensibility is it, tell me, for us, who have received, and are to receive so much, to be slaves of money, from which we shall a little while hence be separated even against our will? And others indeed have given up even their life, and shed their blood; and dost thou not even

give up thy superfluities for Heaven's sake, for the sake of so great crowns? And of what favor canst thou be worthy? of what justification? who in thy sowing of the earth, gladly pourest forth all, and in lending to men at usury sparest nothing; but in feeding thy Lord through His poor art cruel and inhuman?

Having then considered all these things, and calculated what we have received, what we are to receive, what is required of us, let us show forth all our diligence on the things spiritual. Let us become at length mild and humane, that we may not draw down on ourselves the intolerable punishment. For what is there that hath not power to condemn us? Our having enjoyed so many and such great benefits; our having no great thing required of us; our having such things required, as we shall leave here even against our will; our exhibiting so much liberality in our worldly matters. Why each one of these, even by itself, were enough to condemn us; but when they all meet together, what hope will there be of salvation? In order then that we may escape all this condemnation, let us show forth some bounty towards those who are in need. For thus shall we enjoy all the good things, both here, and there; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 46

Matthew Chapter 13, Verse 24-Matthew Chapter 13, Verse 30

”Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field. But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both therefore grow together until the harvest.” What is the difference between this, and the parable before it? There He speaks of them that have not at all holden with Him, but have started aside, and have thrown away the seed; but here He means the societies of the heretics. For in order that not even this might disturb His disciples, He foretells it also, after having taught them why He speaks in parables. The former parable then means their not receiving Him; this, their receiving corrupters. For indeed this also is a part of the devil’s craft, by the side of the truth always to bring in error, painting thereon many resemblances, so as easily to cheat the deceivable. Therefore He calls it not any other seed, but tares; which in appearance are somewhat like wheat.

Then He mentions also the manner of his device. For ”while men slept,” saith He. It is no small danger, which He hereby suspends over our rulers, to whom especially is entrusted the keeping of the field; and not the rulers only, but the subjects too. And He signifies also that the error comes after the truth, which the actual event testifies. For so after the prophets, were the false prophets; and after the apostles, the false apostles; and after Christ, Antichrist For unless the devil see what to imitate, or against whom to plot, he neither attempts, nor knows how. Now then also, having seen that ”one brought forth a hundred, another sixty, another thirty,” he proceeds after that another way. That is, not having been able to carry away what had taken root, nor to choke, nor to scorch it up, he conspires against it by another craft, privily casting in his own inventions.

And what difference is there, one may say, between them that sleep, and them that resemble the wayside? That in the latter case he immediately caught it away; yea, he suffered it not even to take root; but here more of his craft was needed. And these things Christ

saith, instructing us to be always wakeful. For, saith He, though thou quite escape those harms, there is yet another harm. For as in those instances "the wayside," and "the rock," and "the thorns," so here again sleep occasions our ruin; so that there is need of continual watchfulness. Wherefore He also said, "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." Something like this took place even at the beginning. Many of the prelates, I mean, bringing into the churches wicked men, disguised heresiarchs, gave great facility to the laying that kind of snare. For the devil needs not even to take any trouble, when he hath once planted them among us.

And how is it possible not to sleep? one may say. Indeed, as to natural sleep, it is not possible; but as to that of our moral faculty, it is possible. Wherefore Paul also said, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith." After this He points out the thing to be superfluous too, not hurtful only; in that, after the land hath been tilled, and these is no need of anything, then this enemy sows again; as the heretics also do, who for no other cause than vainglory inject their proper venom. And not by this only, but by what follows likewise, He depicts exactly all their acting. For, "When the blade was sprung up, saith He, "and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also;" which kind of thing these men also do. For at the beginning they disguise themselves; but when they have gained much confidence, and some one imparts to them the teaching of the word, then they pour out their poison.

But wherefore doth He bring in the servants, telling what hath been done? That He may pronounce it wrong to slay them. And He calls him "an enemy," because of his harm done to men. For although the despite is against us, in its origin it sprang from his enmity, not to us, but to God. Whence it is manifest, that God loves us more than we love ourselves. And see from another thing also, the malicious craft of the devil. For he did not sow before this, because he had nothing to destroy, but when all had been fulfilled, that he might defeat the diligence of the Husbandman; in such enmity against Him did he constantly act. And mark also the affection of the servants. I mean, what haste they are in at once to root up the tares, even though they do it indiscreetly; which shows their anxiety for the crop, and that they are looking to one thing only, not to the punishment of that enemy, but to the preservation of the seed sown. For of course this other is not the urgent consideration.

Wherefore how they may for the present extirpate the mischief, this is their object. And not even this do they seek absolutely, for they trust not themselves with it, but await the Master's decision, saying, "Wilt Thou?" What then doth the Master? He forbids them, saying, "Lest haply ye root up the wheat with them." And this He said, to hinder wars from arising, and blood and slaughter. For it is not right to put a heretic to death, since an implacable war would be brought into the world. By these two reasons then He restrains them; one, that the wheat be not hurt; another, that punishment will surely overtake them, if incurably diseased. Wherefore, if thou wouldest have them punished, yet without harm to the wheat, I bid thee wait for the proper season. But what means, "Lest ye root up the wheat with them?" Either He means this, If ye are to take up arms, and to kill the heretics, many of the saints also must needs be overthrown with them; or that of the very tares it is

likely that many may change and become wheat. If therefore ye root them up beforehand, ye injure that which is to become wheat, slaying some, in whom there is yet room for change and improvement. He doth not therefore forbid our checking heretics, and stopping their mouths, and taking away their freedom of speech, and breaking up their assemblies and confederacies, but our killing and slaying them.

But mark thou His gentleness, how He not only gives sentence and forbids, but sets down reasons. What then, if the tares should remain until the end? "Then I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them." He again reminds them of John's words, introducing Him as judge; and He saith, So long as they stand by the wheat, we must spare them, for it is possible for them even to become wheat but when they have departed, having profiled nothing, then of necessity the inexorable punishment will overtake them. "For I will say to the reapers," saith He, "Gather ye together first the tares." Why, "first?" That these may not be alarmed, as though the wheat were carried off with them. "And bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn." 2. "Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The Kingdom of Heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed."

That is, since He had said, that of the crop three parts are lost, and but one saved, and in the very part again which is saved so great damage ensues; lest they should say, "And who, and how many will be the faithful?" this fear again He removes, by the parable of the mustard seed leading them on to belief, and signifying that in any case the gospel shall be spread abroad. Therefore He brought forward the similitude of this herb, which has a very strong resemblance to the subject in hand; "Which indeed is the least," He saith, "of all seeds, but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." Thus He meant to set forth the most decisive sign of its greatness. "Even so then shall it be with respect to the gospel too," saith He. Yea, for His disciples were weakest of all, and least of all; but nevertheless, because of the great power that was in them, It hath been unfolded in every part of the world.

After this He adds the leaven to this similitude, saying, "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures ofmeal, until the whole was leavened." For as this converts the large quantity of meal into its own quality, even so shall ye convert the whole world. And see His wisdom, in that He brings in things natural, implying that as the one cannot fail to take place, so neither the other. For say not this to me: "What shall we be able to do, twelve men, throwing ourselves upon so vast a multitude?" Nay, for this very thing most of all makes your might conspicuous, that ye mix with the multitude and are not put to flight. As therefore the leaven then leavens the lump when it comes close to the meal, and not simply close, but so as to be actually mixed with it (for He said not, "put," simply, but "hid"); so also ye, when ye cleave to your enemies, and are made one with them, then shall ye get the better of them. And as the leaven, though it be buried, yet is not destroyed, but by little and little transmutes all into its own condition; of like sort

will the event be here also, with respect to the gospel. Fear ye not then, because I said there would be much injurious dealing: for even so shall ye shine forth, and get the better of all.

But by "three measures," here, He meant many. for He is wont to take this number for a multitude. And marvel not, if discoursing about the kingdom, He made mention of a little seed and of leaven; for He was discoursing with men inexperienced and ignorant, and such as needed to be led on by those means. For so simple were they, that even after all this, they required a good deal of explanation. Where now are the children of the Greeks? Let them learn Christ's power, seeing the verity of His deeds, and on either ground let them adore Him, that He both foretold so great a thing, and fulfilled it. Yea, for it is He that put the power into the leaven. With this intent He mingled also with the multitude those who believe on Him, that we might impart unto the rest of our wisdom. Let no one therefore reprove us for being few. For great is the power of the gospel, and that which hath been once leavened, becomes leaven again for what remains. And as a spark, when it hath caught in timber, makes what hath been burnt up already increase the flame, and so proceeds to the rest; even so the gospel likewise. But He said not fire, but "leaven." Why might this be? Because in that case the whole effect is not of the fire, but partly of the timber too that is kindled, but in this the leaven doth the whole work by itself.

3. Now if twelve men leavened the whole world, imagine how great our baseness, in that when we being so many are not able to amend them that remain; we, who ought to be enough for ten thousand worlds, and to become leaven to them. "But they," one may say, "were apostles." And what then? Were they not partakers with thee? Were they not brought up in cities? Did they not enjoy the same benefits? Did they not practise trades? What, were they angels? What, came they down from Heaven.? "But they had signs," it will be said. It was not the signs that made them admirable. How long shall we use those miracles as cloaks for our own remissness? Behold the choir of the Saints, that they shone not by those miracles. Why, many who had actually cast out devils, because they wrought iniquity, instead of being admired, did even incur punishment.

And what can it be then, he will say, that showed them great? Their contempt of wealth, their despising glory, their freedom from worldly things. Since surely, had they wanted these qualities, and been slaves of their passions, though they had raised ten thousand dead, so far from doing any good, they would even have been accounted deceivers. Thus it is their life, so bright on all sides, which also draws down the grace of the Spirit.

What manner of miracle did John work, that he fixed on himself the attention of so many cities? For as to the fact that he did no wondrous works, hear the evangelist, saying, "John did no miracle." And whence did Elias become admirable? Was it not from his boldness towards the king? from his zeal towards God? from his voluntary poverty? from his garment of sheep's skin, and his cave, and his mountains? For his miracles He did after all these. And as to Job, what manner of miracle did he work in sight of the devil, that he was amazed at him? No miracle indeed, but a life that shone and displayed an endurance firmer than any adamant. What manner of miracle did David, yet being young, that God should say,

"I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart?" And Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, what dead body did they raise? what leper did they cleanse? Knowest thou not that the miracles, except we be sober, do even harm in many cases? Thus many of the Corinthians were severed one from another; thus many of the Romans were carried away with pride; thus was Simon cast out. Thus he, who at a certain time had a desire to follow Christ, was rejected, when he had been told, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air nests." For each of these, one aiming at the wealth, another at the glory, which the miracles bring, fell away and perished. But care of practice, and love of virtue, so far from generating such a desire, doth even take it away when it exists.

And Himself too, when He was making laws for His own disciples, what said He? "Do miracles, that men may see you"? By no means. But what? "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." And to Peter again He said not, "If thou lovest me," "do miracles," but "feed my sheep." And whereas He everywhere distinguishes him with James and John above all the rest, for what, I pray thee, did He distinguish them? For their miracles? Nay, all alike cleansed the lepers, and raised the dead; and to all alike He gave that authority. Whence then had these the advantage? From the virtue in their soul. Seest thou how everywhere practice is required, and the proof by works? "For by their fruits," saith He, "ye shall know them." And what commends our own life? Is it indeed a display of miracles, or the perfection of an excellent conversation? Very evidently it is the second; but as to the miracles, they both have their origin from hence, and terminate herein. For both He that shows forth an excellent life, draws to Himself this gift, and he that receives the gift, receives it for this end, that he may amend other men's lives. Since even Christ for this end wrought those miracles, that having made Himself thereby credible, and drawn men unto Him, He might bring virtue into our life. Wherefore also He lays more stress of the two on this. For He is not at all satisfied with the signs only, but He also threatens hell, and promises a kingdom, and lays down those startling laws, and all things He orders to this end, that He may make us equal to the angels.

And why say I, that Christ doth all for this object? Why, even thou, should one give thee thy choice, to raise dead men by His name, or to die for His name; which I pray thee, of the two wouldest thou rather accept? Is it not quite plain, the latter? and yet the one is a miracle, the other but a work. And what, if one offered thee to make grass gold, or to be able to despise all wealth as grass, wouldest thou not rather accept this latter? and very reasonably. For mankind would be attracted by this more than any way. For if they saw the grass changed into gold, they would covet themselves also to acquire that power, as Simon did, and the love of money would be increased in them; but if they saw us all contemning and neglecting gold, as though it were grass, they would long ago have been delivered from this disease.

4. Seest thou that our practice has more power to do good? By practice I mean, not thy fasting, nor yet thy strewing sackcloth and ashes under thee, but if thou despise wealth, as

it ought to be despised; if thou be kindly affectioned, if thou give thy bread to the hungry, if thou control anger, if thou cast out vainglory, if thou put away envy. So He Himself used to teach: for, "Learn of me," saith He, "for I am meek and lowly in heart." He did not say, "for I fasted," although surely He might have spoken of the forty days, yet He saith not this; but, "I am meek and lowly in heart." And again, when sending them out, He said not, "Fast," but, "Eat of all that is set before you." With regard to wealth, however, He required of them great strictness, saying, "Provide not gold, or silver, or brass, in your purses."

And all this I say, not to depreciate fasting, God forbid, but rather highly to commend it. But I grieve when other duties being neglected, ye think it enough for salvation, having but the last place in the choir of virtue. For the greatest thing is charity, and moderation, and almsgiving; which hits a higher mark even than virginity. Wherefore, if thou desire to become equal to the apostles, there is nothing to hinder thee. For to have arrived at this virtue only suffices for thy not at all falling short of them. Let no one therefore wait for miracles. For though the evil spirit is grieved, when he is driven out of a body, yet much more so, when he sees a soul delivered from sin. For indeed this is his great power. This power caused Christ to die, that He might put an end to it. Yea, for this brought in death; by reason of this all things have been turned upside down. If then thou remove this, thou hast cut out the nerves of the devil, thou hast "bruised his head," thou hast put an end to all his might, thou hast scattered his host, thou hast exhibited a sign greater than all signs.

The saying is not mine, but the blessed Paul's. For when he had said, "Covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet show I unto you a more excellent way;" he did not speak next of a sign, but of charity, the root of all our good things. If then we practise this, and all the self-denial that flows from it. we shall have no need of signs; even as on the other hand, if we do not practise it, we shall gain nothing by the signs. Bearing in mind then all this, let us imitate those things whereby the apostles became great. And whereby did they become great? Hear Peter, saying, "Behold we have forsaken all. and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?" Hear also Christ saying to them, Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones," and, "every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or father, or mother, shall receive an hundredfold in this world, and shall inherit everlasting life." From all worldly things, therefore, let us withdraw ourselves, and dedicate ourselves to Christ, that we may both be made equal to the apostles according to His declaration, and may enjoy eternal life; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 47

Matthew Chapter 13, Verse 34 And Matthew Chapter 13, Verse 35

”All these things spake Jesus unto the multitudes in parables, and without a parable spake He not unto them; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things that have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.” But Mark saith, ”As they were able to hear it, He spake the word unto them in parables.” Then pointing out that He is not making a new thing, He brings in the Prophet also, proclaiming beforehand this His manner of teaching. And to teach us the purpose of Christ, how He discoursed in this manner, not that they might be ignorant, but that He might lead them to inquiry, he added, ”And without a parable spake He nothing unto them.” Yet surely He did say many things without a parable; but then nothing. And for all this no man asked Him questions, whereas the Prophets, we know, they were often questioning: as Ezekiel, for instance; as many others: but these did no such thing. Yet surely His sayings were enough to cast them into perplexity, and to stir them up to the inquiry; for indeed a very sore punishment was threatened by those parables: however, not even so were they moved.

Wherefore also He left them and went away. For, ”Then,” saith he, ”Jesus sent the multitudes away, and went into His house.” And not one of the Scribes follows Him; whence it is clear that for no other purpose did they follow, than to take hold of Him. But when they marked not His sayings, thenceforth He let them be. ”And His disciples come unto Him, asking Him concerning the parable of the tares;” although at times wishing to learn, and afraid to ask. Whence then arose their confidence in this instance? They had been told, ”To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven;” and they were emboldened. Wherefore also they ask in private; not as grudging the multitude, but observing their Master’s law. For, ”To these,” saith He, ”it is not given.” And why may it be that they let pass the parable of the leaven, and of the mustard seed, and inquire concerning this? They let those pass, as being plainer; but about this, as having an affinity to that before spoken, and as setting forth something more than it, they are desirous to learn (since He would not have spoken the same to them a second time); for indeed they saw how severe was the threatening therein uttered. Wherefore neither doth He blame them, but rather completes His previous statements.

And, as I am always saying, the parables must not be explained throughout word for word, since many absurdities will follow; this even He Himself is teaching us here in thus interpreting this parable. Thus He saith not at all who the servants are that came to Him, but, implying that He brought them in, for the sake of some order, and to make up the picture, He omits that part, and interprets those that are most urgent and essential, and for the sake of which the parable was spoken; signifying Himself to be Judge and Lord of all. "And He answered," so it is said, "and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world, the good seed, these are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that soweth them is the devil; and the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are angels. As there fore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of Man shall send His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into the furnace of fire, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

For whereas He Himself is the sower, and that of His own field, and out of His own kingdom He gathers, it is quite clear that the present world also is His. But mark His unspeakable love to man, and His leaning to bounty, and His disinclination to punishment; in that, when He sows, He sows in His own person, but when He punishes, it is by others, that is, by the angels. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Not because it will be just so much only, but because this star is surpassed in brightness by none that we know. He uses the comparisons that are known to us. And yet surely elsewhere He saith, the harvest is already come; as when He saith of the Samaritans, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" And again, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few." How then saith He there, that the harvest is already come, while here He said, it is yet to be? According to another signification.

And how having elsewhere said, "One soweth, and another reapeth," doth He here say, it is Himself that soweth? Because there again, He was speaking, to distinguish the apostles, not from Himself, but from the prophets, and that in the case of the Jews and Samaritans. Since certainly it was He who sowed through the prophets also. And at times He calls this self-same thing both harvest and sowing, naming it with relation, now to one thing, now to another. Thus when He is speaking of the conviction and obedience of His converts, He calls the thing "a harvest," as though He had accomplished all; but when He is seeking after the fruit of their hearing, He calls it seed, and the end, harvest. And how saith He elsewhere, that "the righteous are caught up first?" Because they are indeed caught up first, but Christ being come, those others are given over to punishment, and then the former depart into, the kingdom of heaven. For because they must be in heaven, but He Himself is to come and judge all men here; having passed sentence upon these, like some king He rises with His friends, leading them to that blessed portion. Seest thou that the punishment is twofold, first to be burnt up, and then to fall from that glory?

2. But wherefore cloth He still go on, when the others have withdrawn, to speak to these also in parables? They had become wiser by His sayings, so as even to understand. At any rate, to them He saith afterwards, "Have ye understood all these things? They say unto Him, Yea, Lord." So completely, together with its other objects, did the parable effect this too, that it made them more clear sighted. What then saith He again? "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field, the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a merchant man seeking goodly pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." Much as in the other place, the mustard seed and the leaven have but some little difference from each other, so here also these two parables, that of the treasure and that of the pearl. This being of course signified by both, that we ought to value the gospel above all things. And the former indeed, of the leaven and of the mustard seed, was spoken with a view to the power of the gospel, and to its surely prevailing over the world; but these declare its value, and great price. For as it extends itself like mustard seed, and prevails like leaven, so it is precious like a pearl, and affords full abundance like a treasure. We are then to learn not this only, that we ought to strip ourselves of everything else, and cling to the gospel, but also that we are to do so with joy; and when a man is dispossessing himself of his goods, he is to know that the transaction is gain, and not loss.

Seest thou how both the gospel is hid in the world, and the good things in the gospel? Except thou sell all, thou buyest not; except thou have such a soul, anxious and inquiring, thou findest not. Two things therefore are requisite, abstinence from worldly matters, and watchfulness. For He saith "One seeking goodly pearls, who when he had found one of great price, sold all and bought it." For the truth is one, and not in many divisions. And much as he that hath the pearl knows indeed himself that he is rich, but others know not, many times, that he is holding it in his hand (for there is no corporeal bulk); just so also with the gospel, they that have hold of it know that they are rich, but the unbelievers, not knowing of this treasure, are in ignorance also of our wealth. 3. After this, that we may not be confident in the gospel merely preached, nor think that faith only suffices us for salvation, He utters also another, an awful parable. Which then is this? That of the net.

"For the kingdom of Heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind; which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." And wherein doth this differ from the parable of the tares? For there too the one are saved the other perish; but there, for choosing of wicked doctrines; and those Before this again, for not giving heed to His sayings, but these for wickedness of life; who are the most wretched of all, having attained to His knowledge, and being caught, but not even so capable of being saved. Yet surely He saith elsewhere, that the shepherd Himself separates them, but here He saith the angels do this; and so with respect to the tares. How then is it? At one time He discourses to them in a way more suited to their dullness, at another time in a higher strain.

And this parable He interprets without so much as being asked, but of His own motion He explained it by one part of it, and increased their awe. For lest, on being told, "They east the bad away," thou shouldest suppose that ruin to be without danger; by His interpretation He signified the punishment, saying, "They will cast them into the furnace." And He declared the gnashing of teeth, and the anguish, that it is unspeakable. Seest thou how many are the ways of destruction? By the rock, by the thorns, by the wayside, by the tares, by the net. Not without reason therefore did He say, "Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go away by it." 4. Having then uttered all this, and concluded His discourse in a tone to cause fear, and signified that these are the majority of cases (for He dwelt more on them). He saith,

"Have ye understood al! these things? They say unto Him, Yea, Lord." Then because they understood, He again praises them, saying, "Therefore every Scribe, which is instructed in the Kingdom of Heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." Wherefore elsewhere also He saith, "I will send you wise men and scribes." Seest thou how so far from excluding the Old Testament, He even commends it, and speaks publicly in favor of it, calling it "a treasure"? So that as many as are ignorant of the divine Scriptures cannot be "householders;" such as neither have of themselves, nor receive of others, but neglect their own case, perishing with famine. And not these only, but the heretics too, are excluded from this blessing. For they bring not forth things new and old. For they have not the old things, wherefore neither have they the new; even as they who have not the new, neither have they the old, but are deprived of both. For these are bound up and interwoven one with another.

Let us then hear, as many of us as neglect the reading of the Scriptures, to what harm we are subjecting ourselves, to what poverty. For when are we to apply ourselves to the real practice of virtue, who do not so much as know the very laws according to which our practice should be guided? But while the rich, those who are mad about wealth, are constantly shaking out, their garments, that they may not become moth-eaten; dost thou, seeing forgetfulness worse than any moth wasting thy soul, neglect conversing with books? dost thou not thrust away from thee the pest, adorn thy soul, look continually upon the image of virtue, and acquaint thyself with her members and her head? For she too hath a head and members more seemly than any graceful and beautiful body. What then, saith one, is the head of virtue? Humility. Wherefore Christ also begins with it, saying, "Blessed are the poor." This head hath not locks and ringlets, but beauty, such as to gain God's favor. For, "Unto whom shall I look," saith He, "but unto him that is meek and humble, and trembleth at my words?" And, "Mine eyes are upon the meek of the earth." And, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a contrite heart." This head, instead of locks, and flowing hair, bears sacrifices acceptable to God. It is a golden altar, and a spiritual place of sacrifice; "For a contrite spirit is a sacrifice to God." This is the mother of wisdom. If a man have this, he will have the rest also.

Hast thou seen a head such as thou hadst never seen? Wilt thou see the face too, or rather mark it? Mark then for the present its color, how ruddy, and blooming, and very engag-

ing; and observe what are its ingredients. "Well, and what are they?" Shame-facedness and blushing. Wherefore also some one saith, "Before a shamefaced man shall go favor." This sheds much beauty over the other members also. Though thou mix ten thousand colors, thou wilt not produce such a bloom. And if thou wilt see the eyes also, behold them exactly delineated with decency and temperance. Wherefore they become also so beautiful and sharpsighted, as to behold even the Lord Himself. For, "Blessed," saith He, "are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." And her mouth is wisdom and understanding, and the knowledge of spiritual hymns. And her heart, acquaintance with Scripture, and maintenance of sound doctrines, and benevolence, and kindness. And as without this last there is no living, so without that other is never any salvation. Yea, for from that all her excellencies have birth. She hath also for feet and hands the manifestations of her good works. She hath a soul too, godliness. She hath likewise a bosom of gold, and firmer than adamant, even fortitude; and all may be taken captive more easily than that bosom may be riven asunder. And the spirit that is in the brain and heart, is charity

5. Wilt thou that in her actual deeds also I show thee her image? Consider, I pray thee, this very evangelist: although we have not his whole life in writing, nevertheless even from a few facts one may see his image shine forth. First, as to his having been lowly and contrite, hear him, after his gospel, calling himself a publican; for his being also merciful, see him stripping himself of all and following Jesus; and as to his piety, it is evident from his doctrines. And his wisdom again it is easy to see from the gospel which he composed, and his charity (for he cared for the whole world); and the manifestation of his good works, from the throne on which he is to sit; and his courage too, "by his departing with joy from the presence of the council."

Let us imitate then this virtue, and most of all his humility and almsgiving, without which one cannot be saved. And this is shown by the five virgins, and together with them by the Pharisee. For without virginity indeed it is possible to see the kingdom, but without almsgiving it cannot be. For this is among the things that are essential, and hold all together. Not unnaturally then have we called it the heart of virtue. But this heart, unless it supply breath to all, is soon extinguished. In the same way then as the fountain also, if it confine its streams to itself, grows putrid; so it is with the rich also, when they keep their possessions to themselves. Wherefore even in our common conversation we say, "great is the consumption of wealth with such a man;" instead of saying, "great is the abundance, great the treasure." For in truth there is a consumption, not of the possessors only, but of the riches themselves. Since both garments laid by spoil, and gold is cankered, and corn is eaten up, and the soul too of their owner is more than they all cankered and corrupted by the cares of them.

And if thou be willing to produce in the midst a miser's soul; like a garment eaten by innumerable worms, and not having any sound part, even so wilt thou find it, perforated on all sides by cares; rotted, cankered by sins. But not such the poor man's soul, the soul of him, I mean, that is voluntarily poor; but it is resplendent as gold, it shines like a pearl, and it blooms like a rose. For no moth is there, no thief is there, no worldly care, but as angels

converse, so do they. Wouldest thou see the beauty of this soul? Wouldest thou acquaint thyself with the riches of poverty? He commands not men, but he commands evil spirits. He stands not at a king's side, but he hath taken his stand near to God. He is the comrade, not of men, but of angels. He hath not chests, two, or three, or twenty, but such an abundance as to account the whole world as nothing. He hath not a treasure, but heaven. He needs not slaves, or rather hath his passions for slaves, hath for slaves the motives that rule over kings. For that which commands him who wears the purple, that motive shrinks before him. And royalty, and gold, and all such things, he laughs at, as at children's toys; and like hoops, and dice, and heads, and balls, so doth he count all these to be contemptible. For he hath an adorning, which they who play with these things cannot even see.

What then can be superior to this poor man? He hath at least heaven for his pavement; but if the pavement be like this, imagine the roof! But hath he not horses and chariots? Why, what need hath he of these, who is to be borne upon the clouds, and to be with Christ? Having these things then impressed on our minds, let us, both men and women, seek after that wealth, and the plenty that cannot be rifled; that we may attain also unto the kingdom of heaven, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 48

Matthew Chapter 13, Verse 53

"And it came to pass, that, when Jesus had finished these parables, He departed thence." Wherefore said He, "these"? Because He was to speak others besides. And wherefore, again, doth He depart? Desiring to sow the word everywhere. "And when He was come into His own country, He taught them in their synagogue." And what doth he now call His country? As it seems to me, Nazareth. "For He did not many mighty works there," it is said, but in Capernaum He did miracles: wherefore He said also, "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto Heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day."

But having come there, while He slackens somewhat in His miracles; so as not to inflame them unto more envy, nor to condemn them more grievously, by the aggravation of their unbelief: He yet puts forth a doctrine, having no less of wonder in it than the miracles. For these utterly senseless men, when they ought to have marvelled, and to have been amazed at the power of His words, they on the contrary hold Him cheap, because of him who seemed to be His father; yet we know they had many examples of these things in the former times, and from fathers of no note had seen illustrious children. For so David was the son of a certain mean husbandman, Jesse; and Amos, the child of a goatherd, and himself a goatherd; and Moses too, the lawgiver, had a father very inferior to himself. When they therefore, for this especially, ought to adore and be amazed, that being of such parents He spake such things, it being quite manifest, that so it was not of man's care, but of God's grace: yet they, what things they should admire Him for, for those they despise Him.

He is moreover continually frequenting the synagogues, lest if He were always abiding in the wilderness, they should the more accuse Him as making a schism, and fighting against their polity. Being amazed therefore, and in perplexity, they said, "Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these powers?" either calling the miracles powers, or even the wisdom itself. "Is not this the carpenter's son?" The greater then the marvel, and the more abundant the ground of amaze. "Is not His mother called Mary, and His brethren James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? and His sisters, are they not all with us? Whence hath this man these things? And they were offended in Him." Seest thou that Nazareth was where He was discoursing? "Are not his brethren," it is said, "such a one, and such a one?" And what of

this? Why, by this especially you ought to have been led on to faith. But envy you see is a poor base thing, and often falls foul of itself. For what things were strange and marvellous, and enough to have gained them over, these offended them.

What then saith Christ unto them? "A prophet," saith He, "is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house: and He did not," it is said, "many mighty works, because of their unbelief." But Luke saith, "And He did not there many miracles." And yet it was to be expected He should have done them. For if the feeling of wonder towards Him was gaining ground (for indeed even there He was marvelled at), wherefore did He not do them? Because He looked not to the display of Himself, but to their profit. Therefore when this succeeded not, He overlooked what concerned Himself, in order not to aggravate their punishment. And yet see after how long a time He came to them, and after how great a display of miracles: but not even so did they endure it, but were inflamed again with envy. Wherefore then did He yet do a few miracles? That they might not say, "Physician, heal thyself." That they might not say, "He is a foe and an enemy to us, and overlooks His own;" that they might not say, "If miracles had been wrought, we also should have believed." Therefore He both wrought them, and stayed: the one, that He might fulfill His own part; the other, that He might not condemn them the more.

And consider thou the power of His words, herein at least, that possessed as they were by envy, they did yet admire. And as with regard to His works, they do not find fault with what is done, but feign causes which have no existence, slaying, "In Beelzebub He casteth out the devils;" even so here too, they find no fault with the teaching, but take refuge in the meanness of His race. But mark thou, I pray thee, the Master's gentleness, how He reviles them not, but with great mildness saith, "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country." And neither here did He stop, but added, "And in his own house." To me it appears, that with covert reference to His very own brethren, He made this addition. But in Luke He puts examples also of this, saying, that neither did Elias come unto His own, but to the stranger widow; neither by Eliseus was any other leper healed, but the stranger Naaman; and Israelites neither received benefit, nor conferred benefit, but the foreigners. And these things He saith, signifying in every instance their evil disposition, and that in His case nothing new is taking place.

2. "At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus." For Herod the king, this man's father, he that slew the children, was dead. But not without a purpose doth the evangelist signify the time, but to make thee observe also the haughtiness of the tyrant, and his thoughtlessness, in that not at the beginning did he inform himself about Christ, but after a very long time. For such are they that are in places of power, and are encompassed with much pomp, they learn these things late, because they do not make much account of them. But mark thou, I pray thee, how great a thing virtue is, that he was afraid of him even when dead, and out of his fear he speaks wisely even concerning a resurrection. "For he said," it is mentioned, "unto his servants, This is John, whom I slew, he is risen from the dead, and therefore the mighty powers do work in him." Seest thou the intensity of his

fear? for neither then did he dare to publish it abroad, but he still speaks but to his own servants.

But yet even this opinion savored of the soldier, and was absurd. For many besides had risen from the dead, and no one had wrought anything of the kind. And his words seem to me to be the language both of vanity, and of fear. For such is the nature of unreasonable souls, they admit often a mixture of opposite passions. But Luke affirms that the multitudes said, "This is Elias, or Jeremias, or one of the old prophets," but he, as uttering forsooth something wiser than the rest, made this assertion. But it is probable that before this, in answer to them that said He was John (for many had said this too), he had denied it, and said, "I slew him," priding himself and glorying in it. For this both Mark and Luke report that he said, "John I beheaded." But when the rumor prevailed, then he too saith the same as the people.

Then the evangelist relates to us also the history. And what might his reason be for not introducing it as a subject by itself? Because all their labor entirely was to tell what related to Christ, and they made themselves no secondary work besides this, except it were again to contribute to the same end. Therefore neither now would they have mentioned the history were it not on Christ's account, and because Herod said, "John is risen again." But Mark saith, that Herod exceedingly honored the man, and this, when reproved. So great a thing is virtue. Then his narrative proceeds thus: "For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison, for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife. For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her. And when he would have put him to death, he feared the people, because they counted him as a prophet."

And wherefore doth he not address his discourse at all to her, but to the man? Because it depended more on him. But see how inoffensive he makes his accusation, as relating a history rather than bringing a charge. 4. "But when Herod's birth-day was kept," saith he, "the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod." O diabolical revel! O satanic spectacle! O lawless dancing! and more lawless reward for the dancing. For a murder more impious than all murders was perpetrated, and he that was worthy to be crowned and publicly honored, was slain in the midst, and the trophy of the devils was set on the table. And the means too of the victory were worthy of the deeds done. For, "The daughter of Herodias," it is said, "danced in the midst, and pleased Herod. Whereupon he swore with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask. And she being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger."

Her reproach is twofold; first, that she danced, then that she pleased him, and so pleased him, as to obtain even murder for her re ward. Seest thou how savage he was? how senseless? how foolish? in putting himself under the obligation of an oath, while to her he gives full power over her request. But when he saw the evil actually ensuing, "he was sorry," it is said; and yet in the first instance he had put him in bonds. Wherefore then is he sorry? Such is the nature of virtue, even amongst the wicked admiration and praises are its due. But alas for her madness! When she too ought to admire, yea, to bow down to him, for

trying to redress her wrong, she on the contrary even helps to arrange the plot, and lays a snare, and asks a diabolical favor. But he was afraid "for the oath's sake," it is said, "and them that sat at meat with him." And how didst thou not fear that which is more grievous? Surely if thou wast afraid to have witnesses of thy perjury, much more oughtest thou to fear having so many witnesses of a murder so lawless.

But as I think many are ignorant of the grievance itself, whence the murder had its origin, I must declare this too, that ye may learn the wisdom of the lawgiver. What then was the ancient law, which Herod indeed trampled on, but John vindicated? The wife of him that died childless was to be given to his brother. For since death was an incurable ill, and all was contrived for life's sake; He makes a law that the living brother should marry her, and should call the child that is born by the name of the dead, so that his house should not utterly perish. For if the dead were not so much as to leave children, which is the greatest mitigation of death, the sorrow would be without remedy. Therefore you see, the lawgiver devised this refreshment for those who were by nature deprived of children, and commanded the issue to be reckoned as belonging to the other.

But when there was a child, this marriage was no longer permitted. "And wherefore?" one may say, "for if it was lawful for another, much more for the brother." By no means. For He will have men's consanguinity extended, and the sources multiplied of our interest in each other. Why then, in the case also of death without offspring, did not another marry her? Because it would not so be accounted the child of the departed; but now his brother begetting it, the fiction became probable. And besides, any other man had no constraining call to build up the house of the dead, but this had incurred the claim by relationship. Forasmuch then as Herod had married his brother's wife, when she had a child, therefore John blames him, and blames him with moderation, showing together with his boldness, his consideration also. But mark thou, I pray thee, how the whole theatre was devilish. For first, it was made up of drunkenness and luxury, whence nothing healthful could come. Secondly, the spectators in it were depraved, and he that gave the banquet the worst transgressor of all. Thirdly, there was the irrational pleasure. Fourthly, the damsel, because of whom the marriage was illegal, who ought even to have hid herself, as though her mother were dishonored by her, comes making a show, and throwing into the shade all harlots, virgin as she was.

And the time again contributes no little to the reproof of this enormity. For when he ought to be thanking God, that on that day He had brought him to light, then he ventures upon those lawless acts. When one in chains ought to have been freed by him, then he adds slaughter to bonds. Hearken, ye virgins, or rather ye wives also, as many as consent to such unseemliness at other person's weddings, leaping, and bounding, and disgracing our common nature. Hearken, ye men too, as many as follow after those banquets, full of expense and drunkenness, and fear ye the gulf of the evil one. For indeed so mightily did he seize upon that wretched person just then, that he sware even to give the half of his king-

dom: this being Mark's statement, "He sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom."

Such was the value he set upon his royal power; so was he once for all made captive by his passion, as to give up his kingdom for a dance. And why marvel at these things so happening then, since even now, after the coming in of so high a wisdom, for a dance' sake many of these effeminate young men give up their very souls, and that without constraint of any oath? For being made captive by the pleasure, they are led like sheep, wheresoever the wolf may drag them; which was then the case with that frenzied man, who was guilty of two extreme acts of madness; first, in making it depend on her that was so maddened, and intoxicated with her passion, and shrinking from nothing; next, in making the deed fast with the constraint of an oath. 5. But albeit he was so wicked, that base woman was more wicked than all of them, both the damsel and the tyrant. For she was the very first contriver of all the mischiefs, and the framer of the whole plot (she who most of all ought to have been thankful to the prophet); since it was in obedience to her that her daughter both disgraced herself, and danced, and sought the murder; and Herod was entrapped by her.

Seest thou how justly Christ said, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me." For had she kept this law, she would not have trangressed so many laws, she would not have perpetrated this foul murder. For what could be worse than this brutal fierceness? to ask a murder by way of a favor, a lawless murder, a murder in the midst of a banquet, a murder publicly, and without shame? Since she went not unto him privately to speak of these things, but publicly, and with her mask thrown off, barefaced, and having got the devil to plead with her, in this guise she saith whatever she saith. Yea, and he it was that caused her at all to get credit by her dancing, and to catch Herod at that moment. For where dancing is, there is the evil one. For neither did God give us feet for this end, but that we may walk orderly: not that we may behave ourselves unseemly, not that we may jump like camels (for even they too are disagreeable when dancing, much more women), but that we may join the choirs of angels.

For if the body is base, thus making itself unseemly, much more the soul. Like this is the dancing of the demons, like this, the jesting of such as are servants of the demons. And mark too the very mode of asking. "Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger." Dost thou see her lost to all shame, become altogether the devil's? She mentions his very office, and not even so does she hide her face, but as if it were some viand she is speaking of, just so doth she ask for that sacred and blessed head to be brought in in a charger. And she doth not so much as assign a cause, for neither had she one to mention, but she claims simply to be complimented by the calamities of others. And she said not, "Bring him in here, and slay him," for she could not have endured his bold language even when he was about to die. Yea, and she dreaded to hear his awful voice, even when enduring slaughter; for not on the very point of being beheaded would he have kept silence. Therefore she saith, "Give me here in a charger," for "I long to see that tongue silent:" her object being, not simply to be rid of his reproofs, but also to trample upon him, and deride him when fallen.

Yet God endured it, and neither discharged His thunderbolt from above to scorch her shameless countenance, nor commanded the earth to open, and receive that wicked revel; at once both crowning the righteous man more signally, and leaving much consolation to them that hereafter suffer anything unjustly. 6. Let us hearken therefore, as many as suffer ill, living in virtue, at the hands of wicked men. For then too God endured that even he in the wilderness, he in the leathern girdle, in the garment of hair, the prophet, the man greater than all prophets, who had no superior among those born of women, should actually be murdered, and that by an immodest damsel, and a corrupt harlot, and all in vindicating the laws of God. These things then let us consider, and bear all nobly, whatever we may suffer. For then too this bloodthirsty and lawless woman, as far as she desired to take vengeance on him that had grieved her, so far did she prevail, and satiated all her anger, and God permitted it. And yet to her he had said nothing, nor had he accused her, but he found fault with the man only. But her conscience was a bitter accuser. Wherefore also she was led on in frenzy to greater evils, being grieved, and stung, and she disgraced all at once, herself, her daughter, her departed husband, her living paramour, and tried to surpass her former acts. For "if thou art vexed," saith she, "at his committing adultery, I make him a murderer also, and cause him to be the slayer of his reprover."

Hearken, as many as are unduly excited about women. Hearken, as many as proffer oaths about things uncertain, and give others power for your own destruction, and dig a pit for your selves. Yea, for so came this man's ruin. I mean, he surely expected her to ask some request suitable to the feast, and that being a damsel, and asking a favor at a banquet, and revel, and solemn assembly, she would ask something cheerful, and gracious, and surely not a head; and he was deceived. But nevertheless none of these things will be a plea for him. And what if she had attained the spirit of the men that fight with wild beasts? nevertheless he ought not to have been deceived, nor to have ministered to such tyrannical injunctions. For, in the first place, who would not have shuddered to see that sacred head, dropping blood, set forth at the feast? But not so the lawless Herod, nor the woman more accursed than he. For such is the nature of the unchaste among women; none so audacious and so savage as they.

For if we shudder at hearing these things, what must we suppose of the effect of that sight at the time? what of the feeling of those who sat with him at meat, on seeing blood dropping from a newly-severed head in the midst of the revel? But as for that blood-thirsty woman, and fiercer than furies, she had no feeling at that spectacle, but even took delight in it, yet if nothing else, surely the mere sight, it was to be expected, would effectually turn her cold. But no such feeling had she, the murderess, and full of thirst after prophets' blood. For such is the nature of whoredom. It makes men not wanton only, but murderous also. Those women at all events, who desire to commit adultery, are prepared even for the slaying of their injured husbands, and not one only, nor two, but ten thousand murders are they ready to venture upon. And of this sort of tragic plots there are many witnesses.

Which thing she also did at that time, looking to be concealed after this, and to hide her crime. The very contrary whereunto was the result; for John's cry was heard more loudly after these things. But wickedness looks to the present only, like fevered persons unseasonably asking for cold water. For in fact, if she had not slain her accuser, her crime would not have been so completely discovered. His disciples at least, when she had thrown him into prison, said nothing of the kind; but when she had slain him, then they were compelled to mention the cause also. For willing as they were to have concealed the adulteress, and not inclined to expose their neighbor's calamities; yet when they found themselves compelled to give an account of it, then they tell the whole crime. For lest any one should suspect that the cause of his slaughter was a discreditable one, as in the case of Theudas and Judas, they are constrained to tell the occasion also of the murder. So that the more thou wouldest dissemble a sin in this way, so much the more dost thou expose it. For sin is not hidden by the addition of sin, but by repentance and confession.

7. But see the evangelist, how he relates all without invidiousness, and as far as he can, absolutely makes out an excuse. Thus first in behalf of Herod he saith, "For the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat," and that "he was sorry;" then of the damsel, "Being before instructed of her mother," and that "she brought the head to her mother;" as though he had said, it was her command that she was fulfilling. Since not for the sufferers but for the wrongdoers do all righteous men grieve, since in fact these are they who properly speaking suffer ill. For neither was John injured, but these the centrivers of such proceedings. Them let us also imitate, and not trample upon our neighbors' sins, but so far as is right, shadow them over. Let us take to ourselves a soul severe in goodness. For so the very evangelist, speaking of a harlot and a blood-stained woman, avoided harshness, as far as might be. For neither did he say, "by the blood-stained and accursed woman," but "being before instructed of her mother," using such names as have rather an innocent sound.

But thou dost even insult and revile thy neighbor, and couldest never endure to make mention of a brother that had grieved thee in such terms, as he hath done of the harlot, but with much brutal fierceness, and re-preaches, calling him the wicked one, the malefactor, the crafty, the feel, and many other names more grievous than these. For so we make ourselves more and more like wild beasts, and talk of him as of a man of monstrous origin, vilifying, reviling, insulting. But not so the saints; they on the contrary mourn for such as sin, rather than curse them. 8. This then let us also do, and let us weep for Herodias, and for them that imitate her. For many such revels now also take place, and though John be not slain, yet the members of Christ are, and in a far more grievous way. For it is not a head in a charger that the dancers of our time ask, but the souls of them that sit at the feast. For in making them slaves, and leading them to unlawful loves, and besetting them with harlots, they do not take off the head, but slay the soul, making them adulterers, and effeminate, and whoremongers.

For thou wilt not surely tell me, that when full of wine, and drunken, and looking at a woman who is dancing and uttering base words, thou dost not feel anything towards her,

neither art hurried on to profligacy, overcome by thy lust. Nay, that awful thing befails thee, that thou "makest the members of Christ members of an harlot." For though the daughter of Herodias be not present, yet the devil, who then danced in her person, in theirs also holds his choirs now, and departs with the souls of those guests taken captive. But if ye are able to keep clear of drunkenness, yet are ye partakers of another most grievous sin; such revels being also full of much rapine. For look not, I pray thee, on the meats that are set before them, nor on the cakes; but consider whence they are gathered, and thou wilt see that it is of vexation, and covetousness, and violence, and rapine.

"Nay, ours are not from such sources," one may say. God forbid they should be: for neither do I desire it. Nevertheless, although they be clear of these, not even so are our costly feasts freed from blame. Hear, at all events, how even apart from these things the prophet finds fault with them, thus speaking, "Woe to them that drink wine racked off, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments." Seest thou how He censures luxury too? For it is not covetousness which He here lays to their charge, but prodigality only. And thou eatest to excess, Christ not even for need; thou various cakes, He not so much as dry bread; thou drinkest Thasian wine, but on Him thou hast not bestowed so much as a cup of cold water in His thirst. Thou art on a soft and embroidered bed, but He is perishing with the cold.

Wherefore, though the banquets be clear from covetousness, yet even so are they accursed, because, while for thy part thou doest all in excess, to Him thou givest not even His need; and that, living in luxury upon things that belong to Him. Why, if thou wert guardian to a child, and having taken possession of his goods, were to neglect him in extremities, thou wouldest have ten thousand accusers, and wouldest suffer the punishment appointed by the laws; and now having taken possession of the goods of Christ, and thus consuming them for no purpose, dost thou not think thou wilt have to give account? 9. And these things I say not of those who introduce harlots to their tables (for to them I have nothing to say, even as neither have I to the dogs), nor of those who cheat some, and pamper others (for neither with them have I anything to do, even as I have not with the swine and with the wolves); but of those who enjoy indeed their own property, but do not impart thereof to others; of those who spend their patrimony at random. For neither are these clear from reprehension. For how, tell me, wilt thou escape reproving and blame, while thy parasite is pampered, and the dog that stands by thee, but Christ's worth appears to thee even not equal to theirs? when the one receives so much for laughter's sake, but the other for the Kingdom of Heaven not so much as the smallest fraction thereof. And while the parasite, on saying something witty, goes away filled; this Man, who hath taught us, what if we had not learnt we should have been no better than the dogs,-is He counted unworthy of even the same treatment with such an one?

Dost thou shudder at being told it? Shudder then at the realities. Cast out the parasites, and make Christ to sit down to meat with thee. If He partake of thy salt, and of thy table, He will be mild in judging thee: He knows how to respect a man's table. Yea, if robbers know this, much more the Lord. Think, for instance, of that harlot, how at a table He justified

her, and upbraids Simon, saying, "Thou gavest me no kiss." I say, if He feed thee, not doing these things, much more will He reward thee, doing them. Look not at the poor man, that he comes to thee filthy and squalid, but consider that Christ by him is setting foot in thine house, and cease from thy fierceness, and thy relentless words, with which thou art even aspersing such as come to thee, calling them impostors, idle, and other names more grievous than these.

And think, when thou art talking so, of the parasites; what kind of works do they accomplish? in what respect do they profit thine house? Do they really make thy dinner pleasant to thee? pleasant, by their being beaten and saying foul words? Nay, what can be more unpleasing than this, when thou smitest him that is made after God's likeness, and from thine insolence to him gatherest enjoyment for thyself, making thine house a theatre, and filling thy banquet with stage-players, thou who art well born and free imitating the actors with their heads shaven? For among them too is laughter, and rude blows. These things then dost thou call pleasure, I pray thee, which are deserving of many tears, of much mourning and lamentation? And when it were fit to urge them to a good life, to give timely advice, dost thou lead them on to perjuries, and disorderly language, and call the thing a delight? and that which procures hell, dost thou account a subject of pleasure? Yea, and when they are at a loss for witty sayings, they pay the whole reckoning wits oaths and false swearing. Are these things then worthy of laughter, and not of lamentations and tears? Nay, who would say so, that hath understanding?

And this I say, not forbidding them to be fed, but not for such a purpose. Nay, let their maintenance have the motive of kindness, not of cruelty; let it be compassion, not insolence. Because he is a poor man, feed him; because Christ is fed, feed him; not for introducing satanical sayings, and disgracing his own life. Look not at him outwardly laughing, but examine his conscience, and then thou wilt see him uttering ten thousand imprecations against himself, and groaning, and wailing. And if he do not show it, this also is due to thee. 10. Let the companions of thy meals then be men that are poor and free, not perjured persons, nor stage-players. And if thou must needs ask of them a requital for their food, enjoin them, should they see anything done that is amiss, to rebuke, to admonish, to help thee in thy care over thine household, in the government of thy servants. Hast thou children? Let these be joint fathers to them, let them divide thy charge with thee, let them yield thee such profits as God loveth. Engage them in a spiritual traffic. And if thou see one needing protection, bid them succor, command them to minister. By these do thou track the strangers out, by these clothe the naked, by these send to the prison, put an end to the distresses of others.

Let them give thee, for their food, this requital, which profits both thee and them, and carries with it no condemnation. Hereby friendship also is more closely riveted. For now, though they seem to be loved, yet for all that they are ashamed, as living without object in thy house; but if they accomplish these purposes, both they will be more pleasantly situated, and thou wilt have more satisfaction in maintaining them, as not spending thy money without fruit;

and they again will dwell with thee in boldness and due freedom, and thy house, instead of a theatre, will become to thee a church, and the devil will be put to flight, and Christ will enter, and the choir of the angels. For where Christ is, there are the angels too, and where Christ and the angels are, there is Heaven, there is a light more cheerful than this of the sun.

And if thou wouldest reap yet another consolation through their means, command them, when thou art at leisure, to take their books and read the divine law. They will have more pleasure in so ministering to you, than in the other way. For these things add respect both to thee and to them, but those bring disgrace upon all together; upon thee as an insolent person and a drunkard, upon them as wretched and gluttonous. For if thou feed in order to insult them, it is worse than if thou hadst put them to death; but if for their good and profit, it is more useful again than if thou hadst brought them back from their way to execution. And now indeed thou dost disgrace them more than thy servants, and thy servants enjoy more liberty of speech, and freedom of conscience, than they do; but then thou wilt make them equal to the angels.

Set free therefore both them and thine own self, and take away the name of parasite, and call them companions of thy meals; cast away the appellation of flatterers, and bestow on them that of friends. With this intent indeed did God make our friendships, not for evil to the beloved and loving, but for their good and profit. But these friendships are more grievous than any enmity. For by our enemies, if we will, we are even profiled; but by these we must needs be harmed, no question of it. Keep not then friends to teach thee harm; keep not friends who are enamored rather of thy table than of thy friendship. For all such persons, if thou retrench thy good living, retrench their friendship too; but they that associate with thee for virtue's sake, remain continually, enduring every change. And besides, the race of the parasites doth often take revenge upon thee, and bring upon thee an ill fame. Hence at least I know many respectable persons to have got bad characters, and some have been evil reported of for sorceries, some for adulteries and corrupting of youths. For whereas they have no work to do, but spend their own life unprofitably; their ministry is suspected by the multitude as being the same with that of corrupt youths.

Therefore, delivering ourselves both from evil report, and above all from the hell that is to come, and doing the things that are well-pleasing to God, let us put an end to this devilish custom, that "both eating and drinking we may do all things to the glory of God," and enjoy the glory that cometh from Him; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 49

Matthew Chapter 14, Verse 13

"But when Jesus heard of it, He departed thence by ship into a desert place apart; and when the multitudes had heard thereof, they followed Him on foot out of all the cities." See Him on every occasion "departing," both when John was delivered up, and when he was slain, and when the Jews heard that He was making more disciples. For it is His will ordinarily to conduct things after the manner of a man, the time not yet calling Him to reveal His Godhead plainly. Wherefore also He bade His disciples "tell no man that He is the Christ;" for His will was that this should be better known after His resurrection. Wherefore upon those of the Jews that were for a time obstinate in their unbelief He was not very severe, but even disposed to be indulgent to them. And on retiring, He departs not into a city, but into a wilderness, and in a vessel, so that no man should follow.

But do thou mark, I pray thee, how the disciples of John had now come to be more attached to Jesus. For it was they that told Him of the event; for indeed they have left all, and take refuge henceforth in Him. Thus, besides their calamity, His provision before made in that answer did no small good. But wherefore did He not retire before they brought Him the tidings, when yet He knew the fact before they reported it? To signify all means the reality of His economy. For not by His appearance only, but by His actions He would have this confirmed, because He knew the devil's craft, and that he would leave nothing undone to destroy this doctrine. He then for this end retires; but the multitudes not even so withdraw themselves from Him, but they follow, riveted to Him, and not even John's tragical end alarmed them. So great a thing is earnest desire, so great a thing is love; in such wise doth it overcome and dispel all dangers.

Therefore they straightway also received their reward. For "Jesus," it is said, "went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and He healed their sick." For great as their assiduity was, yet nevertheless His doings exceeded what any diligence could earn. Wherefore He sets forth also His motive for so healing them, His mercy, intense mercy: and He healeth all. And He requires not faith here. For both by coming to Him, and by leaving their cities, and by diligently seeking Him, and by abiding with Him even when hunger was pressing, they display their own faith. But He is about to feed them also. And He doth not this of Himself, but waits to be entreated; on every occasion, as I

have said, maintaining this rule, not to spring onward to His miracles, preventing them, but upon some call. And why did none of the multitude come near and speak for them? They reverenced Him exceedingly, and felt not even their hunger, through their longing to stay with Him. Neither indeed do His disciples, when they were come to Him, say, "Feed them;" for as yet they were rather in an imperfect state; but what?

"And when it was evening,' it is said, "His disciples came to Him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now passed; send the multitude away, that they may go and buy themselves victuals." For if even after the miracle they forgot what had been done, and after the baskets, supposed Him to be speaking of loaves, when He gave the name of "leaven" to the doctrine of the Pharisees; much less, when they had never yet had experience of such a miracle, would they have expected any such thing. And yet He had made a beginning by actually healing many sick; but nevertheless, not even from this did they expect the miracle of the loaves; so imperfct were they as yet. But mark thou, I pray, the Teacher's skill, how distinctly He summons them on towards believing. For He said not at once, "I feed them;" which indeed would not have been easily received; but what?

"But Jesus," so it is written, "said unto them, "They need not depart; give ye them to eat." He said not, "I give them," but, "Give ye them;" for as yet their regard to Him was as to a man. But they not even so are awakened, but still reason as with a man, saying, "We have but five loaves, and two fishes." Wherefore Mark also saith, "They understood not the saying, for their heart was hardened." They continuing therefore to crawl on the ground, then at length He brings in His own part, and saith, "Bring them hither to me." For although the place be desert, yet He that feeds the world is here; and although the time be now past, yet He that is not subject to time is discoursing with you. But John saith also, that they were "barley loaves," not mentioning it without object, but teaching us to trample under foot the pride of costly living. Such was the diet of the prophets also.

2. "He took therefore the five loaves, and the two fishes, and commanded the multitude," it is said, "to sit down upon the grass, and looking up to Heaven, He blessed, and brake, and gave to His disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat and were filled, and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children. Wherefore did He look up to Heaven, and bless? It was to be believed of Him, both that He is of the Father, and that He is equal to Him. But the proofs of these things seemed to oppose one another. For while His equality was indicated by His doing all with authority, of His origin from the Father they could no otherwise be persuaded, than by His doing all with great lowliness, and with reference to Him, and invoking Him on His works. Wherefore we see that He neither did these actions only, nor those, that both might be confirmed; and now He works miracles with authority, now with prayer.

Then again, that what He did might not seem an inconsistency, in the lesser things He looks up to Heaven, but in the greater doth all with authority; to teach thee in the lesser also, that not as receiving power from elsewhere, but as honoring Him that begat Him, so

He acts. For example: when He forgave sins, and opened paradise, and brought in the thief, and most utterly set aside the old law, and raised innumerable dead, and bridled the sea, and reproved the un-uttered thoughts of men, and created an eye;-which are achievements of God only and of none else;-we see Him in no instance praying: but when He provided for the loaves to multiply themselves, a far less thing than all these, then He looks up to Heaven; at once establishing these truths which I have spoken of, and instructing us not to touch a meal, until we have given thanks to Him who giveth us this food.

And why doth He not make it of things that are not? Stopping the mouth of Marcion, and of Manichaeans, who alienate His creation from Him, and teaching by His very works, that even all the things that are seen are His works and creatures, and signifying that it is Himself who gives the fruits, who said at the beginning, "Let the earth put forth the herb of grass," and "Let the waters bring forth things moving with living souls." For this is not at all a less work than the other. For though those were made of things that are not, yet nevertheless were they of water; and it was no greater thing to produce fruits out of the earth, and moving things with life out of the water, than out of five loaves to make so many; and of fishes again, which was a sign that He was ruler both of the earth and of the sea.

Thus, since the sick were constantly the subject of His miracles, He works also a general benefit, that the many might not be spectators only of what befell others, but themselves also partakers of the gift. And that which in the wilderness seemed to the Jews marvellous, (they said at least, "Can He give bread also? or prepare a table in the wilderness?)" this He shows forth in His works. With this view also He leads them into the wilderness, that the miracle might be very far beyond suspicion, and that no one might think that any village lying near contributed ought to the meal. For this reason He mentions the hour also, not the place only. And another thing too we learn, the self-restraint of the disciples which they practised in necessary things, and how little they accounted of food. For being twelve, they had five loaves only and two fishes; so secondary to them were the things of the body: so did they cling to the things spiritual only.

And not even that little did they hold fast, but gave up even it when asked. Whereby we should be taught, that though we have but little, this too we ought to give up to them that are in need. Thus, when commanded to bring the five loaves, they say not, "and whence are we to have food? whence to appease our own hunger?" but they obey at once. And besides what I have mentioned, to this end, as I at least think, He makes it out of the materials which they had, namely, that He might lead them to faith; for as yet they were rather in a weak state. Wherefore also "He looks up to Heaven." For of the other miracles they had many examples, but of this none. 3. "He took the loaves," therefore, "and brake them, and gave them by His disciples," hereby to honor them; and not in honor to them only, but also that, when the miracle had been done they might not disbelieve it, nor forget it when it had past, their own hands bearing them witness.

Wherefore also He suffers the multitudes first to have a sense of hunger, and waits for these to come to Him first and ask Him, and by them makes the people sit down, and by them

distributes; being minded by their own confessions and actions to prepossess them every one. Therefore also, from them He receives the loaves, that the testimonies of what was doing might be many, and that they might have memorials of the miracle. For if even after these occurrences they forgot, what would not have been their case, had He omitted those provisions? And He commands them to sit down on the trampled grass, instructing the multitudes in self-denial. For His will was not to feed their bodies only, but also to instruct their souls. As well by the place therefore, as by His giving them nothing more than loaves and fishes, and by setting the same before all, and making it common, and by affording no one more than another, He was teaching them humility, and temperance, and charity, and to be of like mind one towards another, and to account all things common.

"And He brake and gave to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitude." The five loaves He brake and gave, and the five multiplied themselves in the hands of the disciples. And not even here doth He stay the miracle, but He made them even to exceed; to exceed, not as whole loaves, but as fragments; to signify that of those loaves these were remains, and in order that the absent might learn what had been done. For this purpose indeed He suffered the multitudes to hunger, that no one might suppose what took place to be illusion. For this also He caused just twelve baskets to remain over, that Judas also might bear one. For He was able indeed to have appeased their hunger, but the disciples would not have known His power, since in Elijah's case also this took place. At all events, so greatly were the Jews amazed at Him for this, that they wished even to make Him a king, although with regard to the other miracles they did not so m any instance.

What reasoning now may set forth, how the loaves multiplied themselves; how they flowed together in the wilderness; how they were enough for so many (for there were "five thousand men beside women and children;" which was a very great commendation of the people, that both women and men attended Him); how the remnants had their being (for this again is not less than the former), and became so abundant, that the baskets were equal in number to the disciples, and neither more nor less? Having then taken the fragments, He gave them not to the multitudes, but to the disciples, and that, because the multitudes were m a more imperfect state than the disciples. And, having wrought the miracle, "straightway He constrained His disciples to get into a ship, and to go before Him unto the other side, while He sent the multitudes away." For even if He had seemed, when in sight, to be presenting an illusion, and not to have wrought a truth; yet surely not in His absence also. For this cause then, submitting His proceedings to an exact test, He commanded those that had got the memorials, and the proof of the miracles, to depart from Him.

And besides this, when He is doing great works, He disposes elsewhere of the multitudes and the disciples, instructing us in nothing to follow after the glory that comes from the people, nor to collect a crowd aboutus. Now by saying, "He constrained them," He indicates the very close attendance of the disciples. And His pretext indeed for dismissing them was the multitude, but He was Himself minded to go up into the mountain; and He did this, instructing us neither to be always in intercourse with multitudes, nor always to fly from

the crowd, but each of the two as may be expedient, and giving each duly his turn. 4. Let us learn therefore ourselves also to wait upon Jesus; but not for His bounty in things sensible, lest we be upbraided like the Jews. For "ye seek me," saith He, "not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." Therefore neither doth He work this miracle continually, but a second time only; that they might be taught not to be slaves to their belly, but to cling incessantly to the things of the Spirit.

To these then let us also cling, and let us seek the heavenly bread, and having received it, let us cast away all worldly care. For if those men left houses, and cities, and kinsmen, and all, and abode in the wilderness, and when hunger was pressing, withdrew not; much more ought we, when approaching such a table, to show forth a more abundant self-command, and to set our love on the things of the Spirit, and to seek the things of sense as secondary to these. Since even they were blamed, not because they sought Him for the bread, but because it was for this only they sought Him, and for this primarily. For should any one despise the great gifts, but cling to the small, and to those which the giver would have him despise. He loses these latter too: as on the other hand, if we love those, He adds these also. For these are but an appendage to the others; so vile are they and trifling, compared with those, although they be great. Let us not therefore spend our diligence on them, but account both the acquisition and loss of them alike indifferent, even as Job also neither clung to them when present, nor sought them absent. For on this account, they are called xrh/mata, not that we should bury them in the earth, but that we should use them aright.

And as of artisans every one hath his peculiar skill, even so the rich man, as he knows not how to work in brass, nor to frame ships, nor to weave, nor to build houses, nor any such thing;-let him learn then to use his wealth aright, and to pity the poor; so shall he know a better art than all those. For indeed this is above all those arts. Its workshop is builded in Heaven. It hath its tools not of iron and brass, but of goodness and of a right will. Of this art Christ is the Teacher, and His Father. "For be ye merciful," saith He, "as your Father which is in Heaven." And what is indeed marvellous, being so much superior to the rest, it needs no labor, no time for its perfection; it is enough to have willed, and the whole is accomplished. But let us see also the end thereof, what it is. What then is the end of it? Heaven, the good things in the heavens, that unspeakable glory, the spiritual bride-chambers, the bright lamps, the abiding with the Bridegroom; the other things, which no speech, nor even understanding, is able to set forth.

So that herein likewise great is its difference from all others. For most of the arts profit us for the present life, but this for the life to come also. 5. But if it so far excels the arts that are necessary to us for the present, as medicine, for instance, and house-building, and all others like them: much more the rest, which if any one were nicely to examine, he would not even allow them to be arts. Wherefore I at least would not call those others, as they are unnecessary, so much as arts at all. For wherein is delicate cookery and making sauces profitable to us? Nowhere: yea, they are greatly unprofitable and hurtful, doing harm both

to body and soul, by bringing upon us the parent of all diseases and sufferings, luxury, together with great extravagance.

But not these only, but not even painting, or embroidery, would I for one allow to be an art, for they do but throw men into useless expense. But the arts ought to be concerned with things necessary and important to our life, to supply and work them up. For to this end God gave us skill at all, that we might invent methods, whereby to furnish out our life. But that there should be figures either on walls, or on garments, wherein is it useful, I pray thee? For this same cause the sandal-makers too, and the weavers, should have great retrenchments made in their art. For most things in it they have carried into vulgar ostentation, having corrupted its necessary use, and mixed with an honest art an evil craft; which has been the case with the art of building also. But even as to this, so long as it builds houses and not theatres, and labors upon things necessary, and not superfluous, I give the name of an art; so the business of weaving too, as long as it makes clothes, and coverlids, but does not imitate the spiders, and overwhelm men with much absurdity, and unspeakable effeminacy, so long I call it an art.

And the sandal-makers' trade, so long as it makes sandals, I will not rob of the appellation of art; but when it perverts men to the gestures of women, and causes them by their sandals to grow wanton and delicate, we will set it amidst the things hurtful and superfluous, and not so much as name it an art. And I know well, that to many I seem over-minute in busying myself about these things; I shall not however refrain for this. For the cause of all our evils is this, such faults being at all counted trifling, and therefore disregarded. And what sin, say you, can be of less account than this, of having an ornamented and glittering sandal, which fits the foot; if indeed it seem right at all to denominate it a sin? Will ye then that I let loose my tongue upon it, and show its unseemliness, how great it is? and will ye not be angry? Or rather, though ye be angry, I care not much. Nay, for yourselves are to blame for this folly, who do not so much as think it is a sin, and hereby constrain us to enter upon the reproof of this extravagance. Come then, let us examine it, and let us see what sort of an evil it is. For when the silken threads, which it is not seemly should be even inwoven in your garments, these are sewn by you into your shoes, what reproach, what derision do these things deserve?

And if thou despise our judgments, hear the voice of Paul, with great earnestness forbidding these things, and then thou wilt perceive the absurdity of them. What then saith he? "Not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array." Of what favor then canst thou be worthy; when, in spite of Paul's prohibiting the married woman to have costly clothing, thou extendest this effeminacy even to thy shoes, and hast no end of contrivances for the sake of this ridicule and reproach? Yes: for first a ship is built, then rowers are mustered, and a man for the prow, and a helmsman, and a sail is spread, and an ocean traversed, and, leaving wife and children and country, the merchant commits his very life to the waves, and comes to the land of the barbarians, and undergoes innumerable dangers for these threads,

that after it all thou mayest take them, and sew them into thy shoes, and ornament the leather. And what can be done worse than this folly?

But the old ways are not like these, but such as become men. Wherefore I for my part expect that in process of time the young men amongst us will wear even women's shoes, and not be ashamed. And what is more grievous, men's fathers seeing these things are not much displeased, but do even account it an indifferent matter. Would ye that I should add what is still more grievous; that these things are done even when there are many poor? Would ye that I bring before you Christ, an hungered, naked, wandering everywhere, in chains? And how many thunderbolts must ye not deserve, overlooking Him in want of necessary food, and adorning these pieces of leather with so much diligence? And He indeed, when He was giving law to His disciples, would not so much as suffer them to have shoes at all, but we cannot bear to walk, I say not barefooted, but even with feet shod as they ought to be.

7. What then can be worse than this unseemliness, this absurdity? For the thing marks a soul, in the first place effeminate, then unfeeling and cruel, then curious and idly busy. For when will he be able to attend to any necessary matter, who is taken up with these superfluous things? when will such a youth endure to take heed to his soul, or to consider so much as that he hath a soul? Yes, he surely will be a trifler who cannot help admiring such things; he cruel, who for their sake neglects the poor; he void of virtue, who spends all his diligence on them. For he that is curious about the beauty of threads, and the bloom of colors, and the tendrils made of such woven work, when will he be able to look upon the heaven? when will he admire the beauty there, who is excited about a kind of beauty that belongs to pieces of leather, and who is bending to the earth? And whereas God hath stretched out the Heaven, and lighted up the sun, drawing thy looks upwards; thou constrainest thyself to look downwards, and to the earth, like the swine, and obeyest the devil. For indeed this wicked demon hath devised this unseemliness, to draw thee off from that beauty. For this intent hath he drawn thee this way; and God, showing Heaven, is outvied by a devil showing certain skins, or rather not even skins (for indeed these too are God's works), but effeminacy and a bad kind of skill.

And the young man goes about bending down towards the earth, he that is required to seek wisdom concerning the things in Heaven; priding himself more on these trifles than if he had accomplished some great and good work, and walking on tiptoe in the forum, and hereby begetting to himself superfluous sorrows and distresses, lest he should stain them with the mud when it is winter; lest he should cover them with the dust, when summer is come. What sayest thou, O man? Hast thou cast thy whole soul into the mire through this extravagance, and dost thou overlook it trailing on the ground, and art thou so anxious about a pair of shoes? Mark their use, and respect the verdict thou passest on them. For to tread on mud and mire, and all the spots on the pavement, for this were thy shoes made. Or if thou canst not bear this, take and hang them from thy neck, or put them on thy head.

And ye indeed laugh at hearing this. But I am inclined to weep for these men's madness, and their earnest care about these matters. For in truth they would rather stain their body with

mud, than those pieces of leather. Triflers then they become in this way, and fond of money again in another way. For he that has been used to be frantic and eager upon such matters, requires also for his clothes and for all other things much expense, and a large income. And if he have a munificent father, his thraldom becomes worse, his absurd fancy more intense; but if a parsimonious one, he is driven to other unseemliness, by way of getting together a little money for such expenses. Hence many young men have even sold their manhood, and have become parasites to the rich, and have undertaken other servile offices, purchasing thereby the fulfillment of such desires.

So then, that this man is sure to be at once fond of money, and a trifler, and about important things the most indolent of all men, and that he will be forced to commit many sins, is hereby evident. And that he is cruel and vainglorious, neither this will any one gainsay: cruel, in that when he sees a poor man, through the love of finery he makes as though he did not even see him, but while he is decking out these things with gold, overlooks him perishing of hunger; vainglorious, since even in such little matters he trains himself to hunt after the admiration of the beholders. For I suppose no general prides himself so much on his legions and trophies, as our profligate youths on the decking out of their shoes, on their trailing garments, on the dressing of their hair; yet surely all these are works of other persons, in their trades. But if men do not cease from vain boasting in the works of others, when will they cease from it in their own?

8. Shall I mention yet other things more grievous than these? or are even these enough for you? Well then; I must end my speech here; since even this have I said, because of the disputatious, who maintain the thing not to be so very wrong. And although I know that many of the young will not so much as attend to what I have said, being once for all intoxicated with this fancy, I yet ought not therefore to keep silence. For such fathers as have understanding, and are as yet sound, will be able to force them, even against their will, to a becoming decency. Say not then, "this is of no consequence, that is of no consequence;" for this, this hath ruined all. For even hereby ought you to train them, and by the things which seem trifling to make them grave, great of soul, superior to outward habiliments; so shall we find them approved in the great things also. For what is more ordinary than the learning of letters? nevertheless thereby do men become rhetoricians, and sophists, and philosophers, and if they know not their letters, neither will they ever have that knowledge.

And this we have spoken not to young men only, but to women also, and to young damsels. For these too are liable to the like charges, and much more, inasmuch as seemliness is a thing appropriate to a virgin. What has been said therefore to the others; do ye account to have been said to you also, that we may not repeat again the same things. For it is full time now to close our discourse with prayer. All of you then pray with us, that the young men of the church above all things may be enabled to live orderly, and to attain an old age becoming them. Since for those surely who do not so live, it were well not to come to old age at all. But for them that have grown old even in youth, I pray that they may attain also to the very deep of gray hairs, and become fathers of approved children, and may be a joy to them that

gave them birth, and above all surely to the God that made them, and may exterminate every distempered fancy, not that about their shoes, nor about their clothes only, but every other kind also.

For as untilled land, such is also youth neglected, bringing forth many thorns from many quarters. Let us then send forth on them the fire of the Spirit, and burn up these wicked desires, and let us break up our fields, and make them ready for the reception of the seed, and the young men amongst us let us exhibit with soberer minds than the old elsewhere. For this in fact is the marvellous thing, when temperance shines forth in youth; since he surely that is temperate in old age cannot have a great reward, having in perfection the security from his age. But what is wonderful, is to enjoy a calm amidst waves, and in a furnace not to be burnt, and in youth not to run wanton. With these things then in our minds, let us emulate that blessed Joseph, who shone through all these trials, that we may attain unto the same crowns with him; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be glory unto the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 50

Matthew Chapter 14, Verse 23 And Matthew Chapter 14, Verse 24

"And when He had sent the multitudes away, He went up into the mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, He was there alone. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary." For what purpose doth He go up into the mountain? To teach us, that loneliness and retirement is good, when we are to pray to God. With this view, you see, He is continually withdrawing into the wilderness, and there often spends the whole night in prayer, teaching us earnestly to seek such quietness in our prayers, as the time and place may confer. For the wilderness is the mother of quiet; it is a calm and a harbor, delivering us from all turmoils. He Himself then went up thither with this object, but the disciples are tossed with the waves again, and undergo a storm, equal even to the former. But whereas before they had Him in the ship when this befell them, now they were alone by themselves. Thus gently and by degrees He excites and urges them on for the better, even to the bearing all nobly. Accordingly we see, that when they were first near that danger, He was present, though asleep, so as readily to give them relief; but now leading them to a greater degree of endurance, He doth not even this, but departs, and in mid sea permits the storm to arise, so that they might not so much as look for a hope of preservation from any quarter; and He lets them be tempest-tost all the night, thoroughly to awaken, as I suppose, their hardened heart.

For such is the nature of the fear, which the time concurs with the rough weather in producing. And together with the compunction, He cast them also into a greater longing for Himself, and a continual remembrance of Him. Accordingly, neither did He present Himself to them at once. For, "in the fourth watch," so it is said, "of the night, He went unto them, walking upon the sea;" instructing them not hastily to seek for deliverance; from their pressing dangers, but to bear all occurrences manfully. At all events, when they looked to be delivered, then was their fear again heightened. For, "When the disciples," it is said, "saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit: and they cried out for fear." Yea, and He constantly doth so; when He is on the point of removing our terrors, He brings upon us other worse things, and more alarming: which we see took place then also. For together with the storm, the sight too troubled them, no less than the storm. Therefore neither did He remove the darkness, nor straightway make Himself manifest, training them, as I said, by the continuance of these fears, and instructing them to be ready to endure. This

He did in the case of Job also; for when He was on the point of removing the terror and the temptation, then He suffered the end to grow more grievous; I mean not for his children's death, or the words of his wife, but because of the reproaches, both of his servants and of his friends. And when He was about to rescue Jacob from his affliction in the strange land, He allowed his trouble to be awakened and aggravated: in that his father-in-law first overtook him and threatened death, and then his brother coming immediately after, suspended over him the extremest danger.

For since one cannot be tempted both for a long time and severely; when the righteous are on the point of coming to an end of their conflicts, He, willing them to gain the more, enhances their struggles. Which He did in the case of Abraham too, appointing for his last conflict that about his child. For thus even things intolerable will be tolerable, when they are so brought upon us, as to have their removal near, at the very doors. So did Christ at that time also, and did not discover Himself before they cried out. For the more intense their alarm, the more did they welcome His coming. Afterward when they had exclaimed, it is said, "Straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid." This word removed their fear, and caused them to take confidence. For as they knew Him not by sight, because of His marvellous kind of motion, and because of the time, He makes Himself manifest by His voice.

2. What then saith Peter, everywhere ardent, and ever starting forward before the rest? "Lord, if it be Thou," saith he, "bid me come unto Thee on the water." He said not, "Pray and entreat," but, "bid." Seest thou how great his ardor, how great his faith? Yet surely he is hereby often m danger, by seeking things beyond his measure. For so here too he required an exceedingly great thing, for love only, not for display. For neither did he say, "Bid me walk on the water," but what? "Bid me come unto Thee." For none so loved Jesus. This he did also after the resurrection; he endured not to come with the others, but leapt forward. And not love only, but faith also doth he display. For he not only believed that He was able Himself to walk on the sea, but that He could lead upon it others also; and he longs to be quickly near Him.

"And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, and came to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand and caught him, and saith unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" This is more wonderful than the former. Therefore this is done after that. For when He had shown that He rules the sea, then He carries on the sign to what is yet more marvellous. Then He rebuked the winds only; but now He both walks Himself, and permits another to do so; which thing if He had required to be done at the beginning, Peter would not have so well received it, because he had not yet acquired so great faith. Wherefore then did Christ permit him? Why, if He had said, "thou canst not," Peter being ardent would have contradicted Him again. Wherefore by the facts He convinces him, that for the future he may be sobered.

But not even so doth he endure. Therefore having come down, he becomes dizzy; for he was afraid. And this the surf caused, but his fear was wrought by the wind. But John saith, that "they willingly received Him into the ship; and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went," relating this same circumstance. So that when they were on the point of arriving at the land, He entered the ship. Peter then having come down from the ship went unto Him, not rejoicing so much in walking on the water, as in coming unto Him. And when he had prevailed over the greater, he was on the point of suffering evil from the less, from the violence of the wind, I mean, not of the sea. For such a thing is human nature; not seldom effecting great things, it exposes itself in the less; as Elias felt toward Jezebel, as Moses toward the Egyptian, as David toward Bathsheba. Even so then this man also; while their fear was yet at the height, he took courage to walk upon the water, but against the assault of the wind he was no longer able to stand; and this, being near Christ. So absolutely nothing doth it avail to be near Christ, not being near Him by faith.

And this also showed the difference between the Master and the disciple, and allayed the feelings of the others. For if in the case of the two brethren they had indignation, much more here; for they had not yet the Spirit vouchsafed unto them. But afterwards they were not like this. On every occasion, for example, they give up the first honors to Peter, and put him forward in their addresses to the people, although of a rougher vein than any of them. And wherefore did He not command the winds to cease, but Himself stretched forth His hand and took hold of him? Because in him faith was required. For when our part is wanting, then God's part also is at a stand. Signifying therefore that not the assault of the wind, but his want of faith had wrought his overthrow, He saith, "Wherefore didst thou doubt, O thou of little faith?" So that if his faith had not been weak, he would have stood easily against the wind also. And for this reason, you see, even when He had caught hold of Him, He suffers the wind to blow, showing that no hurt comes thereby, when faith is steadfast.

And as when a nestling has come out of the nest before the time, and is on the point of falling, its mother bears it on her wings, and brings it back to the nest; even so did Christ. "And when they were come into the ship, then the wind ceased." Whereas before this they had said, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!" now it is not so. For "they that were in the ship," it is said, "came and worshipped Him, saying, Of a truth Thou art Son of God." Seest thou, how by degrees he was leading them all higher and higher? For both by His walking on the sea, and by His commanding another to do so, and preserving him in jeopardy; their faith was henceforth great. For then indeed He rebuked the sea, but now He rebukes it not, in another way signifying His power more abundantly. Wherefore also they said, "Of a truth Thou art Son of God."

What then? Did He rebuke them on their so speaking? Nay, quite the contrary, He rather confirmed what they said, with greater authority healing such as approached Him, and not as before. "And when they were gone over," so it is said, "they came into the land of Gennesaret. And when the men of that place had knowledge of Him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto Him all that were diseased; and besought Him

that they might touch the hem of His garment; and as many as touched were made perfectly whole." For neither did they approach Him as before, dragging Him into their houses, and seeking a touch of His hand, and directions from Him in words; but in a far higher strain, and with more of self-denial, and with a more abundant faith did they try to win themselves a cure; for she that had the issue of blood taught them all to be severe in seeking wisdom.

And the evangelist, implying also that at long intervals He visited the several neighborhoods, saith, "The men of that place took knowledge of Him, and sent out into the country round about, and brought unto Him them that were diseased." But yet the interval, so far from abolishing their faith, made it even greater, and preserved it in vigor. 3. Let us also then touch the hem of His garment, or rather, if we be willing, we have Him entire. For indeed His body is set before us now, not His garment only, but even His body; not for us to touch it only, but also to eat, and be filled. Let us now then draw near with faith, every one that hath an infirmity. For if they that touched the hem of His garment drew from Him so much virtue, how much more they that possess Him entire? Now to draw near with faith is not only to receive the offering, but also with a pure heart to touch it; to be so minded, as approaching Christ Himself. For what, if thou hear no voice? Yet thou seest Him laid out; or rather thou dost also hear His voice, while He is speaking by the evangelists.

Believe, therefore, that even now it is that supper, at which He Himself sat down. For this is in no respect different from that. For neither doth man make this and Himself the other; but both this and that is His own work. When therefore thou seest the priest delivering it unto thee, account not that it is the priest that doeth so, but that it is Christ's hand that is stretched out. Even as when he baptizes, not he doth baptize thee, but it is God that possesses thy head with invisible power, and neither angel nor archangel nor any other dare draw nigh and touch thee; even so now also. For when God begets, the gift is His only. Seest thou not those who adopt to themselves sons here, how they commit not the act to slaves, but are themselves present at the judgment-seat? Even so neither hath God committed His gift to angels, but Himself is present, commanding and saying, "Call no man Father on earth;" not that thou shouldest dishonor them that gave thee birth, but that thou shouldest prefer to all those Him that made thee, and enrolled thee amongst His own children. For He that hath given the greater, that is, hath set Himself before thee, much more will He not think scorn to distribute unto thee of His body. Let us hear therefore, both priests and subjects, what we have had vouchsafed to us; let us hear and tremble. Of His own holy flesh He hath granted us our fill; He hath set before us Himself sacrificed.

What excuse shall we have then, when feeding on such food, we commit such sins? when eating a lamb, we become wolves? when feeding on a sheep, we spoil by violence like the lions? For this mystery He directs to be always clear, not from violence only, but even from bare enmity. Yea, for this mystery is a mystery of peace; it allows us not to cling to wealth. For if He spared not Himself for us, what must we deserve, sparing our wealth, and being lavish of a soul, in behalf of which He spared not Himself? Now upon the Jews God every year bound in their feasts a memorial of His peculiar favors to them: but for thee, every day,

as I may say, through these mysteries. Be not therefore ashamed of the cross: for these are our venerable things, these our mysteries; with this gift do we adorn ourselves, with this we are beautified.

And if I say, He stretched out the heaven, He spread out the earth and the sea, He sent prophets and angels, I say nothing in comparison. For the sum of His benefits is this, that "He spared not His own Son," in order to save His alienated servants. 4. Let no Judas then approach this table, no Simon; nay, for both these perished through covetousness. Let us flee then from this gulf; neither let us account it enough for our salvation, if after we have stripped widows and orphans, we offer for this table a gold and jewelled cup. Nay, if thou desire to honor the sacrifice, offer thy soul, for which also it was slain; cause that to become golden; but if that remain worse than lead or potter's clay, while the vessel is of gold, what is the profit? Let not this therefore be our aim, to offer golden vessels only, but to do so from honest earnings likewise. For these are of the sort that is more precious even than gold, these that are without injuriousness. For the church is not a gold foundry nor a workshop for silver, but an assembly of angels. Wherefore it is souls which we require, since in fact God accepts these for the souls' sake.

That table at that time was not of silver nor that cup of gold, out of which Christ gave His disciples His own blood; but precious was everything there, and awful, for that they were full of the Spirit. Wouldest thou do honor to Christ's body Neglect Him not when naked; do not while here thou honorest Him with silken garments, neglect Him perishing without of cold and nakedness. For He that said, "This is my body," and by His word confirmed the fact, "This same said, "Ye saw me an hungered, and fed me not;" and, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." For This indeed needs not coverings, but a pure soul; but that requires much attention. Let us learn therefore to be strict in life, and to honor Christ as He Himself desires. For to Him who is honored that honor is most pleasing, which it is His own will to have, not that which we account best. Since Peter too thought to honor Him by forbidding Him to wash his feet, but his doing so was not an honor, but the contrary.

Even so do thou honor Him with this honor, which He ordained, spending thy wealth on poor people. Since God hath no need at all of golden vessels, but of golden souls. And these things I say, not forbidding such offerings to be provided; but requiring you, together with them, and before them, to give alms. For He accepts indeed the former, but much more the latter. For in the one the offerer alone is profited, but in the other the receiver also. Here the act seems to be a ground even of ostentation; but there all is mercifulness, and love to man. For what is the profit, when His table indeed is full of golden cups, but He perishes with hunger? First fill Him, being an hungered, and then abundantly deck out His table also. Dost thou make Him a cup of gold, while thou givest Him not a cup of cold water? And what is the profit? Dost thou furnish His table with cloths bespangled with gold, while to Himself thou affordest not even the necessary covering? And what good comes of it? For tell me, should you see one at a loss for necessary food, and omit appeasing his hunger,

while you first overlaid his table with silver; would he indeed thank thee, and not rather be indignant? What, again, if seeing one wrapped in rags, and stiff with cold, thou shouldest neglect giving him a garment, and build golden columns, saying, "thou weft doing it to his honor," would he not say that thou wert mocking, and account it an insult, and that the most extreme?

Let this then be thy thought with regard to Christ also, when He is going about a wanderer, and a stranger, needing a roof to cover Him; and thou, neglecting to receive Him, deckest out a pavement, and walls, and capitals of columns, and hangest up silver chains by means of lamps, but Himself bound in prison thou wilt not even look upon. 5. And these things I say, not forbidding munificence in these matters, but admonishing you to do those other works together with these, or rather even before these. Because for not having done these no one was ever blamed, but for those, hell is threatened, and unquenchable fire, and the punishment with evil spirits. Do not therefore while adorning His house overlook thy brother in distress, for he is more properly a temple than the other. And whereas these thy stores will be subject to alienations both by unbelieving kings, and tyrants, and robbers; whatever thou mayest do for thy brother, being hungry, and a stranger, and naked, not even the devil will be able to despoil, but it will be laid up in an inviolable treasure.

Why then doth He Himself say, "The poor always ye have with you, but me ye have not always?" Why, for this reason most of all should we give alms, that we have Him not always an hungered, but in the present life only. But if thou art desirous to learn also the whole meaning of the saying, understand that this was said not with a view to His disciples, although it seem so, but to the woman's weakness. That is, her disposition being still rather imperfect, and they doubting about her; to revive her He said these things. For in proof that for her comfort He said it, He added, "Why trouble ye the woman?" And with regard to our having Him really always with us, He saith, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." From all which it is evident, that for no other object was this said, but that the rebuke of the disciples might not wither the faith of the woman, just then budding.

Let us not then bring forward these things now, which were uttered because of some economy, but let us read all the laws, those in the New and those in the Old Testament, that are set down about almsgiving, and let us be very earnest about this matter. For this cleanses from sin. For "give alms, and all things will be clean unto you." This is a greater thing than sacrifice. "For I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." This opens the heavens. For "thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God." This is more indispensable than virginity: for thus were those virgins cast out of the bridechamber; thus were the others brought in. All which things let us consider, and sow liberally, that we may reap in more ample abundance, and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Homily 51

Matthew Chapter 15, Verse 1.

"Then came to Jesus Scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do Thy disciples," etc. Then; when? when He had wrought His countless miracles; when He had healed the infirm by the touch of the hem of His garment. For even with this intent doth the evangelist mark the time, that He might signify their unspeakable wickedness, by nothing repressed. But what means, "The Scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem?" In every one of the tribes were they scattered abroad, and divided into twelve parts; but they who occupied the chief city were worse than the others, as both enjoying more honor, and having contracted much haughtiness. But mark, I pray thee, how even by the question itself they are convicted; in not saying, "Why do they transgress the law of Moses," but, "the tradition of the elders." Whence it is evident that the priests were inventing many novelties, although Moses, with much terror and with much threatening, had enjoined neither to add nor take away. "For ye shall not add," saith he, "unto the word which I command you this day, and ye shall not take away from it."

But not the less were they innovating; as in this instance, that one ought not to eat with unwashen hands, that we must wash cups and brazen vessels, that we must wash also ourselves. Thus, when men were henceforth, as time advanced, to be freed from their observances, at that very time they bound them with the same in more and more instances, fearing lest any one should take away their power, and wishing to strike more dread, as though they were themselves also lawgivers. The thing in fact proceeded so far in enormity, that while their own commandments were kept, those of God were transgressed; and they so far prevailed, that the matter had actually become a ground of accusation. Which was a twofold charge against them, in that they both invented novelties, and were so strict exactors on their own account, while of God they made no reckoning.

And omitting to speak of the other things, the pots and the brazen vessels (for it was too ridiculous), what seemed more reasonable than the rest, that they bring forward, wishing, as seems at least to me, in that way to provoke Him to anger. Wherefore also they made mention of the elders, in order that He, as setting them at nought, might give occasion against Himself. But it were meet first to inquire, why the disciples ate with unwashen hands. Wherefore then did they so eat? Not as making a point of it, but as overlooking

henceforth the things that are superfluous, and attending to such as are necessary; having no law to wash or not to wash, but doing either as it happened. For they that despised even their own necessary food, how were they to hold these things worth much consideration? This then having often happened unintentionally,-for instance, when they ate in the wilderness, when they plucked the ears of corn,-is now put forward as a charge by these persons, who are always transgressing in the great things, and making much account of the superfluous.

2. What then saith Christ? He did not set Himself against it, neither made He any defense, but straightway blames them again, plucking down their confidence, and signifying that he who commits great sins ought not to be strict with others concerning small matters. "What? when you ought to be blamed," saith He, "do ye even blame?" But do thou observe, how when it is His will to set aside any of the things enjoined by the law, He does it in the form of an apology; and so He did in that case. For by no means doth He proceed at once to transgress it, nor doth He say, "It is nothing;" for surely He would have made them more audacious; but first He clean cuts away their boldness, bringing forward the far heavier charge, and directing it upon their head. And He neither saith, "they do well in transgressing it," lest He should give them a hold on Him; nor doth He speak ill of their proceeding, lest He should confirm the law: nor again, on the other hand, doth He blame the elders, as lawless and unholy men; for doubtless they would have shunned Him as a reviler and injurious: but all these things He gives up, and proceeds another way. And He seems indeed to be rebuking the persons themselves who had come to Him, but He is reprehending them that enacted these laws; nowhere indeed making mention of the elders, but by His charge against the Scribes casting down them also, and signifying that their sin is twofold, first in disobeying God, next in doing so on men's account; as though He had said, "Why this, this hath ruined you, your obeying the elders in all things."

Yet He saith not so, but this is just what He intimates, by answering them as follows: "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honor thy father and thy mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, and honor not his father or his mother -And ye have made void the commandment of God by your tradition. And He said not, "the elders' tradition," but "your own." And, "ye say;" again He said not, "the elders say:" in order to make His speech less galling. That is, because they wanted to prove the disciples transgressors of the law, He signifies that they themselves are doing so, but that these are free from blame. For of course that is not a law, which is enjoined by men (wherefore also He calls it "a tradition"), and especially by men that are transgressors of the law.

And since this had no shade of contrariety to the law, to command men to wash their hands, He brings forward another tradition, which is opposed to the law. And what He saith is like this. "They taught the young, under the garb of piety, to despise their fathers." How, and in what way? "If one of their parents said to his child, Give me this sheep that thou hast, or

this calf, or any such thing, they used to say, 'This is a gift to God, whereby thou wouldest be profited by me, and thou canst not have it.' And two evils hence arose: on the one hand they did not bring them to God, on the other they defrauded their parents under the name of the offering, alike insulting their parents for God's sake, and God for their parents' sake." But He doth not say this at once, but first rehearses the law, by which He signifies His earnest desire that parents should be honored. For, "honor," saith He, "thy father and thy mother, that thou mayest live long upon the earth." And again, "He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death."

But He, omitting the first, the reward appointed for them that honor their parents, states that which is more awful, the punishment, I mean, threatened to such as dishonor them; desiring both to dismay them, and to conciliate such as have understanding; and He implies them to be for this worthy of death. For if he who dishonors them in word is punished, much more ye, who do so in deed, and who not only dishonor, but also teach it to others. "Ye then who ought not so much as to live, how find ye fault with the disciples?" "And what wonder is it, if ye offer such insults to me, who am as yet unknown, when even to the Father ye are found doing the like?" For everywhere He both asserts and implies, that from Him they began with this their arrogance. But some do also otherwise interpret, "It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me;" that is, I owe thee no honor, but it is a free gift from me to thee, if indeed I do honor thee. But Christ would not have mentioned an insult of that sort.

And Mark again makes this plainer, by saying, "It is Corban, by whatsoever thou mightest be profiled by me;" which means, not a gift and present, but properly an offering. Having then signified that they who were trampling on the law could not be justly entitled to blame men for transgressing a command of certain elders, He points out this same thing again from the prophet likewise. Thus, having once laid hold of them severely, He proceeds further: as on every occasion He doth, bringing forward the Scriptures, and so evincing Himself to be in accordance with God. And what saith the prophet? "This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Seest thou a prophecy in exact accordance with His sayings, and from the very first proclaiming beforehand their wickedness? For what Christ laid to their charge now, of this Isaiah also spake from the very first; that the words of God they despise, "for in vain do they worship me," saith He; but of their own they make much account, "teaching," saith He, "for doctrines the commandments of men." Therefore with reason the disciples keep them not.

3. Having, you see, given them their mortal blow; and from the facts first, then from their own suffrage, then from the prophet having aggravated the charge, with them indeed He discourses not at all, incorrigibly disposed as they are now come to be, but directs His speech to the multitudes, so as to introduce His doctrine, great and high, and full of much strictness; and taking occasion from the former topic, He proceeds to insert that which is greater, casting out also the observance of meats. But see when. When He had cleansed the leper,

when He had repealed the Sabbath, when He had shown Himself King of earth and sea, when He had made laws, when He had remitted sins, when He had raised dead men, when He had afforded them many proofs of His Godhead, then He discourses of meats. For indeed all the religion of the Jews is comprised in this; if thou take this away, thou hast even taken away all. For hereby He signifies, that circumcision too must be abrogated. But of Himself He doth not prominently introduce this (forasmuch as that was older than the other commandments, and had higher estimation), but He enacts it by His disciples. For so great a thing was it, that even the disciples after so long a time being minded to do it away, first practise it, and so put it down.

But see how He introduces His law: how "He called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear and understand." Thus He doth by no means simply reveal it to them, but by respect and courtesy, first, He makes His saying acceptable (for this the evangelist declares by saying, "He called them unto Him"): and secondly, by the time also; in that after their refutation, and His victory over them, and the accusation by the prophet, then He begins His legislation, when they too would more easily receive His sayings. And He doth not merely call them unto Him, but also makes them more attentive. For "understand," saith He, that is, "consider, rouse yourselves; for of that sort is the law now about to be enacted. For if they set aside the law, even unseasonably, for their own tradition, and ye hearkened; much more ought ye to hearken unto me, who at the proper season am leading you unto a higher rule of self restraint."

And He did not say, "The observance of meats is nothing, neither that Moses had given wrong injunctions, nor that of condescension He did so;" but in the way of admonition and counsel, and taking His testimony from the nature of the things, He saith: "Not the things that go into the mouth, defile the man, but the things that go out of the mouth;" resorting to nature herself both in His enactment and in His demonstration. Yet they hearing all this, made no reply, neither did they say, "What sayest Thou? When God hath given charges without number concerning the observance of meats, dost thou make such laws?" But since He had utterly stopped their mouths, not by refuting them only, but also by publishing their craft, and exposing what was done by them in secret, and revealing the secrets of their mind; their mouths were stopped, and so they went away.

But mark, I pray thee, how He doth not yet venture distinctly to set Himself with boldness against the meats. Therefore neither did He say "the meats," but, "the things that enter in defile not the man;" which it was natural for them to suspect concerning the unwashen hands also. For He indeed was speaking of meats, but it would be understood of these matters too. Why, so strong was the feeling of scruple about the meats, that even after the resurrection Peter said, "Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten anything common or unclean." For although it was for the sake of others that He said this, and in order to leave Himself a justification against his censurers, by pointing out that he actually remonstrated, and not even so was excused, nevertheless it implies the depth of their impression on that point. Wherefore you see He Himself also at the beginning spake not openly concerning meats,

but, "The things that go into the mouth;" and again, when He had seemed afterwards to speak more plainly, He veiled it by His conclusion, saying, "But to eat with unwashen hands defileth not the man:" that He might seem to have had His occasion from thence, and to be still discoursing of the same. Therefore He said not, "To eat meats defileth not a man," but is as though He were speaking on that other topic; that they may have nothing to say against it.

4. When therefore they had heard these things, "the Pharisees," it is said, "were offended," not the multitudes. For "His disciples," so it is said, "came and said unto Him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, when they heard the saying?" Yet surely nothing had been said unto them. What then saith Christ? He did not remove the offense in respect of them, but reproved them, saying, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." For He is wont both to despise offenses, and not to despise them. Elsewhere, for example, He saith, "But lest we should offend them, cast an hook into the sea:" but here He saith, "Let them alone, they be blind leaders of the blind: and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." But these things His disciples said, not as grieving for those men only, but as being themselves also slightly perplexed. But because they durst not say so in their own person, they would fain learn it by their telling Him of others. And as to its being so, hear how after this the ardent and ever-forward Peter came to Him, and saith, "Declare unto us this parable," discovering the trouble in his soul, and not indeed venturing to say openly, "I am offended," but requiring that by His interpretation he should be freed from his perplexity; wherefore also he was reproved.

What then saith Christ? "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." This, they that are diseased with the Manichaean pest affirm to be spoken of the law; but their months are stopped by what had been said before. For if He was speaking of the law, how doth He further back defend it, and fight for it, saying, "Why do ye transgress the commandments of God for your tradition?" And how doth He bring forward the prophet? But of themselves and of their traditions He so speaks. For if God said, "Honor thy father and thy mother," how is not that of God's planting, which was spoken by God? And what follows also indicates, that of themselves it was said, and of their traditions. Thus He added, "They are blind leaders of the blind." Whereas, had He spoken it of the law, He would have said, "It is a blind leader of the blind." But not so did He speak, but, "They are blind leaders of the blind:" freeing it from the blame, and bringing it all round upon them.

Then to sever the people also from them, as being on the point of falling into a pit by their means, He saith, "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." It is a great evil merely to be blind, but to be in such a case and have none to lead him, nay, to occupy the place of a guide, is a double and triple ground of censure. For if it be a dangerous thing for the blind man not to have a guide, much more so that he should even desire to be guide to another. What then saith Peter? He saith not, "What can this be which Thou hast said?" but as though it were full of obscurity, he puts his question. And he saith not, "Why hast thou spoken contrary to the law?" for he was afraid, lest he should be thought to have taken

offense, but asserts it to be obscure. However, that it was not obscure, but that he was offended, is manifest, for it had nothing of obscurity.

Wherefore also He rebukes him, saying, "Are ye also yet without understanding?" For as to the multitude, they did not perhaps so much as understand the saying; but themselves were the persons offended. Wherefore, whereas at first, as though asking in behalf of the Pharisees, they were desirous to be told; when they heard Him denouncing a great threat, and saying, "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up," and," They are blind leaders of the blind," they were silenced. But he, always ardent, not even so endures to hold his peace, but saith, "Declare unto us this parable." What then saith Christ? With a sharp rebuke He answers, "Are ye also yet without understanding? Do ye not yet understand?" But these things He said, and reproved them, in order to cast out their prejudice; He stopped not however at this, but adds other things also, saying, "That whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught; but those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, blasphemies, false-witnessings: and these are the things that defile the man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not the man."

Seest thou how sharply He deals with them, and in the way of rebuke? Then He establishes His saying by our common nature, and with a view to their cure. For when He saith, "It goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught," he is still answering according to the low views of the Jews. For He saith, "it abides not, but goes out:" and what if it abode? it would not make one unclean. But not yet were they able to hear this. And one may remark, that because of this the lawgiver allows just so much time, as it may be remaining within one, but when it is gone forth, no longer. For instance, at evening He bids you wash yourself, and so be clean; measuring the time of the digestion, and of the excretion. But the things of the heart, He saith, abide within, and when they are gone forth they defile, and not when abiding only. And first He puts our evil thoughts, a kind of thing which belonged to the Jews; and not as yet doth He make His refutation from the nature of the things, but from the manner of production from the belly and the heart respectively, and from the fact that the one sort remains, the other not; the one entering in from without, and departing again outwards, while the others are bred within, and having gone forth they defile, and then more so, when they are gone forth. Because they were not yet able, as I said, to be taught these things with all due strictness.

But Mark saith, that "cleansing the meats," He spake this. He did not however express it, nor at all say, "but to eat such and such meats defileth not the man," for neither could they endure to be told it by Him thus distinctly. And accordingly His conclusion was, "But to eat with unwashen hands defileth not the man." 5. Let us learn then what are the things that defile the man; let us learn, and let us flee them. For even in the church we see such a custom prevailing amongst the generality, and men giving diligence to come in clean garments, and to have their hands washed; but how to present a clean soul to God, they make no account.

And this I say, not forbidding them to wash hands or mouth; but willing men so to wash as is meet, not with water only, but instead of water, with all virtues. For the filth of the mouth is evil speaking, blasphemy, reviling, angry words, filthy talking, laughter, jesting: if then thou art conscious to thyself of uttering none of them, neither of being defiled with this filth, draw near with confidence; but if thou hast times out of number received these stains, why dost thou labor in vain, washing thy tongue indeed with water, but bearing about on it such deadly and hurtful filth? For tell me, hadst thou dung on thy hands, and mire, wouldest thou indeed venture to pray? By no means. And yet this were no hurt; but that is ruin. How then art thou reverential in the different things, but in the forbidden remiss?

What then? should not we pray? saith one. We should indeed, but not while defiled, and having upon us mire of that sort. "What then, if I have been overtaken?" saith one. Cleanse thyself. "How, and in what way?" Weep, groan, give alms, apologize to him that is affronted, reconcile him to thyself hereby, wipe clean thy tongue, lest thou provoke God more grievously. For so if one had filled his hands with dung, and then should lay hold of thy feet, entreating thee, far from hearing him, thou wouldest rather spurn him with thy foot; how then durst thou in such sort draw nigh to God? Since in truth the tongue is the hand of them that pray, and by it we lay hold on the knees of God. Defile it not therefore, lest to thee also He say, "Though ye make many prayers, I will not hearken." Yea, and "in the power of the tongue are death and life;" and, "By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

I bid thee then watch thy tongue more than the apple of thine eye. The tongue is a royal steed. If then thou put a bridle on it, and teach it to pace orderly, the King will rest and take His seat thereon; but if thou suffer it to rush about unbridled and leap wantonly, it becomes a beast for the devil and bad spirits to ride on. And while thou, fresh from the company of thine own wife, darest not pray, although this is no blame at all; dost thou lift up thine hands, fresh from reviling and insult, which brings after it no less than hell, before thou hast well cleansed thyself? And how dost thou not shudder? tell me. Hast thou not heard Paul, saying, "Marriage is honorable, and the bed undefiled?" But if on rising from the undefiled bed, thou darest not draw nigh in prayer, how dost thou coming from the bed of the devil call on that awful and terrible name? For it is truly the devil's bed, to wallow in insults and reviling. And like some wicked adulterer, wrath dailies with us in great delight, casting into us deadly seed, and making us give birth to diabolical enmity, and doing all things in a way opposite to marriage. For whereas marriage causes the two to become one flesh, wrath severs into many parts them that were united, and cleaves and cuts in pieces the very soul.

That thou mayest therefore with confidence draw nigh to God, receive not wrath, when it comes in upon thee, and desires to be with thee, but drive it away like a mad dog. For so Paul too commanded: his phrase being, "lifting up holy hands without wrath and disputing." Dishonor not then thy tongue, for how will it entreat for thee, when it hath lost its proper confidence? but adorn it with gentleness, with humility, make it worthy of the God who is

entreated, fill it with blessing, with much almsdoing. For it is possible even with words to do alms. "For a word is a better thing than a gift," and "answer the poor man peaceably with meekness." And all the rest of thy time too adorn it with the rehearsing of the laws of God; "Yea, let all thy communication be in the law of the Most High."

Having thus adorned ourselves, let us come to our King, and fall at His knees, not with the body only, but also with the mind. Let us consider whom we are approaching, and on whose behalf, and what we would accomplish. We are drawing nigh unto God, whom the seraphim behold and turn away their faces, not bearing His brightness; at sight of whom the earth trembles. We draw nigh unto God, "who dwelleth in the light, which no man can approach unto." And we draw nigh unto Him for deliverance from hell, for remission of sins, for escape from those intolerable punishments, for attaining to the Heavens, and to the good things that are there. Let us, I say, fall down before Him both in body and in mind, that He may raise us up when we are down; let us converse with all gentleness and meekness. And who is so wretched and miserable, one may say, as not to become gentle in prayer? He that prays with an imprecations and fills himself with wrath, and cries out against his enemies.

6. Nay, if thou wilt accuse, accuse thyself. If thou wilt whet and sharpen thy tongue, let it be against thine own sins. And tell not what evil another hath done to thee, but what thou hast done to thyself; for this is most truly an evil; since no other will really be able to injure thee, unless thou injure thyself. Wherefore, if thou desire to be against them that wrong thee, approach as against thyself first; there is no one to hinder; since by coming into court against another, thou hast but the greater injury to go away with. And what injury at all hast thou really to mention? That such an one insulted and spoiled thee by violence, and encompassed thee with dangers? Nay, this is receiving not injury, but if we be sober, the very greatest benefit; the injured being he that did such things, not he that suffered them. And this is more than any one thing the cause of all our evils, that we do not so much as know at all who is the injured, and who the injurious person. Since if we knew this well, we should not ever injure ourselves, we should not pray against another, having learnt that it is impossible to suffer ill of another. For not to be spoiled, but to spoil, is an evil. Wherefore, if thou hast spoiled, accuse thyself; but if thou hast been spoiled, rather pray for him that spoiled thee, because he hath done thee the greatest good. For although the intent of the doer was not such, yet thou hast received the greatest benefit, if thou hast endured it nobly. For him, both men, and the laws of God declare to be wretched, but thee, the injured party, they crown, and proclaim thy praise.

For so if any one sick of a fever had violently taken from any other a vessel containing water, and had had his fill of his pernicious desire, we should not say that the despoiled had been injured, but the spoiler; for he has aggravated his fever, and made his disease more grievous. Now in this way I bid thee reason concerning him also that loves wealth and money. For he too, having a far worse fever than the other, has by this rapine fanned the flame in himself. Again,were some madman to snatch a sword from any one, and destroy himself, which again is the injured? He that hath been robbed, or the robber? It is quite

clear, he that did the robbery. Well then, in the case of seizing property also, let us give the same suffrage. For what a sword is to a madman, much the same is wealth to a covetous man; nay, it is even a worse thing. For the madman, when he has taken the sword, and thrust it through himself, is both delivered from his madness, and hath no second blow to receive; but the lover of money receives daily ten thousand wounds more grievous than his, without delivering himself from his madness, but aggravating it more exceedingly: and the more wounds he receives, the more doth he give occasion for other more grievous blows.

Reflecting then on these things, let us flee this sword; let us flee the madness; though late, let us become temperate. For this virtue too ought to be called temperance, not less than that which is used to be so called among all men. For whereas there the dominion of one lust is to be struggled against, here we have to master many lusts, and those of all kinds. Yea, nothing, nothing is more foolish than the slave of wealth. He thinks he overcomes when he is overcome. He thinks he is master, when he is a slave, and putting bonds on himself, he rejoices; making the wild beast fiercer, he is pleased; and becoming a captive, he prides himself, and leaps for joy; and seeing a dog rabid and flying at his soul, when he ought to bind him and weaken him by hunger, he actually supplies him with abundance of food, that he may leap upon him more fiercely, and be more formidable.

Reflecting then on all these things, let us loose the bonds, let us slay the monster, let us drive away the disease, let us cast out this madness; that we may enjoy a calm and pure health, and having with much pleasure sailed into the serene haven, may attain unto the eternal blessings; unto which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 52

Matthew Chapter 15, Verse 21 And Matthew Chapter 15, Verse 22

"And Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." But Mark saith, that "He could not behid," though He had entered into the house. And why did He go at all into these parts? When He had set them free from the observance of meats, then to the Gentiles also He goes on to open a door, proceeding in due course; even as Peter, having been first directed to annul this law, is sent to Cornelius. But if any one should say, "How then, while saying to His disciples, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles," doth He Himself admit her?" first, this would be our reply, that what He enjoined upon His disciples, He was not Himself also tied to; secondly, that not in order to preach did He depart; which indeed Mark likewise intimating said, He even hid Himself, yet was not concealed.

For as His not hastening to them first was a part of the regular course of His proceedings, so to drive them away when coming to Him was unworthy of His love to man. For if the flying ought to be pursued, much more ought the pursuing not to be avoided. See at any rate how worthy this woman is of every benefit. For she durst not even come to Jerusalem, fearing, and accounting herself unworthy. For were it not for this, she would have come there, as is evident both from her present earnestness, and from her coming out of her own coasts. And some also taking it as an allegory say, that when Christ came out of Judea, then the church ventured to approach Him, coming out herself also from her own coasts. For it is said, "Forget thine own people and thy father's house." For both Christ went out of His borders, and the woman out of her borders, and so it became possible for them to fall in with each other: thus He saith, "Behold a woman of Canaan coming out of her own coasts."

The evangelist speaks against the woman, that he may show forth her marvellous act, and celebrate her praise the more. For when thou hearest of a Canaanitish woman, thou shouldest call to mind those wicked nations, who overset from their foundations the very laws of nature. And being reminded of these, consider also the power of Christ's advent. For they who were cast out, that they might not pervert any Jews, these appeared so much better disposed than the Jews, as even to come out of their coasts, and approach Christ; while those were driving Him away, even on His coming unto them. 2. Having then come

unto Him, she saith nothing else, but "Have mercy on me," and by her cry brings about them many spectators. For indeed it was a pitiful spectacle to see a woman crying aloud in so great affliction, and that woman a mother, and entreating for a daughter, and for a daughter in such evil case: she not even venturing to bring into the Master's sight her that was possessed, but leaving her to lie at home, and herself making the entreaty.

And she tells her affliction only, and adds nothing more; neither doth she drag the physician to her house, like that nobleman, saying, "Come and lay thy hand upon her," and, "Come down ere my child die." But having described both her calamity, and the intensity of the disease, she pleads the Lord's mercy, and cries aloud; and she saith not, "Have mercy on my daughter," but, "Have mercy on me." For she indeed is insensible of her disease, but it is I that suffer her innumerable woes; my disease is with consciousness, my madness with perception of itself. 2. "But He answered her not a word." What is this new and strange thing? the Jews in their perverseness He leads on, and blaspheming He entreats them, and tempting Him He dismisses them not; but to her, running unto Him, and entreating, and beseeching Him, to her who had been educated neither in the law, nor in the prophets, and was exhibiting so great reverence; to her He doth not vouchsafe so much as an answer.

Whom would not this have offended, seeing the facts so opposite to the report? For whereas they had heard, that He went about the villages healing, her, when she had come to Him, He utterly repels. And who would not have been moved by her affliction, and by the supplication she made for her daughter in such evil case? For not as one worthy, nor as demanding a due, not so did she approach Him, but she entreated that she might find mercy, and merely gave a lamentable account of her own affliction; yet is she not counted worthy of so much as an answer. Perhaps many of the hearers were offended, but she was not offended. And why say I, of the hearers? For I suppose that even the very disciples must have been in some degree affected at the woman's affliction, and have been greatly troubled, and out of heart.

Nevertheless not even in this trouble did they venture to say, "Grant her this favor," but, "His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away, for she crieth after us." For we too, when we wish to persuade any one, oftentimes say the contrary. But Christ saith, "I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." What then did the woman, after she heard this? Was she silent, and did she desist? or did she relax her earnestness? By no means, but she was the more instant. But it is not so with us; rather, when we fail to obtain, we desist; whereas it ought to make us the more urgent. And yet, who would not have been driven to perplexity by the word which was then spoken? Why His silence were enough to drive her to despair, but His answer did so very much more. For together with herself, to see them also in utter perplexity that were pleading with her, and to hear that the thing is even impossible to be done, was enough to cast her into unspeakable perplexity.

Yet nevertheless the woman was not perplexed, but on seeing her advocates prevail nothing, she made herself shameless with a goodly shamelessness. For whereas before this she had not ventured so much as to come in sight (for "she crieth," it is said, "after us"), when one might expect that she should rather depart further off in utter despair, at that very time

she comes nearer, and worships, saying, "Lord, help me." What is this, O woman? Hast thou then greater confidence than the apostles? more abundant strength? "Confidence and strength," saith she, "by no means; nay, I am even full of shame. Yet nevertheless my very shamelessness do I put forward for entreaty; He will respect my confidence." And what is this? Heardest thou not Him saying, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel? "I heard," saith she, "but He Himself is Lord." Wherefore neither did she say, "Entreat and beseech," but, "Help me."

3. What then saith Christ? Not even with all this was He satisfied, but He makes her perplexity yet more intense again, saying, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to the dogs." And when He vouchsafed her a word, then He smote her more sharply than by His silence. And no longer doth He refer the cause to another, nor say, "I am not sent," but the more urgent she makes her entreaty, so much the more doth He also urge His denial. And He calls them no longer "sheep," but "children," and her "a dog." What then saith the woman? Out of His own very words she frames her plea. "Why, though I be a dog," said she, "I am not an alien." Justly did Christ say, "For judgment am I come." The woman practises high self-command, and shows forth all endurance and faith, and this, receiving insult; but they, courted and honored, requite it with the contrary.

For, "that food is necessary for the children," saith she, "I also know; yet neither am I forbidden, being a dog. For were it unlawful to receive, neither would it be lawful to partake of the crumbs; but if, though in scanty measure, they ought to be partakers, neither am I forbidden, though I be a dog; nay, rather on this ground am I most surely a partaker, if I am a dog." With this intent did Christ put her off, for He knew she would say this; for this did He deny the grant, that He might exhibit her high self-command. For if He had not meant to give, neither would He have given afterwards, nor would He have stopped her mouth again. But as He doth in the case of the centurion, saying, "I will come and heal him," that we might learn the godly fear of that man, and might hear him say, "I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof;" and as He doth in the case of her that had the issue of blood, saying, "I perceive that virtue hath gone out of me," that He might make her faith manifest; and as in the case of the Samaritan woman, that He might show how not even upon reproof she desists: so also here, He would not that so great virtue in the woman should be hid. Not in insult then were His words spoken, but calling her forth, and revealing the treasure laid up in her.

But do thou, I pray thee, together with her faith see also her humility. For He had called the Jews "children," but she was not satisfied with this, but even called them "masters;" so far was she from grieving at the praises of others. "Why, the dogs also," saith she, "eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table." Seest thou the woman's wisdom, how she did not venture so much as to say a word against it, nor was stung by other men's praises, nor was indignant at the reproach? Seest thou her constancy? He said, "It is not meet," and she said, "Truth, Lord;" He called them "children," but she "masters;" He used the name of a dog, but she added also the dog's act. Seest thou this woman's humility? Hear the proud

language of the Jews. "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man;" and, "We be born of God." But not so this woman, rather she calls herself a dog, and them masters; sofor this she became a child. What then saith Christ? "O woman, great is thy faith."

Yea, therefore did He put her off, that He might proclaim aloud this saying, that He might crown the woman. "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Now what He saith is like this: "Thy faith indeed is able to effect even greater things than these; nevertheless, Be it unto thee even as thou wilt." This was akin to that voice that said, "Let the Heaven be, and it was." "And her daughter was made whole from that very hour." Seest thou how this woman too contributed not a little to the healing of her daughter? For to this purpose neither did Christ say, "Let thy little daughter be made whole," but, "Great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt;" to teach thee that the words were not used at random, nor were they flattering words, but great was the power of her faith. The certain test, however, and demonstration thereof, He left to the issue of events. Her daughter accordingly was straightway healed.

But mark thou, I pray thee, how when the apostles had failed, and had not succeeded, this woman had success. So great a thing is assiduity in prayer. Yea, He had even rather be solicited by us, guilty as we are, for those who belong to us, than by others in our behalf. And yet they had more liberty to speak; but she exhibited much endurance. And by the issue He also excused Himself to His disciples for the delay, and showed that with reason He had not assented to their request. 4. "And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into the mountain, and sat down there. And great multitudes came unto Him, having with them those that were lame, blind, maimed, dumb; and cast them at His feet; and He healed them, insomuch that the multitudes wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see, and they glorified the God of Israel."

Now He goes about Himself, now sits awaiting the diseased, and hath the lame brought up unto the mountain. And no longer do they touch so much as His garment, but advance a higher step, being cast at His feet: and they showed their faith doubly, first, by going up into the mountain though lame, then by wanting nothing else but to be cast at His feet only. And great was the marvel and strange, to see them that were carried walking, the blind needing not any to lead them by the hand. Yea, both the multitude of the healed, and the facility of their cure amazed them. Seest thou, how the woman indeed He healed with so much delay, but these immediately? not because these are better than she is, but because she is more faithful than they. Therefore, while in her case He defers and delays, to manifest her constancy; on these He bestows the gift immediately, stopping the mouths of the unbelieving Jews, and cutting away from them every plea. For the greater favors one hath received, so much the more is he liable to punishment, if he be insensible, and the very honor make him no better. Therefore you see the rich also proving wicked, are more punished than the poor, for not being softened even by their prosperity. For tell me not that they gave alms. Since if they gave not in proportion to their substance, not even so shall they escape; our alms being

judged not by the measure of our gifts, but by the largeness of our mind. But if these suffer punishment, much more they that are eager about unnecessary things; who build houses of two and three stories, but despise the hungry; who give heed to covetousness, but neglect alms-giving.

5. But since the discourse hath fallen on almsgiving, come then, let us resume again to-day that argument, which I was making three days ago concerning benevolence, and left unfinished. Ye remember, when lately I was speaking of vanity about your shoes, and of that empty trouble, and the luxury of the young, that it was from almsgiving that our discourse passed on to those charges against you. What were the matters then at that time brought forward? That almsgiving is a kind of art, having its workshop in Heaven, and for its teacher, not man, but God. Then inquiring what is an art, and what not an art, we came upon fruitless labors, and evil devices, amongst which we made mention also of this art concerning men's shoes. Have ye then recalled it to mind? Come now, let us to-day also resume what we then said, and let us show how almsgiving is an art, and better than all arts. For if the peculiarity of art is to issue in something useful, and nothing is more useful than almsgiving, very evidently this is both an art, and better than all arts. For it makes for us not shoes, nor doth it weave garments, nor build houses that are of clay; but it procures life everlasting, and snatches us from the hands of death, and in either life shows us glorious, and builds the mansions that are in Heaven, and those eternal tabernacles.

This suffers not our lamps to go out, nor that we should appear at the marriage having filthy garments, but washes them, and renders them purer than snow. "For though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow." It suffers us not to fall, where that rich man fell, nor to hear those fearful words, but it leads us into the bosom of Abraham. And indeed of the arts of this life, each severally takes and keeps one good work; as agriculture the feeding us; weaving the clothing us; or rather not so much as this; for it is in no wise sufficient alone to contribute to us its own part. And, if thou wilt, let us try agriculture first. Why, if it hath not the smith's art, that it may borrow from it spade, and ploughshare, and sickle, and axe, and other things besides; and that of the carpenter, so as both to frame a plough, and to prepare a yoke and a cart to bruise the ears; and the currier's, to make also the leathern harness; and the builder's, to build a stable for the bullocks that plough, and houses for the husbandmen that sow; and the woodman's, to cut wood; and the baker's after all these, it is found nowhere.

So also the art of weaving, when it produces anything, calls many arts, together with itself, to assist it in the works set before it; and if they be not present and stretch forth the hand, this too stands, like the former, at a loss. And indeed every one of the arts stands in need of the other. But when alms is to be given, we want nothing else, but the disposition only is required. And if thou say that money is needed, and houses and clothes and shoes; read those words of Christ, which He spake concerning the widow, and cease from this anxiety. For though thou be exceedingly poor, and of them that beg, if thou cast in two mites, thou hast effected all; though thou give but a barley cake, having only this, thou art arrived at

the end of the art. This science then let us receive, and bring to perfection. For truly it is a better thing to know this, than to be a king, and to wear a diadem. For this is not its only advantage, that it needs not other things, but it is also able to accomplish a variety of objects, both many and of all kinds. Thus, it both builds houses that continue forever in Heaven; and teaches them that have brought it to perfection, how they may escape the never-dying death; and bestows on thee treasures that are never spent, but escape all injury, both from robbers, and from worms, and from moths, and from time.

And yet, were it but for the preservation of wheat that any one had taught thee this, what wouldest thou not have given, to be able to preserve thy grain unconsumed for many years? But behold, this teaches thee the same not concerning wheat only, but concerning all things, and shows how both thy goods and thy soul and thy body may remain unconsumed. And why should we rehearse particularly all the good effects of this art? For this teaches thee how thou mayest become like God, which is the sum of all good things whatsoever. Seest thou how the work thereof is not one, but many? Without needing any other art, it builds houses, it weaves garments, it stores up treasures which cannot be taken from us, it makes us get the better of death, and prevail over the devil; it renders us like God.

What now can be more profitable than this art? For while the other arts, as well as what I have mentioned, both end with our present life, and when the artists are diseased, are found nowhere; and their works have no power to endure, and they need much labor and time, and innumerable other things; this one, when the world hath passed away, then it becomes more than ever conspicuous; when we are dead, then it shines out brighter than ever, and exhibits the works which it hath accomplished. And neither time nor labor, nor any such travail, doth it need; but is active even in thy sickness, and in thine old age, and migrates with thee into the life to come, and never forsakes thee. This makes thee to surpass in ability both sophists and rhetoricians. For such as are approved in those arts have many to envy them, but they who shine in this have thousands to pray for them. And those indeed stand at men's judgment seat, pleading for them that are wronged, and often too for them that do wrong; but this virtue stands by the judgment seat of Christ, not only pleading, but persuading the judge Himself to plead for him that is judged, and to give sentence in his favor: though his sins have been very many, almsgiving doth both crown and proclaim him. For "give alms, and all things shall be clean."

And why do I speak of the things to come? Since in our present life, should we ask men which they would rather, that there should be many sophists and rhetoricians, or many that give alms, and love their fellow men, thou wilt hear them choose the latter; and very reasonably. For if oratory were taken away, our life will be nothing the worse; for indeed even before this, it had continued a long time; but if thou take away the showing of mercy, all is lost and undone. And as men could not sail on the sea, if harbors and roadsteads were blocked up; so neither could this life hold together, if thou take away mercy, and compassion, and love to man. 6. Therefore God hath not at all left them to reasoning only, but many parts thereof He hath implanted by the absolute power of nature herself. Thus do fathers pity children,

thus mothers, thus children parents; and not in the case of men only, but of all the brutes also; thus brothers pity brothers, and kinsmen, and connexions; thus man pities man. For we have somewhat even from nature prone to mercy.

Therefore also we feel indignation in behalf of them that are wronged, and seeing men killed we are overcome, and beholding them as they mourn, we weep. For because it is God's will that it should be very perfectly performed, He commanded nature to contribute much hereunto, signifying that this is exceedingly the object of His care. Considering then these things, let us bring both ourselves and our children and them that pertain to us unto the school of mercy, and this above all things let man learn, since even this is man. "For a man is a great thing, and a merciful man a precious thing;" so that unless one hath this, one hath fallen away even from being a man. This renders them wise. And why marvel at this being man? This is God. For, "be ye," saith He, "merciful as your Father?" Let us learn therefore to be merciful on all accounts, but chiefly, because we too need much mercy. And let us reckon ourselves as not even living, at such time as we are not showing mercy. But by mercy, I mean that which is free from covetousness. For if he that is contented with his own, and imparts to no man, is not merciful, how is he that takes the goods of other men merciful, though he give without limit? For if merely to enjoy one's own be inhumanity, much more to defraud others. If they that have done no wrong are punished, because they imparted not, much more they, who even take what is others.

Say not therefore this, "One is injured, another receives mercy." For this is the grievous thing. Since it were meet that the injured should be the same with the receiver of the mercy: but now, while wounding some, thou art healing them whom thou hast not wounded, when thou oughtest to heal the same; or rather not so much as to wound them. For he is not humane who smites and heals, but he that heals such as have been smitten by others. Heal therefore thine own evil acts, not another's; or rather do not smite at all, nor cast down (for this is the conduct of a mocker), but raise up them that are cast down. For neither is it possible by the same measure of almsgiving to cure the evil result of covetousness. For if thou hast unjustly gotten a farthing, it is not a farthing that thou needest again for almsgiving, to remove the sin that comes of thine unjust gain, but a talent. Therefore the thief being taken pays fourfold, but he that spoils by violence is worse than he that steals. And if this last ought to give fourfold what he stole, the extortioner should give tenfold and much more; and it is much if even so he can make atonement for his injustice; for of almsgiving not even then will he receive the reward. Therefore saith Zacchaeus, "I will restore what I have taken by false accusation fourfold, and the half of my goods I will give to the poor." And if under the law one ought to give fourfold, much more under grace; if he that steals, much more he that spoils by violence. For besides the damage, in this case the in-suit too is great. So that even if thou give an hundredfold, thou hast not yet given the whole.

Seest thou how not without cause I said, If thou take but a farthing by violence, and pay back a talent, scarcely even so dost thou remedy it? But if scarcely by doing this; when thou reversest the order, and hast taken by violence whole fortunes, yet bestowest but little,

and not to them either that have been wronged, but to others in their stead; what kind of plea wilt thou have? what favor? what hope of salvation? Wouldest thou learn how bad a deed thou doest in so giving alms? Hear the Scripture that saith, "As one that killeth the son before his father's eyes, so is he that bringeth a sacrifice of the goods of the poor." This denunciation then let us write in our minds before we depart, this let us write on our walls, this on our hands, this in our conscience, this everywhere; that at least the fear of it being vigorous in our minds, may restrain our hands from daily murders. For extortion is a more grievous thing than murder, consuming the poor man by little and little.

In order then that we may be pure from this pollution, let us exercise ourselves in these thoughts, both by ourselves and to one another. For so shall we both be more forward to show mercy, and receive undiminished the reward for it, and enjoy the eternal good things, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory and might with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 53

Matthew Chapter 15, Verse 32

"But Jesus called His disciples unto Him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way." Both above, when going to do this miracle, He first healed them that were maimed in body, and here He doth the self-same thing; from the healing of the blind and the lame, He goes on to this again. But why might it be, that then His disciples said, "Send away the multitude," but now they said not so; and this, though three days had past? Either being themselves improved by this time, or seeing that the people had no great sense of hunger; for they were glorifying God for the things that were done. But see how in this instance too He doth not proceed at once to the miracle, but calls them forth thereunto. For the multitudes indeed who had come out for healing durst not ask for the loaves; but He, the benevolent and provident one, gives even to them that ask not, and saith unto His disciples, "I have compassion, and will not send them away fasting."

For lest they should say that they came having provisions for the way, He saith, "They continue with me now three days;" so that even if they came having any, it is all spent. For therefore He Himself did not this on the first and second day, but when all had been consumed by them, in order that having first been in want, they might more eagerly accept His work. Therefore He saith, "Lest they faint in the way;" implying both their distance to be great, and that they had nothing left. "Then, if thou art not willing to send them away fasting, wherefore dost thou not work the miracle?" That by this question and by their answer He might make the disciples more heedful, and that they might show forth their faith, coming unto Him, and saying, "Make loaves." But not even so did they understand the motive of His question; wherefore afterwards He saith to them, as Mark relates, "Are your hearts so hardened? Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not?"

Since, if this were not so, wherefore doth He speak to the disciples, and signify the multitude's worthiness to receive a benefit, and add also the pity He Himself feels? But Matthew saith, that after this He also rebuked them, saying, "O ye of little faith, do ye not yet understand, nor remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? nor the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?" So completely do the evangelists harmonize one with another. What then say the disciples? Still

they creep on the ground, although He had done so very many things in order that that miracle might be kept in memory; as by His question, and by the answer, and by making them minister herein, and by distributing the baskets; but their state of mind was yet rather imperfect. Wherefore also they say to Him, "Whence should we have so many loaves in the wilderness?"

Both before this, and now, they make mention of the wilderness; themselves in a weak way of argument so speaking, yet even hereby putting the miracle above suspicion. That is, lest any should affirm (as I have indeed already said), that they obtained it from some neighboring village, the place is acknowledged, that the miracle may be believed. With this view, both the former miracle and this He works in a wilderness, at a great distance from the villages. The disciples, considering none of all this, said, "Whence should we have so many loaves in a wilderness?" For they thought verily He had said it as purposing next to enjoin them to feed the people; most foolishly; since with this intent He had said, and that lately, "Give ye them to eat," that He might bring them to an urgent need of entreating Him. But now He saith not this, "Give ye them to eat," but what? "I have compassion on them, and will not send them away fasting;" bringing the disciples nearer, and provoking them more, and granting them clearer sight, to ask these things of Him. For in truth they were the words of one signifying that He hath power not to send them away fasting; of one manifesting His authority. For the expression, "I will not," implies such a purpose in Him.

2. Since however they still spake of the multitude merely, and the place, and the wilderness (for "whence," it is said, "should we have in a wilderness so many loaves, as to fill so great a multitude"?); and not even so understood what He said, He proceeds to contribute His own part, and saith unto them, "How many loaves have ye? And they say, Seven, and a few little fishes." And they no more say, "But what are these among so many?" as they had said before. So that although they reached not His whole meaning, yet nevertheless they became higher by degrees. For so He too, arousing their mind hereby, puts the question much as He had done before, that by the very form of the inquiry He might remind them of the works already done. But as thou hast seen their imperfection hereby, so do thou observe the severity of their spirit, and admire their love of truth, how, writing themselves, they conceal not their own defects, great as they were. For it was no small blame to have presently forgotten this miracle, which had so recently taken place; wherefore they are also rebuked.

And herewith consider also their strictness in another matter, how they were conquerors of their appetite; how disciplined to make little account of their diet. For being in the wilderness and abiding there three days, they had seven loaves. Now all the rest He doth as on the former occasion; thus He both makes them sit down on the ground, and He makes the loaves multiply themselves in the hands of the disciples. For, "He commanded," it is said, "the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves, and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to His disciples, and the disciples to the multitude." But when we come to the end, there is a difference. For, "they did all eat," so it is said, "and

were filled, and they took up of the broken meat that was left, seven baskets full. And they that did eat were four thousand men, besides women and children."

But why at the former time, when there were five thousand, did twelve baskets full remain over and above, whereas here, when there were four thousand, it was seven baskets full? For what purpose, I say, and by what cause, were the remnants less, the guests not being so many? Either then one may say this, that the baskets on this last occasion were greater than those used before, or if this were not so, lest the equality of the miracle should again cast them into forgetfulness, He rouses their recollection by the difference, that by the variation they might be reminded of both one and the other. Accordingly, in that case, He makes the baskets full of fragments equal in number to His disciples, in this, the other baskets equal to the loaves; indicating even hereby His unspeakable power, and the ease wherewith He exercised His authority, in that it was possible for Him to work such miracles, both in this way and in the other. For neither was it of small power, to maintain the exact number, both then and now; then when there were five thousand, now when there were four thousand; and not suffer the remnants to be more than the baskets used on the one occasion or on the other, although the number of the guests was different.

And the end again was like the former. For as then He left the multitude and withdrew in a ship, so also now; and John also saith this. For since no sign did so work upon them to follow Him, as the miracle of the loaves; and they were minded not only to follow Him, but also to make Him a king; avoiding all suspicion of usurping royalty, He hastens away after this work of wonder: and He doth not even go away afoot, lest they should follow Him, but by entering into a ship. "And He sent away the multitudes," so it saith, "and went on board the ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala." 3. "And the Pharisees and Sadducees came and desired Him to show them a sign from Heaven. But He saith, When it is evening, ye say, Fair weather, for the sky is red; and in the morning, Foul weather today, for the sky is red and lowering. Ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And He left them, and departed."

But Mark saith, that when they were come unto Him, and were questioning with Him, "He sighed deeply in His spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign?" And yet surely their inquiry was deserving of anger and great displeasure; yet nevertheless the benevolent and provident One is not angry, but pities and bewails them as incurably diseased, and after so full a demonstration of His power, tempting Him. For not in order to believe did they seek, but to lay hold of Him. Since had they come unto Him as ready to believe, He would have given it. For He who said to the woman, "It is not meet," and afterwards gave, much more would He have shown His bounty to these. But since they did not seek to believe, therefore He also calls them hypocrites, because in another place they said one thing, and meant another. Yea, had they believed, they would not even have asked. And from another thing too it is evident that they believed not; that when reproved and exposed, they abode not with Him, nor said, "We are ignorant and seek to learn."

But for what sign from Heaven were they asking? Either that He should say the sun, or curb the moon, or bring down thunderbolts, or work a change in the air, or some other such thing. What then saith He to all this? "Ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" See His meekness and moderation. For not even as before did He refuse merely, and say, "There shall none be given them," but He states also the cause why He gives it not, even though they were not asking for information. What then was the cause? "Much as in the sky," saith He, "one thing is a sign of a storm, another of fair weather, and no one when he saw the sign of foul weather would seek for a calm, neither in calm and fair weather for a storm; so should you reckon with regard to me also. For this present time of my coming, is different from that which is to come. Now there is need of these signs which are on the earth, but those in Heaven are stored up against that time. Now as a physician am I come, then I shall be here as a judge; now to seek that which is gone astray, then to demand an account. Therefore in a hidden manner am I come, but then with much publicity, folding up the heaven, hiding the sun, not suffering the moon to give her light. Then 'the very powers of the heavens shall be shaken, and the manifestation of my coming shall imitate lightning that appears at once to all. But not now is the time for these signs; for I am come to die, and to suffer all extremities."

Heard ye not the prophet, saying, "He shall not strive nor cry, neither shall His voice be heard without?" and another again, "He shall come down as rain upon a fleece of wool?" And if men speak of the signs in Pharaoh's time, there was an enemy then from whom deliverance was needed, and it all took place in due course. But to Him that came among friends there was no need of those signs. "And besides, how shall I give the great signs, when the little are not believed?" Little, I mean, as regards display, since in power these latter were much greater than the former. For what could be equal to remitting sins, and raising the dead, and driving away devils, and creating a body, and ordering all other things aright? But do thou see their hardened heart, how on being told, that "no sign should be given them but the sign of the prophet Jonas," they do not ask. And yet, knowing both the prophet, and all that befell him, and having been told this a second time, they ought to have inquired and learnt what the saying could mean; but, as I said, there is no desire of information in these their doings. For this cause "He also left them, and departed."

4. "And when His disciples," so it is said, "were come to the other side, they forgot to take bread. Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." And why said He not plainly, Beware of their teaching? His will is to remind them of what had been done, for He knew they had forgotten. But for accusing them at once there seemed to be no reasonable ground, but to take the occasion from themselves, and so to reprove them, would make the charge admissible. "And why did He not then reprove them, when they said, 'Whence should we have so many loaves in the wilderness?' for it seemed a good time then to say what He says here." That He might not seem to rush hastily on the miracle. And besides, He would not blame them before the multitude, nor seek honor in their presence. And now too the accusation had greater reason, for that after repetition of the miracle they were so minded.

Wherefore also He works another miracle, and then and not till then He reproves; I mean, He brings forward what they were reasoning in their hearts. But what were their reasonings? "Because," so it is said, "we have taken no bread." For as yet they were full of trepidation about the purifications of the Jews, and the observances of meats. Wherefore on all accounts He attacks them even with severity, saying, "Why reason ye in yourselves, O ye of little faith, because ye have brought no bread? Perceive ye not yet, neither understand? Have ye your heart hardened? Having eyes, see ye not? Having ears, hear ye not? Do ye not remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?" Seest thou intense displeasure? For nowhere else doth He appear to have so rebuked them. Wherefore then doth He so? In order again to cast out their prejudice about the meats. I mean that with this view, whereas then He had only said, "Perceive ye not, neither understand?" in this place, and with a strong rebuke, He saith, "O ye of little faith."

For not everywhere is lenity a good thing. And as He used to allow them freedom of speech, so doth He also reprove, by this variety providing for their salvation. And mark thou at once His reproof, bow strong, and His mildness. For all but excusing Himself to them for His severe reproofs to them, He saith, "Do ye not yet consider the five loaves, and how many baskets ye took up; and the seven loaves, and how many baskets ye took up?" And to this end He sets down also the numbers, as well of the persons fed as of the fragments, at once both bringing them to recollection of the past, and making them more attentive to the future. And to teach thee how great the power of His reproof, and how it roused up their slumbering mind, hear what saith the evangelist. For Jesus having said no more, but having reproved them, and added this only, "How is it that ye do not understand, that I spake it not to you concerning bread that ye should beware, but of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees;" He subjoined, saying, "Then understood they that He bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees," although He had not uttered that interpretation.

See how much good His reproof wrought. For it both led them away from the Jewish observances, and when they were remiss, made them more heedful, and delivered them from want of faith; so that they were not afraid nor in alarm, if at any time they seemed to have few loaves; nor were they careful about famine, but despised all these things. 5. Neither let us then for our part be in all ways flattering those under our charge, nor seek to be flattered of them that have the rule over us. Since, in truth, the soul of men stands in need of medicines in both these kinds. Therefore even in the whole world we may see that God doth so order things, now doing this, now the other, and permits neither our good things to be permanent, nor our adversities to be by themselves. Yea, as now it is night, now day, and now winter, now summer; so also within us, now pain, now pleasure, now sickness, and now health. Let us not then marvel when we are sick, since rather when we are in health we should marvel. Neither let us be troubled when we are in sorrow, since when we are glad rather it is reasonable to be troubled; all coming to pass according to nature and in order.

And why marvel, if in thy case so it be, when even in regard of those saints one may see this happening?

And that thou mayest learn it, the life which thou accountest to be most full of pleasure and free from troubles, that let us bring forward. Wilt thou that we examine Abraham's life from the beginning? What then at the very first was said to him? "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred." Didst thou see what a painful thing is enjoined him? But look also on the good coming after it: "And come hither unto a land that I will show thee, and I will make thee a great nation." What then? after he had come to the land, and reached the harbor, did his troubles cease? By no means; but others again, more grievous than the former, succeed, a famine, and a removal, and a violent seizure of his wife; and after these other prosperities befell him, the plague upon Pharaoh, and her liberation, and the honor, and those many gifts, and the return to his house. And the subsequent events too all form the same kind of chain, prosperities and troubles entwined together.

And the like befell the apostles too. Wherefore also Paul said, "Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble." "What then is this to me," some one will say, "who am always in sorrow?" Be not uncandid, nor unthankful; nay, it is out of the question for one to be in troubles always, nature being unequal to it; but because we want to be always in joy, therefore we account ourselves always in sorrow. Not however on this account alone, but because we presently forget our advantages and blessings, but are always remembering our troubles, therefore we say we are in sorrow. Whereas it is impossible, being a man, to be always in sorrow. 6. And if ye will, let us examine both the life of luxury, so delicate and dissipated, and the other, so grievous and galling, and painful. For we will show you that both the former hath sorrows, and the latter refreshments Nay, be not disturbed. Let there be set before us a man who is in bonds, and another who is a king, youthful, an orphan, having succeeded to a great substance; and let there also be set before us one toiling for hire through the whole day, and another living in luxury continually.

Wilt thou then that we tell first the vexations of that one, who lives in luxury? Consider how his mind must naturally be rocked as with a tempest, when he longs for a glory beyond him, when he is despised by his servants, when he is insulted by his inferiors, when he hath ten thousand to accuse him, and to blame his costly living. And all the rest too, which is likely to occur in such wealth, one cannot even tell; the vexations, the affronts, the accusations, the losses, the devices of the envious, who, because they cannot transfer his wealth to themselves, drag and tear in pieces the young man on every side, and excite against him storms without end. Wilt thou have me tell also of the pleasure of this other, the hired laborer? From all this he is free; though one insult him, he grieves not, for he counts not himself greater than any; he is not in fear about wealth, he eats with pleasure, he sleeps with great comfort. Not so luxurious are the drinkers of Thasian wine, as he in going to fountains, and enjoying those springs. But the state of the other is not such.

Now if what I have said suffice thee not, to make my victory more complete. come let us compare the king and the prisoner, and thou wilt often see the latter in pleasure and sporting and leaping, while the former with his diadem and purple robe is in despair, and hath innumerable cares, and is dead with fear. For we may not, we may not find any one's life without sorrow, nor again without its share of pleasure; for our nature would not have been equal to it, as I have already said. But if one joys more, and another grieves more, this is due to the person himself that grieves, being mean of soul, not to the nature of the case. For if we would rejoice continually, we have many means thereto. Since, had we once laid hold on virtue, there would be nothing to grieve us any more. For she suggests good hopes to them that possess her, and makes them well pleasing to God, and approved among men, and infuses unspeakable delight. Yea, though in doing right virtue hath toil, yet doth it fill the conscience with much gladness, and lays up within so great pleasure, as no speech shall be able to express.

For which of the things in our present life seems to thee pleasant? A sumptuous table, and health of body, and glory, and wealth? Nay, these delights, if thou set them by that pleasure, will prove the bitterest of all things, compared thereunto. For nothing is more pleasurable than a sound conscience, and a good hope. 7. And if ye would learn this, let us inquire of him who is on the point of departing hence, or of him that is grown old; and when we have reminded him of sumptuous banqueting which he hath enjoyed, and of glory and honor, and of good works which he hath some time practised and wrought, let us ask in which he exults the more; and we shall see him for the other ashamed, and covering his face, but for these soaring and leaping with joy.

So Hezekiah, too, when he was sick, called not to mind sumptuous feasting, nor glory, nor royalty, but righteousness. For "remember," saith he, "how I walked before Thee in an upright way." See Paul again for these things leaping with joy, and saying, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." "Why, what had he to speak of besides?" one may say. Many things, and more than these; even the honors wherewith he was honored, what attendance and great respect he had enjoyed. Hearest thou not him saying, "Ye received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus"? and, "If it were possible, ye would have plucked out your eyes, and given them to me"? and that "Men had laid down their neck for his life"? But none of those things doth he bring forward, but his labors, and perils, and his crowns in requital for them; and with much reason. For while the one sort are left here, the other migrate with us; and for those we shall give account, but for these we shall ask reward.

Know ye not in the day of death how sins make the soul shrink? how they stir up the heart from beneath? At that time therefore, when such things are happening, the remembrance of good works stands by us, like a calm in a storm, and comforts the perturbed soul. For if we be wakeful, even during our life this fear will be ever present with us; but, insensible as we are, it will surely come upon us when we are cast out from hence. Because the prisoner too is then most grieved, when they are leading him out to the court; then most trembles,

when he is near the judgment-seat, when he must give his account. For the same kind of reason most persons may be then heard relating horrors, and fearful visions, the sight whereof they that are departing may not endure, but often shake their very bed with much vehemence, and gaze fearfully on the bystanders, the soul urging itself inwards, unwilling to be torn away from the body, and not enduring the sight of the coming angels. Since if human beings that are awful strike terror into us beholding them; when we see angels threatening, and stern powers, among our visitors; what shall we not suffer, the soul being forced from the body, and dragged away, and bewailing much, all in vain? Since that rich man too, after his departure, mourned much, but derived no profit therefrom.

All these things then let us picture to ourselves, and consider, test we too suffer the same, and thus let us keep the fear thence arising in vigor; that we may escape the actual punishment, and attain unto the eternal blessings; unto which God grant we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be glory unto the Father, together with the Holy and Life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 54

Matthew Chapter 14, Verse 13

"Now when Jesus had gone forth into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?" Wherefore hath he mentioned the founder of the city? Because there was another besides, Caesarea Stratonis. But not in that, but in this doth He ask them, leading them far away from the Jews, so that being freed from all alarm, they might speak with boldness all that was in their mind. And wherefore did He not ask them at once their own opinion, but that of the people? In order that when they had told the people's opinion, and then were asked, "But whom say ye that I am?" by the manner of His inquiry they might be led up to a sublimer notion, and not fall into the same low view as the multitude. Accordingly He asks them not at all in the beginning of His preaching, but when He had done many miracles, and had discoursed with them of many and high doctrines, and had afforded so many clear proofs of His Godhead, and of His unanimity with the Father, then He puts this question to them.

And He said not, "Whom say the Scribes and Pharisees that I am?" often as these had come unto Him, and discoursed with Him; but, "Whom do men say that I am?" inquiring after the judgment of the people, as unbiassed. For though it was far meaner than it should be, yet was it free from malice, but the other was teeming with much wickedness, And signifying how earnestly He desires His Economy to be confessed, He saith, "The Son of Man;" thereby denoting His Godhead, which He doth also in many other places. For He saith, "No man hath ascended up to Heaven, but the Son of Man, which is in Heaven." And again, "But when ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up, where He was before." Then, since they said, "Some John the Baptist, some Elias, some Jeremias, or one of the prophets," and set forth their mistaken opinion, He next added, "But whom say ye that I am?" calling them on by His second inquiry to entertain some higher imagination concerning Him, and indicating that their former judgment falls exceedingly short of His dignity. Wherefore He seeks for another judgment from themselves, and puts a second question, that they might not fall in with the multitude, who, because they saw His miracles greater than human, accounted Him a man indeed, but one that had appeared after a resurrection, as Herod also said. But He, to lead them away from this notion, saith, "But whom say ye that I am?" that is, "ye that are with me always, and see me working miracles, and have yourselves done many mighty works by me."

5. What then saith the mouth of the apostles, Peter, the ever fervent, the leader of the apostolic choir? When all are asked, he answers. And whereas when He asked the opinion of the people, all replied to the question; when He asked their own, Peter springs forward, and anticipates them, and saith, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." What then saith Christ? "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee." Yet surely unless he had rightly confessed Him, as begotten of the very Father Himself, this were no work of revelation; had he accounted our Lord to be one of the many, his saying was not worthy of a blessing. Since before this also they said, "Truly He is Son of God," those, I mean, who were in the vessel after the tempest, which they saw, and were not blessed, although of course they spake truly. For they confessed not such a Sonship as Peter, but accounted Him to be truly Son as one of the many, and though peculiarly so beyond the many, yet not of the same substance.

And Nathanael too said, "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel;" s and so far from being blessed, he is even reproved by Him, as having said what was far short of the truth. He replied at least, "Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these." Why then is this man blessed? Because he acknowledged Him very Son. Wherefore you see, that while in those former instances He had said no such thing, in this case He also signifies who had revealed it. That is, lest his words might seem to the many (because he was an earnest lover of Christ) to be words of friendship and flattery, and of a disposition to show favor to Him, he brings forward the person who had made them ring in his soul; to inform thee that Peter indeed spake, but the Father suggested, and that thou mightest believe the saying to be no longer a human opinion, but a divine doctrine.

And wherefore doth He not Himself declare it, nor say, "I am the Christ," but by His question establish this, bringing them in to confess it? Because so to do was both more suitable to Him, yea necessary at that time, and it drew them on the more to the belief of the things that were said. Seest thou how the Father reveals the Son, how the Son the Father? For "neither knoweth any man the Father," saith He, "save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him." It cannot therefore be that one should learn the Son of any other than of the Father; neither that one should learn the Father of any other than of the Son. So that even hereby, their sameness of honor and of substance is manifest. 3. What then saith Christ? "Thou art Simon, the son of Jonas; thou shalt be called Cephas." "Thus since thou hast proclaimed my Father, I too name him that begat thee;" all but saying, "As thou art son of Jonas, even so am I of my Father." Else it were superfluous to say, "Thou art Son of Jonas;" but since he had said, "Son of God," to point out that He is so Son of God, as the other son of Jonas, of the same substance with Him that begat Him, therefore He added this, "And I say unto thee, Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church;" that is, on the faith of his confession. Hereby He signifies that many were now on the point of believing, and raises his spirit, and makes him a shepherd. "And the gates of hell" shall not prevail against it." "And if not against it, much more not against me. So be not troubled because thou art shortly to hear that I shall be betrayed and crucified."

Then He mentions also another honor. "And I also will give thee the keys of the heavens." But what is this, "And I also will give thee?" "As the Father hath given thee to know me, so will I also give thee." And He said not, "I will entreat the Father" (although the manifestation of His authority was great, and the largeness of the gift unspeakable), but, "I will give thee." What dost Thou give? tell me. "The keys of the heavens, that whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in Heaven." How then is it not "His to give to sit on His right hand, and on His left," when He saith, "I will give thee"? Seest thou how He, His own self, leads Peter on to high thoughts of Him, and reveals Himself, and implies that He is Son of God by these two promises? For those things which are peculiar to God alone, (both to absolve sins, and to make the church incapable of overthrow in such assailing waves, and to exhibit a man that is a fisher more solid than any rock, while all the world is at war with him), these He promises Himself to give; as the Father, speaking to Jeremiah, said, He would make him as "a brazen pillar, and as a wall;" but him to one nation only, this man in every part of the world.

I would fain inquire then of those who desire to lessen the dignity of the Son, which manner of gifts were greater, those which the Father gave to Peter, or those which the Son gave him? For the Father gave to Peter the revelation of the Son; but the Son gave him to sow that of the Father and that of Himself in every part of the world; and to a mortal man He entrusted the authority over all things in Heaven, giving him the keys; who extended the church to every part of the world, and declared it to be stronger than heaven. "For heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away." How then is He less, who hath given such gifts, hath effected such things? And these things I say, not dividing the works of Father and Son ("for all things are made by Him, and without Him was nothing made which was made"): but bridling the shameless tongue of them that dare so to speak.

But see, throughout all, His authority: "I say unto thee, Thou art Peter; I will build the Church; I will give thee the keys of Heaven." 4. And then, when He had so said, "He charged them that they should tell no man that He was the Christ." And why did He charge them? That when the things which offend are taken out of the way, and the cross is accomplished, and the rest of His sufferings fulfilled, and when there is nothing any more to interrupt and disturb the faith of the people in Him, the right opinion concerning Him may be engraven pure and immovable in the mind of the hearers. For, in truth, His power had not yet clearly shone forth. Accordingly it was His will then to be preached by them, when both the plain truth of the facts, and the power of His deeds were pleading in support of the assertions of the apostles. For it was by no means the same thing to see Him in Palestine, now working miracles, and now insulted and persecuted (and especially when the very cross was presently to follow the miracles that were happening); and to behold him everywhere in the world, adored and believed, and no more suffering anything, such as He had suffered.

Therefore He bids them "tell no man." For that which hath been once rooted and then plucked up, would hardly, if planted, again be retained among the many; but that which, once fixed, hath remained immovable, and hath suffered injury from no quarter, easily

mounts up, and advances to a greater growth. And if they who had enjoyed the benefit of many miracles, and had had part in so many unutterable mysteries, were offended by the mere hearing of it; or rather not these only, but even the leader of them all, Peter; consider what it was likely the common sort should feel, being first told that He is the Son of God, then seeing Him even crucified and spit upon, and that without knowledge of the secret of those mysteries, or participation in the gift of the Holy Ghost. For if to His disciples He said, "I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now;" much more would the rest of the people have utterly failed, had the chiefest of these mysteries been revealed to them before the proper time. Accordingly He forbids them to tell.

And to instruct thee how great a thing it was, their afterwards learning His doctrine complete, when the things that offend had passed by; learn it from this same leader of theirs. For this very Peter, he who after so many miracles proved so weak as even to deny Him, and to be in fear of a mean damsel; after the cross had come forth, and he had received the certain proofs of the resurrection, and there was nothing more to offend and trouble him, retained the teaching of the Spirit so immovable, that more vehemently than a lion he sprang upon the people of the Jews, for all the dangers and innumerable deaths which were threatened. With reason then did He bid them not tell the many before the crucifixion, since not even to them that were to teach did He venture to commit all before the crucifixion. "For I have many things to say unto you," saith He, "but ye cannot bear them now."

And of the things too that He did say, they do not understand many, which He did not make plain before the crucifixion. At least when He was risen from the dead, then and not before they knew some of His sayings. 5. "From that time forth began He to show unto them that He must suffer. From that time." What time? When He had fixed the doctrine in them; when He had brought in the beginning of the Gentiles. But not even so did they understand what He said. "For the saying," it is said, "was hid from them; " and they were as in a kind of perplexity, not knowing that He must rise again. Therefore He rather dwells on the difficulties, and enlarges His discourse, that He may open their mind, and they may understand what it can be that He speaks of.

"But they understood not, but the saying was hid from them, and they feared to ask this; " not whether He should die, but how, and in what manner, and what this mystery could be. For they did not even know what was this same rising again, and supposed it much better not to die. Therefore, the rest being troubled and in perplexity, Peter again, in his ardor, alone ventures to discourse of these things; and not even he openly, but when he had taken Him apart; that is, having separated himself from the rest of the disciples; and he saith, "Be it far from Thee, Lord, this shall not be unto Thee." What ever is this? He that obtained a revelation, he that was blessed, hath he so soon fallen away, and suffered overthrow, so as to fear His passion? And what marvel, that one who had not on these points received any revelation, should have that feeling? Yea, to inform thee that not of himself did he speak those other things either, see in these matters that were not revealed to him how he is

confounded and overthrown, and being told ten thousand times, knows not what the saying can mean.

For that He is Son of God he had learnt, but what the mystery of the cross and of the resurrection might be, was not yet manifest to him: for "the saying," it is said, "was hid from them." Seest thou that with just cause He bade them not declare it to the rest? For if it so confounded them, who must needs be made aware of it, what would not all others have felt? 6. He however, to signify that He is far from coming to the passion against His will, both rebuked Peter, and called him Satan. Let them hear, as many as are ashamed of the suffering of the cross of Christ. For if the chief apostle, even before he had learnt all distinctly, was called Satan for feeling this, what excuse can they have, who after so abundant proof deny His economy? I say., when he who had been so blessed, who made such a confession, has such words addressed to him; consider what they will suffer, who after all this deny the mystery of the cross.

And He said not, "Satan spake by thee," but, "Get thee behind me, Satan." For indeed it was a desire of the adversary that Christ should not suffer. Therefore with such great severity did He rebuke him, as knowing that both he and the rest are especially afraid of this, and will not easily receive it. Therefore He also reveals the thoughts of his mind, saying, "Thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." But what means, "Thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men"? Peter examining the matter by human and earthly reasoning, accounted it disgraceful to Him and an unmeet thing. Touching him therefore sharply, He saith, "My passion is not an unmeet thing, but thou givest this sentence with a carnal mind; whereas if thou hadst hearkened to my sayings in a godly manner, disengaging thyself from thy carnal understanding, thou wouldest know that this of all things most becometh me. For thou indeed supposest that to suffer is unworthy of me; but I say unto thee, that for me not to suffer is of the devil's mind;" by the contrary statements repressing his alarm.

Thus as John, accounting it unworthy of Christ to be baptized by him, was persuaded of Christ to baptize Him, He saying, "Thus it becometh us," and this same Peter too, forbidding Him to wash his feet, by the words, "Thou hast no part with me, unless I wash thy feet; " even so here too He restrained him by the mention of the opposite, and by the severity of the reproof repressed his fear of suffering. 7. Let no man therefore be ashamed of the honored symbols of our salvation, and of the chiefest of all good things, whereby we even live, and whereby we are; but as a crown, so let us bear about the cross of Christ. Yea, for by it all things are wrought, that are wrought among us. Whether one is to be new-born, the cross is there; or to be nourished with that mystical food, or to be ordained, or to do anything else, everywhere our symbol of victory is present. Therefore both on house, and walls, and windows, and upon our forehead, and upon our mind, we inscribe it with much care.

For of the salvation wrought for us, and of our common freedom, and of the goodness of our Lord, this is the sign. "For as a sheep was He led to the slaughter." When therefore thou signest thyself, think of the purpose of the cross, and quench anger, and all the other

passions. When thou signest thyself, fill thy forehead with all courage, make thy soul free. And ye know assuredly what are the things that give freedom. Wherefore also Paul leading us there, I mean unto the freedom that beseems us, did on this wise lead us unto it, having reminded us of the cross and blood of our Lord. "For ye are bought," saith he, "with a price; be not ye the servants of men." Consider, saith he, the price that hath been paid for thee, and thou wilt be a slave to no man; by the price meaning the cross.

Since not merely by the fingers ought one to engrave it, but before this by the purpose of the heart with much faith. And if in this way thou hast marked it on thy face, none of the unclean spirits will be able to stand near thee, seeing the blade whereby he received his wound, seeing the sword which gave him his mortal stroke. For if we, on seeing the places in which the criminals are beheaded, shudder; think what the devil must endure, seeing the weapon, whereby Christ put an end to all his power, and cut off the head of the dragon. Be not ashamed then of so great a blessing, lest Christ be ashamed of thee, when He comes with His glory, and the sign appears before Him, shining beyond the very sunbeam. For indeed the cross cometh then, uttering a voice by its appearance, and pleading with the whole world for our Lord, and signifying that no part hath failed of what pertained to Him.

This sign, both in the days of our forefathers and now, hath opened doors that were shut up; this hath quenched poisonous drugs; this hath taken away the power of hemlock:, this hath healed bites of venomous beasts. For if it opened the gates of hell, and threw wide the archways of Heaven, and made a new entrance into Paradise, and cut away the nerves of the devil; what marvel, if it prevailed over poisonous drugs, and venomous beasts, and all other such things. This therefore do thou engrave upon thy mind, and embrace the salvation of our souls. For this cross saved and converted the world, drove away error, brought back truth, made earth Heaven, fashioned men into angels. Because of this, the devils are no longer terrible, but contemptible; neither is death, death, but a sleep; because of this, all that warreth against us is cast to the ground, and trodden under foot.

If any one therefore say to thee, Dost thou worship the crucified? say, with your voice all joy, and your countenance gladdened, "I do both worship Him, and will never cease to worship." And if he laugh, weep for him, because he is mad. Thank the Lord, that He hath bestowed on us such benefits, as one cannot so much as learn without His revelation from above. Why, this is the very reason of his laughing, that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit." Since our children too feel this, when they see any of the great and marvellous things; and if thou bring a child into the mysteries, he will laugh. Now the heathen are like these children; or rather they are more imperfect even than these; wherefore also they are more wretched, in that not in an immature age, but when full grown, they have the feelings of babes; wherefore neither are they worthy of indulgence.

But let us with a clear voice, shouting both loud and high, cry out and say (and should all the heathen be present, so much the more confidently), that the cross is our glory, and 'the sum of all our blessings, and our confidence, and all our crown. I would that also with Paul I were able to say, "By which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world; " but

I cannot, restrained as I am by various passions. 8. Wherefore I admonish both you, and surely before you myself, to be crucified to the world, and to have nothing in common with the earth, but to set your love on your country above, and the glory and the good things that come from it. For indeed we are soldiers of a heavenly King, and are clad with spiritual arms. Why then take we upon ourselves the life of traders, and mountebanks, nay rather of worms? For where the King is, there should also the soldier be. Yea, we are become soldiers, not of them that are far off, but of them that are near. For the earthly king indeed would not endure that all should be in the royal courts, and at his own side, but the King of the Heavens willeth all to be near His royal throne.

And how, one may say, is it possible for us, being here, to stand by that throne? Because Paul too being on earth was where the seraphim, where the cherubim are; and nearer to Christ, than these the body guards to the king. For these turn about their faces in many directions, but him nothing beguiled nor distracted, but he kept his whole mind intent upon the king. So that if we would, this is possible to us also. For were He distant from us in place, thou mightest well doubt, but if He is present everywhere, to him that strives and is in earnest He is near. Wherefore also the prophet said, "I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me; " and God Himself again, "I am a God nigh at hand, and not a God afar off." Then as our sins separate us from Him, so do our righteousnesses draw us nigh unto Him. "For while thou art yet speaking," it is said, "I will say, Here I am." What father would ever be thus obedient to his offspring?What mother is there, so ready, and continually standing, if haply her children call her? There is not one, no father, no mother: but God stands continually waiting, if any of his servants should perchance call Him; and never, when we have called as we ought, hath He refused to hear. Therefore He saith, "While thou art yet speaking," I do not wait for thee to finish, and I straightway hearken.

9. Let us call Him therefore, as it is His will to be called. But what is this His will? "Loose," saith He, "every band of iniquity, unloose the twisted knots of oppressive covenants, tear in pieces every unjust contract. Break thy bread to the hungry, and bring in the poor that are cast out to thy house. If thou seest one naked, cover him, and them that belong to thy seed thou shalt not overlook. Then shall thy light break forth in the morning, and thine healings shall spring forth speedily, and thy righteousness shall go before thee, and the glory of the Lord shall cover thee. Then thou shalt call upon me, and I will give ear unto thee; whilst thou art yet speaking, I will say, Lo! here I am." And who is able to do all this? it may be asked. Nay, who is unable, I pray thee?For which is difficult of the things I have mentioned?Which is laborious? Which not easy?

Why, so entirely are they not possible only, but even easy, that many have actually overshot the measure of those sayings, not only tearing in pieces unjust contracts, but even stripping themselves of all their goods; making the poor welcome not to roof and table, but even to the sweat of their body, and laboring in order to maintain them; doing good not to kinsmen only, but even to enemies. But what is there at all even hard in these sayings? For neither did He say, "Pass over the mountain, go across the sea, dig through so many acres of land,

abide without food, wrap thyself in sackcloth;" but, "Impart to the poor? impart of thy bread, cancel the contracts unjustly made." What is more easy than this? tell me. But even if thou account it difficult, look, I pray thee, at the rewards also, and it shall be easy to thee.

For much as our emperors at the horse races heap together before the combatants crowns, and prizes, and garments, even so Christ also sets His rewards in the midst of His course, holding them out by the prophet's words, as it were by many hands. And the emperors, although they be ten thousand times emperors, yet as being men, and the wealth which they have in a course of spending, and their munificence of exhaustion, are ambitious of making the little appear much; wherefore also they commit each thing severally into the hand of the several attendants, and so bring it forward. But our King contrariwise, having heaped all together (because He is very rich, and doeth nothing for display), He so brings it forward, and what He so reaches out is indefinitely great, and will need many hands to hold it. And to make thee aware of this, examine each particular of it carefully.

"Then," saith He, "shall thy light break forth in the morning." Doth not this gift appear to thee as some one thing?But it is not one; nay, for it hath many things in it, both prizes, and crowns, and other rewards. And, if ye are minded, let us take it to pieces and show all its wealth, as it shall be possible for us to show it; only do not ye grow weary. And first, let us learn the meaning of "It shall break forth." For He said not at all, "shall appear," but" shall break forth;" declaring to us its quickness and plentifulness, and how exceedingly He desires our salvation, and how the good things themselves travail to come forth, and press on; and that which would check their unspeakable force shall be nought; by all which He indicates their plentifulness, and the infinity of His abundance. But what is "the morning." It means, "not after being in life's temptations, neither after our evils have come upon us;" nay, it is quite beforehand with them. For as in our fruits, we call that early, which has shown itself before its season; so also here again, declaring its rapidity, he has spoken in this way, much as above He said, "Whilst thou art yet speaking, I will say, Lo! here I am."

But of what manner of light is He speaking, and what can this light be?Not this, that is sensible; but another far better, which shows us Heaven, the angels, the archangels, the cherubim, the seraphim, the thrones, the dominions, the principalities, the powers, the whole host, the royal palaces, the tabernacles. For shouldest thou be counted worthy of this light, thou shalt both see these, and be delivered from hell, and from the venomous worm, and from the gnashing of teeth, and from the bonds that cannot be broken, and from the anguish and the affliction, from the darkness that hath no light, and from being cut asunder, and from the river of fire, and from the curse, and from the abodes of sorrow; and thou shalt depart, "where sorrow and woe are fled away," where great is the joy, and the peace, and the love, and the pleasure, and the mirth; where is life eternal, and unspeakable glory, and inexpressible beauty; where are eternal tabernacles, and the untold glory of the King, and those good things, "which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man;" where is the spiritual bridechamber, and the apartments of the heavens, and

the virgins that bear the bright lamps, and they who have the marriage garment; where many are the possessions of our Lord, and the storehouses of the King.

Seest thou how great the rewards, and how many He hath set forth by one expression, and how He brought all together? So also by unfolding each of the expressions that follow, we shall find our abundance great, and the ocean immense. Shall we then still delay, I beg you; and be backward to show mercy on them that are in need? Nay, I entreat, but though we must throw away all, be cast into the fire, venture against the sword, leap upon daggers, suffer what you will; let us bear all easily, that we may obtain the garment of the kingdom of Heaven, and that untold glory; which may we all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, world without end. Amen.

Homily 55

Matthew Chapter 16, Verse 24

"Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after me, let him renounce himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Then; when? When Peter said, 'Be it far from Thee, this shall not be unto Thee; and was told, "Get thee behind me, Satan." For He was by no means satisfied with the mere rebuke, but, willing also more abundantly to show both the extravagance of what Peter had said, and the benefit of His passion, He saith, "Thy word to me is, "Be it far from Thee, this shall not be unto Thee:" but my word to thee is, "Not only is it hurtful to thee, and destructive, to hinder me and to be displeased at my Passion, but it will be impossible for thee even to be saved, unless thou thyself too be continually prepared for death." Thus, test they should think His suffering unworthy of Him, not by the former things only, but also by the events that were coming on, He teaches them the gain thereof. Thus in John first, He saith," Except the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit;" but here more abundantly working it out, not concerning Himself only doth He bring forward the statement that it is meet to die, but concerning them also. "For so great is the profit thereof, that in your case also unwillingness to die is grievous, but to be ready for it, good."

This however He makes clear by what follows, but for the present He works it out on one side only. And see how He also makes His discourse unexceptionable: not saying at all, "whether you will, or no, you must suffer this," but how? "If any man will come after me." "I force not, I compel not, but each one I make lord of his own choice; wherefore also I say, 'If any man will.' For to good things do I call you, not to things evil, or burdensome; not to punishment and vengeance, that I should have to compel. Nay, the nature of the thing is alone sufficient to attract you." Now, thus saying, He drew them unto Him the more. For he indeed that uses compulsion oftens turns men away, but he that leaves the hearer to choose attracts him more. For soothing is a mightier thing than force. Wherefore even He Himself said, "If any man will." "For great," saith He, "are the good things which I give you, and such as for men even to run to them of their own accord. For neither if one were giving gold, and offering a treasure, would he invite with force. And if that invitation be without compulsion, much more this, to the good things m the Heavens. Since if the nature of the thing persuade thee not to run, thou art not worthy to receive it at all, nor if thou shouldest receive it, wilt thou well know what thou hast received."

Wherefore Christ compels not, but urges, sparing us. For since they seemed to be murmuring much, being secretly disturbed at the saying, He saith, "No need of disturbance or of trouble. If ye do not account what I have mentioned to be a cause of innumerable blessings, even when befalling yourselves, I use no force, nor do I compel, but if any be willing to follow, him I call. "For do not by any means imagine that this is your following of me; I mean, what ye now do attending upon me. Ye have need of many toils, many dangers, if ye are to come after me. For thou oughtest not, O Peter, because thou hast confessed me Son of God, therefore only to expect crowns, and to suppose this enough for thy salvation, and for the future to enjoy security, as having done all. For although it be in my power, as Son of God, to hinder thee from having any trial at all of those hardships; yet such is not my will, for thy sake, that thou mayest thyself too contribute something, and be more approved."

For so, if one were a judge at the games, and had a friend in the lists, he would not wish to crown him by favor only, but also for his own toils; and for this reason especially, because he loves him. Even so Christ also; whom He most loves, those He most of all will have to approve themselves by their own means also, and not from His help alone. But see how at the same time He makes His saying not a grievous one. For He cloth by no means compass them only with His terror, but He also puts forth the doctrine generally to the world, saying, "If any one will," be it woman or man, ruler or subject, let him come this way. 5. And though he seem to have spoken but one single thing, yet His sayings are three, "Let him renounce himself," and "Let him bear his cross," and "Let him follow me;" and two of them are joined together, but the one is put by itself.

But let us see first what it can be to deny one's self. Let us learn first what it is to deny another, and then we shall know what it may be to deny one's self. What then is it to deny another?He that is denying another,-for example, either brother, or servant, or whom you will,-should he see him either beaten, or bound, or led to execution, or whatever he may suffer, stands not by him, doth not help him, is not moved, feels nothing for him, as being once for all alienated from him. Thus then He will have us disregard our own body, so that whether men scourge, or banish, or burn, or whatever they do, we may not spare it. For this is to spare it. Since fathers too then spare their offspring, when committing them to teachers, they command not to spare them. So also Christ; He said not, "Let him not spare himself," but very strictly, "Let him renounce himself;" that is, let him have nothing to do with himself, but give himself up to all dangers and conflicts; and let him so feel, as though another were suffering it all.

And He said not, "Let him deny," but "Let him renounce;" even by this small addition intimating again, how very far it goes. For this latter is more than the former. "And let him take up his cross." This arises out of the other. For to hinder thy supposing that words, and insults, and reproaches are to be the limits of our self-renunciation, He saith also how far one ought to renounce one's self; that is, unto death, and that a reproachful death. Therefore He said not, "Let him renounce himself unto death," but, "Let him take up his cross;" setting forth the reproachful death; and that not once, nor twice, but throughout all life one

ought so to do. "Yea," saith He, "bear about this death continually, and day by day be ready for slaughter. For since many have indeed contemned riches, and pleasure, and glory, but death they despised not, but feared dangers; I," saith He, "will that my champion should wrestle even unto blood, and that the limits of his course should reach unto slaughter; so that although one must undergo death, death with reproach, the accursed death, and that upon evil surmise, we are to bear all things nobly, and rather to rejoice in being suspected."

"And let him follow me." That is, it being possible for one to suffer, yet not to follow Him, when one doth not suffer for Him (for so robbers often suffer grievously, and violaters of tombs, and sorcerers); to hinder thy supposing that the mere nature of thy calamities is sufficient, He adds the occasion of these calamities. And what is it? In order that, so doing and suffering, thou mayest follow Him; that for Him thou mayest undergo all things; that thou mayest possess the other virtues also. For this too is expressed by "Let him follow me;" so as to show forth not fortitude only, such as is exercised in our calamities, but temperance also, and moderation, and all self-restraint. This being properly "to follow," the giving heed also to the other virtues, and for His sake suffering all. For there are who follow the devil even to the endurance of all this, and for his sake give up their own lives; but we for Christ, or rather for our own sakes: they indeed to harm themselves both here and there; but we, that we may gain both lives.

How then is it not extreme dullness, not to show forth even the same fortitude with them that perish; and this, when we are to reap from it so many crowns? Yet with us surely Christ Himself is present to be our help, but with them no one. Now He had indeed already spoken this very injunction, when He sent them, saying, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles" (for, saith He, "I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves," and, "ye shall be brought before kings and governors") but now with more intensity and severity. For then He spake of death only, but here He hath mentioned a cross also, and a continual cross. For "let him take up," saith He, "his cross;" that is," let him carry it continually and bear it." And this He is wont to do in everything; not in the first instance, nor from the beginning, but quietly and gradually, bringing in the greater commandments, that the hearers may not count it strange.

3. Then, because the saying seemed to be vehement, see how He softens it by what follows, and sets down rewards surpassing our toils; and not rewards only, but also the penalties of vice: nay, on these last He dwells more than on those, since not so much His bestowing blessings, as His threat of severities, is wont to bring ordinary men to their senses. See at least how He both begins here from this, and ends in this. "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it," saith He, "but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, shall find it. For what is a man profiled,' if he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ?" Now what He saith is like this: "not as unsparing towards you, but rather as exceedingly sparing you, I enjoin these things. For he who spares his child, ruins it; but he who spares it not, preserves." To which effect also a certain wise man said, "If thou beat thy son with a rod, he shall not die, but thou shall deliver his soul from death." And again, "He that refresheth his son, shall bind up his wounds."

This takes place in the camp also. For if the general, sparing the soldiers, commands them to remain within the place always, he will destroy with them the inhabitants too. "In order then that this may not happen in your case also," saith He, "ye must be arrayed against continual death. For now too a grievous war is about to be kindled. Sit not therefore within, but go forth and fight; and shouldest thou fall in thy post, then hast thou obtained life." For if in the visible wars he that in his post meets slaughter, is both more distinguished than the rest, and more invincible, and more formidable to the enemy; although we know that after death the king, in behalf of whom he takes his station, is not able to raise him up again: much more in these wars, when there are such hopes of resurrection besides, will he who exposes his own life unto death, find it; in one sense, because he will not be quickly taken; in a second, because even though he fall, God will lead his life on to a higher life.

4. Then, because he had said, "He who will save shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose shall save it," and on that side had set salvation and destruction, and on this salvation and destruction; to prevent any one's imagining the one destruction and salvation to be all the same with the other, and to teach thee plainly that the difference between this salvation and that is as great as between destruction and salvation; from the contraries also He makes an inference once for all to establish these points. "For what is a man profited," saith He, "if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ?" Seest thou how the wrongful preservation of it is destruction, and worse than all destruction, as being even past remedy, from the want of anything more to redeem it?For "tell me not this," saith He, "that he that hath escaped such dangers hath saved his life; but together with his life put also the whole world, yet what profit hath he thereby, if the soul perish?"

For tell me, shouldest thou see thy servants in luxury, and thyself in extreme calamity, wilt thou indeed profit aught by being master?By no means. Make this reckoning then with regard to thy soul also, when the flesh is in luxury and wealth, and she awaiting the destruction to come. "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul ?" Again, He dwells upon the same point. What?hast thou another soul to give for this soul?saith He. Why, shouldest thou lose money, thou wilt be able to give money; or be it house, or slaves, or any other kind of possession, but for thy soul, if thou lose it, thou wilt have no other soul to give: yea, though thou hadst the world, though thou wast king of the whole earth, thou wouldest not be able, by paying down all earthly goods, with the earth itself, to redeem but one soul.

And what marvel, if it be so with the soul? Since even in the body one may see that so it turns out. Though thou wear ten thousand diadems, but have a body sickly by nature, and incurable, thou wilt not be able, not by giving all thy kingdom, to recover this body, not though thou add innumerable persons, and cities, and goods. Now thus I bid thee reason with regard to thy soul also; or rather even much more with regard to the soul; and do thou, forsaking all besides, spend all thy care upon it. Do not then while taking thought about the things of others, neglect thyself and thine own things; which now all men do, resembling them that work in the mines. For neither do these receive any profit from this labor, nor from the wealth; but rather great harm, both because they incur fruitless peril, and incur

it for other men, reaping no benefit from such their toils and deaths. These even now are objects of imitation to many, who are digging up wealth for others; or rather we are more wretched even than this, inasmuch as hell itself awaits us after these our labors. For they indeed are staid from those toils by death, but to us death proves a beginning of innumerable evils.

But if thou say, thou hast in thy wealth the fruit of thy toils: show me thy soul gladdened, and then I am persuaded. For of all things in us the soul is chief. And if the body be fattened, while she is pining away, this prosperity is nothing to thee (even as when the handmaiden is glad, the happiness of the maidservant is nothing to her mistress perishing, nor is tho fair robe anything compared with the weak flesh); but Christ will say unto thee again, "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul ?" on every hand commanding thee to be busied about that, and to take account of it only.5. Having alarmed them therefore hereby, He comforts them also by His good things. "For the Son of Man shall come," saith He, "in the glory of His Father with His holy angels, and then He shall reward every man according to his works."

Seest thou how the glory of the Father and of the Son is all one? But if the glory be one, it is quite evident that the substance also is one. For if in one substance there be a difference of glory ("for there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory;" although the substance be one), how may the substance of those differ, whereof the glory is one? For He said not at all, "In glory such as the Father's," whereby thou mightest suppose again some variation; but implying entire perfection, "In that same glory," saith He, "will He come;" for it to be deemed one and the same. "Now, why fear, O Peter" (so He speaks), "on being told of death? Why, then shalt thou see me in the glory of the Father. And if I am in glory, so are ye; your interests are no wise limited to the present life, but another sort of portion will take you up, a better one." Nevertheless, when He had spoken of the good things, He stayed not at this, but mingled the fearful things also, bringing forward that judgment-seat, and the inexorable account, and the inflexible sentence, and the judgment that cannot be deceived.

He suffered not however His discourse to appear only dismal, but tempered it also with good hopes. For neither did He say, "then shall He punish them that sinned," but, "He shall reward every man according to his doings." And this He said, reminding not only the sinners of punishment, but also them that have done well of prizes and crowns. 6. And He indeed spake it, in part to refresh the good, but I ever shudder at hearing it, for I am not of them that are crowned, and I suppose that others also share with us in our fear and anxiety. For whom is this saying not enough to startle, when he hath entered into his own conscience; and to make him shudder, and convince him that we have need of sackcloth, and of prolonged fasting, more than the people of the Ninevites? For not for an overthrow of a city, and the common end, are we concerned, but for eternal punishment, and the fire that is never quenched.

Wherefore also I praise and admire the monks that have occupied the desert places, as for the rest, so for this saying. For they after having made their dinners, or rather after supper (for dinner they know not at any time, because they know that the present time is one of mourning and fasting); after supper then, in saying certain hymns of thanksgiving unto God, they make mention of this expression also. And if ye would hear the very hymns themselves, that ye too may say them continually, I will rehearse to you the whole of that sacred song. The words of it then stand as follows: "Blessed God, who feedest me from my youth up, who givest food to all flesh; fill our hearts with joy and gladness, that always having all sufficiency we may abound unto every good work in Christ Jesus our Lord; with whom be unto Thee glory, honor and might, with the Holy Spirit, forever. Amen. Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee, O Holy One, glory to Thee. O King, that Thou hast given us meat to make us glad. Fill us with the Holy Ghost, that we may be found well-pleasing before Thee, not being ashamed, when Thou rendcrest to every man according to his works."

Now this hymn is in all parts worthy of admiration, but especially the above ending of it. That is, because meals and food are wont to dissipate and weigh down, they put this saying as a kind of bridle upon the soul, at the time of indulgence reminding it of the time of judgment. For they have learnt what befell Israel through a costly table. "For my beloved," saith He, "ate, and waxed fat, and kicked."' Wherefore also Moses said, "When thou shalt have eaten and drunk and art full, remember the Lord thy God." For after that feast, then they ventured on those acts of lawless daring. Do thou therefore also look to it, lest something like it befall thee. For though thou sacrifice not to stone nor to gold, either sheep or bullocks, see lest to wrath thou sacrifice thine own soul, lest to whoredom or other like passions, thou sacrifice thine own salvation. Yea-on this account, you see, they being afraid of these downfalls, when they have enjoyed their meal, or rather fasting (for their meal is in fact fasting), remind themselves of the terrible judgment-seat, and of that day. And if they who correct themselves both with fasting, and with nights spent on the ground, with watchings, and with sackcloth, and with ten thousand means, do yet require also this reminding, when will it be possible for us to live virtuously; who set forth tables loaded with innumerable wrecks, and do not so much as pray at all, neither in the beginning nor the end ?

7. Wherefore to put an end to these shipwrecks, let us bring before us that hymn and unfold it all, that seeing the profit thereof, we too may chant it constantly over our table, and quell the rude motions of the belly, introducing both the manners and laws of those angels into our houses. For you ought indeed to go there and reap these fruits; but since ye are not willing, at least through our words, hear this spiritual melody, and let every one after his meal say these words, beginning thus. "Blessed God." For the apostolic law they straightway fulfill, that commands, "Whatsoever we do in word or in deed, that we do it in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him." Next, the thanksgiving takes place not for that one day only, but for all their life. For, "Who feedest me," it is said, "from my youth up." And a lesson of self-command is drawn thence, that when God feeds, we must not take thought. For if upon a king's promising thee to furnish thy daily food out of his own stores, thou wouldest be of good hope for the future; much more, when God gives, and

all things pour upon thee as out of fountains, shouldest thou be freed from all anxiety. Yea, and to this very intent they so speak, that they may persuade both themselves, and those that are made disciples by them, to put off all worldly care.

Then, not to have thee suppose that for themselves only they offer up this thanksgiving, they further say, "Who givest food to all flesh," giving thanks in behalf of all the world; and as fathers of the whole earth, so do they offer up their praises for all, and train themselves to a sincere brotherly love. For it is not even possible they should hate them, in behalf of whom they thank God, that they are fed. Seest thou both charity introduced by their thanksgiving, and worldly care cast out, both by the preceding words, and by these?For if He feed all flesh, much more them that are devoted to him; if them that are entangled in worldly cares, much more them that are freed from the same. To establish this, Christ Himself said, "How many sparrows do ye exceed in value?" And He said it, teaching them not to put their confidence in wealth and land and seeds; for it is not these that feed us, but the word of God?

Hereby they stop the mouths, both of the Manichaeans, and of them of Valentinus, and of all that are diseased in their way. For sure this Being is not evil, who sets his own stores before all, even before them that blaspheme Him. Then comes the petition: "Fill our hearts with joy and gladness." With what manner of joy then, doth it mean? the joy of this world?God forbid: for had they meant this, they would not have occupied summits of mountains, and deserts, nor wrapt themselves in sackcloth; but that joy they mean, which hath nothing in common with this present life, the joy of angels, the joy above. And they do not simply ask for it, but in great excess; for they say not, "give," but, "fill," and they say not "us," but "our hears." For this is especially a heart's joy; "For the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace."

Thus, because sin brought in sorrow, they request that through joy righteousness may be implanted in them, for no otherwise might joy be engendered. "That, always having all sufficiency, we may abound unto every good work." See how they fulfill that word of the gospel which saith, "Give us this day our daily bread," and how they seek even this for spiritual ends. For their phrase is, "That we may abound unto every good work." They said not, "That we may do our duty only," but "even more than what is enjoined," for, "that we may abound," means this. And while of God they seek sufficiency in things needful, themselves are willing to obey not in sufficiency only, but with much abundance, and in all things. This is the part of well-disposed servants, this of men strict in goodness, to abound always, and in all things. Then again reminding themselves of their own weakness, and that without the influence from above nothing noble can be done; having said, "that we may abound unto every good work," they add, "in Christ Jesus our Lord, with whom unto Thee be glory, honor, and might forever. Amen;" framing this end like their commencement by a thread of thanksgiving.

8. After this again, they seem to begin afresh, but they are keeping to the same argument. As Paul also in the beginning of an epistle, having closed with a doxology, where he says, "According to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory forever. Amen;" begins the subject again on which he was writing. And again in another place when he had said, "They

worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator,who is blessed forever: Amen;" he completed not his discourse, but begins again. Therefore neither let us blame these our angels, as acting disorderly, for that having closed with a doxology they begin again the sacred hymns. For they follow apostolical laws, beginning from a doxology, and ending therein, and after that end making a commencement again. Wherefore they say, "Glory be to Thee, O Lord; glory be to Thee, O Holy One; glory be to Thee, O King; that Thou hast given us food to make us glad."

Since not for the greater things only, but also for the lesser, we ought to give thanks. And they do give thanks for these also, putting to shame the heresy of the Manichaeans, and of as many as affirm our present life to be evil. For lest for their high self-command, and contempt of the belly, thou shouldest suspect them as abhorring the meat, like the heretics aforesaid, who choke themselves to death; they by their prayer teach thee, that not from abhorrence of God's creatures they abstain from most of them, but as exercising self-restraint. And see how after thanksgiving for His past gifts, they are importunate also for the greater things, and dwell not upon the matters of this life, but mount above the heavens, and say, "Fill us with the Holy Ghost." For it is not even possible to approve one's self as one ought, not being filled with that grace; as there is no doing anything noble or great, without the benefit of Christ's influences.

As therefore when they had said, "That we may abound unto every good work," they added, "In Christ Jesus;" so here also they say, "Fill us with the Holy Ghost, that we may be found to have been well-pleasing before Thee." Seest thou how for the things of this life they pray not, but give thanks only; but for the things of the Spirit, they both give thanks and pray. For, "seek ye," saith He, "the kingdom of heaven, and all these things shall be added unto you. " And mark too another kind of severe goodness in them; their saying, namely, "That we may be found to have been well-pleasing in Thy sight, not being ashamed." For "we care not," say they, "for the shame that proceeds from the many, but whatever men may say of us, laughing, upbraiding, we do not so much as regard it; but our whole endeavor is not to be put to shame then." But in these expressions, they bring in also the river of fire, and the prizes, and the rewards.

They said not, "that we be not punished," but, "that we be not ashamed." For this is to us far more fearful than hell, to seem to have offended our Lord." But since the more part and the grosser sort are not in fear of this, they add, "When Thou renderest to every man according to his works." Seest thou how greatly these strangers and pilgrims have benefitted us, these citizens of the wilderness, or rather citizens of the Heavens? For whereas we are strangers to the Heavens, but citizens of the earth, these are just the contrary. And after this hymn, being filled with much compunction, and with many and fervent tears, so they proceed to sleep, snatching just so much of it as a little to refresh themselves. And again, the nights they make days, spending them in thanksgivings and in the singing of psalms. But not men only, but women also practise this self-denial, overcoming the weakness of their nature by the abundance of their zeal.

Let us be abashed then at their earnestness, we who are men, let us cease to be fastened to the things present, to shadow, to dreams, to smoke. For the more part of our life is passed in insensibility. For both the first period of our life is full of much folly, and that again which travels on to old age, makes all the feeling that is in us wither away, and small is the space between, that is able feelingly to enjoy pleasure; or rather, not even that hath a pure participation thereof, by reason of innumerable cares and toils, that harrass it. Wherefore, I pray, let us seek the unmovable and eternal goods, and the life that never has old age. For even one dwelling in a city may imitate the self-denial of the monks; yea, one who has a wife, and is busied in a household, may pray, and fast, and learn compunction. Since they also, who at the first were instructed by the apostles, though they dwelt in cities, yet showed forth the piety of the occupiers of the deserts: and others again who had to rule over workshops, as Priscilla and Aquila.

And the prophets too, all had both wives and households, as Isaiah, as Ezekiel, as the great Moses, and received no hurt therefrom in regard of virtue. These then let us also imitate, and continually offer thanksgiving to God, continually sing hymns to Him; let us give heed to temperance, and to all other virtues, and the self-denial that is practised in the deserts, let us bring into our cities; that we may appear both well-pleasing before God, and approved before men, and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom and with whom be unto the Father, glory, honor, and might, together with the holy and life-giving Spirit, now and always and world without end. Amen.

Homily 56

Matthew Chapter 16, Verse 28

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, There are some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." Thus, inasmuch as He had discoursed much of dangers and death, and of His own passion, and of the slaughter of the disciples, and had laid on them those severe injunctions; and these were in the present life and at hand, but the good things in hope and expectation:-for example, "They save their life who lose it;" "He is coming in the glory of His Father;" "He renders His rewards: "-He willing to assure their very sight, and to show what kind of glory that is wherewith He is to come, so far as it was possible for them to learn it; even in their present life He shows and reveals this; that they should not grieve any more, either over their own death, or over that of their Lord, and especially Peter in His sorrow.

And see what He doth. Having discoursed of hell, and of the kingdom (for as well by saying, "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose it for my sake, shall find it; " as by saying, "He shall reward every man according to his works," He had manifested both of these): having, I say, spoken of both, the kingdom indeed He shows in the vision, but hell not yet. Why so? Because had they been another kind of people, of a grosser sort, this too would have been necessary; but since they are approved and considerate, He leads them on the gentler way. But not therefore only doth He make this disclosure, but because to Himself also it was far more suitable. Not however that He passes over this subject either, but in some places He almost brings even before our eyes the very realities of hell; as when He introduces the picture of Lazarus, and mentions him that exacted the hundred pence, and him that was clad in the filthy garments, and others not a few.

2. "And after six days He taketh with Him Peter and James and John. Now another says, "after eight," not contradicting this writer, but most fully agreeing with him. For the one expressed both the very day on which He spake, and that on which He led them up; but the other, the days between them only. But mark thou, I pray thee, the severe goodness of Matthew, not concealing those who were preferred to himself. This John also often doth, recording the peculiar praises of Peter with great sincerity. For the choir of these holy men was everywhere pure from envy and vainglory. Having taken therefore the leaders, "He bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and His

face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light. And there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with Him.

Wherefore doth He take with Him these only? Because these were superior to the rest. And Peter indeed showed his superiority by exceedingly loving Him; but John by being exceedingly loved of Him; and James again by his answer which he answered with his brother, saying, "We are able to drink the cup; nor yet by his answer only, but also by his works; both by the rest of them, and by fulfilling, what he said. For so earnest was he, and grievous to the Jews, that Herod himself supposed that he had bestowed herein a very great favor on the Jews, I mean in slaying him. But wherefore doth He not lead them up straightway? To spare the other disciples any feeling of human weakness: for which cause He omits also the names of them that are to go up. And this, because the rest would have desired exceedingly to have followed, being to see a pattern of that glory; and would have been pained, as overlooked. For though it was somewhat in a corporeal way that He made the disclosure, yet nevertheless the thing had much in it to be desired.

Wherefore then doth He at all foretell it? That they might be readier to seize the high meaning, by His foretelling it; and being filled with the more vehement desire in that round of days, might so be present with their mind quite awake and full of care. 3. But wherefore doth He also bring forward Moses and Elias? One might mention many reasons. And first of all this: because the multitudes said He was, some Elias, some Jeremias, some one of the old prophets, He brings the leaders of His choir, that they might see the difference even hereby between the servants and the Lord; and that Peter was rightly commended for confessing Him Son of God.

But besides that, one may mention another reason also: that because men were continually accusing Him of transgressing the law, and accounting Him to be a blasphemer, as appropriating to Himself a glory which belonged not to Him, even the Father's, and were saying, "This Man is not of God, because He keepeth not the Sabbath day;" and again, "For a good work we stone Thee not, but for blasphemy, and because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God:" that both the charges might be shown to spring from envy, and He be proved not liable to either; and that neither is His conduct a transgression of the law, nor His calling Himself equal to the Father an appropriation of glory not His own; He brings forward them who had shone out in each of these respects: Moses, because he gave the law, and the Jews might infer that he would not have overlooked its being trampled on, as they supposed, nor have shown respect to the transgressor of it, and the enemy of its founder: Elias too for his part was jealous for the glory of God, and were any man an adversary of God, and calling himself God, making himself equal to the Father, while he was not what he said, and had no right to do so; he was not the person to stand by, and hearken unto him.

And one may mention another reason also, with those which have been spoken of. Of what kind then is it? To inform them that He hath power both of death and life, is ruler both above and beneath. For this cause He brings forward both him that had died, and him that never yet suffered this. But the fifth motive, (for it is a fifth, besides those that have been

mentioned), even the evangelist himself hath revealed. Now what was this? To show the glory of the cross, and to console Peter and the others in their dread of the passion, and to raise up their minds. Since having come, they by no means held their peace, but "spake," it is said, "of the glory which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem; " that is, of the passion, and the cross; for so they call it always.

And not thus only did He cheer them, but also by the excellency itself of the men, being such as He was especially requiring from themselves. I mean, that having said, "If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross, and follow me; them that had died ten thousand times for God's decrees, and the people entrusted to them, these persons He sets before them. Because each of these, having lost his life, found it. For each of them both spake boldly unto tyrants, the one to the Egyptian, the other to Ahab; and in behalf of heartless and disobedient men; and by the very persons who were saved by them, they were brought into extreme danger; and each of them wishing to withdraw men from idolatry; and each being unlearned; for the one was of a "slow tongue," and dull of speech, and the other for his part also somewhat of the rudest in his bearing: and of voluntary poverty both were very strict observers; for neither had Moses made any gain, nor had Elias aught more than his sheepskin; and this under the old law, and when they had not received so great a gift of miracles. For what if Moses clave a sea? yet Peter walked on the water, and was able to remove mountains, and used to work cures of all manner of bodily diseases, and to drive away savage demons, and by the shadow of his body to work those wonderful and great prodigies; and changed the whole world.

And if Elias too raised a dead man, yet these raised ten thousand; and this before the spirit was as yet vouchsafed to them. He brings them forward accordingly for this cause also. For He would have them emulate their winning ways toward the people, and their presence of mind and inflexibility; and that they should be meek like Moses, and jealous for God like Elias, and full of tender care, as they were. For the one endured a famine of three years for the Jewish people; and the other said, "If thou wilt forgive them their sin, forgive; else blot me too out of the book, which thou hast written. Now of all this He was reminding them by the vision.

For He brought those in glory too, not that these should stay where they were, but that they might even surpass their limitary lines. For example, when they said, "Should we command fire to come down from heaven," and made mention of Elias as having done so, He saith, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of;" training them to forbearance by the superiority in their gift. And let none suppose us to condemn Elias as imperfect; we say not this; for indeed he was exceedingly perfect, but in his own times, when the mind of men was in some degree childish, and they needed this kind of schooling. Since Moses too was in this respect perfect; nevertheless these have more required of them than he. For "except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no ease enter into the kingdom of Heaven." For not into Egypt did they enter, but into the whole world, worse disposed than the Egyptians; neither were they to speak with Pharaoh, but to

fight hand to hand with the devil, the very prince of wickedness. Yea, and their appointed struggle was, both to bind him, and to spoil all his goods; and this they did cleaving not the sea, but an abyss of ungodliness, through the rod of Jesse,-an abyss having waves far more grievous. See at any rate how many things there were to put the men in fear; death, poverty, dishonor, their innumerable sufferings; and at these things they trembled more than the Jews of old at that sea. But nevertheless against all these things He persuaded them boldly to venture, and to pass as along dry ground with all security.

To train them therefore for all this, He brought forward those who shone forth under the old law. 4. What then saith the ardent Peter? "It is good for us to be here." For because he had heard that Christ was to go to Jerusalem and to suffer, being in fear still and trembling for Him, even after His reproof, he durst not indeed approach and say the same thing again, "Be it far from thee; but from that fear obscurely intimates the same again in other words. That is, when he saw a mountain, and so great retirement and solitude, his thought was, "He hath great security here, even from the place; and not only from the place, but also from His going away no more unto Jerusalem." For he would have Him be there continually: wherefore also he speaks of "tabernacles." For "if this may be," saith he, "we shall not go up to Jerusalem; and if we go not up, He will not die, for there He said the scribes would set upon Him."

But thus indeed he durst not speak; but desiring however to order things so, he said undoubtingly, "It is good for us to be here," where Moses also is present, and Elias; Elias who brought down fire on the mountain, and Moses who entered into the thick darkness, and talked with God; and no one will even know where we are." Seest thou the ardent lover of Christ? For look not now at this, that the manner of his exhortation was not well weighed, but see how ardent he was, how burning his affection to Christ. For in proof that not so much out of fear for himself he said these things, hear what he saith, when Christ was declaring beforehand His future death, and the assault upon Him: "I will lay down my life for Thy sake. Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee.

And see how even in the very midst of the actual dangers he counselled amiss for himself. We know that when so great a multitude encompassed them, so far from flying, he even drew the sword, and cut off the ear of the high priest's servant. To such a degree did he disregard his own interest, and fear for his Master. Then because he had spoken as affirming a fact, he checks himself, and thinking, what if he should be again reproved, he saith, "If Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for Thee and one for Moses, and one for Elias." What sayest thou, O Peter? didst thou not a little while since distinguish Him from the servants? Art thou again numbering Him with the servants? Seest thou how exceedingly imperfect they were before the crucifixion? For although the Father had revealed it to him, yet he did not always retain the revelation, but was troubled by his alarm; not this only, which I have mentioned, but another also, arising from that sight. In fact, the other evangelists, to declare this, and to indicate that the confusion of his mind, with which he spake these things, arose from that alarm, said as follows; mark, "He wist not what to say, for they

were sore afraid;" but Luke after his saying, "Let us make three tabernacles," added, "not knowing what he said." Then to show that he was holden with great fear, both he and the rest, he saith, "They were heavy with sleep, and when they were awake they saw His glory;" meaning by deep sleep here, the deep stupor engendered in them by that vision. For as eyes are darkened by an excessive splendor, so at that time also did they feel. For it was not, I suppose, night, but day; and the exceeding greatness of the light weighed down the infirmity of their eyes.

5. What then? He Himself speaks nothing, nor Moses, nor Elias, but He that is greater than all, and more worthy of belief, the Father, uttereth a voice out of the cloud. Wherefore out of the cloud? Thus doth God ever appear. "For a cloud and darkness are round about Him;" and, "He sitteth on a light cloud;" and again, "Who maketh clouds His chariot;" and, "A cloud received Him out of their sight;" and, "As the Son of Man coming in the clouds." In order then that they might believe that the voice proceeds from God, it comes from thence. And the cloud was bright. For "while he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and, behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." For as, when He threatens, He shows a dark cloud;-as on Mount Sinai; for "Moses," it is said, "entered into the cloud, and into the thick darkness; and as a vapor, so went up the smoke;" and the prophet said, when speaking of His threatening, "Dark water in clouds of the air;" -so here, because it was His desire not to alarm, but to teach, it is a bright cloud.

And whereas Peter had said "Let us make three tabernacles," He showed a tabernacle not made with hands. Wherefore in that case it was smoke, and vapor of a furnace; but in this, light unspeakable and a voice. Then, to signify that not merely concerning some one of the three was it spoken, but; concerning Christ only; when the voice was uttered, they were taken away. For by no means, had it been spoken merely concerning any one of them, would this man have remained alone, the two being severed from Him. Why then did not the cloud likewise receive Christ alone, but all of them together? If it had received Christ alone, He would have been thought to have Himself uttered the voice. Wherefore also the evangelist, making sure this same point, saith, that the voice was from the cloud, that is, from God. And what saith the voice? "This is my beloved Son." Now if He is beloved, fear not thou, O Peter. For thou oughtest indeed to know His power already, and to be fully assured touching His resurrection; but since; thou knowest not, at least from the voice of the Father take courage. For if God be mighty, as surely He is mighty, very evidently the Son is so likewise. Be not afraid then of those fearful things.

But if as yet thou receive it not, consider at least that other fact, that He is both a Son, and is beloved. For "This," it is said, "is My beloved Son." Now if He is beloved, fear not. For no one gives up one whom he loves. Be not thou therefore confounded; though thou lovest Him beyond measure, thou lovest Him not as much as He that begat Him. "In whom I am well pleased." For not because He begat Him only, doth He love Him, but because He is also equal to Him in all respects, and of one mind with Him. So that the charm of love is twofold,

or rather even threefold, because He is the Son, because He is beloved, because in Him He is well pleased. But what means, "In whom I am well pleased ?" As though He had said," In whom I am refreshed, in whom I take delight;" because He is in all respects perfectly equal with Himself, and there is but one will in Him and in the Father, and though He continue a Son, He is in all respects one with the Father.

"Hear ye Him." So that although He choose to be crucified, you are not to oppose Him. 6. "And when they heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only." How was it that, when they heard these words, they were dismayed? And yet before this also a like voice was uttered at Jordan, and a multitude was present, and no one felt anything of the kind; and afterwards again, when also they said, "It thundered, ... yet neither at that time did they experience anything like this. How then did they fall down in the mount? Because there was solitude, and height. and great quietness, and a transfiguration full of awe, and a pure light, and a cloud stretched out; all which things put them in great alarm. And the amazement came thick on every side, and they fell down both in fear at once and in adoration.

But that the fear abiding so long might not drive out their recollection, presently He puts an end to their alarm, and is seen Himself alone, and commands them to tell no man this, until He is risen from the dead. For "as they came down from the mount, He charged them to tell the vision to no man, until He were risen from the dead." For the greater the things spoken of Him, the harder to be received by the generality at that time; and the offense also from the cross was the more increased thereby. Therefore He bids them hold their peace; and not merely so, but He again reminds them of the passion, and all but tells them also the cause, for which indeed He requires them to keep silence. For He did not, you see, command them never to tell any man, but "until He were risen from the dead." And saying nothing of the painful part, He expresses the good only.

What then? Would they not afterwards be offended? By no means. For the point required was the time before the crucifixion. Since afterwards they both had the spirit vouchsafed them, and the voice that proceeded from the miracles pleading with them, and whatsoever they said was thenceforth easy to be received, the course of events proclaiming His might more clearly than a trumpet, and no offense of that sort interrupting what they were about. 7. Nothing then is more blessed than the apostles, and especially the three, who even in the cloud were counted worthy to be under the same roof with the Lord. But if we will, we also shall behold Christ, not as they then on the mount, but in far greater brightness. For not thus shall He come hereafter. For whereas then, to spare His disciples, He discovered so much only of His brightness as they were able to bear; hereafter He shall come in the very glory of the Father, not with Moses and Elias only, but with the infinite host of the angels, with the archangels, with the cherubim, with those infinite tribes, not having a cloud over His head, but even heaven itself being folded up.

For as it is with the judges; when they judge publicly, the attendants drawing back the curtains show them to all; even so then likewise all men shall see Him sitting, and all the human race shall stand by, and He will make answers to them by Himself; and to some He will say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; " to others," Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things. And again passing an opposite sentence, to some He will answer, "Depart into the everlasting fire, that is prepared for the devil and his angels," and to others, "O thou wicked and slothful servants." And some He will "cut asunder," and "deliver to the tormentors;" but others He will command to "be bound hand and foot, and cast into outer darkness? And after the axe the furnace will follow; and all out of the net, that is east away, will fall therein.

"Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun; " or rather more than the sun. But so much is said, not because their light is to be so much and no more, but since we know no other star brighter than this, He chose by the known example to set forth the future brightness of the saints. Since on the mount too, when He says, "He did shine as the sun," for the same cause did He so speak. For that the comparison did not come up to His light, the apostles showed by falling down. For had the brightness not been unalloyed, but comparable to the sun; they would not have fallen, but would easily have borne it. The righteous therefore will shine as the sun, and more than the sun in that time; but the sinners shall suffer all extremities. Then will there be no need of records, proofs, witnesses. For He who judges is Himself all, both witness, and proof, and judge. For He knows all things exactly; "For all things are naked and opened unto His eyes."

No man will there appear rich or poor, mighty or weak, wise or unwise, bond or free; but these masks will be dashed in pieces, and the inquiry will be into their works only. For if in our courts, when any one is tried for usurpation, or murder, whatever he may be, whether governor, or consul, or what you will, all these dignities fleet away, and he that is convicted suffers the utmost penalty; much more will it be so there. 8. Therefore that this may not be so, let us lay aside our filthy garments, let us put on the armor of light, and the glory of God will wrap us around. For what is even grievous in the injunctions? or what is there not easy? Hear, for instance, the prophet speaking, and then thou shalt know the easiness thereof. "Neither though thou bow as a collar thy neck, and strew beneath thee sackcloth and ashes, not even so shalt thou call a fast acceptable; but loose every bond of iniquity, unloose the twisted knots of oppressive bargains."

See a prophet's wisdom, how stating first whatever was irksome, and removing it, he exhorts them to obtain salvation by the duties that are easy; signifying, that God needs not toils, but obedience. Then implying that virtue is easy, but vice grievous and galling, he makes it out by the bare names; "For," saith he, "vice is a bond," and "a twisted knot," but virtue is a disengagement and release from all these. "Tear in sunder every unjust compact;" thus calling men's bills about the interest due to them, and the sums they have lent. "Set at liberty them that are bruised;' them that are afflicted. For such a being is the debtor; when

he sees his creditor, his mind is broken, and he fears him more than a wild beast. "Bring in the poor that are cast out to thy house; if thou seest one naked, clothe him, and them that belong to thy seed thou shalt not overlook."

Now in our late discourse which we made unto you when declaring the rewards, we showed the wealth arising from these acts; but now let us see if any of the injunctions be grievous, and transcending our nature. Nay, nothing of the kind shall we discover, but quite the contrary; that while these courses are very easy, those of vice are full of labor. For what is more vexatious than to be lending, and taking thought about usuries and bargains, and demanding sureties, and fearing and trembling about securities, about the principal, about the writings, about the interest, about the bondsmen ? For such is the nature of worldly things; yea, nothing is so unsound and suspicious as that which is accounted security, and contrived for that purpose; but to show mercy is easy, and delivers from all anxiety. Let us not then traffic in other men's calamities, nor make a trade of our benevolence. And I know indeed that many hear these words with displeasure; but what is the profit of silence? For though I should hold my peace, and give no trouble by my words, I could not by this silence deliver you from your punishment; rather it has altogether the opposite result; the penalty is enhanced, and not to you only, but to me also, doth such a silence procure punishment. What then signify our gracious words, when in our works they help us not, but rather do harm? What is the good of delighting men in word, while we vex them in deed, bringing pleasure to the ears, and punishment to the soul? Wherefore I must needs make you sorry here, that we may not suffer punishment there.

9. For indeed a dreadful disease, beloved, dreadful and needing much attendance, hath fallen on the church. Those, namely, who are enjoined not even by honest labors to lay up treasures, but to open their houses to the needy, make a profit of other men's poverty, devising a specious robbery, a plausible covetousness. For tell me not of the laws that are without; since even the publican fulfills the law that is without, but nevertheless is punished: which will be the case with us also, unless we refrain from oppressing the poor, and from using their need and necessity as an occasion for shameless trafficking. For to this intent thou hast wealth, to relieve poverty, not to make a gain of poverty; but thou with show of relief makest the calamity greater, and sellest benevolence for money. Sell it, I forbid thee not, but for a heavenly kingdom. Receive not a small price for so good a deed, thy monthly one in the hundred, but that immortal life. Why art thou beggarly, and poor, and mean, selling thy great things for a little, even for goods that perish. when it should be for an everlasting kingdom? Why dost thou leave God, and get human gains? Why dost thou pass by the wealthy one, and trouble him that hath not? and leaving the sure paymaster make thy bargain with the unthankful? The other longs to repay, but this even grudges in the act of repaying. This hardly repays a hundredth part, but the other "an hundredfold and eternal life." This with insults and revilings, but the other with praises and auspicious words. This stirs up envy against thee, but the other even weaves for thee crowns. This hardly here, but the other both there and here.

Surely then is it not the utmost senselessness, not so much as to know how to gain? How many have lost their very principal for the interest's sake? How many have fallen into perils for usurious gains. How many have involved both themselves and others in extreme poverty through their unspeakable covetousness ! For tell me not this, that he is pleased to receive, and is thankful for the loan. Why, this is a result of thy cruelty. Since Abraham too, contriving how his plan might take with the barbarians, did himself give up his wife to them; not however willingly, but through fear of Pharaoh. So also the poor man, because thou countest him not even worth so. much money, is actually compelled to be thankful for cruelty. And it seems to me as though, shouldest thou deliver him from dangers, thou wouldest exact of him a payment for this deliverance. "Away," saith he; "let it not be." What sayest thou? Delivering him from the greater evil, thou art unwilling to exact money, and for the lesser dost thou display so much inhumanity?

Seest thou not how great a punishment is appointed for the deed? hearest thou not that even in the old law this is forbidden? But what is the plea of the many? "When I have received the interest, I give to the poor;" one tells me. Speak reverently, O man; God desires not such sacrifices. Deal not subtilly with the law. Better not give to a poor man, than give from that source; for the money that hath been collected by honest labors, thou often makest to become unlawful because of that wicked increase; as if one should compel a fair womb to give birth to scorpions. And why do I speak of God's law? Do not even ye call it "filth"? But if ye, the gainers, give your voice so, consider what suffrage God will pass upon you. And if thou wilt ask the Gentile lawgivers too, thou wilt be told that even by them this thing is deemed a proof of the most utter shamelessness. Those, for example, who are in offices of honor, and belong to the great council, which they call the senate, may not legally disgrace themselves with such gains; there being a law among them which prohibits the same.

How then is it not a horrible thing, if thou ascribe not even so much honor to the polity of Heaven, as the legislators to the council of the Romans; but Heaven is to obtain less than earth, and thou art not ashamed even of the very folly of the thing? For what could be more foolish than this, unless one without! land, rain, or plough, were to insist upon sowing? Tares therefore, to be committed to the fire, do they reap, who have devised this evil husbandry. Why, are there not many honest trades? in the fields, the flocks, the herds, the breeding of cattle, in handicrafts, in care of property? Why rave and be frantic, cultivating thorns for no good? What if the fruits of the earth are subject to mischance; hail, and blight, and excessive rain? yet not to such an extent as are money dealings. For in whatsoever cases of that sort occur, the damage of course concerns the produce, but the principal remains, I mean, the land. But herein many often have suffered shipwreck in their principal; and before the loss too they are in continual dejection. For never cloth the money-lender enjoy his possessions, nor find pleasure in them; but when the interest is brought, he rejoices not that he hath received gain, but is grieved that the interest hath not yet come up to the principal. And before this evil offspring is brought forth complete, he compels it also to bring forth, making the interest principal, and forcing it to bring forth its untimely and abortive brood of vipers. For of this nature are the gains of usury; more than those wild creatures

do they devour and tear the souls of the wretched. This ”is the bond of iniquity:” this ”the twisted knot of oppressive bargains.”

Yea, ”I give,” he seems to say, ”not for thee to receive, but that thou mayest repay more.” And whereas God commands not even to receive what is given (for ”give,” saith He, ”to them from whom ye look not to receive”), thou requirest even more than is given, and what thou gavest not, this as a debt, thou constrainest the receiver to pay. And thou indeed supposest thy substance to be increased hereby, but instead of substance thou art kindling the unquenchable fire. That this therefore may not be, let us cut out the evil womb of usurious gains, let us deaden these lawless travailings, let us dry up this place of pernicious teeming, and let us pursue the true and great gains only. ”But what are these?” Hear Paul saying ”Godliness with contentment is great gain.” Therefore in this wealth alone let us be rich, that we may both here enjoy security, and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 57

Matthew Chapter 17, Verse 10

”And His disciples asked Him, saying, Why then say the Scribes that Elias must first come ?” Not then from the Scriptures did they know this, but the Scribes used to explain themselves, and this saying was reported abroad amongst the ignorant people; as about Christ also. Wherefore the Samaritan woman also said, ”Messiah cometh; when He is come, He will tell us all things:” ú and they themselves asked John, ”Art thou Elias, or the Prophet ?” For the saying, as I said, prevailed, both that concerning the Christ and that concerning Elias, not however rightly interpreted by them. For the Scriptures speak of two advents of! Christ, both this that is past, and that which is to come; and declaring these Paul said, ”The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared, teaching us, that, denying! ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live l soberly, and righteously, and godly.” Behold the one, hear how he declares the other also; for having said these things, he added, ”Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.” And the prophets too mention both; of the one, however, that is, of the second, they say Elias will be the forerunner. For of the first, John was forerunner; whom Christ called also Elias, not because he was Elias, but because he was fulfilling the ministry of that prophet. For as the one shall be forerunner of the second advent, so was the other too of the first. But the Scribes, confusing these things and perverting the people, made mention of that other only to the people, the second advent, and said, ”If this man is the Christ, Elias ought to have come beforehand.” Therefore the disciples too speak as follows, ”How then say the Scribes, Elias must first come ?”

Therefore also the Pharisees sent unto John, and asked him, ”Art thou Elias?” making no mention anywhere of the former advent. What then is the solution, which Christ alleged? ”Elias indeed cometh then, before my second advent; and now too is Elias come;” so calling John. In this sense Elias is come: but if thou wouldest seek the Tishbite, he is coming. Wherefore also He said, ”Elias truly cometh, and shall restore all things.” All what things? Such as the Prophet Malachi spake of; for ”I will send you,” saith He, ”Elias the Tishbite, who shall restore the heart of father to son, lest I come and utterly smite the earth.” Seest thou the accuracy of prophetical language? how, because Christ called John, Elias, by reasoning of their community of office, lest thou shouldest suppose this to be the meaning of the prophet too in this place, He added His country also, saying, ”the Tishbite;” whereas

John was not a Tishbite. And herewith He sets down another sign also, saying, "Lest I come and utterly smite the earth," signifying His second and dreadful advent. For in the first He came not to smite the earth. For, "I came not," saith He, "to judge the world, but to save the world."

To show therefore that the Tishbite comes before that other advent, which hath the judgment, He said this. And the reason too of his coming He teaches withal. And what is this reason? That when He is come, he may persuade the Jews to believe in Christ, and that they may not all utterly perish at His coming. Wherefore He too, guiding them on to that remembrance, saith, "And he shall restore all things;" that is, shall correct the unbelief of the Jews that are then in being. Hence the extreme accuracy of his expression; in that he said not, "He will restore the heart of the son to the father," but "of the father to the son." For the Jews being fathers of the apostles, his meaning is, that he will restore to the doctrines of their sons, that is, of the apostles, the hearts of the fathers, that is, the Jewish people's mind.

"But I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of Man suffer of them. Then they understood that He spake to them of John." And yet neither the Scribes said this, nor the Scriptures; but because now they were sharper and more attentive to His sayings, they quickly caught His meaning. And whence did the disciples know this? He had already told them, "He is Elias, which was for to come;" but here, that he hath come; and again, that "Elias cometh and will restore all things." But be not thou troubled, nor imagine that His statement wavers, though at one time He said, "he will come," at another, "he hath come." For all these things are true. Since when He saith, "Elias indeed cometh, and will restore all things," He means Elias himself, and the conversion of the Jews which is then to take place; but when He saith, "Which was for to come," He calls John, Elias, with regard to the manner of his administration. Yea, and so the prophets used to call every one of their approved kings, David; and the Jews, "rulers of Sodom," and "sons of Ethiopians;" because of their ways. For as the other shall be forerunner of the second advent, so was this of the first.

2. And not for this only doth He call him Elias everywhere, but to signify His perfect agreement with the Old Testament, and that this advent too is according to prophecy. Wherefore also He adds again, "He came, and they knew him not, but have done unto him all things whatsoever they listed." What means, "call things whatsoever they listed?" They cast him into prison, they used him despitefully, they slew him, they brought his head in a charger. "Likewise shall also the Son of Man suffer of them." Seest thou how again He in due season reminds them of His passion, laying up for them great store of comfort from the passion of John. And not in this way only, but also by presently working great miracles. Yea, and whensoever He speaks of His passion, presently He works miracles, both after those sayings and before them; and in many places one may find Him to have kept this rule.

"Then," for instance, it saith, "He began to signify how that He must go unto Jerusalem, and be killed, and suffer many things." "Then:" when? when He was confessed to be Christ, and the Son of God. Again on the mountain, when He had shown them the marvellous vision, and the prophets had been discoursing of His glory, He reminded them of His passion. For having spoken of the history concerning John, He added, "Likewise shall also the Son of Man suffer of them." And after a little while again, when He had cast out the devil, which His disciples were not able to cast out; for then too, "As they abode in Galilee," so it saith, "Jesus said unto them, The Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinful men, and they shall kill Him, and the third day He shall rise again." Now in doing this, He by the greatness of the miracles was abating the excess of their sorrow, and in every way consoling them; even as here also, by the mention of John's death, He afforded them much consolation.

But should any one say, "Wherefore did He not even now raise up Elias and send him, witnessing as He doth so great good of his coming?" we should reply, that even as it was, while thinking Christ to be Elias, they did not believe Him. For "some say," such are the words, "that Thou art Elias, and others, Jeremias." And indeed between John and Elias, there was no difference but the time only. "Then how will they believe at that time?" it may be said. Why, "he will restore all things," not simply by being recognized, but also because the glory of Christ will have been growing more intense up to that day, and will be among all clearer than the sun. When therefore, preceded by such an opinion and expectation, he comes making the same proclamation as John, and himself also announcing Jesus, they will more easily receive his sayings. But in saying, "They knew him not," He is excusing also what was done in His own case.

And not in this way only doth He console them, but also by pointing out that John's sufferings at their hands, whatever they are, are undeserved; and by His throwing into the shade what would annoy them, by means of two signs, the one on the mountain, the other just about to take place. But when they heard these things, they do [not ask Him when Elias cometh; being straitened either by grief at His passion, or by fear. For on many occasions, upon seeing Him unwilling to speak a thing clearly, they are silent, and so an end. For instance, when during their abode in Galilee He said, "The Son of Man shall be betrayed, and they shall kill Him;" it is added by Mark, "That they understood not the saying, and were afraid to ask Him;" by Luke, "That it was hid from them, that they might not perceive it, and they feared to ask Him of that saying."

3. "And when they were come to the multitude, there came to Him a man, kneeling down to Him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is lunatic, and sore vexed; for ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him unto Thy disciples, and they could not cure him." This man the Scripture signifies to be exceedingly weak in faith; and this is many ways evident; from Christ's saying, "All things are possible to him that believeth;" from the saying of the man himself that approached, "Help Thou mine unbelief:" from Christ's commanding the devil to "enter no more into him;" and from the man's saying again to Christ, "If Thou canst." "Yet if his unbelief was the cause," it may be said, "that the

devil went not out, why doth He blame the disciples?" Signifying, that even without persons to bring the sick in faith, they might in many instances work a cure. For as the faith of the person presenting oftentimes availed for receiving the cure, even from inferior ministers; so the power of the doers oftentimes sufficed, even without belief in those who came to work the miracle.

And both these things are signified in the Scripture. For both they of the company of Cornelius by their faith drew unto themselves the grace of the Spirit; and in the case of Eliseus again, when none had believed, a dead man rose again. For as to those that cast him down, not for faith but for cowardice did they cast him, unintentionally and by chance, for fear of the band of robbers, and so they fled: while the person himself that was cast in was dead, yet by the mere virtue of the holy body the dead man arose. Whence it is clear in this case, that even the disciples were weak; but not all; for the pillars were not present there. And see this man's want of consideration, from another circumstance again, how before the multitude he pleads to Jesus against His disciples, saying, "I brought him to Thy disciples, and they could not cure him."

But He, acquitting them of the charges before the people, imputes the greater part to him. For, "O faithless and perverse generation," these are His words, "how long shall I be with you?" not aiming at his person only, lest He should confound the man, but also at all the Jews. For indeed many of those present might probably be offended, and have undue thoughts of them. But when He said, "How long shall I be with you," He indicates again death to be welcome to Him, and the thing an object of desire, and His departure longed for, and that not crucifixion, but being with them, is grievous. He stopped not however at the accusations; but what saith He? "Bring him hither to me." And Himself moreover asks him, "how long time he is thus;" both making a plea for His disciples, and leading the other to a good hope, and that he might believe in his attaining deliverance from the evil.

And He suffers him to be torn, not for display (accordingly, when a crowd began to gather, He proceeded to rebuke him), but for the father's own sake, that when he should see the evil spirit disturbed at Christ's mere call, so at least, if in no other way, he might be led to believe the coming miracle. And because he had said, "Of a child," and, "If thou canst help me," Christ saith, "To him that believeth, all things are possible," again giving the complaint a turn against him. And whereas when the leper said, "If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean," bearing witness to His authority Christ commending him, and confirming His words, said, "I will, be thou clean;" in this man's case, upon his uttering a speech in no way worthy of His power,-" If Thou canst, help me,"-see how He corrects it, as not rightly spoken. For what saith He? "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." What He saith is like this: "Such abundance of power is with me, that I can even make others work these miracles. So that if thou believe as one ought, even thou thyself art able," saith He, "to heal both this one, and many others." And having thus said, He set free the possessed of the devil.

But do thou not only from this observe His providence and His beneficence, but also from that other time, during which He allowed the devil to be in him. Since surely, unless the man had been favored with much providential care even then, he would have perished long ago; for "it cast him both into the fire," so it is said, "and into the water." And he that dared this would assuredly have destroyed the man too, unless even in so great madness God had out on him His strong curb: as indeed was the case with those naked men that were running in the deserts and cutting themselves with stones. And if he call him "'a lunatic," trouble not thyself at all, for it is the father of the possessed who speaks the word. How then saith the evangelist also, "He healed many that were lunatic?" Denominating them according to the impression of the multitude. For the evil spirit, to bring a reproach upon nature, both attacks them that are seized, and lets them go, according to the courses of the moon; not as though that were the worker of it;-away with the thought;-but himself craftily doing this to bring a reproach on nature. And an erroneous opinion hath gotten ground among the simple, and by this name do they call such evil spirits, being deceived; for this is by no means true.

4. "Then came His disciples unto Him apart, and asked Him, why they could not themselves cast out the devil." To me they seem to be in anxiety and fear, lest haply they had lost the grace, with which they had been entrusted. For they received power against unclean spirits. Wherefore also they ask, coming to Him apart; not out of shame (for if the fact had gone abroad, and they were convicted, it were superfluous after that to be ashamed of confessing it in words); but it was a secret and great matter they were about to ask Him of. What then saith Christ? "Because of your unbelief," saith He; "for if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." Now if you say, "Where did they remove a mountain?" I would make this answer, that they did far greater things, having raised up innumerable dead. For it is not at all the same thing, to remove a mountain, and to remove death from a body. And certain saints after them, far inferior to them, are said actually to have removed mountains, when necessity called for it." Whereby we see that these also would have done the same, need calling on them. But if there was then no need for it, do not thou find fault. And besides, He Himself said not, "ye shall surely remove it," but "ye shall be able to do even this." And if they did it not, it was not because they were unable (how could this be, when they had power to do the greater things?), but because they would not, there being no need.

And it is likely that this too may have been done, and not have been written; for we know that not all the miracles they wrought were written. Then however they were in a state by comparison very imperfect. What then? Had they not at that time so much as this faith? They had not, for neither were they always the same men, since even Peter is now pronounced blessed, now reproved; and the rest also are mocked by Him for folly, when they understood not His saying concerning the leaven. And so it was, that then also the disciples were weak, for they were but imperfectly minded before the cross. But by faith here He means that which related to the miracles, and mentions a mustard seed, to declare its unspeakable power. For though in bulk the mustard seed seem to be small, yet in power

it is the strongest of all things. To indicate therefore that even the least degree of genuine faith can do great things, He mentioned the mustard seed; neither by any means did He stop at this only, but added even mountains, and went on beyond that. "For nothing," saith He, "shall be impossible to you."

But do thou herein also marvel at their self-denial, and the might of the Spirit; their self-denial in not hiding their fault, and the might of the Spirit in so leading on by degrees them who had not so much as a gram of mustard seed, that rivers and fountains of faith sprang up within them. "Howbeit, this kind goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting;" meaning the whole kind of evil spirits, not that of lunatics only. Seest thou how He now proceeds to lay beforehand in them the foundation of His doctrine about fasting? Nay, argue not with me from rare cases, that some even without fasting have cast them out. For although one might say this, in one or two instances, of them that rebuke the evil spirits, yet for the patient it is a thing impossible, living luxuriously, to be delivered from such madness: this thing being especially necessary for him that is diseased in that way. "And yet, if faith be requisite," one may say, "what need of fasting?" Because, together with our faith, that also brings no small power. For it both implants much strictness, and of a man makes one an angel, and fights against the incorporeal powers: yet not by itself, but prayer too is needed, and prayer must come first.

5. See, at any rate, how many blessings spring from them both. For he that is praying as he ought, and fasting, hath not many wants, and he that hath not many wants, cannot be covetous; he that is not covetous, will be also more disposed for almsgiving. He that fasts is light, and winged, and prays with wakefulness, and quenches his wicked lusts, and propitiates God, and humbles his soul when lifted up. Therefore even the apostles were almost always fasting. He that prays with fasting hath his wings double, and lighter than the very winds. For neither doth he gape, nor stretch himself, nor grow torpid in prayer, as is the case with most men, but is more vehement than fire, and rises above the earth. Wherefore also such a one is most especially a hater and an enemy to the evil spirits. For nothing is mightier than a man who prays sincerely. For if a woman had power to prevail with a savage ruler, one neither fearing God, nor regarding man; much more will he prevail with God, who is continually waiting upon Him, and controlling the belly, and casting out luxury. But if thy body be too weak to fast continually, still it is not too weak for prayer, nor without vigor for contempt of the belly. For although thou canst not fast, yet canst thou avoid luxurious living; and even this is no little thing, nor far removed from fasting, but even this is enough to pluck down the devil's madness.

For indeed nothing is so welcome to that evil spirit, as luxury and drunkenness; since it is both fountain and parent of all our evils. Hereby, for example, of old he drove the Israelites to idolatry; hereby he made the Sodomites to burn in unlawful lust. For, "this," it is said, "was the iniquity of Sodom; in pride, and in fullness of bread, and in banquetings they waxed wanton. Hereby he hath destroyed ten thousand others, and delivered them to hell.

For what evil doth not luxury work? It makes swine of men, and worse than swine. For whereas the sow wallows in the mire and feeds on filth, this man lives on food more abominable than that, devising forbidden intercourse, and unlawful lusts. Such an one is in no respect different from a demoniac, for like him he is lost to shame, and raves. And the demoniac at any rate we pity, but this man is the object of our aversion and hatred. Why so? Because he brings upon himself a self-chosen madness, and makes his mouth, and his eyes, and nostrils, and all, in short, mere sewers. But if thou wert to see what is within him also, thou wilt behold his very soul as in a kind of wintry frost, stiff and torpid, and in nothing able to help its vessel through the excess of the storm. I am ashamed to say how many ills men and women suffer from luxury, but I leave it to their own conscience, which knows it all more perfectly. For what is viler than a woman drunken, or at all led away by wine? For the weaker the vessel, the more entire the shipwreck, whether she be free or a slave. For the free woman behaves herself unseemly in the midst of her slaves as spectators, and the slave again in like manner in the midst of the slaves, and they cause the gifts of God to be blasphemously spoken of by foolish men.

For instance, I hear many say, when these excesses happen, "Would there were no wine." O folly! O madness! When other men sin, dost thou find fault with God's gifts? And what great madness is this? What? did the wine, O man, produce this evil? Not the wine, but the intemperance of such as take an evil delight in it. Say then, "Would there were no drunkenness, no luxury;" but if thou say, "Would there were no wine," thou wilt say, going on by degrees, "Would there were no steel, because of the murderers; no night, because of the thieves; no light, because of the informers; no women, because of adulteries;" and, in a word, thou wilt destroy all. But do not so; for this is of a satanical mind; do not find fault with the wine, but with the drunkenness; and when thou hast found this self-same man sober, sketch out all his unseemliness, and say unto him, Wine was given, that we might be cheerful, not that we might behave ourselves unseemly; that we might laugh, not that we might be a laughingstock; that we might be healthful, not that we might be diseased; that we might correct the weakness of our body, not cast down the might of our soul.

God honored thee with the gift, why disgrace thyself with the excess thereof? Hear what Paul saith, "Use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities" But if that saint, even when oppressed with disease, and enduring successive sicknesses, partook not of wine, until his Teacher suffered him; what excuse shall we have, who are drunken in health? To him indeed He said, "Use a little wine for thy stomach's sake;" but to each of you who are drunken, He will say, "Use little wine, for thy fornications, thy frequent filthy talking, for the other wicked desires to which drunkenness is wont to give birth." But if ye are not willing, for these reasons, to abstain; at least on account of the despondencies which come of it, and the vexations, do ye abstain. For wine was given for gladness, "Yea, wine," so it is said, "maketh glad the heart of man:" but ye mar even this excellence in it. For what kind of gladness is it to be beside one's self, and to have innumerable vexations, and to see all things whirling round, and to be oppressed with giddiness, and like those that have a fever, to require some who may drench their heads with oil?

6. These things are not said by me to all: or rather they are said to all, not because all are drunken, God forbid; but because they who do not drink take no thought of the drunken. Therefore even against you do I rather inveigh, that are in health; since the physician too leaves the sick, and addresses his discourse to them that are sitting by them. To you therefore do I direct my speech, entreating you neither to be at any time over-taken by this passion, and to draw up as by cords those who have been so overtaken, that they be not found worse than the brutes. For they indeed seek nothing more than what is needful, but these have become even more brutish than they, overpassing the boundaries of moderation. For how much better is the ass than these men? how much better the dog! For indeed each of these animals, and of all others, whether it need to eat, or to drink, acknowledges sufficiency for a limit, and goes not on beyond what it needs; and though there are innumerable persons to constrain, it will not endure to go on to excess.

In this respect then we are worse even than the brutes, by the judgment not of them that are in health only, but even by our own. For that ye have judged yourselves to be baser than both dogs and asses, is evident from thence: that these brutes thou dost not compel to partake of food, beyond their measure; and should any one say, "Wherefore?" "Lest I should hurt them," thou wilt reply. But upon thyself thou bestowest not so much as this forethought. Thus thou accountest thyself viler even than they are, and permittest thyself to be continually tossed as with a tempest. For neither in the day of thy drunkenness only dost thou undergo the harm of drunkenness, but also after that day. And as when a fever is passed by, the mischievous consequences of the fever remain; so also when drunkenness is past, the disturbance of intoxication is whirling round both the soul and body; and while the wretched body lies paralyzed, like the hull of a vessel after a shipwreck, the soul yet more miserable than it, even when this is ended, stirs up the storm, and kindles the desire; and when one seems to be sober, then most of all is he mad, imagining to himself wine and casks, cups and goblets. And like as in a storm when the raging of the waters hath ceased, the loss by reason of the storm remains; so likewise here too. For as there of our freight, so here too is there a casting away of nearly all our good things. Whether it be temperance, or modesty, or understanding, or meekness, or humility, which the drunkenness finds there, it casts all away into the sea of iniquity.

But in what follows there is no more any likeness. Since there indeed upon the casting out the vessel is lightened, but here it is weighed down the more. For in its former place of wealt hit takes on board sand, and salt water, and all the accumulated filth of drunkenness; enough to sink the vessel at once, with the mariners and the pilot. That we may not then suffer these things, let us deliver ourselves from that tempest. It is not possible with drunkenness to see the kingdom of Heaven. "Be not deceived," it is said, "no drunkards, no revilers, shall inherit the kingdom of God." And why do I speak of a kingdom? Why, with drunkenness one cannot see so much as the things present. For in truth drunkenness makes the days nights to us, and the light darkness. And though their eyes be opened, the drunken see not even what is close at hand.

And this is not the only frightful things but with these things they suffer also another most grievous punishment, continually undergoing unreasonable despondencies, madness, infirmity, ridicule, reproach. What manner of excuse is there for them that pierce themselves through with so many evils? There is none. Let us fly then from that pest, that we may attain both unto the good things here, and unto those to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might with the Father and the Holy Spirit, world without end. Amen.

Homily 58

Matthew Chapter 17, Verse 22 And Matthew Chapter 17, Verse 23

"And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him, and the third day He shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry." That is, to hinder their saying, "wherefore do we abide here continually," He speaks to them again of the passion; on hearing which they had no wish so much as to see Jerusalem. And it is remarkable how, when both Peter had been rebuked, and Moses and Elias had discoursed concerning it, and had called the thing glory, and the Father had uttered a voice from above, and so many miracles had been done, and the resurrection was at the doors (for He said, He should by no means abide any long time in death, but should be raised the third day); not even so did they endure it, but were sorry; and not merely sorry, but exceeding sorry.

Now this arose from their being ignorant as yet of the force of His sayings. This Mark and Luke indirectly expressing said, the one, "They understood not the saying, and were afraid to ask Him:" the other, "It was hid from them, that they perceived it not, and they feared to ask Him of that saying." And yet if they were ignorant, how were they sorry? Because they were not altogether ignorant; that He was to die they knew, continually hearing it, but what this death might be, and that there would be a speedy release from it, and that it would work innumerable blessings, as yet they knew not clearly; nor what this resurrection might be: but they understood it not, wherefore they grieved; for indeed they clung very earnestly to their Master. "And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received the didrachma came to Peter, and said, Doth not your Master pay the didrachma?"

And what is this "didrachma?" When God had slain the firstborn of the Egyptians, then He took the tribe of Levi in their stead. Afterwards, because the number of the tribe was less than of the firstborn among the Jews, for them that are wanting to make up the number, He commanded a shekel to be contributed: and moreover a custom came thereby in force, that the firstborn should pay this tribute. Because then Christ was a firstborn child, and Peter seemed to be first of the disciples, to him they come: their way being, as I suppose, to exact it in every city; wherefore also in His native place they approached Him; for Capernaum was accounted His native place. And Him indeed they durst not approach, but Peter; nor him either with much violence, but rather gently. For not as blaming, but as inquiring, they

said, "Doth not your Master pay the didrachma?" For the right opinion of Him they had not as yet, but as concerning a man, so did they feel; yet they rendered Him some reverence and honor, because of the signs that went before.

2. What then saith Peter? "He saith, Yea:" and to these indeed he said, that He payeth, but to Him he said it not, blushing perhaps to speak to Him of these things. Wherefore that gentle one, well knowing as He did all things, prevented him, "saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own sons, or of strangers;" and when he said "of strangers," He replied, "Then are the sons free." For lest Peter should suppose Him to say so, being told it by the others, He prevents him, partly indicating what hath been said, partly giving him leave to speak freely, backward as he was to speak first of these things. And what He saith is like this, "I am indeed free from paying tribute. For if the kings of the earth take it not of their sons, but of their subjects; much more ought I to be freed from this demand, I who am Son, not of an earthly king, but of the King of Heaven, and myself a King." Seest thou how He hath distinguished the sons from them that are not sons? And if He were not a Son, to no purpose hath He brought in the example also of the kings. "Yea," one may say, "He is a Son, but not truly begotten." Then is He not a Son; and if not a Son, nor truly begotten, neither doth He belong to God, but to some other. But if He belong to another, then neither hath the comparison its proper force. For He is discoursing not of the sons generally, but of the genuine sons, men's very own; of them that share the kingdom with their parents.

Wherefore also in contradistinction He hath mentioned the "strangers;" meaning by "strangers," such as are not born of them, but by "their own," those whom they have begotten of themselves. And I would have thee mark this also; how the high doctrine, revealed to Peter, He doth hereby again confirm. And neither at this did He stop, but by His very condescension declares this self-same truth; an instance of exceeding wisdom. For after thus speaking, He saith, "But lest we should offend them, go thou and cast an hook into the sea, and take up the fish that first cometh up, and thou shall find therein a piece of money; that take, and give unto them for me and thee." See how He neither declines the tribute, nor simply commands to pay it, but having first proved Himself not liable to it, then He gives it: the one to save the people, the other, those around Him, from offense. For He gives it not at all as a debt, but as doing the best for their weakness. Elsewhere, however, He despises the offense, when He was discoursing of meats, teaching us to know at what seasons we ought to consider them that are offended, and at what to disregard them.

And indeed by the very mode of giving He discloses Himself again. For wherefore doth He not command him to give of what they have laid up? That, as I have said, herein also He might signify Himself to be God of all, and the sea also to be under His rule. For He had indeed signified this even already, by His rebuke, and by His commanding this same Peter to walk on the waves; but He now again signifies the self-same thing, though in another way, yet so as to cause herein great amazement. For neither was it a small thing, to foretell that

the first, who out of those depths should come in his way, would be the fish that would pay the tribute; and having cast forth His commandment like a net into that abyss, to bring up the one that bore the piece of money; but it was of a divine and unutterable power, thus to make even the sea bear gifts, and that its subjection to Him should be shown on all hands, as well when in its madness it was silent, and when, though fierce, it received its fellow servant; as now again, when it makes payment in His behalf to them that are demanding it.

"And give unto them," He saith, "for me and thee." Seest thou the exceeding greatness of the honor? See also the self-command of Peter's mind. For this point Mark, the follower of this apostle, doth not appear to have set down, because it indicated the great honor paid to him; but while of the denial he wrote as well as the rest, the things that make him illustrious he hath passed over in silence, his master perhaps entreating him not to mention the great things about himself. And He used the phrase, "for me and thee," because Peter too was a firstborn child. Now as thou art amazed at Christ's power, so I bid thee admire also the disciple's faith, that to a thing beyond possibility he so gave ear. For indeed it was very far beyond possibility by nature. Wherefore also in requital for his faith, He joined him to Himself in the payment of the tribute.

3. "In that hour came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who then is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" The disciples experienced some feeling of human weakness; wherefore the evangelist also adds this note, saying, "In that hour;" when He had preferred him to all. For of James too, and John, one was a firstborn son, but no such thing as this had He done for them. Then, being ashamed to avow their feeling, they say not indeed openly, "Wherefore hast thou preferred Peter to us?" or, "Is he greater than we are?" for they were ashamed; but indefinitely they ask, "Who then is greater?" For when they saw the three preferred, they felt nothing of the kind; but now that the honor had come round to one, they were vexed. And not for this only, but there were many other things which they put together to kindle that feeling. For to him He had said, "I will give thee the keys;" to him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona;" to him here, "Give unto them for me and thee;" and seeing too in general how freely he was allowed to speak, it somewhat fretted them. And if Mark saith, that they did not ask, but reasoned in themselves, that is nothing contrary to this. For it is likely that they did both the one and the other, and whereas before, on another occasion, they had had this feeling, both once and twice, that now they did both declare it, and reason among themselves.

But to thee I say, "Look not to the charge against them only, but consider this too; first, that they seek none of the things of this world; next, that even this passion they afterwards laid aside, and give up the first place one to another." But we are not able to attain so much as unto their faults, neither do we seek, "who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven;" but, who is greatest in the earthly kingdom, who is wealthiest, who most powerful. What then saith Christ? He unveils their conscience, and replies to their feeling, not merely to their words. "For He called a little child unto Him," saith the Scripture, "and said, Except ye be

converted, and become as this little child, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." "Why, you," He saith, "inquire who is greatest, and are contentious for first honors; but I pronounce him, that is not become lowest of all, unworthy so much as to enter in thither."

And full well doth He both allege that pattern, and not allege it only, but also set the child in the midst, by the very sight abashing them, and persuading them to be in like manner lowly and artless. Since both from envy the little child is pure, and from vainglory, and from longing for the first place; and he is possessed of the greatest of virtues, simplicity, and whatever is artless and lowly. Not courage then only is wanted, nor wisdom, but this virtue also, humility I mean, and simplicity. Yea, and the things that belong to our salvation halt even in the chiefest point, if these be not with us. The little child, whether it be insulted and, beaten, or honored and glorified, neither by the one is it moved to impatience or envy, nor by the other lifted up. Seest thou how again He calls us on to all natural excellencies, indicating that of free choice it is possible to attain them, and so silences the wicked frenzy of the Manichaeans? For if nature be an evil thing, wherefore doth He draw from hence His patterns of severe goodness? And the child which He set in the midst suppose to have been a very young child indeed, free from all these passions. For such a little child is free from pride and the mad desire of glory, and envy, and contentiousness, and all such passions, and having many virtues, simplicity, humility, unworldliness, prides itself upon none of them; which is a twofold severity of goodness; to have these things, and not to be puffed up about them.

Wherefore He brought it in, and set it in the midst; and not at this merely did He conclude His discourse, but carries further this admonition, saying, "And whoso shall receive such a little child in my name, receiveth me." "For know," saith He, "that not only, if ye yourselves become like this, shall ye receive a great reward; but also if for my sake ye honor others who are such, even for your honor to them do I appoint unto you a kingdom as your recompence." Or rather, He sets down what is far greater, saying, "he receiveth me." So exceedingly dear to me is all that is lowly and artless." For by "a little child," here, He means the men that are thus simple and lowly, and abject and contemptible in the judgment of the common sort. 4. After this, to obtain yet more acceptance for His saying, He establishes it not by the honor only, but also by the punishment, going on to say, "And whoso shall offend one of these little ones, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

"For as they," saith He, "who honor these for my sake, have heaven, or rather an honor greater than the very kingdom; even so they likewise who dishonor them (for this is to offend them), shall suffer the extremity of punishment. And marvel thou not at His calling the affront "an offense;" for many feeble-minded persons have suffered no ordinary offense from being treated with slight and insult. To heighten therefore and aggravate the blame, He states the mischief arising therefrom. And He doth not go on to express the punishment in the same way, but from the things familiar to us, He indicates how intolerable it is. For when He would touch the grosser sort most sharply, He brings sensible images. Wherefore

here also, meaning to indicate the greatness of the punishment they shall undergo, and to strike into the arrogance of those that despise them, He brought forward a kind of sensible punishment, that of the millstone, and of the drowning. Yet surely it were suitable to what had gone before to have said, "He that receiveth not one of these little ones, receivoth not me;" a thing bitterer than any punishment; but since the very unfeeling, and exceeding gross, were not so much penetrated by this, terrible as it is, He puts "a millstone," and "a drowning." And He said not, "A millstone shall be hanged about his neck," but, "It were better for him" to undergo this; implying that another evil, more grievous than this, awaits him; and if this be unbearable, much more that.

Seest thou how in both respects He made His threat terrible, first by the comparison with the known image rendering it more distinct, then by the excess on its side presenting it to the fancy as far greater than that visible one. Seest thou how He plucks up by the root the spirit of arrogance; how He heals the ulcer of vainglory; how He instructs us in nothing to set our heart on the first honors; how He persuades such as covet them in everything to follow after the lowest place? 5. For nothing is worse than arrogance. This even takes men out of their natural senses, and brings upon them the character of fools; or rather, it really makes them to be utterly like idiots. For like as, if any one, being three cubits in stature, were to strive to be higher than the mountains, or actually to think it, and draw himself up, as overpassing their summits, we should seek no other proof of his being out of his senses; so also when thou seest a man arrogant, and thinking himself superior to all, and accounting it a degradation to live with other people, seek not thou after that to see any other proof of that man's madness. Why, he is much more ridiculous than any natural fool, inasmuch as he absolutely creates this his disease on purpose. And not in this only is he wretched, but because he doth without feeling it fall into the very gulf of wickedness.

For when will such an one come to due knowledge of any sin? when will he perceive that he is offending? Nay, rather he is as a vile and captive slave, whom the devil having caught goes off with, and makes him altogether a prey, buffetting him on every side, and encompassing him with ten thousand insults. For unto such great folly doth he lead them in the end, as to get them to be haughty towards their children, and wives, and towards their own forefathers. And others, on the contrary, He causes to be puffed up by the distinction of their ancestors. Now, what can be more foolish than this? when from opposite causes people are alike puffed up, the one sort because they had mean persons for fathers, grandfathers, and ancestors; and the other because theirs were glorious and distinguished? How then may one abate in each case the swelling sore? By saying to these last, "Go farther back than your grandfather, and immediate ancestors, and you will find perchance many cooks, and drivers of asses, and shopkeepers:" but to the former, that are puffed up by the meanness of their forefathers, the contrary again; "And thou again, if thou proceed farther up among thy forefathers, wilt find many far more illustrious than thou art."

For that nature hath this course, come let me prove it to thee even from the Scriptures. Solomon was son of a king, and of an illustrious king, but that king's father was one of the

vile and ignoble. And his grandfather on his mother's side in like manner; for else he would not have given his daughter to a mere soldier. And if thou weft to go up again higher from these mean persons, thou wilt see the race more illustrious and royal. So in Saul's case too, so in many others also, one shall come to this result. Let us not then pride ourselves herein. For what is birth? tell me. Nothing, but a name only without a substance; and this ye will know in that day. But because that day is not yet come, let us now even from the things present persuade you, that hence arises no superiority. For should war overtake us, should famine, should anything else, all these inflated conceits of noble birth are put to the proof: should disease, should pestilence come upon us, it knows not how to distinguish between the rich and the poor, the glorious and inglorious, the high born and him that is not such; neither doth death, nor the other reverses of fortune, but they all rise up alike against all; and if I may say something that is even marvellous, against the rich more of the two. For by how much they are less exercised in these things, so much the more do they perish, when overtaken by them. And the fear too is greater with the rich. For none so tremble at princes as they; and at multitudes, not less than at princes, yea rather much more; many such houses in fact have been subverted alike by the wrath of multitudes and the threatening of princes. But the poor man is exempt from both these kinds of troubled waters.

6. Wherefore let alone this nobility, and if thou wouldest show me that thou art noble, show the freedom of thy soul, such as that blessed man had (and he a poor man), who said to Herod, "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother Philip's wife;" such as he was possessed of, who before him was like him, and after him shall be so again; who said to Ahab, "I do not trouble Israel, but thou, and thy father's house;" such as the prophets had, such as all the apostles. But not like this are the souls of them that are slaves to wealth, but as they that are under ten thousand tutors, and taskmasters, so these dare not so much as lift up their eye, and speak boldly in behalf of virtue. For the love of riches, and that of glory, and that of other things, looking terribly on them, make them slavish flatterers; there being nothing which so takes away liberty, as entanglement in worldly affairs, and the wearing what are accounted marks of distinction. For such an one hath not one master, nor two, nor three, but ten thousand.

And if ye would fain even number them, let us bring in some one of those that are in honor in kings' courts, and let him have both very much wealth, and great power, and a birthplace excelling others, and distinction of ancestry, and let him be looked up to by all men. Now then let us see, if this be not the very person to be more in slavery than all; and let us set in comparison with him, not a slave merely, but a slave's slave, for many though servants have slaves. This slave's slave then for his part hath but one master. And what though that one be not a freeman? yet he is but one, and the other looks only to his pleasure. For albeit his master's master seem to have power over him, yet for the present he obeys one only; and if matters between them two are well, he will abide in security all his life. But our man hath not one or two only, but many, and more grievous masters. And first he is in care about the sovereign himself. And it is not the same to have a mean person for a master, as to have a

king, whose ears are buzzed into by many, and who becomes a property now to this set and now to that.

Our man, though conscious of nothing, suspects all; both his comrades and his subordinates; both his friends and his enemies. But the other man too, you may say, fears his master. But how is it the same thing, to have one or many, to make one timorous? Or rather, if a man inquire carefully, he will not find so much as one. How, and in what sense? Whereas that slave hath no one that desires to put him out of that service of his, and to introduce himself (whence neither hath he any one to plot against him therein); these have not even any other pursuit, but to unsettle him. that is more approved and more beloved by their ruler. Wherefore also he must needs flatter all, his superiors, his equals, his friends. For where envy is, and love of glory, there even sincere friendship has no strength. For as those of the same craft cannot love one another with a perfect and genuine love, so is it with rivals in honor also, and with them that long for the same among worldly objects. Whence also great is the war within.

Seest thou what a swarm of masters, and of hard masters? Wilt thou that I show thee yet another, more grievous than this? They that are behind him, all of them strive to get before him: all that are before him, to hinder him from coming nearer them, and passing them by. 7. But O marvel! I undertook indeed to show you masters, but our discourse, we find, coming on and waxing eager, hath performed more than my undertaking, pointing out foes instead of masters; or rather the same persons both as foes and as masters. For while they are courted like masters, they are terrible as foes, and they plot against us as enemies. When then any one hath the same persons both as masters, and as enemies, what can be worse than this calamity? The slave indeed, though he be subject to command, yet nevertheless hath the advantage of care and good-will on the part of them who give him orders; but these, while they receive commands, are made enemies, and are set one against another; and that so much more grievously than those in battles, in that they both wound secretly, and in the mask of friends they treat men as their enemies would do, and oftentimes make themselves credit of the calamity of others.

But not such are our circumstances; rather should another fare ill, there are many to grieve with him: should he obtain distinction, many to find pleasure with him. Not so again the apostle: "For whether," saith he, "one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it." And the words of him who gives these admonitions, are at one time, "What is my hope or joy? are not even ye?" at another, "Now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord;" at another, "Out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you;" and, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?" Wherefore then do we still endure the tempest and the billows of the world without, and not run to this calm haven, and leaving the names of good things, go on to the very things themselves? For glory, and dignity, and wealth, and credit, and all such things, are names with them, but with us realities; just as the grievous things, death and dishonor

and poverty, and whatever else is like them, are names indeed with us, but realities with them.

And, if thou wilt, let us first bring forward glory, so lovely and desirable with all of them. And I speak not of its being short-lived, and soon put out, but when it is in its bloom, then show it me. Take not away the daubings and colored lines of the harlot, but bring her forward decked out, and exhibit her to us, for me thereupon to expose her deformity. Well then, of course thou wilt tell of her array, and her many lictors, and the heralds' voice, and the listening of all classes, and the silence kept by the populace, and the blows given to alI that come in one's way, and the universal gazing. Are not these her splendors? Come then, let us examine whether these things be not vain, and a mere unprofitable imagination. For wherein is the person we speak of the better for these things, either in body, or in soul? for this constitutes the man. Will he then be taller hereby, or stronger, or healthier, or swifter, or will he have his senses keener, and more piercing? Nay, no one could say this. Let us go then to the soul, if haply we may find there any advantage occurring herefrom. What then? Will such a one be more temperate, more gentle, more prudent, through that kind of attendance? By no means, but rather quite the contrary. For not as in the body, so also is the result here. For there the body indeed gains nothing in respect of its proper excellence; but here the mischief is not only the soul's reaping no good fruit, but also its actually receiving much evil therefrom: hurried as it is by such means into haughtiness, and vainglory, and folly, and wrath, and ten thousand faults like them.

"But he rejoices," thou wilt say, "and exults in these things, and they brighten him up." The crowning point of his evils lies in that word of thine, and the incurable part of the disease. For he that rejoices in these things, would be unwilling however easily to be released from that which is the ground of his evils; yea, he hath blocked up against himself the way of healing by this delight. So that here most of all is the mischief, that he is not even pained, but rather rejoices, when the diseases are growing upon him. For neither is rejoicing always a good thing; since even thieves rejoice in stealing, and an adulterer in defiling his neighbor's marriage bed, and the covetous in spoiling by violence, and the manslayer in murdering. Let us not then look whether he rejoice, but whether it be for something profitable, lest perchance we find his joy to be such as that of the adulterer and the thief.

For wherefore, tell me, doth he rejoice? For his credit with the multitude, because he can puff himself up, and be gazed upon? Nay, what can be worse than this desire, and this ill-placed fondness? or if it be no bad thing, ye must leave off deriding the vainglorious and aspersing them with continual mockeries: ye must leave off uttering imprecations on the haughty and contemptuous. But ye would not endure it. Well then, they too deserve plenty of censure, though they have plenty of lictors. And all this I have said of the more tolerable sort of rulers; since the greater part of them we shall find transgressing more grievously than either robbers, or murderers, or adulterers, or spoilers of tombs, from not making a good use of their power. For indeed both their thefts are more shameless, and their butcheries more hardened, and their impurities far more enormous than the others;

and they dig through, not one wall, but estates and houses without end, their prerogative making it very easy to them.

And they serve a most grievous servitude, both stooping basely under their passions, and trembling at all their accomplices. For he only is free, and he only a ruler, and more kingly than all kings, who is delivered from his passions. Knowing then these things, let us follow after the true freedom, and deliver ourselves from the evil slavery, and let us account neither pomp of power nor dominion of wealth, nor any other such thing, to be blessed; but virtue only. For thus shall we both enjoy security here, and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, world without end. Amen.

Homily 59

Matthew Chapter 18, Verse 7

Woe unto the world because of offenses: for it must needs be that offenses come: but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." "And if 'it must needs be that offenses come,'" (some one of our adversaries may perchance say), "why doth He lament over the world, when He ought rather to afford succor, and to stretch forth His hand in its behalf? For this were the part of a physician, and a protector, whereas the other might be looked for even from any ordinary person." What then could we possibly say, in answer to so shameless a tongue? nay what dost thou seek for equal to this healing care of His? For indeed being God He became man for thee, and took the form of a slave, and underwent all extremities, and left undone none of those things which it concerned Him to do. But inasmuch as unthankful men were nothing the better for this, He laments over them, for that after so much fostering care they continued in their unsoundness.

It was like as if over the sick man, that had had the advantage of much attendance, and who had not been willing to obey the rules of the physician, any one were to lament and say, "Woe to such a man from his infirmity, which he has increased by his own remissness." But in that case indeed there is no advantage from the bewailing, but here this too is a kind of healing treatment to foretell what would be, and to lament it. For many oftentimes, though, when advised, they were nothing profited, yet, when mourned for, they amended. For which reason most of all He used the word "Woe," thoroughly to rouse them, and to make them in earnest, and to work upon them to be wakeful. And at the same time He shows forth the good will He had towards those very men and His own mildness, that He mourns for them even when gainsaying, not taking mere disgust at it, but correcting them, both with the mourning, and with the prediction, so as to win them over.

But how is this possible? he may say. For if "it must needs be that offenses come," how is it possible to escape these? Because that the offenses come indeed must needs be, but that men should perish is not altogether of necessity. Like as though a physician should say (for nothing hinders our using the same illustration again), it must needs be that this disease should come on, but it is not a necessary consequence that he who gives heed should be of course destroyed by the disease. And this He said, as I mentioned, to awaken together with the others His disciples. For that they may not slumber, as sent unto peace and unto

untroubled life, He shows many wars close upon them, from without, from within. Declaring this, Paul said, "Without were fightings, within were fears;" and, "In perils among false brethren;" and in his discourse to the Milesians too He said, "Also of you shall some arise speaking perverse things;" and He Himself too said, "The man's foes shall be they of his own household." But when He said, "It must needs be," it is not as taking away the power of choosing for themselves, nor the freedom of the moral principle, nor as placing man's life under any absolute constraint of circumstances, that He saith these things, but He foretells what would surely be; and this Luke hath set forth in another form of expression, "It is impossible but that offenses should come."

But what are the offenses? The hindrances on the right way. Thus also do those on the stage call them that are skilled in those matters, them that distort their bodies. It is not then His prediction that brings the offenses; far from it; neither because He foretold it, therefore doth it take place; but because it surely was to be, therefore He foretold it; since if those who bring in the offenses had not been minded to do wickedly, neither would the offenses have come; and if they had not been to come, neither would they have been foretold. But because those men did evil, and were incurably diseased, the offenses came, and He foretells that which is to be. But if these men had been kept right, it may be said, and there had been no one to bring in an offense, would not this saying have been convicted of falsehood? By no means, for neither would it have been spoken. For if all were to have been kept right, He would not have said, "it must needs be that they come," but because He foreknew they would be of themselves incorrigible, therefore He said, the offenses will surely come.

And wherefore did He not take them out of the way? it may be said. Why, wherefore should they have been taken out of the way? For the sake of them that are hurt? But not thence is the ruin of them that are hurt, but from their own remissness. And the virtuous prove it, who, so far from being injured thereby, are even in the greatest degree profiled, such as was Job, such as was Joseph, such as were all the righteous, and the apostles. But if many perish, it is from their own slumbering. But if it were not so, but the ruin was the effect of the offenses, all must have perished. And if there are those who escape, let him who doth not escape impute it to himself. For the offenses, as I have said, awaken, and render more quick-sighted, and sharper, not only him that is preserved; but even him that hath fallen into them, if he rise up again quickly, for they render him more safe, and make him more difficult to overcome; so that if we be watchful, no small profit do we reap from hence, even to be continually awake. For if when we have enemies, and when so many dangers are pressing upon us, we sleep, what should we be if living in security. Nay, if thou wilt, look at the first man. For if having lived in paradise a short time, perchance not so much as a whole day, and having enjoyed delights, he drove on to such a pitch of wickedness, as even to imagine an equality with God, and to account the deceiver a benefactor, and not to keep to one commandment; if he had lived the rest of his life also without affliction, what would he not have done?

2. But when we say these things, they make other objections again, asking, And why did God make him such? God did not make him such, far from it, since then neither would He have punished him. For if we in those matters in which we are the cause, do not find fault with our servant, much more will not the God of all. "But whence did this come to pass?" one may say. Of himself and his own remissness. "What means, of himself?" Ask thyself. For if it be not of themselves the bad are bad, do not punish thy servant nor reprove thy wife for what errors she may commit, neither beat thy son, nor blame thy friend, nor hate thine enemy that doth despite to thee: for all these deserve to be pitied, not to be punished, unless they offend of themselves. "But I am not able to practise self-restraint," one may say. And yet, when thou perceivest the cause not to be with them, but of another necessity, thou canst practise self-restraint. When at least a servant being taken with sickness doth not the things enjoined him, so far from blaming thou dost rather excuse him. Thus thou art a witness, that the one thing is of one's self, the other not of one's self. So that here too, if thou knewest that he was wicked from being born such, so far from blaming, thou wouldest rather have shown him indulgence. For surely, when thou makest him allowance for his illness, it could not be that thou wouldest have refused to make allowance for God's act of creation, if indeed he had been made such from the very first.

And in another way too it is easy to stop the mouths of such men, for great is the abounding power of the truth. For wherefore dost thou never find fault with thy servant, because he is not of a beautiful countenance, that he is not of fine stature in his body, that he is not able to fly? Because these things are natural. So then from blame against his nature he is acquitted, and no man gainsays it. When therefore thou blamest, thou showest that the fault is not of nature but of his choice. For if in those things, which we do not blame, we bear witness that the whole is of nature, it is evident that where we reprove, we declare that the offense is of the choice. Do not then bring forward, I beseech thee, perverse reasonings, neither sophistries and webs slighter than the spider's, but answer me this again: Did God make all men? It is surely plain to every man. How then are not all equal in respect of virtue and vice? whence are the good, and gentle, and meek? whence are the worthless and evil? For if these things do not require any purpose, but are of nature, how are the one this, the others that? For if by nature all were bad, it were not possible for any one to be good, but if good by nature, then no one bad. For if there were one nature of all men, they must needs in this respect be all one, whether they were to be this, or whether they were to be that.

But if we should say that by nature the one are good, the other bad, which would not be reasonable (as we have shown), these things must be unchangeable, for the things of nature are unchangeable. Nay, mark. All mortals are also liable to suffering; and no one is free from suffering, though he strive without end. But now we see of good many becoming worthless, and of worthless good, the one through remissness, the other by earnestness; which thing most of all indicates that these things do not come of nature. For the things of nature are neither changed, nor do they need diligence for their acquisition. For like as for seeing and hearing we do not need labor, so neither should we need toils in virtue, if it had been

apportioned by nature. ”But wherefore did He at all make worthless men, when He might have made all men good? Whence then are the evil things?” saith he. Ask thyself; for it is my part to show they are not of nature, nor from God.

”Come they then of themselves?” he saith. By no means. ”But are they unoriginated?” Speak reverently, O man, and start back from this madness, honoring with one honor God and the evil things, and that honor the highest. For if they be unoriginate they are mighty, and cannot so much as be plucked up, nor pass into annihilation. For that what is unoriginate is imperishable, is surely manifest to all. 3. And whence also are there so many good, when evil hath such great power? how are they that have an origin stronger than that which is unoriginate? ”But God destroys these things,” he saith. When? And how will He destroy what are of equal honor, and of equal strength, and of the same age, as one might say, with Himself? Oh malice of the devil! how great an evil hath he invented! With what blasphemy hath he persuaded men to surround God! with what cloak of godliness hath he devised another profane account? For desiring to show, that not of Him was the evil, they brought in another evil doctrine, saying, that these things are unoriginate.

”Whence then are evils?” one may say. From willing and not willing. ”But the very thing of our willing and not willing, whence is it?” From ourselves. But thou dost the same in asking, as if when thou hadst asked, whence is seeing and not seeing? then when I said, from closing the eyes or not closing the eyes, thou wert to ask again; the very closing the eyes or not, whence is it? then having heard that it was of ourselves, and our will, thou weft to seek again another cause. For evil is nothing else than disobedience to God. ”Whence then,” one may say, ”did man find this?” ”Why, was it a task to find this? I pray thee.” ”Nay, neither do I say this, that this thing is difficult; but whence became he desirous to disobey.” ”From remissness. For having power for either, he inclined rather to this.”

But if thou art perplexed yet and dizzy at hearing this, I will ask thee nothing difficult nor involved, but a simple and plain question. Hast thou become some time bad? and hast thou become some time also good? What I mean, is like this. Didst thou prevail some time over passion, and wast thou taken again by passion? Has thou been overtaken by drunkenness, and hast thou prevailed over drunkenness? Wast thou once moved to wrath, and again not moved to wrath? Didst thou overlook a poor man, and not overlook him? Didst thou commit whoredom once? and didst thou become chaste again? Whence then are all these things? tell me, whence? Nay if thou thyself do not tell, I will say. Because at one time thou didst restrain thyself and strive, but after that thou becamest remiss and careless. For to those that are desperate, and are continually in wickedness, and are in a state of senselessness, and are mad, and who are not willing so much as to hear what will amend them, I will not even discourse of self restraint; but to them that have been sometimes in the one, and sometimes in the other, I will gladly speak. Didst thou once take by violence the things that belonged not to thee; and after this, subdued by pity, didst impart even of thine unto him that was in need? Whence then this change? Is it not quite plain it is from the mind, and the choice of will?

It is quite plain, and there is no one who would not say this. Wherefore I entreat you to be in earnest, and to cleave to virtue, and ye will have no need of these questions. For our evils are mere names, if we be willing. Inquire not then whence are evils, neither perplex thyself; but having found that they are from remissness only, flee the evil deeds. And if any one should say, that these things come not from us; whenever thou seest him angry with his servants, and provoked with his wife, and blaming a child, and condemning them who injure him, say to him, how then saidst thou, that evils come not from us? For if they be not from us, wherefore dost thou find fault? Say again; is it of thyself thou revilest, and insultest? For if it be not of thyself, let no man be angry with thee; but if it be of thyself, of thyself and of thy remissness are thy evil deeds.

But what? thinkest thou there are some good men? For if indeed no man is good, whence hast thou this word? whence are praises? But if there are good men, it is quite plain that they will also reprove the bad. Yet if no one is voluntarily wicked, nor of himself, the good will be found to be unjustly reproving the bad, and they themselves too will be in this way bad again. For what can be worse than to subject the guiltless to accusations? But if they continue in our estimation good men, though reproving, and this especially is a proof of their goodness, even to the very fools it is hereby plain, that no one is ever by necessity bad. But if after all this thou wouldest still inquire, whence are evils? I would say, from remissness, from idleness, from keeping company with the bad, from contempt of virtue; hence are both the evils themselves, and the fact that some inquire, whence are the evils. Since of them surely who do right no one inquires about these things, of them that are purposed to live equitably and temperately; but they, who dare to commit wicked acts, and wish to devise some foolish comfort to themselves by these discussions, do weave spiders' webs.

But let us tear these in pieces not by our words only, but by our deeds too. For neither are these things of necessity. For if they were of necessity, He would not have said, "Woe to the man, by whom the offense cometh." For those only doth he bewail, who are wicked by their choice. And if He saith "by whom," marvel not. For not as though another were bringing in it by him, doth He say this, but viewing him as himself causing the whole. For the Scripture is wont to say, "by whom," for "of whom;" as when it saith, "I have gotten a man by God," putting not the second cause, but the first; and again, "Is not the interpretation of them by God," and, "God is faithful, by whom ye are called unto the fellowship of His Son." 4. And that thou mayest learn that it is not of necessity, hear also what follows. For after bewailing them, He saith, "If thy hand, or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: for it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or feet to be cast into the fire. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out; it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into the furnace of fire;" not saying these things of limbs; far from it; but of friends, of relations, whom we regard in the rank of necessary members. This He had both said further back, and now He saith it. For nothing is so hurtful as bad company. For what things compulsion cannot, friendship can often effect, both for hurt, and for profit. Wherefore with much earnestness He commands us to cut off them that hurt us, intimating these that bring the offenses.

Seest thou how He hath put away the mischief that would result from the offenses? By foretelling that there surely will be offenses, so that they might find no one in a state of carelessness, but that looking for them men might be watchful. By showing the evils to be great (for He would not have said without purpose, "Woe to the world because of the offenses," but to show that great is the mischief therefrom), by lamenting ú again in stronger terms over him that brings them in. For the saying, "But woe to that man," was that of one showing that great was the punishment, but not this only, but also by the comparison which He added He increased the fear. Then He is not satisfied with these things, but He showeth also the way, by which one may avoid the offenses. But what is this? The wicked, saith He, though they be exceeding dear friends to thee, cut off from thy friendship.

And He giveth a reason that cannot be gainsaid. For if they continue friends, thou wilt not gain them, but thou wilt lose thyself besides; but if thou shouldest cut them off, thine own salvation at least thou wilt gain. So that if any one's friendship harms thee, cut it off from thee. For if of our own members we often cut off many, when they are both in an incurable state, and are ruining the rest, much more ought one to do this in the case of friends. But if evils were by nature, superfluous were all this admonition and advice, superfluous the precaution by the means that have been mentioned. But if it be not superfluous, as surely it is not superfluous, it is quite clear that wickedness is of the will. "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven."

He calleth little ones not them that are really little, but them that are so esteemed by the multitude, the poor, the objects of contempt, the unknown (for how should he be little who is equal in value to the whole world; how should he be little, who is dear to God?); but them who in the imagination of the multitude are so esteemed. And He speaks not of many only, but even of one, even by this again warding off the hurt of the many offenses. For even as to flee the wicked, so also to honor the good, hath very great gain, and would be a twofold security to him who gives heed, the one by rooting out the friendships with them that offend, the other from regarding these saints with respect and honor. Then in another way also He makes them objects of reverence, saying, "That their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven."

Hence it is evident, that the saints have angels, or even all men. For the apostle too saith of the woman, "That she ought to have power on her head because of the angels." And Moses, "He set the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels of God." But here He is discoursing not of angels only, but rather of angels that are greater than others. But when He saith, "The face of my Father," He means nothing else than their fuller confidence, and their great honor. "For the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost." Again, He is putting another reason stronger than the former, and connects with it a parable, by which He brings in the Father also as desiring these things. "For how think ye?" saith He; "If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so

be that he find it, he rejoiceth over it more than over the ninety and nine, which went not astray. Even so it is not will before your Father, that one of these little ones should perish."

Seest thou by how many things He is urging to the care of our mean brethren. Say not then, "Such a one is a blacksmith, a shoemaker, he is a ploughman, he is a fool," and so despise him. For in order that thou shouldest not feel this, see by how many motives He persuades thee to practise moderation, and presses thee into a care for these. He set a little child, and saith, "Be ye as little children." And, "Whosoever receiveth such a little child receiveth me;" and, "Whosoever shall offend," shall suffer the utmost penalties. And He was not even satisfied with the comparison of the "millstone," but added also His "woe," and commanded us to cut off such, though they be in the place of hands and eyes to us. And by the angels again that are entrusted with these same mean brethren, He makes them objects of veneration, and from His own will and passion (for when He said, "The Son of Man is come to save that which was lost," He signifies even the cross, like as Paul saith, speaking of a brother, "For whom Christ died"); and from the Father, for that neither to Him doth it seem good that one should perish; and from common custom, because the shepherd leaves them that are safe, and seeks what is lost; and when he hath found what was gone astray, he is greatly delighted at the finding and the saving of this.

5. If then God thus rejoices over the little one that is found, how dost thou despise them that are the objects of God's earnest care, when one ought to give up even one's very life for one of these little ones? But is he weak and mean? Therefore for this very cause most of all, one ought to do everything in order to preserve him. For even He Himself left the ninety and nine sheep, and went after this, and the safety of so many availed not to throw into the shade the loss of one. But Luke saith, that He even brought it on his shoulders, and that "There was greater joy over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons" And from His forsaking those that were saved for it, and from His taking more pleasure in this one, He showed His earnestness about it to be great.

Let us not then be careless about such souls as these. For all these things are said for this object. For by threatening, that he who has not become a little child should not so much as at all set foot in the Heavens, and speaking of "the millstone," He hath brought down the haughtiness of the boastful; for nothing is so hostile to love as pride; and by saying, "It must needs be that offenses come," He made them to be wakeful; and by adding, "Woe unto him by whom the offense cometh," He hath caused each to endeavor that it be not by him. And while by commanding to cut off them that offend He made salvation easy; by enjoining not to despise them, and not merely enjoining, but with earnestness (for "take heed," saith He, "that ye despise not one of these little ones"), and by saying, "Their angels behold the face of my Father," and, "For this end am I come," and "my Father willeth this," He hath made those who should take care of them more diligent.

Seest thou what a wall He hath set around them, and what earnest care He taketh of them that are contemptible and perishing, at once threatening incurable ills to them that make them fall, and promising great blessings to them that wait upon them, and take care of

them, and bringing an example from Himself again and from the Father? Him let us also imitate, refusing none of the tasks that seem lowly and troublesome for our brethren's sake; but though we have to do service, though he be small, though he be mean for whom this is done, though the work be laborious, though we must pass over mountains and precipices, let all things be held endurable for the salvation of our brother. For a soul is an object of such earnest care to God, that "He spared not His own Son." Wherefore I entreat, when morning hath appeared, straightway as we come out of our house, let us have this one object in view, this earnest care above all, to rescue him that is in danger; I do not mean this danger only that is known by sense, for this is not danger at all, but the danger of the soul, that which is brought upon men by the devil.

For the merchant too, to increase his wealth, crosses the sea; and the artisan, to add to his substance, doeth all things. Let us also then not be satisfied with our own salvation only, since else we destroy even this. For in a war too, and in an engagement, the soldier who is looking to this only how he may save himself by flight, destroys the rest also with himself; much as on the other hand the noble-minded one, and he who stands in arms in defense of the others, with the others preserves himself also. Since then our state too is a war, and of all wars the bitterest, and an engagement and a battle, even as our King commanded us, so let us set ourselves in array in the engagement, prepared for slaughter, and blood, and murders, looking to salvation in behalf of all, and cheering them that stand, and raising up them that are down. For indeed many of our brethren lie fallen in this conflict, having wounds, wallowing in blood, and there is none to heal, not any one of the people, not a priest, no one else, no one to stand by, no friend, no brother, but we look every man to his own things.

By reason of this we maim our own interests also. For the greatest confidence and means of approval is the not looking to our own things. Therefore I say, are we weak and easy to be overcome both by men, and by the devil, because we seek the opposite to this, and lock not our shields one with another, neither are fortified with godly love, but seek for ourselves other motives of friendship, some from relationship, some from long acquaintance, some from community of interest, some from neighborhood; and from every cause rather are we friends, than from godliness, when one's friendships ought to be formed upon this only. But now the contrary is done; with Jews and with Greeks we sometimes become friends, rather than with the children of the church. 6. Yes, saith he, because the one is worthless, but the other kind and gentle. What sayest thou? Dost thou call thy brother worthless, who art commanded not to call him so much as Raca? And art thou not ashamed, neither dost thou blush, at exposing thy brother, thy fellow member, him that hath shared in the same birth with thee, that hath partaken of the same table?

But if thou hast any brother after the flesh, if he should perpetrate ten thousand evil deeds, thou laborest to conceal him, and accountest thyself also to partake of the shame, when he is disgraced; but as to thy spiritual brother, when thou oughtest to free him from calumny, thou dost rather encompass him with ten thousand charges against him? "Why he is worth-

less and insufferable," thou mayest say. Nay then for this reason become his friend, that thou mayest put an end to his being such a one, that thou mayest convert him, that thou mayest lead him back to virtue.-" But he obeys not," thou wilt say, "neither cloth he bear advice."-Whence knowest thou it? What, hast thou admonished him, and attempted to amend him?-"I have admonished him often," thou wilt say. How many times?-Oftentimes, both once, and a second time.-Oh! Is this often? Why, if thou hadst done this throughout all the time, oughtest thou to grow weary, and to give it up? Seest thou not how God is always admonishing us, by the prophets, by the apostles, by the evangelists? What then? have we performed all? and have we been obedient in all things? By no means. Did He then cease admonishing? Did He hold His peace? Doth He not say each day, "Ye cannot serve God, and mammon" and with many, the superfluity and the tyranny of wealth yet increases? Doth He not cry aloud each day, "Forgive, and ye shall have forgiveness," and we become wild beasts more and more? Doth He not continually admonish to restrain desire, and to keep the mastery over wicked lust, and many wallow worse than swine in this sin? But nevertheless, He ceases not speaking.

Wherefore then do we not consider these things with ourselves, and say that even with us God reasons, and abstains not from doing this, although we disobey Him in many things? Therefore He said that, "Few are the saved." For if virtue in ourselves suffices not for our salvation, but we must take with us others too when we depart; when we have saved neither ourselves, nor others, what shall we suffer? Whence shall we have any more a hope of salvation? But why do I blame for these things, when not even of them that dwell with us do we take any account, of wife, and children, and servants, but we have care of one thing instead of another, like drunken men, that our servants may be more in number, and may serve us with much diligence, and that our children may receive from us a large inheritance, and that our wife may have ornaments of gold, and costly garments, and wealth; and we care not at all for themselves, but for the things that belong to them. For neither do we care for our own wife, nor provide for her, but for the things that belong to the wife; neither for the child, but for the things of the child.

And we do the same as if any one seeing a house in a bad state, and the walls giving way, were to neglect to raise up these, and to make up great fences round it without; or when a body was diseased, were not to take care of this, but were to weave for it gilded garments; or when the mistress was ill, were to give heed to the maidservants, and the looms, and the vessels in the house, and mind other things, leaving her to lie and moan.

For this is done even now, and when our soul is in evil and wretched case, and angry, and reviling, and lusting wrongly, and full of vainglory, and at strife, and dragged down to the earth, and torn by so many wild beasts, we neglect to drive away the passions from her, and are careful about house and servants. And while if a bear has escaped by stealth, we shut up our houses, and run along by the narrow passages, so as not to fall in with the wild beast; now while not one wild beast, but many such thoughts are tearing in pieces the soul, we have not so much as a feeling of it. And in the city we take so much care, as to shut up

the wild beasts in solitary places and in cages, and neither at the senate house of the city, nor at the courts of justice, nor at the king's palace, but far off somewhere at a distance do we keep them chained; but in the case of the soul, where the senate house is, where the King's palace, where the court of justice is, the wild beasts are let loose, crying and making a tumult about the mind itself and the royal throne. Therefore all things are turned upside down, and all is full of disturbance, the things within, the things without, and we are in nothing different from a city thrown into confusion from being overrun by barbarians; and what takes place in us is as though a serpent were setting on a brood of sparrows, and the sparrows, with their feeble cries, were flying about every way affrighted, and full of trouble, without having any place whither to go and end their consternation.

7. Wherefore I entreat, let us kill the serpent, let us shut up the wild beasts, let us stifle them, let us slay them, and these wicked thoughts let us give over to the sword of the Spirit, lest the prophet threaten us also with such things as he threatened Judea, that "The wild asses shall dance there, and porcupines, and serpents." For there are, there are even men worse than wild asses, living as it were in the wilderness, and kicking; yea the more part of the youth amongst us is like this. For indeed having wild lusts they thus leap, they kick, going about unbridled, and spend their diligence on no becoming object. And the fathers are to blame, who while they constrain the horsebreakers to discipline their horses with much attention, and suffer not the youth of the colt to go on long untamed, but put upon it both a rein, and all the rest, from the beginning; but their own young ones they overlook, going about for a long season unbridled, and without temperance; disgracing themselves, by fornications, and gamings, and continuings in the wicked theatres, when they ought before fornication to give him to a wife, to a wife chaste, and highly endued with wisdom; for she will both bring off her husband from his most disorderly course of life, and will be instead of a rein to the colt.

For indeed fornications and adulteries come not from any other cause, than from young men's being unrestrained. For if he have a prudent wife, he will take care of house and honor and character. "But he is young," you say. I know it too. For if Isaac was forty years old when he took his bride, passing all that time of his life in virginity, much more ought young men under grace to practise this self-restraint. But oh what grief! Ye do not endure to take care of their chastity, but ye overlook their disgracing, defiling themselves, becoming accursed; as though ye knew not that the profit of marriage is to preserve the body pure, and if this be not so, there is no advantage of marriage. But ye do the contrary; when they are filled with countless stains, then ye bring them to marriage without purpose and without fruit.

"Why I must wait," thou wilt say, "that he may become approved, that he may distinguish himself in the affairs of the state." but of the soul ye have no consideration, but ye overlook it as a cast-away. For this reason all things are full of confusion, and disorder, and trouble, because this is made a secondary matter, because necessary things are neglected, but the unimportant obtain much forethought. Knowest thou not, that thou canst do no such kind-

ness to the youth, as to keep him pure from whorish uncleannness? For nothing is equal to the soul. Because, "What is a man profited," saith He, "if he shall gain the whole world, but lose his own soul." But because the love of money hath overturned and cast down all, and hath thrust aside the strict fear of God, having seized upon the souls of men. like some rebel chief upon a citadel; therefore we are careless both of our children's salvation, and of our own, looking to one object only, that having become wealthier, we may leave riches to others, and these again to others after them, and they that follow these to their posterity, becoming rather a kind of passers on of our possessions and of our money, but not masters.

Hence great is our folly; hence the free are less esteemed than the slaves. For slaves we reprove, if not for their sake, yet for our own; but the free enjoy not the benefit even of this care, but are more vile in our estimation than these slaves. And why do I say, than our slaves? For our children are less esteemed than cattle; and we take care of horses and asses rather than of children. And should one have a mule, great is his anxiety to find the best groom, and not one either harsh, or dishonest, or drunken, or ignorant of his art; out if we have set a tutor over a child's soul, we take at once, and at random, whoever comes in our way. And yet than this art there is not another greater. For what is equal to training the soul, and forming the mind of one that is young? For he that hath this art, ought to be more exactly observant than any painter and any sculptor.

But we take no account of this, but look to one thing only, that he may be trained as to his tongue. And to this again we have directed our endeavors for money's sake. For not that he may be able to speak, but that he may get money, does he learn speaking; since if it were possible to grow rich even without this, we should have no care even for this. Seest thou how great is the tyranny of riches? how it has seized upon all things, and having bound them like some slaves or cattle, drags them where it will? But what are we advantaged by such accusations against it? For we indeed shoot at it in words, but it prevails over us in deeds. Nevertheless, not even so shall we cease to shoot at it with words from our tongue. For if any advance is made, both we are gainers and you; but if you continue in the same things, all our part at least hath been performed.

But may God both deliver you from this disease, and cause us to glory in you, for to Him be glory, and dominion, world without end. Amen.

Homily 60

Matthew Chapter 18, Verse 15

"If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." For, since He had used vehement language against them that cause offense, and on every hand had moved them to fear; in order that the offended might not in this way on the other hand become supine. neither supposing all to be cast upon others, should be led on to another vice, soften in themselves, and desiring to be humored in everything, and run upon the shoal of pride; seest thou how He again checks them also, and commands the telling of the faults to be between the two alone, lest by the testimony of the many he should render his accusation heavier, and the other, become excited to opposition, should continue incorrigible. Wherefore He saith, "Between thee and him alone," and, "If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." What is, "If he shall hear thee?" If he shall condemn himself, if he shall be persuaded that he has done wrong.

"Thou hast gained thy brother." He did not say, Thou hast a sufficient revenge, but, "Thou hast gained thy brother," to show that there is a common loss from the enmity. For He said not, "He hath gained himself only," but, "thou too hast gained him," whereby He showed that both the one and the other were losers before this, the one of his brother, the other of his own salvation. This, when He sat on the mount also, He advised; at one time bringing him who has given the pain to him that had been pained, and saying, "Be reconciled to thy brother," and at another commanding him that had been wronged to forgive his neighbor. For He taught men to say, "Forgive us our debts, like as we forgive our debtors."

But here He is devising another mode. For not him that gave the pain, doth He now call upon, but him that was pained He brings to this one. For because this who hath done the wrong would not easily come to make excuse, out of shame, and confusion of face, He draws that other to him, and not merely so, but in such way as also to correct what hath been done. And He saith not, "Accuse," nor "Charge him," nor "Demand satisfaction, and an account," by. "Tell him of his fault," saith He. For he is held in a kind of stupor through anger and shame with which he is intoxicated; and thou, who art in health, must go thy way to him that is ill, and make the tribunal private, and the remedy such as may be readily received. For to say, "Tell him of his fault," is nothing else than "Remind him of his errors" tell him

what thou hast suffered at his hand, which very thing, if it be done as it ought, is the part of one making excuse for him, and drawing him over earnestly to a reconciliation.

What then, if he should disobey, and be disposed to abide in hardness? "Take with thyself yet one or two, that in the mouth of two witnesses every word may be established." For the more he is shameless, and bold, the more ought we to be active for his cure, not in anger and indignation. For the physician in like manner, when he sees the malady obstinate, doth not give up nor grow impatient, but then makes the more preparation; which He commands us to do in this case too. For since thou appearedst to be too weak alone, make thyself more powerful by this addition. For surely the two are sufficient to convict him that hath sinned. Seest thou how He seeketh not the good of him that hath been pained only, but of him also that hath given the pain. For the person injured is this one who is taken captive by his passion, he it is that is diseased, and weak, and infirm. Wherefore He often sends the other to this one, now alone, and now with others; but if he continue in it, even with the church. For, "Tell it," saith He, "to the Church." For if He were seeking this one's advantage only, He would not have commanded to pardon, seventy times seven, one repenting. He would not so often have set so many over him to correct his passion; but if he had remained incorrigible after the first conference would have let him be; but now once, and twice, and thrice, He commands to attempt his cure, and now alone and now with two, now with more.

Wherefore, with respect to them that are without He saith no such thing, but, "If any one smite thee," He saith, "on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also," but here not in such wise. For what Paul meaneth, saying, "What have I to do to judge them also that are without?" but the brethren he commands both to tell of their faults, and to avoid them, and to cut them off, not being obedient, that they may be ashamed; this Himself also doeth here, making these laws about the brethren; and He sets three over him for teachers and judges, to teach him the things that are done at the time of his drunkenness. For though it be himself that hath said and done all those unreasonable things, yet he will need others to teach him this, like as the drunken man. For anger and sin is a more frantic thing than any drunkenness, and puts the soul in greater distraction.

Who, for instance, was wiser than David? Yet for all that, when he had sinned he perceived it not, his lust keeping in subjection all his reasoning powers, and like some smoke filling his soul. Therefore he stood in need of a lantern from the prophet, and of words calling to his mind what he had done. Wherefore here also He brings these to him that hath sinned, to reason with him about the things he had done. 2. But for what reason doth He command this one to tell him of his fault, and not another? Because this man he would endure more quietly, this, who hath been wronged, who hath been pained, who hath been despitefully used. For one doth not bear in. the same way being told by another of one's fault concerning him that hath been insulted, as by the insulted person himself, especially when this person is alone convicting him. For when he who should demand justice against him, even this one appears to be caring for his salvation, this will have more power than anything in the world to shame him.

Seest thou how this is done not for the sake of just punishment, but of amendment? Therefore He doth not at once command to take with him the two, but when himself hath failed; and not even then doth He send forth a multitude against him; but makes the addition no further than two, or even one; but when he has contemned these too, then and not till then He brings him out to the church. So much earnestness doth He show, that our neighbor's sins be not exposed by us. And indeed He might have commanded this from the first, but that this might not be, He did not command it, but after a first and second admonition He appoints this. But what is, "In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established?" Thou hast a sufficient testimony. His meaning is, that thou hast done all thy part, that thou hast left undone none of the things which it pertained to thee to do.

"But if he shall neglect to hear them also, tell it to the church," that is, to the rulers of it; "but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be to thee as an heathen man and a publican." For after this such a one is incurably diseased. But mark thou, I pray thee, how everywhere He putteth the publican for an example of the greatest wickedness. For above too He saith, "Do not even the publicans the same?" And further on again, "Even the publicans and the harlots shall go before you into the Kingdom of Heaven," that is, they who are utterly reprobated and condemned. Let them hearken, who are rushing upon unjust gains, who are counting up usuries upon usuries. But why did He set him with these? To soothe the person wronged, and to alarm him. Is this only then the punishment? Nay, but hear also what follows. "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven." And He did not say to the ruler of the church, "Bind such a man," but, "If thou bind," committing the whole matter to the person himself, who is aggrieved, and the bonds abide indissoluble. Therefore he will suffer the utmost ills; but not he who hath brought him to account is to blame, but he who hath not been willing to be persuaded.

Seest thou how He hath bound him down with twofold constraint, both by the vengeance here, and by the punishment hereafter? But these things hath He threatened, that these circumstances may not arise, but that fearing, at once the being cast out of the church, and the danger from the bond, and the being bound in Heaven, he may become more gentle. And knowing these things, if not at the beginning, at any rate in the multitude of the tribunals he will put off his anger. Wherefore, I tell you, He hath set over him a first, and a second, and a third court, so that though he should neglect to hear the first, he may yield to the second; and even if he should reject that, he may fear the third; and though he should make no account of this, he may be dismayed at the vengeance to come, and at the sentence and judgment to proceed from God.

"And again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Seest thou how by another motive also He puts down our enmities, and takes away our petty dissensions, and draws us one to another, and this not from the punishment only which hath been mentioned, but also from the good things which spring from charity? For having

denounced those threats against contentiousness, He putteth here the great rewards of concord, if at least they who are of one accord do even prevail with the Father, as touching the things they ask, and have Christ in the midst of them.

"Are there then indeed nowhere two of one accord?" Nay, in many places, perchance even everywhere. "How then do they not obtain all things?" Because many are causes of their failing. For either they often ask things inexpedient. And why marvellest thou, if this is the case with some others, whereas it was so even with Paul, when he heard. "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is perfected in weakness." Or they are unworthy to be reckoned with them that heard these words, and contribute not their own part, but He seeks for such as are like them; therefore He saith "of you," of the virtuous, of them that show forth an angelic rule of life. Or they pray against them that have aggrieved them, seeking for redress and vengeance; and this kind of thing is forbidden, for, "Pray," saith He, "for your enemies." Or having sins unrepented they ask mercy, which thing it is impossible to receive, not only if themselves ask it, but although others having much confidence towards God entreat for them, like as even Jeremiah praying for the Jews did hear, "Pray not thou for this people, because I will not hear thee."

But if all things are there, and thou ask things expedient, and contribute all thine own part, and exhibit an apostolical life, and have concord and love towards thy neighbor, thou wilt obtain on thy entreaty; for the Lord is loving towards man. 3. Then because He had said, "Of my Father," in order that He might show that it is Himself that giveth, and not He who begat Him only, He added, "For wheresoever two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." What then? are there not two or three gathered together in His name? There are indeed, but rarely. For not merely of the assembling doth He speak, neither this doth He require only; but most surely, as I said before also, the rest of virtue too together with this, and besides, even this itself He requires with great strictness. For what He saith is like this, "If any holds me the principal ground of his love to his neighbors, I will be with Him, if he be a virtuous man in other respects."

But now we see the more part having other motives of friendship. For one loves, because he is loved, another because he hath been honored, a third because such a one has been useful to him in some other worldly matter, a fourth for some other like cause; but for Christ's sake it is a difficult thing to find any one loving his neighbor sincerely, and as he ought to love him. For the more part are bound one to another by their worldly affairs. But Paul did not love thus, but for Christ's sake; wherefore even when not loved in such wise as he loved, he did not cease his love, because he had planted a strong root of his affection; but not so our present state, but on inquiry we shall find with most men anything likely to produce friendship rather than this. And if any one bestowed on me power in so great a multitude to make this inquiry, I would show the more part bound one to another by worldly motives.

And this is evident from the causes that work enmity. For because they are bound one to another by these temporal motives, therefore they are neither fervent towards one another, nor constant, but insult, and loss of money, and envy, and love of vainglory, and every such

thing coming upon them, severs the love-tie. For it finds not the root spiritual. Since if indeed it were such, no worldly thing would dissolve things spiritual. For love for Christ's sake is firm, and not to be broken, and impregnable, and nothing can tear it asunder; not calumnies, not dangers, not death, no other thing of this kind. For though he suffer ten thousand things, who thus loves; looking to the ground of his love, he will not desist. For he who loves because of being loved, should he meet with anything painful, puts an end to his love; but he who is bound by this, will never desist.

Wherefore Paul also said, "Charity never faileth." For what hast thou to say? That when honored he insults? that receiving benefits he was minded to slay thee? But even this works upon thee to love more, if thou lovest for Christ's sake. For what things are in the rest subversive of love, these here become apt to produce it. How? First, because such a one is to thee a cause of rewards; secondly, because he that is so disposed stands in need of more succor, and much attention. Therefore I say, he who thus loves inquires not about race, nor country, nor wealth, nor his love to himself, nor any other such matter, but though he be hated, though he be insulted, though he be slain, continues to love, having as a sufficient ground for love, Christ; wherefore also he stands steadfast, firm, not to be overthrown, looking unto Him.

For Christ too so loved his enemies, having loved the obstinate, the injurious, the blasphemers, them that hated Him, them that would not so much as see Him; them that were preferring wood and stones to Him, and with the highest love beyond which one cannot find another. "For greater love hath no man than this," He saith, "that one lay down his life for his friends." And those even that crucified Him, and acted in so many instances with contumely against Him, see how He continues to treat with kindness. For even to His Father He speaks for them, saying, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do." And He sent His disciples moreover, after these things, unto them. This love then let us also imitate, unto this let us look, that being followers of Christ, we may attain both unto the good things here, and unto those to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might world without end. Amen.

Homily 61

Matthew Chapter 18.

"Then came Peter to Him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times. but, Until seventy times seven." Peter supposed he was saying something great, wherefore also as aiming at greatness he added, "Until seven times?" For this thing, saith he, which Thou hast commanded to do, how often shall I do? For if he forever sins, but forever when reproved repents, how often dost thou command us to bear with this man? For with regard to that other who repents not, neither acknowledges his own faults, Thou hast set a limit, by saying, "Let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican;" but to this no longer so, but Thou hast commanded to accept him. How often then ought I to bear with him, being told his faults, and repenting? Is it enough for seven times?

What then saith Christ, the good God, who is loving towards man? "I say not unto thee, until seven times, but, until seventy times seven," not setting a number here, but what is infinite and perpetual and forever. For even as ten thousand times signifies often, so here too. For by saying, "The barren hath borne seven," the Scripture means many. So that He hath not limited the forgiveness by a number, but hath declared that it is to be perpetual and forever. This at least He indicated by the parable that is put after. For that He might not seem to any to enjoin great things and hard to bear, by saying, "Seventy times seven," He added this parable, at once both leading them on to what He had said, and putting down him who was priding himself upon this, and showing the act was not grievous, but rather very easy. Therefore let me add, He brought forward His own love to man, that by the comparison, as He saith, thou mightest learn, that though thou forgive seventy times seven, though thou continually pardon thy neighbor for absolutely all his sins, as a drop of water to an endless sea, so much, or rather much more, doth thy love to man come short in comparison of the boundless goodness of God, of which thou standest in need, for that thou art to be judged, and to give an account.

Wherefore also He went on to say, "The Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, he commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and his children, and all that he had."

Then after this man had enjoyed the benefit of mercy, he went out, and "took by the throat his fellow-servant, which owed him an hundred pence;" and having by these doings l moved his lord, he caused him to cast him again into prison, until he should pay off the whole. Seest thou how great the difference between sins against man and against God? As great as between ten thousand talents, and a hundred pence, or rather even much more. And this arises both from the difference of the persons, and the constant succession of our sins. For when a man looks at us, we stand off and shrink from sinning: but when God sees us every day, we do not forbear, but do and speak all things without fear.

But not hereby alone, but also from the benefit and from the honor of which we have partaken, our sins become more grievous. And if ye are desirous to learn how our sins against Him are ten thousand talents. or rather even much more, I will try to show it briefly. But I fear test to them that are inclined to wickedness, and love continually to sin, I should furnish still greater security, or should drive the meeker sort to despair, and they should repeat that saying of the disciples, "who can be saved?" Nevertheless for all that I will speak, that I may make those that attend more safe, and more meek. For they that are incurably diseased, and past feeling, even without these words of mine, do not depart from their own carelessness, and wickedness; and if even from hence they derive greater occasion for contempt, the fault is not in what is said, but in their insensibility; since what is said surely is enough both to restrain those that attend to it, and to prick their hearts; and the meeker sort, when they see on the one hand the greatness of their sins, and learn also on the other hand the power of repentance, will cleave to it the more, wherefore it is needful to speak.

I will speak then, and will set forth our sins, both wherein we offend against God, and wherein against men, and I will set forth not each person's own, but what are common; but his own let each one join to them after that from his conscience. And I will do this, having first set forth the good deeds of God to us. What then are His good deeds? He created us when we were not, and made all things for our sakes that are seen, Heaven, sea, air, all that in them is, living creatures, plants, seeds; for we must needs speak briefly for the boundless ocean of the works. Into us alone of all that are on earth He breathed a living soul such as we have, He planted a garden, He gave a help-meet, He set us over all the brutes, He crowned us with glory and honor.

After that, when man had been unthankful towards his benefactor, He vouchsafed unto him a greater gift. 2. For look not to this only, that He cast him out of paradise, but mark also the gain that arose from thence. For after having cast him out of paradise, and having wrought those countless good works, and having accomplished His various dispensations, He sent even His own Son for the sake of them that had been benefited by Him and were hating Him, and opened Heaven to us, and unfolded paradise itself, and made us sons, the enemies, the unthankful. Wherefore it were even seasonable now to say, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" And He gave us also a baptism of the remission of sins, and a deliverance from vengeance, and an inheritance of a kingdom, and

He promised numberless good things on our doing what is right, and stretched forth His hand, and shed abroad His Spirit into our hearts.

What then? After so many and such great blessings, what ought to be our disposition; should we indeed, even if each day we died for Him who so loves us, make due recompense, or rather should we repay the smallest portion of the debt? By no means, for moreover even this again is turned to our advantage. How then are we disposed, whose disposition ought to be like this? Each day we insult His law. But be ye not angry, if I let loose my tongue against them that sin, for not you only will I accuse, but myself also. Where then would ye that I should begin? With the slaves, or with the free? with them that serve in the army, or with private persons? with the rulers, or with the subjects? with the women, or with the men? with the aged men, or with the young? with what age? with what race? with what rank? with what pursuit?

Would ye then that I should make the beginning with them that serve as soldiers? What sin then do not these commit every day, insulting, reviling, frantic, making a gain of other men's calamities, being like wolves, never clear from offenses, unless one might say the sea too was without waves. What passion doth not trouble them? what disease cloth not lay siege to their soul? For to their equals they show a jealous disposition, and they envy, and seek after vainglory; and to those that are subject to them, their disposition is covetous; but to them that have suits, and run unto them as to a harbor, their conduct is that of enemies and perjured persons. How many robberies are there with them! How many frauds! How many false accusations, and meannesses! how many servile flatteries! Come then, let us apply in each case the law of Christ. "He that saith to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. He that hath looked on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her. Unless one humble himself as the little child, he shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

But these even study haughtiness, becoming towards them that are subject to them, and are delivered into their hands, and who tremble at them, and are afraid of them, more fierce than a wild beast; for Christ's sake doing nothing, but all things for the belly, for money, for vainglory. Can one indeed reckon up in words the trespass of their actions? What should one say of their decisions, their laughter, their unseasonable discourses, their filthy language? But about covetousness one cannot so much as speak. For like as the monks on the mountains know not even what covetousness is, so neither do these; but in an opposite way to them, For they indeed, because of being far removed from the disease, know not the passion, but these, by reason of being exceedingly intoxicated with it, have not so much as a perception how great the evil is. For this vice hath so thrust aside virtue and tyrannises, that it is not accounted so much as a heavy charge with those madmen.

But will ye, that we leave these, and go to others of a gentler kind? Come then, let us examine the race of workmen and artisans. For these above all seem to live by honest labors, and the sweat of their own brow. But these too, when they do not take heed to themselves, gather to themselves many evils from hence. For the dishonesty that arises from buying and

selling they bring into the work of honest labor, and add oaths, and perjuries, and falsehoods to their covetousness often, and are taken up with worldly things only, and continue riveted to the earth; and while they do all things that they may get money, they do not take much heed that they may impart to the needy, being always desirous to increase their goods. What should one say of the revilings that are uttered touching such matters, the insults, the loans, the usurious gains, the bargains full of much mean trafficking, the shameless buyings and sellings.

3. But will ye that we leave these too, and go to others who seem to be more just? Who then are they? They that are possessed of lands, and reap the wealth that springs from the earth. And what can be more unjust than these? For if any one were to examine how they treat their wretched and toil-worn laborers, he will see them to be more cruel than savages. For upon them that are pining with hunger, and toiling throughout all their life, they both impose constant and intolerable payments, and lay on them laborious burdens, and like asses or mules, or rather like stones, do they treat their bodies, allowing them not so much as to draw breath a little, and when the earth yields, and when it doth not yield, they alike wear them out, and grant them no indulgence. And what can be more pitiable than this, when after having labored throughout the whole winter, and being consumed with frost and rain, and watchings, they go away with their hands empty, yea moreover in debt, and fearing and dreading more that this famine and shipwreck, the torments of the overlookers, and their dragging them about, and their demands, and their imprisonments, and the services from which no entreaty can deliver them!

Why should one speak of the merchandise which they make of them, the sordid gains which they gain by them, by their labors and their sweat filling winepresses, and wine vats, but not suffering them to take home so much as a small measure, but draining off the entire fruits into the casks of their wickedness, and flinging to them for this a little money? And new kinds of usuries also do they devise, and not lawful even according to the laws of the heathens, and they frame contracts for loans full of many a curse. For not the hundredth part of the sum, but the half of the sum they press for and exact; and this when he of whom it is exacted has a wife, is bringing up children, is a human being, and is filling their threshing floor, and their wine-press by his own toils. But none of these things do they consider. Wherefore now it were seasonable to bring forward the prophet and say, "Be astonished, O Heaven, and be horribly afraid, O earth," to what great brutality hath the race of man been madly carried away!

But these things I say, not blaming crafts, nor husbandry, nor military service, but ourselves. Since Cornelius also was a centurion, and Paul a worker in leather, and after his preaching practised his craft, and David was a king, and Job enjoyed the possession of land and of large revenues, and there was no hindrance hereby to any of these in the way of virtue. Bearing in mind all these things, and considering the ten thousand talents, let us at least hence hasten to remit to our neighbors their few and trifling debts. For we too have an account to give of the commandments wherewith we have been trusted, and we are not able to pay all,

no not whatever we may do. Therefore God hath given us a way to repayment both ready and easy, and which is able to cancel all these things, I mean, not to be revengeful.

In order then that we may learn this well, let us hear the whole parable, going on regularly through it. "For there was brought unto Him," it saith, "one which owed ten thousand talents, and when he had not to pay, He commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and his children." Wherefore, I pray thee? Not of cruelty, nor of inhumanity (for the loss came back again upon himself, for she too was a slave), but of unspeakable tenderness. For it is His purpose to alarm him by this threat, that He might bring him to supplication, not that he should be sold. For if He had done it for this intent, He would not have consented to his request, neither would He have granted the favor. Wherefore then did He not do this, nor forgive the debt before the account? Desiring to teach him, from how many obligations He is delivering him, that in this way at least he might become more mild towards his fellow servant. For even if when he had learnt the weight of his debt, and the greatness of the forgiveness, he continued taking his fellow-servant by the throat; if He had not disciplined him beforehand with such medicines, to what length of cruelty might he not have gone?

What then saith the other? "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And his Lord s was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt." Seest thou again surpassing benevolence? The servant asked only for delay and putting off the time, but He gave more than he asked, remission and forgiveness of the entire debt. For it had been his will to give it even from the first, but he did not desire the gift to be his only, but also to come of this man's entreaty, that he might not go away uncrowned. For that the whole was of him, although this other fell down to him and prayed, the motive of the forgiveness showed, for "moved with compassion" he forgave him. But still even so he willed that other also to seem to contribute something, that he might not be exceedingly covered with shame, and that he being schooled in his own calamities, might be indulgent to his fellow-servant.

4. Up to this point then this man was good and acceptable; for he confessed, and promised to pay the debt, and fell down before him, and entreated, and condemned his own sins, and knew the greatness of the debt. But the sequel is unworthy of his former deeds. For going out straightway, not after a long time but straightway, having the benefit fresh upon him, he abused to wickedness the gift, even the freedom bestowed on him by his master. For, "he found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him an hundred pence, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me what thou owest." Seest thou the master's benevolence? Seest thou the servant's cruelty? Hear, ye who do these things for money. For if for sins we must not do so, much more not for money. What then saith the other? "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." But he did not regard even the words by which he had been saved (for he himself on saying this was delivered from the ten thousand talents), and did not recognize so much as the harbor by which he escaped shipwreck; the gesture of supplication did not remind him of his master's kindness, but he put away from him all these things, from covetousness and cruelty and revenge, and was more fierce than any wild beast, seizing his fellow-servant by the throat.

What doest thou, O man? perceivest thou not, thou art making the demand upon thyself, thou an thrusting the sword into thyself, and revoking the sentence and the gift? But none of these things did he consider, neither did he remember his own state, neither did he yield; although the entreaty was not for equal objects. For the one besought for ten thousand talents, the other for a hundred pence; the one his fellow-servant, the other his lord; the one received entire forgiveness, the other asked for delay, and not so much as this did he give him, for "he cast him into prison." "But when his fellow-servants saw it, they accused him to their lord." Not even to men is this well-pleasing, much less to God. They therefore who did not owe, partook of the grief. What then saith their lord? "O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me; shouldest not thou also have had compassion, even as I had pity on thee?"

See again the lord's gentleness. He pleads with him, and excuses himself, being on the point of revoking his gift; or rather, it was not he that revoked it, but the one who had received it. Wherefore He saith, "I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me; shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant?" For even if the thing cloth seem to thee hard; yet shouldest thou have looked to the gain, which hath been, which is to be. Even if the injunction be galling, thou oughtest to consider the reward; neither that he hath grieved thee, but that thou hast provoked God, whom by mere prayer thou hast reconciled. But if even so it be a galling thing to thee to become friends with him who hath grieved thee, to fall into hell is far more grievous; and if thou hadst set this against that, then thou wouldest have known that to forgive is a much lighter thing.

And whereas, when he owed ten thousand talents, he called him not wicked, neither reproached him, but showed mercy on him; when he had become harsh to his fellow-servant, then he saith, "O thou wicked servant." Let us hearken, the covetous, for even to us is the word spoken. Let us hearken also, the merciless, and the cruel, for not to others are we cruel, but to ourselves. When then thou art minded to be revengeful, consider that against thyself art thou revengeful, not against another; that thou art binding up thine own sins, not thy neighbors. For as to thee, whatsoever thou mayest do to this man, thou doest as a man and in the present life, but God not so, but more mightily will He take vengeance on thee, and with the vengeance hereafter. "For He delivered him over till he should pay that which was due," that is, for ever; for he will never repay. For since thou art not become better by the kindness shown thee, it remains that by vengeance thou be corrected.

And yet, "The graces and the gifts are without repentance," but wickedness has had such power as to set aside even this law. What then can be a more grievous thing than to be revengeful, when it appears to overthrow such and so great a gift of God. And he did not merely "deliver" him, but "was wroth." For when he commanded him to be sold, his were not the words of wrath (therefore neither did he do it), but a very great occasion for benevolence; but now the sentence is of much indignation, and vengeance, and punishment. What then means the parable? "So likewise shall my Father do also unto you," He saith, "if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." He saith not "your Father,"

but "my Father." For it is not meet for God to be called the Father of such a one, who is so wicked and malicious.

5. Two things therefore doth He here require, both to condemn ourselves for our sins, and to forgive others; and the former for the sake of the latter, that this may become more easy (for he who considers his own sins is more indulgent to his fellow-servant); and not merely to forgive with the lips, but from the heart. Let us not then thrust the sword into ourselves by being revengeful. For what grief hath he who hath grieved thee inflicted upon thee, like thou wilt work unto thyself by keeping thine anger in mind, and drawing upon thyself the sentence from God to condemn thee? For if indeed thou art watchful, and keepest thyself under control, the evil will come round upon his head, and it will be he that will suffer harm; but if thou shouldest continue indignant, and displeased, then thyself wilt undergo the harm not from him, but from thyself.

Say not then that he insulted thee, and slandered thee, and did unto thee ills beyond number; for the more thou tellest, so much the more dost thou. declare him a benefactor. For he hath given thee an opportunity to wash away thy sins; so that the greater the injuries he hath done thee, so much more is he become to thee a cause of a greater remission of sins. For if we be willing, no one shall be able to injure us, but even our enemies shall advantage us in the greatest degree. And why do I speak of men? For what can be more wicked than the devil; yet nevertheless, even hence have we a great opportunity of approving ourselves; and Job showeth it. But if the devil hath become a cause of crowns, why art thou afraid of a man as an enemy? See then how much thou gainest, bearing meekly the spiteful acts of thine enemies. First and greatest, deliverance from sins; secondly, fortitude and patience; thirdly, mildness and benevolence; for he that knoweth not how to be angry with them that grieve him, much more will he be ready to serve them that love him. Fourthly, to be free from anger continually, to which nothing can be equal. For of him that is free from anger, it is quite clear that he is delivered also from the despondency hence arising, and will not spend his life on vain labors and sorrows. For he that knows not how to hate, neither cloth he know how to grieve, but will enjoy pleasure, and ten thousand blessings. So that we punish ourselves by hating others, even as on the other hand we benefit ourselves by loving them.

Besides all these things, thou wilt be an object of veneration even to thy very enemies, though they be devils; or rather, thou wilt not so much as have an enemy whilst thou art of such a disposition. But what is greater than all, and first, thou gainest the favor of God. Shouldest thou have sinned, thou wilt obtain pardon; shouldest thou have done what is right, thou wilt obtain a greater confidence. Let us accomplish therefore the hating no one, that God also may love us, that, though we be in debt for ten thousand talents, He may have compassion and pity us. But hast thou been injured by him? Pity him then, do not hate him; weep and mourn, do not turn away from him. For thou art not the one that hath offended against God, but he; but thou hast even approved thyself, if thou endure it. Consider that Christ, when about to be crucified, rejoiced for Himself, but wept for them

that were crucifying Him. This ought to be our disposition also; and the more we are injured, so much the more should we lament for them that are injuring us. For to us many are the benefits hence arising, but to them the opposites.

But did he insult thee, and strike thee before all? Then bath he disgraced and dishonored himself before all, and hath opened the mouths of a thousand accusers, and for thee hath he woven more crowns, and gathered for thee many to publish thy forbearance. But did he slander thee to others? And what is this? God is the one that is to demand the account, not they that have heard this. For to himself hath he added occasion of punishment, so that not only for his own sins he should give account, but also of what he said of thee. And upon thee hath he brought evil report with men, but he himself hath incurred evil report with God. And if these things are not sufficient for thee, consider that even thy Lord was evil reported of both by Satan and by men, and that to those most loved by Him; and His Only-Begotten the same again. Wherefore He said, "If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, much more shall they call them of His household."

And that wicked demon did not only slander Him, but was also believed, and slandered Him not in ordinary matters, but with the greatest reproaches and accusations. For he affirmed Him to be possessed, and to be a deceiver, and an adversary of God. But hast thou also done good, and received evil? Nay, in respect of this most of all lament and grieve for him that hath done the wrong, but for thyself rather rejoice, because thou art become like God, "Who maketh the sun to rise upon evil and good." But if to follow God is beyond thee, although to him that watcheth not even this is hard; yet nevertheless if this seem to thee to be too great for thee, come let us bring thee to thy fellow-servants, to Joseph, who suffered countless things, and did good unto his brethren; to Moses, who after their countless plots against him, prayed for them; to the blessed Paul, who cannot so much as number what he suffered from them, and is willing to be accursed for them; to Stephen, who is stoned, and entreating this sin may be forgiven them. And having considered all these things, cast away all anger, that God may forgive us also all our trespasses by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father and the Holy Ghost be glory, might, honor, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 62

Matthew Chapter 19, Verse 1

"And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, He departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Jud'a beyond Jordan." Having constantly left Jud'a on account of the envy of those men, now He frequents it from this time forth, because the passion was to be nigh at hand; He goeth not up, however, unto Jerusalem for a while, but "into the coasts of Jud'a." "And," when He was come, "great multitudes followed Him, and He healed them." For neither in the teaching by words doth He continue always, nor in the wonderful working of signs, but He doeth now one now the other, variously working the salvation of them that were waiting upon Him and following Him, so as by the miracles to appear, in what He said, a Teacher worthy of belief, and by the teaching of His word to increase the profit from the miracles; and this was to lead them by the hand to the knowledge of God.

But do thou mark, I pray thee, this too, how the disciples pass over whole multitudes with one word, not declaring by name each of them that are healed. For they said not, that such a one, and such another, but that many, teaching us to be unostentatious. But Christ healed, benefiting both them, and by them many others. For the healing of these men's infirmity was to others a foundation for the knowledge of God. But not so to the Pharisees, but even for this self-same thing they become more fierce, and come unto Him tempting Him. For because they could not lay hold of the works that were doing, they propose to Him questions. For they "came unto Him, and tempting Him said, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" O folly! They thought to silence Him by their questions, although they had already received certain proof of this power in Him. When at least they argued much about the Sabbath, when they said, "He blasphemeth," when they said, "He hath a devil," when they found fault with His disciples as they were walking in the corn fields, when they argued about unwashen hands, on every occasion having sewed fast their mouths, and shut up their shameless tongue, He thus sent them away. Nevertheless, not even so do they keep off from Him. For such is wickedness, such is envy, shameless and bold; though it be put to silence ten thousand times, ten thousand times doth it assault again.

But mark thou, I pray thee, their craft also from the form of their question. For neither did they say unto Him, Thou didst command not to put away a wife, for indeed He had already discoursed about this law; but nevertheless they made no mention of those words; but took

occasion from hence, and thinking to make their snare the greater, and being minded to drive Him to a necessity of contradicting the law, they say not, why didst Thou enact this or that? but as though nothing had been said, they ask, "Is it lawful expecting that He had forgotten having said it; and being ready if on the one hand He said, "It is lawful to put away," to bring against Him the things He Himself had spoken, and to say, How then didst Thou affirm the contrary? but if the same things now again as before, to bring against Him the words of Moses.

What then said He? He said not," tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?" although afterwards He saith this, but here He speaks not thus. Why can this be? In order that together with His power He might show forth His gentleness also. For He doth neither always keep silence, lest they should suppose they are hidden; nor doth He always reprove, in order that He may instruct us to bear all things with gentleness. How then cloth He answer them? "Have ye not read, that He which made them at the beginning, made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh? So that they are no more twain but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." See a teacher's wisdom. I mean, that being asked, Is it lawful? He did not at once say, It is not lawful, lest they should be disturbed and put in disorder, but before the decision by His argument He rendered this manifest, showing that it is itself too the commandment of His Father, and that not in opposition to Moses did He enjoin these things, but in full agreement with him.

But mark Him arguing strongly not from the creation only, but also from His command. For He said not, that He made one man and one woman only, but that He also gave this command that the one man should be joined to the one woman. But if it had been His will that he should put this one away, and bring in another, when He had made one man, He would have formed many Women. But now both by the manner of the creation, and by the manner of lawgiving, He showed that one man must dwell with one woman continually, and never break off from her. And see how He saith, "He which made them at the beginning, made them male and female," that is, from one root they sprung. and into one body came they together, "for the twain shall be one flesh." After this, to make it a fearful thing to find fault with this lawgiving, and to confirm the law, He said not, "Sever not therefore, nor put asunder," but, "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

But if thou put forward Moses, I tell thee of Moses' Lord, and together with this, I rely upon the time also. For God at the beginning made them male and female; and this law is older (though it seem to have been now introduced by me), and with much earnestness established. For not merely did He bring the woman to the man, but also commanded to leave father and mother. And neither did He make it a law for him merely to come to the woman, but also "to cleave to her," by the form of the language intimating that they might not be severed. And not even with this was He satisfied, but sought also for another greater union, "for the twain," He saith, "shall be one flesh." Then after He had recited the ancient law, which was brought in both by deeds and by words, and shown it to be worthy of respect

because of the giver, with authority after that He Himself too interprets and gives the law, saying, "So that they are no more twain, but one flesh." Like then as to sever flesh is a horrible thing, so also to divorce a wife is unlawful. And He stayed not at this, but brought in God also by saying, "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder," showing that the act was both against nature, and against law; against nature, because one flesh is dissevered; against law, because that when God hath joined and commanded it not to be divided, ye conspire to do this.

2. What then ought they to have done after this? Ought they not to have held their peace, and to have commended the saying? ought they not to have marvelled at His wisdom? ought they not to have stood amazed at His accordance with the Father? But none of these things do they, but as though they were contending for the law, they say, "How then did Moses command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?" And yet they ought not now to have brought this forward, but rather He to them; but nevertheless He doth not take advantage of them, nor doth He say to them, "I am not now bound by this," but He solves this too. And indeed if He had been an alien from the old covenant, He would not have striven for Moses, neither would He haste argued positively from the things done once for all at the beginning; He would not have studied to show that His own precepts agreed with those of old.

And indeed Moses had given many other commandments besides, both those about meats, and those about the Sabbath; wherefore then do they nowhere bring him forward, as here? From a wish to enlist the multitude of the husbands against him. For this was considered a thing indifferent with the Jews, and all used to do so much as this. Accordingly it was for this reason that when so many things had been said on the mount, they remembered this commandment only now. Nevertheless, unspeakable wisdom maketh a defense even for these things, and saith. "Moses for the hardness of your hearts" thus made the law. And not even him doth He suffer to remain under accusation, forasmuch as He had Himself given him the law; but delivers him from the charge, and turns the whole upon their head, as everywhere He doth. For again when they were blaming His disciples for plucking the ears of corn, He shows themselves to be guilty; and when they were laying a trangression to their charge as to their not washing their hands, He shows themselves to be the transgressors, and touching the Sabbath also: both everywhere, and here in like manner.

Then because the saying was hard to bear, and brought on them much blame, He quickly directs back His discourse to that ancient law, saying as He had said before also, "But in the beginning it was not so," that is, God by His acts at the beginning ordained the contrary. For in order that they may not say, Whence is it manifest, that "for our hardness Moses said this?" hereby again He stoppeth their mouths. For if this were the primary law, and for our good, that other would not have been given at the beginning; God in creating would not have so created, He would not have said such things. "But I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife except it be for fornication, and marry another, committeth adultery." For

since he had stopped their mouths, He then gives the law with His own authority, like as touching the meats, like as touching the Sabbath.

For with regard to the meats likewise, when He had overcome them, then, and not till then, He declared unto the multitude, that, "Not that which goeth in defileth the man; " and with regard to the Sabbath, when He had stopped their mouths, He saith, "Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath day;" and here this self-same thing. But what took place there, this happened here also. For as there, when the Jews had been put to silence the disciples were troubled, and came unto Him with Peter and said, "Declare unto us this parable;" even so now also they were troubled and said, "If the case of the man be so, it is good not to marry." For now they understood the saying more than before. Therefore then indeed they held their peace, but now when there hath been gainsaying, and answering, and question, and learning by reply, and the law appeared more clear, they ask Him. And openly to contradict they do not dare, but they bring forward what seemed to be a grievous and galling result of it, saying, "If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry." For indeed it seemed to be a very hard thing to have a wife full of every bad quality, and to endure a wild beast perpetually shut up with one in the house. And that thou mayest learn that this greatly troubled them, Mark said, to show it, that they spake to Him privately.

3. But what is, "If such be the case of a man with his wife?" That is, if to this end he is joined with her, that they should be one, or, on the other hand, if the man shall get to himself blame for these things, and always transgresses by putting away, it were easier to fight against natural desire and against one's self, than against a wicked woman. What then saith Christ? He said not, "yea, it is easier, and so do," lest they should suppose that the thing is a law; but He subjoined, "Not all men receive it, but they to whom it is given," raising the thing, and showing that it is great, and in this way drawing them on, and urging them.

But see herein a contradiction. For He indeed saith this is a great thing; but they, that it is easier. For it was meet that both these things should be done, and that it should be at once acknowledged a great thing by Him, that it might render them more forward, and by the things said by themselves it should be shown to be easier, that on this ground too they might the rather choose virginity and continence. For since to speak of virginity seemed to be grievous, by the constraint of this law He drove them to this desire. Then to show the possibility of it, He saith, "There are some eunuchs, who were so born from their mother's womb, there are some eunuchs which were made eunuchs of men, and there be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of Heaven's sake," by these words secretly leading them to choose the thing, and establishing the possibility of this virtue, and all but saying, Consider if thou weft in such case by nature, or hadst endured this selfsame thing at the hands of those who inflict such wanton injuries, what wouldest thou have done, being deprived indeed of the enjoyment, yet not having a reward? Thank God therefore now, for that with rewards and crowns thou undergoest this, which those men endure without crowns; or rather not ever this, but what is much lighter, being supported

both by hope, and by the consciousness of the good work, and not having the desire so raging like waves within thee.

For the excision of a member is not able to quell such waves, and to make a calm, like the curb of reason; or rather, reason only can do this. For this intent therefore He brought in those others, even that He might encourage these, since if this was not what He was establishing, what means His saying concerning the other eunuchs? But when He saith, that they made themselves eunuchs, He means not the excision of the members, far from it, but the putting away of wicked thoughts. Since the man who hath mutilated himself, in fact, is subject even to a curse, as Paul saith, "I would they were even cut off which trouble you." And very reasonably. For such a one is venturing on the deeds of murderers. and giving occasion to them that slander God's creation. and opens the mouths of the Manich'ans, and is guilty of the same unlawful acts as they that mutilate themselves amongst the Greeks. For to cut off our members hath been from the beginning a work of demoniacal agency, and satanic device, that they may bring up a bad report upon the work of God, treat they may mar this living creature, that imputing all not to the choice, but to the nature of our members, the more part of them may sin in security. as being irresponsible; and doubly harm this living creature, both by mutilating the members, and by impeding the forwardness of the free choice in behalf of good deeds.

These are the ordinances of the devil, bringing in, besides the things which we have mentioned, another wicked doctrine also, and making way beforehand for the arguments concerning destiny and necessity even from hence, and everywhere marring the freedom given to us of God. and persuading us that evil deeds are of nature, and hence secretly implanting many other wicked doctrines, although not openly. For such are the devil's poisons. Therefore I beseech you to flee from such lawlessness. For together with the things I have mentioned. neither doth the force of lust become milder hereby, but even more fierce. For from another origin hath the seed that is in us its sources, and from another cause do its waves swell. And some say from the brain, some from the loins, this violent impulse hath its birth; but I should say from nothing else than from an ungoverned will and a neglected mind: if this be temperate, there is no evil result from the motions of nature.

Having spoken then of the eunuchs that are eunuchs for nought and fruitlessly, unless with the mind they too practise temperance, and of those that are virgins for Heaven's sake, He proceeds again to say, "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it," at once making them more earnest by showing that the good work is exceeding in greatness, and not suffering the thing to be shut up in the compulsion of a law, because of His unspeakable gentleness. And this He said, when He showed it to be most possible, in order that the emulation of the free choice might be greater. And if it is of free choice, one may say, how doth He say, at the beginning, "All men do not receive it, but they to whom it is given?" That thou mightest learn that the conflict is great, not that thou shouldest suspect any compulsory allotments. For it is given to those, even to the willing.

But He spake thus to show that much influence from above is needed by him who entereth these lists, whereof He that is willing shall surely partake. For it is customary for Him to use this form of speech when the good work done is great, as when He saith, "To you it is given to know the mysteries." And that this is true, is manifest even from the present instance. For if it be of the gift from above only, and they that live as virgins contribute nothing themselves, for nought did He promise them the kingdom of Heaven, and distinguish them from the other eunuchs. But mark thou, I pray, how from some men's wicked doings, other men gain. I mean, that the Jews went away having learnt nothing, for neither did they ask with the intent of learning, but the disciples gained even from hence. 4. "Then were there brought unto Him little children, that He should put His hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But He said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven. And He laid His hands on them, and departed thence."

And wherefore did the disciples repel the little children? For dignity. What then doth He? Teaching them to be lowly, and to trample under foot worldly pride, He doth receive them, and takes them in His arms, and to such as them promises the kingdom; which kind of thing He said before also. Let us also then, if we would be inheritors of the Heavens, possess ourselves of this virtue with much diligence. For this is the limit of true wisdom; to be simple with understanding; this is angelic life; yes, for the soul of a little child is pure from all the passions. Towards them who have vexed him he bears no resentment, but goes to them as to friends, as if nothing had been done; and how much soever he be beaten by his mother; after her he seeks, and her doth he prefer to all. Though thou show him the queen with a diadem, he prefers her not to his mother clad in rags, but would choose rather to see her in these, than the queen in splendor. For he useth to distinguish what pertains to him and what is strange to him, not by its poverty and wealth, but by friendship. And nothing more than necessary things doth he seek, but just to be satisfied from the breast, and then he leaves sucking. The young child is not grieved at what we are grieved, as at loss of money and such things as that, and he doth not rejoice again at what we rejoice, namely, at these temporal things, he is not eager about the beauty of persons.

Therefore He said, "of such is the kingdom of Heaven," that by choice we should practise these things, which young children have by nature. For since the Pharisees from nothing rise so much as out of craft and pride did what they did, therefore on every hand He charges the disciples to be single hearted, both darkly hinting at those men, and instructing these. For nothing so much lifts up unto haughtiness, as power and precedence. Forasmuch then as the disciples were to enjoy great honors throughout the whole world, He preoccupies their mind, not suffering them to feel anything after the manner of men, neither to demand honors from the multitude, nor to have men dear the way before them. For though these seem to be little things, yet are they a cause of great evils. The Pharisees at least being thus trained were carried on into the very summit of evil, seeking after the salutations, the first seats, the middle places, for from these they were cast upon the shoal of their mad desire of glory, then from thence upon impiety. So therefore those men went away having drawn

upon themselves a curse by their tempting, but he little children a blessing, as being freed from all these.

Let us then also be like the little children, and "in malice be we babes." For it cannot be, it cannot be for one otherwise to see Heaven, but the crafty and wicked must needs surely be cast into hell. 5. And before hell too, we shall here suffer the utmost ills. "For if thou be evil," it is said, "thou alone shalt endure the evil; but if good, it is for thyself and for thy neighbor." Mark, at any rate, how this took place in the former instances also. For neither was anything more wicked than Saul, nor more simple and single-hearted than David. Which therefore was the stronger? Did not David get him twice into his hands, and having the power to slay him, forebore? Had he not him shut up as in a net and prison, and spared him? And this when both others were urging him, and when he himself was able to accuse him of countless charges; but nevertheless he suffered him to go away safe. And yet the other was pursuing him with all his army, but he was, with a few desperate fugitives, wandering and changing from place to place; nevertheless the fugitive had the advantage of the king, forasmuch as the one came to the conflict with simplicity, the other with wickedness.

For what could be more wicked than that man, who when he was leading his armies, and bringing all his wars to a successful issue, and undergoing the labors of the victory and the trophies, but bringing the crowns to him, assayed to slay him?

6. Such is the nature of envy, it is ever plotting against its own honors, and wasting him that hath it, and encompassing him with countless calamities. And that miserable man, for instance, until David departed, burst not forth into that piteous cry, bewailing himself and saying, "I am sore distressed, and the Philistines make war against me, and the Lord is departed from me. not in war, but was both in safety and in glory; for indeed unto the king passed the glory of the captain. For neither was the man disposed to usurpation, nor did he assay to depose the other from his throne, but for him did he achieve all things, and was earnestly attached to him, and this is evident even from what followed afterwards. For when indeed he was set under him, any one of them who do not search carefully might perhaps suppose these things to be by the usual custom of a subject; but after he had withdrawn himself out of Saul's kingdom, what then was there to restrain him, and to him even to slay? Had not the other beet evil towards him once, twice, and often? Was it not after having received benefits from him Was it not having nothing whereof to accuse him? Was not Saul's kingdom and safety danger and insecurity to himself? must he not needs wander and be a fugitive, and be in trembling for fear of the utmost ills, while the other is alive, and reigning?

Nevertheless none of these things constrained him to stain his sword with blood, but when he saw him asleep, and bound, and alone, and in the midst of his own men, and had touched his head, and when there were many rousing him those who were urging him on, and refrained from the murder, and sent him away both safe and well; and as though he had been rather a body guard of his, and a shield-bearer, not an enemy, so did he chide the host for their treachery towards the king.

What could be equal to this soul? What to that mildness? For this it is possible to see even by the things that have been mentioned but much more by what are done now. For when we have considered our vileness, then we shall know more perfectly the virtue of those saints. Wherefore I entreat you to hasten towards the emulation of them. For indeed if thou lovest glory, and for this cause art plotting against thy neighbor, then shalt thou enjoy it more largely, when having spurned it, thou wilt abstain from the plotting. For like as to become rich is contrary to covetousness, so is the loving of glory to the obtaining of glory. And if ye be minded, let us inquire into each. For since we have no fear of hell, nor much regard for the kingdom, come and even from the things present let us lead you on.

For who are they that are ridiculous? Tell me. Is it not they that are doing anything for the sake of glory from the multitude? And who are the objects of praise? Is it not they who spurn the praise of the multitude? Therefore if the love of vainglory be matter of reproach, and it cannot be concealed that the vainglorious man loves it, he will assuredly be an object of reproach, and the love of glory is become to him a cause of dishonor. And not in this respect only doth he disgrace himself, but also in that he is compelled to do many things shameful, and teeming with the utmost disgrace. And like as with respect to their gains men are wont to suffer harm more than anything from the disease of covetousness (they become at least the subjects of many tricks, and of small gains make great losses, wherefore this saying hath prevailed even to be a proverb); and as to the voluptuous man likewise, his passion becomes a hindrance to the enjoyment of his pleasure. These at least that are exceedingly given up thereto, and are the slaves of women these above all do women carry about as servants, and will never vouchsafe to treat them as men, buffeting, spurning them, leading, and taking them about everywhere, and giving themselves airs, and in everything merely giving them orders.

Even so also than him that is arrogant and mad about glory, and accounts himself to be high, nothing is more base and dishonored. For the race of man is fond of contention, and against nothing else doth it set itself so much, as against a boaster, and a contemptuous man, and a slave of glory. And he himself too, in order to maintain the fashion of his pride, exhibits the conduct of a slave to the common sort, flattering, courting them, serving a servitude more grievous than that of one bought for money. Knowing then all these things, let us lay down these passions, that we may not both pay a penalty here, and there be punished without end. Let us become lovers of virtue. For so both before reaching the kingdom we shall reap the greatest benefits here, and when we are departed thither we shall partake of the eternal blessings; unto which God grant we may all attain by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might world without end. Amen.

Homily 63

Matthew Chapter 19, Verse 16

”And, behold, one came and said unto Him, Good Master, by doing what, shall I inherit eternal life?” Some indeed accuse this young man, as one dissembling and ill-minded, and coming with a temptation to Jesus, but I, though I would not say he was not fond of money, and under subjection to his wealth, since Christ in fact convicted him of being such a character, yet a dissembler I would by no means call him, both because it is not safe to venture on things uncertain, and especially in blame, and because Mark hath taken away this suspicion; for he saith, that ”having come running unto Him, and kneeling to Him, he besought Him,” and that” Jesus beheld him, and loved him.” But great is the tyranny of wealth, and it is manifest hence; I mean, that though we be virtuous as to the rest, this ruins all besides. With reason hath Paul also affirmed it to be the root of all evils in general. ”For the love of money is the root of all evils,” he saith.

Wherefore then doth Christ thus reply to him, saying, ”There is none good?” Because He came unto Him as a mere man, and one of the common sort, and a Jewish teacher; for this cause then as a man He discourses with him. And indeed in many instances He replies to the secret thoughts of them that come unto Him; as when He saith, ”We worship we know what;” and, ”If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.” When therefore He saith, ”There is none good;” not as putting Himself out from being good doth He say this, far from it; for he said not, ”Why dost thou call me good? I am not good;” but, ”there is none good,” that is, none amongst men.

And when He saith this self-same thing, He saith it not as depriving even men of goodness, but in contradistinction to the goodness of God. Wherefore also He added, ”But one, that is, God;” and He said not, ”but my Father” that thou mightest learn that He had not revealed Himself to the young man. So also further back He called men evil, saying, ”If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children.” For indeed there too He called them evil, not as condemning the whole race as evil (for by ”ye,” He means not ”ye men”), but comparing the goodness that is in men with the goodness of God, He thus named it; therefore also He added, ”How much more shall your Father give good things to them that ask Him?” And what was there to urge Him, or what the profit that He should answer in this way? He leads him on by little and little, and teaches him to be far from all flattery, drawing him off

from the things upon each, and fastening him upon God, and persuading him to seek after the things to come, and to know that which is really good, and the root and fountain of all things, and to refer the honors to Him.

Since also when He saith, "Call no one master upon each," it is in contradistinction to Himself He saith this, and that they might learn what is the chief sovereignty over all things that are. For neither was it a small forwardness the young man had shown up to this time in having fallen into such a desire; and when of the rest some were tempting, some were coming to Him for the cure of diseases, either their own or others, he for eternal life was both coming to Him, and discoursing with Him. For fertile was the land and rich, but the multitude of the thorns choked the seed. Mark at any rate how he is prepared thus far for obedience to the commandments. For "By doing what," he saith, "shall I inherit eternal life?" So ready was he for the performance of the things that should be told him. But if he had come unto Him, tempting Him, the evangelist would have declared this also to us, as He doth also with regard to the others, as in the case of the lawyer. And though himself had been silent, Christ could not have suffered him to lie concealed, but would have convicted him plainly, or at least would have intimated it, so that he should not seem to have deceived Him, and to be hidden, and thereby have suffered hurt.

If he had come unto Him tempting, he would not have departed sorrowing for what he heard. This was not at any rate ever the feeling of any of the Pharisees, but they grew fierce when their mouths were stopped. But not so this man; but he goeth away cast down, which is no little sign that not with an evil will he had come unto Him, but with one too feeble, and that he did indeed desire life, but was held in subjection by another and most grievous feeling. Therefore when Christ said, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," he saith, "Which?" Not tempting, far from it, but supposing there were some others besides those of the law that should procure him life, which was like one who was very desirous. Then since Jesus mentioned those out of the law, he saith, "All these things have I kept from my youth up." And neither at this did he stop, but again asks, "What lack I yet?" which itself again was a sign of his very earnest desire.

What then saith Christ? Since He was going to enjoin something great, He setteth forth the recompenses, and saith, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven: and come, and followme." 2. Seest thou how many prizes, how many crowns, He appoints for this race? If he had been tempting, He would not have told him these things. But now He both saith it, and in order to draw him on, He also shows him the reward to be great, and leaves it all to his own will, by all means throwing into the shade that which seemed to be grievous in His advice. Wherefore even before mentioning the conflicts and the toil, He shows him the prize, saying "If thou wilt be perfect," and then saith, "Sell that thou hast, and give to the poor," and straightway again the rewards, "Thou shalt have treasure in Heaven; and come, and follow me." For indeed to follow Him is a great recompense. "And thou shalt have treasure in Heaven."

For since his discourse was of money, even of all did He advise him to strip himself, showing that he loses not what he hath, but adds to his possessions, He gave him more than He required him to give up; and not only more, but also as much greater as Heaven is greater than earth, and yet more so. But He called it a treasure, showing the plenteousness of the recompense, its permanency, its security, so far as it was possible by human similitudes to intimate it to the hearer. It is not then enough to despise wealth, but we must also maintain poor men, and above all things follow Christ; that is, do all the things that are ordered by Him, be ready for slaughter and daily death. "For if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." So that to cast away one's money is a much less thing than this last commandment, to shed even one's very blood; yet not a little doth our being freed from wealth contribute towards this.

"But when the young man heard it, he went away sorrowful" After this the evangelist, as it were to show that he hath not felt anything it was unlikely he should feel, saith, "For he had great possessions." For they that have little are not equally held in subjection, as they that are overflowed with great affluence, for then the love of it becomes more tyrannical. Which thing I cease not always saying, that the increase of acquisitions kindles the flame more, and renders the getters poorer, inasmuch as it puts them in greater desire, and makes them have more feeling of their want. See, for example, even here what strength did this passion exhibit. Him that had come to Him with joy and forwardness, when Christ commanded him to cast away his riches, it so overwhelmed and weighed down, as not to suffer him so much as to answer touching these things, but silenced and become dejected and sullen to go away.

What then saith Christ? "How hardly shall the rich enter into the kingdom of Heaven!" blaming not riches but them that are held in subjection by them. But if the rich man "hardly," much more the covetous man. For if not to give one's own be an hindrance to entering the kingdom, even to take of other men's goods, think how much fire it heapeth up. Why can it have been, however, that He said to His disciples, that "hardly shall a rich man enter in," they being poor men, and having no possessions? Instructing them not to be ashamed of their poverty, and, as it were, excusing Himself to them for suffering them to have nothing. But having said it was hard; as He proceeds, He shows that it is even impossible, and not merely impossible, but even in the highest degree impossible; and this He showed by the comparison concerning the camel and the needle.

"It is easier" saith He, "for a camel to enter in by the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of Heaven." Whence it is shown, that there is no ordinary reward for them that are rich, and are able to practise self command. Wherefore also He affirmed it to be a work of God, that He might show that great grace is needed for him who is to achieve this. At least, when the disciples were troubled, he said, He said, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible." And wherefore are the disciples troubled, being poor, yea, exceedingly poor? Wherefore then are they confounded? Being in pain about the salvation of the rest, and having a great affection for all, and having already taken upon

themselves the tender bowels of teachers. They were at least in such trembling and fear for the whole world from this declaration, as to need much comfort.

Therefore, having first "beheld them, He said unto them, The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God." For with a mild and meek look, having soothed their shuddering mind, and having put an end to their distress (for this the evangelist signified by saying, "He beheld them"), then by His words also He relieves them, bringing before them God's power, and so making them feel confidence. But if thou wilt learn the manner of it likewise, and how what is impossible may become possible, hear. Born either for this end did He say, "The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God," that thou shouldest give it up, and abstain, as from things impossible; but that having considered the greatness of the good work, thou shouldest hasten to it readily, and having besought God to assist thee in these noble contests, shouldest attain unto life.

3. How then should this become possible? If thou cast away what thou hast, if thou empty thyself of thy wealth, if thou refrain from the wicked desire. For in proof that He does not refer it to God alone, but that to this end He said it, that thou shouldest know the vastness of the good work, hear what follows. For when Peter had said, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee," and had asked, "What shall we have therefore?" having appointed the reward for them; He added, "And every one who hath forsaken houses, or lands, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit eternal life." Thus that which is impossible becometh possible. But how may this very thing be done, one may say, to forsake these? how is it possible for him that is once sunk in such lust of wealth, to recover himself? If he begin to empty himself of his possessions, and cut off what are superfluous. For so shall he both advance further, and shall run on his course more easily afterwards.

Do not then seek all at once, but gently, and by little and little, ascend this ladder, that leads thee up to Heaven. For like as those in fevers having acrid bile abounding within them, when they cast in thereon meats and drinks, so far from quenching their thirst, do even kindle the flame; so also the covetous, when they cast in their wealth upon this wicked lust more acrid than that bile, do rather inflame it. For nothing so stays it as to refrain for a time from the lust of gain, like as acrid bile is stayed by abstinence and evacuations. But this itself, by what means will it be done? one may say. If thou consider, that whilst rich, thou wilt never cease thirsting, and pining with the lust of more; but being freed from thy possessions, thou wilt be able also to stay this disease. Do not then encompass thyself with more, lest thou follow after things unattainable, and be incurable, and be more miserable than all, being thus frantic.

For answer me, whom shall we affirm to be tormented and pained? him that longs after costly meats and drinks, and is not able to enjoy them as he will, or him that hath not such a desire? It is quite clear one must say, him that desires, but cannot obtain what he desires. For this is so painful, to desire and not to enjoy, to thirst and not to drink, that Christ desiring to describe hell to us, described it in this way, and introduced the rich man thus

tormented. For longing for a drop of water, and not enjoying it, this was his punishment. So then he that despises wealth quiets the desire, but he that desires to be rich hath inflamed it more, and not yet doth he stay; but though he have got ten thousand talents, he desireth as much more; though he obtain these, again he aims at sea, and all to become gold for him, being mad with a kind of new and fearful madness, and one that can never thus be extinguished.

And that thou mightest learn, that not by addition but by taking away this evil is stayed; if thou hadst ever had an absurd desire to fly and to be borne through the air, how wouldest thou extinguish this unreasonable desire? By fashioning wings, and preparing other instruments, or by convincing the mind that it is desiring things impossible, and that one should attempt none of these things? It is quite plain, that by convincing the mind. But that, thou mayest say, is impossible. But this again is more impossible, to find a limit for this desire. For indeed it is more easy for men to fly, than to make this lust cease by an addition of more. For when the objects of desire are possible, one may be soothed by the enjoyment of them, but when they are impossible, one must labor for one thing, to draw ourselves off from the desire, as otherwise at least it is not possible to recover the soul.

Therefore that we may not have superfluous sorrows, let us forsake the love of money that is ever paining, and never endures to hold its peace, and let us remove ourselves to another love, which both makes us happy, and hath great facility, and let us long after the treasures above. For neither is the labor here so great, and the gain is unspeakable, and it is not possible for him to fail of them who is but in any wise watchful and sober, and despises the things present; even as on the other hand, as to him that is a slave to these last, and is utterly given up to them, it as altogether of necessity that he fail of those better riches. 4. Considering then all these things, put away the wicked desire of wealth. For neither couldest thou say this, that it gives the things present, though it deprive us of the things to come, albeit even if this were so, this were extreme punishment, and vengeance. But and before that hell, even here it casts thee into a more grievous punishment. For many houses hath this lust overthrown, and fierce wars hath it stirred up, and compelled men to end their lives by a violent death; and before these dangers it ruins the nobleness of the soul, and is wont often to make him that hath it cowardly, and unmanly, and rash, and false, and calumnious, and ravenous, and over-reaching, and all the worst things.

But seeing perhaps the brightness of the silver, and the multitude of the servants, and the beauty of the buildings, the court paid in the market-place, art thou bewitched thereby? What remedy then may there be for this evil wound? If thou consider how these things affect thy soul, how dark, and desolate, and foul they render it, and how ugly; if thou reckon with how many evils these things were acquired, with how many labors they are kept, with how many dangers: or rather they are not kept unto the end, but when thou hast escaped the attempts of all, death coming on thee is often wont to remove these things into the hand of thine enemies, and goeth and taketh thee with him destitute, drawing after thee none of these things, save the wounds and the sores only, which the soul received from these, before

its departing. When then thou seest any one resplendent outwardly with raiment and large attendance, lay open his conscience, and thou shalt see many a cobweb within, and much dust. Consider Paul, Peter Consider John, Elias, or rather the Son of God Himself, who hath not where to lay His head. Be an imitator of Him, and of His servants, and imagine to thyself the unspeakable riches of these.

But if having obtained a little sight by these, thou shouldest be darkened again, as in any shipwreck when a storm hath come on, hear the declaration of Christ, which affirms, that it is impossible "for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of Heaven." And against this declaration set the mountains, and the earth, and the sea; and all things, if thou wilt, suppose to be gold; for thou shalt see nothing equal to the loss arising to thee from thence. And thou indeed makest mention of acres of land, so many and so many, and of houses ten or twenty or even more, and of baths as many, and of slaves a thousand, or twice as many, and of chariots fastened with silver and overlaid with gold; but I say this, that if each one of you that are rich were to leave this poverty (for these things are poverty compared with what I am about to say), and were possessed of a whole world, and each of them had as many men as are now everywhere on land and sea, and each a world both sea and land, and everywhere buildings, and cities, and nations, and from every side instead of water, instead of fountains, gold flowed up for him, I would not say those who are thus rich are worth three farthings, when they are cast out of the kingdom

For if now aiming at riches that perish, when they miss them, they are tormented, if they should obtain a perception of those unspeakable blessings, what then will suffice for consolation for them? There is nothing Tell me not then of the abundance of their possessions, but consider how great loss the lovers of this abundance undergo in consequence thereof, for these things losing Heaven, and being in the same state, as if any one after being cast out of the highest honor in kings' courts, having a dung heap, were to pride himself on that. For the storing up of money differs nothing from that, or rather that is even the better. For that is serviceable both for husbandry, and for heating a bath, and for other such uses, but the buried gold for none of these things. And would it were merely useless; but as it is, it kindles moreover many furnaces for him that hath it, unless he use it rightly; countess evils at least spring therefrom.

Therefore they that are without used to call the love of money the citadel of evils; but the blessed Paul spake much better and more vividly, pronouncing it "the root of all evils." Considering then all these things, let us emulate the things worthy of emulation, not gorgeous buildings not costly estates, but the men that have much confidence towards God, those that have riches in Heaven, the owners of those treasures, them that are really rich, them that are poor for Christ's sake, that we may attain unto the good things of eternity by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be unto the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, glory, might, honor, now and always and world without end. Amen.

Homily 64

Matthew Chapter 19, Verse 27

"Then answered Peter and said unto Him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?" All which? O blessed Peter; the rod? the net? the boat? the craft? These thing dost thou tell me of, as all? Yea, saith he, but not for display do I say these things, but in order that by this question I may bring in the multitude of the poor. For since the Lord had said, "If thou wilt be perfect, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven;" lest any one of the poor should say, What then? if I learn, that thou art made in no respect inferior by this: Peter asks, that thou mayest not learn from Peter and doubt (for indeed he was imperfect as yet, and void of the Spirit), but that, having received the declaration from Peter's Master, thou mayest be confident.

For like as we do (we make things our own often when speaking of the concerns of others), so did the apostle, when he put to Him this question in behalf of all the world. Since that at least he knew with certainty his own portion, is manifest from what had been said before; for he that had already received the keys of the Heavens, much more might feel confidence about the things hereafter. But mark also how exactly his reply is according to Christ's demand. For He had required of the rich man these two things, to give that he had to the poor, and to follow Him. Wherefore he also expresses these two things, to forsake, and to follow. "For behold we have forsaken all," saith he, "and have followed Thee." For the forsaking was done for the sake of following, and the following was rendered easier by the forsaking, and made them feel confidence and joy touching the forsaking.

What then saith He? "Verily, I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." What then, one may say, shall Judas sit there? By no means How, then, doth He say, "Ye shall sit on twelve thrones?" how shall the terms of the promise Hear how, and on what principle. There is a law ordained of God, recited by Jeremiah, the prophet to the Jews, and in these words: "At what instant I shall speak a sentence concerning a nation and kingdom, to pluck up and destroy; if that nation turn from their evil deeds, I also will repent of the evils, which I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and kingdom to build and to plant it; and

if they do evil in my sight, that they obey not my voice, I also will repent of the good, which I said I would do unto them."

For the same custom do I observe with respect to the good things as well, saith He. For though I spake of building up, should they show themselves unworthy of the promise, I will no longer do it. Which sort of thing was done with respect to man upon his creation, "For the dread of you," it is said, "and the fear of you shall be on the wild beasts," and it came not to pass, for he proved himself unworthy of the sovereignty, even as did Judas also. For in order that neither at the denunciations of punishment any men should despair and become more hardened, nor by the promises of good things be rendered causelessly more remiss, He remedies both these evils, by that which I have before mentioned, saying in this way: Though I should threaten, do not despair; for thou an able to repent, and to reverse the denunciation, like the Ninevites. Though I should promise any good thing, grow not remiss because of the promise. For shouldest thou appear unworthy, the fact of my having promised will not advantage thee, but will rather bring punishment. For I promise thee being worthy.

Therefore even then in His discourse with His disciples He did not promise to them simply, for neither did He say, "you," only, but added, "which have followed me," that He might both cast out Judas, and draw towards Him those that should come afterwards. For neither to them only was it said, nor to Judas any more, when he had become unworthy. Now to the disciplines He promised things to come, saying, "Ye shall sit on twelve thrones," for. they were now of a higher stamp, and sought after none of the things of the present world, but to the rest He promises also what are here. For "every one," He saith, "that hath forsaken brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, or house, for my names sake, shall receive an hundredfold in this world, and shall inherit eternal life," For lest any after having heard the word "ye," should suppose this a thing peculiar to the disciples (I mean now the enjoying the greatest and first honors in the things to come), He extended the word, and spread the promise over the whole earth, and from the things present establishes the things to come also. And to the disciples also at the beginning, when they were in a more imperfect state, He reasoned from the things present. For when He drew them from the sea, and took them from their trade, and commanded them to forsake the ships, He made mention not of Heaven, not of thrones, but of the things here, saying, "I will make you fishers of men;" but when He had wrought them to be of higher views, then after that He discourses of the things to come also.

2, But what is, "Judging the twelve tribes of Israel?" This is, "condemning them." For they are not surely to sit as judges, but like as He said the Queen of the South should condemn that generation, and the Ninevites shall condemn them; so now these also. Therefore He said not, the nations, and the world, but the tribes of Israel. For since both the Jews alike and the apostles had been brought up under the same laws, and customs, and polity; when the Jews said, that for this cause they could not believe in Christ, because the law forbade to receive His commandments, by bringing forward these men, who had received the same law,

and yet had believed, He condemns all those; like as even already He had said, "therefore they shall be your judges." And what great thing doth He promise them, it may be said, if what the Ninevites have and the Queen of the South, this these are to have also? In the first place He had promised them many other things before this, and after this doth promise them, and this alone is not their reward.

And besides even in this He intimated by the way something more than these things. For of those He simply said, The men of Nineveh shall rise up and condemn this Seneration, " and, "The Queen of the South shall condemn it;" but concerning these, not merely thus, but how? "When the Son of Man shall sit upon the throne of His glory, then shall ye also sit upon twelve thrones," saith He, declaring, that they also shall reign with Him, and partake of that glory. "For if we suffer," it is said, "we shall also reign with Him." For neither do the thrones signify a sitting (in judgment), for He alone is the one that shall sit and judge, but honor and glory unspeakable did He intimate by the thrones. To these then He spake of these things, but to all the rest of eternal life and an hundredfold here. But if to the rest, much more to these too, both these things, and the things in this life.

And this surely came to pass; for when they had left a fishing rod and a net, they possessed with authority the substances of all, the prices of the houses and the lands, and the very bodies of the believers. For often did they choose even to be slain for their sake, as Paul also bears witness to many, when he saith, "If it had been possible ye would have plucked out your eyes, and given them to me." But when He saith, "Every one who hath forsaken wife," He saith not this, for marriages to be broken asunder for nought, but as He saith concerning one's life, "He that loseth his life for my sake shall fin. d it," not that we should destroy ourselves, neither that while yet here we should part it from the body, but that we should prefer godliness to all things; this too He saith also with respect to wife and brethren.

But He seems to me here to intimate also the persecutions. For since there were many instances both of fathers urging their sons to ungodliness, and wives their husbands; when they command these things, saith He, let them be neither wives nor parents, even as Paul likewise said, "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart." When He had then raised the spirit of all, and had persuaded them to feel confidence both with respect to themselves and to all the world, He added, that "Many that were first shall be last, and last first." But this although it be spoken also without distinction concerning many others likewise, it is spoken also concerning these men and concerning the Pharisees, who did not believe, even as before also He had said, "Many shall come from east and west and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out."

Then He adds also a parable, as training those who had fallen short to a great forwardness. "For the kingdom of Heaven," He said, "is like to a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with them for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard." "And at the third hour he saw others standing idle, and to them too he said, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And about the sixth and ninth hours he did likewise. And about the

eleventh hour, he saw others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? But they say unto him, No man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into my vineyard, and whatsoever is right, ye shall receive."

"So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the laborers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. And the first supposed that they should receive more, and they received likewise every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the good man of the house, saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us that have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong; didst thou not agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way; I will give unto this last also, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? Thus the last shall be first, and the first last: for many are called, but few chosen."

3. What is to us the intent of this parable? For the beginning doth not harmonize with what is said at the end, but intimates altogether the contrary. For in the first part He shows all enjoying the same, and not some cast out, and some brought in; yet He Himself both before the parable and after the parable said the opposite thing. "That the first shall be last, and the last first," that is, before the very first, those not continuing first, but having become last. For in proof that this is His meaning, He added, "Many are called, but few chosen," so as doubly both to sting the one, and to soothe and urge on the other. But the parable saith not this, but that they shall be equal to them that are approved, and have labored much. "For thou hast made them equal unto us," it is said, "that have borne the burden and heat of the day."

What then is the meaning of the parable? For it is necessary to make this first clear, and then we shall clear up that other point. By a vineyard He meaneth the injunctions of God and His commandments: by the time of laboring, the present life: by laborers, them that in different ways are called to the fulfillment of the injunctions: by early in the morning, and about the third and ninth and eleventh hours, them who at different ages have drawn near to God, and approved themselves. But the question is this, whether the first having gloriously approved themselves, and having pleased God, and having throughout the whole day shone by their labors, are possessed by the basest feeling of vice, jealousy and envy. For when they had seen them enjoying the same rewards, they say, "These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, that have borne the burden and heat of the day." And in these words, when they are to receive no hurt, neither to suffer diminution as to their own hire, they were indignant, and much displeased at the good of others, which was proof of envy and jealousy. And what is yet more, the good man of the house in justifying himself with respect to them, and in making his defense to him that had said these things, convicts him of wickedness and the basest jealousy, saying, "Didst thou

not agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way; I will give unto the last even as unto thee. Is thine eye evil, because I am good?"

What then is it which is to be established by these things? For in other parables also this self-same thing may be seen. For the son who was approved is brought in, as having felt this self-same thing, when he saw his prodigal brother enjoying much honor, even more than himself. For like as these enjoyed more by receiving first, so he in a greater degree was honored by the abundance of the things given him; and to these things he that was approved bears witness. What then may we say? There is no one who is thus justifying himself, or blaming others in the kingdom of Heaven; away with the thought! for that place is pure from envy and jealousy. For if when they are here the saints give their very lives for sinners, much more when they see them there in the enjoyment of these things, do they rejoice and account these to be blessings of their own. Wherefore then did He so frame His discourse? The saying is a parable, wherefore neither is it right to inquire curiously into all things in parables word by word, but when we have learnt the object for which it was composed, to reap this, and not to busy one's self about anything further.

Wherefore then was this parable thus composed? what is its object to effect? To render more earnest them that are converted and become better men in extreme old age, and not to allow them to suppose they have a less portion. So it is for this cause He introduces also others displeased at their blessings, not to represent those men as pining or vexed, away with the thought! but to teach us that these have enjoyed such honor, as could even have begotten envy in others. Which we also often do, saying, "Such a one blamed me, because I counted thee worthy of much honor," neither having been blamed, nor wishing to slander that other, but hereby to show the greatness of the gift which this one enjoyed. But wherefore can it have been that He did not hire all at once? As far as concerned Him, He did hire all; but if all did not hearken at once, the difference was made by the disposition of them that were called. For this cause, some are called early in the morning, some at the third hour, some at the sixth, some at the ninth, some at the eleventh, when they would obey.

This Paul also declared when he said, "When it pleased Him, who separated me from my mother's womb." When did it please Him? When he was ready to obey. For He willed it even from the beginning, but because he would not have yielded, then it pleased Him, when Paul also was ready to obey. Thus also did He call the thief, although He was able to have called him even before, but he would not have obeyed. For if Paul at the beginning would not have obeyed, much more the thief. And if they say, "No man hath hired us," in the first place as I said we must not be curious about all the points in the parables; but here neither is the good man of the house represented to say this, but they; but he cloth not convict them, that he might drive them to perplexity, but might win them over. For that He called all, as far as lay in Him, from the first even the parable shows, saying, that "He went out early in the morning to hire."

4. From everything then it is manifest to us, that the parable is spoken with reference to them who from earliest youth, and those who in old age and more tardily, lay hold on virtue;

to the former, that they may not be proud, neither reproach those called at the eleventh hour; to the latter, that they may learn that it is possible even in a short time to recover all. For since He had been speaking about earnestness, and the casting away of riches, and contempt of all one's possessions, but this needed much vigor of mind and youthful ardor; in order to kindle in them a fire of love, and to give vigor to their will, He shows that it is possible even for men coming later to receive the hire of the whole day. But He doth not say it thus, lest again He should make them proud, but he shows that the whole is of His love to man, and because of this they shall not fail, but shall themselves enjoy the unspeakable blessings.

And this chiefly is what it is His will to establish by this parable. And if He adds, that, "So the last shall be first and the first last; for many are called, but few chosen," marvel not. For not as inferring it from the parable doth He say this, but His meaning is this, that like as this came to pass, so shall that come to pass. For here indeed the first did not become last, but all received the same contrary to hope and expectation. But as this result took place contrary to hope and contrary to expectation, and they that came before were equalled by them that followed, so shall that also come to pass which is more than this, and more strange, I mean, that the last should come to be even before the first, and that the first should be after these. So that that is one thing, and this another.

But He seems to me to say these, things, darkly hinting at the Jews, and amongst the believers at those who at first shone forth, but afterwards neglected virtue, and fell back; and those others again that have risen from vice, and have shot beyond many. For we see such changes taking place both with respect to faith and practice. Wherefore I entreat you let us use much diligence both to stand in the right faith, and to show forth an excellent life. For unless we add also a life suitable to our faith, we shall suffer the extremest punishment. And this the blessed Paul showed even from times of old, when he said, that "They did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink: "and added, that they were not saved; "for they were overthrown in the Wilderness." And Christ declared it even in the evangelists, when He brought in some that had cast out devils and prophesied, and are led away to punishment. And all His parables also, as that of the virgins, that of the net, that of the thorns, that of the tree not bringing forth fruit, demand virtue in our works. For concerning doctrines He discourses seldom, for neither doth the subject need labor, but of life often or rather everywhere, for the war about this is continual, wherefore also so is the labor.

And why do I speak of the whole code. For even a part of it overlooked brings upon one great evils; as, for instance, almsgiving overlooked casts into hell them that have come short in it; and yet this is not the whole of virtue, but a part thereof. But nevertheless both the virgins were punished for not having this, and the rich man was for this cause tormented, and they that have not fed the hungry, are for this condemned with the devil. Again, not to revile is a very small part of it, nevertheless this too casts out them that have not attained to it. "For he that saith to his brother, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." Again, even continence itself is a part, but nevertheless, without this no one shall see the Lord. For, "Follow peace,"

it is said. "and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." And humility too in like manner is a part of virtue; but nevertheless though any one should fulfill other good works, but have not attained to this, he is unclean with God. And this is manifest from the Pharisee, who though abounding with numberless good works, by this lost all.

But I have also something more than these things to say again. I mean, that not only one of them overlooked shuts Heaven against us, but though it be done, yet not in due perfection and abundance, it produces the selfsame effect again. "For except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven." So that though thou give alms, but not more than they, thou shalt not enter in. And how much did they bestow in alms? one may ask. For this very thing, I am minded to say now, that they who do not give may be roused to give, and they that give may not pride themselves, but may make increase of their gifts. What then did they give? A tenth of all their possessions, and again another tenth, and after this a third, so that they almost gave away the third part, for three-tenths put together make up this. And together with these, first fruits, and first born, and other things besides, as, for instance, the offerings for sins, those for purification, those at feasts, those in the jubilee, those by the cancelling of debts, and the dismissals of servants. and the lendings that were clear of usury. But if he who gave the third part of his goods, or rather the half (for those being put together with these are the half), if then he who is giving the half, achieves no great thing, he who doth not bestow so much as the tenth, of what shall he be worthy? With reason He said, "There are few that be saved."

5. Let us not, then, despise the care of our life. For if one portion of it despised brings so great a destruction, when on every hand we are subject to the sentence of condemnation, how shall we escape the punishment? and what manner of penalty shall we not suffer? and what manner of hope of salvation have we, one may ask, if each of the things we have numbered threatens us with hell? I too say this; nevertheless, if we give heed we may be saved, preparing the medicines of almsgiving, and attending to our wounds. For oil does not so strengthen a body, as benevolence at once strengthens a soul, and makes it invincible to all and impregnable to the devil. For wheresoever he may seize us, his hold then slips, this oil not suffering his grasp to fix on our back. With this oil therefore let us anoint ourselves continually. For it. is the cause of health, and a supply of light, and a source of cheerfulness. "But such a one," thou wilt say, "hath talents of gold so many and so many, and gives away nothing." And whal is that to thee? For thus shalt thou appear more worthy of admiration, when in poverty thou an more munificent than he. It was on this ground Paul marvelled at the Macedonians, not because they gave, but because even though they were in poverty they gave.

Look not then at these, but at the common Teacher of all, who "had not where to lay His head." And why, you say, doth not this and that person do so? Do not judge another, but deliver thyself from the charge against thee. Since the punishment is greater when thou at the same time blamest others, and thyself doest not, when judging other men, thou art again

thyself also subject to the same judgment. For if even them who do right He permits not to judge others, much more will He not permit offenders. Let us not therefore judge others, neither let us look to others who are taking their ease, but unto Jesus, and from thence let us draw our examples. Why! have I been thy benefactor? Why! did I redeem thee, that thou lookest to me? It is another who hath bestowed these things on thee. Why dost thou let go thy Master, and look unto thy fellow-servant? Heardest thou not Him saying, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart?" And again, "He that would be first amongst you, let him be servant of all:" and again, "Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." And after these things again, lest taking offense at them who are remiss amongst thy fellow-servants, thou continue in contemptuousness; to draw thee off from that, He saith, "I have made myself an example to you, that as I have done, ye should do also." But hast thou no teacher of virtue amongst those persons that are with thee, neither such a one as to lead thee on to these things? More abundant then will be the praise, the commendation greater, when not even being supplied with teachers thou hast become one to be marvelled at.

For this is possible, nay very easy, if we be willing: and this they show, who first duly performed these things, as for instance, Noah, Abraham, Melchizedeck, Job, and all the men like them. To them it is needful to look every day, and not unto these, whom ye never cease emulating, and passing about their names in your assemblies. For nothing else do I hear you saying everywhere, but such words as these; "Such a one has bought so many acres of land; such a one is rich, he is building." Why dost thou stare, O man, at what is without? Why dost thou look to others? If thou art minded to look to others, look to them that do their duty, to them that approve themselves, to them that carefully fulfill the law, not to those that have become offenders, and are in dishonor. For if thou look to these, thou wilt gather hence many evil things, falling into remissness, into pride, into condemnation of others; but if thou reckon over them that do right, thou wilt lead thyself on unto humility, unto diligence, unto compunction, unto the blessings that are beyond number.

Hear what the Pharisee suffered, because he let pass them that do right, and looked to him that had offended; hear and fear. See how David became one to be marvelled at, because he looked to his ancestors that were noted for virtue. "For I am a stranger," saith he, "and a sojourner, as all my fathers were." For this man, and all that are like him, let pass them that had sinned, and thought of those who had approved themselves. This do thou also. For thou art not set to judge of the negligences of which others have been guilty, nor to inquire into the sins which others are committing; thou art required to do judgment on thyself, not on others. "For if we judged ourselves," it is said, "we should not be judged, but when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord." But thou hast reversed the order, of thyself requiring no account of offenses great or small, but being strict and curious about the offenses of others.

Let us no more do this, but leaving off this disorderly way, let us set up a tribunal in ourselves for the sins committed by ourselves, becoming ourselves accusers, and judges, and

executioners for our offenses. But if it be thy will to be busy about the things of other men also, busy thyself about their good works, not their sins, that both by the memory of our negligences and by our emulation for the good works they have done, and by setting before ourselves the judgment-seat from which no prayers can deliver, wounded each day by our conscience as by a kind of goad, we may lead ourselves on to humility, and a greater diligence, and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ; with whom be to the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, glory, might, honor, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 65

Matthew Chapter 20, Verse 17-Matthew Chapter 20, Verse 19

”And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the Scribes, and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify Him; and the third day He shall be raised.” He goeth not up at once to Jerusalem when He is come out of Galilee, but having first wrought miracles, and having stopped the mouths of Pharisees, and having discoursed with His disciples of renouncing possessions: for, ”if thou wilt be perfect,” saith He, ”sell that thou hast: ” and of virginity, ”He that is able to receive, let him receive it:” and of humility, ”For except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven:” and of a recompense of the things here, ”For whoso hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, shall receive an hundredfold in this world:” and of rewards there, ”For he shall also inherit,” it is said, ”eternal life:” then He assails the city next, and being on the point of going up, discourses again of His passion. For since it was likely that they, because they were not willing this should come to pass, would forget it, He is continually putting them in remembrance, exercising their mind by the frequency with which He reminded them, and diminishing their pain.

But He speaks with them ”apart,” necessarily; for it was not meet that His discourse about these things should be published to the many; neither that it should be spoken plainly, for no advantage arose from this. For if the disciples were confounded at hearing these things, much more the multitude of the people. What then? was it not told to the people? you may say. It was indeed told to the people also, but not so plainly. For, ”Destroy,” saith lie, ”this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up;” and, ”This generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas; ” and again, ”Yet a little while am I with you, and ye shall seek me, and shall not find me.”

But to the disciples not so, but as the other things He spake unto them more plainly, so also spake He this too. And for what purpose, if the multitude understood not the force of His sayings, were they spoken at all? That they might learn after these things, that fore-knowing it, He came to His passion, and willing it; not in ignorance, nor by constraint But to the disciples not for this cause only did He foretell it; but, as I have said, in order that

having been exercised by the expectation, they might more easily endure the passion, and that it might not confound them by coming upon them without preparation. So for this cause, while at the beginning He spake of His death only, when they were practised and trained to hear of it, He adds the other circumstances also; as, for instance, that they should deliver Him to the Gentiles, that they should mock and scourge Him; as well on this account, as in order that when they saw the mournful events come to pass, they might expect from this the resurrection also. For He who had not cloaked from them what would give pain, and what seemed to be matter of reproach, would reasonably be believed about good things too.

But mark, I pray thee, how with regard to the time also He orders the thing wisely. For neither at the beginning did He tell them, lest He should disquiet them, neither at the time itself, lest by this again He should confound them; but when they had received sufficient proof of His power, when He had given them promises that were very great concerning life everlasting, then He introduces also what He had to say concerning these things, once and twice and often interweaving it with His miracles and His instructions. But another evangelist saith, that He brought in the prophets also as witnesses; and another again saith, that even they themselves understood not His words, but the saying was hid from them, and that they were amazed as they followed Him. Surely then, one may say, the benefit of the prediction is taken away. For if they knew not what they were hearing, neither could they look for the event, and not looking for it, neither could they be exercised by their expectations.

But I say another thing also more perplexing than this: If they did not know, how were they sorry. For another saith, they were sorry. If therefore they knew it not, how were they sorry? How did Peter say, "Be it far from Thee. this shall not be unto Thee?" What then may we say? That He should die indeed they knew, albeit they knew not clearly the mystery of the Incarnation. Neither did they know clearly about the resurrection, neither what He was to achieve; and this was hid from them. For this cause also they felt pain. For some they had known to have been raised again by other persons, but for any one to have raised up himself again, and in such wise to have raised himself as not to die any more, they had never known. This then they understood not, though often said; nay nor of this self-same death did they clearly know what it was, and how it should come on Him. Wherefore also they were amazed as they followed Him, but not for this cause only; but to me at least He seems even to amaze them by discoursing of His passion.

2. Yet none of these things made them take courage, and this when they were continually hearing about His resurrection. For together with His death this also especially troubled them, to hear that men should "mock and scourge Him," and the like. For when they considered His miracles, the possessed persons whom He had delivered, the dead whom He had raised, all the other marvellous works which He was doing, and then heard these things, they were amazed, if He who doeth these works is thus to suffer. Therefore they fell even into perplexity, and now believed. now disbelieved, and could not understand His sayings. So far at least were they from understanding clearly what He said, that the sons of Zebedee

at the same time came to Him, and spake to Him of precedence. "We desire," it is said, "that one should sit on Thy right hand, and one on Thy left " How then doth this evangelist 'say, that their mother came to Him? It is probable both things were done. I mean, that they took their mother with them, with the purpose of making their entreaty stronger, and in this way to prevail with Christ.

For in proof that this is true, as I say, and the request was rather theirs, and that being ashamed they put forward their mother, mark how Christ directs His words to them. But rather let us learn, first, what do they ask, and with what disposition, and whence they were moved to this? Whence then were they moved to this? They saw themselves honored above the rest, and expected from that they should obtain this request also. But what can it be they ask? Hear another evangelist plainly declaring this. For, "Because He was nigh," it is said, "to Jerusalem, and because they thought the kingdom of God should immediately appear," they asked these things. For they supposed that this was at the doors, and visible, and that having obtained what they asked, they would undergo none of the painful things. For neither for its own sake only did they seek it, but as though they would also escape the hardships.

Wherefore also Christ in the first place leads them off from these thoughts, commanding them to await slaughter and dangers, and the utmost tenors. For, "Are ye able," saith He, "to drink of the cup that I drink of?" But let no man be troubled at the apostles being in such an imperfect state. For not yet was the cross accomplished, not yet the grace of the Spirit given. But if thou wouldest learn their virtue, notice them after these things, and thou wilt see them superior to every passion. For with this object He reveals their deficiencies, that after these things thou mightest know what manner of men they became by grace. That then they were asking, in fact, for nothing spiritual, neither had a thought of the kingdom above, is manifest from hence. But let us see also, how they come unto Him, and what they say. "We would," it is said, "that whatsoever we shall desire of Thee, Thou shouldest do it for us."

And Christ saith to them, "What would ye? " not being ignorant, but that He may compel them to answer, and lay open the wound, and so apply the medicine. But they out of shame and confusion of face, because under the influence of a human passion they were come to do this, took Him privately apart from the disciples, and asked Him. For they went before, it is said, so that it might not be observable to them, and so said what they wished. For it was their desire, as I suppose, because they heard, "Ye shall sit on twelve thrones, to have the first place of these seats. And that they had an advantage over the others, they knew, but they were afraid of Peter, and say, "Command, that one sit on Thy right hand, one on Thy left;" and they urge Him, saying, "Command." What then saith He? Showing, that they asked nothing spiritual, neither, if they had known again what they were asking, would they have ventured to ask for so much, He saith, "Ye know not what ye ask," how great, how marvellous, how surpassing even the powers above. After that He adds, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized

with?" Seest thou, how He straightway drew them off from their suspicion, by framing His discourse from the contrary topics? For ye, He saith, talk to me of honor and crowns, but I to you of conflicts and labors. For this is not the season for rewards, neither shall that glory of mine appear now, but the present time is one of slaughter, and wars, and dangers.

And see how by the form of His question, He both urges and attracts them. For He said not, "Are ye able to be slain?" "Are ye able to pour forth your blood?" but how? "Are ye able to drink of the cup?" Then to attract them to it, He saith, "Which I shall drink of," that by their fellowship with Him in it they might be made more ready. And a baptism again calls He it; showing that great was the cleansing the world was to have from the things that were being done. "They say unto Him, We are able." Out of their forwardness they straightway undertook it, not knowing even this which they were saying, but looking to hear what they had asked. What then saith He? "Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with." Great blessings did He foretell to them. His meaning is, ye shall be counted worthy of martyrdom, and shall suffer these things which I suffer; ye shall close your life by a violent death, and in these things ye shall be partakers with me; "But to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father."

3. Having first elevated their souls, and made them of a higher character, and having rendered them such as sorrow could not subdue, then He reproves their request. But what can be this present saying? For indeed there are two points that are subjects of inquiry to many: one, if it be prepared for any to sit on His right hand; and then, if the Lord of all hath not power to bestow it on them for whom it is prepared. What then is the saying? If we solve the former point, then the second also will be clear to the inquirers. What then is this? No one shall sit on His right hand nor on His left. For that throne is inaccessible to all, I do not say to men only, and saints, and apostles, but even to angels, and archangels, and to all the powers that are on high.

At least Paul puts it. as a peculiar privilege of the Only-Begotten, saying, "To which of the angels said He at any time, Sit thou on my right hand? And of the angels He saith, who maketh His angels spirits;" but unto the Son, 'Thy throne, O God.'" How then saith He, "To sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give," as though there are some that should sit there? Not as though there are; far from it; but He makes answer to the thoughts of them who ask the favor, condescending to their understanding. For neither did they know that lofty throne, and His sitting at the right hand of the Father; how should they, when even the things that were much lower than these, and were daily instilled into them, they understood not? but they sought one thing only, to enjoy the first honors, and to stand before the rest, and that no one should stand before them with Him; even as I have already said before, that, since they heard of twelve thrones, in ignorance what the saying could mean, they asked for the first place.

What therefore Christ saith is this: "Ye shall die indeed for me, and shall be slain for the sake of the gospel, and shall be partakers with me, as far as regards the passion: but this is

not sufficient to secure you the enjoyment of the first seat, and to cause that ye should occupy the first place. For if any one else should come, together with the martyrdom, possessed of all the other parts of virtue far more fully than you, not because I love you now, and prefer you to the rest, therefore. shall I set aside him that is distinguished by his good works, and give the first honors to you." But thus indeed He did not say it, so as not to pain them, but darkly He intimates the self-same thing, saying, "Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and ye shall be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on my right hand and on my left, this is not mine to give, but it shall be given to those for whom it is prepared."

But for whom is it prepared? For them who could become distinguished by their works. Therefore He said not, It is not mine to give, but my Father's, lest any should say that He was too weak, or wanting in vigor for their recompense; but how? It is not mine, but of those for whom it is prepared. And in order that what I say may be more explain, let us work it on an illustration, and let us suppose there was some master of the games, then that many excellent combatants went down to the contest, and that some two of the combatants that were most nearly connected with the master of the games were to come to him and say, "Cause us to be crowned and proclaimed," confiding in their good-will and friendship with him; and that he were to say to them, "This is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared, by their labors, and their toils;" should we indeed condemn him as powerless? By no means, but we should approve him for his justice, and for having no respect of persons. Like then as we should not say that he did not give the crown from want of vigor, but as not wishing to corrupt the law of the games, nor to disturb the order of justice; in like manner now should I say Christ said this, from every motive to compel them, after the grace of God, to set their hopes of salvation and approval on the proof of their own good works.

Therefore He saith, "For whom it is prepared." For what, saith He, if others should appear better than you? What, if they should do greater things? For shall ye, because ye have become my disciples, therefore enjoy the first honors, if ye yourselves should not appear worthy of the choice? For that He Himself hath power over the whole, is manifest from His having the entire judgment. For to Peter too He speaks thus, "I will give thee the keys of the Heavens." And Paul also makes this clear where he saith, "Henceforth is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me in that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also which have loved His appearing.", But the appearing was of Christ. But that no one will stand before Paul, is surely clear to every one. And if He hath expressed these things somewhat obscurely, marvel not. For to lead them on by hidden instruction. not to be rudely pressing Him without object or cause for the first honors (for from a human passion they felt this), and not wishing to give them pain, by the obscurity He effects both these objects.

"Then were the ten moved with indignation with respect to the two." Then. When.) When He had reproved them. So long as the judgment was Christ's, they were not moved with indignation; but seeing them preferred, they were contented, and held their peace, out of

reverence and honor to their Master. And if they were vexed in mind, yet they dared not utter this. And when they had some feeling of human weakness towards Peter, at the time that He gave the didrachmas, they did not give way to anger, but asked only, "Who then is greatest?" But since here the request was the disciples', they are moved with indignation. And not even here are they straightway moved with indignation, when they asked, but when Christ had reproved them, and had said they should not enjoy the first honors, unless they showed themselves worthy of these. 4. Seest thou how they were all in an imperfect state, when both these were lifting themselves up above the ten, and those envying the two? But, as I said, show me them after these things, and thou wilt see them delivered from all these passions. Hear at least how this same John, he who now came to Him for these things, everywhere gives up the first place to Peter, both in addressing the people, and in working miracles, in the Acts of the Apostles.

And he conceals not Peter's good deeds, but relates both the confession, which he openly made when all were silent, and his entering into the tomb, and puts the apostle before himself. For, because both continued with Him at His crucifixion, taking away the ground of his own commendation, he saith, "That disciple was known unto the high priest." But James survived not a long time, but from the beginning he was so greatly filled with warmth, and so forsook all the things of men, and mounted up to an height unutterable, as straightway to be slain. Thus, in all respects, they after these things became excellent. But then, "they were moved with indignation." What then saith Christ? "He called them unto Him, and said, The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them." For, as they were disturbed and troubled, He soothes them by His call before His word, and by drawing them near Him. For the two having separated themselves from the company of the ten, had stood nearer Him, pleading their own interests. Therefore He brings near Him these also, by this very act, and by exposing and revealing it before the rest, soothing the passion both of the one and of the other.

And not as before, so now also doth He check them. For whereas before He brings little children into the midst, and commands to imitate their simplicity and lowliness; here He reproves them in a sharper way from the contrary side, saying, "The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and their great ones exercise authority upon them, but it shall not be so among you; but he that will be great among you, let this man be minister to all; and he that will be first, let him be last of all;" showing that such a feeling as this is that of heathens, I mean, to love the first place. For the passion is tyrannical, and is continually hindering even great men; therefore also it needs a severer stripe. Whence He too strikes deeper into them, by comparison with the Gentiles shaming their inflamed soul, and removes the envy of the one and the arrogance of the other, all but saying, "Be not moved with indignation, as insulted. For they harm and disgrace themselves most, who on this wise seek the first places, for they are amongst the last. For matters with us are not like matters without. 'For the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them,' but with me the last, even he is first."

"And in proof that I say not these things without cause, by the things which I do and suffer, receive the proof of my sayings. For I have myself done something even more. For being King of the powers above, I was willing to become man, and I submitted to be despised, and despitefully entreated. And not even with these things was I satisfied, but even unto death did I come. Therefore," He saith, "Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." "For not even at this did I stop," saith He, "but even my life did I give a ransom; and for whom? For enemies. But thou if thou art abused, it is for thyself, but I for thee." Be not then afraid, as though thine honor were plucked down. For how much soever thou humblest thyself, thou canst not descend so much as thy Lord. And yet His descent hath become the ascent of all, and hath made His own glory shine forth. For before He was made man, He was known amongst angels only; but after He was made man and was crucified, so far from lessening that glory, He acquired other besides, even that from the knowledge of the world.

Fear not then, as though thine honor were put down, if thou shouldest abase thyself, for in this way is thy glory more exalted, in this way it becomes greater. This is the door of the kingdom. Let us not then go the opposite way, neither let us war against ourselves. For if we desire to appear great, we shall not be great, but even the most dishonored of all. Seest thou how everywhere He urges them by the opposite things, giving them what they desire? For in the preceding parts also we have shown this in many instances, and in the cases of the covetous, and of the vain-glorious, He did thus. For wherefore, He saith, dost thou give alms before men? That thou mayest enjoy glory? Thou must then not do so, and thou shall surely enjoy it. Wherefore dost thou lay up treasures? That thou mayest be rich? Thou must then not lay up treasures, and thou shalt be rich. Even so here too, wherefore dost thou set thy heart on the first places? That thou mayest be before others? Choose then the last place, and then thou wilt enjoy the first. So that if it be thy will to become great, seek not to become great, and then thou wilt be great. For the other is to be little.

5. Seest thou how He drew them off from the disease, by showing them both from thence failing of their object, and from hence gaining, that they might flee the one, and follow after the other. And of the Gentiles, too, He for this cause reminded them, that in this way again He might show the thing to be disgraceful and to be abhorred. For the arrogant is of necessity base, and, on the contrary, the lowly-minded is high. For this is the height that is true and genuine, and exists not in name only, nor in manner of address. And that which is from without is of necessity and fear, but this is like to God's. Such a one, though he be admired by no one, continues high; even as again the other, though he be courted by all, is of all men the basest. And the one is an honor rendered of necessity, whence also it easily passes away; but the other is of principle, whence also it continues steadfast. Since for this we admire the saints also, that being greater than all, they humbled themselves more than all. Wherefore even to this day they continue to be high, and not even death hath brought down that height.

And if ye be minded, let us by reasonings also inquire into this very thing. Any one is said to be high, either when he is so by greatness of stature, or when he hath chanted to be set on a high place, and low in like manner, from the opposite things. Let us see then who is like this, the boaster, or he that keeps within measure, that thou mayest perceive that nothing is higher than lowliness of mind, and nothing lower than boastfulness. The boaster then desires to be greater than all, and affirms no one to be equal in worth with him; and how much soever honor he may obtain, he sets his heart on more and claims it, and accounts himseif to have obtained none, and treats men with utter contempt, and yet seeks after the honor that comes from them; than which what can be more unreasonable? For this surely is like an enigma. By those, whom he holds in no esteem, he desires to be glorified.

Seest thou how he who desires to be exalted falls down and is set on the ground? For that he accounts all men to be nothing compared with himself, he himself declares, for this is boasting. Why then dost cast thyself upon him who is nothing? why dost thou seek honor of him? Why dost thou lead about a with thee such great multitudes? Seest thou one low, and set on a low place. Come then, let us inquire about the high man. This one knows what man is, and that man is a great thing, and that he himself is last of all, and therefore whatever honor he may enjoy, he reckons this great, so that this one is consistent with himself and is high, and shifts not his judgment; for whom he accounts great, the honors that come from them he esteems great also, though they should chance to be small, because he accounts those who bestow them to be great. But the boastful man accounts them that give the honors to be nothing, yet the honors bestowed by them he reckons to be great.

Again, the lowly man is seized by no passion, no anger can much trouble this man, no love of glory, no envy, no jealousy: and what can be higher than the soul that is delivered from these things? But the boastful man is held in subjection by all these things, like any worm crawling in the mire, for jealousy and envy and anger are forever troubling his soul. Which then is high? He that is superior to his passions, or he that is their slave? He that trembles at them and is afraid of them, or he that is unsubdued, and never taken by them? Which kind of bird should we say flies higher? that which is higher than the hands and the arrows of the hunter, or that which does not even suffer the hunters to need an arrow, from his flying along the ground, and from not being able ever to elevate himself? Is not then the arrogant man like this? for indeed every net readily catches him as crawling on the ground.

6. But if thou wilt, even from that wicked demon prove thou this. For what can be baser than the devil, because he had exalted himseif; what higher than the man who is willing to abase himself? For the former crawls on the ground under our heel (For, ”ye tread,” He saith, ”upon serpents and scorpions”), but the latter is set with the angels on high. But if thou desirest to learn this from the example of haughty men also, consider that barbarian king, that led so great an army, who knew not so much as the things that are manifest to all; as, for instance, that stone was stone, and the images, images; wherefore he was inferior even to these. But the godly and faithful are raised even above the sun; than whom what

can be higher, who rise above even the vaults of heaven, and passing beyond angels, stand by the very throne of the king.

And that thou mayest learn in another way their vileness; who will be abased? He who has God for his ally, or he with whom God is at war? It is quite plain that it is he with whom He is at war. Hear then touching either of these what saith the Scripture. "God res steth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." Again, I will ask you another thing also. Which is higher? He who acts as a priest to God and offers sacrifice? or he who is somewhere far removed from confidence towards Him? And what manner of sacrifice doth the lowly man offer? one may say. Hear David saying, "The sacrifice of God is a contrite spirit; a contrite and humbled heart God will not despise." Seest thou the purity of this man? Behold also the uncleanness of the other; for "every one that is proud in heart is unclean before God." Besides, the one hath God resting upon him, ("For unto whom will I look," saith He, "but to him that is meek and quiet, and trembleth at my words"), but the other crawls with the devil, for he that is lifted up with pride shall suffer the devil's punishment. Wherefore Paul also said, "Lest, being lifted up with pride, he should fall into the condemnation of the devil."

And the thing opposite to what he wishes, befalls him. For his wish is to be arrogant, that he may be honored; but the most contemned of all is this character. For these most of all are laughing stocks, foes and enemies to all men, the most easy to be subdued by their enemies, the men that easily fall into anger, the unclean before God. What then can be worse than this, for this is the extremity of evils? And what is sweeter than the lowly, what more blessed, since, they are longed after, and beloved of God? And the glory too that cometh of men, these do most of all enjoy, and all honor them as fathers, embrace them as brothers, receive them as their own members.

Let us then become lowly, that we may be high. For most utterly doth arrogance abase. This abased Pharaoh. For, "I know not," he saith, "the Lord," and he became inferior to flies and frogs, and the locusts, and after that with his very arms and horses was he drowned in the sea. In direct opposition to him, Abraham saith, "I am dust and ashes," and prevailed over countless barbarians, and having fallen into the midst of Egyptians, returned, bearing a trophy more glorious than the former, and, cleaving to this virtue, grew ever more high. Therefore he is celebrated everywhere, therefore he is crowned and proclaimed; but Pharaoh is both earth and ashes, and if there is anything else more vile than these. For nothing cloth God so abhor as arrogance. For this object hath He done all things from the beginning, in order that He might root out this passion. Because of this are we become mortal, and are in sorrows, and wailings. Because of this are we in toil, and sweat, and in labor continual, and mingled with affliction. For indeed out of arrogance did the first man sin, looking for an equality with God. Therefore, not even what things he had, did he continue to possess, but lost even these.

For arrogance is like this, so far from adding to us any improvement of our life, it subtracts even what we have; as, on the contrary, humility, so far from subtracting from what we have, adds to us also what we have not. This virtue then let us emulate, this let us pursue,

that we may both enjoy present honor, and attain unto the glory to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be unto the Father glory and might, together with the Holy Ghost, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 66

Matthew Chapter 20, Verse 29 And Matthew Chapter 20, Verse 30

"And as they departed from Jericho, great multitudes followed Him. And, behold, two blind men sitting by the wayside, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, Thou Son of David." See whence He passed unto Jerusalem, and where He abode before this, with regard to which it seems to me especially worthy of inquiry, wherefore He went not away even long before this from thence unto Galilee, but through Samaria. But this we will leave to them that are fond of learning. For if any one were disposed to search the matter out carefully, he will find that John intimates it well, and hath expressed the cause. But let us keep to the things set before us, and let us listen to these blind men, who were better than many that see. For neither having a guide, nor being able to see Him when come near to them, nevertheless they strove to come unto Him, and began to cry with a loud voice, and when rebuked for speaking, they cried the more. For such is the nature of an enduring soul, by the very things that hinder, it is borne up.

But Christ suffered them to be rebuked, that their earnestness might the more appear, and that thou mightest learn that worthily they enjoy the benefits of their cure. Therefore He doth not so much as ask, "Do ye believe?" as He doth with many; for their cry, and their coming unto Him, sufficed to make their faith manifest. Hence learn, O beloved, that though we be very vile and outcast, but yet approach God with earnestness, even by ourselves we shall be able to effect whatsoever we ask. See, for instance, these men, how, having none of the apostles to plead with them, but rather many to stop their mouths, they were able to pass over the hindrances, and to come unto Jesus Himself. And yet the evangelist bears witness to no confidence of life in them, but earnestness sufficed them instead of all. These then let us also emulate. Though God defer the gift, though there be many withdrawing us, let us not desist from asking. For in this way most of all shall we win God to us. See at least even here, how not poverty, not blindness, not their being unheard, not their being rebuked by the multitude, not anything else, impeded their exceeding earnestness. Such is the nature of a fervent and toiling soul.

What then saith Christ? "He called them, and said, What will ye that I should do unto you? They say unto Him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened." Wherefore cloth He ask them? Lest any one should think that when they wish to receive one thing, He giveth them another thing.

For indeed it is usual with Him on every occasion, first to make manifest and discover to all the virtue of those He is healing, and then to apply the cure, for one reason, that He might lead on the others likewise to emulation; and for another, that He might show that they were enjoying the gift worthily. This, for instance, He did with respect to the Canaanitish woman also, this too in the case of the centurion, this again as to her that had the issue of blood, or rather that marvellous woman even anticipated the Lord's inquiry; but not so did He pass her by, but even after the cure makes her manifest. Such earnest care had He on every occasion to proclaim the good deeds of them that come to Him, and to show them to be much greater than they are, which He doth here also.

Then, when they said what they wished, He had compassion on them, and touched them. For this alone is the cause of their cure, for which also He came into the world. But nevertheless, although it be mercy and grace, it seeks for the worthy. But that they were worthy is manifest, both from what they cried out, and from the fact that, when they had received, they did not hasten away, as many do, being ungrateful after the benefits. Nay, they were not like this, but were both persevering before the gift, and after the gift grateful, for "they followed Him." "And when He drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and was come to Bethphage, unto the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples, saying, Go into the village over against you, and ye shall find an ass tied, and a coIt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he sendeth them. And this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Zechariah the prophet, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh to thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass."

And yet He had often entered Jerusalem before, but never with so much circumstance. What then is the cause? It was the beginning then of the dispensation; and neither was He very well known, nor the time of His passion near; wherefore He mixed with them with less distinction, and more disguising Himseif. For He would not have been held in admiration, had He so appeared, and He would have excited them to greater anger. But when He had both given them sufficient proof of His power, and the cross was at the doors, He makes Himself then more conspicuous, and doeth with greater circumstance all the things that were likely to inflame them. For it was indeed possible for this to have been done at the beginning also; but it was not profitable nor expedient it should be so. But do thou observe, I pray thee. how many miracles are done, and how many prophecies are fulfilled. He said, "Ye shall find an ass;" He foretold that no man should hinder them, but that all, when they heard, should hold their peace.

But this is no small condemnation of the Jews, if them that were never known to Him, neither had appeared before Him, He persuades to give up their own property, and to say nothing against it, and that by His disciples, while these, being present with Him at the working of His miracles, were not persuaded. 2. And do not account what was done to be a small thing. For who persuaded them, when their own property was taken from them, and that, when they were perhaps poor men and husbandmen, not to forbid it? Why say I

not to forbid it? not to ask, or even if they asked, to hold their peace, and give it up. For indeed both things were alike marvellous, as well, if they said nothing, when their beasts were dragged away, or if having spoken, and heard, "The Lord hath need of them," they yielded and withstood not, and this when they see not Him, but His disciples.

By these things He teaches them, that it was in His power to have entirely hindered the Jews also, even against their will, when they were proceeding to attack Him, and to have made them speechless, but He would not. And another thing again together with these doth He teach the disciples, to give whatever He should ask; and, though he should require them to yield up their very life, to give even this, and not to gainsay. For if even strangers gave up to Him, much more ought they to strip themselves of all things. And besides what we have said, He was fulfilling also another prophecy, one which was twofold, one part in words, and another in deeds. And that in deeds was, by the sitting on the ass; and that by words, the prediction of Zacharias; because he had said, that the King should sit on an ass. And He, having sat and having fulfilled it, gave to the prophecy another beginning again, by what He was doing typifying beforehand the things to come.

How and in what manner? He proclaimed beforehand the calling of the unclean Gentiles, and that He should rest upon them, and that they should yield to Him and follow Him, and prophecy succeeded to prophecy. But to me He seemeth not for this object only to sit on the ass, but also as affording us a standard of self-denial. For not only did He fulfill prophecies, nor did He only plant the doctrines of the truth, but by these very things He was correcting our practice for us, everywhere setting us rules of necessary use, and by all means amending our life. For this cause, I say, even when He was to be born He sought not a splendid house, nor a mother rich and distinguished, but a poor woman, and one that had a carpenter as her betrothed husband; and is born in a shed, and laid in a manger: and choosing His disciples, He chose not orators and wise men, not rich men and nobly born, but poor men, and of poor families, and in every way undistinguished; and providing His table, at one time He sets before Himself barley loaves, and at another at the very moment commands the disciples to buy at the market. And making His couch, He makes it of grass, and putting on raiment, He clothes Himself in what is cheap, and in no respect different from the common sort; and a house He did not so much as possess. And if He had to go from place to place, He did this travelling on foot, and so travelling, as even to grow weary. And sitting, He requires no throne nor pillow, but sits on the ground, sometimes in the mountain, and sometimes by the well, and not merely by the well, but also alone, and talks with a Samaritan woman.

Again, setting measures of sorrow, when He had need to mourn, He weeps moderately, everywhere setting us rules, as I have said, and limits how far one ought to proceed, and not any further. So for this intent now also, since it happens that some are weak and have need of beasts to carry them, in this too He fixes a measure, showing that one ought not to yoke horses or mules to be borne by them, but to use an ass, and not to proceed further, and everywhere to be limited by the want. But let us look also at the prophecy, that by words, that by acts. What then is the prophecy? "Behold, thy King cometh to thee, meek,

and riding on an ass, and a young colt;" not driving chariots, like the rest of the kings, not demanding tributes, not thrusting men off, and leading about guards, but displaying His great meekness even hereby.

Ask then the Jew, what King came to Jerusalem borne on an ass? Nay, he could not mention, but this alone. But He did these things, as I said, signifying beforehand the things to come. For here the church is signified by the colt, and the new people, which was once unclean, but which, after Jesus sat on them, became clean. And see the image preserved throughout. I mean that the disciples loose the asses For by the apostles, both they and we were called; by the apostles were we brought near. But because our acceptance provoked them also to emulation, therefore the ass appears following the colt. For after Christ hath sat on the Gentiles, then shall they also come moving us to emulation. And Paul declaring this, said, "That blindnesss in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved." For that it was a prophecy is evident from what is said. For neither would the prophet have cared to express with such great exactness the age of the ass, unless this had been so.

But not these things only are signified by what is said, but also that the apostles should bring them with ease. For as here, no man gainsaid them so as to keep the asses, so neither with regard to the Gentiles was any one able to prevent them, of those who were before masters of them. But He doth not sit on the bare colt, but on the apostles' garments. For after they had taken the colt, they then gave up all, even as Paul also said, "I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls." But mark how tractable the colt, how being unbroken, and having never known the rein, he was not restive, but went on orderly; which thing itself was a prophecy of the future, signifying the submissiveness of the Gentiles, and their sudden conversion to good order. For all things did that word work, which said, "Loose him, and bring him to me:" so that the unmanageable became orderly, and the unclean thenceforth clean.

3. But see the baseness of the Jews. He had wrought so many miracles, and never were they thus amazed at Him; but when they saw a multitude running together, then they marvel. "For all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? But the multitudes said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee." And when they thought they were saying something great, even then were their thoughts earthly, and low, and dragging on the ground. But these things He did, not as displaying any pomp, but at once, as I have said, both fulfilling a prophecy, and teaching self-denial, and at the same time also comforting His disciples, who were grieving for His death, and showing them that He suffers all these things willingly. And mark thou, I pray thee, the accuracy of the prophet, how he foretold all things. And some things David, some things Zechariah, had proclaimed beforehand. Let us also do likewise, and let us sing hymns, and give up our garments to them that bear Him. For what should we deserve, when some clothe the ass on which He was set, and others strew the garments even under her feet; but we, seeing him naked, and not being even commanded to strip ourselves, but to spend of what is laid by, not even so are liberal? And when they

indeed attend upon Him before and behind, but we, when He cometh unto us, send Him away, and thrust Him off and insult Him.

How sore a punishment do these things deserve, how great vengeance! Thy Lord cometh unto thee in need, and thou art not willing so much as to listen to His entreaty, but thou blamest and rebukest Him, and this, when thou hast heard such words as these. But if in giving one loaf, and a little money, thou art so mean, and haughty, and backward; if thou hadst to empty out all, what wouldest thou become? Seest thou not those that show their magnificence in the theatre, how much they give away to the harlots? but thou givest not so much as the half, nay often not the smallest part. But the devil is exhorting to give to whom it may chance, procuring us hell, and thou givest; but Christ to the needy, promising a kingdom, and thou, far from giving, dost rather insult them, and thou choosest rather to obey the devil, that thou mightest be punished, than to submit to Christ, and be saved.

And what could be worse than this frenzy? One procures hell, the other a kingdom, and ye leave the latter, and run unto the former. And this ye send away, when He cometh unto you, that when he is far off, ye call unto you. And what you do is the same as if a king bearing a royal robe, and offering a diadem, did not win your choice, but a robber brandishing a sword at you, and threatening death, were to win it. Considering these things then, beloved, let us discern the truth at length though late, and let us grow sober. For I am now ashamed of speaking of almsgiving, because that having often spoken on this subject, I have effected nothing worth the exhortation. For some increase indeed hath there been, but not so much as I wished. For I see you sowing, but not with a liberal hand. Wherefore I fear too lest ye also ”reap sparingly.”

For in proof that we do sow sparingly, let us inquire, if it seem good, which are more numerous in the city, poor or rich; and which they, who are neither poor nor rich, but have a middle place. As, for instance, a tenth part is of rich, and a tenth of the poor that have nothing at all, and the rest of the middle sort.

Let us distribute then amongst the poor the whole multitude of the city, and ye will see the disgrace how great it is. For the very rich indeed are but few, but those that come next to them are many; again, the poor are much fewer than these. Nevertheless, although there are so many that are able to feed the hungry, many go to sleep in their hunger, not because those that have are not able with ease to succor them, but because of their great barbarity and inhumanity. For if both the wealthy, and those next to them, were to distribute amongst themselves those who are in need of bread and raiment, scarcely would one poor person fall to the share of fifty men or even a hundred. Yet nevertheless, though in such great abundance of persons to assist them, they are wailing every day. And that thou mayest learn the inhumanity of the others, when the church is possessed of a revenue of one of the lowest among the wealthy, and not of the very rich, consider how many widows it succors every day, how many virgins; for indeed the list of them hath already reached unto the number of three thousand. Together with these, she succors them that dwell in the prison, the sick in the caravansera, the healthy, those that are absent from their home, those that

are maimed in their bodies, those that wait upon the altar; and with respect to food and raiment, them that casually come every day; and her substance is in no respect diminished. So that if ten men only were thus willing to spend, there would be no poor.

4. And what, it will be said, are our children to inherit? The principal remains, and the income again is become more abundant, the goods being stored up for them in Heaven. But are ye not willing to do this? At least do it by the half, at least by the third part, at least by the fourth part at least by the tenth. For owing to God's favor, it were possible for our city to nourish the poor of ten cities. And if ye will, let us make some calculation in proof of this; or rather there is no need so much as of reckoning; for of itself the easiness of the thing is discernible. See at least, upon public occasions, how much one house hath often not been backward to spend, and hath not had so much as a little feeling of the expense, which service if each of the rich were willing to perform for the poor, in a brief moment of time he would have seized on Heaven.

What plea then will there be? what shadow of defense, when not even of the things from which we must assuredly be separated, when taken away from hence, not even of these do we impart to the needy with as much liberality as others to those on the stage, and this when we are to reap so many benefits therefrom? For we ought indeed, even though we were always to be here, not even so to be sparing of this good expenditure; but when after a little time, we are to be removed from hence, and dragged away naked from all, what kind of defense shall we have for not even out of our income giving to the hungry and distressed? For neither do I constrain thee to lessen thy possessions, not because I do not wish it, but because I see thee very backward. It is not then this I say, but spend of your fruits, and treasure up nothing from these. It is enough for thee to have the money of thine income pouring in on thee as from a fountain; make the poor sharers with thee, and become a good steward of the things given thee of God.

But I pay tribute, one may say. For this cause then dost thou despise, because in this case no one demands it of thee? And the other, who, should the earth bear, or should it not bear, takes by force, and extorts, thou darest not gainsay; but Him that is so mild, and then only demands, when the earth bears, thou answerest not even to a word? And who will deliver thee from those intolerable punishments? There is no one. For if, because in the other case a very sore punishment will ensue to thee for not giving, therefore thou becomest diligent about the payment, consider here too is one more sore; not to be bound, neither to be cast into prison, but to depart into the eternal fire. For all reasons then let us pay these tributes first: for great is the facility, and greater the reward; and more abundant the gain, and worse the punishments to us if we are obstinate. For a punishment cometh upon us, which hath no end.

But if thou tell me of the soldier's fighting for thee with the barbarians, there is here too a camp, that of the poor, and a war, which the poor are waging for thee. For when they receive, by praying they make God propitious; and making Him propitious, they repulse, instead of barbarians, the assaults of the devils; they suffer not the evil one to be violent, neither to

attack us continually, but they relax his might. 5. Seeing therefore these soldiers every day fighting in thy behalf with the devil by their supplications and prayers, demand of thyself this good contribution, their nourishment. For this King being mild hath not assigned thee any to demand it of thee, but desires thou shouldest give it willingly; though thou pay by little and little, He receives it; though being in difficulty, thou shouldest pay after a long time, He cloth not press him that hath not.

Let us not then despise His long-suffering; let us treasure up for ourselves, not wrath, but salvation; not death, but life; not punishment and vengeance, but honors and crowns. There is no need in this case to pay a hire for the conveyance of the things contributed; there is no need in this case to labor in turning them into money. If thou givest them up, the Lord Himself removes them into Heaven; He Himself makes the traffic the more gainful for thee. There is no need here to find one to carry in what thou hast contributed; contribute only, and straightway it goeth up, not that others may be maintained as soldiers, but that it may remain for thee with great profit. For here whatsoever thou mayest have given, it is not possible to recover; but there thou wilt receive them again with much honor, and shalt gain greater, and more spiritual gains. Here the gifts are a demand; there a loan, and money at interest, and a debt.

Yea farther, God hath given thee bonds. For" he that showeth mercy to a poor man," it is said, "lendeth to the Lord." He gave thee also an earnest, and bail, and this being God! What sort of earnest? The things in the present life, the visible, the spiritual things, the foretaste of the things to come. Why then dost thou delay, and why art thou backward, having received so many things already, looking for so many things? For what thou hast received are these: He Himseif made thee a body, He Himself put in thee a soul, He honored with speech thee alone of the things on the earth, He gave thee the use of all the things that are seen, He bestowed on thee the knowledge of Himself, He gave up His Son for thee, He gave thee a baptism full of so many good things, He gave thee a holy table, He promised a kingdom, and the good things that cannot be told.

Having then received so many good things, having to receive so many, again I say the same thing, art thou making petty reckoning about perishing riches, and what excuse wilt thou have? But art thou looking altogether at thy children? and dost draw back for the sake of these? Nay, rather teach them also to gain such gains. For if thou hadst money lent out and bearing interest, and thou hadst a grateful debtor, thou wouldest ten thousand times rather choose instead of the gold to leave the bond to thy child, so that he should have the large income from it, and not be constrained to go about, and seek for others to borrow it. And now give this bond to thy children, and leave God a debtor to them. Thou dost not sell thy lands, and give to thy children, but leavest them, that the income may remain, and that they may have a greater increase of riches from thence; but this bond, which is more productive than any land or revenue, and bears so many fruits, this art thou afraid to leave to them? What great folly must this be, and frenzy. And this when thou knowest, that though thou shouldest leave it to them, thou thyself also shall again take it away with thee.

Of this nature are the things spiritual; they have great munificence. Let us not then be beggarly; neither be inhuman and savage towards ourselves, but let us traffic in that good merchandise; that we may both ourselves take it away with us when we depart, and leave it to our own children, and attain to the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom be unto the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, glory, might, honor, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 67

Matthew Chapter 21, Verse 12 And Matthew Chapter 21, Verse 13

"And Jesus went into the temple, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrow the tables of the money-changers and the seats of them that sold doves, and saith unto them, It is written, my house shall be called a house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." This John likewise saith, but he in the beginning of his Gospel, this at the end. Whence it is probable this was done twice, and at different seasons. And it is evident both from the times, and from their reply. For there He came at the very passover, but here much before. And there the Jews say, "What sign showest thou us?" but here they hold their peace, although reproved, because He was now marvelled at amongst all men. And this is a heavier charge against the Jews, that when He had done this not once only, but a second time, they continued in their trafficking, and said that He was an adversary of God, when they ought even from hence to have learnt His honor for His Father and His own might. For indeed He also wrought miracles, and they saw His words agreeing with His works.

But not even so were they persuaded, but "were sore displeased," and this while they heard the prophet crying aloud, and the children in a manner beyond their age proclaiming Him. Wherefore also He Himself sets up Isaiah against them as an accuser, saying, "My house shall be called a house of prayer. But not in this way only doth He show His authority, but also by His healing divers in firmities. "For the blind and the tame came unto Him, and He healed them," and His power and authority He indicates. But they not even so would be persuaded, but together with the rest of the miracles hearing even the children proclaiming, were ready to choke, and say, "Hearest thou not what these say? And yet it was Christ's part to have said this to them, "Hear ye not what these say?" for the children were singing to Him as to God.

What then saith He? Since they were speaking against things manifest, He applies His correction more in the way of reproof, saying, "Have ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?" And well did He say, "Out of the mouth." For what was said was not of their understanding, but of His power giving articulation to their tongue yet immature. And this was also a type of the Gentiles lisping, and sounding forth at once great things with understanding and faith. And for the apostles also there was

from hence no small consolation. For that they might not be perplexed, how being unlearned they should be able to publish the gospel, the children anticipate them, and remove all their anxiety, teaching them, that He would grant them utterance, who made even these to sing praises. And not so only, but the miracle showed that He is Creator even of nature. The children then, although of age immature, uttered things that had a clear meaning, and were in accordance with those above, but the men things teeming with frenzy and madness. For such is the nature of wickedness.

Forasmuch then as there were many things to provoke them, from the multitude, from the casting out of the sellers, from the miracles, from the children, He again leaves them, giving room to the swelling passion, and not willing to begin His teaching, test boiling with envy they should be the more displeased at His sayings. "Now in the morning as He returned into the city, He was an hungered." How is He an hungered in the morning? When He permits the flesh, then it shows its feeling. "And when He saw a fig tree in the way, He came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only." Another evangelist saith, "The time of figs was not yet;" but if it was not time, how doth the other evangelist say, "He came, if haply He might find fruit thereon." Whence it is manifest that this belongs to the suspicion of His disciples, who were yet in a somewhat imperfect state. For indeed the evangelists in many places record the suspicions of the disciples.

Like as this then was their suspicion, so also was it too to suppose it was cursed for this cause, because of having no fruit. Wherefore then was it cursed? For the disciples' sakes, that they might have confidence. For because everywhere He conferred benefits, but punished no man; and it was needful that He should afford them a demonstrative proof of His power to take vengeance also, that both the disciples might learn, and the Jews, that being able to blast them that crucify Him, of His own will He submits, and does not blast them; and it was not His will to show forth this upon men; upon the plant did He furnish the proof of His might in taking vengeance. But when unto places, or unto plants, or unto brutes, any such thing as this is done, be not curious, neither say, how was the fig-tree justly dried up, if it was not the time of figs; for this it is the utmost trifling to say; but behold the miracle, and admire and glorify the worker thereof.

Since in the case also of the swine that were drowned, many have said this, working out the argument of justice; but neither there should one give heed, for these again are brutes, even as that was a plant without life. Wherefore then was the act invested with such an appearance, and with this plea for a curse? As I said, this was the disciple's suspicion. But if it was not yet time, vainly do some say the law is here meant. For the fruit of this was faith, and then was the time of this fruit, and it had indeed borne it; "For already are the fields white to harvest," saith He; and, "I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor." 2. Not any therefore of these things doth He here intimate, but it is what I said, He displays His power to punish, and this is shown by saying, "The time was not yet," making it clear that of this special purpose He went, and not for hunger, but for His disciples' sake, who indeed marvelled exceedingly, although many miracles had been done greater; but, as I said,

this was strange, for now first He showed forth His power to take vengeance. Wherefore not in any other, but in the moistest of all planted things did He work the miracle, so that hence also the miracle appeared greater.

And that thou mightest learn, that for their sakes this was done, that He might train them to feel confidence, hear what He saith afterwards. But what saith He? "Ye also shall do greater things, if ye are willing to believe and to be confident in prayer." Seest thou that all is done for their sake, so that they might not be afraid and tremble at plots against them? Wherefore He saith this a second time also, to make them cleave to prayer and faith. For not this only shall ye do, but also shall remove mountains; and many more things shall ye do, being confident in faith and prayer." But the boastful and arrogant Jews, wishing to interrupt His teaching, came unto Him, and asked, "By what authority doest thou these things?" For since they could not object against the miracles, they bring forward against Him the correction of the traffickers in the temple. And this in John also they appear to ask, although not in these words, but with the same intent. For there too they say, "What sign showest thou unto us? seeing that thou doest these things." But there He answers them, saying, "Destroy this temple, and I in three days will raise it up," whereas here He drives them into a difficulty. Whence it is manifest, that then indeed was the beginning and prelude of the miracles, but here the end.

But what they say is this: Hast thou received the teacher's chair? Hast thou been ordained a priest, that thou didst display such authority? it is said. And yet He had done nothing implying arrogance, but had been careful for the good order of the temple, yet nevertheless having nothing to say, they object against this. And indeed when He cast them out, they did not dare to say anything, because of the miracles, but when He showed Himself, then they find fault with Him. What then saith He? He doth not answer them directly, to show that, if they had been willing to see His authority, they could; but He asks them again, saying, "The baptism of John, whence is it? From heaven, or of men?" And what sort of inference is this? The greatest surely. For if they had said, from heaven, He would have said unto them, why then diet ye not believe him? For if they had believed, they would not have asked these things. For of Him John had said, "I am not worthy to loose the latchet of His shoe; and, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world;" and, "This is the Son of God;" and, "He that cometh from above is above all;" and, "His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor." So that if they had believed him, there was nothing to hinder them from knowing by what authority Christ doeth these things.

After this, because they, dealing craftily, said, "We know not," He said not, neither know I, but what? "Neither tell I you." For if indeed they had been ignorant it would have been requisite for them to be instructed; but since they were dealing craftily with good reason He answers them nothing. And how was it they did not say that the baptism was of men? "They feared the people" it is said. Seest thou a perverse heart? It, every case they despise God and do all things for the sake of men. For this man too they feared for their sakes not reverencing the saint but on account of men? and they were not willing to believe in Christ,

because of men, and all their evils were engendered to them from hence. After this, He saith, "What think ye? A man had two sons; and he saith to the first, go, work to-day in the vineyard. But he answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go sir: and went not. Whether then of them twain did the will of his father? They say, the first."

Again He convicts them by a parable, intimating both their unreasonable obstinacy, and the submissiveness of those who were utterly condemned by them. For these two children declare what came to pass with respect to both the Gentiles and the Jews. For the former not having undertaken to obey, neither having become hearers of the law, showed forth their obedience in their works; and the latter having said, "All that the Lord shall speak, we will do, and will hearken," in their works were disobedient. And for this reason, let me add, that they might not think the law would benefit them, He shows that this self-same thing condemns them, like as Paul also saith," Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." For this intent, that He might make them even self-condemned, He causes the judgment to be delivered by themselves, like as He does also in the ensuing parable of the vineyard.

3. And that this might be done, He makes trial of the accusation in the person of an other. For since they were not willing to confess directly, He by a parable drives them on to what He desired. But when, not understanding His sayings, they had delivered the judgment, He unfolds His concealed meaning after this, and saith, "Publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of Heaven before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans believed him; and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterwards, that ye might believe him. For if He had said simply, harlots go before you, the word would have seemed to them to be offensive; but now, being uttered after their own judgment it appears to be not too hard. Therefore He adds also the accusation. What then is this? "John came," He saith, "unto you," not unto them, and not this only, but; also "in the way of righteousness." "For neither with this can ye find fault, that he was some careless one, and of no profit; but both his life was irreprehensible, and his care for you great, and ye gave no heed to him."

And with this there is another charge also, that publicans gave heed; and with this, again another, that "not even after them did ye. For ye should have done so even before them, but not to do it even after them was to be deprived of all excuse;" and unspeakable was both the praise of the one, and the charge against the other. "To you he came, and ye accepted him not; he came not to them, and they receive him, and not even them did ye take for instructors." See by how many things is shown the commendation of those, and the charge against these. To you he came, not to them. Ye believed not, this offended not them. They believed, this profited not you. But the word, "go before you," is not as though these were following, but as having a hope, if they were willing. For nothing, so much as jealousy, rouses the grosser sort. Therefore He is ever saying, "The first shall be last, and the last

first." Therefore He brought in both harlots and publicans, that they might provoke them to jealousy.

For these two indeed are chief sins, engendered of violent lust, the one of sexual desire, the other of the desire of money. And He indicates that this especially was hearing the law of God, to believe John. For it was not of grace only, that harlots entered in, but also of righteousness. For not, as continuing harlots, did they enter in, but having obeyed and believed, and having been purified and converted, so did they enter in. Seest thou how He rendered His discourse less offensive, and more penetrating, by the parable, by His bringing in the harlots? For neither did He say at once, wherefore believed ye not John? but what was much more pricking, when, He had put forward the publicans and the harlots, then He added this, by the order of their actions convicting their unpardonable conduct, and showing that for fear of men they do all things, and for vainglory. For they did not confess Christ for fear, test they should be put out of the synagogue; and again, of John they dared not speak evil, and not even this from reverence, but for fear. All which things He convicted by His sayings, and with more severity afterwards did He go on to inflict the blow, saying, "But ye, when ye knew it, repented not afterwards, that ye might believe him."

For an evil thing it is not at the first to choose the good, but it is a heavier charge not even to be brought round. For this above all maketh many wicked, which I see to be the case with some now from extreme insensibility. But let no one be like this; but though he be sunk down to the extremity of wickedness, let him not despair of the change for the better. For it is an easy thing to rise up out of the very abysses of wickedness. Heard ye not how that harlot, that went beyond all in lasciviousness, outshone all in godly reverence. Not the harlot in the gospels do I mean, but the one in our generation, who came from Phoenice, that most lawless city. For she was once a harlot among us, having the first honors on the stage, and great was her name everywhere, not in our city only, but even as far as the Cilicians and Cappadocians. And many estates did she ruin, and many orphans did she overthrow; and many accused her of sorcery also, as weaving such toils not by her beauty of person only, but also by her drugs. This harlot once won even the brother of the empress, for mighty indeed was her tyranny.

But all at once, I know not how, or rather I do know well, for it was being so minded, and converting, and bringing down upon herself God's grace, she despised all those things, and having cast away the arts of the devils, mounted up to heaven. And indeed nothing was more vile than she was, when she was on the stage; nevertheless, afterwards she outwent many in exceeding continence, and having clad herself with sackcloth, all her time she thus disciplined herself. On the account of this woman both the governor was stirred up, and soldiers armed, yet they had not strength to carry her off to the stage, nor to lead her away from the virgins that had received her. This woman having been counted worthy of the unutterable mysteries, and having exhibited a diligence proportionate to the grace (given her) so ended her life, having washed off all through grace, and after her baptism having shown forth much self-restraint. For not even a mere sight of herself did she allow

to those who were once her lovers, when they had come for this, having shut herself up, and having passed many years, as it were, in a prison. Thus "shall the last be first, and the first last;" thus do we in every case need a fervent soul, and there is nothing to hinder one from becoming great and admirable:

4. Let no man then of them that live in vice despair; let no man who lives in virtue slumber. Let neither this last be confident, for often the harlot will pass him by; nor let the other despair, for it is possible for him to pass by even the first. Hear what God saith unto Jerusalem, "I said, after she had committed all these whoredoms, Turn thou unto me, and she returned not." When we have come back unto the earnest love of God, He remembers not the former things. God is not as man, for He reproaches us not with the past, neither doth He say, Why wast thou absent so long a time? when we repent; only let us approach Him as we ought. Let us cleave to Him earnestly, and rivet our hearts to His fear. Such things have been done not under the new covenant only, but even under the old. For what was worse than Manasseh? but he was able to appease God. What more blessed than Solomon? but when he slumbered, he fell. Or rather I can show even both things to have taken place in one, in the father of this man, for he the same person became at different times both good and bad. What more blessed than Judas? but he became a traitor. What more wretched than Matthew? but he became an evangelist. What worse than Paul? but he became an apostle. What more to be envied than Simon? but he became even himself the most wretched of all.

How many other such changes wouldest thou see, both to have taken place of old, and now taking place every day? For this reason then I say, Neither let him on the stave despair, nor let him in the church be confident. For to this last it is said, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall;" and to the other, "Shall not he that falleth arise?" and, "Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees." Again, to these He saith, "Watch;" but to those, "Awake, thou that sleepest and arise from the dead." For these need to preserve what they have, and those to become what they are not; these to preserve their health, those to be delivered from their infirmity, for they are sick; but many even of the sick become healthy, and of the healthy many by remissness grow infirm. To the one then He saith, "Behold, thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee;" but to these, "Wilt thou be made whole? Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house." For a dreadful, dreadful palsy is sin, or rather it is not palsy only, but also somewhat else more grievous. For such a one is not only in inactivity as to good works, but also in the active doing of evil works. But nevertheless, though thou be so disposed, and be willing to rouse thyself a little, all the terrors are at an end.

Though thou hast been so "thirty and eight years," and art earnest to become whole, there is no one to hinder thee. Christ is present now also, and saith, "Take up thy bed," only be willing to rouse thyself, despair not. Hast thou no man? but thou hast God. Hast thou no one to put thee into the pool? but thou hast Him who suffers thee not to need the pool. Hast thou had no one to cast thee in there? but thou hast Him that commands thee to take up thy bed. Thou mayest not say, "While I am coming, another steppeth down before me."

For if it be thy will to go down into the fountain, there is none to hinder thee. Grace is not consumed, is not spent, it is a kind of fountain springing up constantly; by His fullness are we all healed both soul and body. Let us come unto it then even now. For Rahab also was a harlot, yet was she saved; and the thief was a murderer, yet he became a citizen of paradise; and while Judas being with his Master perished, the thief being on a cross became a disciple. Such are the wonderful works of God. Thus the magi approved themselves, thus the publican became an evangelist, thus the blasphemer an apostle.

5. Look at these things, and never despair, but be ever confident, and rouse thyself. Lay hold only on the way that leads thither, and thou wilt advance quickly. Shut not up the doors, close not up the entrance. Short is the present life, small the labor. But though it were great, not even so ought one to decline it. For if thou toil not at this most glorious toil that is spent upon repentance and virtue, in the world thou wilt assuredly toil and weary thyself in other ways. But if both in the one and the other there be labor, why do we not choose that which hath its fruit abundant, and its recompense greater. Yet neither is this labor and that the same. For in worldly pursuits are continual perils, and losses one upon another, and the hope uncertain; great is the servility, and the expenditure alike of wealth, and of bodies, and of souls; and then the return of the fruits is far below our expectation, if perchance it should grow up.

For neither doth toil upon worldly matters everywhere bear fruit; nay but even, when it hath not failed, but has brought forth its produce even abundantly, short is the time wherein it continues. For when thou art grown old, and hast no longer after that the feeling of enjoyment in perfection, then and not till then doth the labor bear thee its recompense. And whereas the labor was with the body in its vigor, the fruit and the enjoyment is with one grown old and languid, when time has dulled even the feeling, although if it had not dulled it, the expectation of the end suffers us not to find pleasure. But in the other case not so, but the labor is in corruption and a dying body, but the crown in one incorruptible, and immortal, and having no end. And the labor is both first and short-lived; but the reward both subsequent and endless, that with security thou mayest take thy rest after that, looking for nothing unpleasant.

For neither mayest thou fear change any more or loss as here. What sort of good things, then, are these, which are both insecure, and short-lived, and earthly, and vanishing before they have appeared, and acquired with many toils? And what good things are equal to those, that are immovable, that grow not old, that have no toil, that even at the time of the conflicts bring thee crowns? For he that despises money even here already receives his reward, being freed from anxiety, from rivalry, from false accusation, from plotting from envy. He that is temperate, and lives orderly, even before his departure, is crowned and lives in pleasure, being delivered from unseemliness, ridicule, dangers of accusation, and the other things that are to be feared. All the remaining parts of virtue likewise make us a return here already. In order therefore that we may attain unto both the present and the future blessings, let us flee from vice and choose virtue. For thus shall we both enjoy delight,

and obtain the crowns to come, unto which God grant we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 68

Matthew Chapter 21, Verse 33-Matthew Chapter 21, Verse 44
"Hear another parable. There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country. And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to receive the fruits. And the husbandmen took the servants, and beat some, and killed some, and stoned some. Again he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last he sent unto them his son, saying, It may be they will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir, come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the Lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do to those husbandmen? They say unto Him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The Stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?"

Many things doth He intimate by this parable, God's providence, which had been exercised towards them from the first; their murderous disposition from the beginning; that nothing had been omitted of whatever pertained to a heedful care of them; that even when prophets had been slain, He had not turned away from them, but had sent His very Son; that the God both of the New and of the Old Testament was one and the same; that His death should effect great blessings; that they were to endure extreme punishment for the crucifixion, and their crime; the calling of the Gentiles, the casting out of the Jews. Therefore He putteth it after the former parable, that He may show even hereby the charge to be greater, and highly unpardonable. How, and in what way? That although they met with so much care, they were worse than harlots and publicans, and by so much.

And observe also both His great care, and the excessive idleness of these men. For what pertained to the husbandmen, He Himself did, the hedging it round about, the planting the vineyard, and all the rest, and He left little for them to do; to take care of what was there, and to preserve what was given to them. For nothing was left undone, but all accomplished; and not even so did they gain, and this, when they had enjoyed such great blessings from Him. For when they had come forth out of Egypt, He gave a law, and set up a city, and

built a temple, and prepared an altar. "And went into a far country;" that He bore long with them, not always bringing the punishments close upon their sins; for by His going into a far country, He means His great long-suffering. And "He sent His servants," that is, the prophets, "to receive the fruit;" that is, their obedience, the proof of it by their works. But they even here showed their wickedness, not only by failing to give the fruit, after having enjoyed so much care, which was the sign of idleness, but also by showing anger towards them that came. For they that had not to give when they owed, should not have been indignant, nor angry, but should have entreated. But they not only were indignant, but even filled their hands with blood, and while deserving punishment, themselves inflicted punishment.

Therefore He sent both a second, and a third company, both that the wickedness of these might be shown, and the love towards man of Him who sent them. And wherefore sent He not His Son immediately? In order that they might condemn themselves for the things done to the others, and leave off their wrath, and reverence Him when He came. There are also other reasons, but for the present let us go on to what is next. But what means, "It may be they will reverence?" It is not the language of one ignorant, away with the thought! but of one desiring to show the sin to be great; and without any excuse. Since Himself knowing that they would slay Him, He sent Him. But He saith, "They will reverence," declaring what ought to have been done, that it was their duty to have reverenced Him. Since elsewhere also He saith, "if perchance they will hear;" not in this case either being ignorant, but lest any of the obstinate should say, that His prediction was the thing that necessitated their disobedience, therefore He frames His expressions in this way, saying, "Whether they will," and, "It may be." For though they had been obstinate towards His servants, yet ought they to have reverenced the dignity of the Son.

What then do these? When they ought to have run unto Him, when they ought to have asked pardon for their offenses, they even persist more strongly in their former sins, they proceed to add unto their pollutions, forever throwing into the shade their former offenses by their later; as also He Himself declared when He said, "Fill ye up the measure of your fathers." For from the first the prophets used to charge them with these things, saying, "Your hands are full of blood;" and, "They mingle blood with blood;" and, "They build up Sion with blood." But they did not learn self-restraint, albeit they received this commandment first, "Thou shalt not kill;" and had been commanded to abstain from countless other things because of this, and by many and various means urged to the keeping of this commandment. Yet, for all that, they put not away that evil custom; but what say they, when they saw Him? Come, let us kill Him. With what motive, and for what reason? what of any kind had they to lay to His charge, either small or great? Is it that He honored you, and being God became man for your sakes, and wrought His countless miracles? or that He pardoned your sins? or that He called you unto a kingdom?

But see together with their impiety great was their folly, and the reason of His murder was full of much madness. "For let us kill Him," it is said, "and the inheritance shall be ours."

And where do they take counsel to kill Him? "Out of the vineyard." 2. Seest thou how He prophesies even the place where He was to be slain. "And they cast Him out, and slew Him." And Luke indeed saith, that He declared what these men should suffer; and they said, "God forbid;" and He added the testimony [of Scripture]. For "He beheld them, and said, What is it then that is written? The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner; and every; one that falleth upon it shall be broken." But Matthew, that they themselves delivered the sentence. But this is not a contradiction. For indeed both things were done, both themselves passed the sentence against themselves; and again, when they perceived what they had said, they added, "God forbid;" and He set up the prophet against them, persuading them that certainly this would be.

Nevertheless, not even so did He plainly reveal the Gentiles, that He might afford them no handle, but signified it darkly by saying, "He will give the vineyard to others." For this purpose then did He speak by a parable, that themselves might pass the sentence, which was done in the case of David also, when He passed judgment on the parable of Nathan. But do thou mark, I pray thee, even hereby how just is the sentence, when the very persons that are to be punished condemn themselves. Then that they might learn that not only the nature of justice requires these things, but even from the beginning the grace of the Spirit had foretold them, and God had so decreed, He both added a prophecy, and reproves them in a way to put them to shame, saying, "Did ye never read, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes;" by all things showing, that they should be cast out for unbelief, and the Gentiles brought in. This He darkly intimated by the Canaanitish woman also; this again by the ass, and by the centurion, and by many other parables; this also now.

Wherefore He added too, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes," declaring beforehand that the believing Gentiles, and as many of the Jews as should also themselves believe, shall be one, although the difference between them had been so great before. Then, that they might learn that nothing was opposed to God's will of the things doing, but that the event was even highly acceptable, and beyond expectation, and amazing every one of the beholders (for indeed the miracle was far beyond words), He added and said, "It is the Lord's doing." And by the stone He means Himself, and by builders the teachers of the Jews; as Ezekiel also saith, "They that build the wall, and daub it with untempered mortar." But how did they reject Him? By saying, "This man is not of God; This man deceiveth the people;" and again, "Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil."

Then, that they might know that the penalty is not limited to their being cast out, He added the punishments also, saying, "Every one that falleth on this stone, shall be broken; but upon whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder." He speaks here of two ways of destruction, one from stumbling and being offended; for this is, "Whosoever falleth on this stone:" but another from their capture, and calamity, and utter destruction, which also He clearly foretold, saying, "It will grind him to powder." By these words He darkly intimated His own resurrection also. Now the Prophet Isaiah saith, that He blames the

vineyard, but here He accuses in particular the rulers of the people. And there indeed He saith, "What ought I to have done to my vineyard, that I did not;" and elsewhere again, "What transgression have your fathers found in me?" And again, "O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I grieved thee?" showing their thankless disposition, and that when in the enjoyment of all things, they requited it by the contraries; but here He expresses it with yet greater force. For He cloth not plead, Himself, saying, "What ought I to have done that I have not done?" but brings in themselves to judge, that nothing hath been wanting, and to condemn themselves. For when they say, "He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out the vineyard to other husbandmen," they say nothing else than this, publishing their sentence with much greater force.

With this Stephen also upbraids them, which thing most of all stung them, that having enjoyed always much providential care, they requited their benefactor with the contraries, which very thing itself was a very great sign, that not the punisher, but the punished, were the cause of the vengeance brought upon them. This here likewise is shown, by the parable, by the prophecy. For neither was He satisfied with a parable only, but added also a twofold prophecy, one David's, the others from Himself. What then ought they to have done on hearing these things? ought they not to have adored, to have marvelled at the tender care, that shown before, that afterwards? But if by none of these things they were made better, by the fear of punishment at any rate ought they not to have been rendered more temperate? But they did not become so, but what do they after these things? "When they had heard it," it is said, "they perceived that He spake of them. And when they sought to lay hands on Him, they were afraid because of the multitudes, for they took Him for a prophet." For they felt afterwards that they themselves were intimated. Sometimes indeed, when being seized, He withdraws through the midst of them, and is not seen; and sometimes while appearing to them He lays a check upon their laboring eagerness; at which indeed men marveled, and said, "Is not this Jesus? Lo, He speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto Him." But in this instance, forasmuch as they were held in restraint by the fear of the multitude, He is satisfied with this, and doth not work miracles, as before, withdrawing through the midst, and not appearing. For it was not His desire to do all things in a superhuman way, in order that the Dispensation might be believed.

But they, neither by the multitude, nor by what had been said, were brought to a sound mind; they regarded not the prophet's testimony, nor their own sentence, nor the disposition of the people; so entirely had the love of power and the lust of vainglory blinded them, together with the pursuit of things temporal. 3. For nothing so urges men headlong and drives them down precipices, nothing so makes them fail of the things to come, as their being riveted to these decaying things. Nothing so surely makes them enjoy both the one and the other, as their esteeming the things to come above all. For, "Seek ye," saith Christ, "the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you." And indeed, even if this were not joined, not even in that case ought we to aim at them. But now in obtaining the others, we may obtain these two; and not even so are some persuaded, but are like senseless stones, and pursue shadows of pleasure. For what is pleasant of the things in this present life? what

is delightful? For with greater freedom do I desire to discourse with you to-day; but suffer it, that ye may learn that this life which seems to you to be a galling and wearisome life, I mean that of the monks and of them that are crucified, is far sweeter, and more to be desired than that which seems to be easy, and more delicate.

And of this ye are witnesses, who often have asked for death, in the reverses and despondencies that have overtaken you, and have accounted happy them that are in mountains, them that are in caves, them that have not married, them that live the unworldly life; ye that are engaged in crafts, ye that are in military services, ye that live without object or rules, and pass your days at the theatres and orchestras. For of these, although numberless fountains of pleasures and mirth seem to spring up, yet are countless darts still more bitter brought forth. For if any one be seized with a passion for one of the damsels that dance there, beyond ten thousand marches, beyond ten thousand journeys from home, will he undergo a torture more grievous, being in a more miserable state than any besieged city. However, not to inquire into those things for the present, having left them to the conscience of those that have been taken captive, come let us discourse of the life of the common sort of men, and we shall find the difference between either of these kinds of life as great as between a harbor, and a sea continually beaten about with winds.

And observe from their retreats at once the first signs of their tranquillity. For they have fled from market places, and cities, and the tumults amidst men, and have chosen the life in mountains, that which hath nothing in common with the things present, that which undergoes none of the ills of man, no worldly sorrows, no grief, no care so great, no dangers, no plots, no envy, no jealousy, no lawless lusts, nor any other thing of this kind. Here already they meditate upon the things of the kingdom, holding converse with groves, and mountains, and springs, and with great quietness, and solitude, and before all these, with God. And from all turmoil is their cell pure, and from every passion and disease is their soul free, refined and light, and far purer than the finest air. And their work is what was Adam's also at the beginning and before his sin, when he was clothed with the glory, and conversed freely with God, and dwelt in that place that was full of great blessedness. For in what respect are they in a worse state than he, when before his disobedience he was set to till the garden? Had he no worldly care? But neither have these. Did he talk to God with a pure conscience? this also do these; or rather they have a greater confidence than he, inasmuch as they enjoy even greater grace by the supply of the Spirit.

Now ye ought indeed by the sight to take in these things; but forasmuch as ye are not willing, but pass your time in turmoils and in markets, by word at least let us teach you, taking one part of their way of living (for it is not possible to go over their whole life). These that are the lights of the world, as soon as the sun is up, or rather even long before its rise, rise up from their bed, healthy, and wakeful, and sober (for neither cloth any sorrow and care, nor headache, and toil, and multitude of business, nor any other such thing trouble them, but as angels live they in Heaven); having risen then straightway from their bed cheerful and glad, and having made one choir, with their conscience bright, with one voice all, like as out

of one mouth, they sing hymns unto the God of all, honoring Him and thanking Him for all His benefits, both particular, and common.

So that if it seem good, let us leave Adam, and inquire what is the difference between the angels and this company of them who on earth sing and say, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men." And their dress is suitable to their manliness. For not indeed, like those with trailing garments, the enervated and mincing, are they dressed, but like those blessed angels, Elijah, Elisha, John, like the apostles; their garments being made for them, for some of goat's hair, for some of camel's hair, and there are some for whom skins suffice alone, and these long worn. Then, after they have said those songs, they bow their knees, and entreat the God who was the object of their hymns for things, to the very thought of which some do not easily arrive. For they ask nothing of things present, for they have no regard for these, but that they may stand with boldness before the fearful judgment-seat, when the Only-Begotten Son of God is come to judge quick and dead, and that no one may hear the tearful voice that saith, "I know you not," and that with a pure conscience and many good deeds they may pass through this toilsome life, and sail over the angry sea with a favorable wind. And he leads them in their prayers, who is their Father, and their ruler.

After this, when they have risen up and finished those holy and continual prayers, the sun being risen, they depart each one to their work, gathering thence a large supply for the needy. 4. Where now are they who give themselves to devilish choirs, and harlot's songs, and sit in theatres? For I am indeed ashamed to make mention of them; nevertheless, because of your infirmity it is needful to do even this. For Paul too saith, "Like as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. Come let us also therefore compare the company that is made up of harlot women, and prostituted youths on the stage, and this same that consists of these blessed ones in regard of pleasure, for which most of all, many of the careless youths are taken in their snares. For we shall find the difference as great as if any one heard angels singing above that all-harmonious melody of theirs, and dogs and swine howling and grunting on the dunghill. For by the mouths of these Christ speaketh, by their tongues the devil.

But is the sound of pipes joined to them with unmeaning noise, and unpleasing show, when cheeks are puffed out, and their strings stretched to breaking? But here the grace of the Spirit pours forth a sound, using, instead of flute or lyre or pipes, the lips of the saints. Or rather, whatever we may say, it is not possible to set forth the pleasure thereof, because of them that are riveted to their clay, and their brick-making? Therefore I would even wish to take one of those who are mad about these matters, and to lead him off there, and to show him the choir of those saints, and I should have no more need for these words. Nevertheless, though we speak unto miry ones, we will try, though by word, still by little and little, to draw them out of the slime and the fens. For there the hearer receives straightway the fire of illicit love; for as though the sight of the harlot were not enough to set the mind on fire, they add the mischief also from the voice; but here even should the soul have any such thing, it lays

it aside straightway. But not their voice only, nor their countenance, but even their clothes do more than these confound the beholders. And should it be some poor man of the grosser and heedless sort, from the sight he will cry out ten thousand times in bitter despair, and will say to himself, "The harlot, and the prostituted boy, children of cooks and cobblers, and often even of slaves live in such delicacy, and I a freeman, and born of freemen, choosing honest labor, am not able so much as to imagine these things in a dream;" and thus he will go his way inflamed with discontent.

But in the case of the monks there is no such result, but rather the contrary altogether. For when he shall see children of rich men and descendants of illustrious ancestors clothed in such garments as not even the lowest of the poor, and rejoicing in this, consider how great a consolation against poverty he will receive as he goes away. And should he be rich, he returns sobered, become a better man. Again in the theatre, when they see the harlot clothed with golden ornaments, while the poor man will lament, and bemoan, seeing his own wife having nothing of the kind, the rich will in consequence of this spectacle contemn and despise the partners of their home. For when the harlot present to the beholders garb and look, and voice and step, all luxurious, they depart set on fire, and enter into their own houses, thenceforth captives. Hence the insults, and the affronts, hence the enmities, the wars, the daily deaths; hence to them that are taken captive, life is insupportable, and the partner of their home thenceforth unpleasing, and their children not as much objects of affection, and all things in their houses turned upside down, and after that they seem to be thrown into disorder by the very sunbeam.

But not from these choirs does any such dissatisfaction arise, but the wife will receive her husband quiet and meek, freed from all unlawful lust, and will find him more gentle to her than before this. Such evil things doth that choir bring forth, but this good things the one making wolves of sheep, this lamb: of wolves. But as yet we have perhaps said nothing hitherto touching the pleasure. And what could be more pleasant than not to be troubled or grieved in mind, neither to despond and groan? Nevertheless, let us carry on our discourse still further, and examine the enjoyment of either kind of song and spectacle; and we shall see the one indeed continuing until evening, so long as the spectator sits in the theatre, but after this paining him more grievously than any sting; but in the other case forever vigorous in the souls of them that have beheld it. For as well the fashion of the men, and the delightfulness of the place, and the sweetness of their manner of life, and the purity, of their rule, and the grace of that most beautiful and spiritual song they have for ever infixed in them. They at least who are in continual enjoyment of those havens, thenceforth flee as from a tempest, from the tumults of the multitude.

But not when singing only, and praying, but also when riveted to their books, they are a pleasing spectacle to the beholders. For after they have ended the choir, one takes Isaiah and discourses with him, another converses with the apostles, and another goes over the labors of other men, and seeks wisdom concerning God, concerning this universe, concerning the things that are seen, concerning the things that are not seen, concerning the objects

of sense, and the objects of intellect, concerning the vileness of this present life, and the greatness of that to come. 5. And they are fed on a food most excellent, not setting before themselves cooked flesh of beasts; but oracles of God, beyond honey and the honey comb, a honey marvellous, and far superior to that whereon John fed of old in the wilderness. For this honey no wild bees collect, settling on the flowers, neither do lay it up in hives digesting the dew, but the grace of the Spirit forming it, layeth it up in the souls of the saints, in the place of honeycombs, and hives, and pipes, so that he that will may eat thereof continually in security. These bees then they also imitate, and hover around the honeycombs of those holy books, reaping therefrom great pleasure.

And if thou desirest to learn about their table, be near it, and thou shalt see them bursting forth with such things, all gentle and sweet, and full of a spiritual fragrance. No foul word can those spiritual mouths bring forth, nothing of foolish jesting, nothing harsh, but all worthy of Heaven. One would not be wrong in comparing the mouths of them that crawl about in the market places, and are mad after worldly things, to ditches of some mire; but the lips of these to fountains flowing with honey, and pouring forth pure streams. But if any felt displeased that I have called the mouths of the multitude ditches of some mire, let him know that I have said it, sparing them very much. For Scripture hath not used this measure, but a comparison far stronger. "For adder's poison," it is said, "is under their lips, and their throat is an open sepulchre." But theirs are not so, but full of much fragrance.

And their state here is like this, but that hereafter what speech can set before us? what thought shall conceive? the portion of angels, the blessedness unspeakable, the good things untold? Perchance some are warmed now, and have been moved to a longing after this good rule of life. But what is the profit, when whilst ye are here only, ye have this fire; but when ye have gone forth, ye extinguish the flame, and this desire fades. How then, in order that this may not be? While this desire is warm in you, go your way unto those angels, kindle it more. For the account that we give will not be able to set thee on fire, like as the sight of the things. Say not, I will speak with my wife, and I will settle my affairs first. This delay is the beginning of remissness. Hear, how one desired to bid farewell to them at his house, and the prophet suffered him not. And why do I say, to bid farewell? The disciple desired to bury his father, and Christ allowed not so much as this. And yet what thing seems to thee to be so necessary as the funeral of a father? but not even this did He permit.

Why could this have been? Because the devil is at hand fierce, desiring to find some secret approach; and though it be but a little hindrance or delay he takes hold of, he works a great remissness. Therefore one adviseth, "Put not off from day to day." For thus shalt thou be able to succeed in most things, thus also shall the things in thine house be well ordered for thee. "For seek ye," it is said, "the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you." For if we establish in great security them that overlook their own interests, and prefer the care of ours, much more doth God, who even without these things hath a care for us, and provides for us. Be not thoughtful then about thine interests, but leave them to God. For if thou art thoughtful about them, thou art thoughtful as a man; but if God provide,

He provides as God. Be not so thoughtful about them as to let go the greater things, since then He will not much provide for them. In order therefore that He may fully provide for them, leave them to Him alone. For if thou also thyself takest them in hand, having let go the things spiritual, He will not make much provision for them.

In order then that both these things may be well disposed for thee, and that thou mayest be freed from all anxiety, cleave to the things spiritual, overlook the things of the world; for in this way thou shalt have earth also with heaven, and shalt attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might world without end. Amen.

Homily 69

Matthew Chapter 22, Verse 1-Mathew Chapter 22, Verse 14

"And Jesus answered and spake again in parables. The kingdom of Heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son; and sent forth his servants to call them which were bidden to the wedding; and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: and the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them." Seest thou both in the former parable and in this the difference between the Son and the servants? Seest thou at once the great affinity between both parables, and the great difference also? For this also indicates God's long-suffering, and His great providential care, and the Jews' ingratitude.

But this parable hath something also more than the other. For it proclaims beforehand both the casting out of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles; and it indicates together with this also the strictness of the life required, and how great the punishment appointed for the careless. And well is this placed after the other. For since He had said, "It shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof," He declares next to what kind of nation; and not this only, but He also again sets forth His providential care towards the Jews as past utterance. For there He appears before His crucifixion bidding them; but here even after He is slain, He still urges them, striving to win them over. And when they deserved to have suffered the most grievous punishment, then He both presses them to the marriage, and honors them with the highest honor. And see how both there He calls not the Gentiles first, but the Jews, and here again. But as there, when they would not receive Him, but even slew Him when He was come, then He gave away the vineyard; thus here too, when they were not willing to be present at the marriage, then He called others.

What then could be more ungrateful than they, when being bidden to a marriage they rush away? For who would not choose to come to a marriage, and that a King's marriage, and of a King making a marriage for a Son? And wherefore is it called a marriage? one may say. That thou mightest learn God's tender care, His yearning towards us, the cheerfulness of the state of things, that there is nothing sorrowful there, nor sad, but all things are full of spiritual joy: Therefore also John calls Him a bridegroom, therefore Paul again saith, "For

I have espoused you to one husband;" and, "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." Why then is not the bride said to be espoused to Him, but to the Son? Because she that is espoused to the Son, is espoused to the Father. For it is indifferent in Scripture that the one or the other should be said, because of the identity of the substance.

Hereby He proclaimed the resurrection also. For since in what went before He had spoken of the death, He shows that even after the death, then is the marriage, then the bridegroom. But not even so do these become better men nor more gentle, than which what can be worse? For this again is a third accusation. The first that they killed the prophets; then the son; afterwards that even when they had slain Him, and were bidden unto the marriage of Him that was slain, by the Very one that was slain, they come not, but feign excuses, yokes of oxen, and pieces of ground, and wives. And yet the excuses seem to be reasonable; but hence we learn, though the things which hinder us be necessary, to set the things spiritual at a higher price than all. And He not suddenly, but a long time before. For, "Tell," He saith, "them that are bidden;" and again, "Call them that were bidden;" which circumstance makes the charge against them heavier. And when were they bidden? By all the prophets; by John again; for unto Christ he would pass all on, saying, "He must increase, I must decrease;" by the Son Himself again, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you;" and again, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."

But not by words only, but also by actions did He bid them, after His ascension by Peter, and those with him. "For He that wrought effectually in Peter," it is said, "to the apostleship of the circumcision, was mighty also in me towards the Gentiles." For since on seeing the Son, they were wroth and slew Him, He bids them again by His servants. And unto what cloth He bid them? Unto labors, and toils, and sweat? Nay but unto pleasure. For, "My oxen," He saith, "and my fatlings are killed." See how complete His banquet? how great His munificence. And not even this shamed them, but the more long-suffering He showed, so much the more were they hardened. For not for press of business, but from "making light of they did not come. "How then do some bring forward marriages, others yokes of oxen? these things surely are of want of leisure."

By no means, for when spiritual things call us, there is no press of business that has the power of necessity. And to me they seem moreover to make use of these excuses, putting forward these things as cloke for their negligence, And not this only is the grievous thing, that they came not, but also that which is a far more violent and furious act, to have even beaten them that came, and to have used them despitefully, and to have slain them; this is worse than the former. For those others came, demanding produce and fruits, and were slain; but these, bidding them to the marriage of Him that had been slain by them, and these again are murdered. What is equal to this madness? This Paul also was laying to their charge, when he said, "Who both killed the Lord, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us."

Moreover, that they may not say, "He is an adversary of God, and therefore we do not come," hear what they say who are bidding them; that it is the father who is making the marriage,

and that it is He who is bidding them. What then did He after these things? Since they were not willing to come, yea and also slew those that came unto them; He burns up their cities, and sent His armies and slew them. And these things He saith, declaring beforehand the things that took place under Vespasian and Titus, and that they provoked the father also, by not believing in Him; it is the father at any rate who was avenging. And for this reason let me add, not straightway after Christ was slain did the capture take place, but after forty years, that He might show His long suffering, when they had slain Stephen, when they had put James to death, when they had spitefully entreated the apostles.

Seest thou the truth of the event, and its quickness? For while John was yet living, and many other of them that were with Christ, these things came to pass, and they that had heard these words were witnesses of the events. See then care utterable. He had planted a vineyard; He had done all things, and finished; when His servants had been put to death, He sent other servants; when those had been slain, He sent the son; and when He was put to death, He bids them to the marriage. They would not come, After this He sends other servants, and they slew these also. Then upon this He slays them, as being incurably diseased. For that they were incurably diseased, was proved not by their acts only, but by the fact, that even when harlots and publicans had believed, they did these things. So that, not by their own crimes alone, but also from what others were able to do aright, these men are condemned,

But if any one should say, that not then were they out of the Gentiles called, I mean, when the apostles had been beaten and had suffered ten thousand things, but straightway after the resurrection (for then He said to them, "Go ye and make disciples of all nations." We would say, that both before the crucifixion, and after the crucifixion, they addressed themselves to them first. For both before the crucifixion, He saith to them, "Go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel;" and after the crucifixion, so far from forbidding, He even commanded them to address themselves to the Jews. For though He said, "Make disciples of all nations," yet when on the point of ascending into Heaven, He declared that unto those first they were to address themselves; For, "ye shall receive power," saith He, "after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and unto the uttermost part of the earth;" and Paul again, "He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, was mighty in me also toward the Gentiles." Therefore the apostles also went first unto the Jews, and when they had tarried a long time in Jerusalem, and then had been driven away by them, in this way they were scattered abroad unto the Gentiles.

2. And see thou even herein His bounty; "As many as ye shall find," saith He, "bid to the marriage. For before this, as I said, they addressed themselves both to Jews and Greeks, tarrying for the most part in Judaea; but since they continued to lay plots against them, hear Paul interpreting this parable, and saying thus, "It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but since ye judge yourselves unworthy, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. Therefore Christ also saith, "The wedding is ready, but they which

were bidden were not worthy." He knew this indeed even before, but that He might leave them no pretext of a shameless sort of contradiction, although He knew it, to them first He both came and sent, both stopping their mouths, and teaching us to fulfill all our parts, though no one should derive any profit.

Since then they were not worthy, go ye, saith He, into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid; both the common sort, and the outcasts. For because He had said m every way. "The harlots and publicans shall inherit heaven;" and, "The first shall be last, and the last first;" He shows thai justly do these things come to pass; which more than anything stung the Jews, and goaded them far more grievously than their overthrow, to see those from the Gentiles brought into their privileges, and into far greater than theirs. Then in order that not even these should put confidence in their faith alone, He discourses unto them also concerning the judgment to be passed upon wicked actions; to them that have not yet believed, of coming unto Him by faith, and to them that have believed, of care with respect to their life. For the garment is life and practice.

And yet the calling was of grace; wherefore then doth He take a strict account? Because although to be called and to be cleansed was of grace, yet, when called and clothed in clean garments, to continue keeping them so, this is of the diligence of them that are called. The being called was not of merit, but of grace. It was fit therefore to make a return for the grace, and not to show forth such great wickedness after the honor. "But I have not enjoyed," one may say, "so much advantage as the Jews." Nay, but thou hast enjoyed far greater benefits. For what things were being prepared for them throughout all their time, these thou hast received at once, not being worthy. Wherefore Paul also saith, "And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy." For what things were due to them, these thou hast received.

Wherefore also great is the punishment appointed for them that have been remiss. For as they did despite by not coming, so also thou by thus sitting down with a corrupt life. For to come in with filthy garments is this namely, to depart hence having one's life impure; wherefore also he was speechless. Seest thou how, although the fact was so manifest, He doth not punish at once, until he himself, who has sinned, has passed the sentence? For by having nothing to reply he condemned himself, and so is taken away to the unutterable torments. For do not now, on hearing of darkness, suppose he is punished by this, by sending into a place where there is no light only, but where" there is "also" weeping and gnashing of teeth." And this He saith, indicating the intolerable pains. Hear ye, as many as having partaken of the mysteries, and having been present at the marriage, clothe your souls with filthy deeds Hear whence ye were called.

From the highway. Being what? Lame and halt in soul, which is a much more grievous thing than the mutilation of the body. Reverence the love of Him, who called you, and let no one continue to have filthy garments, but let each of you busy himself about the clothing of your soul. Hear, ye women; hear, ye men; we need not these garments that are bespangled with gold, that adam our outward parts, but those others, that adorn the inward. Whilst we have these former, it is difficult to put on those latter. It is not possible at the same time

to deck both soul and body. It is not possible at the same time both to serve mammon, and to obey Christ as we ought. Let us put off us therefore this grievous tyranny. For neither if any one were to adorn thy house by hanging it with golden curtains, and were to make thee sit there in rags, naked, wouldest thou endure it with meekness. But lo, now thou doest this to thyself, decking the house of thy soul, I mean the body, with curtains beyond number, but leaving the soul itself to sit in rags. Knowest thou not that the king ought to be adorned more than the city? so therefore while for the city hangings are prepared of linen, for the king there is a purple robe and a diadem. Even so do thou wrap the body with a much meaner dress, but the mind do thou clothe in purple, and put a crown on it, and set it on a high and conspicuous chariot. For now thou art doing the opposite, decking the city in various ways, but suffering the king, the mind, to be dragged bound after the brute passions.

Rememberest thou not, that thou art bidden to a marriage, and to God's marriage? Considerest thou not how the soul that is bidden ought to enter into those chambers, clad, and decked with fringes of gold. 3. Wilt thou that I show thee them that are clad thus, them that have on a marriage garment? Call to mind those holy persons, of whom I discoursed to you of late, them that wear garments of hair, them that dwell in the deserts. These above all are the wearers of the garments of that wedding; this is evident from hence, that how many soever purple robes thou weft to give them, they would not choose to receive them; but much as a king, if any one were to take the beggar's rags, and exhort him to put them on, would abhor the clothing, so would those persons also his purple robe. And from no other cause have they this feeling, but because of knowing the beauty of their own raiment. Therefore even that purple robe they spurn like the spider's web. For these things hath their sackcloth taught them; for indeed they are far more exalted and more glorious than the very king who reigns.

And if thou wert able to open the doors of the mind, and to look upon their soul, and all their ornaments within, surely thou wouldest fall down upon the earth, not bearing the glory of their beauty, and the splendor of those garments, and the lightning brightness of their conscience. For we could tell also of men of old, great and to be admired; but since visible examples lead on more those of grosset souls, therefore do I send you even to the tabernacles of those holy persons. For they have nothing sorrowful, but as if in heaven they had pitched their tents, even so are they encamped far off the wearisome things of this present life, in campaign against the devils; and as in choirs, so do they war against him. Therefore I say, they have fixed their tents, and have fled from cities, and markets, and houses. For he that warreth cannot sit in a house, but he must make his habitation of a temporary kind, as on the point of removing straightway, and so dwell. Such are all those persons, contrary to us. For we indeed live not as in a camp, but as in a city at peace.

For who in a camp ever lays foundation, and builds himself a house, which he is soon after to leave? There is not one; but should any one attempt it, he is put to death as a traitor. Who in a camp buys acres of land, and makes for himself trades? There is not one, and very

reasonably. "For thou art come here," they would say, "to fight, not to traffic; why then dost thou trouble thyself about the place, which in a little time thou wilt leave? When we are gone away to our country, do these things." The same do I now say to thee also. When we have removed to the city that is. above, do these things: or rather thou wilt have no need of labors there; after that the king will do all things for thee. But here it is enough to dig a ditch round only, and to fix a palisade, but of building houses there is no need.

Hear what was the life of the Scythians, that lived in their wagons, such, as they say, are the habits of the shepherd tribes. So ought Christians to live; to go about the world, warring against the devil, rescuing the captives held in subjection by him, and to be in freedom from all worldly things. Why preparest thou a house, O man, that thou mayest bind thyself more? Why dost thou bury a treasure, and invite the enemy against thyself? Why dost thou compass thyself with walls, and prepare a prison for thyself? But if these things seem to thee to be hard, let us go away unto the tents of those men, that by their deeds we may learn the easiness thereof. For they having set up huts, if they must depart from these, depart like as soldiers, having left their camp in peace. For so likewise are they encamped, or rather even much more beautifully.

For indeed it is more pleasant to behold a desert containing huts of monks in close succession, than soldiers stretching the canvas in a camp, and fixing spears, and suspending from the point of the spears saffron garments, and a multitude of men having heads of brass, and the bosses of the shields glistening much, and men armed all throughout with steel. and royal courts hastily made, and ground levelled far, and men dining and piping. For neither is this spectacle so delightful as that of which I now speak. For if we were to go away into the wilderness, and look at the tents of Christ's soldiers, we shall see not canvas stretched, neither points of spears, nor golden garments making a royal pavilion; but like as if any one upon an earth much larger than this earth, yea infinite, had stretched out many heavens, strange and awful would be the sight he showed; even so may one see here.

For in nothing are their lodging-places in a condition inferior to the heavens; for the angels lodge with them, and the Lord of the angels. For if they came to Abraham, a man having a wife, and bringing up children, because they saw him hospitable; when they find much more abundant virtue, and a man delivered from the body, and in the flesh disregarding the flesh, much more do they tarry there, and celebrate the choral feast that becomes them. For there is moreover a table amongst them pure from all covetousness, and full of self-denial. No streams of blood are amongst them, nor cutting up of flesh, nor heaviness of head, nor dainty cooking, neither are there unpleasing smells of meat amongst them, nor disagreeable smoke, neither runnings and tumults, and disturbances, and wearisome clamors; but bread and water, the latter from a pure fountain, the former from honest labor. But if any time they should be minded to feast more sumptuously, their sumptuousness consists of fruits, and greater is the pleasure there than at royal tables. There is no fear there, or trembling; no ruler accuses, no wife provokes, no child casts into sadness, no disorderly mirth dissipates, no multitude of flatterers puffs up; but the table is an angel's table free from all such turmoil.

And for a couch they have grass only beneath them, like as Christ did when making a dinner in the wilderness. And many of them do this, not being even under shelter, but for a roof they have heaven, and the moon instead of the light of a candle, not wanting oil, nor one to attend to it; on them alone does it shine worthily from on high. 4. This table even angels from heaven beholding are delighted and pleased. For if over one sinner that repenteth they rejoice, over so many just men imitating them, what will they not do? There are not master and slave; all are slaves, all free men. And do not think the saying to be a dark proverb, for they are indeed slaves one of another, and masters one of another. They have no occasion to be in sadness when evening has overtaken them, as many men feel, revolving the anxious thoughts that spring from the evils of the day. They have no occasion after their supper to be careful about robbers, and to shut the doors, and to put bars against them, neither to dread the other ills, of which many are afraid, extinguishing their candles with strict care, lest a spark anywhere should set the house on fire.

And their conversation again is full of the whereof we discourse, that are nothing to us; such a one is made governor, such a one has ceased to be governor; such a one is dead, and another has succeeded to the inheritance, and all such like, but always about the things to come do they speak and seek wisdom; and as though dwelling in another world, as though they had migrated unto heaven itself, as living there, even so all their conversation is about the things there, about Abraham's bosom, about the crowns of the saints, about the choiring with Christ; and of things present they have neither any memory nor thought, but like as we should not deign to speak at all of what the ants do in their holes and clefts; so neither do they of what we do; but about the King that is above, about the war in which they are engaged, about the devil's crafts, about the good deeds which the saints have achieved.

Wherein therefore are we different from ants, when compared with them? For like as they care for the things of the body, so also do we; and would it were for these alone: but now it is even for things far worse. For not for necessary things only do we care like them, but also for things superfluous. For those insects pursue a business free from all blame, but we follow after all covetousness, and not even the ways of ants do we imitate, but the ways of wolves, but the ways of leopards, or rather we are even worse than these. For to them nature has assigned that they should be thus fed, but us God hath honored with speech, and a sense of equity, and we are become worse than the wild beasts. And whereas we are worse than the brutes, those men are equal to the angels, being strangers and pilgrims as to the things here; and all things in them are made different from us, clothing, and food, and house, and shoes, and speech. And if any one were to hear them conversing and us, then he would know full well, how they indeed are citizens of heaven, but we are not worthy so much as of the earth.

So that therefore, when any one invested with rank is come unto them, then is all inflated pride found utterly vain. For the laborer there, and he that hath no experience of worldly affairs, sits near him that is a commander of troops, and prides himself on his authority, upon the grass, upon a mean cushion. For there are none to extol him, none to puff him

up; but the same result takes place, as if any one were to go to a goldsmith, and a garden of roses, for he receives some brightness from the gold and from the roses; so they too, gaining a little from the splendor of these, are delivered from their former arrogance. And like as if any were to go upon a high place, though he be exceedingly short, he appears high; so these too, coming unto their exalted minds, appear like them, so long as they abide there, but when they are gone down are abased again, on descending from that height.

A king is nothing amongst them, a governor is nothing; but like as we, when children are playing at these things, laugh; so do they also utterly spurn the inflamed pride of them who strut without. And this is evident from hence, that if any one would give them a kingdom to possess in security, they would never take it; yet they would take it, unless their thoughts were upon what is greater than it, unless they accounted the thing to be but for a season. What then? Shall we not go over unto blessedness so great? Shall we not come unto these angels; shall we not receive clean garments, and join in the ceremonies of this wedding feast; but shall we continue begging, in no respect in a better condition than the poor in the streets, or rather in a state far worse and more wretched? For much worse than these are they that are rich in evil ways, and it is better to beg than to spoil, for the one hath excuse, but the other brings punishment; and the beggar in no degree offends God, but this other both men and God; and undergoes the labors of rapine, but all the enjoyment thereof other men often reap.

Knowing then these things, let us lay aside all covetousness, and covet the things above, with great earnestness "taking the kingdom by force." For it cannot be, it cannot be that any one who is remiss should enter therein. But God grant that we all having become earnest, and watchful may attain thereto, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, world without end. Amen.

Homily 70

Matthew Chapter 22, Verse 15

"Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle Him in His talk." Then. When? When most of all they ought to have been moved to compunction, when they should have been amazed at His love to man, when they should have feared the things to come, when from the past they ought to have believed touching the future also. For indeed the things that had been said cried aloud in actual fulfillment I mean, that publicans and harlots believed, and prophets and righteous men were slain, and from these things they ought not to have gainsaid touching their own destruction, but even to believe and to be sobered. But nevertheless not even so do their wicked acts cease, but travail and proceed further. And forasmuch as they could not lay hands. on Him (for they feared the multitude), they took another way with the intention of bringing Him into danger, and making Him guilty of crimes against the state.

For "they sent out unto Him their disciples with the Herodians saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man; for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto C'sar or not? For they were now tributaries, their state having passed under the rule of the Romans. Forasmuch then as they saw that Theudas and Judas with their companies for this cause were put to death, as having prepared for a revolt, they were minded to bring Him too by these words into such a suspicion. Therefore they sent both their own disciples, and Herod's soldiers, digging, as they thought, a precipice on either side, and in every direction setting the snare, so that, whatever He should say, they might lay hold of it; and if He should answer in favor of the Herodians, themselves might find fault with Him, but if in their favor, the others should accuse Him. And yet He had given the didrachmas, but they knew not that.

And in either way indeed they expected to lay hold of Him; but they desired rather that He should say something against the Herodians. Wherefore they send their disciples also to urge. Him thereto by their presence, that they might deliver Him to the governor as an usurper. For this Luke also intimates and shows, by saying, that they asked also in the presence of the multitude, so that the testimony should be the stronger. But the result was altogether opposite; for in a larger body of spectators they afforded the demonstration of

their folly. And see their flattery, and their hidden craft. "We know," their words are, "that Thou art true." How said ye then, "He is a deceiver," and "deceiveth the people," and "hath a devil," and "is not of God?" how a little while before did ye devise to slay Him? But they are at everything, whatsoever their craft against Him may suggest. For since, when a little before they had said in self will, "By what authority doest Thou these things?" they did not meet with an answer to the question, they look to puff Him up by their flattery, and to persuade Him to say something against the established laws, and opposed to the prevailing government.

Wherefore also they testify the truth unto Him, confessing what was really so, nevertheless, not with an upright mind, nor willingly; and add thereto, saying, "Thou carest not for any man." See how plainly they are desiring to urge Him to these sayings, that would make Him both offend Herod, and incur the suspicion of being an usurper, as standing up against the laws, so that they might punish Him, as a mover of sedition, and an usurper. For in saying, "Thou carest not for any man," and, "Thou regardest not the person of man," they were hinting at Herod and Caesar, "Tell us therefore, what thinkest Thou?" Now ye honor Him, and esteem Him a Teacher, having despised and insulted Him oftentimes, when He was discoursing of the things that concern your salvation.Whence also they are become confederates. And see their craftiness. They say not, Tell us what is good, what is expedient, what is lawful? but, "What thinkest Thou?" So much did they look to this one object, to betray Him, and to set Him at enmity with the rulers. And Mark declaring this, and more plainly discovering their self-will, and their murderous disposition, affirms them to have said, "Shall we give C'sar tribute, or shall we not give?" So that they were breathing anger, and travailing with a plot against Him, yet they feigned respect.

What then saith He? "Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?" Seest thou how He talks with them with more than usual severity? For since their wickedness was now complete and manifest, He cuts the deeper, first confounding and silencing them, by publishing their secret thoughts, and making it manifest to all with what kind of intent they are coming unto Him. And these things He did, repulsing their wickedness, so that they might not suffer hurt in attempting the same things again. And yet their words were full of much respect, for they both called Him Master, and bore witness to His truth, and that He was no respecter of persons; but being God, He was deceived by none of these things. Wherefore they also ought to have conjectured, that the rebuke was not the result of conjecture, but a sign of His knowing their secret thoughts. 2. He stopped not, however, at the rebuke, although it was enough merely to have convicted them of their purpose, and to have put them to shame for their wickedness; but He stoppetn not at this, but in another way closes their mouths; for, "Shew me," saith He, "the tribute money." And when they had shown it, as He ever doth, by their tongue He brings out the decision, and causes them to decide, that it is lawful; which was a clear and plain victory. So that. when He asks, not from ignorance doth He ask, but because it is His will to cause them to be bound by their own answers. For when, on being asked, "Whose is the image?" they said, "C'sar's;" He saith, "Render unto

C'sar the things that are C'sar's." For this is not to give but to render, and this He shows both by the image, and by the superscription.

Then that they might not say, Thou art subjecting us to men, He added, "And unto God the things that are God's." For it is possible both to fulfill to men their claims and to give unto God the things that are due to God from us. Wherefore Paul also saith, "Render unto all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear." But thou, when thou hearest, "Render unto C'sar the things which are Ct, "Ren'sar's" know that He is speaking only of those things, which are no detriment to godliness; since if it be any such thing as this, such a thing is no longer C'sar's tribute, but the devil's. When they heard these things, their mouths were stopped, and they "marvelled" at His wisdom. Ought they not then to have believed, ought they not to have been amazed. For indeed, He gave them proof of His Godhead, by revealing the secrets of their hearts, and with gentleness did He silence them.

What then? did they believe? By no means, but they "left Him, and went their way;" and after them, "came to Him the Sadducees." O folly! When the others had been put to silence, these made the attack, when they ought to have been the more backward. But such is the nature of rashness, shameless, and importunate, and attempting things impossible. Therefore the evangelist also, amazed at their folly, signified this very thing, by saying, "On that day came to Him." On that day. On what day? In which He had convicted their craftiness, and put them to shame. But who are these? A sect of the Jews different from the Pharisees, and much worse than they, who said, "that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit. For these were some of a grosset sort, and eager after the things of the body. For there were many sects even amongst the Jews. Wherefore Paul also saith, "I am a Pharisee, of the strictest sect amongst us."

And they say nothing indeed directly about a resurrection; but they feign a story, and make up a case, which, as I suppose, never so much as had an existence; thinking to drive Him to perplexity, and desiring to overthrow both things, both the existence of a resurrection, and of such a resurrection. And again, these too attack Him with a show of moderation, saying, "Master, Moses said, If a man die, not having children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased; and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother. Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. And last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife shall she be of the seven?" See Him answering these like a teacher. For though out of craft they came unto Him, yet was their question rather one of ignorance. Therefore neither doth He say unto them, "Ye hypocrites."

Moreover, in order that He might not blame, saying, "Wherefore had seven one wife?" they add the authority of Moses; although, as I have said before, it was a fiction, in my judgment at least. For the third would not have taken her, when he saw the two bridegrooms dead; or if the third, yet not the fourth or the fifth; and if even these, much more the sixth or the

seventh would not have come unto the woman, but have shrunk from her. For such is the nature of the Jews. For if now many have this feeling, much more then had they; when at least, even without this, they often avoided marrying in this way, and that when the law was constraining them. Thus, at any rate, Ruth, that Moabitish woman, was thrust off to him that was further off from her kindred; and Tamar too was thus compelled to obtain, by stealth, seed from her husband's kinsman.

And wherefore did they not feign two or three, but seven? In order the more abundantly to bring derision, as they thought, upon the resurrection. Wherefore they further say, "they all had her," as driving Him into some difficulty. What then saith Christ? He replies unto both, as taking His stand not against the words, but the purpose, and on every occasion revealing the secrets of their hearts; and at one time exposing them, at another time leaving the refutation of them that question Him to their conscience. See, at any rate here, how He proves both points, as well that there will be a resurrection, as that it will not be such a resurrection as they suspect. For what saith He? "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." For since, as if they knew them, they put forward Moses and the law, He shows that this question is that of men very ignorant of the Scriptures. For hence also arose their tempting Him, from their being ignorant of the Scriptures, and from their not knowing the power of God as they ought.

"For what marvel then is it," He saith, "if ye tempt me, who am as yet unknown to you, when at least ye know not so much as the power of God, of which ye have had so much experience, and neither from common sense nor from the Scriptures have become acquainted with it;" if indeed even common sense causes us to know this, that to God all things are possible. And in the first place He answers to the question asked. For since this was the cause for their not believing a resurrection, that they think the order of things is like this, He cures the cause, then the symptom also (for thence arose the disease too), and shows the manner of the resurrection. "For in the resurrection," saith He, "they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as angels of God in Heaven." But Luke saith, "As Sons of God."

If then they marry not, the question is vain. But not because they do not marry, therefore are they angels, but because they are as angels, therefore they do not marry. By this He removed many other difficulties also, all which things Paul intimated by one word, saying, "For the fashion of this world passeth away." And by these words He declared how great a thing the resurrection is; and that moreover there is a resurrection, He proves. And indeed this too was demonstrated at the same time by what He had said, nevertheless over and above He adds again to His word by what He saith now. For neither at their question only did He stop, but at their thought. Thus when they are not deafing with great craft, but are asking in ignorance, He teaches even over and above, but when it is of wickedness only, not even to their question doth He answer.

And again by Moses doth He stop their mouths, since they too had brought forward Moses; and He saith, "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but

of the living." Not of them that are not His meaning is, and that are utterly blotted out, and are to rise no more. For He said not, I was, but, I am; of them that are, and them that live. For like as Adam, although he lived on the day that he ate of the tree, died in the sentence: even so also these, although they had died, lived in the promise of the resurrection. How then doth He say elsewhere, "That He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living?" But this is not contrary to that. For here He speaks of the dead, who are also themselves to live. And moreover too, "I am the God of Abraham," is another thing from, "That He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living." He knew of another death too, concerning which He saith, "Let the dead bury their dead."

"And when the multitudes heard this, they were astonished at His doctrine." Yet not even here the Sadducees; but these go away defeated, while the impartial multitude reap the benefit. Since then the resurrection is like this, come let us do all things, that we may obtain the first honors there. But, if ye will, let us show you some even before the resurrection here pursuing and reaping these blessings, again having made our resort to the deserts. For again will I enter upon the same discourse, since I see you listening with more pleasure. Let us behold then to-day also the spiritual camps, let us behold their pleasure unalloyed with fear. For not with spears are they encamped like the soldiers, for at this point I lately ended my discourse, neither with shields and breastplates; but bare of all these wilt thou see them, yet achieving such things, as not even with arms do they.

And if thou art able to observe, come and stretch forth thy hand to me, and let us go unto this war, both of us, and let us see their battle array. For these too fight every day, and slay their adversaries, and conquer all the lusts that are plotting against us; and thou wilt see these cast out on the ground, and not able so much as to struggle, but proving by very deed that saying of the apostle, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Seest thou a multitude of dead lying there, slain by the sword of the Spirit? Therefore in that place is no drunkenness nor gluttony. And their table proves it, and the trophy that is set thereon. For drunkenness and gluttony lie dead, put to the rout by the drinking of water, though this be multiform, and a many-headed monster. For like as in the fabled Scylla and Hydra, so in drunkenness may one see many heads, on one side fornication growing up, on another wrath; on one hand sloth, on another lawless lusts; but all these things are taken away. And yet all those other armies, though they get the better in ten thousand wars, are taken captive by these; and neither arms, nor spears, nor whatever else there may be, is able to stand against these phalanxes; but the very giants, the heroes, those that do countless brave deeds, thou wilt find without bonds bound by sleep and drunkenness, without slaughter or wounds lying like the wounded, or rather in more grievous case. For those at least struggle; but these do not even this, but straightway give up.

Seest thou that this host is greater and more to be admired? For the enemies that got the better of the others it destroys by its mere will. For they do so weaken the mother of all thor evils, that she cannot even trouble them any more; and the leader being overthrown, and the

head removed, the rest of the body also lies still. And this victory one may see each of them, that abide there, achieving. For it is not as in these wars of ours, where, if any enemy hath received a blow from one, he is no more grievous to another, having been once overthrown; but it is necessary for all to smite this monster; and he that hath not smitten and overthrown her, is surely troubled by her. Seest thou a glorious victory? For such a trophy as the hosts in all pans of the world having met together have not power to erect, this each one of those men erects; and all things that from the army of drunkenness lie mingled together wounded, delirious words of frenzy, insane thoughts, unpleasing haughtiness. And they imitate their own Lord, at whom the Scripture marvelling saith, "He shall drink of the brook in the way, therefore shall He lift up the head."

Would ye see also another multitude of dead? Let us see the lusts that arise from luxurious living, those that are cherished by the makers of sauces, by the cooks, the furnishers of feasts, the confectioners. For I am ashamed indeed to speak of all; however, I will tell of the birds from Phasis, the soups that are mixed from various things: the moist, the dry dishes, the laws made about these things. For like as if ordering some city and mashalling hosts, even so these too make laws, and ordain such a thing first, and such a thing second, and some bring in first birds roasted on the embers, filled within with fish; and others make of other material the beginnings of these unlawful feasts; and them is much rivalry about these things, about quality, and about order, and about quantity; and they take a pride in the things, for which they ought to bury themselves for shame; some saying that they have spent the half of the day, some all of it, some that they have added the night too. Behold, O wretched man, the measure of thy belly, and be ashamed of thy unmeasured earnestness!

But there is nothing like this amongst those angels; but all these desires also are dead. For their meals are not unto fullness, and unto luxurious living, but unto necessity. No bird hunters are there, no fishermen, but bread and water. But this confusion, and the disturbance, and the turmoils, are all removed from thence, alike from the house and from the body, and great is the haven, but amongst these great the tempest. Burst open now in thought the belly of them who feed on such things, and thou wilt see the vast refuse, and the unclean channel, and the whited sepulchre. But what come after these I am even ashamed to tell, the disagreeable erucations, the vomitings, the discharges downwards and upwards. But go and see even these desires dead there, and those more violent lusts that spring from these; I mean, those of impurity. For these too thou wilt see all overthrown, with their horses, with their beasts of burden. For the beast of burden, and the weapon, and the horse of a filthy deed, is a filthy word. But thou wilt see such like horse and rider together, and their weapons thrown down; but here quite the contrary, and souls cast down dead. But not at their meal only is the victory of these holy men glorious, but in the other things also, in money, in glory, in envy, in all diseases of the soul.

Surely does not this host seem to thee mightier than that, and the meal better? Nay, who will gainsay it? None, not even of those persons themselves, though he be very mad. For this guides us on to Heaven, that drags to hell; this the devil lays out, that Christ; for this luxury

gives laws, and intemperance, for that self-denial and sobriety, here Christ is present, there the devil. For where there is drunkenness, the devil is there; where there are filthy words, where there is surfeiting, there the devils hold their choirs. Such a table had that rich man, therefore not even of a drop of water was he master. But these have not such a table, but they already practise the ways of the angels. They marry not, they are not given in marriage, neither do they sleep excessively, nor live luxuriously, but except a few things they are even bodiless.

Now who is there that so easily overcomes his enemies as he that sets up a trophy while at his dinner? Therefore also the prophet saith, "Thou hast prepared a table before me, in the presence of them that trouble me." One could not be wrong in repeating this oracle about this table. For nothing so troubles a soul as disorderly concupiscence, and luxury, and drunkenness, and the evils that spring from these; and this they know full well who have had experience thereof. And if thou wast to learn also, whence this table is procured, and whence that; then thou wouldest see wall the difference between each. Whence then is this procured. From countless tears, from widows defrauded, from orphans despoiled; but the other from honest labor. And this table is like to a fair and wall-favored woman, needing nothing external, but having her beauty from nature; but that to some ugly and ill-favored harlot, wearing much paint, but not able to disguise her deformity, but the nearer she is, the more convicted. For this too, when it is nearer to him that is at it, then shows its ugliness more. For look not I tell thee, at the banqueters, as they come only, but also as they go away, and then thou wilt see its ugliness. For that, as being free, suffers them that come unto it to say nothing shameful; but this nothing seemly, as being a harlot, and dishonored. This seeks the profit of him that is at it that the hurt. And one not but that we must offend Him.

Let us go away therefore unto those men. Thence we shall learn with how many bonds we are encompassed. Thence shall we learn to set before ourselves a table full of countless blessings, most sweet, without cost, delivered from care, free from envy and jealousy and every disease, and full of good hope, and having its many trophies. No turmoil of soul there, no sorrow, no wrath; all is calm, all is peace. For tell me not of the silence of them that serve in the houses of the rich, but of the clamor of them that dine; I mean, not that which they make one to another (for this too is worthy of derision), but that within, that in the soul, that brings on them a great captivity, the tumults of the thoughts, the sleet, the darkness, the tempest, by which all things are mingled and confused, and are like to some night battle. But not in the monks' tents are such things as these; but great is the calm, great the quietness. And that table is succeeded by a sleep that is like death, but this by sobriety and wakefulness; that by punishment, this by the kingdom of heaven, and the immortal rewards.

This then let us follow, that we may enjoy also the fruits thereof; unto which God grant we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ to whom be glory and might world without end. Amen.

Homily 71

Matthew Chapter 22, Verse 34-Matthew Chapter 22, Verse 36

”But when the Pharisees had heard that He had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together; and one of them, which was a lawyer, asked Him a question, tempting Him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law?” Again doth the evangelist express the cause, for which they ought to have held their peace, and marks their boldness by this also. How and in what way? Because when those others were put to silence, these again assail Him. For when they ought even for this to hold their peace, they strive to urge further their former endeavors, and put forward the lawyer, not desiring to learn, but making a trial of Him, and ask, ”What is the first commandment?” For since the first commandment was this, ”Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,” thinking that He would afford them some handle, as though He would amend it, for the sake of showing that Himself too was God, they propose the question. What then saith Christ? Indicating from what they were led to this; from having no charity, from pining with envy. from being seized by jealousy, He saith, ”Thou shalt love the Lord thy God. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto this Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”

But wherefore ”like unto this?” Because this makes the way for that, and by it is again established; ”For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light;’ and again, ”The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.” And what in conssequence of this? ”They are corrupt, and become abminable in their ways.” And again, ”The love of money is the root of all evils; which while some coveted after they have erred from the faith; ” and, ”He that loveth me, will keep my commandment.” But His commandments, and the sum of them, are, ”Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and thy neighbor as thyself.” If therefore to love God is to love one’s neighbor, ”For if thou lovest me,” He saith, ”O Peter, feed my sheep,” but to love one’s neighbor worketh a keeping of the commandments, with reason doth He say, ”On these hang all the law and the prophets.”

So therefore what He did before, this He doth here also. I mean, that both there, when asked about the manner of the resurrection, He also taught a resurrection, instructing ”For charity envieth not.” By this He shows Himself to be submissive both to the law and to the prophets. But wherefore doth Matthew say that he asked, tempting Him, but Mark the contrary? ”For when Jesus,” he saith, ”saw that he answered discretly, He said unto him,

Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." They are not contradicting each other, but indeed fully agreeing. For he asked indeed, tempting, at the beginning, but being benefitted by the answer, was commended. For not at the beginning did He commend him, but when he had said, "That to love his neighbor is more than whole burnt sacrifices," then He saith, "Thou art not far from the kingdom;" because he overlooked low things, and embraced the first principle of virtue. For indeed all those are for the sake of this, as well the Sabbath as the rest.

And not even so did He make His commendation perfect, but yet deficient. For His saying, "Thou art not far off," indicates that he is yet falling short, that he might seek after what was deficient. But if, when He said, "There is one God, and there is none other but He," He commended him, wonder not, but by this too observe, how He answers according to the opinion of them that come unto Him. For although men say ten thousand things about Christ unworthy of His glory, yet this at any rate they will not dare to say, that He is not God at all. Wherefore then doth He praise him that said, that beside the Father, there is no other God? Not excepting Himself from being God; away with the thought; but since it was not yet time to disclose His Godhead, He suffers him to remain in the former doctrine, and praises him for knowing well the ancient principles, so as to make him fit for the doctrine of the New Testament, which He is bringing in its season.

And besides, the saying, "There is one God, and there is none other but He," both in the Old Testament and everywhere, is spoken not to the rejection of the Son, but to make the distinction from idols. So that when praising this man also, who had thus spoken, He praises him in this mind. Then since He had answered, He asks also: in turn, "What think ye of Christ, whose Son is He? They say unto Him, The Son of David." See after how many miracles, after how many signs, after how many question, after how great a display of His unanimity with the Father, as well in words, as in deeds; after having praised this man that said, that there is one God, He asks the question, that they may not be able to say, that He did miracles indeed, yet was an adversary to the law, and a foe to God.

Therefore, after so many things, He asks these questions, secretly leading them on to confess Him also to be God. And the disciples He asked first what the others say, and then themselves; but these not so; for surely they would have said a deceiver, and a wicked one, as speaking all things without fear. So for this cause He inquires for the opinion of these men themselves. For since He was now about to go on to His passion, He sees forth the prophecy that plainly proclaims Him to be Lord; and not as having come to do this without occasion, nor as having made this His aim, but from a reasonable cause. For having asked them first, since they answered not the truth concerning Him (for they said He was a mere man), to overthrow their mistaken opinion, He thus introduces David proclaiming His Godhead. For they indeed supposed that He was a mere man, wherefore also they said, "the Son of David;" but He to correct this brings in the prophet witnessing to His being Lord, and the genuineness of His Sonship, and His equality in honor with His Father.

And not even at this doth He stop, but in order to move them to fear, He adds what followeth also, saying, "Till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool;" that at least in this way He might gain them over. And that they may not say, that it was in flattery he so called Him, and that this was a human judgment, see what He saith, "How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord?" See how submissively He introduces the sentence and judgment concerning Himself. First. He had said, "What think ye? Whose Son is He?" so by a question to bring them to an answer. Then since they said, "the Son of David," He said not, "And yet David saith these things," but again in this order of a question, "How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord?" in order that the sayings might not give offense to them. Wherefore neither did He say, What think ye of me, but of Christ. For this reason the apostles also reasoned submissively, saying, "Let us speak freely of the Patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried."

And He Himself too in like manner for this cause introduces the doctrine in the way of question and inference, saying, "How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on my right hand, until I make Thy foes Thy footstool;" and again, "If David then call Him Lord, how is He then his Son," not taking away the fact that He is his Son, away with the thought; for He would not then have reproved Peter for this, but to correct their secret thoughts. So that when He saith, "Howls He his Son?" He meaneth this, not so as ye say. For they said, that He is Son only, and not also Lord. And this after the testimony, and then submissively, "If David then call Him Lord, how is He his Son?" But, nevertheless, even when they had heard these things, they answered nothing, for neither did they wish to learn any of the things that were needful. Wherefore He Himself addeth and saith, that "He is his Lord." Or rather not even this very thing doth He say without support, but having taken the prophet with Him, because of His being exceedingly distrusted by them, and evil reported of amongst them. To which fact we ought to have especial regard, and if anything be said by Him that is lowly and submissive, not to be offended, for the cause is this, with many other things also, that He talks with them in condescension.

Wherefore now also He delivers His doctrine in the manner of question and answer; but He darkly intimates even in this way His dignity. For it was not as much to be called Lord of the Jews, as of David. But mark thou also, I pray thee, how seasonable it is. For when He had said, "There is one Lord," then He spake of Himself that He is Lord, and showed it by prophecy, no more by His works only. And He showeth the Father Himself taking vengeance upon them in His behalf, for He saith, "Until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool," and great unanimity even hereby on the part of Him that begat Him towards Himself, and honor. And upon His reasonings with them He doth set this end high and great, and sufficient to close fast their mouths. For they were silent from thenceforth, not willingly, but from their having nothing to say; and they received so deadly a blow, as no longer to dare to attempt the same things any more. For, "no one," it is said, "durst from that day forth ask Him any more questions."

And this was no little advantage to the multitude. Therefore also unto them doth He henceforth direct His word, having removed the wolves, and having repulsed their plots. For those men gained nothing, taken captive by vainglory, and having fallen upon this terrible passion. For terrible is this passion and many-headed, for some set their heart upon power for the sake of this, some on wealth, some on strength. But proceeding in order it goes on unto almsgiving also, and fasting, and prayers, and teaching, and many are the heads of this monster. But to be vainglorious indeed about those other things is nothing wonderful; but to be so about fasting and prayer, this is strange and lamentable. But that we may not again blame only, come and let us tell the means, by which we shall avoid this. Against whom shall we prepare to contend first, against those that are vainglorious of money, or those of dress, or those of places of power, or those of sciences, or those of art, or those of their person, or those of beauty, or those of ornaments, or those of cruelty, or those of humanity and almsgiving, or those of wickedness, or those of death, or those after death? For indeed, as I have said, this passion hath many links? and goes on beyond our life. For such a one, it is said, is dead, and that he may be held in admiration, hath charged that such and such things be done; and therefore such a one is poor, such a one rich.

For the grievous thing is this, that even of opposite things is it made up. Against whom then shall we stand, and let ourselves in array first? For one and the same discourse suffices not against all. Will ye then that it be against them that are vainglorious about almsgiving? To me at least it seems well; for exceedingly do I love this thing, and am pained at seeing it marred, and vainglory plotting against it, like a pandering nurse against some royal damsel. For she feeds her indeed, but for disgrace and mischief, prostituting her and commanding her to despise her father; but to deck herself to please unholy and often despicable men; and invests her with such a dress, as strangers wish, disgraceful, and dishonorable, not such as the father. Come now, then, let us take our aim against these; and let there be an almsgiving made in abundance for display to the multitude. Surely then, first vainglory leads her out of her Father's chamber. And whereas her Father requires not to appear so much as to the left hand, she displays her to the slaves, and to the vulgar, that have not even known her.

Seest thou a harlot, and pander, casting her into the love of foolish men, that according as they require, so she may order herself? Dost thou desire to see how it renders such a soul not a harlot only, but insane also? Mark then her mind. For when she lets go heaven and runs after fugitives and menial slaves, pursuing through streets and lanes them that hate her, the ugly and deformed, them that are not willing so much as to look at her, them that, when she burns with love towards them, hate her, what can be more insane than this? For no one do the multitude hate so much, as those that want the glory they have to bestow. Countless accusations at least do they frame against them, and the result is the same, as if any one were to bring down a virgin daughter of the king from the royal throne, and to require her to prostitute herself to gladiators, who abhorred her. These then, as much as thou pursuest them, so much do they turn away from thee; but God, if thou seek the glory

that cometh from Him, so much the more both draws thee unto Himself, and commends thee, and great is the reward He renders unto thee.

But if thou art minded in another way also to discern the mischief thereof, when thou givest for display and ostentation, consider how great the sorrow that then comes upon thee, and how continual the desponding, while Christ's voice is heard in thine ears, saying, "Thou hast lost all thy reward." For in every matter indeed vainglory is a bad thing. yet most of all in beneficence, for it is the utmost cruelty, making a show of the calamities of others, and all but upbraiding those in poverty. For if to mention one's own good actions is to upbraid, what dost thou think it is to publish them even to many others. How then shall we escape the danger? If we learn how to give alms, if we see after whose good report we are to seek. For tell me, who has the skill of almsgiving? Plainly, it is God, who hath made known the thing. who best of all knows it, and practises it without limit. What then? If thou art learning to be a wrestler, to whom dost thou look? or to whom dost thou display thy doings in the wrestling school, to the seller of herbs, and of fish, or to the trainer? And ye they are many, and he is one. What then, if while the admires thee, others deride thee. wilt thou not with him deride them?

What, if thou art learning to box, wilt thou not look in like manner to him who knows how to teach this? And if thou art practising oratory, wilt thou not accept the praise of the teacher of rhetoric, and despise the rest. How then is it other than absurd, in other arts to look to the teacher only, but here to do the contrary? although the loss be not equal. For there, if you wrestle according to the opinion of the multitude, and not that of the teacher, the loss is in the wrestling; but here it is in eternal life. Thou art become like to God in giving alms; be thou then like Him in not making a display. For even He said, when healing, that they should tell no man. But dost thou desire to be called merciful amongst men? And what is the gain? The gain is nothing; but the loss infinite. For these very persons, whom thou callest to be witnesses. become robbers of thy treasures that are in the heavens; or rather not these, but ourselves, who spoil our own possessions, and scatter what we have laid up above.

O new calamity! this strange passion. Where moth corrupteth not, nor thief breaketh through, vainglory scattereth. This is the moth of those treasures there; this the thief of our wealth in heaven; this steals away the riches that cannot be spoiled; this mars and corrupts all. For because the devil saw that that place is impregnable to thieves and to the worm, and the other plots against them, he by vainglory steals away the wealth. But dost thou desire glory? Doth not then that suffice thee which is given by the receiver himself, that from our gracious God, but dost thou set thine heart on that from men also? Take heed, lest thou undergo the contrary, lest some condemn thee as not showing mercy, but making a display, and seeking honor, as making a show of the calamities of others. For indeed the showing of mercy is a mystery. Shut therefore the doors, that none may see what it is not pious to display. For our mysteries too are above all things, a showing of God's mercy and loving-kindness. According to His great mercy, He had mercy on us being disobedient.

And the first prayer too is full of mercy, when we entreat for the energumens; and the second again, for others under penance seeking for much mercy; and the third also for ourselves, and this puts forward the innocent children of the people entreating God for mercy. For since we condemn ourselves for sins, for them that have sinned much and deserve to be blamed we ourselves cry; but for ourselves the children; for the imitators of whose simplicity the kingdom of heaven is reserved. For this image shows this, that they who are like those children, lowly and simple, these above all men are able to deliver the guilty by their prayers. But the mystery itself, of how much mercy, of how much love to man it is full, the initiated know. Do thou then, when according to thy power thou art showing mercy to a man, shut the doors, let the object of thy mercy see it only; but if it be possible, not even he. But if thou set them open, thou art profanely exposing thy mystery.

Consider that the very person, whose praise thou seekest, even himself will condemn thee; and if he be a friend, will accuse thee to himself; but if an enemy, he will deride thee unto others also. And thou wilt undergo the opposite of what thou desirest. For thou indeed desirest that he should call thee the merciful man; but he will not call thee this, but the vainglorious, the man-pleaser, and other names far more grievous than these. But if thou shouldest hide it, he will call thee all that is opposite to this; the merciful, the kind. For God suffers it not to be hidden; but if thou conceal it, the other will make it known, and greater will be the admiration, and more abundant the gain. So that even for this very object of being glorified, to make a display is against us; for with respect to the thing unto which we most hasten and press, as to this most especially is this thing against us. For so far from obtaining the credit of being merciful, we obtain even the contrary, and besides this, great is the loss we undergo.

For every motive then let us abstain from this, and set our love on God's praise alone. For thus shall we both attain to honor here, and enjoy the eternal blessings, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might world without end. Amen.

Homily 72

Matthew Chapter 23, Verse 1-Matthew Chapter 23, Verse 3

"Then spake Jesus to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying, The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you do, that do; but do not after their works." Then. When? When He had said these things, when He had stopped their mouths; when He had brought them that they should no more dare to tempt Him; when He had shown their state incurable. And since He had made mention of "the Lord" and "my Lord,"2 He recurs again to the law. And yet the law said nothing of this kind, but, "The Lord thy God is one Lord." But Scripture calls the whole Old Testament the law. But these things He saith, showing by all thinks His full agreement with Him that begat Him. For if He were opposed, He would have said the opposite about the law; but now He commands so great reverence to be shown towards it, that, even when they that teach it are depraved, He charges them to hold to it. But here He is discoursing about their life and morals, since this was chiefly the cause of their unbelief, their depraved life, and the love of glory. To amend therefore His hearers; that which in the first place most contributes to salvation, not to despise our teachers, neither to rise up against our priests, this doth He command with superabundant earnestness. But He does not only command it, but also Himself doth it. For though they were depraved, He doth not depose them from their dignity; to them rendering their condemnation heavier, and to His disciples leaving no cloke for disobedience.

I mean, that lest any one should say, that because my teacher is bad, therefore am I become more remiss, He takes away even this pretext. So much at any rate did He establish their authority, although they were wicked men, as even after so heavy an accusation to say, "All whatsoever they command you to do, do." For they speak not their own words, but God's, what He appointed for laws by Moses. And mark how much honor He showed towards Moses, again showing His agreement with the Old Testament; since indeed even by this doth He make them objects of reverence. "For they sit," He saith, "on Moses' seat." For because He was not able to make them out worthy of credit by their life, He doth it from the grounds that were open to Him, from their seat, and their succession from him. But when thou hearest all, do not understand all the law, as, for instance, the ordinances about meats, those about sacrifices, and the like for how was He to say so of these things, which He had taken away beforehand? but He meant all things that correct the moral principle,

and amend the disposition, and agree with the laws of the New Testament, and suffer them not any more to be under the yoke of the law.

Wherefore then doth He give these things divine authority, not from the law of grace, but from Moses? Because it was not yet time, before the crucifixion, for these things to be plainly declared. But to me He seems, in addition to what has been said, to be providing for another object, in saying these things. For since He was on the point of accusing them, that He might not seem in the sight of the foolish to set His heart on this authority of theirs, or for enmity to be doing these things, first He removed this thought, and having set himself clear from suspicion, then begins His accusation. And for what intent doth He convict them, and run out into a long discourse against them? To set the multitude on their guard, so that they might not fall into the same sins. For neither is dissuading like pointing out those that have offended; much as recommending what is right, is not like bringing forward those that have done well. For this cause also He is beforehand in saying, "Do not after their works." For, lest they should suppose, because of their listening to them, they ought also to imitate them, He uses this means of correction, and makes what seems to be their dignity a charge against them. For what can be more wretched than a teacher, when the preservation of his disciples is, not to give heed to his life? So that what seemeth to be their dignity is a most heavy charge against them, when they are shown to live such a life, as they that imitate are ruined.

For this cause He also falls upon His accusations against them, but not for this only, but that He might show, that both their former unbelief wherewith they had not believed, and the crucifixion after this, which they dared to perpetrate, were not a charge against Him who was crucified and disbelieved, but against their perverseness. But see whence He begins, and whence He aggravates His blame of them. "For they say," He saith, and do not." For every one is worthy of blame in transgressing the law, but especially he that bears the authority of teaching, for doubly and triply doth he deserve to be condemned. For one cause, because he transgresses; for another, that as he ought to amend others, and then halteth, he is worthy of a double punishment, because of his dignity; and in the third place, that he even corrupts the more, as committing such transgression in a teacher's place.

And together with these He mentions also another charge against them, that they are harsh to those accountable to them. "For they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders, but they will not move them with their finger." He mentions here a twofold wickedness, their requiring great and extreme strictness of life, without any indulgence, from those over whom they rule, and their allowing to themselves great security; the opposite to which the truly good ruler ought to hold; in what concerns himself, to be an unpardoning and severe judge, but in the matters of those whom he rules, to be gentle and ready to make allowances; the contrary to which was the conduct of these men. 2. For such are all they who practise self restraint in mere words, unpardoning and grievous to bear as having no experience of the difficulty in actions. And this itself too is no small fault, and in no ordinary way increases the former charge.

But do thou mark, I pray thee, how He aggravates this accusation also. For He did not say, "they cannot," but, "they will not." And He did not say, "to bear," but, "to move with a finger," that is, not even to come near them, nor to touch them. But wherein are they earnest, and vigorous? In the things forbidden. For, "all their works they do," He saith, "to be seen of men." These things He saith, accusing them in respect of vainglory, which kind of thing was their ruin. For the things before were signs of harshness and remissness, but these of the mad desire of glory. This drew them off from God, this caused them to strive before other spectators, and ruined them. For whatever kind of spectators any one may have, since it hath become his study to please these, such also are the contests he exhibits And he that wrestles among the noble, such also are the conflicts he takes in hand, but he among the cold and supine, himself also becomes more remiss. For instance, hath any one a beholder that delights in ridicule? he himself too becomes a mover of ridicule, that he may delight the spectator: hath another one who is earnest minded, and practises self-government? he endeavors himself to be such as he is, since such is the disposition of him who praises him.

But see again that here too the charge is with aggravation. For neither is it that they do some things in this way, some in another way, but all things absolutely this way. Then, having blamed them for vainglory, He shows that it is not even about great and necessary things they are vainglorious (for neither had they these, but were destitute of good works), but for things without warmth or worth, and such as were certain proofs of their baseness, the phylacteries, the borders; of their garments. "For they make broad their phylacteries," He saith, "and enlarge the borders of their garments." And what are these phylacteries, and these borders? Since they were continually forgetting God's benefits, He commanded His marvellous works to be inscribed on little tablets, and that these should be suspended from their hands (wherefore also He said, "They shall be immoveable in thine eyes"), which they called phylacteries; as many of our women now wear Gospels hung from their necks. And in order that by another thing again they may be reminded, like as many often do, binding round their finger with a piece of linen or a thread, as being likely to forget, this God enjoined them as children to do, "to sew a ribbon of blue on their garments, upon the fringe that hung round their feet, that they might look at it, and remember the commandments;" and they were called "borders."

In these things then they were diligent, making wide the strips of the tablets, and enlarging the borders of their garments; which was a sign of the most extreme vanity. For wherefore art thou vainglorious, and dost make these wide? what, is this thy good work? what cloth it profit thee at all, if thou gain not the good results from them. For God seeks not the enlarging of these and making them wide, but our remembering His benefits. But if for almsgiving and prayer, although they be attended with labor, and be good deeds on our parts, we must not seek vainglory, how dost thou, O Jew, pride thyself in these things, which most of all convict thy remissness. But they not in these only, but in other little things, suffered from this disease. For, "they love," He saith, "the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi." For

these things, although one may think them small, yet are they a cause of great evils. These things have overthrown both cities and churches.

And it comes upon me now even to weep, when I hear of the first seats, and the greetings, and consider how many ills were hence engendered to the churches of God, which it is not necessary to publish to you now; nay rather as many as are aged men do not even need to learn these things from us. But mark thou, I pray thee, how vainglory prevailed; when they were commanded not to be vainglorious, even in the synagogues, where they had entered to discipline others. For to have this feeling at feasts, to howsoever great a degree, doth not seem to be so dreadful a thing; although even there the teachers ought to be held in reverence, and not in the church only, but everywhere. And like as a man, wherever he may appear, is manifestly distinguished from the brutes; so also ought the teacher, both speaking and holding his peace, and dining, and doing whatever it may be, to be distinguished as well by his gait, as by his look, and by his garb, and by all things generally. But they were on every account objects of ridicule, and in every respect disgraced themselves, making it their study to follow what they ought to flee. For they love them, it is said; but if the loving them be a matter of blame, what a thing must the doing them be; and to hunt and strive after them, how great an evil.

3. The other things then He carried no further than to accuse them, as being small and trifling, and as though His disciples. needed not at all to be corrected about these matters; but what was a cause of all the evils, even ambition, and the violent seizing of the teacher's chair, this He brings forward, and corrects with diligence, touching this vehemently and earnestly charging them. For what saith He? "Bat be not ye called Rabbi." Then follows the cause also; "For one is your master, and all ye are brethren;" and one hath nothing more than another, in respect of his knowing nothing from himself. Wherefore Paul also saith, "For who is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers?" He said not masters. And again, "Call not, father," not that they should not call, but they may know whom they ought to call Father, in the highest sense. For like as the master is not a master principally; so neither is the father. For He is cause of all, both of the masters, and of the fathers.

And again He adds, "Neither be ye called guides, for one is your guide, even Christ;" and He said not, I. For like as above He said, "What think ye of Christ?" and He said not, "of me," so here too. But I should be glad to ask here, what they would say, who are repeatedly applying the term one, one, to the Father alone, to the rejection of the Only-begotten. Is the Father guide? All would declare it, and none would gainsay it. And yet "one," He saith, "is your guide, even Christ." For like as Christ, being called the one guide, casts not out the Father from being guide; even so the Father, being called Master, doth not cast out the Son from being Master. For the expression, one, one, is spoken in contra-distinction to men, and the rest of the creation. Having warned them therefore against this grievous pest, and amended them, He instructs also how they may escape it; by humility. Wherefore He adds also, "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant. For whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased, and whosoever shall abase himself shall be exalted."

For nothing is equal to the practice of modesty, wherefore He is continually reminding them of this virtue, both when He brought the children into the midst, and now. And, when on the mount, beginning the beatitudes, He began from hence. And in this place, He plucks it up by the roots hereby, saying, "He that abaseth himself shall be exalted." Seest thou how He draws off the hearer right over to the contrary thing. For not only doth He forbid him to set his heart upon the first place, but requires him to follow after the last. For so shalt thou obtain thy desire, He saith. Wherefore he that pursues his desire for the first, must follow after the last place. "For he that abaseth himself shall be exalted." And where shall we find this humility? Will ye that we go again to the city of virtue, the tents of the holy men, the mountains. I mean, and the groves? For there too shall we see this height of humility.

For men, some illustrious from their rank in the world, some from their wealth, in every way put themselves down, by their vesture, by their dwelling, by those to whom they minister; and, as in written characters, they throughout all things inscribe humility. And the things that are incentives of arrogance, as to dress well, and to build houses splendidly, and to have many servants, things which often drive men even against their will to arrogance; these are all taken away. For they themselves light their fire, they themselves cleave the logs, themselves cook, themselves minister to those that come there. No one can be heard insulting there, nor seen insulted, nor commanded, nor giving commands; but all are devoted to those that are waited on, and every one washes the strangers' feet, and there is much contention about this. And he doeth it, not inquiring who it is, neither if he be a slave, nor if he be free; but in the case of every one fulfills this service. No man there is great nor mean. What then? Is there confusion? Far from it, but the highest order. For if any one be mean, he that is great seeth not this, but hath accounted himself again to be inferior even to him, and so becomes great.

There is one table for all, both for them that are served, and for them that serve; the same food, the same clothes, the same dwellings, the same manner of life. He is great there, who eagerly seizes the mean task. There is not mine and thine, but this expression is exterminated, that is a cause of countless wars. 4. And why dost thou marvel, if there be one manner of life and table and dress for all, since indeed there is even one soul to all, not in substance only (for this is with all men also), but in love? how then should it ever be lifted up itself against itself? There is no wealth and poverty there, honor and dishonor; how then should haughtiness and arrogance find an entrance? For they are indeed little and great in respect of their virtue; but, as I have said, no one seeth this. He that is little, feels not pain, as despised; for neither is there any one to despise him; and should any one spurn him, this above all are they taught, to be despised, to be spurned, to be set at nought, in word and in deed. And with the poor and maimed do they associate, and their tables are full of these guests; so that for this are they worthy of the heavens. And one tends the wounds of the mutilated, another leads the blind by the hand, a third bears him that is lamed of his leg.

There is no multitude of flatterers or parasites there; or rather they know not even what flattery is; whence then could they be lifted up at any time? For there is great equality

amongst them, wherefore also there is much facility for virtue. For by these are they of an inferior sort better instructed, than if they were compelled to give up the first place to them. For like as the impetuous man derives instruction from him that is smitten, and submits to it; so the ambitious from him that claims not glory, but despises it. This they do there abundantly, and as the strife is great with us to obtain the first place, so great is it with them not to obtain it, but utterly to refuse it; and great is their earnest desire who shall have the advantage in honoring, not in being honored. And besides, even their very employments persuade them to practise moderation, and not to be high-swollen. For who, I pray thee, digging in the earth, and watering, and planting, or making baskets, or weaving sackcloth, or practising any other handy works, will ever be proud? Who dwelling in poverty and wrestling with hunger, will ever be sick of this disease? There is not one. Therefore humility is easy to them. And like as here, it is a hard thing to be lowly minded, for the multitude of them who applaud and admire us, so there it is exceedingly easy.

And that man gives heed only to the wilderness, and sees birds flying, and trees waving, and a breeze blowing, and streams rushing through glens. Whence then should he be lifted up who dwells in solitude so great? Not however that therefore we have from this an excuse, in that we are proud when living in the midst of men. For surely Abraham, when amidst Canaanites, said, "I am but dust and ashes;" and David, when in the midst of camps, "I am a worm, and no man;" and the apostle, in the midst of the world, "I am not meet to be called an apostle." What comfort shall we have then; what plea, when even, having such great examples, we do not practise moderation? For even as they are worthy of countless crowns, having been the first that went the way of virtue, even so are we deserving of countless punishments, who not even after those that are departed, and are set before us in books, no nor even after these that are living, and held in admiration through their deeds, are drawn on to the like emulation.

For what couldest thou say, for not being amended? Art thou ignorant of letters, and hast not looked into the Scriptures that thou mightest learn the virtues of them of old? To say the truth, this is itself blameworthy, when the church is constantly standing open, not to enter in, and partake of those sacred streams. However, although thou know not the departed by the Scriptures, these living men thou oughtest to see. But is there no one to lead thee? Come to me, and I will show thee the places of refuge of these holy men; come and learn thou of them something useful. Shining lamps are these in every part of the earth; as walls are they set about the cities. For this cause have they occupied the deserts, that they may instruct thee to despise the tumults in the midst of the world. For they, as being strong, are able even in the midst of the raging of the waters to enjoy a calm; but thou, who art leaky on every side, hast need of tranquility, and to take breath a little, after the successive waves. Go then there continually, that, having purged away the abiding stain by their prayers and admonitions, thou mayest both pass in the best manner the present life, and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom, be unto the Father, together with the Holy Ghost, glory, might, honor, now and ever, and world with. out end. Amen.

Source. English translation: an older public-domain translation as collected in the Writings-Database (HistoricalChristianFaith), mostly from the Ante-Nicene, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers and similar nineteenth-century editions. SermonIndex has only divided it into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator's own. Square brackets, Greek or Latin words and footnote-free text are as the source file prints them, and a transcription error may remain. No Greek or Latin text is shown beside it yet, and no modern English version has been made.