Homilies on Matthew (part 3 of 3)

John Chrysostom (c. AD 349–407)

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Homily 73

Matthew Chapter 23, Verse 14

"Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers: therefore ye shall receive greater damnation." After this, next He derides them for gluttony: and the grievous thing was, that not from rich men's goods, but from the poor they indulged their own belly, and aggravated their poverty, which they should have relieved. For neither did they merely eat, but devoured. Moreover also the manner of their overreaching was yet more grievous, "for a pretense making long prayers." For every one is worthy of vengeance who doeth any evil thing; but he that is deriving even the reason for so doing from godliness, and is using this cloke for his wickedness, is justly liable to a far more grievous punishment. And wherefore did He not depose them? Because the time suffered it not as yet. So therefore He lets them alone for a time, but by His sayings, He secures that the people be not deceived, lest, through the dignity of those men, they be drawn on to the same emulation.

For as He had said, "Whatsoever they bid you do, that do;" He shows how many things they do amiss, lest from thence He should be supposed amongst the unwise to commit all to them. "Woe unto you, for ye shut up the kingdom against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." But if to profit no one be a charge against a man, even to hurt and hinder, what plea hath that? But what means, "them that are entering in?" Them that are fit for it. For when they were to lay injunctions on others, they used to make the burdens intolerable, but when they themselves were to do any of the things required, on the contrary, so far from doing anything, they went much beyond this in wickedness, they even used to corrupt others. These are they that are called pests, who make their employment the ruin of others, standing right contrary to teachers. For if it be the part of a teacher to save that which is perishing, to destroy that which is on the point of being saved is that of a destroyer.

After this, again another charge: compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves;" that is, not even the fact that hardly ye have taken him, and with endless toils, induces you to be sparing towards him, although of the things we have hardly acquired, we are more sparing, but you not even this renders more gentle. Here He lays to their charge two things; one, that they

are unprofitable for the salvation of the many, and need much toil in order to win over even one; another, that they were remiss in the preservation of him whom they had gained, or rather that they were not only careless, but even traitors, by their wickedness in their life corrupting him, and making him worse. For when the disciple sees his teachers to be such as these, he becomes worse than they. For he stops not at his teacher's wickedness; but as when his teacher is virtuous, he imitates him, so when he is bad, he even goes beyond him, by reason of our proneness to what is evil.

And He calls him "a child of hell," that is, a very hell. And He said "twofold more than you," that He might both alarm those, and make these feel the more severely, because they are teachers of wickedness. And not this only, but because they labor to instill into their disciples a greater wickedness, hardening them to a much greater depravity than they have, and this is above all a mark of a depraved soul. Then He derides them for folly also, because they bade them disregard the greater commandments. And yet before He had said the opposite, that "they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne." But these things too they did again and were doing everything for the corruption of those who were subject to them, in little things requiring strictness, and despising the great. "For ye pay tithe," He saith, "of mint and anise, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, and mercy, and faith. These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the others undone."

Here then He naturally saith it, where it is tithe and almsgiving, for what doth it hurt to give alms? But not to keep the law; for neither doth it say thus. Therefore here indeed He saith, "These ought ye to have done;" but where He is speaking about clean and unclean, He no longer adds this, but makes a distinction, and shows that the inward purity is necessarily followed by the outward, but the converse is no longer so. For where there is a plea of love to man, He passes it over lightly, for this very reason, and because it was not yet time expressly and plainly to revoke the things of the law. But where it is an observance of bodily purification, He overthrows it more plainly. So, therefore, while with respect to alms He saith, "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the others undone," touching purifications He speaks not on this wise, but what? "Ye make clean," He saith, "the outside of the cup and the platter, but within they are full of extortion, and injustice. Cleanse that which is within the cup, that the outside may be clean also." And He took it from a thing confessed and manifest, from a cup and platter.

2. Then, to show that there is no harm arising from despising bodily cleansings, but very great vengeance from not regarding the purifications of the soul, which is virtue, He called these "a gnat," for they are small and nothing, but those other a camel, for they were beyond what men could bear. Wherefore also He saith, "Straining at the gnat, and swallowing the camel." For indeed the one were enacted for the sake of the other, I mean of mercy and judgment; so that not even then did they profit being done alone. For whereas the little things were mentioned for the sake of the great, and after that these last were neglected, and labor was spent on those alone, nothing was gained even then by this. For the greater followed not the lesser, but the lesser were sure to follow these greater. But these things He

saith to show, that even before grace was come, these were not among the principal things, or amongst those upon which men should spend their labor, but the matters required were different. But if before the grace they were so, much more when high commandments had come, were these things unprofitable, and it was not meet to practise them at all.

In every case then is vice a grievous thing, but especially when it does not so much as think it needs amendment; and it is yet more grievous, when it thinks itself sufficient even to amend others; to express which Christ calls them "blind guides." For if for a blind man not to think he needs a guide be extreme misery and wretchedness; when he wishes himself to guide others, see to what a gulf it leads. But these things He said, by all intimating their mad desire of glory, and their exceeding frenzy concerning this pest. For this became a cause to them of all their evils, namely, that they did all things for display. This both led them away from the faith, and caused them to neglect what really is virtue, and induced them to busy themselves about bodily purifyings only, neglecting the purifications of the soul. So therefore to lead them into what really is virtue, and to the purifyings of the soul, He makes mention of mercy, and judgment, and faith. For these are the things that comprise our life, these are what purify the soul, justice, love to man, truth; the one inclining us to pardon and not suffering us to be excessively severe and unforgiving to them that sin (for then shall we gain doubly, both becoming kind to man, and hence meeting also ourselves with much kindness from the God of all), and causing us both to sympathize with them that are despitefully entreated, and to assist them; the other not suffering them to be deceitful, and crafty.

But neither when He saith, "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the others undone," doth He say it as introducing a legal observance; away with the thought; neither with regard to the platter and the cup, when He said, "Cleanse that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also," doth He bring us unto the old regard for little things, but on the contrary indeed, He doth all things to show it to be superfluous. For He said not, Cleanse the outside of them also, but that which is within, and the outside is sure to follow. And besides, neither is it concerning a cup and platter he is speaking, but of soul and body, by the outside meaning the body, by the inside the soul. But if with regard to the platter there be need of that which is within much more with regard to thee.

But ye do the contrary, saith He, observing things trifling and external, ye neglect what are great and inward: whence very great mischief arises, for that thinking ye have duly performed all, ye despise the other things; and despising them, ye do not so much as strive or attempt to perform them. After this, He again derides them for vainglory, calling 'them "whited sepulchers." and unto all adding, "ye hypocrites;" which thing is the cause of all their evils, and the origin of their ruin. And He did not merely call them whited sepulchers, but said, that they were full of uncleanness and hypocrisy. And these things He spake, indicating the cause wherefore they did not believe, because they were full of hypocrisy and iniquity. But these things not Christ only, but the prophets also constantly lay to their charge, that they spoil, that their rulers judge not according to the rule of justice, and every

where you may find the sacrifices indeed refused, but these things required. So that there is nothing strange, nothing new, neither in the lawgiving, nor in the accusation, nay not even in the comparison of the sepulchre. For the prophet makes mention thereof, neither did he call them merely a sepulchre, "but their throat an open sepulchre."

Such are many men now also, decking themselves indeed outwardly, but full of iniquity within. For now too there is many a mode, and many a care for outward purifications, but of those in the soul not so much as one. But if indeed any one should tear open each man's conscience, many worms and much corruption would he find, and an ill savor beyond utterance; unreasonable and wicked lusts I mean, which are more unclean than worms. 3. But that "they" should be such persons is not "so" dreadful a thing (although it be dreadful), but that "you," that have been counted worthy to become temples of God, should of a sudden have become sepulchers, having as much ill savor, this is extreme wretchedness. He in whom Christ dwells, and the Holy Spirit hath worked, and such great mysteries, that this man should be a sepulchre, what wretchedness is this? What mournings and lamentations doth this call for, when the members of Christ have become a tomb of uncleanness? Consider how thou wast born, of what things thou hast been counted worthy, what manner of garment thou hast received, how thou wast built a temple without a breach! how fair! not adorned with gold, neither with pearls, but with the spirit that is more precious than these.

Consider that no sepulchre is made in a city, so then neither shalt thou be able to appear in the city above. For if here this is forbidden, much more there. Or rather even here thou art an object of scorn to all, bearing about a dead soul, and not to be scorned only, but also to be shunned. For tell me. if any one were to go round, bearing about a dead body, would not all have rushed away? would not all have fled? Think this now likewise. For thou goest about, bearing a spectacle far more grievous than this, a soul deadened by sins, a soul paralyzed. Who now will pity such a one? For when thou dost not pity thine own soul, how shall another pity him that is so cruel, such an enemy to himself? If any one, where thou didst sleep and eat, had buried a dead body, what wouldest thou not have done? but thou art burying a dead soul, not where thou dinest, nor where thou sleepest, but in the members of Christ: and art thou not afraid lest a thousand lightnings and thunderbolts be hurled from above upon thine head?

And how dost thou even dare to set foot in the churches of God, and in holy temples, having within thee the savor of so much abomination? For if one bearing a dead body into the king's courts and burying it would have suffered the utmost punishment, thou setting thy foot in the sacred courts. and filling the house with so much ill savor, consider what a punishment thou wilt undergo. Imitate that harlot who anointed with ointment the feet of Christ, and filled the whole house with the odor, the opposite to which thou doest to His house! For what though thou be not sensible of the ill savor? For this most of all is the grievous part of the disease; wherefore also thou art incurably diseased, and more grievously than they that are maimed in their bodies, and become fetid. For that disease indeed is both felt by the sick and is without any blame, nay even is deserving of pity; but this of hatred and punishment.

Since then both in this respect it is more grievous, and from the sick not being sensible of it as he ought to be; come, give thyself to my words, that I may teach thee plainly the mischief of it. But first listen to what thou sayest in the Psalm, "Let my prayer be set forth in Thy sight as incense." When then not incense, but a stinking smoke arises from thee, and from thy deeds, what punishment dost thou not deserve to undergo? What then is the stinking smoke? Many come in gazing about at the beauty of women; others curious about the blooming youth of boys. After this, dost thou not marvel, how bolts are not launched, and all things are not plucked up from their foundations? For worthy both of thunderbolts and hell are the things that are done; but God, who is long-suffering, and of great mercy, forbears awhile His wrath, calling thee to repentance and amendment.

What doest thou, O man? Art thou curiously looking after women's beauty, and dost thou not shudder at thus doing despite unto the temple of God? Doth the church seem to thee a brothel, and less honorable than the market-place. For in a market-place indeed thou art afraid and ashamed to appear to be looking after any woman, but in God's temple, when God Himself is discoursing unto thee, and threatening about these things, thou art committing whoredom and adultery at the very time in which thou art being told not to do this. And dost thou not shudder, nor stand amazed? These things do the spectacles of wantonness teach you, the pest that is so hard to put down, the deleterious sorceries, the grievous snares of the thoughtless, the pleasurable destruction of the unchaste Therefore the prophet also blaming thee, said, "Thine eyes are not good, neither is thine heart."

It were better for such men to be blind; it were better to be diseased, than to abuse thine eyes for these purposes. It were meet indeed that ye had within you the wall to part you from the women; but since ye are not so minded, our fathers thought it necessary by these boards to wall you off; since I hear from the eider ones, that of old there were not so much as these partitions; "For in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female." And in the apostle's time also both men and women were together. Because the men were men, and the women women, but now altogether the contrary; the women have urged themselves into the manners of courtezans, but the men are in no better state than frantic horses. Heard ye not, that the men and women were gathered together in the upper room, and that congregation was worthy of the heavens? And very reasonably. For even women then practised much self-denial, and the men gravity and chastity. Hear, for instance, the seller of purple saying, "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come in, and abide with me." Hear the women, who went about with the apostles, having taken unto themselves manly courage, Priscilla, Persis, and the rest; from whom our present women are as far removed as our men from their men.

4. For then indeed even travelling into far countries women brought not on themselves evil report; but now even though brought up in a chamber, they hardly escape this suspicion. But these things arise from their decking of themselves, and their luxury, Then the business of those women was to spread the word; but now to appear beauteous, and fair, and comely in countenance. This is glory to them, this salvation; but of lofty and great works they do

not even dream. What woman exerts herself to make her husband better? what man hath taken to himself this care to amend his wife? There is not one: but the woman's whole study is upon the care of ornaments of gold, and raiment, and the other adornments of the person, and how to increase their substance; but the man's both this, and others more than this, all however worldly. Who, when about to marry, inquires about the disposition and nurture of the damsel? No one; but straightway about money, and possessions, and measures of property of various and different kinds; like as if he were about to buy something, or to settle some common contract.

Therefore they do even so call marriage. For I have heard many say, such a man has contracted with such a woman, that is, has married. And they offer insult to the gifts of God, and as though buying and selling, so do they marry, and are giver in marriage. And writings there are, requiring greater security than those about buying and selling. Learn how those of old married, and imitate them. How then did they marry? They inquired about ways of life, and morals, and virtue of the soul. Therefore they had no need of writings, nor of security by parchment and ink; for the bride's disposition sufficed them in the place of all. I therefore entreat you likewise not to seek after wealth and affluence, but a good disposition, and gentleness. Seek for a pious and self-denying damsel, and these will be to thee better than countless treasures. If thou seek the things of God, these others will come also; but if thou pass by those, and hasten unto these, neither will these follow.

But such a man, one will say, became rich by his wife! Art thou not ashamed of bringing forward such examples? I had ten thousand times sooner become a poor man, as I have heard many say, than gain wealth from a wife. For what can be more unpleasing than that wealth? What more painful than the abundance? What more shameful than to be notorious from thence, and for it to be said by all, such a man became rich by a wife? For the domestic discomforts I pass by, all that must needs result from hence, the wife's pride, the servility, the strifes, the reproaches of the servants. "The beggar," "the ragged one. "the base one, and sprung of base. "Why, what had he when he came in? "Do not all things belong to our mistress? But thou dost not care at all about these sayings, for neither art thou a freeman. Since the parasites likewise hear worse things than these, and are not pained wherefore neither are these, but rather pride themselves in their disgrace; and when we tell them of these things,"Let me have," saith one of them, "something pleasant and sweet, and let it choke me. Alas! the devil,what proverbs hath he brought into the world, of power to overturn the whole life of such persons. See at least this self-same devilish and pernicious saying; of how much ruin it is full. For it means nothing else than these words, Have thou no regard to what is honorable; have thou no regard to what is just;

let all those things be cast aside, seek one thing alone, pleasure. Though the thing stifle thee, let it be thy choice; though all that meet thee spurn thee, though they smear thy face with mire, though they drive thee away as a dog, bear all. And what else would swine say, if they had a voice? What else would filthy dogs? But perhaps not even they would have said such things, as the devil hath persuaded men to rave.

Wherefore I entreat you, being conscious of the senselessness of such words as these, to flee such proverbs, and to choose out those in the Scriptures that are contrary to them. But what are these? "Go not," it is said, "after thy lusts, and refrain thyself from thine appetites." And, touching an harlot again, it is said in opposition to this proverb, "Give not heed to a bad woman: for honey droppeth from the lips of a woman that is an harlot, which, for a season, is luscious unto thy throat; but afterwards thou shalt find it more bitter than gall, and sharper than a two-edged sword." Unto these last then let us listen, not unto those. For hence indeed spring our mean, hence our slavish thoughts, hence men become brutes, because in everything they will follow after pleasure according to this proverb, which, even without arguments of ours, is of itself ridiculous. For after one is choked, what is the gain of sweetness?

Cease, therefore, to set up such great absurdity, and to kindle hell and unquenchable fire; and let us look steadfastly (at length though late) as we ought, unto the things to come, having put away the film on our eyes, that we may both pass the present life honestly, and with much reverence and godly fear, and attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory world without end. Amen.

Homily 74

Matthew Chapter 23, Verse 29 And Matthew Chapter 23, Verse 30

"Woe unto you, because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish their sepulchers, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets." Not because they build, nor because they blame the others, doth He say, woe, but because, while both thus, and by what they say, they are pretending to condemn their fathers, they do worse. For in proof that the condemnation was a pretense, Luke saith, ye do allow because ye build; for, "Woe unto you," saith He, "for ye build the sepulchers of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Truly ye bear witness, and ye allow the deeds of your fathers, for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchers." For here He reproves their purpose, wherewith they built, that it was not for the honoring of them that were slain, but as making a show of the murders, and afraid, lest, when the tombs had perished by time, the proof and memory of such daring should fade away, setting up these glorious buildings, as a kind of trophy, and priding themselves in the daring deeds of those men, and displaying them.

For the things that ye now dare to do, show that ye do these things also in this spirit. For, though ye speak the contrary, saith He, as condemning them, as, for instance, "We should not, if we had been in their days, have been partakers with them;" yet the disposition is evident wherewith ye say these things. Wherefore also unfolding it, though darkly, still He hath expressed it. For when He had said, ye say, "If we had been in the days of our fathers, we should not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets;" He added, "Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them that slew the prophets." And what blame is it to be a murderer's son, if one partake not in the mind of one's father? None. Whence it is evident, that for this same thing He brings it forward against them, hinting at their affinity in wickedness.

And this is manifest too by what comes after; He adds at least, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers." For as those beasts are like their parents, in the destructiveness of their venom, so also are ye like your fathers in murderousness. Then, because He was searching their temper of mind, which is to the more part obscure, He doth, from those things also which they were about to perpetrate, which would be manifest to all, establish His words. For, because He had said, "Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves that ye are the children

of them which killed the prophets," making it evident, that of their affinity in wickedness He is speaking, and that it was a pretense to say, "We should not have been partakers with them," He added, "Fill ye up therefore the measure of your fathers," not commanding, but declaring beforehand, what was to be, that is, His own murder.

Therefore, having brought in their refutation, and having shown that they were pretenses which they said in their own defense, as, for instance, "We would not have been partakers with them," (for they who refrain not from the Lord, how should they have refrained from the servants), He makes after this His language more condemnatory, calling them "serpents, and generation of vipers," and saying, "How shall ye escape the damnation of hell," at once perpetrating such things, and denying them, and dissembling your purpose? Then rebuking them more exceedingly from another cause also, He Saith, "I will send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes, and some of them shall ye kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues." For that they should not say, "Though we crucified the Lord, yet from the servants we should have refrained, if we had been then;" "Behold," He saith, "I send servants also to you, prophets likewise themselves, and neither will ye spare them." But these things He saith, showing that it was nothing strange, that He should be murdered by those sons, being both murderous and deceitful, and having much guile, and surpassing their fathers in their outrages.

And besides what hath been said, He shows them to be also exceedingly vainglorious. For when they say, "If we had been in the days of our fathers, we should not have been partakers with them," they spake out of vainglory, and were practising virtue in words only, but in their works doing the contrary. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, that is, wicked sons of wicked men, and more wicked than those who begat them. For He showeth that they are committing greater crimes, both by their committing them after those others, and by their doing much more grievous things than they, and this, while positively affirming that they never would have fallen into the same. For they add that which is both the end and the crown of their evil deeds. For the others slew them that came to the vineyard, but these, both the son, and them that were bidding them to the wedding.

But these things He saith, to separate them off from the affinity to Abraham, and to show that they had no advantage from thence, unless they followed his works; wherefore also He adds, "How can ye flee from the damnation of hell," when following them that have committed such acts? And here He recalls to their remembrance John's accusation, for he too called them by this name, and reminded them of the judgment to come. Then, because they are nothing alarmed by judgment and hell, by reason of their not believing them, and because the thing is future, He awes them by the things present, and saith, "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets and scribes: and some of them shall ye kill and crucify, and scourge; that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias the son of Barschias, whom ye stew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, that all these things shall come upon this generation."

2. See by how many things He has warned them. He said, Ye condemn your fathers, in that ye say, "We would not have been partakers with them;" and this is no little thing to shame them. He said, While ye condemn them, ye do worse things, even ye yourselves; and this is sufficient to cover them with disgrace. He said, These things shall not be without punishment; and hence he implants in them fear beyond words. He hath reminded them at least of hell. Then because that was to come, He brought home to them the terrors as even present. "For all these things shall come," He saith, "upon this generation." He added also unspeakable severity to the vengeance, saying, that they shall suffer more grievous things than all; yet by none of these things did they become better. But if any one say, And why do they suffer more grievously than all? we would say, Because they have first committed more grievous things than all, and by none of the things that have been done to them have they been brought to a sound mind.

Heardest thou not Lamech saying, "Of Lamech vengeance shall be taken seventy times sevenfold;" that is, "I am deserving of more punishment than Cain." Why could this be? Yet he did not slay his brother; but because not even by his example was he brought to a better mind. And this is what God saith elsewhere, "Requiting the sins of fathers upon children for the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." Not as though one were to suffer punishment for the crimes committed by others, but inasmuch as they who, after many sin and have been punished, yet have not grown better, but have committed the same offenses, are justly worthy to suffer their punishments also. But see how seasonably he also mentioned Abel, indicating that this murder likewise is of envy. What then have ye to say? Know ye not what Cain suffered? Did God hold His peace at his deeds? Did He not exact the severest penalty? Heard ye not what things your fathers suffered, when they slew the prophets; were they not delivered over to punishments, and inflictions of vengeance without number? How then did ye not become better? And why do I speak of the punishments of your fathers, and what they suffered? Thou who thyself condemnest thy fathers, how is it thou doest worse? For moreover even ye yourselves have declared that "He will miserably destroy those wicked men." What favor then will ye have after this, committing such things after such a sentence?

But who is this Zacharias? Some say, the father of John; some, the prophet; some, a priest with two different names, whom the Scripture also calls, the son of Jehoiada. But do thou mark this, that the outrage was twofold. For not only did they slay holy men, but also in a holy place. And saying these things, He did not only alarm them, but also comfort His disciples, showing that the righteous men also who were before them suffered these things. But these He alarmed, foretelling that like as they paid their penalty, even so should these too suffer the utmost extremities. Therefore He calls them "prophets, and wise men, and scribes," even hereby again taking away every plea of theirs. "For ye cannot say," He saith, "Thou didst send from among the Gentiles, and therefore we were offended;" but they were led on unto this by being murderous, and thirsting for blood. Wherefore He also said beforehand, "For this cause do I send prophets and scribes." This did the prophets also lay to their charge, saying, "They mingle blood with blood," and that they are men of blood.

Therefore also did He command the blood to be offered to Him, showing that if in a brute it be thus precious, much more in a man. Which He saith to Noah likewise, "I will require all blood that is shed." And ten thousand other such things might one find Him enjoining with regard to their not committing murder; wherefore He commanded them not even to eat that which was strangled.

Oh the love of God towards man! that though He foreknew they would profit nothing, He still doeth His part. For I will send, He saith, and this knowing they would be slain. So that even hereby they were convicted of saying vainly, "We should not have been partakers with our fathers." For these too slew prophets even in their synagogues, and reverenced neither the place, nor the dignity of the persons. For not merely ordinary persons did they slay, but prophets and wise men, such that they had nothing to lay to their charge. And by these He meaneth the apostles, and those after them, for, indeed, many prophesied. Then, willing to aggravate their fears, He saith, "Verily, verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation;" that is, I will bring all upon your heads, and will make the vengeance sore. For he that knew many to have sinned, and was not sobered, but himself hath committed the same sins again, and not the same only, but also far more grievous, would justly deserve to suffer a far more grievous punishment than they. For like as, if he had been minded, he would have gained greatly, had he grown better by their examples, even so, since he continued without amendment, he is liable to a heavier vengeance, as having had the benefit of more warning by them who had sinned before and been punished, and having reaped no advantage.

3. Then He directs His speech unto the city, in this way too being minded to correct His hearers, and saith, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" What meaneth the repetition? this is the manner of one pitying her, and bemoaning her, and greatly loving her. For, like as unto a woman beloved, herself indeed ever loved, but who had despised Him that loved her, and therefore on the point of being punished, He pleads, being now about to inflict the punishment. Which He doth in the prophets also, using these words, "I said, Turn thou unto me, and she returned not." Then having called her, He tells also her blood-stained deeds, "Thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not," in this way also pleading for His own dealings; not even with these things hast thou turned me aside, nor withdrawn me from my great affection toward thee, but it was my desire even so, not once or twice, but often to draw thee unto me. "For how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens, and ye would not." And this He saith, to show that they were ever scattering themselves by their sins. And His affection He indicates by the similitude; for indeed the creature is warm in its love towards its brood. And everywhere in the prophets is this same image of the wings, and in the song of Moses and in the Psalms, indicating His great protection and care.

"But ye would not," He saith. "Behold your house is left desolate," stripped of the succor which cometh from me. Surely it was the same, who also was before protecting them, and

holding them together, and preserving them; surely it was He who was ever chastening them. And He appoints a punishment, which they had ever dreaded exceedingly; for it declared the entire overthrow of their polity. "For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." And this is the language of one that loves earnestly, earnestly drawing them unto Him by the things to come, not merely warning them by the past; for of the future day of His second coming doth He here speak. What then? Did they not see Him from that time? But it is not that hour which He meaneth in saying, Henceforth, but the time up to His crucifixion.

For since they were forever accusing Him of this, that He was a kind of rival God, and a foe to God, He moves them to love Him by this, namely, by showing Himself to be of one accord with His Father; and He indicates Himself to be the same that was in the prophets. Wherefore also He uses the same words as did the prophets. And by these He intimated both His resurrection, and His second coming, and made it plain even to the utterly unbelieving, that then most surely they should worship Him. And how did He make this plain? By speaking of many things that were first to be, that He should send prophets, that they should kill them; that it should be in the synagogues; that they should suffer the utmost extremities; that their house should be left desolate; that they should undergo things more grievous than any, and such as never were undergone before. For all these things are enough to furnish even to the most senseless and contentious a clear proof of that which should come to pass at His coming.

For I will ask them, Did He send the prophets and wise men? Did they slay them in their synagogue? Was their house left desolate? Did all the vengeance come upon that generation? It is quite plain that it was so, and no man gainsays it. As then all these things came to pass, so shall those also come to pass, and most surely they shall submit then. But they shall derive thence no advantage in the way of defense, as neither will they who repent of their course of life then. Wherefore let us, while it is time, practise what is good. For like as they henceforth derived no advantage from their knowledge, even so neither shall we ourselves from our repentance for our wickedness. For neither to the pilot, when the bark is sunk in the sea from his remissness, will there remain anything more; nor to the physician, when the sick man is gone; but each of these must before the end devise, and execute all things, so as to be involved in no danger, nor shame; but after this, all is unprofitable.

Let us also then, while in sickness, send for physicians, and lay out money, and exert unceasing diligence, that having risen up from our affliction, we may depart hence in health. And as much care as we exert about our servants, when their bodies are sick, so much let us show forth upon ourselves, when our soul is diseased. And indeed we are nearer to ourselves than our servants, and our souls are more necessary than those bodies, but nevertheless it were well if we exert at least an equal diligence. For if we do not this now, when gone, thenceforth we may obtain nothing more in the way of plea. 4. Who is so wretched, one may say, as not to show even as much thought as this? Why this is the marvellous thing, that we are held in so little esteem with our ownselves, that we despise ourselves more than

our servants. For when our servants are sick of a fever, we send for physicians, and make a separation in the house, and compel them to obey the laws of that art; and if these are neglected, we are displeased with them, and set persons to watch them, who will not, even should they wish them, suffer them to satiate their desire; and if they who have the care of these persons should say, that medicines must be procured at great cost, we yield; and whatsoever they may enjoin, we obey, and we pay them hire for these injunctions.

But when we are sick (or rather there is no time when we are not sick), we do not so much as call in the physician, we do not lay out money, but as though some ruffian, and enemy, and foes were concerned, so do we disregard our soul. And these things I say, not finding fault with our attention towards our servants, but thinking it meet to take at least as much care of our souls. And how should we do? one may say. Show it to Paul when ill; call in Matthew; let John sit by it. Hear from them, what we ought to do that is thus ill, they will surely tell, and will not conceal. For they are not dead, but live and speak. But doth the soul take no heed to them, being weighed down by the fever? Do thou compel it, and awaken its reasoning power. Call in the prophets. There is no need to pay money to these physicians, for neither do they themselves demand hire for themselves, nor for the medicines which they prepare do they drive thee to the necessity of expense, except for almsgiving; but in everything else they even add to thy possessions; as, for instance, when they require thee to be temperate, they deliver thee from unseasonable and wrong expenses; when they tell thee to abstain from drunkenness, they make thee wealthier. Seest thou the skill of physicians, who besides health, are supplying thee also with riches?

Sit down therefore by them, and learn of them the nature of thy diseaseú For instance, dost thou love wealth, and greedy gain, like as the fevered love water? Listen at any rate to their admonitions. For like as the physician saith to thee, If thou wilt gratify thy desire, thou wilt perish, and undergo this or that; even so also Paul: "They that will be rich, fall into temptation, and a snare of the devil, and into foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition."

But art thou impatient? Hear him saying, "Yet a little while, and He that cometh will come, and will not tarry. The Lord is at hand, be careful for nothing;" and again, "The fashion of this world passeth away." For neither doth he command only, but also soothes, as a physician should. And like as they devise some other things in the place of cold things, so doth this man draw off the desire another way. Dost thou wish to be rich, saith he; let it be "in good works." Dost thou desire to lay up treasure? I forbid it not at all; only let it be in Heaven. And like as the physician saith, that what is cold is hurtful to teeth, to nerves, to bones; so he too, more briefly indeed, as heedful of brevity, yet far more, clearly and more powerfully, saith," For the love of money is the root of all evils."

Of what then should one make use? He tells this also: of contentedness instead of covetousness. "For contentment," he saith, "with godliness is great gain." But if thou art dissatisfied, and desirest more, and art not yet equal to cast away all superfluous things, he tells also him that is thus diseased, how he ought to handle these things too. "That they that rejoice

in wealth, be as though they rejoiced not; and they that have, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it." Seest thou what manner of things he enjoins? Wilt thou thou call in also another physician besides? To me at least it seems well. For neither are these physicians like those of the body, who often, while vying one with another, overwhelm the sick man. But not so these, for they have regard to the health of the sick, not to their own vainglory. Be not then afraid of the number of them; one Master speaks in all, that is, Christ.

5. See, for instance, another again entering in, and saying severe things concerning this disease, or rather it is the Master by him; "For ye cannot serve God and mammon." Yea, saith he, and how will these things be? how shall we cease from the desire? Hence may we learn this also. And how shall we know? Hear him saying this too: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal." Seest thou how by the place, by the things that waste there, He draws men off from this desire that is here, and rivets them to Heaven, where all things are impregnable? For if ye transfer your wealth there where neither rust nor moth corrupts, nor thieves break through and steal, ye will both expel this disease, and establish your soul in the greatest abundance.

And together with what we have said, He brings forward an example also to teach thee moderation. And like as the physician, to alarm the sick man saith, that such a one died from the use of cold water; so doth He also bring in the rich man, laboring indeed, and longing for life and health, but not able to attain thereto, because of having set his heart on covetousness, but going away empty. And besides this man, another is shown to thee again by another evangelist, he that was in torment, and was not master so much as of a drop of water. Then showing that His injunctions are easy, He saith, "Behold the fowls of the air." But being compassionate, He suffers not even the rich to despair. "For the things which are impossible with men, are possible with God," saith He. For though thou be rich, the physician is able to cure thee. For neither was it wealth that He took away, but to be slave of riches, and a lover of greedy gain.

How then is it possible for the rich man to be saved. By possessing his goods in common with them that are in need, being such as Job was, and exterminating out of his soul the desire of more, and in no points going beyond real need. He shows thee together with these this selfsame publican also, that was grievously oppressed by the fever of covetousness, quickly set free from it. For what more sordid than a publican? Nevertheless, the man became indifferent to wealth from obeying the laws of the physician. For indeed He hath for His disciples such persons as these, that were sick of the same diseases as we are, and have recovered their health quickly. And He shows us each, in order we may not despair. See at least this publican. Mark again another, a chief of the publicans, who promised four fold indeed for all that he had extorted, and the half of all that he possessed, that he might receive Jesus.

But art thou on fire with exceeding desire for riches. Have the possessions of all men instead of thine own. For indeed I give thee, He saith, more than thou seekest, in opening to thee the houses of the wealthy throughout the world. "For whosoever hath forsaken father or mother, or lands, or house, shall receive an hundredfold." Thus wilt thou not enjoy more abundant possessions only, but thou wilt even remove this grievous thirst altogether, and wilt endure all things easily, so far from desiring more, not seeking often even necessary things. Thus doth Paul suffer hunger, and is held in honor more than when he ate. Forasmuch as a wrestler also, when striving, and winning crowns, would not choose to give up and to be in repose; and a merchant who hath entered on sea voyages would not desire to be afterwards in idleness. And we therefore, if we should taste as we ought of spiritual fruits, shall thenceforth not even account the things present to be anything, being seized by the desire of the things to come as with some most noble intoxication.

Let us taste of them, therefore, that we may both be delivered from the turmoil of the things present, and may attain the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory and the might, now and ever, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 75

Matthew Chapter 24, Verse 1 And Matthew Chapter 24, Verse 2

"And Jesus went out from the temple, and departed. And His disciples came to Him to show Him the buildings of the temple. And He answered and said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." For inasmuch as He said, "Your house is left desolate," and had previously forewarned them of many grievous things; therefore the disciples having heard these things, as though marvelling at it, came unto Him, showing the beauty of the temple, and wondering, if so much beauty was to be destroyed, and materials so costly, and variety of workmanship past utterance; He no longer thenceforth talks to them of desolation merely, but foretells an entire destruction. "See ye not all these things," saith He, and do ye marvel, and are ye amazed? "There shall not remain one stone upon another." How then did it remain? one may say. But what is this? For neither so hath the prediction fallen to the ground. For He said these things either indicating its entire desolation, or at that spot where He was. For there are parts of it destroyed unto the foundations.

And together with its we would say another thing also, that from what hath been done, even the most contentious ought to believe concerning the remains, that they are utterly to be destroyed. "And as He sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto Him privately, saying, Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Therefore did they come unto Him privately, as it was of such matters they meant to inquire. For they were in travail to know the day of His coming, because of their eager desire to behold that glory, which is the cause of countless blessings. And these two things do they ask him, when shall these things be? that is, the overthrow of the temple; and, what is the sign of thy coming? But Luke saith, the question was one concerning Jerusalem, as though they were supposing that then is His coming. And Mark saith, that neither did all of them ask concerning the end of Jerusalem, but Peter and John, as having greater freedom of speech.

What then saith He? "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet." For since they felt as being told of vengeance falling on others when hearing of that which was

to be brought upon Jerusalem and as though they were to be out of the turmoils, and were dreaming of good things only, and looked for these to befall them quite immediately; for this cause He again foretells to them grievous things, making them earnest, and commanding them on two grounds to watch, so as neither to be seduced by the deceit of them that would beguile them, nor to be overpowered by the violence of ills that should overtake them.

For the war, saith He, shall be twofold that of the deceivers, and that of the enemies, but the former far more grievous, as coming upon them in the confusion and turmoils, and when men were terrified and troubled. For indeed great was the storm then, when the Roman power was beginning to flourish, and cities were taken, and camps and weapons were set in motion, and many were readily believed. But of wars in Jerusalem is He speaking; for it is not surely of those without, and everywhere in the world; for what did they care for these? And besides, He would thus say nothing new, if He were speaking of the calamities of the world at large, which are happening always. For before this, were wars, and tumults, and fightings; but He speaks of the Jewish wars coming upon them at no great distance, for henceforth the Roman arms were a matter of anxiety. Since then these things also were sufficient to confound them, He foretells them all.

Then to show that He Himself also will assail the Jews with them, and war on them, He speaks not of battles only, but also of plagues sent from God, famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, showing that the wars also He Himself permitted to come upon them, and that these things do not happen for no purpose according to what has been before the accustomed course of things amongst men, but proceed from the wrath on high. Therefore He saith, they shall come not by themselves or at once, but with signs. For that the Jews may not say, that they who then believed were the authors of these evils, therefore hath He told them also of the cause of their coming upon them. "For verily I say unto you," He said before, "all these things shall come upon this generation," having made mention of the stain of blood on them.

Then lest on hearing of the showers of evils, they should suppose the gospel to be broken through, He added, "See, be not troubled, for all things must come to pass," i.e which I foretold, and the approach of the temptations will set aside none of the things which I have said; but there shall indeed be tumults and confusion, but nothing shall shake my predictions. Then since He had said to the Jews, "Ye shall not see me, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord;" and the disciples supposed that together with the destruction would be the end also; to set right this secret thought of theirs, He said, "But the end is not yet." For that they did suspect even as I said, you may learn from their question. For, what did they ask? When shall these things be? i.e. when shall Jerusalem be destroyed? And what is the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?

But He answered nothing directly to this question, but first speaks of those other things that are urgent, and which it was needful for them to learn first. For neither concerning Jerusalem straightway, nor of His own second coming, did He speak, but touching the ills that were to meet them at the doors. Wherefore also He makes them earnest in their exertions, by saying, "Take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name,

saying, I am Christ." Afterwards, when He hath roused them to listen about these things (for, "take heed," saith He, "that no man deceive you"); and having made them energetic, and prepared them to be watchful, and hath spoken first of the false Christs, then He speaks of the ills of Jerusalem, assuring them ever by the things already past, foolish and contentious though they were, of those which were yet to come.

2. But by "wars and rumors of wars," He meaneth, what I before said, the troubles coming upon them. After this, because, as I have already said, they supposed after that war the end would come, see how He warns them, saying, "But the end is not yet. For nation," He saith, "shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." Of the preludes to the ills of the Jews doth He speak. "All these are the beginning of sorrows," that is, of those that befall them. "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you." In good season did He introduce their ills, having a consolation from the common miseries; and not in this way only, but also by His adding, that it is "for my name's sake. For ye shall be hated," He saith, "of all men for my name's sake. Then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and many false Christs and false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold; but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

This is the greater evil, when the war is intestine too, for there were many false brethren. Seest thou the war to be threefold? from the deceivers, from the enemies, from the false brethren. See Paul too lamenting over the same things, and saying, "Without were fightings, within were fears;" and, "perils among false brethren," and again, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ." After this again, what is more grievous than all, they shall not have so much as the consolation from love. Then indicating, that these things will in no degree harm the noble and the firm, He saith, Fear not, neither be troubled. For if ye show forth the patience that becomes you, the dangers will not prevail over you. And it is a plain proof of this, that the word shall surely be preached everywhere in the world, so much shall ye be above the things that alarm you. For, that they may not say, how then shall we live? He said more, Ye shall both live and preach everywhere. Therefore He added moreover, "And this gospel shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all nations, and then shall the end come," of the downfall of Jerusalem.

For in proof that He meant this, and that before the taking of Jerusalem the gospel was preached, hear what Paul saith, "Their sound went into all the earth;" and again, "The gospel which was preached to every creature which is under Heaven." And seest thou him running from Jerusalem unto Spain ? And if one took so large a portion, consider what the rest also wrought. For writing to others also, Paul again saith con-coming the gospel, that "it is bringing forth fruit, and growing up in every creature which is under Heaven." But what meaneth, "For a witness to all nations?" Forasmuch as though it was everywhere preached, yet it was not everywhere believed. It was for a witness, He saith, to them that were disbelieving, that is, for conviction, for accusation, for a testimony; for they that be-

lieved will bear witness against them that believed not, and will condemn them. And for this cause, after the gospel is preached in every part of the world, Jerusalem is destroyed, that they may not have so much as a shadow of an excuse for their perverseness. For they that saw His power shine throughout every place, and in an instant take the world captive, what excuse could they then have for continuing in the same perverseness? For in proof that it was everywhere preached at that time, hear what Paul saith, "of the gospel which was preached to every creature which is under Heaven."

Which also is a very great sign of Christ's power, that in twenty or at most thirty years the word had reached the ends of the world. "After this therefore," saith He, "shall come the end of Jerusalem." For that He intimates this was manifested by what follows. For He brought in also a prophecy, to confirm their desolation, saying, "But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, let him that readeth understand." He referred them to Daniel. And by" abomination" He meaneth the statue of him who then took the city, which he who desolated the city and the temple placed within the temple, wherefore Christ calleth it, "of desolation." Moreover, in order that they might learn that these things will be while some of them are alive, therefore He said, "When ye see the abomination of desolation."

3. Whence one may most marvel at Christ's power, and their courage, for that they preached in such times, in which most especially the Jewish state was warred against, in which most especially men regarded them as movers of sedition, when Caesar commanded all of them to be driven away. And the result was the same as if any one (when the sea was stirred up on every side, and darkness was filling all the air, and successive shipwrecks taking place, and when all their fellow-sailors were at strife above, and monsters were rising up from beneath, and with the waves devouring the mariners, and thunderbolts falling, and their being pirates, and those in the vessel plotting one against another), were to command men inexperienced in sailing, and who had not so much as seen the sea to sit at the rudder, and to guide and fight the vessel, and when an immense fleet was coming against them with a great array, making use of a single bark, with her crew in this disturbed state, to sink and subdue the fleet. For indeed by the heathens they were hated as Jews, and by the Jews were stoned, as waging war against their laws; and nowhere could they stand.

Thus were all things, precipices, and reefs, and rocks, the things in the cities, the things in the fields, the things in the houses, and every single person was at war with them; generals and rulers, and private persons, and all nations, and all people, and a turmoil which cannot be set forth by words. For the Jewish race was exceedingly detestable to the government of the Romans, as having occasioned them endless trouble; and not even from this did the preaching of the word take hurt; but the city was stormed and set on fire, and involved its inhabitants in countless evils; but the apostles that came from thence, introducing new laws, prevailed even over the Romans. O strange and wonderful facts! Countless myriads of Jews did the Romans then subdue, and they did not prevail over twelve men fighting against them naked and unarmed. What language can set forth this miracle? For they that

teach need to have these two things, to be worthy of credit, and to be beloved by them whom they are instructing; and together with these, and besides them, that their sayings should be easy of reception, and the time should be free from trouble and tumults.

But then were all the contraries to these. For while they did not seem worthy of credit, they were withdrawing from such as did seem worthy of it, those who had been deceived by them. So far from being loved, they were even hated, and were taking men away from what they loved, both habits, and hereditary customs, and laws. Again, their injunctions had great difficulty; but the things, from which they were withdrawing men, much pleasure. And many were the perils, many the deaths, both themselves and they that obeyed them underwent, and together with all this, the time also occasioned them much difficulty, teeming with wars, tumults, disturbance, so that, even if there had been none of the things we have mentioned, it would have quite thrown all things into confusion.

We have good occasion to say, "Who shall tell the mighty works of the Lord, and make all His praises to be heard." For if his own people amid signs hearkened not to Moses, because of the clay only, and the bricks; who persuaded these that every day were beaten and slain, and were suffering incurable evils, to leave a quiet life, and to prefer thereto this which was teeming with blood and death, and that when they who preached it were strangers to them, and very hostile in every way? For I say not unto nations and cities and people, but into a small house let one bring in him that is hated of all that are in the house, and by him endeavor to bring them away from those whom they love, from father, and wife, and child, will he not surely be seen torn in pieces, before he hath opened his mouth? And if there be added moreover a tumult and strife of husband and wife in the house, will they not stone him to death before he steps on the threshold? And if he also be one whom they may readily despise, and who enjoins galling things, and commands them who are living in luxury to practise self restraint, and together with this the conflict be against those who are far more in numbers and who excel him, is it not quite manifest that he will be utterly destroyed? Yet nevertheless, this, which is impossible to be done in one house, this hath Christ accomplished in all the world, through precipices and furnaces, and ravines, and rocks, and land and sea at war with Him, bringing in the healers of the world.

And if thou art minded to learn these things more distinctly, I mean, the famines, the pestilences, the earthquakes, the other calamities, peruse the history about these things composed by Josephus, and thou wilt know all accurately. Therefore Himself too said, "Be not troubled, for all must be;" and, "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved;" and, "The gospel shall surely be preached in all the world." For when weakened and faint at the fear of what had been said, He braces them up by saying, Though ten thousand things be done, the gospel must be preached in every part of the world, and then shall the end come. 4. Seest thou in what a state things were then, and how manifold was the war? And this is the beginning, when each of the things to be effected most required quiet. In what state then were they? for nothing hinders us from resuming the same things again. The first war was that of the deceivers; "For there shall come," He saith, "false Christs and false

prophets:" the second, that of the Romans, "For ye shall hear," He saith, "of wars:" the third, that which bringeth on the "famines:" the fourth, "the pestilences" and "the earthquakes:" the fifth, "they shall deliver you into afflictions:" the sixth, "ye shall be hated of all men:" the seventh, "They shall betray one another, and hate one another" (an intestine war doth He here make known); then, "false Christs," and false brethren; then, "the love of the most shall wax cold," which is the cause of all the ills.

Seest thou numberless kinds of war, new and strange? Yet nevertheless in the midst of these things, and much more (for with the intestine wars was mingled also that of kinsmen), the gospel prevailed over the whole earth. "For the gospel," He saith, "shall be preached in the whole world." Where then are they who set up the power of a nativity and the cycle of times against the doctrines of the church? For who has ever recorded that another Christ appeared; that such a thing took place? Although they falsely affirm other things, that ten myriads of years passed, yet this they cannot even feign. Of what kind of cycle then would ye speak? For there was never another Sodom, nor another Gomorrah, nor another flood. How long do ye trifle, talking of a cycle and nativity? How then, it is said, do many of the things they say come to pass? Because thou hast bereaved thyself of the help God bestows, and didst betray thyself, and didst place thyself without His providence; therefore doth the evil spirit turn and twist about thy matters as he will.

But not so among the saints, or rather not even amongst us sinners, who utterly despise it. For although our practice is beyond endurance, yet because by God's grace we cling with much exactness to the doctrines of the truth, we are above the malice of the evil spirits. And altogether, what is a nativity? nothing else than injustice, and confusion, and that all things are borne along at random; or rather not at random only; but more than this, with folly. "And if there is not any nativity, whence is such a one rich? whence is such a one poor?" I know not: for in this way I will for a time reason with thee, instructing thee not to be curious about all things; neither in consequence of this to go on at random and rashly. For neither because thou art ignorant of this, oughtest thou to feign the things that are not. It is better to be ignorant well, than to learn ill. For he that knoweth not the cause, will come soon to the right one; but he who because he does not know the real cause, feigns one that is untrue, will not be able easily to receive the real; but he needs more both of labors and toil, in order to take away the former. For indeed on a tablet, if it have been wiped smooth, any one may easily write what he will, but when it is written upon, no longer in the same way, for we must first wipe out what has been ill written. And amongst physicians again, he that applies nothing, is far better than he that applies hurtful things; and he who builds unsoundly, is worse than he who cloth not so much as build at all; like as the land is far better that bears nothing, than that which bears thorns.

Let us not then be impatient to learn all things, but let us endure to be even ignorant of some things, that when we have found a teacher, we may not afford him double toil. Or rather many oftentimes have remained even incurably diseased, by carelessly entangling themselves in evil opinions. For neither is the toil the same to pluck up first what hath

taken root amiss, and then to sow, as to plant a clear ground. For in that case, he must overthrow first, and then put in other things; but in this, the hearing is ready. Whence then is such a one rich? I will say, now; many acquire wealth, by God's gift; and many by His permission. For this is the short and simple account. What then? it is said, doth He make the whoremongers to be rich, and the adulterers, and him that hath abused himself with mankind, and him that hath made a bad use of his possessions? He doth not make them, but permits them to be rich; and great is the difference, and quite infinite between making and permitting. But wherefore doth He suffer it at all? Because it is not yet the time for judgment, that every one may receive according to his merits.

For what more worthless than that rich man, who giveth not to Lazarus so much as of his crumbs? Nevertheless, he was more wretched than all, for he came to be possessed not even of a drop of water, and for this very cause most especially, that being rich he was cruel. For if there are two wicked men, who have not had the same portion here, but one in wealth, the other in poverty, they will not be similarly punished there, but the wealthier more grievously. 5. Dost thou not see at least even this man, suffering more fearfully because he had "received his good things?" Do thou also therefore, when thou seest in prosperity one who is become rich by injustice, groan, weep; for indeed this wealth is to him an addition of punishment. For like as they who sin much, and are not minded to repent, treasure up to themselves a treasure of wrath; even so they, who, besides not being punished, are even enjoying prosperity, will undergo the greater punishment.

And the proof of this, if thou wilt, I will show thee, not from the things to come only, but also from the present life. For the blessed David, when he sinned that sin of Bathsheba, and was convicted by the prophet, for this cause most of all was he more severely reproved, that even when he had enjoyed such security, he was like this. Hear at least God upbraiding him with this especially. "Did not I anoint thee for a king, and delivered thee from the hand of Saul, and give thee all that pertained to thy master, and all the house of Israel and Judah, and if it had been little for thee, I would have added thus and thus; and wherefore hast thou done that which was evil in my sight? For not for all sins are there the same punishments, but many and diverse, according to the times, according to the persons, according to their rank, according to their understanding, according to other things besides. And that what I say may be more clear, let one sin be set forth, fornication; and mark how many different punishments I find not from myself, but from the divine Scriptures. Did any one commit fornication before the law, he is differently punished; and this Paul showeth, "For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law. Did any one commit fornication after the law? He shall suffer more grievous things. "For as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law.

Did any one commit fornication being a priest, he receives from his dignity a very great addition to his punishment. So for this cause, whereas the other women were slain for fornication, the daughters of the priests were burnt; the lawgiver showing the more amply, how great punishment await the priest if he commits this sin. For if on the daughter he

inflicts a greater punishment, because of her being a priest's daughter, much more on the man himself who bears the priest's office. Was fornication committed with any violence? she is even freed from punishment. Did One play the harlot being rich, and another being poor? Here again also is a difference. And this is evident from what we have said before concerning David. as any one guilty of fornication after Christ's coming? Should he depart uninitiated, he will suffer a punishment more sore than all those. Was any guilty of fornication after the layer? in this case not even a consolation is left for the sin any more. And this selfsame thing Paul declared when he said, "He that despised Moses' law dieth without mercy, under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be counted worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the grace of the Spirit? Hath any been guilty of fornication, bearing the priest's office now? this above all is the crown of the evil deeds.

Seest thou of one sin how many different forms? one that before the law, another that after the law, another that of him who bears the priest's office; that of the rich woman, and that of the poor woman, of her that is a catechumen. and of the believing woman, of the daughter of the priest. And from the knowledge again great is the difference; "For he which knew his Lord's will, and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes." And to sin after examples bringeth greater vengeance. Therefore He saith, "But ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterwards," though ye had had the advantage of much care. Therefore He upbraids Jerusalem likewise with this saying, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not!" And to sin being in luxury, this is shown by the history of Lazarus. And from the place also the sin becomes more grievous, which He Himself indicated when He said, "Between the temple and the altar."

And from the equality of the offenses themselves, "It is not marvellous if one be taken stealing;" and again, "Thou didst slay thy sons and thy daughters; this is beyond all thy whoredoms, and thine abominations." And from the persons again: "If one man sin against another, they shall pray for him; but if he sin against God, who shall entreat for him?" And when any one surpasses in negligence those who are far inferior; wherewith in Ezekiel He doth charge them, saying, "Not even according to the judgments of the nations hast thou done." And when one is not sobered even by the examples of others, "She saw her sister," it is said, "and justified her." And when one has had the advantage of more abundant care; "For if," He saith, "these mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago; but it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for that city."

Seest thou perfect exactness, and that all for the same sins are not paying the same penalty? For moreover when we have had the benefit of long-suffering, and profit nothing, we shall endure worse things. And this Paul shows, where he says, "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart, thou treasurest up for thyself wrath." Knowing then these things, let us not be offended, neither let us be confounded at any of the things that happen, nor bring in upon us the storm of thought, but giving place to God's providence, let us give heed to virtue, and flee vice, that we may also attain to the good things to come, by the grace and

love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom and with whom be glory unto the Father together with the Holy Spirit, now and always, and world without end. Amen.

Homily 76

Matthew Chapter 24, Verse 16-Matthew Chapter 24, Verse 18

"Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains. And let him that is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house. Neither let him which is in his field return back to take his clothes." Having spoken of the ills that were to overtake the city, and of the trials of the apostles, and that they should remain unsubdued, and should overrun the whole world, He mentions again the Jews' calamities, showing that when the one should be glorious, having taught the whole world, the others should be in calamity. And see how He relates the war, by the things that seem to be small setting forth how intolerable it was to be. For, "Then," saith He, "let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains." Then, When? When these things should be, "when the abomination of desolation should stand in the holy place." Whence be seems to me to be speaking of the armies. Flee therefore then, saith He, for thenceforth there is no hope of safety for you.

For since it had fallen out, that they often had recovered themselves in grievous wars, as under Sennacherib, under Antiochus again (for when at that time also, armies had come in upon them, and the temple had been seized beforehand, the Maccabees rallying gave their affairs an opposite turn); in order then that they might not now also suspect this, that there would be any such change, He forbids them all thought of the kind. For it were well, saith He, to escape henceforth with one's naked body. Therefore them also that are on the housetop, He suffers not to enter into the house to take their clothes, indicating the evils to be inevitable, and the calamity without end, and that it must needs be that he that was involved therein should surely perish. Therefore He adds also, him that is in the field, saying, neither let this man turn back to take his clothes. For if they that are in doors flee, much more they that are out of doors ought not to take refuge within.

"Woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck," to the one because of their greater inertness, and because they cannot flee easily, being weighed down by the burden of their pregnancy; to the other, because they are held by the tie of feeling for their children, and cannot save their sucklings. For money it is a light thing to despise, and an easy thing to provide, and clothes; but the bonds of nature how could any one escape? how could the pregnant woman become active? how could she that gives suck be able to overlook that which she had borne? Then, to show again the greatness of the calamity, He saith, "Pray

ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day. For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world until now, neither shall be."

Seest thou that His discourse is addressed to the Jews, and that He is speaking of the ills that should overtake them? For the apostles surely were not to keep the Sabbath day, neither to be there, when Vespasian did those things. For indeed the most part of them were already departed this life. And if any was left, he was dwelling then in other parts of the world. But wherefore neither "in the winter, nor on the Sabbath day?" Not in the winter, because of the difficulty arising from the season; not on the Sabbath day, because of the absolute authority exercised by the law. For since they had need of flight, and of the swiftest flight, but neither would the Jews dare to flee on the Sabbath day, because of the law, neither in winter was such a thing easy; therefore, "Pray ye," saith He; "for then shall be tribulation, such as never was, neither shall be."

And let not any man suppose this to have been spoken hyperbolically; but let him study the writings of Josephus, and learn the truth of the sayings. For neither can any one say, that the man being a believer, in order to establish Christ's words, hath exaggerated the tragical history. For indeed He was both a Jew, and a determined Jew, and very zealous, and among them that lived after Christ's coming. What then saith this man? That those terrors surpassed all tragedy, and that no such had ever overtaken the nation. For so great was the famine, that the very mothers fought about the devouring of their children, and that there were wars about this; and he saith that many when they were dead had their bellies ripped up. I should therefore be glad to inquire of the Jews. Whence came there thus upon them wrath from God intolerable, and more sore than all that had befallen aforetime, not in Judaea only, but in any part of the world? Is it not quite clear, that it was for the deed of the cross, and for this rejection? All would say it, and with all and before all the truth of the facts itself.

But mark, I pray thee, the exceeding greatness of the ills, when not only compared with the time before, they appear more grievous, but also with all the time to come. For not in all the world, neither in all time that is past, and that is to come, shall any one be able to say such ills have been. And very naturally; for neither had any man perpetrated, not of those that ever have been, nor of those to come hereafter, a deed so wicked and horrible. Therefore He saith, "there shall be tribulation such as never was, nor shall be." "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." By these things He shows them to be deserving of a more grievous punishment than had been mentioned, speaking now of the days of the war and of that siege. But what He saith is like this. If, saith He, the war of the Romans against the city had prevailed further, all the Jews had perished (for by "no flesh" here, He meaneth no Jewish flesh), both those abroad, and those at home. For not only against those in Judaea did they war, but also those that were dispersed everywhere they outlawed and banished, because of their hatred against the former.

2. But whom doth He here mean by the elect? The believers that were shut up in the midst of them. For that Jews may not say that because of the gospel, and the worship of Christ, these ills took place, He showeth, that so far from the believers being the cause, if it had not been for them, all had perished utterly. For if God had permitted the war to be protracted, not so much as a remnant of the Jews had remained, but lest those of them who had become believers should perish together with the unbelieving Jews, He quickly put down the fighting, and gave an end to the war. Therefore He saith, "But for the elect's sake they shall be shortened." But these things He said to leave an encouragement to those of them who were shut up in the midst of them, and to allow them to take breath, that they might not be in fear, as though they were to perish with them. And if here so great is His care for them, that for their sakes others also are saved, and that for the sake of Christians remnants were left of the Jews, how great will be their honor in the time for their crowns?

By this He also encouraged them not to be distressed at their own dangers, since these others are suffering such things, and for no profit, but for evil upon their own head. But He not only encouraged them, but also led them off secretly and unsuspectedly from the customs of the Jews. For if there is not to be a change afterwards, and the temple is not to stand, it is quite evident that the law also shall be made to cease. However, He spake not this openly, but by their entire destruction He darkly intimated it. But He spake it not openly, lest He should startle them before the time. Wherefore neither at the beginning did He of Himself fall into discourse touching these things; but having first lamented over the city, He constrained them to show Him the stones, and question Him, in order that as it were in answering them their question, He might declare to them beforehand all the things to come.

But mark thou, I pray thee, the dispensation of the Spirit, that John wrote none of these things, lest he should seem to write from the very history of the things done (for indeed he lived a long time after the taking of the city), but they, who died before the taking, and had seen none of these things, they write it, in order that every way the power of the prediction should clearly shine forth. "Then, if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not: for there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show signs and wonders, so as to deceive, if possible, the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, He is in the desert, go not forth: behold, He is in the secret chambers, believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there shall the eagles be gathered together."

Having finished what concerned Jerusalem, He passes on to His own coming, and tells the signs of it, not for their use only, but for us also, and for all that shall come after us. "Then." When? Here, as I have often said, the word, "then," relates not to the connection in order of time with the things before mentioned. At least, when He was minded to express the connection of time, He added, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days," but here not so, but, "then," not meaning what should follow straightway after these things, but

what should be in the time, when these things were to be done, of which He was about to speak. So also when it is said, "In those days cometh John the Baptist," he is not speaking of the time that should straightway follow, but that many years after, and that in which these things were done, of which He was about to speak. For, in fact, having spoken of the birth of Jesus, and of the coming of the magi, and of the death of Herod, He at once saith, "In those days cometh John the Baptist;" although thirty years had intervened. But this is customary in the Scripture, I mean, to use this manner of narration. So then here also, having passed over all the intermediate time from the taking of Jerusalem unto the preludes of the consummation, He speaketh of the time just before the consummation. "Then," He saith therefore, "if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there, believe it not."

Awhile He secures them by the place, mentioning the distinguishing marks of His second coming, and the indications of the deceivers. For not, as when at His former coming He appeared in Bethlehem, and in a small corner of the world, and no one knew Him at the beginning, so doth He say it shall be then too; but openly and with all circumstance, and so as not to need one to tell these things. And this is no small sign that He will not come secretly. But mark how here He saith nothing of war (for He is interpreting the doctrine concerning His advent), but of them that attempt to deceive. For some in the days of the apostles deceived the multitude, "for they shall come," saith He, "and shall deceive many;" and others shall do so before His second coming, who shall also be more grievous than the former. "For they shall show," He saith, "signs and wonders, so as to deceive if possible the very elect:" here He is speaking of Antichrist, and indicates that some also shall minister to him. Of him Paul too speaks on this wise. Having called him "man of sin," and "son of perdition," He added, "Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders; and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish."

And see how He secures them; "Go not forth into the deserts, enter not into the secret chambers." He did not say, "Go, and do not believe;" but, "Go not forth, neither depart thither." For great then will be the deceiving, because that even deceiving miracles are wrought. 3. Having told them how Antichrist cometh, as, for instance, that it will be in a place; He saith how Himself also cometh. How then doth He Himself come? "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For wheresoever the carcase is, there also will the eagles be gathered together." How then shineth the lightning? It needs not one to talk of it, it needs not a herald, but even to them that sit in houses, and to them in chambers it shows itself in an instant of time throughout the whole world. So shall that coming be, showing itself at once everywhere by reason of the shining forth of His glory. But He mentions also another sign, "where the carcase is, there also shall the eagles be;" meaning the multitude of the angels, of the martyrs, of all the saints.

Then He tells of fearful prodigies. What are these prodigies? "Immediately after the tribulation of those days," saith He, "the sun shall be darkened." Of the tribulation of what days doth He speak? Of those of Antichrist and of the false prophets? For there shall be great

tribulation, there being so many deceivers. But it is not protracted to a length of time. For if the Jewish war was shortened for the elect's sake, much more shall this temptation be limited for these same's sake. Therefore, He said not, "after the tribulation," but Immediately "after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened," for almost at the same time all things come to pass. For the false prophets and false Christs shall come and cause confusion, and immediately He Himself will be here. Because no small turmoil is then to prevail over the world. But how doth He come? The very creation being then transfigured, for "the sun shall be darkened," not destroyed, but overcome by the light of His presence; and the stars shall fall, for what shall be the need of them thenceforth, there being no night? and "the powers of Heaven shall be shaken," and in all likelihood, seeing so great a change come to pass. For if when the stars were made, they trembled and marvelled ("for when the stars were made, all angels," it is said, "praised Me with a loud voice"); much more seeing all things in course of change, and their fellow servants giving account, and the whole world standing by that awful judgment-seat, and those who have lived from Adam unto His coming, having an account demanded of them of all that they did, how shall they but tremble, and be shaken?

"Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven;" that is, the cross being brighter than the sun, since this last will be darkened, and hide himself, and that will appear when it would not appear, unless it were far brighter than the beams of the sun. But wherefore doth the sign appear? In order that the shamelessness of the Jews may be more abundantly silenced. For having the cross as the greatest plea, Christ thus cometh to that judgment-seat, showing not His wounds only, but also the death of reproach. "Then shall the tribes mourn," for there shall be no need of an accusation, when they see the cross; and they shall mourn, that by His death they are nothing benefited; because they crucified Him whom they ought to have adored. Seest thou how fearfully He has pictured His coming? how He has stirred up the spirits of His disciples? For this reason, let me add, He puts the mournful things first, and then the good things, that in this way also He may comfort and refresh them. And of His passion He suggests to them the remembrance, and of His resurrection, and with a display of glory, He mentions His cross, so that they may not be ashamed nor grieve, whereas indeed He cometh then setting it forth for His sign. And another saith, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced." Therefore it is that they shall mourn, when they see that this is He.

And forasmuch as He had made mention of the cross, He added, "They shall see the Son of Man coming," no longer on the cross, but "in the clouds of Heaven, with power and great glory." For think not, He meaneth, because thou hearest of the cross, that it is again anything mournful, for He shall come with power and great glory. But He bringeth it, that their sin may be self-condemned, as if any one who had been struck by a stone, were to show the stone itself, or his garments stained with blood. And He cometh in a cloud as He was taken up, and the tribes seeing these things mourn. Not however that the terrors shall with them proceed no further than mournings; but the mourning shall be, that they may bring forth their sentence from within, and condemn themselves. And then again, "He will send His

angels with a great trumpet, and they shall gather the elect from the four winds, from one end of Heaven to the other."

But when thou hast heard of this, consider the punishment of them that remain. For neither shall they suffer that former penalty only, but this too. And as above He said, that they should say, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord," so here, that they shall mourn. For since He had spoken unto them of grievous wars, that they might learn, that together with the fearful things here, the torments there also await them, He brings them in mourning and separated from the elect, and consigned to hell; by this again rousing the disciples, and indicating from how many evils they should be delivered, and how many good things they shall enjoy. 5. And why now doth He call them by angels, if He comes thus openly?' To honor them in this way also. But Paul saith, that they "shall be caught up in clouds." And He said this also, when He was speaking concerning a resurrection. "For the Lord Himself," it is said, "shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel." So that when risen again, the angels shall gather them together, when gathered together the clouds shall catch them up; and all these things are done in a moment, in an instant. For it is not that He abiding above calleth them, but He Himself cometh with the sound of a trumpet. And what mean the trumpets and the sound? They are for arousing, for gladness, to set forth the amazing nature of the things then doing, for grief to them that are left.

Woe is me for that fearful day! For though we ought to rejoice when we hear these things, we feel pain, and are dejected, and our countenance is sad. Or is it I only that feel thus, and do ye rejoice at hearing of these things? For upon me at least there comes a kind of shudder when these things are said, and I lament bitterly, and groan from the very depth of my heart. For I have no part in these things, but in those that are spoken afterwards, that are said unto the virgins, unto him mat buried the talents he had received, unto the wicked servant. For this cause I weep, to think from what glory we are to be cast out, from what hope of blessings, and this perpetually, and forever, to spare ourselves a little labor. For if indeed this were a great toil, and a grievous law, we ought even so to do all things; nevertheless many of the remiss would seem to have at least some pretext, a poor pretext indeed, yet would they seem to have some, that the toil was great, and the time endless, and the burden intolerable; but now we can put forward no such objection; which circumstance most of all will gnaw us no less than hell at that time, when for want of a slight endeavor, and a little toil, we shall have lost Heaven, and the unspeakable blessings. For both the time is short, and the labor small, and yet we faint and are supine. Thou strivest on earth, and the crown is in Heaven; thou art punished of men, and art honored of God; the race is for two days, and the reward for endless ages; the struggle is a corruptible body, and the rewards in an incorruptible.

And apart from these things, we should consider another point also, that even if we do not choose to suffer any of the things that are painful for Christ's sake, we must in other ways most assuredly endure them. For neither, though thou shouldest not have died for

Christ, wilt thou be immortal; neither though thou shouldest not have cast away thy riches for Christ, wilt thou go away hence with them. These things He requires of thee, which although He should not require them, thou wilt have to give up, because thou art mortal; He willeth thee to do these by thy choice, which thou must do by necessity. So much only He requires to be added, that it be done for His sake; since that these things befall men and pass away, cometh to pass of natural necessity. Seest thou how easy the conflict? What it is altogether necessary for thee to suffer, that choose to suffer for my sake; let this only be added, and I have sufficient obedience. The gold which thou intendest to lend to another, this lend to me, both at more profit, and in greater security. Thy body, wherewith thou art going to warfare for another, make it to war for me, for indeed I surpass thy toils with recompenses in the most abundant excess. Yet thou in all other matters preferrest him that giveth thee more as well in loans, as in marketing and in warfare; but Christ alone, when giving more, and infinitely more than all, thou dost not receive. And what is this so great hostility? What is this so great enmity? Where will there be any excuse or defense left for thee, when the reasons for which thou preferrest man to man avail not to induce thee to prefer God to man?

Why dost thou commit thy treasure to the earth? "Give it into my hand," He saith. Doth not the earth's Lord seem to thee more worthy of trust than the earth? This indeed restoreth that which thou laidest in it, though oftentimes not even this, but He gives thee also recompense for His keeping of it? For indeed He doth exceedingly love us. Therefore if thou shouldest wish to lend, He stands ready; or to sow, He receives it; or if thou shouldest wish to build, He draws thee unto Himself, saying, Build in my regions. Why runnest thou unto poor, unto beggarly men, who also for little gains occasion thee great trouble? Nevertheless, not even on hearing these things, do we make up our minds to it, but where are fightings and wars, and wild struggles, and trials and suits of law, and false accusations, thither do we hasten.

5. Doth He not justly turn away from us, and punish us, when He is giving up Himself unto us for all things, and we are resisting Him? It is surely plain to all. For whether thou art desirous to adorn thyself, "Let it, He saith, be with my ornaments; or to arm thyself, "with my arms," or to clothe thyself, "with my raiment; or to feed thyself, "at my table; or to journey, "on my way; or to inherit, "my inheritance; or to enter into a country, "the city of which I am builder and maker; or to build a house, "amongst my tabernacles. "For I, so far from asking thee for a recompense of the things that I give thee, to even make myself owe thee a recompense for this very thing, if thou be willing to use all I have. What can be equal to this munificence, "I am Father, I am brother, I am bridegroom, I am dwelling place, I am food, I am raiment, I am root, I am foundation, all whatsoever thou wiliest, I am. "Be thou in need of nothing, I will be even a servant, for I came to minister, not to be ministered unto; I am friend, and member, and head, and brother, and sister, and mother; I am all; only cling thou closely to me. I was poor for thee, and a wanderer for thee, on the cross for thee, in the tomb for thee, above I intercede for thee to the Father;

on earth I am come for thy sake am ambassador from my Father. Thou art all things to me, brother, and joint heir, and friend, and member. What wouldest thou more? Why dost thou turn away from Him, who loveth thee? Why dost thou labor for the world? Why dost thou draw water into a broken cistern? For it is this to labor for the present life. Why dost thou comb wool into the fire? Why dost thou "beat the air? Why dost thou "run in vain?"

Hath not every art an end? It is surely plain to every one. Do thou also show the end of thy worldly eagerness. But thou canst not; for, "yanity of vanities, all is vanity." Let us go to the tombs; show me thy father; show me thy wife. Where is he that was clad in raiment of gold? he that rode in the chariot? he that had armies, that had the girdle, that had the heralds? he that was slaying these, and casting those into prison? he that put to death whom he would, and set free whom he was minded? I see nothing but bones, and a worm, and a spider's web; all those things are earth, all those a fable, all a dream, and a shadow, and a bare relation, and a picture, or rather not so much as a picture. For the picture we see at least in a likeness, but here not so much as a likeness.

And would that the evils stop with this. For now the honor, and the luxury, and the distinction, end with a shadow, with words; but the consequences of them, are no longer limited to a shadow and to words, but continue, and will pass over with us elsewhere, and will be manifest to all, the rapine, the covetousness, the fornications, the adulteries, the dreadful things beyond number; these not in similitude, neither in ashes, but written above, both words and deeds. With what eyes then shall we behold Christ? For if any one could not bear to see his father, when conscious to himself that he had sinned against him, upon Him who infinitely exceeds a father in forbearance how shall we then look? how shall we bear it? For indeed we shall stand at Christ's judgment-seat, and there will be a strict inquiry into all things. But if any man disbelieve the judgments to come, let him look at the things here, at those in the prisons, those in the mines, those on the dunghills, the possessed, the frantic, them that are struggling with incurable diseases, those that are fighting against continual poverty, them that live in famine, them that are pierced with irremediable woes, those in captivity. For these persons would not suffer these things here, unless vengeance and punishments were to await all the others also that have committed such sins. And if the rest have undergone nothing here, you ought to regard this very fact as a sign that there is surely something to follow after our departure here. For the self-same God of all would not take vengeance on some, and leave others unpunished, who have committed the same or more grievous offenses, unless He designed to bring some punishments upon them there.

By these arguments then and these examples let us also humble ourselves; and let them who are obstinate unbelievers of the judgment believe it henceforth, and become better men; that having lived here in a manner worthy of the kingdom, we may attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 77

Matthew Chapter 24, Verse 32 And Matthew Chapter 24, Verse 33

”Now learn a parable of the fig tree; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.” Forasmuch as He had said, ”Immediately after the tribulation of those days;” but they sought of this, after how long a time it should be, and desired to know in particular the very day, therefore He puts also the similitude of the fig tree, indicating that the interval was not great, but that in quick succession would occur His advent also. And this He declared not by the parable alone, but by the words that follow, saying, ”know that it is near, even at the doors.” Whereby He foretells another thing also, a spiritual summer, and a calm that should be on that day (after the present tempest) for the righteous; but to the sinners the contrary, winter after summer, which He declares in what follows, saying, that the day shall come upon them, when they are living in luxury

But not for this intent only did He put forward this about the fig tree, in order to declare the interval; for it was possible to have set this before them in other ways as well; but that he might hereby also confirm His saying, as assuredly thus to come to pass. For as this of the fig tree is of necessity, so that too. For thus, wherever He is minded to speak of that which will assuredly come to pass, He brings forward the necessary courses of nature, both Himself, and the blessed Paul imitating Him. Therefore also when speaking of His resurrection, He saith, ”When the corn of wheat hath fallen into the earth, except it die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” Whereby also the blessed Paul being instructed uses the same similitude, ”Thou fool,” he saith, ”that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die.”

After this, that they might not straightway return to it again, and say, ”When?” he brings to their remembrance the things that had been said, saying, ”Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled!” All these things. What things? I pray thee. Those about Jerusalem, those about the wars, about the famines, about the pestilences, about the earthquakes, about the false Christs, about the false prophets, about the sowing of the gospel everywhere, the seditions, the tumults, all the other things, which we said were to occur until His coming. How then, one may ask, did He say, ”This generation?” Speaking not of the generation then living, but of that of the believers. For He is

wont to distinguish a generation not by times only, but also by the mode of religious service, and practice; as when He saith, "This is the generation of them that seek the Lord."

For what He said above, "All these must come to pass," and again, "the gospel shall be preached," this He declares here also, saying, All these things shall surely come to pass, and the generation of the faithful shall remain, cut off by none of the things that have been mentioned. For both Jerusalem shall perish, and the more part of the Jews shall be destroyed, but over this generation shall nothing prevail, not famine, not pestilence, not earthquake, nor the tumults of wars, not false Christs, not false prophets, not deceivers, not traitors, not those that cause to offend, not the false brethren, nor any other such like temptation whatever. Then to lead them on more in faith, He saith, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away;" that is, it were more easy for these firm, fixed, and immoveable bodies to be blotted out, than for ought of my words to fall to the ground. And he who gainsays these things, let him test His sayings, and when he hath found them true (for so he surely will find them) from what is past, let him believe also the things to come, and let him search out all things with diligence, and he will see the actual events bearing witness to the truth of the prophecy. And the elements He hath brought forward, at once to declare, that the church is of more honor than Heaven and earth, and at the same time to indicate Himself by this also to be maker of all. For since He was speaking of the end, a thing disbelieved by many, He brought forward Heaven and earth, indicating His unspeakable power, and showing with great authority, that He is Lord of all, and by these things rendering His sayings deserving of credit, even with those who are much given to doubt.

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. By saying, not the angels, He stopped their mouths, that they should not seek to learn what these angels know not; and by saying, "neither the Son," forbids them not only to learn, but even to inquire. For in proof that therefore He said this, see after His resurrection, when He saw they were become over curious, how He stopped their mouths more decidedly. For now indeed He hath mentioned infallible signs, many and endless; but then He saith merely, "It is not for you to know times or seasons. And then that they might not say, we are driven to perplexity, we are utterly scorned, we are not held worthy so much as of this, He says, "which the Father hath put in His own power. And this, because He was exceedingly careful to honor them, and to conceal nothing from them. Therefore He refers it to His Father, both to make the thing awful, and to exclude that of which He had spoken from their inquiry. Since if it be not this, but He is ignorant of it, when will He know it? Will it be together with us? But who would say this? And the Father He knoweth clearly, even as clearly as He knoweth the Son; and of the day is He ignorant?

Moreover, "the Spirit indeed searcheth even the deep things of God," and doth not He know so much as the time of the judgment? But how He ought to judge He knoweth, and of the secrets of each He hath a full perception; and what is far more common than that, of this could He be ignorant? And how, if "all things were made by Him, and without Him was not

even one thing made," was He ignorant of the day? For He who made the worlds, it is quite plain that He made the times also; and if the times, even that day. How then is He ignorant of that which He made?

2. And ye indeed say that ye know even His substance, but that the Son not even the day, the Son, who is always in the bosom of the Father; and yet His substance is much greater than the days, even infinitely greater. How then, while assigning to yourselves the greater things, do you not allow even the less to the Son, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." But neither do you know what God is in His substance, though ten thousand times ye talk thus madly, neither is the Son ignorant of the day, but is even in full certainty thereof. For this cause, I say, when He had told all things, both the times and the seasons, and had brought it to the very doors ("for it is near," He saith, "even at the doors"), He was silent as to the day. For if thou seek after the day and hour, thou shall not hear them of me, saith He; but if of times and preludes, without hiding anything, I will tell thee all exactly.

For that indeed I am not ignorant of it, I have shown by many things; having mentioned intervals, and all the things that are to occur, and how short from this present time until the day itself (for this did the parable of the fig tree indicate), and I lead thee to the very vestibule; and if I do not open unto thee the doors, this also I do for your good. And that thou mayest learn by another thing also, that the silence is not a mark of ignorance on His part, see, together with what we have mentioned, how He sets forth another sign also. "But as in the days of Not they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that the flood came, and took all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." And these things He spake, showing that He should come on a sudden, and unexpectedly, and when the more part were living luxuriously. For Paul too saith this, writing on this wise, "When they shall speak of peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them;" and to show how unexpected, He said, "as travail upon a woman with child." How then doth He say, "after the tribulation of those days?" For if there be luxury then, and peace, and safety, as Paul saith, how doth He say, "after the tribulation of those days?" If there be luxury, how is there tribulation? Luxury for them that are in a state of insensibility and peace. Therefore He said not, when there is peace, but "when they speak of peace and safety," indicating their insensibility to be such as of those in Noah's time, for that amid such evils they lived in luxury.

But not so the righteous, but they were passing their time in tribulation and dejection. Whereby He shows, that when Antichrist is come, the pursuit of unlawful pleasures shall be more eager among the transgressors, and those that have learnt to despair of their own salvation. Then shall be gluttony, then revellings, and drunkenness. Wherefore also most of all He puts forth an example corresponding to the thing For like as when the ark was making, they believed not, saith He; but while it was set in the midst of them, proclaiming beforehand the evils that are to come, they, when they saw it, lived in pleasure, just as though nothing dreadful were about to take place; so also now, Antichrist indeed shall appear, after whom is the end, and the punishments at the end, and vengeance intolerable;

but they that are held by the intoxication of wickedness shall not so much as perceive the dreadful nature of the things that are on the point of being done. Wherefore also Paul saith, "as travail upon a woman with child," even so shall those fearful and incurable evils come upon them.

And wherefore did He not speak of the ills in Sodom? It was His will to introduce an example embracing all men, and disbelieved after it was foretold. So therefore, as by the more part the things to come are disbelieved, He confirms those things by the past, terrifying their minds. And together with the points I have mentioned, He shows this also, that of the former things also He was the doer. Then again He sets another sign, by all which things He makes it evident, that He is not ignorant of the day. And what is the sign? "Then shall two be in the field; one shall be taken, and one left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill, one shall be taken, and one left. Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." And all these things are both proofs that He knew, and calculated to turn them from their inquiry. So for this cause He spake also of the days of Not, for this cause He said too, "Two shall be on the bed," signifying this, that He should come upon them thus unexpectedly, when they were thus without thought, and "two women grinding at the mill," which also of itself is not the employment of them that are taking thought.

And together with this, He declares that as well servants as masters should be both taken and left, both those who are at ease, and those in toil, as well from the one rank as from the other; even as in the Old Testament He saith, "From him that sitteth upon the throne to the captive woman that is at the mill." For since He had said, that hardly are the rich saved, He shows that not even these are altogether lost, neither are the poor saved all of them, but both out of these and out of those are men saved, and lost. And to me He seems to declare, that at night will be the advent. For this Luke too saith. Seest thou how accurately He knows all things? After this again, that they may not ask about it, He added, "Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." He said not, "I know not," but, "ye know not." For when He had brought them well nigh to the very hour, and had placed them there, again He deters them from the inquiry, from a desire that they should be striving always. Therefore He saith, "Watch," showing that for the sake of this, He did not tell it.

"But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." For this intent He tells them not, in order that they may watch, that they may be always ready; therefore He saith, When ye look not for it, then He will come, desiring that they should be anxiously waiting, and continually. in virtuous action. But His meaning is like this: if the common sort of men knew when they were to die, they would surely strive earnestly at that hour. 3. In order therefore that they may strive, not at that hour only, therefore He tells them not either the common hour, or the hour of each, desiring them to be ever looking for this, that they may be always striving. Wherefore He made the end of each man's life also uncertain.

After this, He openly calls Himself Lord, having nowhere spoken so distinctly. But here He seems to me also to put to shame the careless, that not even as much care as they that expect a thief have taken for their money, not even this much do these take for their own soul. For they indeed, when they expect it, watch, and suffer none of the things in their house to be carried off; but ye, although knowing that He will come, and come assuredly, continue not watching, saith He, and ready so as not to be carried away hence unprepared. So that the day cometh unto destruction for them that sleep. For as that man, if he had known, would have escaped, so also ye, if ye be ready, escape free. Then, as He had fallen upon the mention of the judgment, He directs His discourse to the teachers next, speaking of punishment and honors; and having put first them that do right, He ends with them that continue in sin, making His discourse to close with that which is alarming.

Wherefore He first saith this, "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord shall set over His household to give them their meat in theirs due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that He shall make him ruler over all His goods." Tell me, is this too the language of one who is in ignorance? For if because He said, "neither doth the Son know," thou sayest He is ignorant of it; as He saith, "who then?" what wilt thou say? Wilt thou say He is ignorant of this too? Away with the thought. For not even one of them that are frantic would say this. And yet in the former case one might assign a cause; but here not even this. And what when He said, "Peter, lovest thou me?" asking it, knew He not so much as this? nor when He said, "Where have ye laid Him?"

And the Father too will be found to be saying such things. For He Himself likewise saith, "Adam, where art thou?" and, "The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is waxed great before me. I will go down therefore, and see whether their doings be according to their cry which cometh unto me, and if not, I will know." And elsewhere He saith, "Whether they will hear, whether they will understand." And in the gospel too, "It may be they will reverence my Son:" all which are expressions of ignorance. But not in ignorance did He say these things, but as compassing objects such as became Him: in the case of Adam, that He might drive him to make an excuse for his sin: in that of the Sodomites, that He might teach us never to be positive, till we are present at the very deeds; in that of the prophet, that the prediction might not appear in the judgment of the foolish a kind of compulsion to disobedience; and in the parable in the gospel, that He might show that they ought to have done this, and to have reverenced the Son: but here, as well that they may not be curious, nor over busy again, as that He might indicate that this was a rare and precious thing. And see of what great ignorance this saying is indicative, if at least He know not even him that is set over. For He blesses him indeed, "For blessed," saith He, "is that servant;" but He saith not who this is. "For who is he," He saith, "whom His Lord shall set over?" and, "Blessed is he whom He shall find so doing."

But these things are spoken not of money only, but also of speech, and of power, and of gifts, and of every stewardship, wherewith each is entrusted. This parable would suit rulers in

the state also, for every one is bound to make full use of what he hath for the common advantage. If it be wisdom thou hast, if power, if wealth, if what it may, let it not be for the hurt of thy fellow-servants, neither for thine own ruin. For this cause, therefore, He requires both things of him, wisdom, and fidelity: for sin arises from folly also. He calls him faithful then, because he hath purloined nothing, neither misspent his Lord's goods without aim or fruit; and wise, because he knew how to dispense the things given him, according as was fit. For indeed we have need of both things, as well not to purloin the goods of our Master, as also to dispense them as is fit. But if the one be wanting, the other halteth. For if he be faithful and steal not, yet were to waste and to spend upon that which concerned him not, great were the blame; and if he should know how to dispense it well, yet were to purloin, again there is no common charge against him.

And let us also that have money listen to these things. For not unto teachers only doth He discourse, but also unto the rich. For either sort were entrusted with riches; those that teach with the more necessary wealth, ye with what is inferior. When then at the time that the teachers are scattering abroad the greater, ye are not willing to show forth your liberality even in the less, or rather not liberality but honesty (for ye give the things of another), what excuse will you have? But now, before the punishment of them that do the contrary things, let us hear the honor of him that approveth himself. "For verily I say unto you, He will set him over all His goods." What can be equal to this honor? what manner of speech will be able to set forth the dignity, the blessedness, when the King of Heaven, He that possesseth all things, is about to set a man over "all His goods?" Wherefore also He calleth him wise, because he knew, not to give up great things for small, but having been temperate here, hath attained to Heaven.

4. After this, as He ever doth, not by the honor only laid up for the good, but also by the punishment threatened against the wicked, doth He correct the hearers. Wherefore also He added, "But and if the evil servant say in his heart, my Lord delayeth His coming; and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and shall eat and drink with the drunken: the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for Him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and shall appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." But if any one should say, "Seest thou what a thought hath entered into his mind, because of the day's not being known, "my Lord," he saith, "delayeth His coming?" we should affirm, that it was not because the day is not known, but because the servant is evil. Else wherefore came not this thought into the heart of the faithful and wise servant. For what, even though the Lord tarry, O wretched man, surely thou lookest that He will come. Why then dost thou not take care?

Hence then we learn, that He cloth not so much as tarry. For this judgment is not the Lord's, but that of the evil servant's mind, wherefore also he is blamed for this. For in proof that He doth not tarry, hear Paul saying, "The Lord is at hand, be careful for nothing;" and, "He that cometh will come, and will not tarry." But do thou hear also what followeth, and learn how continually He reminds them of their ignorance of the day, showing that this

is profitable to the servants, and fitted to waken and thoroughly to rouse them. For what though some gained nothing hereby? For neither by other things profitable for them were some profited, but nevertheless He ceaseth not to do His part. What then is the purport of that which followeth? "For He shall come in a day when he looketh not for Him, and in an hour that he is not aware of;" and shall inflict upon him extreme punishment. Seest thou how even everywhere He puts this, the fact of their ignorance, indicating that it was profitable, and by this making them always earnest minded? For this is the point at which He labors, that we should be always on the watch; and since it is always in luxury that we are supine, but in afflictions we are braced up, therefore everywhere He saith this, that when there is relaxation, then come the terrors. And as further back He showed this by the example of Noah, even so here He saith it is, when that servant is drunken, when he is beating, and that his punishment shall be intolerable.

But let us not regard only the punishment appointed for him, but let us look to this other point too, lest we ourselves also be unawares to ourselves doing the same things. For to this servant are they like, who have money, and give not to the needy. For thou too art steward of thine own possessions, not less than he who dispenses the alms of the church. As then he has not a right to squander at random and at hazard the things given by you for the poor, since they were given for the maintenance of the poor; even so neither mayest thou squander thine own. For even though thou hast received an inheritance from thy father, and hast in this way all thou possessest: even thus all are God's. And then thou for thy part desirest that what thou hast given should be thus carefully dispensed, and thinkest thou not that God will require His own of us with greater strictness, or that He suffers them to be wasted at random? These things are not, they are not so. Because for this end, He left these things in thine hand, in order "to give them their meat in due season." But what meaneth, "in due season?" To the needy, to the hungry. For like as thou gavest to thy fellow-servant to dispense, even so doth the Lord will thee too to spend these things on what is needful. Therefore though He was able to take them away from thee, He left them, that thou mightest have opportunity to show forth virtue; that bringing us into need one of another, He might make our love for one another more fervent.

But thou, when thou hast received, so far from giving, dost even beat. And yet if not to give be blame, what excuse is there for beating? But this, it seems to me, He speaks, hinting at the insolent, and the covetous, and indicating the charge to be heavy, when they beat them, whom they were commanded to feed. 5. But He seemeth to be here hinting also at those that live in luxury, since for luxury too there is laid up a great punishment. "For He eateth and drinketh, it is said, "with the drunken, pointing at gluttony. For not for this purpose didst thou receive, that thou should spend it on luxury, but that thou shouldest lay it out on alms. What! are they thine own things which thou hast? With the goods of the poor hast thou been entrusted, though thou be possessed of them by honest labor, or though it be by inheritance from thy father. What, could not God have taken away these things from thee? But He doth not this, to give thee power to be liberal to the poor.

But mark thou, I pray thee, how throughout all the parables He punishes them that lay not out their money upon the needy. For neither had the virgins robbed other men's goods, but they had not given their own; neither had he that buried the one talent embezzled, but he had not doubled; neither are they that overlooked the hungry punished, because they seized the possessions of others, but because they did not lay out their own, like as also this servant. Let us hearken, as many as please the belly, as many as lay out on costly banquets the riches that pertain not at all to us, but belong to the needy. For do not, because out of great love to man thou art commanded to give as of thine, therefore suppose these things to be indeed thine own. He lent them to thee, that thou mightest be able to approve thyself. Do not then suppose them to be thine, when giving Him His own. For neither, if thou hadst lent to any one, that he might go and be able to find means of gain, wouldest thou say the money was his. To thee then also hath God given, that thou mightest traffic for Heaven. Make not then the exceeding greatness of His love to man a cause of ingratitude.

Consider of what prayer it were a worthy object, to be able to find after baptism a way to do away one's sins. If He had not said this, Give alms, how many would have said, Would it were possible to give money, and so be freed from the ills to come! But since this hath become possible, again are they become supine. "But I give," thou sayest. And what is this? Thou hast not yet given as much as she, who cast in the two mites; or rather not so much as the half, nor a very small part of what she gave, but thou layest out the greater part on useless expenses, on banquets, and drunkenness, and extreme extravagance; now bidding, now bidden; now spending, now constraining others to spend; so that the punishment is even rendered twofold for thee, both from what thyself doest, and what thou movest others to do. See at any rate how He Himself blames His servant for this. "For he eateth," He saith, "and drinketh with the drunken." For not the drunken only, but those that are with them, doth He punish, and very fitly, because (together with corrupting their own selves) they make light also of the salvation of others. But nothing does so much provoke God, as for us to be inclined to overlook the things that concern our neighbor. Wherefore showing His anger, He commands him to be cut asunder. Therefore He also affirmed love to be a distinguishing mark of His disciples, since it is altogether necessary that he who loveth should take thought for the things of his beloved.

To this way then let us hold, for this is especially the way that leads up to Heaven, which renders men followers of Christ, which makes them, as far as possible, like God. See at any rate how these virtues are more needful, which have their dwelling by this way. And, if ye will, let us make an inquiry into them, and let us bring forth the sentences from the judgment of God. Let there be then two ways of most holy life, and let the one secure the goodness of him that practises it, but the other of his neighbor also. Let us see whether is the more approved and leads us to the summit of virtue. Surely he, who seeks his own things only, will receive even from Paul endless blame, and when I say from Paul, I mean from Christ, but the other commendations and crowns. Whence is this evident? Hear what His language is to one, what to the other. "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." Seest thou he rejects the one, and brings in the other? Again, "Let every one of you

please his neighbor for good to edification." Then comes also the praise beyond words with an admonition, "For even Christ pleased not Himself."

Even these judgments then are sufficient to show the victory; but that this may be done even superabundantly, let us see amongst good works, which are confined to ourselves, and which pass over from us to others also. Fasting then, and lying on the bare ground, and keeping virginity, and a self-denying life, these things bring their advantage to the persons themselves who do them; but those that pass from ourselves to our neighbors are almsgiving, teaching, charity. Hear then Paul in this matter also saying, "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, I am nothing profiled." 6. Seest thou it in itself gloriously celebrated, and crowned? But if ye be willing, from a third point also let us compare them; and let the one fast, and deny himself, and be a martyr, and be burnt to death, but let another delay his martyrdom for his neighbor's edification; and let him not only delay it, but let him even depart without martyrdom; who will be the more approved after his removal hence? We need not have many words, nor a long circumlocution. For the blessed Paul is at hand, giving his judgment, and saying, "To depart and to be with Christ is better, nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you;" even to his removal unto Christ did he prefer his neighbor's edification. For this is in the highest sense to be with Christ, even to be doing His will, but nothing is so much His will, as that which is for one's neighbor's good.

Wilt thou that I tell thee a fourth proof also of these things? "Peter, lovest thou me," saith He; "Feed my sheep:" and having asked him a third time, declared this to be an infallible proof of love. But not to priests only is this said, but to every one of us also, who are also entrusted with a little flock. For do not despise it, because it is a little flock: For "my Father," He saith. "hath pleasure in them." Each of us hath a sheep, let him lead that to the proper pastures. And let the man, as soon as he has risen from his bed, seek after nothing else, but how He may do and say something whereby he may render his whole house more reverent. The woman again, let her be indeed a good housekeeper; but before attending to this, let her have another more needful care, that the whole household may work the works of Heaven. For if in worldly matters, before attending to the affairs of our household, we labor diligently to pay public dues, that we may not for our undutifulness in these matters be beaten and dragged to the market places, and suffer ten thousand unseemly things; much more ought we to do this in things spiritual, and to render what is due to God, the King of all, first, that we may not come to that place, "where is gnashing of teeth."

And after these virtues let us seek, which together with our own salvation will be able in the greatest degree to profit our neighbor. Such is almsgiving, such is prayer, or rather even this latter is by the former made efficacious, and furnished with wings. "For thy prayers," it is said, "and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God." But not prayers only, but fasting also hath its strength from hence. Shouldest thou fast without almsgiving; the act is not so much as counted for fasting; but such a one is worse than a gluttonous man and a drunkard; and so much worse, as cruelty is a more grievous thing than luxury. And

why do I speak of fasting? Though thou practise self-denial, though thou practise virginity, thou art set without the bridechamber. if thou hast not almsgiving. And yet what is equal to virginity, which not even in the new dispensation hath come under the compulsion of law, on account of its high excellence? but nevertheless it is cast out, when it hath not almsgiving. But if virgins are cast out, because they have not this in due abundance, who will be able without this to obtain pardon? There is no man, but he must quite of necessity perish, who hath not this.

For, if in worldly matters no man lives for himself, but artisan, and soldier, and husbandman, and merchant, all of them contribute to the common good, and to their neighbor's advantage; much more ought we to do this in things spiritual. For this is most properly to live: since he at least who is living for himself only, and overlooking all others, is useless, and is not so much as a human being, nor of our race. What then, thou wouldest say, if I neglect my own interests, while seeking after the good of the rest? It is not possible, for one who seeks after the good of the rest to overlook his own; for he who seeks after the good of the rest pains no man, but pities all, helps them to the utmost of his powers; will rob no man, will covet the goods of no man, will not steal, will not bear false witness; will abstain from all wickedness, will apply himself to all virtue, and will pray for his enemies, and do good to them that plot against him, and will neither revile any, nor speak ill of them, though he hear from them ten thousand evil things; but will speak the words of the apostle: "Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?" But when looking to our own good, it is not quite sure that the good of the rest will follow.

By all which things being persuaded that it is not possible for one to be saved, who hath not looked to the common good, and seeing this man that was cut asunder, and him that buried his talent, let us choose this way, that we may also attain unto eternal life, unto which God grant we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory, world without end. Amen.

Homily 78

Matthew Chapter 25, Verse 1-Matthew Chapter 25, Verse 30

”Then shall the kingdom of Heaven,” He saith, ”be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps. and went forth to meet the bridegroom. But five of them were wise, and the other five foolish, which took not,” He saith, ”oil. ”Then, while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him. And the five arose, and being in perplexity, said to the wise, Give us of your oil. But they consented not, saying, Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you; go to them that sell, and buy. ”And while they were gone for this, the bridegroom came, and those went in; but these came afterwards, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But He answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know not the day, nor the hour. ”Then He spake again another parable. A man travelling into a far country, called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods; to one five talents, to another two, to another one, to every man according to his several ability, and took his journey. Then, when the two had brought him the double, he that had been entrusted with the one talent brought it alone, and being blamed saith, I knew that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed; and I was afraid, and hid thy talent; lo!

there thou hast that is thine. His Lord answered and said, Thou wicked servant, thou knewest that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not strawed: thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I might have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it to him that hath ten talents. For to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly; but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

These parables are like the former parable of the faithful servant, and of him that was ungrateful and devoured his Lord’s goods. For there are four in all, in different ways admonishing us about the same things, I mean about diligence in almsgiving, and about helping our neighbor by all means which we are able to use, since it is not possible to be saved in another way. But there He speaks more generally of all assistance which should he ren-

dered to one's neighbor; but as to the virgins, he speaketh particularly of mercifulness in alms, and more strongly than in the former parable. For there He punishes him that beats, and is drunken, and scatters and wastes his lord's goods, but here even him that doth not help, nor spends abundantly his goods upon the needy. For they had oil indeed, but not in abundance, wherefore also they are punished.

But wherefore doth He set forth this parable in the person of the virgins, and doth not merely suppose any person whatever? Great things had He spoken of virginity, saying, "There are eunuchs, who have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of Heaven's sake; and, "He that is able to receive, let him receive it. He knew also that the generality of men would have a great opinion of it. For indeed the work is by nature great, and is shown so by this, that neither under the old dispensation was it fulfilled by these ancient and holy men, nor under the new was it brought under the compulsion of the law. For He did not command this, but left it to the choice of his hearers. Wherefore Paul also said "Now, concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord. "For though I praise him that attains thereto, yet I constrain not him that is not willing, neither do I make the thing an injunction. Since then the thing is both great in itself and hath great honor with the multitude, lest any one attaining to this should feel as though he had attained to all, and should be careless about the rest, He putteth forth this parable sufficient to persuade them, that virginity, though it should have everything else, if destitute of the good things arising out of almsgiving, is cast out with the harlots, and He sets the inhuman and merciless with them.

And most reasonably, for the one was overcome by the love of carnal pleasure, but these of money. But the Jove of carnal pleasure and of money are not equal, but that of carnal pleasure is far keener and more tyrannical. And the weaker the antagonist, the less excusable are these that are overcome thereby. Therefore also He calls them foolish, for that having undergone the greater labor, they have betrayed all for want of the less. But by lamps here, He meaneth the gift itself of virginity, the purity of holiness; and by oil, humanity, almsgiving, succor to them that are in need.

"Then, while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." He shows that the time intervening will not be short, leading His disciples away from the expectation that His kingdom was quite immediately to appear. For this indeed they hoped, therefore He is continually holding them back from this hope. And at the same time He intimates this too, that death is a sleep. For they slept, He saith. "And about midnight there was a cry made." Either He was continuing the parable, or again He shows that the resurrection will be at night. But the cry Paul also indicates, saying, "With a shout, with a voice of an archangel, with the last trump, He shall come down from Heaven." And what mean the trumpets, and what saith the cry? "The bridegroom cometh." When therefore they had trimmed their lamps, the foolish say unto the wise, "Give us of your oil." Again He calls them foolish, showing that nothing can be more foolish than they who are wealthy here, and depart naked thither, where most of all we have need of humanity, where we want much oil. But not in this respect only were they foolish, but also because they looked to receive it there, and

sought it out of season; and yet nothing could be more humane than those virgins, who for this especially were approved. Neither do they seek for it all, for, "Give us," they say, "of your oil;" and the urgency of their need is indicated; "for our lamps," they say, "are going out." But even so they failed, and neither the humanity of those whom they asked, nor the easiness of their request, nor their necessity and want, made them obtain.

But what now do we learn from hence? That no man can protect us there, if we are betrayed by our works, not because he will not, but because he cannot. For these too take refuge in the impossibility. This the blessed Abraham also indicated, saying, "Between us and you there is a great gulf," so that not even when willing is it permitted them to pass it. "But go to them that sell, and buy." And who are they that sell? The poor. And where are these? Here, and then should they have sought them, not at that time. 2. Seest thou what great profit arises to us from the poor? shouldest thou take them away, thou wouldest take away the great hope of our salvation. Wherefore here must we get together the oil, that it may be useful to us there, when the time calls us. For that is not the time of collecting it, but this. Spend not then your goods for nought in luxury and vainglory.For thou wilt have need of much oil there.

Having heard these things, those virgins went their way; but they profiled nothing. And this He saith, either pursuing the parable, and working it up; or also by these things showing, that though we should become humane after our departure, we shall gain nothing from thence towards our escape. Therefore neither did their forwardness avail these virgins, because they went to them that sell not here, but there; nor the rich man, when he became so charitable, as even to be anxious about his relations. For he that was passing by him that was laid at the gate, is eager to rescue from perils and from hell them whom he did not so much as see, and entreats that some be sent to tell them these things. But nevertheless, he derived no benefit from thence, as neither did these virgins. For when they having heard these things went their way, the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with Him, but the others were shut out. After their many labors, after their innumerable toils, and that intolerable fight, and those trophies which they had set up over the madness of natural appetite, disgraced, and with their lamps gone out, they withdrew, bending down their faces to the earth. For nothing is more sullied than virginity not having mercy; so that even the multitude are wont to call the unmerciful dark. Where then was the profit of virginity, when they saw not the bridegroom? and not even when they had knocked did they obtain, but they heard that fearful saying, "Depart, I know you not." And when He hath said this, nothing else but hell is left, and that intolerable punishment; or rather, this word is more grievous even than hell. This word He speaks to them also that work iniquity?

"Watch therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour." Seest thou how continually He adds this, showing how awful our ignorance concerning our departure hence? Where now are they, who throughout all their life are remiss, but when they are blamed by us, are saying, At the time of my death, I shall leave money to the poor. Let them listen to these words, and be amended. For indeed at that time many have failed of this, having been snatched

away at once, and not permitted so much as to give charge to their relations touching what they wished to be done. This parable was spoken with respect to mercy in alms; but the one that comes after this, to them that neither in money, nor in word, nor in protection, nor in any other things whatever, are willing to assist their neighbors, but withhold all. And wherefore can it be that this parable brings forward a king, but that a bridegroom? That thou mightest learn how close Christ is joined unto the virgins that strip themselves of their possessions; for this indeed is virginity. Wherefore Paul also makes this as a definition of the thing. "The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord;" such are his words: and, "For that which is comely, and that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction. These things we advise," he saith.

And if in Luke the parable of the talents is otherwise put, this is to be said, that the one is really different from the other. For in that, from the one capital different degrees of increase were made, for from one pound one brought five, another ten; wherefore neither did they obtain the same recompense; but here, it is the contrary, and the crown is accordingly equal. For he that received two gave two, and he that had received the five again in like manner; but there since from the same beginning one made the greater, one the less, increase; as might be expected, in the rewards also, they do not enjoy the same. But see Him everywhere, not requiring it again immediately. For in the case of the vineyard, He let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country; and here He committed to them the talents, and took His journey, that thou mightest learn His long-suffering. And to me He seems to say these things, to intimate the resurrection. But here it is no more a vineyard and husbandmen, but all servants. For not to rulers only, nor to Jews, but to all, doth He address His discourse. And they who bring a return unto Him confess frankly, both what is their own, and what their Master's. And the one saith, Lord, "Thou gavest me five talents;" and the other saith, "two," indicating that from Him they received the source of their gain, and they are very thankful, and reckon all to Him.

What then saith the Master? "Well done, thou good" (for this is goodness to look to one's neighbor) "and faithful servant; thou wast faithful over few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," meaning by this expression all blessedness. But not so that other one, but how? "I knew that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou sowedst not, and gathering where thou strawedst not: and I was afraid, and hid thy talent: lo, there thou hast that is thine." What then the Master? "Thou oughtest to have put my money to the exchangers," that is, "that oughtest to have spoken, to have admonished, to have advised." But are they disobedient? Yet this is nought to thee.

What could be more gentle than this? For men indeed do not so, but him that hath put out the money at usury, even him do they make also responsible to require it again. But He not so; but, Thou oughtest, He saith, to have put it out, and to have committed the requiring of it again to me. And I should have required it with increase; by increase upon the hearing, meaning the showing forth of the works. Thou oughtest to have done that which is easier, and to have left to me what is more difficult. Forasmuch then as he did not this, "Take,"

saith He, "the talent from him, and give it to him that hath ten talents? For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." What then is this? He that hath a gift of word and teaching to profit thereby, and useth it not, will lose the gift also; but he that giveth diligence, will gain to himself the gift in more abundance; even as the other loseth what he had received. But not to this is the penalty limited for him that is slothful, but even intolerable is the punishment, and with the punishment the sentence, which is full of a heavy accusation. For "cast ye," saith He, "the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Seest thou how not only the spoiler, and the covetous, nor only the doer of evil things, but also he that doeth not good things, is punished with extreme punishment.

Let us hearken then to these words. As we have opportunity, let us help on our salvation, let us get oil for our lamps, let us labor to add to our talent. For if we be backward, and spend our time in sloth here, no one will pity us any more hereafter, though we should wail ten thousand times. He also that had on the filthy garments condemned himself, and profited nothing. He also that had the one talent restored that which was committed to his charge, and yet was condemned. The virgins again entreated, and came unto Him and knocked, and all in vain, and without effect. Knowing then these things, let us contribute alike wealth, and diligence, and protection, and all things for our neighbor's advantage. For the talents here are each person's ability, whether in the way of protection, or in money, or in teaching, or in what thing soever of the kind. Let no man say, I have but one talent, and can do nothing; for thou canal even by one approve thyself. For thou art not poorer than that widow; thou art not more uninstructed than Peter and John. who were both "unlearned and ignorant men;" but nevertheless, since they showed forth a zeal, and did all things for the common good, they attained to Heaven. For nothing is so pleasing to God, as to live for the common advantage.

For this end God gave us speech, and hands, and feet, and strength of body, and mind, and understanding, that we might use all these things, both for our own salvation, and for our neighbor's advantage. For not for hymns only and thanksgivings is our speech serviceable to us, but it is profitable also for instruction and admonition. And if indeed we used it to this end, we should be imitating our Master; but if for the opposite ends, the devil. Since Peter also, when he confessed the Christ, was blessed, as having spoken the words of the Father; but when he refused the cross, and dissuaded it, he was severely reproved, as savoring the things of the devil. But if where the saying was of ignorance, so heavy is the blame, when we of our own will commit many sins, what favor shall we have?

Such things then let us speak, that of themselves they may be evidently the words of Christ. For not only if I should say, "Arise, and walk;" neither if I should say, "Tabitha, arise," then only do I speak Christ's words, but much more if being reviled I bless, if being despitefully used I pray for him that doeth despite to me. Lately indeed I said, that our tongue is a hand laying hold on the feet of God; but now much more do I say, that our tongue is a tongue

imitating the tongue of Christ, if it show forth the strictness that becometh us, if we speak those things which He wills. But what are the things which He wills us to speak? Words full of gentleness and meekness, even as also He Himself used to speak, saying to them that were insulting Him, "I have not a devil;" and again, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil." If thou also speak in this way; if thou speak for thy neighbor's amendment, thou wilt obtain a tongue like that tongue. And these things God Himself saith; "For he that bringeth out the precious from the vile, shall be as my mouth;" such are His words.

When therefore thy tongue is as Christ's tongue, and thy mouth is become the mouth of the Father, and thou art a temple of the Holy Ghost, then what kind of honor could be equal to this? For not even if thy mouth were made of gold, no nor even of precious stones, would it shine like as now, when lit up with the ornament of meekness. For what is more lovely than a mouth that knoweth not how to insult, but is used to bless and give good words? But if thou canst not bear to bless him that curses thee, hold thy peace, and accomplish but this for the time; and proceeding in order, and striving as thou oughtest, thou wilt attain to that other point also, and wilt acquire such a mouth, as we have spoken of.

4. And do not account the saying to be rash. For the Lord is loving to man, and the gift cometh of His goodness. It is rash to have a mouth like the devil, to have a tongue resembling that of an evil demon, especially for him that partakes of such mysteries, and communicates of the very flesh of the Lord. Reflecting then on these things, become like Him, to the utmost of thy power. No longer then will the devil be able so much as to look thee in the face, when thou art become such a one as this. For indeed he recognizes the image of the King, he knows the weapons of Christ, whereby he was worsted. And what are these? Gentleness and meekness. For when on the mountain Christ overthrew and laid low the devil who was assaulting him, it was not by making it known that He was Christ, but He entrapped him by these sayings, He took him by gentleness, he turned him to flight by meekness. Thou also must do this; shouldest thou see a man become a devil, and coming against thee, even so do thou likewise overcome. Christ gave thee also power to become like Him, so far as thy ability extends. Be not afraid at hearing this. The fear is not to be like Him. Speak then after His manner, and thou art become in this respect such as He, so far as it is possible for one who is a man to become so.

Wherefore greater is he that thus speaks, than he that prophecies. For this is entirely a gift, but in the other is also thy labor and toil. Teach thy soul to frame thee a mouth like to Christ's mouth. For it can create such things, if it will; it knows the art, if it be not remiss. And how is such a mouth made? one may ask. By what kind of colorings? by what kind of material? By no colorings, indeed, or material; but by virtue only, and meekness, and humility. Let us see also how a devil's mouth is made; that we may never frame that. How then is it made? By curses, by insults, by envy, by perjury. For when any one speaks his words, he takes his tongue. What kind of excuse then shall we have; or rather, what manner of punishment shall we not undergo; when this our tongue, wherewith we are allowed to taste of the Lord's flesh, when this, I say, we overlook, speaking the devil's words?

Let us not overlook it, but let us use all diligence, in order to train it to imitate its Lord. For if we train it to this, it will place us with great confidence at Christ's judgment seat. Unless any one know how to speak thus, the judge will not so much as hear him. For like as when the judge chances to be a Roman, he will not hear the defense of one who knows not how to speak thus; so likewise Christ, unless thou speak after His fashion, will not hear thee, nor give heed. Let us learn therefore to speak in such wise as our Judge is wont to hear; let it be our endeavor to imitate that tongue. And shouldest thou fall into grief, take heed lest the tyranny of despondency pervert thy tongue, but that thou speak like Christ. For He too mourned for Lazarus and Judas. Shouldest thou fall into fear, seek again to speak even as He. For He Himself fell into fear for thy sake, with regard to His manhood. Do thou also say, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

And if thou shouldest lament, weep calmly as He. Shouldest thou fall into plots and sorrows, treat these too as Christ. For indeed He had plots laid against Him, and was in sorrow, and saith, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." And all the examples He presented to thee. in order that thou shouldest continually observe the same measures, and not destroy the rules that have been given thee. So shalt thou be able to have a mouth like His mouth, so while treading on the earth, thou wilt show forth a tongue like to that of Him who sits on high; thou wilt maintain the limits He observed in despondency, in anger, in suffering, in agony. How many are they of you that desire to see His form? Behold, it is possible, not to see Him only, but also to become like Him; if we are in earnest.

Let us not delay then. He doth not so readily accept prophets' lips, as those of meek and forbearing men. "For many will say unto me," He saith, "Have we not prophesied in Thy name? And I will say unto them, I know you not." But the lips of Moses, because he was exceeding gentle and meek ("for Moses," it is said, "was a meek man above all the men which were upon the face of the earth"), He so accepted and loved, as to say, "Face to face, mouth to mouth. did He speak, as a man speaketh unto his friend." Thou wilt not command devils now, but thou shalt then command the fire of hell, if thou keep thy mouth like to Christ's mouth. Thou shalt command the abyss of fire, and shalt say unto it, "Peace, be still," and with great confidence shalt set foot in the Heavens, and enjoy the kingdom; unto which God grant all of us to attain, 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 79

Matthew Chapter 25, Verse 31-Matthew Chapter 25, Verse 41

"When the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit," saith He, "upon the throne of His glory, and He shall divide the sheep from the kids;" [and the one He will accept, because they fed Him, when an hungered, and gave Him drink when thirsty, and took Him in when a stranger, and clothed Him when naked, and visited Him when sick, and came to see Him when in prison: and He will give the kingdom to them. But the others, accusing them for the opposite things, He will send into the eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.] Unto this most delightful portion of Scripture, which we do not cease continually revolving, let us now listen with all earnestness and compunction, this wherewith His discourse ended, even as the last thing, reasonably; for great indeed was His regard for philanthropy and mercy. Wherefore in what precedes He had discoursed concerning this in a different way; and here now in some respects more clearly, and more earnestly, not setting forth two nor three nor five persons, but the whole world; although most assuredly the former places, which speak of two persons, meant not two persons, but two portions of mankind, one of them that disobey, the other of the obedient. But here He handleth the word more fearfully, and with fuller light. Wherefore neither doth He say, "The kingdom is likened," any more, but openly shows Himself, saying, "When the Son of Man shall come in His glory." For now is He come in dishonor, now in affronts and reproaches; but then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory.

And continually doth He make mention of glory. For since the cross was near, a thing that seemed to be matter of reproach, for this cause He raises up the hearer; and brings before his sight the judgment seat, and setteth round him all the world. And not in this way only doth He make His discourse awful, but also by showing the Heavens opened. For all the angels will be present with Him, He saith, themselves also to bear witness, in how many things they had ministered, when sent by the Lord for the salvation of men. And everything will help to render that day fearful. Then, "shall be gathered together," He saith, "all nations," that is, the whole race of men. "And He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd his sheep." For now they are not separated, but all mingled together, but the division then shall be made with all exactness. And for a while it is by their place that He divides them, and makes them manifest; afterwards by the names He indicates the dispositions of each, calling the one kids, the other sheep, that He might indicate the unfruitfulness of the one,

for no fruit will come from kids; and the great profit from the other, for indeed from sheep great is the profit, as well from the milk, as from the wool, and from the young, of all which things the kid is destitute.

But while the brutes have from nature their unfruitfulness, and fruitfulness, these have it from choice, wherefore some are punished, and the others crowned. And He doth not punish them, until He hath pleaded with them; wherefore also, when He hath put them in their place, He mentions the charges against them. And they speak with meekness, but they have no advantage from it now; and very reasonably, because they passed by a work so much to be desired. For indeed the prophets are everywhere saying this, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," and the lawgiver by all means urged them to this, both by words, and by works; and nature herself taught it. But mark them, how they are destitute not of one or two things only, but of all. For not only did they fail to feed the hungry, or clothe the naked; but not even did they visit the sick, which was an easier thing.

And mark how easy are His injunctions. He said not, "I was in prison, and ye set me free; I was sick, and ye raised me up again;" but, "ye visited me," and, "ye came unto me." And neither in hunger is the thing commanded grievous. For no costly table did He seek, but what is needful only, and His necessary food, and He sought in a suppliant's garb, so that all things were enough to bring punishment on them; the easiness. of the request, for it was bread; the pitiable character of Him that requesteth, for He was. poor; the sympathy of nature, for He was a man; the desirableness of the promise, for He promised a kingdom; the fearfulness of the punishment, for He threatened hell. The dignity of the one receiving, for it was God, who was receiving by the poor; the surpassing nature of the honor, that He vouchsafed to condescend so far; His just claim for what they bestowed. for of His own was He receiving. But against all these things covetousness once for all blinded them that were seized by it; and this though so great a threat was set against it.

For further back also He saith, that they who receive not such as these shall suffer more grievous things than Sodom; and here He saith, "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not unto me." What sayest Thou? they are Thy brethren; and how dost Thou call them least. Why, for this reason they are brethren, because they are lowly, because they are poor, because they are outcast. For such doth He most invite to brotherhood, the unknown, the contemptible, not meaning by these the monks only, and them that have occupied the mountains, but every believer; though he be a secular person, yet if he be hungry, and famishing, and naked, and a stranger, His will is he should have the benefit of all this care. For baptism renders a man a brother, and the partaking of the divine mysteries.

2. Then, in order that thou mayest see in another way also the justice of the sentence, He first praises them that have done right, and saith, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat," and all that follows. For that they may not say, we had it not, He condemns them by their fellow-servants; like as the virgins by the virgins, and the servant

that was drunken and gluttonous by the faithful servant, and him that buried his talent, by them that brought the two, and each one of them that continue in sin, by them that have done right. And this comparison is sometimes made in the case of an equal, as here, and in the instance of the virgins, sometimes of him that hath advantage, as when he said, "The men of Nineveh shall rise up and shall condemn this generation, because they believed at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here;" and, "The queen of the south shall condemn this generation, because she came to hear the wisdom of Solomon;" and of an equal again, "They shall be your judges;" and again of one at advantage, "Know ye not, that we shall judge angels, how much more things that pertain to this life?"

And here, however, it is of an equal; for he compares rich with rich, and poor with poor. And not in this way only doth He show the sentence justly passed, by their fellow-servants having done what was right when in the same circumstances, but also by their not being obedient so much as in these things in which poverty was no hindrance; as, for instance, in giving drink to the thirsty, in looking upon him that is in bonds, in visiting the sick. And when He had commended them that had done right, He shows how great was originally His bond of love towards them. For, "Come," saith He, "ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." To how many good things is this same equivalent, to be blessed, and blessed of the Father? And wherefore were they counted worthy of such great honors? What is the cause? "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink;" and what follows.

Of what honor, of what blessedness are these words? And He said not, Take, but, "Inherit," as one's own, as your Father's, as yours, as due to you from the first. For, before you were, saith He, these things had been prepared, and made ready for you, forasmuch as I knew you would be such as you are. And in return for what do they receive such things? For the covering of a roof, for a garment, for bread, for cold water, for visiting, for going into the prison. For indeed in every case it is for what is needed; and sometimes not even for that. For surely, as I have said, the sick and he that is in bonds seeks not for this only, but the one to be loosed, the other to be delivered from his infirmity. But He, being gracious, requires only what is within our power, or rather even less than what is within our power, leaving to us to exert our generosity in doing more.

But to the others He saith, "Depart from me, ye cursed," (no longer of the Father; for not He laid the curse upon them, but their own works), "into the everlasting fire, prepared," not for you, but "for the devil and his angels." For concerning the kingdom indeed, when He had said, "Come, inherit the kingdom," He added, "prepared for you before the foundation of the world;" but concerning the fire, no longer so, but, "prepared for the devil." I, saith He, prepared the kingdom for you, but the fire no more for you, but "for the devil and his angels;" but since ye cast yourselves therein, impute it to yourselves. And not in this way only, but by what follows also, like as though He were excusing Himself to them, He sets forth the causes. "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat," For though He that came to thee had been thine enemy, were not His sufferings enough to have overcome and subdued even

the merciless? hunger, and cold, and bonds, and nakedness, and sickness. and to wander everywhere houseless? These things are sufficient even to destroy enmity. But ye did not these things even to a friend, being at once friend, and benefactor, and Lord. Though it be a dog we see hungry, often we are overcome; and though we behold a wild beast, we are subdued; but seeing the Lord, art thou not subdued? And wherein are these things worthy of defense?

For if it were this only, were it not sufficient for a recompense? (I speak not of hearing such a voice, in the presence of the world, from Him that sitteth on the Father's throne, and of obtaining the kingdom), but were not the very doing it sufficient for a reward? But now even in the presence of the world, and at the appearing of that unspeakable glory, He proclaims and crowns thee, and acknowledges thee as His sustainer and host, and is not ashamed of saying such things, that He may make the crown brighter for thee. So for this cause, while the one are punished justly, the others are crowned by grace. For though they had done ten thousand things, the munificence were of grace, that in return for services so small and cheap, such a heaven, and a kingdom, and so great honor, should be given them.

"And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these sayings, He said unto His disciples, Ye know that after two days is the passover, and the Son of Man is betrayed to be crucified." In good season again doth He speak of the passion, when He had reminded them of the kingdom, and of the recompense there, and of the deathless punishment; as though He had said, Why are ye afraid at the dangers that are for a season, when such good things await you? 3. But mark thou, I pray thee, how He hath in all His first sayings after a new manner worked up and thrown into the shade what was most painful to them. For He said not, Ye know that after two days I am betrayed, but, "Ye know that after two days is the passover," to show that what is done is a mystery and that a feast and celebration is being kept for the salvation of the world, and that with foreknowledge He suffered all, So then, as though this were sufficient consolation for them, He did not even say anything to them now about a resurrection; for it was superfluous, after having discoursed so much about it, to speak of it again. And moreover, as I said. He shows that even His very passion is a deliverance from countless evils, having by the passover reminded them of the ancient benefits in Egypt.

"Then were assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, in the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtlety, and kill Him. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people." Seest thou the unspeakable corruption of the Jewish state? Attempting unlawful acts, they come to the high priest, desiring to obtain their authority from that quarter, whence they ought to have found hindrance. And how many high priests were there? For the law wills there should be one, but then there were many. Whence it is manifest, that the Jewish constitution had begun to dissolve. For Moses, as I said, commanded there should be one, and that when he was dead there should be another, and by the life of this person He measured the banishment of them that had involuntarily committed manslaughter. How then were there at that time many high priests? They were

afterwards made for a year. And this the evangelist declared, when he was speaking of Zacharias, saying, that he was of the course of Abia. Those therefore doth he here call high priests, who had been high priests.

What did they consult together? That they might seize Him secretly, or that they might put Him to death? Both; for they feared the people. Wherefore also they waited for the feast to be past; for "they said, Not on the feast day." For the devil, lest he should make the passion conspicuous, was not willing it should take place at the passover; but they, lest there should be an uproar. Mark them then ever fearing, not the ills from God, neither lest any greater pollution should arise to them from the season, but in every case the ills from men. Yet for all this, boiling with anger, they changed their purpose again. For though they had said, "Not at the feast time;" when they found the traitor, they waited not for the time, but slew Him at the feast. But why did they take Him then? They were boiling with rage, as I said; and they expected then to find Him, and all things they did as blinded. For though He Himself made the greatest use of their wickedness for His own dispensation, they were not surely for this guiltless, but deserving of inflictions without number for their temper of mind. At least when all should be set free, even the guilty, then these men slew the guiltless, Him that had conferred on them countless benefits, and who for a time had neglected the Gentiles for their sake. But O loving-kindness! them that were thus depraved, them that were thus froward, and full of countless evils, He again saves, and sends the apostles to be slain in their behalf, and by the apostles makes entreaty. "For we are ambassadors for Christ."

Having then such patterns as these, I say not, let us die for our enemies, for we ought to do even this; but since we are too feeble for this, I say for the present, at least let us not look with an evil eye upon our friends, let us not envy our benefactors. I say not for the present, let us do good to them that evil entreat us, for I desire even this; but since you are too gross for this, at least avenge not yourselves. What is our condition, a scene. and acting? Wherefore can it be that ye set yourselves directly against the acts enjoined? It is not for nought that all else hath been written and how many things He did at the very cross sufficient to recall them to Him; but that thou mightest imitate His goodness, that thou mightest emulate His lovingkindness. For indeed He east them to the ground, and restored the servant's ear, and discoursed with forbearance; and great miracles did He show forth, when lifted up, turning aside the sunbeams, bursting the rocks, raising the dead, frightening by dreams the wife of him that was judging Him, at the very judgment showing forth all meekness (which was of power not less than miracles to gain them over), forewarning them of countless things in the judgment hall; on the very cross crying aloud, "Father, forgive them their sin." And when buried. how many things did He show forth for their salvation? And having risen again, did he not straightway call the Jews? did He not give them remission of sins? did He not set before them countless blessings? What can be more strange than this? They that crucified Him, and were breathing murder, after they crucified Him, became sons of God.

What can be equal to this tenderness? On hearing these things let us hide our faces, to think that we are so far removed from Him whom we are commanded to imitate. Let us at least see how great the distance, that we may at any rate condemn ourselves, for warring with these, in behalf of whom Christ gave His life, and not being willing to be reconciled to them, whom that He might reconcile He refused not even to be slain; unless this too be some expense, and outlay of money, which ye object in almsgiving. 4. Consider of how many things thou art guilty; and so far from being backward to forgive them that have injured thee, thou wilt even run unto them that have grieved thee, in order that thou mayest have a ground for pardon, that thou mayest find a remedy for thine own evil deeds.

The sons of the Greeks, who look for nothing great, have often shown self-command toward these: and thou who art to depart hence with such hopes, shrinkest, and art slow to act; and that which time effects, this thou endurest not to do before the time for God's law, but willest this passion to be quenched without reward, rather than for a reward? For neither, if this should have arisen from the time, wilt thou have any advantage, but rather great will be the punishment, because, what time hath effected, this the law of God persuaded thee not to do. But if thou sayest that thou burnest with the memory of the insult; call to mind if any good hath been done thee by him that hath offended thee, and how many ills thou hast occasioned to others. Hath he spoken ill of thee, and disgraced thee? Consider also that thou hast spoken thus of others. How then wilt thou obtain pardon, which thou bestowest not on others? But hast thou spoken ill of no one? But thou hast heard men so speaking, and allowed it. Neither is this guiltless.

Wilt thou learn how good a thing it is not to remember injuries, and how this more than anything pleases God? Them that exult over persons, justly chastised by Himself, He punishes. And yet they are justly chastised; but thou shouldest not rejoice over them. So the prophet having brought many accusations, added this also, saying, "They felt nothing for the affliction of Joseph;" and again, "She that inhabiteth Enan, came not forth I to lament for the place near her." And yet both Joseph (that is, the tribes that were sprung from him), and the neighbors of these others, were punished according to the purpose of God; nevertheless, it is His will that we sympathize even with these. For if we, being evil, when we are punishing a servant, if we should see one of his fellow slaves laughing, we at the same time are provoked the more, and turn our anger against him; much more will God punish them that exult over those whom He chastises. But if upon them that are chastised by God it is not right to trample, but to grieve with them, much more with them that have sinned against us. For this is love's sign; love God prefers to all things. For as in the royal purple, those are precious amongst the flowers and dyes, which make up this robing; so here too, these virtues are the precious ones, which preserve love. But nothing maintains love so much as the not remembering them that have sinned against us.

"Why? did not God guard the other side also? Why? did He not drive him that hath done the wrong to him that is wronged? Doth He not send him from the altar to the other, and so after the reconciliation invite him to the table?" But do not therefore wait for the other

to come, since thus thou hast lost all. For to this intent most especially doth He appoint unto thee an unspeakable reward, that thou mayest prevent the other, since, if thou art reconciled by his entreaties, the amity is no longer the result of the divine command, but of the other party's diligence. Wherefore also thou goest away uncrowned, while he receives the rewards. What sayest thou? Hast thou an enemy, and art thou not ashamed? Why is not the devil enough for us, that we bring upon ourselves those of our own race also? Would that not even he had been minded to war against us; would that not even he were a devil!

Knowest thou not how great the pleasure after reconciliation? For what, though in our enmity it appear not great? For that it is sweeter to love him that doth us wrong than to hate him, after the enmity is done away thou shalt be able to learn full well. 5. Why then do we imitate the mad, devouring one another, warring against our own flesh? Hear even under the Old Testament, how great regard there was for this, "The ways of revengeful men are unto death. One man keepeth anger against another, and doth he seek healing of God?" "And yet He allowed, 'eye for eye,' and 'tooth for tooth,' how then doth He find fault?" Because He allowed even those things, not that we should do them one to another, but that through the fear of suffering, we might abstain from the commission of crime. And besides, those acts are the fruits of a short-lived anger, but to remember injuries is the part of a soul that practises itself in evil.

But hast thou suffered evil? yet nothing so great, as thou wilt do to thyself by remembering injuries. And besides, it is not so much as possible for a good man to suffer any evil. For suppose there to be any man, having both children and a wife, and let him practise virtue, and let him have moreover many occasions of being injured, as well abundance of possessions, as sovereign power, and many friends, and let him enjoy honor; only let him practise virtue, for this must be added, and let us in supposition lay plagues upon him. And let some wicked man come unto him, and involve him in losses. What then is that to him who accounts money nothing? Let him kill his children. What this to him, who learns to be wise touching the resurrection? Let him slay his wife; what is this to him who is instructed not to sorrow for them that are fallen asleep? let him cast him into dishonor. What this to him who accounts the things present, the flower of the grass? If thou wilt, let him also torture his body, and cast him into prison, what this to him that hath learnt, "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed;" and that "tribulation worketh approval?"

Now I had undertaken that he should receive no harm; but the account as it proceeded hath shown that he is even advantaged, being renewed, and becoming approved. Let us not then vex ourselves with others, injuring ourselves, and rendering our soul weak. For the vexation is not so much from our neighbors' wickedness, as from our weakness. Because of this, should any one insult us, we weep, and frown; should any one rob us, we suffer the same like those little children, which the more clever of their companions provoke for nothing, grieving them for small causes; but nevertheless these too, if they should see them vexed, continue to tease them, but if laughing, they on the contrary leave off. But we are more foolish even than these, lamenting for these things, about which we ought to laugh.

Wherefore I entreat, let us let go this childish mind, and lay hold of Heaven. For indeed, Christ willeth us to be men, perfect men. On this wise did Paul also command, ”Brethren, be not children in understanding,” he saith, ”howbeit in malice be ye children.”

Let us therefore be children in malice, and flee wickedness, and lay hold on virtue, that we may attain also to the good things eternal, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, world without end. Amen.

Homily 80

Matthew Chapter 26, Verse 6 And Matthew Chapter 26, Verse 7

"Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, there came unto Him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on His head, as He sat at meat." This woman seems indeed to be one and the same with all the evangelists, yet she is not so; but though with the three she cloth seem to me to be one and the same, yet not so with John, but another person, one much to be admired, the sister of Lazarus. But not without purpose did the evangelist mention the leprosy of Simon, but in order that He might show whence the woman took confidence, and came unto Him. For inasmuch as the leprosy seemed a most unclean disease, and to be abhorred, and yet she saw Jesus had both healed the man (for else He would not have chosen to have tarried with a leper), and had gone into his house; she grew confident, that He would also easily wipe off the uncleanness of her soul. And not for nought doth He name the city also, Bethany, but that thou mightest learn, that of His own will He cometh to His passion. For He who before this was fleeing through the midst of them; then, at the time when their envy was most kindled, comes near within about fifteen furlongs; so completely was His former withdrawing Himself a part of a dispensation.

The woman therefore having seen Him, and having taken confidence from thence came unto Him. For if she that had the issue of blood, although conscious to herself of nothing like this, yet because of that natural seeming uncleanness, approached Him trembling and in fear; much more was it likely this woman should be slow, and shrink back because of her evil conscience. Wherefore also it is after many women, the Samaritan, the Canaanite, her that had the issue of blood, and other besides, that she cometh unto Him, being conscious to herself of much impurity; and then not publicly but in a house. And whereas all the others were coming unto Him for the healing of the body alone, she came unto Him by way of honor only, and for the amendment of the soul. For neither was she at all afflicted in body, so that for this most especially one might marvel at her.

And not as to a mere man did she come unto Him; for then she would not have wiped His feet with her hair, but as to one greater than man can be. Therefore that which is the most honorable member of the whole body, this she laid at Christ's feet, even her own head. "But when His disciples saw it, they had indignation," such are the words, "saying, To what

purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. But when Jesus understood it, He said, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me? For ye have the poor always with you, but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

And whence had they this thought? They used to hear their Master saying, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice," and blaming the Jews, because they omitted the weightier matters, judgment, and mercy, and faith, and discoursing much on the mount concerning almsgiving, and from these things they inferred with themselves, and reasoned, that if He accepts not whole burnt offerings, neither the ancient worship, much more will He not accept the anointing of oil. But though they thus thought, He knowing her intention suffers her. For indeed great was her reverence, and unspeakable her zeal; wherefore of this exceeding condescension, He permitted the oil to be poured even on His head. For if He refused not to become man, and to be borne in the womb, and to be fed at the breast, why marvellest thou, if He doth not utterly reject this? For like as the Father suffered a savor of meat, and smoke, even so did He the harlot, accepting, as I have already said, her intention. For Jacob too anointed a pillar to God, and oil was offered in the sacrifices, and the priests were anointed with ointment.

But the disciples not knowing her purpose found fault unseasonably, and by the things they laid to her charge, they show the woman's munificence. For saying, that it might have been sold for three hundred pence, they showed how much this woman had spent on the ointment, and how great generosity she had manifested. Wherefore He also rebuked them, saying, "Why trouble ye the woman?" And He adds a reason, as it was His will again to put them in mind of His passion, "For she did it," He said, "for my burial." And another reason. "For ye have the poor always with you, but me ye have not always;" and, "Wheresoever the gospel shall be preached, that shall be told also which this woman hath done." Seest thou how again He declares beforehand the going forth unto the Gentiles, in this way also consoling them for His death, if after the cross His power was so to shine forth, that the gospel should be spread abroad in every part of the earth.

Who then is so wretched as to set his face against so much truth? For lo! what He said is come to pass, and to whatever part of the earth thou mayest go, thou wilt see her celebrated. And yet neither was the person that did it distinguished, nor had what was done many witnesses, neither was it in a theatre, but in a house,that it took place, and this a house of some leper, the disciples only being present. 2. Who then proclaimed it, and caused it to be spread abroad? It was the power of Him who is speaking these words. And while of countless kings and generals the noble exploits even of those whose memorials remain have sunk into silence; and having overthrown cities, and encompassed them with walls, and set up trophies, and enslaved many nations, they are not known so much as by hearsay, nor by name, though they have both set up statues, and established laws; yet that a woman who

was a harlot poured out oil in the house of some leper, in the presence of ten men, this all men celebrate throughout the world; and so great a time has passed, and yet the memory of that which was done hath not faded away, but alike Persians and Indians, Scythians and Thracians, and Sarmatians, and the race of the Moors, and they that dwell in the British Islands, spread abroad that which was done secretly in a house by a woman that had been a harlot.

Great is the loving-kindness of the Lord. He endureth an harlot, an harlot kissing his feet, and moistening them with oil, and wiping them with her hair, and He receives her, and reproves them that blame her. For neither was it right that for so much zeal the woman should be driven to despair.

But mark thou this too, how far they were now raised up above the world, and forward in almsgiving. And why was it He did not merely say, "She hath wrought a good work," but before this, "Why trouble ye the woman?" That they might learn not at the beginning to require too high principles of the weaker sort. Therefore neither doth He examine the act merely itself by itself, but taking into account the person of the woman. And indeed if He had been making a law, He would not have brought in the woman, but that thou mightest learn that for her sake these things were said, that they might not mar her budding faith, but rather cherish it, therefore He saith it, teaching us whatever good thing may be done by any man, though it be not quite perfect, to receive it, and encourage it, and advance it, and not to seek all perfection at the beginning. For, that at least He Himself would rather have desired this, is manifest from the fact, that He required a bag to be borne, who had not where to lay His head. But then the time demanded not this, that He should correct the deed, but that He should accept it only. For even as, if any one asked Him, without the woman's having done it, He would not have approved this; so, after she had done it, He looks to one thing only, that she be not driven to perplexity by the reproof of the disciples, but that she should go from His care, having been made more cheerful and better. For indeed after the oil had been poured out, their rebuke had no seasonableness.

Do thou then likewise, if thou shouldest see any one provide sacred vessels and offer them, and loving to labor upon any other ornament of the church, about its walls or floor; do not command what has been made to be sold, or overthrown, lest thou spoil his zeal. But if, before he had provided them, he were to tell thee of it, command it to be given to the poor; forasmuch as He also did this not to spoil the spirit of the woman, and as many things as He says, He speaks for her comfort. Then because He had said, 'She hath done it for my burial;" that He might not seem to perplex the woman, by making mention of such a thing as this, His burial and death, I mean; see how by that which follows He recovers her, saying, "What she hath done shall be spoken of in the whole world."

And this was at once consolation to His disciples, and comfort and praise to her. For all men, He saith, shall celebrate her hereafter; and now too hath she announced beforehand my passion, by bringing unto me what was needed for a funeral, let not therefore any man reprove her. For I am so far from condemning her as having done amiss, or from blaming

her as having not acted rightly, that I will not suffer what hath been done to lie hid, but the world shall know that which has been done in a house, and in secret. For in truth the deed came of a reverential mind, and fervent faith, and a contrite soul. And wherefore did He promise the woman nothing spiritual; but the perpetual memory? From this He is causing her to feel a confidence about the other things also. For if she hath wrought a good work, it is quite evident she shall receive a due reward.

"Then went one of the twelve, he that was called Judas Iscariot, unto the chief priests, and said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you?" Then. When? When these things were spoken, when He had said, it is for my burial, and not even thereby was he moved to compunction, neither when he heard that the Gospel should be preached everywhere did he fear (and yet it was the language of unspeakable power), but when women showed so much honor, and women that had been harlots, then he wrought the devil's works. But what can be the reason they mention his surname? Because there was also another Judas. And they do not shrink from saying, He was of the twelve; so entirely do they hide none of those things which seem to be matters of reproach. And yet they might have said merely this, that he was one of the disciples, for there were others besides. But now they add, of the twelve, as though they had said, of the first company of those selected as the best, of them with Peter and John. Because for one thing did they care, for truth alone, not for concealing what things were done.

For this cause many of the signs they pass by, but of the things that appear to be matters of reproach they conceal nothing; but though it be word, though it be deed, though it be what you will of this kind, they proclaim it with confidence. 3. And not these only, but even John himself, who utters the higher doctrines. For he most of all tells us of the affronts and the reproachful things that were done unto Him. And see how great is the wickedness of Judas, in that he comes unto them of his own accord, in that he does this for money, and for such a sum of money. But Luke saith, that he conferred with the chief captains. For after that the Jews became seditious, the Romans set over them those that should provide for their good order For their government had now undergone a change according to the prophecy.

To these then he went and said, "What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you. And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him." For indeed he was afraid of the multitude, and desired to seize him alone. Oh madness! how did covetousness altogether blind him! For he that had often seen Him when He went through the midst, and was not seized, and when He afforded many demonstrations of His Godhead and power, looked to lay hold on Him; and this while He was using like a charm for him so many, both awful and soothing words, to put an end to this evil thought. For not even at the supper did He forbear from this care of him, but unto the last day discoursed to him of these things. But he profited nothing. Yet not for that did the Lord cease to do His part. Knowing this, then, let us also not intermit to do all things unto them that sin and are remiss, warning, teaching, exhorting, admonishing, advising, though we profit nothing. For Christ indeed foreknew that the traitor was incorrigible, yet

nevertheless He ceased not to supply what could be done by Himself, as well admonishing as threatening and bewailing over him, and nowhere plainly, nor openly, but in a concealed way. And at the very time of the betrayal, He allowed him even to kiss Him, but this benefited him nothing. So great an evil is covetousness, this made him both a traitor, and a sacrilegious robber.

Hearken, all ye covetous, ye that have the disease of Judas; hearken, and beware of the calamity. For if he that was with Christ, and wrought signs, and had the benefit of so much instruction, because he was not freed from the disease, was sunk into such a gulf; how much more shall ye, who do not so much as listen to the Scripture, who are constantly riveted to the things present, become an easy prey to this calamity, unless ye have the advantage of constant care. Every day was that man with Him, who had not where to lay His head, and every day was he instructed by deeds, and by words, not to have gold, nor silver, nor two coats; and yet he was not taught self restraint; and how dost thou expect to escape the disease, if thou hast not the benefit of earnest attention, and dost not use much diligence? For terrible, terrible is the monster, yet nevertheless, if thou be willing, thou wilt easily get the better of him. For the desire is not natural; and this is manifest from them that are free from it. For natural things are common to all; but this desire has its origin from remissness alone; hence it takes its birth, hence it derives its increase, and when it has seized upon those who look greedily after it, it makes them live contrary to nature.

For when they regard not their fellow countrymen, their friends, their brethren, in a word all men, and with these even themselves, this is to live against nature. Whence it is evident that the vice and disease of covetousness, wherein Judas, being entangled, became a traitor, is contrary to nature. And how did he become such a one, you may say, having been called by Christ? Because God's call is not compulsory, neither does it force the will of them who are not minded to choose virtue, but admonishes indeed, and advises, and does and manages all things, so as to persuade men to become good; but if some endure not, it does not compel. But if thou wouldest learn from what cause he became such as he was, thou wilt find him to have been ruined by covetousness.

And how was he taken by this calamity? one may say. Because he grew remiss. For hence arise such changes, as on the other hand, those for the better from diligence. How many for instance that were violent, are now more gentle than lambs? how many lascivious persons have become afterwards continent? how many, heretofore covetous, yet now have cast away even their own possessions? And the contrary again has been the result of remissness. For Gehazi also lived with a holy man, and he too became depraved from the same disease. For this calamity is the most grievous of all. Hence come robbers of tombs, hence menslayers, hence wars and fightings, and whatsoever evil thou mayest mention, it cometh hence. And in every respect is such a one useless, whether it be requisite to lead an army or to guide a people: or rather not in public matters only, but also in private. If he is to marry a wife, he will not take the virtuous woman, but the vilest of all; if he have to buy a house, not that

which becomes a free man, but what can bring much rent; if he is to buy slaves, or what else it may be, he will take the worst.

And why do I speak of leading an army, and guiding a people, and managing households; for should he be a king, he is the most wretched of all men, and a pest to the world, and the poorest of all men. For he will feel like one of the common sort, not accounting all men's possessions to be his, but himself to be one of all; and when spoiling all men's goods, thinks himself to have less than any. For measuring the things present by his desire for those whereof he is not yet possessed, he will account the former nothing compared to the latter. Wherefore also one saith, "There is not a more wicked thing than a covetous man."

4. For such a one both setteth himself to sale, and goeth about, a common enemy of the world, grieving that the earth doth not bear gold instead of the corn, and the fountains instead of streams, and the mountains instead of stone; vexed at the fruitfulness of the seasons, troubled at common benefits; shunning every means whence one cannot obtain money; undergoing all things whence one can scrape together so much as two farthings; hating all men, the poor and the rich; the poor, lest they should come and beg of him; the rich. because he hath not their possessions. All men he accounts to be possessed of what is his, and as though he had been injured by all, so is he displeased with all. He knows not plenty, he has no experience of satiety, he is more wretched than any, even as, on the other hand, he that is freed from these things, and practises self-restraint, is the most enviable. For the virtuous man, though he be a servant, though a prisoner, is the most happy of all men. For no one shall do him ill, no not though all men should come together out of the world, setting in motion arms and camps, and warring with him. But he that is depraved and vile, and such as we have described, though he be a king, though he have on a thousand diadems, will suffer the utmost extremities, even from a common hand. So feeble is vice, so strong is virtue.

Why then dost thou mourn, being in a state of poverty. Why wailest thou keeping a feast, for indeed it is an occasion of feasting. Why weepest thou, for poverty is a festival, if thou be wise. Why lamentest thou, thou little child; for such a one we should call a little child. Did such a person strike thee? What is this, he made thee more able to endure? But did he take away thy money? He hath removed the greater part of thy burden. But hath he cut off thine honor? Again thou tellest me of another kind of freedom. Hear even those without teaching wisdom touching these things, and saying, "Thou hast suffered no ill, if thou show no regard to it." But hath he taken away that great house of thine, which hath enclosures about it? But behold the whole earth is before thee, the public buildings, whether thou wouldest have them for delight, or for use. And what is more pleasing or more beautiful than the firmament of Heaven.

How long are ye poor and needy? It is not possible for him to be rich, who is not wealthy in his soul; like as it is not possible for him to be poor, who hath not the poverty in his mind. For if the soul is a nobler thing than the body, the less noble parts have not power to affect it after themselves; but the noble part draws over unto herself, and changes those that are not

so noble. For so the heart, when it has received any hurt, affects the whole body accordingly; if its temperament be disordered, it mars all, if it be rightly tempered, it profits all. And if any of the remaining parts should have become corrupt, while this remains sound, it easily shakes off what is evil in them also. And that I may further make what I say more plain, what is the use, I pray thee, of verdant branches, when the root is withering? and what is the harm of the leaves being withered above, while this is sound? So also here there is no use of money, while the soul is poor; neither harm from poverty, when the soul is rich. And how can a soul, one may say, be rich, being in want of money? Then above all times might this be; for then also is it wont to be rich.

For if, as we have often shown, this is a sure proof of being rich, to despise wealth, and to want nothing; and of poverty again, to want, and any one would more easily despise money in poverty than in wealth, it is quite evident that to be in poverty rather makes one to be rich. For indeed that the rich man sets his heart on money more than the poor man, is surely plain to every one; like as the drunken man is thirsty, rather than he that hath partaken of drink sufficiently. For neither is his desire such as to be quenched by too much; but, on the contrary, it is its nature to be inflamed by this. For fire likewise, when it has received more food, then most of all waxes fierce; and the tyranny of wealth, when thou hast cast into it more gold, then most especially is increased.

If then the desiring more be a mark of poverty; and he that is in the possession of riches is like this; he is especially in poverty. Seest thou that the soul then most of all is poor, when it is rich; and then is rich, when it is in poverty? And if thou wilt, let us exercise our reasoning in persons also, and let there be two, the one having ten thousand talents, the other ten, and from both let us take away these things. Who then will grieve the most? He that hath lost the ten thousand. But he would not have grieved more, unless he had loved it more; but if he loves more, he desires more; but if he desires more, he is more in poverty. For this do we most desire, of which we are most in want, for desire is from want. For where there is satiety, there cannot be desire. For then are we most thirsty, when we have most need of drink.

And all these things have I said, to show that if we be vigilant, no one shall harm us; and that the harm arises not from poverty but from ourselves. Wherefore I beseech you with all diligence to put away the pest of covetousness, that we may both be wealthy here, and enjoy the good things eternal, unto which God grant we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory world without end. Amen.

Homily 81

Matthew Chapter 26, Verse 17 And Matthew Chapter 26, Verse 18

”Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, Where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the Passover? And He said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at thy house with My disciples.” By the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, he means the day before that feast for they are accustomed always to reckon the day from the evening, and he makes mention of this in which in the evening the passover must be killed; for on the fifth day of the week they came unto Him. And this one calls the day before the feast of unleavened bread, speaking of the time when they came to Him, and another saith on this wise, ”Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed;” by the word ”came,” meaning this, it was nigh, it was at the doors, making mention plainly of that evening. For they began with the evening, wherefore also each adds, when the passover was killed.

And they say, ”Where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the passover?” So even from this it is manifest, that He had no house, no place of sojourning; and I suppose neither had they. For surely they would have entreated him to come there. But neither had they any, having now parted with all things. But wherefore did He keep the passover? To indicate by all things unto the last day, that He is not opposed to the law. And for what possible reason doth He send them to an unknown person? To show by this also that He might have avoided suffering. For He who prevailed over this man’s mind, so that he received them, and that by words; what would He not have done with them that crucified Him, if it had been His will not to suffer? And what He did about the ass, this He did here also. For there too He saith, ”If any man say aught unto you, ye shall say, that the Lord hath need of them;” and so likewise here, ”The Master saith, I will keep the passover at thy house.” But I marvel not at this only, that he received Him, being unknown, but that expecting to bring upon himself such enmity and implacable hostility, he despised the enmity of the multitude.

After this, because they knew him not, He gave them a sign, like as the prophet touching Saul, saying, ”Thou shall find one going up and carrying a bottle;” and here, ”carrying a pitcher.” And see again the display of his power. For He did not only say, ”I will keep the passover,” but He adds another thing also, ”My time is at hand.” And this He did, at once

continually reminding His disciples of the passion, so that exercised by the frequency of the prediction, they should be prepared for what was to take place; and at the same time to show to themselves, and to him that was receiving Him, and to all the Jews, which I have often mentioned, that not involuntarily doth He come to His passion. And He adds, "with my disciples," in order that both the preparation should be sufficient, and that the man should not suppose that He was concealing Himself.

"Now when the even was come, He sat down with the twelve disciples." Oh the shamelessness of Judas! For he too was present there, and came to partake both of the mysteries, and of the meal, and is convicted at the very table, when although he had been a wild beast, he would have become tame. For this cause the evangelist also signifies, that while they are eating, Christ speaks of His betrayal, that both by the time and by the table he might show the wickedness of the traitor. For when the disciples had done, as Jesus had appointed them, "when the even was come, He sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat, He said," we are told, "Verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me." And before the supper, He had even washed his feet. And see how He spares the traitor. For He said not, such a one shall betray me; but, "one of you," so as again to give him power of repentance by concealment And He chooseth to alarm all, for the sake of saving this man. Of you, the twelve, saith He, that are everywhere present with me, whose feet I washed, to whom I promised so many things.

Intolerable sorrow thereupon seized that holy company. And John indeed saith, they "were in doubt, and looked one upon another," and each of them asked in fear concerning himself, although conscious to themselves of no such thing. But this evangelist saith, that "being exceeding sorrowful, they began every one of them to say unto Him, Is it I, Lord? And He answered and said, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it." Mark at what time He discovered him. It was when it was His will to deliver the rest from this trouble, for they were even dead with the fear, wherefore also they were instant with their questions. But not only as desiring to deliver them from their distress He did this, but also as willing to amend the traitor. For since after having often heard it generally, he continued incorrigible, being past feeling, He being minded to make him feel more, takes off his mask.

For when being sorrowful they began to say, "Is it I, Lord? He answered and said, He that dippeth with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of Man goeth, as it is written of Him, but woe to the man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It had been good for that man if he had not been born." Now some say that he was so bold as not to honor his Master, but to dip with Him: but to me Christ seems to have done this too, to shame him the more, and bring him over to a better disposition. For this act again has something more in it. 2. But these things we ought not to pass by at random, but they should be infixed in our minds, and wrath would find no place at any time. For who, bearing in mind that supper, and the traitor sitting at meat with the Saviour of all, and Him who was to be betrayed thus meekly reasoning, would not put away all venom of wrath and anger? See at any rate how meekly He conducts Himself towards him, "The Son of Man goeth, as it is written of Him."

And these things again He said, both to restore the disciples, that they might not think the thing was a sign of weakness, and to amend the traitor. "But woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born." See again in His rebukes His unspeakable meekness. For not even here with invective, but more in the way of compassion, doth He apply what He saith, but in a disguised way again; and yet not his former senselessness only, but his subsequent shamelessness was deserving of the utmost indignation. For after this conviction he saith, "Is it I, Lord?" Oh insensibility! He inquires, when conscious to himself of such things. For the evangelist too, marvelling at his boldness, saith this. What then saith the most mild and gentle Jesus? "Thou sayest." And yet He might have said, O thou unholy, thou all unholy one; accursed, and profane; so long a time in travail with mischief, who hast gone thy way, and made satanical compacts, and hast agreed to receive money, and hast been convicted by me too, dost thou yet dare to ask? But none of these things did He say; but how? "Thou sayest?" fixing for us hounds and rules of long suffering.

But some one will say, Yet if it was written that He was to suffer these things, wherefore is Judas blamed, for he did the things that were written? But not with this intent, but from wickedness. For if thou inquire not concerning the motive, thou wilt deliver even the devil from the charges against him. But these things are not, they are not so. For both the one and the other are deserving of countless punishments, although the world was saved. For neither did the treason of Judas work out salvation for us, but the wisdom of Christ, and the good contrivance of His fair skill, using the wickednesses of others for our advantage. "What then," one may say, "though Judas had not betrayed Him, would not another have betrayed Him?" And what has this to do with the question? "Because if Christ must needs be crucified, it must be by the means of some one, and if by some one, surely by such a person as this. But if all had been good, the dispensation in our behalf had been impeded." Not so. For the All wise knows how He shall bring about our benefits, even had this happened. For His wisdom is rich in contrivance, and incomprehensible. So for this reason, that no one might suppose that Judas had become a minister of the dispensation, He declares the wretchedness of the man. But some one Will say again, "And if it had been good if he had never been born, wherefore did He suffer both this man, and all the wicked, to come into the world?" When thou oughtest to blame the wicked, for that having the power not to become such as they are, they have become wicked, thou leavest this, and busiest thyself, and art curious about the things of God; although knowing that it is not by necessity that any one is wicked.

"But the good only should be born," he would say, "and there were no need of hell, nor punishment, nor vengeance, nor trace of vice, but the wicked should either not be born at all, or being born should straightway depart." First then, it were well to repeat to thee the saying of the apostle, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus?" But if thou still demandest reasons, we would say this, that the good are more admired for being among the bad; because their long-suffering and great self-command is then most shown. But

thou takest away the occasion of their wrestlings, and conflicts, by saying these things. "What then, in order that these may appear good, are others punished?" saith he. God forbid, but for their own wickedness. For neither because they were brought into the world did they become wicked, but on account of their own wickedness; wherefore also they are punished. For how should they fail to be deserving of punishment, seeing they have so many teachers of virtue, and gain nothing therefrom. For like as the noble and good are worthy of double honor, because they both became good, and took no hurt from the wicked; so also the worthless deserve twofold punishment, both because they became wicked, when they might have become good (they show it who have become such), and because they gained nothing from the good.

But let us see what saith this wretched man, when convicted by his Master. What then saith he? "Is it I, Rabbi?" And why did he not ask this from the beginning? He thought to escape knowledge by its being said, "one of you;" but when He had made him manifest, he ventured again to ask, confiding in the clemency of his Master, that He would not convict him. 3. O blindness! Whereunto hath it led him? Such is covetousness, it renders men fools and senseless, yea reckless, and dogs instead of men, or rather even more fierce than dogs, and devils after being dogs. This man at least received unto him the devil even when plotting against him, but Jesus, even when doing him good, he betrayed, having already become a devil in will, For such doth the insatiable desire of gain make men, out of their mind, frenzy-smitten,altogether given up to gain, as was the case even with Judas.

But how do Matthew and the other evangelists say, that, when he made the agreement touching the treason, then the devil seized him; but John, that "after the sop Satan entered into him." And John himself knew this, for further back he saith, "The devil having now put into the heart of Judas, that he should betray Him." How then doth he say, "After the sop Satan entered into him?" Because he enters not in suddenly, nor at once, but makes much trial first, which accordingly was done here also. For after having tried him in the beginning, and assailed him quietly, after that he saw him prepared to receive him, he thenceforth wholly breathed himself into him, and completely got the better of him. But how, if they were eating the passover, did they eat it contrary to the law? For they should not have eaten it, sitting down to their meat. What then can be said? That after eating it, they then sat down to the banquet.

But another evangelist saith, that on that evening He not only ate the passover, but also said, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you," that is, on that year. For what reason? Because then the salvation of the world was to be brought about, and the mysteries to be delivered, and the subjects of sorrow to be done away with by His death; so welcome was the cross to Him. But nothing softened the savage monster, nor moved, nor shamed him. He pronounced him wretched, saying, "Woe to that man." He alarmed him again, saying, "It were good for him if he had not been born." He put him to shame, saying, "To whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it." And none of these things checked him, but he was seized

by covetousness, as by some madness, or rather by a more grievous disease. For indeed this is the more grievous madness.

For what would the madman do like this He poured not forth foam out of his mouth but he poured forth the murder of his Lord. He distorted not his hands, but stretched them out for the price of precious blood. Wherefore his madness was greater, because he was mad being in health. But he doth not utter sayest thou, sounds without meaning. And what is more without meaning than this language. "What will ye give me, and I will deliver Him unto you?" "I will deliver," the devil spake by that mouth. But he did not smite the ground with his feet struggling? Nay, how much better so to struggle, than thus to stand upright. But sayest thou, he did not cut himself with stones? Yet how much better, than to do such things as these!

Will ye, that we bring forward the possessed and the covetous, and make a comparison between the two. But let no one account what is done a reproach to himself. For we do not reproach the nature, but we lament the act. The possessed was never clad with garments, cutting himself with stones, and running, he rushes over rough paths, driven headlong of the devil. Do not these things seem to be dreadful? What then, if I shall show the covetous doing more grievous things than these to their own soul, and to such a degree more grievous, that these are considered child's play compared with those. Will you indeed shun the pest? Come then, let us see if they are in any respect in a more tolerable state than they. In none, but even in a more grievous condition; for indeed they are more objects of shame than ten thousand naked persons. For it were far better to be naked as to clothing, than being clad with the fruits of covetousness, to go about like them that celebrate the orgies for Bacchus. For like as they have on madmen's masks and clothes, so have these also. And much as the nakedness of the possessed is caused by madness, so doth madness produce this clothing, and the clothing is more miserable than the nakedness.

And this I will hereby endeavor to prove. For whom should we say was more mad, amongst madmen themselves; one who should cut himself, or one who together with himself should hurt those who met him? It is quite clear that it is this last. The madmen then strip themselves of their clothing, but these all that meet them. "But these tear their clothes to pieces." And how readily would every one of those that are injured consent that his garment should be torn, rather than be stripped of all his substance? "But those do not aim blows at the face." In the first place, the covetous do even this, and if not all, yet do all inflict by famine and penury more grievous pains on the belly. "But those bite not with the teeth." Would that it were with teeth, and not with the darts of covetousness fiercer than teeth. "For their teeth are weapons and darts." For who will feel most pained, he that was bitten once, and straightway healed, or he that is for ever eaten up by the teeth of penury? For penury when involuntary is more grievous than furnace or wild beast.

"But those rush not into the deserts like the possessed of devils." Would it were the deserts, and not the cities, that they overran, and so all in the cities enjoyed security. For now in this respect again, they are more intolerable than all the insane, because they do in the

cities these things which the others do in the deserts, making the cities deserts, and like as in a desert, where there is none to hinder, so plundering the goods of all men. "But they do not pelt with stones them that meet them." And what is this? Of stones it were easy to beware; but of the wounds which by paper and ink they work to the wretched poor (framing writings full of blows without number), who, out of those that fall in with them, can ever easily beware?

4. And let us see also what they do to themselves. They walk naked up and down the city, for they have no garment of virtue. But if this doth not seem to them to be a disgrace, this again is of their exceeding madness, for that they have no feeling of the unseemliness, but while they are ashamed of having their body naked, they bear about the soul naked, and glory in it. And if you wish, I will tell you also the cause of their insensibility. What then is the cause? They are naked amongst many that are thus naked, wherefore neither are they ashamed, like as neither are we in the baths. So that if indeed there were many clothed with virtue, then would their shame appear more. But now this above all is a worthy subject for many tears, that because the bad are many, bad things are not even esteemed as a disgrace. For besides the rest, the devil hath brought about this too, not to allow them to obtain even a sense of their evil deeds, but by the multitude of them that practise wickedness, to throw a shade over their disgrace; since if it came to pass that he was in the midst of a multitude of persons practising self-restraint, such a one would see his nakedness more.

That they are more naked than the possessed is evident from these things; and that they go into the deserts, neither this again could any one gainsay. For the wide and broad way is more desert than any desert. For though it have many that journey on yet none from amongst men, but serpents, scorpions, wolves, adders, and asps. Such are they that practise wickedness. And this way is not only desert, but much more rugged than that of the mad. And this is hereby evident. For stones and ravines and crags do not so wound those that mount them, as robbery and covetousness the souls that practise them. And that they live by the tombs, like the possessed, or rather that they themselves are tombs, is plain by this. What is a tomb? A stone having a dead body lying in it. Wherein then do these men's bodies differ from those stones? or rather, they are more miserable even than they. For it is not a stone containing a dead body, but a body more insensible than stones, bearing about a dead soul. Wherefore one would not be wrong in calling them tombs. For so did our Lord too call the Jews, for this reason most especially; He went on at least to say, "Their inward parts are full of ravening and covetousness."

Would ye that I show next, how they also cut their heads with stones? Whence then first, I pray thee, wilt thou learn this? From the things here, or from the things to come? But of the things to come they have not much regard; we must speak then of the things here. For are not anxieties more grievous than many stones, not wounding heads, but consuming a soul. For they are afraid, test those things should justly go forth out of their house, which have come unto them unjustly; they tremble in fear of the utmost ills, are angry, are provoked, against those of their own house, against strangers; and now despondency, now fear, now

wrath, comes upon them in succession, and they are as if they were crossing precipice after precipice, and they are earnestly looking day by day for what they have not yet acquired. Wherefore neither do they feel pleasure in the things they have, both by reason of not feeling confidence about the security of them, and because with their whole mind they are intent upon what they have not yet seized. And like as one continually thirsting, though he should drink up ten thousand fountains, feeleth not the pleasure, because he is not satisfied; so also these, so far from feeling pleasure, are even tormented, the more they heap around themselves; from their not feeling any limit to such desire.

And things here are like this; but let us speak also of the day to come. For though they give not heed, yet it is necessary for us to speak. In the day to come then, one will see everywhere such men as these undergoing punishment. For when He saith, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink;" He is punishing these; and when He saith, "Depart into the eternal fire prepared for the devil," He is sending thither them that make a bad use of riches. And the wicked servant, who gives not to his fellow-servants the goods of his Lord, is of the number of these men, and he that buried his talent, and the five virgins. And whithersoever thou shalt go, thou wilt see the covetous punished. And now they will hear, "There is a void between us and you;" now, "Depart from me into the fire that is prepared." And now being cut asunder, they will go away, where there is gnashing of teeth, and from every place one may see them driven, and finding a place nowhere, but gathered in hell alone.

5. What then is the use of the right faith to us for salvation, when we hear these things? There, gnashing of teeth, and outer darkness, and the fire prepared for the devil, and to be cut asunder, and to be driven away; here, enmities, evil speakings, slanders, perils, cares, plots, to be hated of all, to be abhorred of all, even of the very persons that seem to flatter us. For as good men are admired not by the good only but even by the wicked; so bad men, not the good only, but also the worthless, hate. And in proof that this is true, I would gladly ask of the covetous, whether they do not feel painfully one toward another; and account such more their enemies than those that have done them the greatest wrong; whether they do not also accuse themselves, whether they do not account the thing an affront, if any one brings this reproach upon them. For indeed this is an extreme reproach, and a sure proof of much wickedness; for if thou dost not endure to despise wealth, of what wilt thou ever get the better? of lust, or of the mad desire of glory, or anger, or of wrath? And how would any be persuaded of it? For as to lust, and anger, and wrath, many impute it even to the temperament of the flesh, and to this do students of medicine refer the excesses thereof; and him that is of a more hot and languid temperament, they affirm to be more lustful; but him that runs out into a drier kind of ill temperament, eager, and irritable, and wrathful. But with respect to covetousness, no one ever heard of their having said any such thing. So entirely is the pest the effect of mere remissness, and of a soul past feeling.

Therefore, I beseech you, let us give diligence to amend all such things, and to give an opposite direction to the passions that come upon us in every age. But if in every part of

our life we sail past the labors of virtue, everywhere undergoing shipwrecks; when we have arrived at the harbor destitute of spiritual freight, we shall undergo extreme punishment. For our present life is an out stretched ocean. And as in the sea here, there are different bays exposed to different tempests, and the 'gean is difficult because of the winds, the Tyrrhenian strait because of the confined space, the Charybdis that is by Africa because of the shallows, the Propontis, which is without the Euxine sea, on account of its violence and currents, the parts without Cadiz because of the desolation, and tracklessness, and unexplored places therein, and other portions for other causes; so also is it in our life.

And the first sea to view is that of our childish days, having much tempestuousness, because of its folly, its facility, because it is not steadfast. Therefore also we set over it guides and teachers, by our diligence adding what is wanting to nature, even as there by the pilot's skill. After this age succeeds the sea of the youth, where the winds are violent as in the 'gean, lust increasing upon us. And this age especially is destitute of correction; not only because he is beset more fiercely, but also because his faults are not reproved, for both teacher and guide after that withdraw. When therefore the winds blow more fiercely, and the pilot is more feeble, and there is no helper, consider the greatness of the tempest. After this there is again another period of life, that of men, in which the cares of the household press upon us, when there is a wife, and marriage, and begetting of children, and ruling of a house, and thick falling showers of cares. Then especially both covetousness flourishes and envy.

When then we pass each part of our life with shipwrecks, how shall we suffice for the present life? how shall we escape future punishment. For when first in the earliest age we learn nothing healthful, and then in youth we do not practise sobriety, and when grown to manhood do not get the better of covetousness, coming to old age as to a hold full of bilgewater, and as having made the barque of the soul weak by all these shocks, the planks being separated, we shall arrive at that harbor, bearing much filth instead of spiritual merchandise, and to the devil we shall furnish laughter, but lamentation to ourselves, and bring upon ourselves the intolerable punishments. That these things may not be, let us brace ourselves up on every side, and, withstanding all our passions, let us east out the lust of wealth, that we may also attain unto the good things to come, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Homily 82

Matthew Chapter 26, Verse 26-Matthew Chapter 26, Verse 28

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; This is my body." "And He took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; This is my blood of the New Testament, Which is shed for many, for the remission of sins." Ah! how great is the blindness of the traitor! Even partaking of the mysteries, he remained the same; and admitted to the most holy table, he changed not. And this Luke shows by saying, that after this Satan entered into him, not as despising the Lord's body, but thenceforth laughing to scorn the traitor's shamelessness. For indeed his sin became greater from both causes, as well in that he came to the mysteries with such a disposition, as that having approached them, he did not become better, either from fear, or from the benefit, or from the honor. But Christ forbad him not, although He knew all things, that thou mightest learn that He omits none of the things that pertain to correction. Wherefore both before this, and after this, He continually admonished him, and checked him, both by deeds, and by words; both by fear, and by kindness; both by threatening, and by honor. But none of these things withdrew him from that grievous pest.

Wherefore thenceforth He leaves him, and by the mysteries again reminds the disciples of His being slain, and in the midst of the meal His discourse is of the cross, by the continual repeating of the prediction, making His passion easy to receive. For if, when so many things had been done and foretold, they were troubled; if they had heard none of these things, what would they not have felt? "And as they were eating, He took bread, and brake it." Why can it have been that He ordained this sacrament then, at the time of the passover? That thou mightest learn from everything, both that He is the lawgiver of the Old Testament, and that the things therein are foreshadowed because of these things. Therefore, I say, where the type is, there He puts the truth. But the evening is a sure sign of the fullness of times, and that the things were now come to the very end.

And He gives thanks, to teach us how we ought to celebrate this sacrament, and to show that not unwillingly doth He come to the passion, and to teach us whatever we may suffer to bear it thankfully, thence also suggesting good hopes. For if the type was a deliverance from such bondage, how much more will the truth set free the world, and will He be delivered up for the benefit of our race. Wherefore, I would add, neither did He appoint the sacrament

before this, but when henceforth the rites of the law were to cease. And thus the very chief of the feasts He brings to an end, removing them to another most awful table, and He saith, "Take, eat, This is my body, Which is broken for many."

And how were they not confounded at hearing this? Because He had before told unto them many and great things touching this. Wherefore that He establishes no more, for they had heard it sufficiently, but he speaks of the cause of His passion, namely, the taking away of sins. And He calls it blood of a New Testament, that of the undertaking, the promise, the new law. For this He undertook also of old, and this comprises the Testament that is in the new law. And like as the Old Testament had sheep and bullocks, so this has the Lord's blood. Hence also He shows that He is soon to die, wherefore also He made mention of a Testament, and He reminds them also of the former Testament, for that also was dedicated with blood. And again He tells the cause of His death, "which is shed for many for the remission of sins;" and He saith, "Do this in remembrance of me." Seest thou how He removes and draws them off from Jewish customs. For like as ye did that, He saith, in remembrance of the miracles in Egypt, so do this likewise in remembrance of me. That was shed for the preservation of the firstborn, this for the remission of the sins of the whole world. For, "This," saith He, "is my blood, which is shed for the remission of sins."

But this He said, indicating thereby, that His passion and His cross are a mystery, by this too again comforting His disciples. And like as Moses saith, "This shall be to you for an everlasting memorial," so He too, "in remembrance of me," until I come. Therefore also He saith, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover," that is, to deliver you the new rites, and to give a passover, by which I am to make you spiritual. And He Himself drank of it. For lest on hearing this, they should say, What then? do we drink blood, and eat flesh? and then be perplexed (for when He began to discourse concerning these things, even at the very sayings many were offended), therefore lest they should be troubled then likewise, He first did this Himself, leading them to the calm participation of the mysteries. Therefore He Himself drank His own blood. What then must we observe that other ancient rite also? some one may say. By no means. For on this account He said, "Do this," that He might withdraw them from the other. For if this worketh remission of sins, as it surely doth work it, the other is now superfluous.

As then in the case of the Jews, so here also He hath bound up the memorial of the benefit with the mystery, by this again stopping the mouths of heretics. For when they say, Whence is it manifest that Christ was sacrificed? together with the other arguments we stop their mouths from the mysteries also. For if Jesus did not die, of what are the rites the symbols? 2. Seest thou how much diligence hath been used, that it should be ever borne in mind that He died for us? For since the Marcionists, and Valentinians, and Manichaeans were to arise, denying this dispensation, He continually reminds us of the passion even by the mysteries, (so that no man should be deceived); at once saving, and at the same time teaching by means of that sacred table. For this is the chief of the blessings; wherefore Paul also is in every way pressing this.

Then, when He had delivered it, He saith, "I will not drink of the fruit of this wine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." For because He had discoursed with them concerning passion and cross, He again introduces what He has to say of His resurrection, having made mention of a kingdom before them, and so calling His own resurrection. And wherefore did He drink after He was risen again? Lest the grosser sort might suppose the resurrection was an appearance. For the common sort made this an infallible test of His having risen again. Wherefore also the apostles also persuading them concerning the resurrection say this, "We who did eat and drink with Him." To show therefore that they should see Him manifestly risen, again, and that He should be with them once more, and that they themselves shall be witnesses to the things that are done, both by sight, and by act, He saith, "Until I drink it new with you," you bearing witness. For you shall see me risen again.

But what is "new." In a new, that is, a strange manner, not having a passible body, but now immortal and incorruptible, and not needing food. It was not then for want that He both ate and drank after the resurrection, for neither did His body need these things any more, but for the full assurance of His resurrection. And wherefore did He not drink water after He was risen again, but wine. To pluck up by the roots another wicked heresy. For since there are certain who use water in the mysteries; to show that both when He delivered the mysteries He had given wine, and that when He had risen and was setting before them a mere meal without mysteries, He used wine, "of the fruit," He saith, "of the vine." But a vine produces wine, not water. "And when they had sung an hymn, they went out unto the Mount of Olives." Let them hear this, as many as, like swine eating at random, rudely spurn the natural table, and rise up in drunkenness, whereas it were meet to give thanks, and end with an hymn

Hear this, as many as wait not again for the last prayer of the mysteries, for this is a symbol of that. He gave thanks before He gave it to His disciples, that we also may give thanks. He gave thanks, and sang an hymn after the giving, that we also may do this selfsame thing. But for what reason doth He go forth unto the mountain? Making Himself manifest, that He may be taken, in order not to seem to hide himself. For He hastened to go to the place which was also known to Judas. Then "He saith unto them, All ye shall be offended in me." After this He mentions also a prophecy, "For it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered abroad:" at once persuading them ever to give heed to the things that are written, and at same time making it plain that He was crucified, according to God's purpose; and by everything showing He was no alien from the old covenant, nor from the God preached therein, but that what is done is a dispensation, and that the prophets all proclaimed all things beforehand from the beginning that are comprised in the matter, so that they be quite confident about the better things also.

And He teaches us to know what the disciples were before the crucifixion, what after the crucifixion. For indeed they who, when He was crucified, were not able so much as to stand their ground, these after His death were mighty, and stronger than adamant. And this

self-same thing is a demonstration of His death, the fright and cowardice, I mean, of His disciples. For if when so many things have been both done and said, still some are shameless, and say that He was not crucified; if none of these things had come to pass, to what pitch of wickedness would they not have proceeded? So for this reason, not by His own sufferings only, but by what took place with respect to the disciples, He confirms the word concerning His death, and by the mysteries also, in every way confounding those that are diseased with the pest of Marcion. For this reason He suffers even the chief apostle to deny Him. But if He was not bound nor crucified, whence sprung the fear to Peter, and to the rest of the apostles.

He suffers them not however, on the other hand, to wait until the sorrows, but what saith He? "But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee." For not from Heaven doth He appear at once, neither will He depart into any distant country, but in the same nation, in which He had also been crucified, nearly in the same place, so as hereby again to assure them that He that was crucified was the very same that rose again, and in this way to comfort them more abundantly when in sorrow. Therefore also He said "in Galilee," that being freed from the fears of the Jews they might believe His saying. For which cause indeed He appeared there. "But Peter answered and said, Though all men should be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended."

3. What sayest thou, O Peter? the prophet said, "The sheep shall be scattered;" Christ hath confirmed the saying, and sayest thou, No? Is not what passed before enough, when Thou saidst, "Far be it from Thee," and thy mouth was stopped? For this then He suffers him to fall, teaching him thereby to believe Christ in all things, and to account His declaration more trustworthy than one's own conscience. And the rest too reaped no small benefit from his denial, having come to know manes weakness, and God' s truth. For when He foretells anything, we must no longer be subtle, nor lift up ourselves above the common sort. For, "thy rejoicing," it is said, "thou shall have in thyself, and not in another." For where he should have prayed, and have said, Help us, that we be not cut off, he is confident in himself, and saith, "Though all men should be offended in Thee, yet will I never;" though all should undergo this, I shall not undergo it, which led him on by little and little to self-confidence. Christ then, out of a desire to put down this, permitted his denial. For since he neither submitted to Him nor the prophet (and yet for this intent He brought in the prophet be sides, that they may not gainsay), but nevertheless since he submitted not to His words, he is instructed by deeds.

For in proof that for this intent He permitted it, that He might amend this in him, hear what He saith, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." For this He said sharply reproving him, and showing that his fall was more grievous than the rest, and needed more help. For the matters of blame were two; both that he gainsaid; and, that he set himself before the other; or rather a third too, namely, that he attributed all to himself. To cure these things then, He suffered the fall to take place, and for this cause also leaves the others, and addresses Himself earnestly to him. For, "Simon," saith He, "Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat;" that is, that he may trouble, confound,

tempt you; but "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." And why, if Satan desired all, did He not say concerning all, I have prayed for you? Is it not quite plain that it is this, which I have mentioned before, that it is as reproving him, and showing that his fall was more grievous than the rest, that He directs His words to him?

And wherefore said He not, But I did not suffer it, rather than, "I have prayed?" He speaks from this time lowly things, on His way to His passion, that He may show His humanity. For He that has built His church upon Peter's confession, and has so fortified it, that ten thousand dangers and deaths are not to prevail over it; He that hath given him the keys of Heaven, and hath put him in possession of so much authority, and in no manner needed a prayer for these ends (for neither did He say, I have prayed, but with His own authority, "I will build my church, and I will give thee the keys of Heaven"), how should He need to pray, that He might brace up the shaken soul of a single man? Wherefore then did He speak in this way? For the cause which I mentioned, and because of their weakness, for they had not as yet the becoming view of Him.

How then was it that He denied? he said not, that thou mayest not deny, but that thy faith fail not, that thou perish not utterly. For this came from His care. For indeed fear had driven out all else, for it was beyond measure, and it became beyond measure, since God had to an exceeding degree deprived him of His help, and He did exceedingly deprive him thereof, because there was to an exceeding degree in him the passion of self-will and contradiction. In order then that He might pluck it up by the roots, therefore He suffered the terror to overtake him. For in proof that this passion was grievous in him, he was not content with his former words, gainsaying both prophet and Christ, but also after these things when Christ had said unto him, "Verily I say unto thee, that this night,2) before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice," he replieth, "Though I should die with Thee, I will not deny Thee in any wise."3) And Luke signifies moreover, that the more Christ warned him, so much the more did Peter exceedingly oppose Him.

What mean these things, O Peter? When He was saying, "One of you shall betray me," thou didst fear lest thou shouldest be the traitor, and didst constrain the disciple to ask, although conscious to thyself of no such thing; but now, when He is plainly crying out, and saying, "All shall be offended," art thou gainsaying it, and not once only, but twice and often? For this is what Luke saith. Whence then did this come to him? From much love, from much pleasure. I mean, that after that he was delivered from that distressing fear about the betrayal, and knew the traitor, he then spoke confidently, and lifted himself up over the rest, saying, "Though all men shall be offended, yet will I not be offended."4) And in some degree too his conduct sprung from jealousy, for at supper they reasoned "which of them is the greater,"5) to such a degree did this passion trouble them. Therefore He checked him, not compelling him to the denial, God forbid! but leaving him destitute of His help, and convicting human nature.

See at any rate after these things how he was subdued. For after the resurrection, when he had said, "And what shall this man do?"6) and was silenced, he ventured no more to

gainsay as here, but held his peace. Again, towards the assumption,7) when he heard, "It is not for you to know times or seasons,"8) again he holds his peace, and contradicts not. After these things, on the house, and by the sheet, when he heard a voice saying to him, "What God hath cleansed, call not thou common,"9) even though he knew not for the time what the saying could be, he is quiet, and strives not. 4. All these things did that fall effect, and whereas before that he attributes all to himself, saying, "Though all men shall be offended, yet will I not be offended;" and, "If I should die, I will not deny Thee"when he should have said, If I receive the assistance from Thee);-yet after these things altogether the contrary, "Why do ye give heed to us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made him to walk?10)

Hence we learn a great doctrine, that a man's willingness is not sufficient, unless any one receive the succor from above; and that again we shall gain nothing by the succor from above, if there be not a willingness. And both these things do Judas and Peter show; for the one, though he had received much help, was profited nothing, because he was not willing, neither contributed his part; but this one, though he was ready in mind, because he received no assistance, fell. For indeed of these two things is virtue's webwoven. Wherefore I entreat you neitherwhen you have cast all upon God) to sleep yourselves, nor, when laboring earnestly, to think to accomplish all by your own toils. For neither is it God's will that we should be supine ourselves, therefore He worketh it not all Himself; nor yet boasters, therefore He did not give all to us; but having removed what was hurtful in either way, left that which is useful for us. Therefore He suffered even the chief apostle to fall, both rendering him more humbled in mind, and training him thenceforth to greater love. "For to whom more is forgiven," it is said, "he loveth more."1)

Let us then in everything believe God, and gainsay Him in nothing, though what is said seem to be contrary to our thoughts and senses, but let His word be of higher authority than both reasonings and sight. Thus let us do in the mysteries also, not looking at the things set before us, but keeping in mind His sayings. For His word cannot deceive, but our senses are easily beguiled. That hath never failed, but this in most things goeth wrong. Since then the word saith, "This is my body," let us both be persuaded and believe, and look at it with the eyes of the mind. For Christ hath given nothing sensible, but though in things sensible yet all to be perceived by the mind. So also in baptism, the gift is bestowed by a sensible thing, that is, by water; but that which is done is perceived by the mind, the birth, I mean, and the renewal. For if thou hadst been incorporeal, He would have delivered thee the incorporeal gifts bare; but because the soul hath been locked up in a body, He delivers thee the things that the mind perceives, in things sensible.

How many now say, I would wish to see His form, the mark, His clothes, His shoes. Lo! thou seest Him, Thou touchest Him, thou eatest Him. And thou indeed desirest to see His clothes, but He giveth Himself to thee not to see only, but also to touch and eat and receive within thee. Let then no one approach it with indifference, no one faint-hearted, but all with burning hearts, all fervent, all aroused. For if Jews standing, and having on

their shoes and their staves in their hands, ate with haste, much more oughtest thou to be watchful. For they indeed were to go forth to Palestine, wherefore also they had the garb of pilgrims, but thou art about to remove unto Heaven. 5. Wherefore it is needful in all respects to be vigilant, for indeed no small punishment is appointed to them that partake unworthily.

Consider how indignant thou art against the traitor, against them that crucified Him. Look therefore, lest thou also thyself become guilty of the body and blood of Christ. They slaughtered the all-holy body, but thou receivest it in a filthy soul after such great benefits. For neither was it enough for Him to be made man, to be smitten and slaughtered, but He also commingleth Himself with us, and not by faith only, but also in very deed maketh us His body. What then ought not he to exceed in purity that hath the benefit of this sacrifice, than what sunbeam should not that hand be more pure which is to sever this flesh, the mouth that is filled with spiritual fire, the tongue that is reddened by that most awful blood? Consider with what sort of honor thou wast honored, of what sort of table thou art partaking. That which when angels behold, they tremble, and dare not so much as look up at it without awe on account of the brightness that cometh thence, with this we are fed with this we are commingled, and we are made one body and one flesh with Christ. "Who shall declare the mighty works of the Lord, and cause all His praises to be heard?"2) What shepherd feeds his sheep with his own limbs? And why do I say, shepherd? There are often mothers that after the travail of birth send out their children to other women as nurses; but He endureth not to do this, but Himself feeds us with His own blood, and by all means entwines us with Himself.

Mark it, He was born of our substance. But, you say, this is nothing to all men; though it does concern all. For if He came unto our nature, it is quite plain that it was to all; but if to all, then to each one. And how was it, you say, that all did not reap the profit therefrom. This was not of His doing, whose choice it was to do this in behalf of all, but the fault of them that were not willing. With each one of the faithful doth He mingle Himself in the mysteries, and whom He begat, He nourishes by Himself, and putteth not out to another; by this also persuading thee again, that He had taken thy flesh. Let us not then be remiss, having been counted worthy of so much both of love and honor. See ye not the infants with how much eagerness they lay hold of the breast? with what earnest desire they fix their lips upon the nipple? With the like let us also approach this table, and the nipple of the spiritual cup. Or rather, with much more eagerness let us, as infants at the breast, draw out the grace of the spirit, let it be our one sorrow, not to partake of this food. The works set before us are not of man's power. He that then did these things at that supper, this same now also works them. We occupy the place of servants. He who sanctifieth and changeth them is the same. Let then no Judas be present, no covetous man. If any one be not a disciple, let him withdraw, the table receives not such. For "I keep the passover," He saith, "with my disciples."1)

This table is the same as that, and hath nothing less. For it is not so that Christ wrought that, and man this, but He doth this too. This is that upper chamber, where they were then;

and hence they went forth unto the mount of Olives. Let us also go out unto the hands of the poor, for this spot is the mount of Olives. For the multitude of the poor are olive-trees planted in the house of God, dropping the oil, which is profitable for us there, which the five virgins had, and the others that had not received perished thereby. Having received this, let us enter in that with bright lamps we may meet the bridegroom; having received this, let us go forth hence. Let no inhuman person be present, no one that is cruel and merciless, no one at all that is unclean.

6. These things I say to you that receive, and to you that minister. For it is necessary to address myself to you also, that you may with much care distribute the gifts there. There is no small punishment for you, if being conscious of any wickedness in any man, you allow him to partake of this table. "His blood shall be required at your hands."2) Though any one be a general, though a deputy, though it be he himself who is invested with the diadem, and come unworthily, forbid him, the authority thou hast is greater than his. Thou, if thou weft entrusted to keep a spring of water clean for a flock, and then wert to see a sheep having much mire on its mouth, thou wouldest not suffer it to stoop down unto it and foul the stream: but now being entrusted with a spring not of water, but of blood and of spirit, if thou seest any having on them sin, which is more grievous than earth and mire, coming unto it, art thou not displeased? dost thou not drive them off? and what excuse canst thou have?

For this end God hath honored you with this honor, that ye should discern these things. This is your office, this your safety, this your whole crown, not that ye should go about clothed in a white and shining vestment. And whence know I, you may say, this person, and that person? I speak not of the unknown, but of the notorious. Shall I say something more fearful. It is not so grievous a thing for the energumens to be within, as for such as these, whom Paul affirms to trample Christ under foot, and to "account the blood of the covenant unclean. and to do despite to the grace of the Spirit." For he that hath fallen into sin and draws nigh, is worse than one possessed with a devil. For they, because they are possessed are not punished, but those, when they draw nigh unworthily, are delivered over to undying punishment. Let us not therefore drive away these only, but all without exception, whomsoever we may see coming unworthily.

Let no one communicate who is not of the disciples. Let no Judas receive, lest he suffer the fate of Judas. This multitude also is Christ's body. Take heed, therefore, thou that ministerest at the mysteries, lest thou provoke the Lord, not purging this body. Give not a sword instead of meat. Nay, though it be from ignorance that he come to communicate, forbid him, be not afraid. Fear God, not man. If thou shouldest fear man, thou wilt be laughed to scorn even by him, but if God, thou wilt be an object of respect even to men. But if thou darest not to do it thyself, bring him to me; I will not allow any to dare do these things. I would give up my life rather than impart of the Lord's blood to the unworthy; and will shed my own blood rather than impart of such awful blood contrary to. what is meet.

But if any hath not known the bad man, after much inquiry, it is no blame. For these things have been said about the open sinners. For if we amend these, God will speedily discover to us the unknown also; but if we let these alone, wherefore should He then make manifest those that are hidden. But these things I say, not that we repel them only, nor cut them off, but in order that we may amend them, and bring them back, that we may take care of them. For thus shall we both have God propitious, and shall find many to receive worthily; and for our own diligence, and for our care for others, receive great reward; unto which God grant we may all attain by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory world without end. Amen.

Homily 83

Matthew Chapter 26, Verse 36-Matthew Chapter 26, Verse 38

"Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy: and He saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here, and watch with me. " Because they clung to Him inseparably, therefore He saith, "Tarry ye here, while I go away and pray." For it was usual with Him to pray apart from them. And this He did teaching us in our prayers, to prepare silence for ourselves and great retirement. And He takes with Him the three, and saith unto them, "my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Wherefore doth He not take all with Him? That they might not be cast down; but these He taketh that had been spectators of His glory. However, even these He dismisses: "And He went on a little farther, and prayeth, saying, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt. And He cometh unto them, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Not without reason doth He inveigh against Peter most, although the others also had slept; but to make him feel by this also, for the cause which I mentioned before. Then because the others also said the same thing (for when Peter had said (these are the words), "Though I must die with Thee, I will not deny Thee; likewise also," it is added, "said all the disciples"); He addresses Himself to all, convicting their weakness. For they who are desiring to die with Him, were not then able so much as to sorrow with Him wake-fully, but sleep overcame them.

And He prays with earnestness, in order that the thing might not seem to be acting. And sweats flow over him for the same cause again, even that the heretics might not say this, that He acts the agony. Therefore there is a sweat like drops of blood, and an angel appeared strengthening Him, and a thousand sure signs of fear, lest any one should affirm the words to be reigned. For this cause also was this prayer. By saying then, "If it be possible, let it pass from me," He showed His humanity; but by saying, "Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt," He showed His virtue and self-command, teaching us even when nature pulls us back, to follow God. For since it was not enough for the foolish to show His face only, He uses

words also. Again, words sufficed not alone, but deeds likewise were needed; these also He joins with the words, that even they who are in a high degree contentious may believe, that He both became man and died. For if, even when these things are so, this be still disbelieved by some, much more, if these had not been. See by how many things He shows the reality of the incarnation: by what He speaks, by what He suffers. After that He cometh and saith to Peter, as it is said, "What, couldest thou not watch one hour with me? All were sleeping, and He rebukes Peter, hinting at him, in what He spake.

And the words, "with me," are not employed without reason; it is as though He had said, Thou couldest not watch with me one hour, and wilt thou lay down thy life for me? and what follows also, intimates this self-same thing. For "Watch," saith He, "and pray not to enter into temptation. See how He is again instructing them not to be self-confident, but contrite in mind, and to be humble, and to refer all to God.

And at one time He addresses Himself to Peter, at another to all in common. And to him He saith, "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee;" and to all in common, "Pray that ye enter not into temptation;" every way plucking up their self-will, and making them earnest-minded. Then, that He might not seem to make His language altogether condemnatory, He saith, "The spirit indeed is ready, but the flesh is weak." For even although thou dost desire to despise death, yet thou wilt not be able, until God stretch forth His hand, for the carnal mind draws down. And again He prayed in the same way, saying, "Father, if this cannot pass from me except I drink it, Thy will be done," showing here, that He fully harmonizes with God's will, and that we must always follow this, and seek after it.

"And He came and found them asleep." For besides that it was late at night, their eyes also were weighed down by their despondency. And the third time He went and spake the same thing, establishing the fact, that He was become man. For the second and third time is in the Scriptures especially indicative of truth; like as Joseph also said to Pharaoh, "Did the dream appear to thee the second time? For truth was this done, and that thou mightest be assured that this shall surely be." Therefore He too once, and twice, and three times spake the same thing, for the sake of proving the incarnation. And wherefore came He the second time? In order to reprove them, for that they were so drowned in despondency, as not to have any sense even of His presence. He did not however reprove them, but stood apart from them a little, showing their unspeakable weakness, that not even when they had been rebuked, were they able to endure. But He doth not awake and rebuke them again, lest He should smite them that were already smitten, but He went away and prayed, and when He is come back again, He saith, "Sleep on now, and take your rest." And yet then there was need to be wakeful, but to show that they will not bear so much as the sight of the dangers, but will be put to flight and desert Him from their terror, and that He hath no need of their succor, and that He must by all means be delivered up, "Sleep on now," He saith, "and take your rest; behold the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."

He shows again that what is done belongs to a divine dispensation. 2. But He doth not this only, but also, by saying, "into the hands of sinners," He cheers up their minds, showing it was the effect of their wickedness, not of His being liable to any charge. "Rise, let us be going; behold, he is at hand that doth betray me." For by all means He taught them, that the matter was not of necessity, nor of weakness, but of some secret dispensation. For, as we see, He fore-knew that Judas would come, and so far from flying, He even went to meet him. At any rate, "While He yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people." Seemly surely are the instruments of the priests! "with swords and staves" do they come against Him! And Judas, it is said, with them, one of the twelve. Again he calleth him "of the twelve," and is not ashamed. Now he that betrayed Him gave them a sign, saying, "Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is He, hold Him fast." Oh! what depravity had the traitor's soul received. For with what kind of eyes did he then look at his Master? with what mouth did he kiss Him? Oh! accursed purpose; what did he devise? What did he dare? What sort of sign of betrayal did he give? Whomsoever I shall kiss, he saith. He was emboldened by his Master's gentleness, which more than all was sufficient to shame him, and to deprive him of all excuse for that he was betraying one so meek.

But wherefore doth He say this? Because often when seized by them He had gone out through the midst, without their knowing it. Nevertheless, then also this would have been done, if it had not been His own will that He should be taken. It was at least with a view to teach them this, that He then blinded their eyes, and Himself asked, "Whom seek ye?" And they knew Him not, though being with lanterns and torches, and having Judas with them. Afterwards, as they had said, "Jesus;" He saith, "I am He" whom ye seek: and here again, "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" For after having shown His own strength, then at once He yielded Himself. But John saith, that even to the very moment He continued to reprove him, saying, "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss?" Art thou not ashamed even of the form of the betrayal? saith He. Nevertheless, forasmuch as not even this checked him, He submitted to be kissed, and gave Himself up willingly; and they laid their hands on Him, and seized Him that night on which they ate the passover, to such a degree did they boil with rage, and were mad. However, they would have had no strength, unless He had Himself suffered it. Yet this delivers not Judas from intolerable punishment, but even more exceedingly condemns him, for that though he had received such proof of His power, and lenity, and meekness, and gentleness, he became fiercer than any wild beast.

Knowing then these things, let us flee from covetousness. For that, that it was, which then drove him to madness; that exercises them who are taken thereby in the most extreme cruelty and inhumanity. For, when it makes them to despair of their own salvation, much more doth it cause them to overlook that of the rest of mankind. And so tyrannical is the passing, as sometimes to prevail over the keenest lust. Wherefore indeed I am exceedingly ashamed, that to spare their money, may indeed have bridled their unchastity, but for the fear of Christ they were not willing to live chastely and with gravity.

Wherefore I say, let us flee from it; for I will not cease for ever saying this. For why, O man, dost thou gather gold? Why dost thou make thy bondage more bitter? Why thy watching more grievous? Why thy anxiety more painful? Account for thine own the metals buried in the mines, those in the kings' courts. For indeed if thou hadst all that heap, thou wouldest keep it only, and wouldest not use it. For if now thou hast not used the things thou possessest, but abstainest from them as though they belonged to others, much more would this be the case with thee, if thou hadst more. For it is the way of the covetous, the more they heap up around them, the more to be sparing of it. "But I know," sayest thou, "that these things are mine." The possession then is in supposition only, not in enjoyment. But I should be an object of fear to men, sayest thou. Nay, but thou wouldest by this become a more easy prey both to rich and poor, to robbers, and false accusers, and servants, and in general to all that are minded to plot against thee. For if thou art desirous to be an object of fear, cut off the occasions by which they are able to lay hold of thee and pain thee, whoever have set their hearts thereon. Hearest thou not the parable that saith, that the poor and naked man, not even a hundred men gathered together are ever able to strip? For he hath his poverty as his great est protection, which not even the king shall ever be able to subdue and take.

3. The covetous man indeed all join in vexing. And why do I say men, when moths and worms war against such a man? And why do I speak of moths? Length of time is enough alone, even when no one troubles him, to do the greatest injury to such a man. What then is the pleasure of wealth? For I see its discomforts, but do thou tell me the pleasure of it. And what are its discomforts? sayest thou: anxieties, plots, enmities, hatred, fear; to be ever thirsting and in pain. For if any one were to embrace a damsel he loves, but were not able to satisfy his sire, he undergoes the utmost torment. Even so also doth the rich man. For he hath plenty, and is with her, but cannot satisfy all his desire; but the same result takes place as some wise man mentions; "The lust of eunuch to deflower a virgin;" and, "Like an eunuch embracing a virgin and groaning;" so are all the rich.

Why should one speak of the other things? how such a one is displeasing to all, to his servants, his laborers, his neighbors, to them that handle public affairs, to them that are injured, to them that are not injured, to his wife most of all, and to his children more than to any. For not as men does he bring them up, but more miserably than menials and purchased slaves. And countless occasions for anger, and vexation, and insult, and ridicule against himself, doth he bring about, being set forth as a common laughing stock to all. So the discomforts are these, and perhaps more than these; before one could never go through them all in discourse, but experience will be able to set them before us. But tell me the pleasure from hence. "I appear to be rich," he saith, "and am reputed to be rich." And what kind of pleasure to be so reputed? It is a very great name for envy. I say a name, for wealth is a name only void of reality.

"Yet he that is rich," saith he, "indulges and delights himself with this notion." He delights himself in those things about which he ought to grieve. "To grieve? wherefore?" asks he. Because this renders him useless for all purposes, and cowardly and unmanly both with

regard to banishment and to death, for he holds this double, longing more for money than for light. Such a one not even Heaven delights, because it beareth not gold; nor the sun, forasmuch as it puts not forth golden beams. But there are some, saith he, who do enjoy what they possess, living in luxury, in gluttony, in drunkenness, spending sumptuously. You are telling me of persons worse than the first. For the last above all are the men, who have no enjoyment. For the first at least abstains from other evils, being bound to one love; but the others are worse than these, besides what we have said, bringing in upon themselves a crowd of cruel masters, and doing service every day to the belly, to lust, to drunkenness, to other kinds of intemperance, as to so many cruel tyrants, keeping harlots, preparing expensive feasts, purchasing parasites, flatterers, turning aside after unnatural lusts, involving their body and their soul in a thousand diseases springing therefrom.

For neither is it on what they want they spend their goods, but on ruining the body, and on ruining also the soul therewith; and they do the same, as if any one, when adorning his person, were to think he was spending his money on his own wants. So that he alone enjoys pleasure and is master of his goods, who uses his wealth for a proper object; but these are slaves and captives, for they aggravate both the passions of the body and the diseases of the soul. What manner of enjoyment is this, where is siege and war, and a storm worse than all the raging of the sea? For if wealth find men fools, it renders them more foolish; if wanton, more wanton. And what is the use of understanding, thou wilt say, to the poor man? As might be expected thou art ignorant; for neither doth the blind man know what is the advantage of light. Listen to Solomon, saying, "As far as light excelleth darkness, so doth wisdom excel folly."

But how shall we instruct him that is in darkness? For the love of money is darkness, permitting nothing that is to appear as it is, but otherwise. For much as one in darkness, though he should see a golden vessel, though a precious stone, though purple garments, supposes them to be nothing, for he sees not their beauty; so also he that is in covetousness, knows not as he ought the beauty of those things that are worthy of our care. Disperse then I pray thee the mist that arises from this passion, and then wilt thou see the nature of things. But nowhere do these things so plainly appear as in poverty, nowhere are those things. so disproved which seem to be, and are not, as in self-denial. 4. But oh! foolish men; who do even curse the poor, and say that both houses and living are disgraced by poverty, confounding all things. For what is a disgrace to a house? I pray thee. It hath no couch of ivory, nor silver vessels, but all of earthenware and wood. Nay, this is the greatest glory and distinction to a house. For to be indifferent about worldly things, often occasions all a man's leisure to be spent in the care of his soul.

When therefore thou seest great care about outward things, then be ashamed at the great unseemliness. For the houses of them that are rich most of all want seemliness. For when thou seest tables covered with hangings, and couches inlaid with silver, much as in the theatre, much as in the display of the stage, what can be equal to this unseemliness? For what kind of house is most like the stage, and the things on the stage? The rich man's

or the poor man's? Is it not quite plain that it is the rich man's? This therefore is full of unseemliness. What kind of house is most like Paul's, or Abraham's? It is quite evident that it is the poor man's. This therefore is most adorned, and to be approved. And that thou mayest learn that this is, above all, a house's adorning, enter into the house of Zacchaeus, and learn, when Christ was on the point of entering therein, how Zacchaeus adored it. For he did not run to his neighbors begging curtains, and seats, and chairs made of ivory, neither did he bring forth from his closets Laconian hangings; but he adorned it with an adorning suitable to Christ. What was this? "The half of my goods I will give, he saith, "to the poor; and whomsoever I have robbed, I will restore fourfold." On this wise let us too adorn our houses, that Christ may enter in unto us also. These are the fair curtains, these are wrought in Heaven, they are woven there. Where these are, there is also the King of Heaven. But if thou adorn it in another way, thou art inviting the devil and his company.

He came also into the house of the publican Matthew. What then did this man also do? He first adorned himself by his readiness, and by his leaving all, and following Christ. So also Cornelius adorned his house with prayers and alms; wherefore even unto this day it shines above the very palace. For the vile state of a house is not in vessels lying in disorder, nor in an untidy bed, nor in walls covered with smoke, but in the wickedness of them that dwell therein. And Christ showeth it, for into such a house, if the inhabitant be virtuous, He is not ashamed to enter; but into that other, though it have a golden roof, He will never enter. So that while this one is more gorgeous than the palace, receiving the Lord of all, that with its golden roof and columns is like filthy drains and sewers, for it contains the vessels of the devil.

But these things we have spoken not of those who are rich for a useful purpose, but of the grasping, and the covetous. For neither is there amongst these, diligence nor care about the things needful, but about pampering the belly, and drunkenness, and other like unseemliness; but with the others about self-restraint. Therefore nowhere did Christ enter into a gorgeous house, but into that of the publican and chief publican, and fisherman, leaving the kings' palaces, and them that are clothed with soft raiment. If then thou also desirest to invite Him, deck thy house with alms, with prayers, with supplications, with vigils. These are the decorations of Christ the King, but those of mammon, the enemy of Christ. Let no one be ashamed then of a humble house, if it hath this furniture; let no rich man pride himself on having a costly house, but let him rather hide his face, and seek after this other, forsaking that, that both here he may receive Christ, and there enjoy the eternal tabernacles, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might world without end. Amen.

Homily 84

Matthew Chapter 26, Verse 51-Matthew Chapter 26, Verse 54

"And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched forth his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear." Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword unto his place, for all they that take the sword, shall perish by the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to the Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? How then should the Scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be?" Who was this "one," who cut off the ear? John saith that it was Peter. For the act was of his fervor. But this other point is worth inquiry, wherefore they were bearing swords? For that they bore them is evident not hence only, but from their saying when asked, "here are two." But wherefore did Christ even permit them to have swords? For Luke affirms this too, that He said unto them, "When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything?" And when they said, "Nothing," He said unto them, "But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and a scrip, and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one." And when they said, "Here are two swords," He said unto them, "It is enough."

Wherefore then did He suffer them to have them? To assure them that He was to be betrayed. Therefore He saith unto them, "Let him buy a sword," not that they should arm themselves, far from it; but by this, indicating His being betrayed. And wherefore doth He mention a scrip also? He was teaching them henceforth to be sober, and wakeful, and to use much diligence on their own part. For at the beginning He cherished them (as being inexperienced) with much putting forth of His power but afterwards bringing them forth as young birds out of the nest, He commands them to use their own wings. Then, that they might not suppose that it was for weakness He is letting them alone, in commanding them also to work their part, He reminds them of the former things, saying, "When I sent you without purse, lacked ye anything?" that by both they might learn His power, both wherein He protected them, and wherein He now leaveth them to themselves by degrees.

But whence were the swords there? They were come forth from the supper, and from the table. It was likely also there should be swords because of the lamb, and that the disciples, hearing that certain were coming forth against Him, took them for defense, as meaning to fight in behalf of their Master, which was of their thought only. Wherefore also Peter is

rebuked for using it, and with a severe threat. For he was resisting the servant who came, warmly indeed, yet not defending himself, but doing this in behalf of his Master. Christ however suffered not any harm to ensue. For He healed him, and showed forth a great miracle, enough to indicate at once both His forbearance and His power, and the affection and meekness of His disciple. For then he acted from affection, now with dutifulness. For when he heard, "Put up thy sword into its sheath," he obeyed straightway, and afterwards nowhere doeth this.

But another saith, that they moreover asked, "Shall we smite?" but that He for-bad it, and healed the man, and rebuked His disciple, and threatened, that He might move him to obedience. "For all they that take the sword," He said, "shall die with the sword." And he adds a reason, saying, "Think ye that I cannot pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But that the Scriptures might be fulfilled." By these words He quenched their anger, indicating that to the Scriptures also, this seemed good. Wherefore there too He prayed, that they might take meekly what befell Him, when they had learnt that this again is done according to God's will. And by these two things, He comforted them, both by the punishment of them that are plotting against Him, "For all they," He saith, "that take the sword shall perish with the sword;" and by His not undergoing these things against His will, "For I can pray, He saith, "to my Father."

And wherefore did He not say, "Think ye that I cannot destroy them all?" Because He was more likely to be believed in saying what He did say; for not yet had they the right belief concerning Him. And a little while before He had said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death," and, "Father, let the cup pass from me;" and He had appeared in an agony and sweating, and strengthened by an angel. Since then He had shown forth many tokens of human nature, He did not seem likely to speak so as to be believed, if He had said, "Think ye that I cannot destroy them." Therefore He saith, "What, think ye that I cannot pray to my Father?" And again He speaks it humbly, in saying, "He will presently give me twelve legions of angels." For if one angel slew one hundred and eighty-five armed thousands, what need of twelve legions against a thousand men? But He frames His language with a view to their terror and weakness, for indeed they were dead with fear. Wherefore also He brings against them the Scriptures, saying, "How then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled?" alarming them by this also. For if this be approved by the Scriptures, do ye oppose and fight against them?

2. And to His disciples He saith these things; but to the others, "Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me." See how many things He doeth that might awaken them. He cast them to the ground, He healed the servant's ear, He threatened them with being slain; "For they shall perish with the sword," He saith, "who take the sword." By the healing of the ear, He gave assurance of these things also; from every quarter, both from the things present, and from the things to come, manifesting His power, and showing that it was not a work of their strength to seize Him. Wherefore He also adds, "I was daily with you, and sat teaching,

and ye laid no hold on me;" by this also making it manifest, that the seizure was of His permission. He passed over the miracles, and mentions the teaching, that He might not seem to boast.

When I taught, ye laid no hold on me; when I held my peace, did ye come against me? I was in the temple, and no one seized me, and now do ye come upon me late and at midnight with swords and staves? What need was there of these weapons against Him, who was with you always? by these things teaching them, that unless He had voluntarily yielded, not even then would they have succeeded o For neither could they (who were not able to hold Him when in their hands, and who, when they had got Him in the midst of them, had not prevailed) even then have succeeded, unless He had been willing. After this, He solves also the difficulty why He willed it then. For, "this was done," He saith, "that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." See how even up to the last hour, and in the very act of being betrayed, He did all things for their amendment, healing, prophesying, threatening. "For," He saith, "they shall perish by the sword." To show that He is suffering voluntarily, He saith, "I was daily with you teaching;" to manifest His accordance with the Father, He adds, "That the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled."

But wherefore did they not lay hold on Him in the temple? Because they would not have dared in the temple, on account of the people. Wherefore also He went forth without, both by the place and by the time giving them security, and even to the last hour taking away their excuse. For He who, in order that He might obey the prophets, gave up even Himself, how did He teach things contrary to them? "Then all His disciples," it is said, "forsook Him, and fled." For when He was seized, they remained; but when He had said these things to the multitudes, they fled. For thenceforth they saw that escape was no longer possible, when He was giving Himself up to them voluntarily, and saying, that this was done according to the Scriptures. And when these were fled, "they lead Him away to Caiaphas; but Peter followed, and entered in to see what the end should be."

Great was the fervor of the disciple; neither did he fly when he saw them flying, but stood his ground, and went in with Him. And if John did so too, yet he was "known to the high priest." And why did they lead Him away there where they were all assembled? That they might do all things with consent of the chief priests. For he was then high priest, and all were waiting for Christ there, to such a degree did they spend the whole night, and give up their sleep for this object. For neither did they then eat the passover, but watched for this other purpose. For John, when he had said that "it was early," added, "they entered into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the passover." What must we say then? That they ate it on another day, and broke the law, on account of their eager desire about this murder. For Christ would not have transgressed as to the time of the passover, but they who were daring all things, and trampling under foot a thousand laws. For since they were exceedingly boiling with rage, and having often attempted to seize Him, had not been able; having then taken Him unexpectedly, they chose even to pass by the passover, for the sake of satiating their murderous lust.

Wherefore also they were all assembled together, and it was a council of pestilent men, and they ask some questions, wishing to invest this plot with the appearance of a court of justice. For "neither did their testimonies agree together;" so reigned was the court of justice, and all things full of confusion and disorder. "But false witnesses came, and said, This fellow said, I will destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it." And indeed He had said, "In three days," but He said not, "I will destroy," but, "Destroy," and not about that temple but about His own body. What then doth. the high priest? Willing to press Him to a defense, that by that he might take Him, he saith, "Hearest Thou not what these witness against Thee? But He held His peace." For the attempts at defense were unprofitable, no man hearing. For this was a show only of a court of justice, but in truth an onset of robbers, assailing Him without cause, as in a cave, or on a road.

Wherefore "He held His peace," but the other continued, saying, "I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of the living God. But He said, Thou hast said. Nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy." And this he did to add force to the accusation, and to aggravate what He said, by the act. For since what had been said moved the hearers to fear, what they did about Stephen, stopping their ears, this high priest doth here also. 3. And yet what kind of blasphemy was this? For indeed before He had said, when they were gathered together, "The Lord said unto my Lord. Sit Thou on my right hand," and interpreted the saying, and they dared say nothing, but held their peace, and from that time forth gainsaid Him no more. Why then did they now call the saying a blasphemy? And wherefore also did Christ thus answer them? To take away all their excuse, because unto the last day He taught that He was Christ, and that He sitteth at the right hand of the Father, and that He will come again to judge the world, which was the language of one manifesting His full accordance with the Father.

Having rent therefore his clothes, he saith, "What think ye?" He gives not the sentence from himself, but invites it from them, as in a case of confessed sins, and manifest blasphemy. For, inasmuch as they knew that if the thing came to be inquired into, and carefully decided, it would free Him from all blame, they condemn Him amongst themselves, and anticipate the hearers by saying, "Ye have heard the blasphemy;" all but necessitating and forcing them to deliver the sentence. What then say they? "He is guilty of death;" that having taken Him as condemned, they should thus work upon Pilate thereupon to pass sentence. In which matter those others also being accomplices say, "He is guilty of death;" themselves accusing, themselves judging, themselves passing sentence, themselves being everything then. But wherefore did they not bring forward the Sabbaths? Because He had often stopped their mouths; and moreover they wanted to take Him, and condemn Him by the things then said. And the high priest anticipated them, and gave the sentence as from them, and drew them all on by rending his vestments, and having led Him away as now condemned unto Pilate, thus did all.

Before Pilate at any rate they said nothing of this kind, but what? "If this Man were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered Him up unto thee;" attempting to put Him to death by political accusations. And wherefore did they not slay Him secretly? They were desirous also to bring up an evil report against His fame. For since many had now heard Him, and were admiring Him, and amazed at Him, therefore they endeavored that He should be put to death publicly, and in the presence of all. But Christ hindered it not, but made full use of their wickedness for the establishment of the truth, so that His death should be manifest. And the result was the contrary to what they wished. For they wished to make a show of it, as in this way disgracing Him, but He even by these very things shone forth the more. And much as they said, "Let us put Him to death, lest the Romans come and take away our place and nation;" and after they had put Him to death, this came to pass; so also here; their object was to crucify Him publicly, that they might injure His fame, and the contrary result took place.

For in proof that indeed they had power to have put Him to death, even amongst themselves, hear what Pilate saith: "Take ye Him, and judge Him according to your law." But they would not, that He might seem to have been put to death as a transgressor, as an usurper, as a mover of sedition. Therefore also they crucified thieves with Him; therefore also they said, "Write not that this man is King of the Jews; but that He said it." But all these things are done for the truth, so that they might not have so much as any shadow of a defense that is surely shameless. And at the sepulchre too, in the like manner, the seals and the watches made the truth to be the more conspicuous; and the mockings, and the jeerings, and the revilings, wrought again this self-same effect. For such is the nature of error: it is destroyed by those things whereby it plots; thus at least it fell out even here, for they that seemed to have conquered, these most of all were put to shame, and defeated, and ruined; but He that seemed to be defeated, this man above all hath both shone forth, and conquered mightily.

Let us not then everywhere seek victory, nor everywhere shun defeat. There is an occasion when victory brings hurt, but defeat profit. For, for instance, in the case of them that are angry; he that hath been very outrageous seems to have prevailed; but this man above all is the one subdued and hurt by the most grievous passion; but he that hath endured nobly, this man hath got the better and conquered. And while the one hath not had strength to overcome so much as his own disease; the other hath removed another man's; this hath been subdued by his own, that hath got the better even of another's passion; and so far from being burnt up, he quenched the flame of another when raised to a height. But if he had minded to gain what seems to be victory, both he himself would have been overcome; and having inflamed the other, he would have occasioned him to have suffered this more grievously; and, like women, both the one and the other would have been disgracefully and miserably overthrown by their anger. But now he that hath exercised self-control is both freed from this disgrace, and hath erected a glorious trophy over anger both in himself and in his neighbor, through his honorable defeat.

4. Let us not then everywhere seek victory. For he that hath overreached hath conquered the person wronged, but with an evil victory, and one that brings destruction to him that has won it; but he that is wronged, and seems to have been conquered, if he have borne it with self-command, this above all is the one that hath the crown. For often to be defeated is better, and this is the best mode of victory. For whether one overreaches, or smites, or envies, he that is defeated, and enters not into the conflict, this is he who hath the victory.

And why do I speak of overreaching and envy? For he also that is dragged to martyrdom, thus conquers by being bound, and beaten, and maimed, and slain. And what is in wars defeat, namely, for the combatant to fall; this with us is victory. For nowhere do we overcome by doing wrongfully, but everywhere by suffering wrongfully. Thus also cloth the victory become more glorious, when we sufferers get the better of the doers. Hereby it is shown that the victory is of God. For indeed it hath an opposite nature to outward conquest. which fact is again above all an infallible sign of strength. Thus also the rocks in the sea, by being struck, break the waves; thus also all the saints were proclaimed, and crowned, and set up their glorious trophies, winning this tranquil victory. "For stir not thyself," He saith, "neither weary thyself. God hath given thee this might, to conquer not by conflict, but by endurance alone. Do not oppose thyself also as he does, and thou hast conquered; conflict not, and thou hast gained the crown. Why dost thou disgrace thyself? Allow him not to say that by conflicting thou hast got the better, but suffer him to be amazed and to marvel at thy invincible power; and to say to all, that even without entering into conflict thou hast conquered."

Thus also the blessed Joseph obtained a good report, everywhere by suffering wrong getting the better of them who were doing it. For his brethren and the Egyptian woman were amongst those that were plotting against him, but over all did this man prevail. For tell me not of the prison, wherein this man dwelt, nor of the kings' courts where she abode, but show me who it is that is conquered, who it is that is defeated, who that is in despondency, who that is in pleasure. For she, so far from being able to prevail over the righteous man, could not master so much as her own passion; but this man prevailed both over her and over that grievous disease. But if thou wilt, hear her very words, and thou shalt see the trophy. "Thou broughtest in unto us here an Hebrew servant to mock us." It was not this man that mocked thee, O wretched and unhappy woman, but the devil that told thee that thou couldest break down the adamant. This thy husband brought not in unto thee an Hebrew servant to plot against thee, but the wicked spirit brought in that unclean lasciviousness; he it was that mocked thee.

What then did Joseph? He held his peace, and thus is condemned, even as Christ is also. For all those things are types of these. And he indeed was in bonds, and she in royal courts. Yet what is this? For he was more glorious than any crowned victor, even while continuing in his bonds, but she was in a more wretched condition than any prisoner, while abiding in royal chambers. But not hence alone may one see the victory, and the defeat, but by the end itself. For which accomplished his desired object? The prisoner, not the high born lady?

For he strove to keep his chastity, but she to destroy it. Which then accomplished what he desired? he who suffered wrong, or she who did the wrong. It is quite plain, that it is he who suffered. Surely then this is the one who hath conquered. Knowing then these things, let us follow after this victory, which is obtained by suffering wrong, let us flee from that which is got by doing wrong. For so shall we both live this present life in all tranquility, and great quietness, and shall 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 85

Matthew Chapter 26, Verse 67 And Matthew Chapter 26, Verse 68

”Then did they spit in His face, and buffeted Him, and others smote Him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?” Wherefore did they these things, when they were to put Him to death? What need of this mockery? That thou mightest learn their intemperate spirit by all things, and that having taken Him like a preys they thus showed forth their intoxication, and gave full swing to their madness; making this a festival, and assaulting Him with pleasure, and showing forth their murderous disposition. But admire, I pray thee, the self command of the disciples, with what exactness they relate these things. Hereby is clearly shown their dispostiion to love the truth, because they relate with all truthfulness the things that seem to be opprobrious, disguising nothing, nor being ashamed thereof, but rather accounting it very great glory, as indeed it was, that the Lord of the universe should endure to suffer such things for us. This shows both His unutterable tenderness, and the inexcusable wickedness of those men, who had the heart to do such things to Him that was so mild and meek, and was charming them with such words, as were enough to change a lion into a lamb. For neither did He fail in any things of gentleness, nor they of insolence and cruelty, in what they did, in what they said. All which things the prophet Isaiah foretold, thus proclaiming beforehand, and by one word intimating all this insolence. For ”like as many were astonished at thee,” he saith, ”so shall thy form be held inglorious of men, and thy glory of the sons of men.”

For what could be equal to this insolence? On that face which the sea, when it saw it, had reverenced, from which the sun, when it beheld it on the cross, turned away his rays, they did spit, and struck it with the palms of their hands, and some upon the head; giving full swing in every way to their own madness. For indeed they inflicted the blows that are most insulting of all, buffeting, smiting with the palms of their hands, and to these blows adding the insult of spitting at Him. And words again teeming with much derision did they speak, saying, ”prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?” because the multitude called Him a prophet. But another saith, that they covered His face with His own garment, and did these things, as though they had got in the midst of them some vile and worthless fellow. And not freemen only, but slaves also were intemperate with this intemperance towards Him at that time.

These things let us read continually, these things let us hear aright, these things let us write in our minds, for these are our honors. In these things do I take a pride, not only in the thousands of dead which He raised, but also in the sufferings which He endured. These things Paul puts forward in every way, the cross, the death, the sufferings, the revilings, the insults, the scoffs. And now he saith, "let us go forth unto Him bearing His reproach; " and now, "who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame." "Now Peter sat in the court without; and a damsel came unto him, saying, thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and saith, this man also was there with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said unto Peter, surely thou also art one of them, 'for thy speech bewrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the words of Jesus, which said, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly."

Oh strange and wonderful acts! When indeed he saw his master seized only, he was so fervent as both to draw his sword, and to cut off the man's ear; but when it was natural for him to be more indignant, and to be inflamed and to burn, hearing such revilings, then he becomes a denier. For who would not have been inflamed to madness by the things that were then done? yet the disciple, overcome by fears, so far from showing indignation, even denies, and endures not the threat of a miserable and mean girl, and not once only, but a second and third time doth he deny Him; and in a short period, and not so much as before judges, for it was without for "when he had gone out into the porch," they asked him, and he did not even readily come to a sense of his fall. And this Luke saith, namely, that Christ looked on him showing that he not only denied Him, but was not even brought to remembrance from within, and this though the cock had crowed; but he needed a further remembrance from his master, and His look was to him instead of a voice; so exceedingly was he full of fear

But Mark saith, that when he had once denied, then first the cock crew, but when thrice, then for the second time; for he declares more particularly the weakness of the disciple, and that he was utterly dead with fear; having learnt these things of his masters himself, for he was a follower of Peter. In which respect one would most marvel at him, that so far from hiding his teacher's faults, he declared it more distinctly than the rest. on this very account, that he was his disciple. 2. How then is what is said true, .when Matthew affirms that Christ said, "Verily I say unto thee, that before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice;" and Mark declares after the third denial, that "The cock crew the second time?" Nay, most certainly is it both true and in harmony. For because at each crowing the cock is wont to crow both a third and a fourth time, Mark, to show that not even the sound checked him, and brought him to recollection saith this. So that both things are true. For before the cock had finished the one crowing, he had denied a third time. And not even when reminded of his sin by Christ did he dare to weep openly, lest he should be betrayed by his tears, but "he went out, and wept bitterly."

"And when it was day, they led away Jesus from Caiaphas to Pilate." For because they were desirous to put Him to death, but were not able themselves because of the feast, they lead Him to the governor. But mark, I pray thee, how the act was forced on, so as to take place at the feast. For so was it typified from the first. "Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that He was condemned, repented, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver." This was a charge both against him, and against these men; against him, not because he repented, but because he did so, late, and slowly, and became self-condemned (for that he delivered Him up, he himself confessed); and against them, for that having the power to reverse it, they repented not. But mark, when it is that he feels remorse. When his sin was completed, and had received an accomplishment. For the devil is like this; he suffers not those that are not watchful to see the evil before this, lest he whom he has taken, should repent. At least, when Jesus was saying so many things, he was not. influenced, but when his offense was completed, then repentance came upon him; and not then profitably. For to condemn it, and to throw down the pieces of silver, and not to regard the Jewish people, were all acceptable things; but to hang himself, this again was unpardonable, and a work of an evil spirit. For the devil led him out of his repentance too soon, so that he should reap no fruit from thence; and carries him off, by a most disgraceful death, and one manifest to all, having persuaded him to destroy himself.

But mark, I pray thee, the truth shining forth on every side, even by what the adversaries both do and suffer. For indeed even the very end of the traitor stops the mouths of them that had condemned Him, and suffers them not to have so much as any shadow of an excuses that is surely shameless. For what could they have to say, when the traitor is shown to pass such a sentence on himself. But let us see also the words, what is said; "He brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests, and saith, I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood. And they said, what is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

For neither could he bear his conscience scourging him. But marks I pray thee, the Jews too suffering the same things. For these men also, when they ought to have been amended by what they suffered, do not stop, until they have completed their sin. For his sin had been completed, for it was a betrayal; but theirs not yet. But when they too had accomplished theirs, and had nailed Him to the cross then they also are troubled; at one time saying, "Write not, this is the king of the Jews" (and yet why are ye afraid? why are ye troubled at a dead body that is nailed upon the cross?); at another time they guard over Him, saying, "Lest His disciples steal Him away, and say that He is risen again; so the last error shall be worse than the first." And yet if they do it, the thing is refuted, if it be not true. But how should they say so, which did not dare so much as to stand their ground, when He was seized; and the chief of them even thrice denied Him, not bearing a damsel's threat. But, as I said, the chief priests were now troubled; for that they knew the act was a transgression of the law is manifest, from their saying, "See thou to that."

Hear, ye covetous, consider what befell him; how he at the same time lost the money, and committed the sin, and destroyed his own soul. Such is the tyranny of covetousness. He enjoyed not the money. neither the present life, nor that to come, but lost all at once, and having got a bad character even with those very men, so hanged himself. But, as I said, after the act, then some see clearly. See at any rate these men too for a time not willing to have a clear perception of the fact, but saying, "See thou to that:" which thing of itself is a most heavy charge against them. For this is the language of men bearing witness to their daring and their transgression, but intoxicated by their passion, and not willing to forbear their satanical attempts, but senselessly wrapping themselves up in a veil of feigned ignorance.

For if indeed these things had been said after the crucifixion, and His being slain, of a truth even then the saying would have had no reasonable meaning, nevertheless it would not have condemned them so much; but now having Him yet in your own hands, and having power to release Him, how could ye be able to say these things? For this defense would be a most heavy accusation against you. How? and in what way? Because while throwing the whole blame upon the traitor (for they say, "See thou to that"), being able to have set themselves free from this murder of Christ, they left the traitor, and even pressed the crime further, adding the cross to the betrayal. For what hindered them, when they said to him, "See thou to that," themselves to forbear the criminal act? But now they even do the contrary, adding to it the murder and in every thing, both by what they do, and by what they say, entangling themselves in inevitable ills. For indeed after these things, when Pilate left it to them, they choose the robber to be released rather than Jesus; but Him that had done no wrong, but had even conferred on them so many benefits, they slew.

3. What then did that man? When he saw that he was laboring to no profit, and that they would not consent to receive the pieces of silver, "he cast them down in the temple, and went and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the pieces of silver, and said, it is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, the field of blood, unto this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, and they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him that was valued, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me." Seest thou them again self-condemned by their conscience? For because they knew that they had been buying the murder, they put them not into the treasury, but bought a field to bury strangers in. And this also became a witness against them, and a proof of their treason. For the name of the place more clearly than a trumpet proclaimed their blood- guiltiness. Neither did they it at random, but having taking counsel, and in every case in like manner, so that no one should be clear of the deed, but all guilty. But these things the prophecy foretold from of old. Seest thou not the apostles only, but the prophets also declaring exactly those things which were matters of reproach, and every way proclaiming the passion, and indicating it beforehand?

This was the case with the Jews without their being conscious of it. For if they had cast it into the treasury, the thing would not have been so clearly discovered; but now having

bought a piece of ground, they made it all manifest even to subsequent generations. Hear ye as many as think to do good works out of murders, and take a reward for the lives of men. These almsgiving are Judaical, or rather they are Satanical. For there are, there are now also they, that take by violence countless things belonging to others, and think that an excuse is made for all if they cast in some ten or a hundred gold pieces.

Touching whom also the prophet saith, "Ye covered my altar with tears. Christ is not willing to be fed by covetousness, He accepts not this food. Why dost thou insult thy Lord, offering Him unclean things? It is better to leave men to pine with hunger, than to feed them from these sources. That was the conduct of a cruel man, this of one both cruel and insolent. It is better to give nothing, than to give the things of one set of persons to others. For tell me, if you saw any two persons, one naked, one having a garment, and then having stripped the one that had the garment, thou wert to clothe the naked, wouldest thou not have committed an injustice? It is surely plain to every one. But if when thou hast given all that thou hast taken to another, thou hast committed an injustice, and not shown mercy; when thou givest not even a small portion of what thou robbest, and callest the deed alms, what manner of punishment wilt thou not undergo? For if men offering lame brutes were blamed, what favor wilt thou obtain doing things more grievous? For if the chief, making restitution to the owner himself, still doeth an injustice, and so doeth an injustice, as by adding fourfold scarcely to do away the charge against himself, and this under the old covenant; he that is not stealing, but taking by violence, and not even giving to him that is robbed, but instead of him to another;

nor yet giving fourfold, but not so much as the half; and moreover not living under the old dispensation, but under the new; consider how much fire he is heaping together upon his own head. And if he do not as yet suffer his punishment, for this self-same thing I say bewail him, for he is treasuring up against himself a greater wrath, unless he repent. For what? "Think ye," saith He, "that they alone were sinners upon whom the tower fell down? Nay, I say unto you, but except ye repent, ye also shall suffer the same things.

Let us repent then, and give alms pure from covetousness, and in great abundance. Consider that the Jews used to feed eight thousand Levites, and together with the Levites, widows also and orphans, and they bore many other public charges, and together with these .things also served as soldiers; but now there are fields, and houses, and hirings of lodgings, and carriages, and muleteers, and mules, and a great array of this kind in the church on account of you, and your hardness of heart. For this store of the church ought to be with you, and your readiness of mind ought to be a revenue to her; but now two wrong things come to pass, both you continue unfruitful, and God's priests do not practise their proper duties. Was it not possible for the houses and the lands to have remained in the time of the apostles? Wherefore then did they sell them and give away? Because this was a better thing.

4. But now a fear seized our fathers (when you were so mad after worldly things, and because of your gatherings, and not dispersing abroad), lest the companies of the widows and orphans, and of the virgins, should perish of famine; therefore were they constrained

to provide these things. For it was not their wish to thrust themselves unto what was so unbecoming; but their desire was that your good will should have been a supply for them, and that they should gather their fruits from thence, and that they themselves should give heed to prayers only. But now ye have constrained them to imitate the houses of them that manage public affairs; whereby all things are turned upside down. For when both you and we are entangled in the same things, who is there to propitiate God? Therefore it is not possible for us to open our mouths, when the state of the church is no better than that of worldly men. Have ye not heard that the apostles would not consent so much as to distribute the money that was collected without any trouble? But now our bishops have gone beyond agents, and stewards, and hucksters in their care about these things; and when they ought to be careful and thoughtful about your souls, they are vexing themselves every day about these things, for which the innkeepers, and tax-gatherers, and accountants, and stewards are careful.

These things I do not mention for nought in the way of complaint, but in order that there may be some amendment and change, in order that we may be pitied for serving a grievous servitude, in order that you may become a revenue and store for the church. But if ye are not willing, behold the poor before your eyes; as many as it is possible for us to suffice, we will not cease to feed; but those, whom it is not possible, we will leave to you, that ye may not hear those words on the awful day, which shall be spoken to the unmerciful and cruel. "Ye saw me an hungered, and fed me not." For together with you this inhumanity makes. us laughing-stocks, because leaving our prayers, and our teaching, and the other parts of holiness, we are fighting all our time, some with wine merchants, some with corn-factors, others with them that retail other provisions.

Hence come battles, and strifes, and daily revilings, and reproaches, and jeers, and on each of the priests names are imposed more suitable for houses of secular men; when it would have been fit to take other names in the place of these, and to be named from those things, from which also the apostles ordained, from the feeding of the hungry, from the protection of the injured, from the care of strangers, from succoring them that are despitefully used, from providing for the orphans, from taking part with the widows, from presiding over the virgins; and these offices should be distributed amongst us instead of the care of the lands and houses. These are the stores of the church, these the treasures that become her, and that afford in great degree both ease to us and profit to you; or rather to you ease with the profit. For I suppose that by the grace of God they that assemble themselves here amount to the number of one hundred thousand; and if each bestowed one loaf to some one of the poor, all would be in plenty; but if one farthing only, no one would be poor; and we should not undergo so many revilings and jeers, in consequence of our care about the money. For indeed the saying, "Sell thy goods, and give to the poor, and come and follow me," might be seasonably addressed to the prelates of the church with respect to the property of the church. For in any other way it is not possible to follow Him as we ought, not being freed from all grosser and more worldly care.

But now the priests of God attend at the vintage and harvest, and at the sale and purchase of the produce; and whereas they that served the shadow had an entire immunity from such matters, although entrusted with a more carnal service; we, who are invited to the very inmost shrines of the heavens, and who enter into the true holy of holies, take upon ourselves the cares of tradesmen and retail dealers. Hence great neglect of the Scriptures, and remissness in prayers, and indifference about all the other duties; for it is not possible to be split into the two things with due zeal. Where I pray and beseech you that many fountains may spring up to us from all quarters, and that your forwardness may be to us the threshing floor and the wine press. For in this way both the poor will more easily be supported, and God will be glorified, and ye will advance unto a greater degree of love to mankind, and will enjoy the good things eternal; unto which God grant we may all attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory world without end. Amen.

Homily 86

Matthew Chapter 27, Verse 11 And Matthew Chapter 27, Verse 12

"And Jesus stood before the governor; and the governor asked Him, saying, Art thou the king of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest. And when He was accused of the chief priests and eiders, He answered nothing." Seest thou what He is first asked? which thing most of all they were continually bringing forward in every way? For since they saw Pilate making no account of the matters of the law, they direct their accusation to the state charges. So likewise did they in the case of the apostles, ever bringing forward these things, and saying that they were going about proclaiming king one Jesus, speaking as of a mere man, and investing them with a suspicion of usurpation. Whence it is manifest, that both the rending the garment and the amazement were a pretense. But all things they got up, and plied, in order to bring Him to death.

This at any rate Pilate then asked. What then said Christ? "Thou sayest." He confessed that He was a king, but a heavenly king, which elsewhere also He spake more dearly, replying to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world;" that neither they nor this man should have an excuse for accusing Him of such things. And He gives a reason that cannot be gainsaid, saying, "If I were of this world, my servants would fight, that I should not be delivered." For this purpose I say, in order to refute this suspicion, He both paid tribute, and commanded others to pay it, and when they would make Him a king, He fled. Wherefore then did he not bring forward these things, it may be said, at that time, when accused of usurpation? Because having the proofs from His acts, of His power, His meekness, His gentleness, beyond number, they were willfully blind, and dealt unfairly, and the tribunal was corrupt. For these reasons then He replies to nothing, but holds His peace, yet answering briefly (so as not to get the reputation of arrogance from continual silence) when the high priest adjured Him, when the governor asked, but in reply to their accusations He no longer saith anything; for He was not now likely to persuade them. Even as the prophet declaring this self-same thing from of old, said, "In His humiliation His judgment was taken away."

At these things the governor marvelled, and indeed it was worthy of admiration to see Him showing such great forbearance, and holding His peace, Him that had countless things to say. For neither did they accuse Him from knowing of any evil thing in Him, but from jealousy and envy only. At least when they had set false witness, wherefore, having nothing

to say, did they still urge their point? and when they saw Judas was dead, and that Pilate had washed his hands of it, why were they not pricked with remorse. For indeed He did many things even at the very time, that they might recover themselves, but by none were they amended. What then saith Pilate? "Hearest thou not how many things these witness against thee?" He wished that He should defend Himself and be acquitted, wherefore also he said these things; but since He answered nothing, he devises another thing again.

Of what nature was this? It was a custom for them to release one of the condemned, and by this means he attempted to deliver Him. For if you are not willing to release Him as innocent, yet as guilty pardon Him for the feast's sake. Seest thou order reversed? For the petition in behalf of the condemned it was customary to be with the people, and the granting it with the rulers; but now the contrary hath come to pass, and the ruler petitions the people; and not even so do they become gentle, but grow more savage and bloodthirsty, driven to frenzy by the passion of envy. For neither had they whereof they should accuse Him, and this though He was silent, but they were refuted even then by reason of the abundance of His righteous deeds, and being silent He overcame them that say ten thousand things, and are maddened.

"And when he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, have thou nothing to do with this just man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him." See what a thing takes place again, sufficient to recall them all. For together with the proof from the things done, the dream too was no small thing. And wherefore doth he not see it himself? Either because she was more worthy, or because he, if he had seen it, would not have been equally believed; or would not so much as have told it. Therefore it was ordered that the wife should see it, so that it might be manifest to all. And she doth not merely see it, but also suffers many things, that from his feeling towards his wife, the man may be made more reluctant to the murder. And the time too contributed not a little, for on the very night she saw it.

But it was not safe, it may be said, for him to let Him go, because they said He made Himself a king. He ought then to have sought for proofs, and a conviction, and for all the things that are infallible signs of an usurpation, as, for instance, whether He levied forces, whether He collected money, whether he forged arms, whether He attempted any other such thing. But he is led away at random, therefore neither doth Christ acquit him of the blame, in saying, "He that betrayeth me unto thee hath greater sin." So that it was from weakness that he yielded and scourged Him, and delivered Him up. He then was unmanly and weak; but the chief priests wicked and criminal. For since he had found out a device, namely, the law of the feast requiring him to release a condemned person, what do they contrive in opposition to that? "They persuaded the multitude," it is said, "that they should ask Barabbas."

2. See how much care he taketh for them to relieve them from blame, and how much diligence they employed, so as not to leave to themselves so much as a shadow of an excuse. For which was right? to let go the acknowledged criminal, or Him about whose guilt there was a question? For, if in the case of acknowledged offenders it was fit there should be a

liberation, much more in those of whom there was a doubt. For surely this man did not seem to them worse than acknowledged murderers. For on this account, it is not merely said they had a robber; but one noted, that is, who was infamous in wickedness, who had perpetrated countless murders. But nevertheless even him did they prefer to the Saviour of the world, and neither did they reverence the season because it was holy, nor the laws of humanity, nor any other thing of the kind, but envy had once for all blinded them. And besides their own wickedness, they corrupt the people also, that for deceiving them too they might suffer the most extreme punishment.

Since therefore they ask for the other, He saith, "What shall I do then with the Christ," in this way desiring to put them to the blush, by giving them the power to choose, that at least out of shame they might ask for Him, and the whole should be of their bountifulness. For though to say, He had not done wrong, made them more contentious, yet to require that He should be saved out of humanity, carries with it persuasion and entreaty that cannot be gainsaid. But even then they said, "Crucify Him. But he said, why, what evil hath He done? but they cried out exceedingly, let Him be crucified. But he, when he saw that he profited nothing, washed his hands, saying, I am innocent." Why then didst thou deliver Him up? Why didst thou not rescue Him, as the centurion did Paul. For that man too was aware that he would please the Jews; and a sedition had taken place on his account, and a tumult, nevertheless he stood firm against all. But not so this man, but he was extremely unmanly and weak, and all were corrupt together. For neither did this man stand firm against the multitude, nor the multitude against the Jews, and in in every way their excuse was taken away. For they "cried out exceedingly," that is, cried out the more, "Let Him be crucified." For they desired not only to put Him to death, but also that it should be on a charge of wickedness, and though the judge was contradicting them, they continued to cry out the same thing.

Seest thou how many things Christ did in order to recover them? For like as He often times checked Judas, so likewise did He restrain these men too, both throughout all His Gospel, and at the very time of His condemnation. For surely when they saw the ruler and the judge washing his hands of it, and saying, "I am innocent of this blood," they should have been moved to compunction both by what was said, and by what was done, as well when they saw Judas had hanged himself, as when they saw Pilate himself entreating them to take another in the place of Him. For when the accuser and traitor condemns himself, and he who gives sentence puts off from himself the guilt, and such a vision appears the very night, and even as condemned he begs Him off, what kind of plea will they have? For if they were not willing that He should be innocent, yet they should not have preferred to him even a robber, one that was acknowledged to be such, and very notorious.

What then did they? When they saw the judge washing his hands, and saying, "I am innocent," they cried out "His blood be on us, and on our children." Then at length when they had given sentence against themselves, he yielded that all should be done. See here too their great madness. For passion and wicked desire are like this. They suffer not men to

see anything of what is right. For be it that ye curse yourselves; why do you draw down the curse upon your children also? Nevertheless, the lover of man, though they acted with so much madness, both against themselves, and against their children, so far from confirming their sentence upon their children, confirmed it not even on them, but from the one and from the other received those that repented, and counts them worthy of good things beyond number. For indeed even Paul was of them, and the thousands that believed in Jerusalem; for, "thou seest it is said, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe." And if some continued in their sin, to themselves let them impute their punishment.

"Then released he Barabbas unto them, but Jesus, when he had scourged Him, he delivered to be crucified." And wherefore did he scourge Him. Either as one condemned, or willing to invest the judgment with due form, or to please them. And yet he ought to have resisted them. For indeed even before this he had said, "Take ye Him, and judge Him according to your law." And there were many things that might have held back him and those men, the signs and the miracles, and the great patience thirdly, he persuaded him to slay and to deny his murder; and did not leave him before he had put on him the crowning act of evil. Wherefore it is necessary for us to resist the beginning. For at any rate, even if the first sins stopped at themselves, not even so were it right to despise the first sins; but now they go on also to what is greater, when the mind is careless. Wherefore we ought to do all things to remove the beginnings of them.

For look not now at the nature of the sin, that it is little, but that it becomes a root of great sin when neglected. For if one may say something marvellous, great sins need not so much earnestness, as such as are little, and of small account. For the former the very nature of the sin causes us to abhor, but the little sins by this very thing cast us into remissness; and allow us not to rouse ourselves heartily for their removal. Wherefore also they quickly become great, while we sleep. This one may see happening in bodies also. So likewise in the instance of Judas, that great wickedness had its birth. For if it had not seemed to him a little thing to steal the money of the poor, he would not have been led on to this treachery. Unless it had seemed to the Jews a little thing to be taken captive by vainglory, they would not have run on the rock of becoming Christ's murderers. And indeed all evils we may see arise from this.

For no one quickly and at once rusheth out into vices. For the soul hath, yea it hath a shame implanted in us, and a reverence for right things; and it would not at once become so shameless as in one act to east away everything, but slowly, and by little and little doth it perish, when it is careless. Thus also did idolatry enter in, men being honored beyond measure, both the living and the departed; thus also were idols worshipped; thus too did whoredom prevail, and the other evils. And see. One man laughed unseasonably; another blamed him; a third took away the fear. by saying, nothing comes of this. "For what is laughing? What can come of it?" Of this is bred foolish jesting; from that filthy talking; then filthy doings. Again, another being blamed for slandering his neighbors, and reviling, and calumniating, despised it, saying, evil-speaking is nothing. By this he begets hatred

unspeakable, revilings without end; by the revilings blows, and by the blows oftentimes murder.

4. From these little things then that wicked spirit thus brings in the great sins; and from the great despair; having invented this other while not less mischievous than the former. For to sin destroys not so much as to despair. For he that hath offended, if he be vigilant, speedily by repentance amends what hath been done; but he that hath learnt to despond, and doth not repent, by reason thereof fails of this amendment by not applying the remedies from repentance. And he hath a third grievous snare; as when he invests the sin with a show of devotion. And where hath the devil so far prevailed as to deceive to this degree? Hear, and beware of his devices. Christ by Paul commanded "that a woman depart not from her husband, and not to defraud one another, except by consent;" but some from a love of continence forsooth, having withdrawn from their own husbands, as though they were doing something devout, have driven them to adultery. Consider now what an evil it is that they, undergoing so much toil, should be blamed as having committed the greatest injustice, and should suffer extreme punishment, and drive their husbands into the pit of destruction.

Others again, abstaining from meats by a rule of fasting, have by degrees gone so far as to abhor them; which even of itself brings a very great punishment. But this comes to pass, when any hold fast their own prejudices contrary to what is approved by the Scriptures. Those also among the Corinthians thought it was a part of perfection to eat of all things without distinction, even of things forbidden, but nevertheless this was not of perfection, but of the utmost lawlessness. Wherefore also Paul earnestly reproves them, and pronounces them to be worthy of extreme punishment. Others again think it a sign of piety to wear long hair. And yet this is amongst the things forbidden, and carries with it much disgrace. Again, others follow after excessive sorrow for their sins as a profitable thing; yet it also comes of the devil's wiles, and Judas showed it; at least in consequence thereof he even hanged himself. Therefore Paul again was in fear about him that had committed fornication, lest any such thing should befall him, and persuaded the Corinthians speedily to deliver him, "lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow." Then, indicating that such a result cometh of the snares of that wicked one, he saith, "Lest Satan should get an advantage over us, for we are not ignorant of his devices," meaning that he assails us with much craft. Since if he fought against us plainly and openly, the victory would be ready and easy; or rather even now, if we be vigilant, victory will be ready. For indeed against each one: of those ways God hath armed us.

For to persuade us not to despise even these little things, hear what warning He gives us, saying, "He that saith to his brother, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell; " and he that hath looked with unchaste eyes is a complete adulterer. And on them that laugh he pronounces a woe, and everywhere He removes the beginning and the seeds of evil, and saith we have to give an account of an idle word. Therefore also Job applied a remedy even for the thoughts of his children, But about not despairing, it is said, "Doth he fall, and not arise? Doth he turn away, and not return?" and, "I do not will the death of the sinner, so much as that he

should turn and live:" and, "To-day if ye will hear His voice: " and many other such things, both sayings and examples are set in the Scripture. And in order not to be ruined under the guise of godly fear, hear Paul saying, "Lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up by overmuch sorrow."

Knowing therefore these things, let us set for a barrier in all the ways that pervert the unwary the wisdom which is drawn from the Scriptures. Neither say, why, what is it, if I gaze curiously at a beautiful woman? For if thou shouldest commit the adultery in the heart, soon thou wilt venture on that in flesh. Say not, why, what is it if I should pass by this poor man? For if thou pass this man by, thou wilt also the next; if him, then the third. Neither again say, why, what is it, if I should desire my neighbor's goods. For this, this caused Ahab's ruin; although he would have paid a price, yet he took it from one unwilling. For a man ought not to buy by force, but on persuasion. But if he, who would have paid the fair price, was so punished, because he took from one unwilling, he who doeth not so much as this, and taketh by violence from the unwilling, and that when living under grace, of what punishment will he not be worthy?

In order therefore that we be not punished, keeping ourselves quite pure from all violence and rapine, and guarding against the sources of sins together with the sins themselves, let us with much diligence give heed to virtue; for thus shall we also enjoy the good things eternal by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory world without end. Amen.

Homily 87

Matthew Chapter 27, Verse 27-Matthew Chapter 27, Verse 29

"Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers; and they stripped Him, and put on Him a purple robe; and when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand; and they bowed the knee before Him, and mocked Him, saying, Hail, king of the Jews." As though on some signal the devil then was entering in triumph into all. For, be it that Jews pining with envy and jealousy were mad against Him, as to the soldiers, whence was it, and from what sort of cause? Is it not clear that it was the devil who was then entering in fury into the hearts of all? For indeed they made a pleasure of their insults against Him, being a savage and ruthless set. I mean that, when they ought to have been awestruck, when they ought to have wept, which even the people did, this they did not, but, on the contrary, were despiteful, and insolent; perhaps themselves also seeking to please the Jews, or it may be doing all in conformity to their own evil nature.

And the insults were different, and varied For that Divine Head at one time they buffeted, at another they insulted with the crown of thorns, at another they smote with the reed, men unholy and accursed! What plea shall we have after this for being moved by injuries, after Christ suffered these things? For what was done was the utmost limit of insolence. For not one member, but the whole entire body throughout was made an object of insolence; the head through the crown, and the reed, and the buffeting; the face, being spit upon; the cheeks, being smitten with the palms of the hands; the whole body by the stripes, by being wrapped in the robe, and by the pretended worship; the hand by the reed, which they gave him to hold instead of a sceptre; the mouth again by the offering of the vinegar. What could be more grievous than these things? What more insulting?

For the things that were done go beyond all language. For as though they were afraid lest they should seem to fall short at all in the crime, having killed the prophets with their own hands, but this man with the sentence of a judge, so they do in every deed; and make it the work of their own hands, and condemn and sentence both among themselves and before Pilate, saying, "His blood be on us and on our children," and insult Him, and do despite unto Him themselves, binding Him, leading Him away, and render themselves authors of the spiteful acts done by the soldiers, and nail Him to the cross. and revile Him, and spit at

Him, and deride Him. For Pilate contributed nothing in this matter, but they themselves did every thing, becoming accusers, and judges, and executioners, and all. And these things are read amongst us, when all meet together. For that the heathens may not say, that ye display to people and nations the things that are glorious and illustrious, such as the signs and the miracles, but that ye hide these which are matters of reproach; the grace of the Spirit hath brought it to pass, that in the full festival, when men in multitude and women are present, and all, as one may say, at the great eve of the passover, then all these things should be read; when the whole world is present, then are all these acts proclaimed with a clear voice. And these being read, and made known to all, Christ is believed to be God and, besides all the rest, is worshipped, even because of this, that He vouchsafed to stoop so much for us as actually to suffer these things, and to teach us all virtue.

These things then let us read continually; for indeed great is the gain, great the advantage to be thence obtained. For when thou seest Him, both by gestures and by deeds, mocked and worshipped with so much derision, and beaten and suffering the utmost insults, though thou be very stone, thou wilt become softer than any wax, and wilt cast out of thy soul all haughtiness. Hear therefore also what follows. For after "they had mocked Him, they led Him to crucify Him," it is said, and when they had stripped Him, they took His garments, and sat down and watched Him, when He should die. And they divide His garments amongst them, which sort of thing is done in the case of very vile and abject criminals, and such as have no one belonging to them, and are in utter desolation. They parted the garments, by which such great miracles were done. But they wrought none now, Christ restraining His unspeakable power. And this was no small addition of insult. For as to one base and abject, as I said, and the vilest of all men; so do they dare to do all things. To the thieves at any rate they did nothing of the kind, but to Christ they dare it all. And they crucified Him in the midst of them, that He might share in their reputation.

And they gave Him gall to drink, and this to insult Him, but He would not. But another saith, that having tasted it, He said, "It is finished." And what meaneth, "It is finished?" The prophecy was fulfilled concerning Him. "For they gave me," it is said, "gall for my meat, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." But neither doth that evangelist indicate that He drank, for merely to taste differs not from not drinking, but hath one and the same signification. But nevertheless not even here doth their contumely stop, but after having stripped and crucified Him, and offered Him vinegar, they proceeded still further, and beholding Him impaled upon the cross, they revile Him, both they themselves and the passers by; and this was more grievous than all, that on the charge of being an impostor and deceiver He suffered these things, and as a boaster, and vainly pretending what He said. Therefore they both crucified Him publicly, that they might make a show of it in the sight of all; and therefore also they did it by the hands of the soldiers, that these things being perpetrated even by a public tribunal, the insult might be the greater.

5. And yet who would not have been moved by the multitude that was following Him, and lamenting Him? Nay, not these wild beasts. Wherefore also He to the multitude vouchsafes

an answer, but to these men not so. For after having done what they would, they endeavor also to injure His honor, fearing His resurrection. Therefore they say these things publicly, and crucified thieves with Him, and wishing to prove Him a deceiver, they say, "Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days come down from the cross." For since on telling Pilate to remove the accusation (this was the writing, "The king of the Jews"), they prevailed not, but he persevered in saying," What I have written, I have written," they then endeavor by their derision of Him to show that He is not a king. Wherefore they said those things, and also these. If "He is the king of Israel, let Him come down now from the cross. He saved others, Himself He cannot save," aiming hereby to bring discredit even on His former miracles. And again, "If He be Son of God, and He will have Him, let Him save Him."

O execrable; most execrable ! What, were not the prophets prophets, nor the righteous men righteous, because God rescued them not out of their dangers. Nay surely they were, though suffering these things. What then could be equal to your folly? For if the coming of the dangers upon them did not injure their honor with you, how much more in the case of this man, was it wrong for you to be offended, when both by what He did, by what He said, He was ever correcting beforehand this suspicion of yours. Yet nevertheless, even when these things were said and done, they prevailed nothing, not even at the very time. At any rate, he, who was depraved in such great wickedness, and who had spent his whole life in murders and house-breakings, when these things were being said, then confessed Him, and made mention of a kingdom, and the people bewailed Him. And yet the things that were done seemed to testify the contrary in the eyes of those who knew not the mysterious dispensations, that He was weak and of no power, nevertheless truth prevailed even by the contrary things.

Hearing then these things, let us arm ourselves against all rage, against all anger. Shouldest thou perceive thy heart swelling, seal thy breast setting upon it the cross. Call to mind some one of the things that then took place, and thou wilt cast out as dust all rage by the recollection of the things that were done. Consider the words, the actions; consider that He is Lord, and thou servant. He is suffering for thee, thou for thyself; He in behalf of them who had been benefited by Him and had crucified Him, thou in behalf of thyself; He in behalf of them who had used Him despitefully, thou oftentimes at the hands of them who have been injured. He in the sight of the whole city, or rather of the whole people of the Jews, both strangers, and those of the country, before whom He spake those merciful words, but thou in the presence of few; and what. was more insulting to Him, that even His disciples forsook Him. For those, who before paid Him attention, had deserted Him, but His enemies and foes, having got Him in the midst of themselves on the cross, insulted, reviled, mocked, derided, scoffed at Him, Jews and soldiers from below, from above thieves on either side: for indeed the thieves insulted, and upbraided Him both of them. How then saith Luke that one "rebuked?" Both things were done, for at first both upbraided Him, but afterwards one did so no more. For that thou mightest not think the thing had been done

by any agreement, or that the thief was not a thief, by his insolence he showeth thee, that up on the cross he was a thief and an enemy, and at once was changed.

Considering then all these things, control thyself. For what sufferest thou like what thy Lord suffered? Wast thou publicly insulted? But not like these things. Art thou mocked? yet not thy whole body, not being thus scourged, and stripped. And even if thou wast buffeted, yet not like this. 3. And add to this, I pray thee, by whom, and wherefore, and when, and who it was; and (the most grievous matter) that these things being done, no one found fault, no one blamed what was done, but on the contrary all rather approved, and joined in mocking Him and in jeering at Him; and as a boaster, impostor, and deceiver, and not able to prove in His works the things that He said, so did they revile Him. But He held His peace to all, preparing for us the most powerful incentives to long suffering.

But we, though hearing such things, are not patient so much as to servants, but we rush and kick worse than wild asses, with respect to injuries against ourselves, being savage and inhuman; but of those against God not making much account. And with respect to friends too we have the same disposition; should any one vex us, we bear it not; should he insult us, we are savage more than wild beasts, we who are reading these things every day. A disciple betrayed Him, the rest forsook Him and fled, they that had been benefited by Him spat at Him, the servants of the high priest smote Him with the palm of the hand, the soldiers buffeted Him; they that passed by jeered Him and reviled Him, the thieves accused Him; and to no man did He utter a word, but by silence overcame all; instructing thee by His actions, that the more meekly thou shalt endure, the more wilt thou prevail over them that do thee evil, and wilt be an object of admiration before all. For who will not admire him that endures with forbearance the insults he receives from them that are using him despitefully? For even as, though any man suffer justly, yet enduring the evil meekly, he is considered by the more part to suffer unjustly; so though one suffer unjustly, yet if he be violent, he will get the suspicion of suffering justly, and will be an object of ridicule, as being dragged captive by his anger, and losing his own nobility. For such a one, we must not call so much as a freeman, though he be lord over ten thousand servants.

But did some person exceedingly provoke thee? And what of that? For then should self-control be shown, since when there is no one to vex, we see even the wild beasts gentle; for neither are they always savage, but when any one rouses them. And we therefore, if we are only then quiet, when there is no one provoking us, what advantage have we over them. For they are both oftentimes justly indignant, and have much excuse, for by being stirred and goaded are they roused, and besides these things they are devoid of reason, and have savageness in their nature. But whence, I pray thee, canst thou find a plea for being savage and fierce? What hardship hast thou suffered? Hast thou been robbed? For this self-same reason shouldest thou endure it, so as to gain more amply. But wast thou deprived of character? And what is this? Thy condition is in no way worsened by this, if thou practise self-command. But if thou sufferest no grievance, whence art thou angry with him that hath done thee no harm, but hath even benefited thee? For they who honor, make them

that are not watchful the more vain; but they who insult and despise render those that take heed to themselves more steadfast. For the careless are more injured by being honored than by being insulted. And the one set of persons, if we be sober, become to us authors of self-control, but the others excite our pride, they fill us with boastfulness, vainglory, folly, they make our soul the feebler.

And to this fathers bear witness, who do not flatter their own children so much as they chide them, fearing lest from the praise they should receive any harm, and their teachers use the same remedy to them. So that if we are to avoid any one, it should be those that flatter us rather than those that insult us; for this bait brings greater mischief than insult to them, who do not take heed, and it is more difficult to control this feeling than that. And the reward too is far more abundant from thence, and the admiration greater. For indeed it is more worthy of admiration to see a man insulted, and not moved, than beaten and smitten, and not falling. And how is it possible not to be moved? one may say. Hath any one insulted thee? Place the sign upon thy breast, call to mind all the things that were then done; and all is quenched. Consider not the insults only, but if also any good hath been ever done unto thee, by him that hath insulted thee, and straightway thou wilt become meek, or rather consider before all things the fear of God, and soon thou wilt be mild and gentle.

4. Together with these things even from thine own servants take a lesson concerning these matters; and when thou seest thyself insulting, but thy servant holding his peace, consider that it is possible to practise self-control, and condemn thyself for being violent; and in the very time of offering insults learn not to insult; and thus not even when insulted, wilt thou be vexed. Consider that he who is insolent is beside himself and mad, and thou wilt not feel indignant, when insulted, since the possessed strike us, and we, so far from being provoked, do rather pity them. This do thou also; pity him that is insolent to thee, for he is held in subjection by a dreadful monster, rage, by a grievous demon, anger. Set him free as he is wrought upon by a grievous demon, and going quickly to ruin. For so great is this disease as not to need even time for the destruction of him that is seized with it. Wherefore also one said, "The sway of his fury shall be his fall; " by this most of all showing its tyranny, that in a short time it works great ills, and needs not to continue long with us, so that if in addition to its strength it were apt to last, it would indeed be hard to strive against.

I should like to show what the man is who insulteth, what he that practises self-control, and to bring nakedly before you the soul of the one and the other. For thou shouldest see the one like a sea tost with a tempest, but the other like a harbor free from disturbance. For it is not disturbed by these evil blasts, but puts them to rest easily. For indeed they who are insulting, do everything in order to make it sting. When then they fail of that hope, even they are thenceforth at peace, and go away amended. For it is impossible that a man, who is angry, should not utterly condemn himself, even as on the other hand it is impossible for one who is not angry to be self-condemned. For though it be necessary to retaliate, it is possible to do this without anger (and it were more easy and more wise than with anger)

and to have no painful feeling. For if we be willing, the good things will be from ourselves, and we shall be with the grace of God sufficient for our own safety and honor.

For why seekest thou the glory that cometh from another? Do thou honor thyself, and no one will be able to insult thee; but if thou dishonor thyself, though all should honor thee, thou wilt not be honored. For like as, unless we put ourselves in an evil state, no one else puts us in such a state; even so unless we insult ourselves, no one else can put us to shame. For let any man be great and worthy of admiration, and let all men call him an adulterer, a thief, a violater of tombs, a murderer, a robber, and let him be neither provoked or indignant, nor be conscious to himself of any of these crimes, what disgrace will he thence undergo? None. What then, you may say, if many have such an opinion of him? Not even so is he disgraced, but they bring shame upon themselves, by accounting one, who is not such, to be such. For tell me, if any one think the sun to be dark, doth he bring an ill name on that heavenly body, or on himself? Surely on himself, getting himself the character of being blind or mad, So also they that account wicked men good. and they that make the opposite error, disgrace themselves.

Wherefore we ought to give the greater diligence, to keep our conscience clear, and to give no handle against ourselves, nor matter for evil suspicion; but if others will be mad, even when this is our disposition, not to care very much, nor to grieve. For he that hath got the character of a wicked man, being a good man, is in no degree thereby hurt as regards his being such as he is; but he that hath been suspecting another vainly and causelessly, receives the utmost harm; as, on the other hand, the wicked man, if he be supposed to be the contrary, will gain nothing thence, but will both have a heavier judgment, and be led into greater carelessness. For he that is such and is suspected thereof, may perhaps be humbled, and acknowledge his sins; but when he escapes detection, he falls into a state past feeling. For if, while all are accusing them, offenders are hardly stirred up to compunction, when so far from accusing them, some even praise them, at what time will they who are living in vice be able to open their eyes? Hearest thou that Paul also blames for this, that the Corinthians (so far from permitting him that had been guilty of fornication, to acknowledge his own sin), applauding and honoring him, did on the contrary urge him on in vice thereby? Wherefore, I pray, let us leave the suspicions of the multitude, their insults and their honors, and let us be diligent about one thing only, that we be conscious to ourselves of no evil thing, nor insult our own selves. For so both here, and in the world to come, we shall enjoy much glory, unto which God grant we all may attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory world without end. Amen.

Homily 88

Matthew Chapter 27, Verse 45-Matthew Chapter 27, Verse 48

”Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, and said, Eli, Eli, lima sabachthani? that is to say, my God my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Some of them that stood there, when they heard that said, this man calleth for Elias. And straight way one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave Him to drink.” This is the sign which before He had promised to give them when they asked it, saying, ”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; ” meaning His cross, and His death, His burial, and His resurrection. And again, declaring in another way the virtue of the cross, He said, ”When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am He.” And what He saith is to this purport: ”When ye have crucified me, and think ye have overcome me, then, above all, shall ye know my might.”

For after the crucifixion, the city was destroyed, and the Jewish state came to an end, they fell away from their polity and their freedom, the gospel flourished, the word’ was spread abroad to the ends of the world; both sea and land, both the inhabited earth and the desert perpetually proclaim its’ power. These things then He meaneth, and those which took place at the very time of the crucifixion. For indeed it was much more marvellous that these things should be done, when He was nailed to the cross, than when He was walking on earth. And not in this respect only was the wonder, but because from heaven also was that done which. they had sought, and it was over all the world, which had never before happened, but in Egypt only, when the passover was to be fulfilled. For indeed those events were a type of these.

And observe when it took place. At midday, that all that dwell on the earth may know it, when it was day all over the world; which was enough to convert them, not by the greatness of the miracle only, but also by its taking place in due season. For after all their insulting, and their lawless derision, this is done, when they had let go their anger, when they had ceased mocking, when they were satiated with their jeerings, and had spoken all that they were minded; then He shows the darkness, in order that at least so (having vented their anger) they may profit by the miracle. For this was more marvellous than to come down

from the cross, that being on the cross He should work these things. For whether they thought He Himself had done it, they ought to have believed and to have feared; or whether not He, but the Father, yet thereby ought they to have been moved to compunction, for that darkness was a token of His anger at their crime. For that it was not an eclipse, but both wrath and indignation, is not hence alone manifest, but also by the time, for it continued three hours, but an eclipse takes place in one moment of time, and they know it, who have seen this; and indeed it hath taken place even in our generation.

And how, you may say, did not all marvel, and account Him to be God? Because the race of man was then held in a state of great carelessness and vice. And this miracle was but one, and when it had taken place, immediately passed away; and no one was concerned to inquire into the cause of it, and great was the prejudice and the habit of ungodliness. And they knew not what was the cause of that which took place, and they thought perhaps this happened so, in the way of an eclipse or some natural effect. And why dost thou marvel about them that are without, that knew nothing, neither inquired by reason of great indifference, when even those that were in Judaea itself, after so many miracles, yet continued using Him despitefully, although He plainly showed them that He Himself wrought this thing. And for this reason, even after this He speaks, that they might learn that He was still alive, and that He Himself did this, and that they might become by this also more gentle, and He saith, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that unto His last breath they might see that He honors His Father, and is no adversary of God. Wherefore also He uttered a certain cry from the prophet, even to His last hour bearing witness to the Old Testament, and not simply a cry from the prophet, but also in Hebrew, so as to be plain and intelligible to them, and by all things He shows how He is of one mind with Him that begat Him.

But mark herein also their wantonness, and intemperance, and folly. They thought (it is said) that it was Elias whom He called, and straightway they gave Him vinegar to drink. But another came unto Him, and "pierced His side with a spear." What could be more lawless, what more brutal, than these men; who carried their madness to so great a length, offering insult at last even to a dead body? But mark thou, I pray thee, how He made use of their wickednesses for our salvation. For after the blow the fountains of our salvation gushed forth from thence. "And Jesus, when He had cried with a loud voice, yielded up the Ghost." This is what He said, "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again," and, "I lay it down of myself." So for this cause He cried with the voice, that it might be shown that the act is done by power. Mark at any rate saith, that "Pilate marvelled if He were already dead:" and that the centurion for this cause above all believed, because He died with power.

This cry rent the veil, and opened the tombs, and made the house desolate. And He did this, not as offering insult to the temple (for how should He, who saith, "Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise," but declaring them to be unworthy even of His abiding there; like as also when He delivered it over to the Babylonians. But not for this only were these

things done, but what took place was a prophecy of the coming desolation, and of the change into the greater and higher state; and a sign of His might.

And together with these things He showed Himself also by what followed after these things, by the raising of the dead. For in the instance of Elisha; one on touching a dead body rose again, but now by a voice He raised them, His body continuing up there, on the cross. And besides, those things were a type of this. For that this might be believed, therefore is that all done. And they are not merely raised, but also rocks are rent, and the earth shaken, that they might learn, that He was able to strike themselves blind, and to rend them in pieces. For He that cleft rocks asunder, and darkened the world, much more could have done these things to them, had it been His will. But He would not, but having discharged His wrath upon the elements, them it was His will to save by clemency. But they abated not their madness. Such is envy, such is jealousy, it is not easily stayed. At that time then they were impudent in setting themselves against the actual appearances; and afterwards even against the things themselves, when a seal being put upon Him, and soldiers watching Him, He rose again, and they heard these things from the very guards; they even gave money, in order both to corrupt others, and to steal away the history of the resurrection.

Marvel not therefore if at this time also they were perverse, being thus altogether prepared to set themselves impudently against all things; but observe this other point, how great signs He had wrought, some from Heaven, some on earth, some in the very temple, at once marking His indignation, and at the same time showing that what were unapproachable are now to be entered, and that Heaven shall be opened; and the work removed to the true Holy of Holies. And they indeed said, "If He be the King of Israel, let Him come down now from the cross," but He shows that He is King of all the world. And whereas those men said, "Thou that destroyest this temple, and buildest it in three days," He shows that it shall be made forever desolate. Again they said, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." but He while abiding on the cross proved this most abundantly on the bodies of His servants. For if for Lazarus to rise on the fourth day was a great thing, how much more for all those who had long ago fallen asleep, at once to appear alive, which was a sign of the future resurrection. For, "many bodies of the saints which slept, arose," it is said, "and went into the holy city, and appeared to many." For in order that what was done might not be accounted to be an imagination, they appear, even to many, in the city. And the Centurion too then glorified God, saying, "Truly this was a righteous man. And the multitudes that came together to that sight, returned beating their breasts." So great was the power of the crucified, that after so many mockings, and scoffs, and jeers, both the centurion was moved to compunction, and the people. And some say that there is also a martyrdom of this centurion, who after these things grew to manhood in the faith.

"And many women were there beholding afar off, which had followed Him, ministering unto Him, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons." These things the women see done, these who were most inclined to feel for Him, who were most of all bewailing Him. And mark how great their assiduity. They

had followed Him ministering to Him, and were present even unto the time of the dangers. Wherefore also they saw all; how He cried, how He gave up the ghost, how the rocks were rent, and all the rest. And these first see Jesus; and the sex that was most condemned, this first enjoys the sight of the blessings, this most shows its courage. And when the disciples had fled, these were present. But who were these? His mother, for she is called mother of James, and the rest. But another evangelist saith, that many also lamented over the things that were done, and smote their breasts, which above all shows the cruelty of the Jews, for that they gloried in things for which others were lamenting, and were neither moved by pity, nor checked by fear. For indeed the things that were done were of great wrath, and were not merely signs, but signs of anger all of them, the darkness, the cloven rocks, the veil rent in the midst, the shaking of the earth, and great was the excess of the indignation.

"But Joseph went, and begged the body." This was Joseph, who was concealing his discipleship of late; now however he had become very bold after the death of Christ. For neither was he an obscure person, nor of the unnoticed; but one of the council, and highly distinguished; from which circumstance especially one may see his courage. For he exposed himself to death, taking upon him enmity with all, by his affection to Jesus, both having dared to beg the body, and not having desisted until he obtained it. But not by taking it only, nor by burying it in a costly manner, but also by laying it in his own new tomb, he showeth his love, and his courage. And this was not so ordered without purpose, but so there should not be any bare suspicion, that one had risen instead of another. "And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre." For what purpose do these wait by it? As yet they knew nothing great, as was meet, and high about Him, wherefore also they had brought ointments, and were waiting at the tomb, so that if the madness of the Jews should relax, they might go and embrace the body. Seest thou women's courage? seest thou their affection? seest thou their noble spirit in money? their noble spirit even unto death?

Let us men imitate the women; let us not forsake Jesus in temptations. For they for Him even dead spent so much and exposed their lives, but we (for again I say the same things) neither feed Him when hungry, nor clothe Him when naked, but seeing Him begging, we pass Him by. And yet if ye saw Himself, every one would strip himself of all his goods. But even now it is the same. For He Himself has said, I am he. Wherefore then dost thou not strip thyself of all? For indeed even now thou hearest Him say, Thou doest it unto me; and there is no difference whether thou givest to this man or to Him; thou hast nothing less than these women that then fed Him, but even much more. But be not perplexed! For it is not so much to have fed Him appearing in His own person, which would be enough to prevail with a heart of stone, as (because of His mere word) to wait upon the poor, the maimed, him that is bent down. For in the former case, the look and the dignity of Him who appears divides with thee that which is done; but here the reward is entire for thy benevolence; and there is the proof of the greater reverence towards Him, when at His mere word waiting upon thy fellow-servant thou refreshest him in all things. Refresh him, and believe Him, who receiveth it, and saith, Thou givest to me. For unless thou hadst given to Him, He would

not have counted thee worthy of a kingdom. If thou hadst not turned away from Him, He would not have sent thee to hell, if thou hadst overlooked a chance person; but because it is He Himself that is despised, therefore great is the blame.

Thus also Paul persecuted Him, in persecuting them that are His; wherefore too He said. "Why persecutest thou me?" Thus therefore let us feel, as bestowing on Christ Himself when we bestow. For indeed His words are more sure than our sight. When therefore thou seest a poor man, remember His words, by which He declared, that it is He Himself who is fed. For though that which appears be not Christ, yet in this man's form Christ Himself receiveth and beggeth. But art thou ashamed to hear that Christ beggeth? Rather be ashamed when thou dost not give to Him begging of thee. For this is shame, this is vengeance and punishment. Since for Him to beg is of His goodness, wherefore we ought even to glory therein; but for thee not to give, is of thy inhumanity. But if thou believe not now, that in passing by a poor man that is a believer, thou passest by Him, thou wilt believe it then, when He will bring thee into the midst and say, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to these, ye did it not to me." But God forbid that we should so learn it, and grant rather that we may believe now, and bring forth fruit, and hear that most blessed voice that bringeth us into the kingdom.

But perhaps some one will say, "Thou art every day discoursing to us of almsgiving and humanity." Neither will I cease to speak of this. For if ye had attained to it, in the first place, not even so ought I to desist, for fear of making you the more remiss; yet had ye attained, I might have relaxed a little; but if ye have not arrived even at the half; say not these things to me, but to yourselves. For indeed thou doest the same in blaming me, as if a little child, hearing often of the letter alpha, and not learning it, were to blame its teacher, because he is continually and for ever reminding him about it.

For who from these discourses has become more forward in the giving of alms? Who has cast down his money? Who has given the half of his substance? Who the third part? No one. How then should it be other than absurd, when ye do not learn, to require us to desist from teaching? Ye ought to do the contrary. Though we were minded to desist, ye ought to stop us and to say, we have not yet learnt these things, and how is it ye have desisted from reminding us of them? If it befell any one to suffer from his eye, and I happened to be a physician, and then having covered it up and anointed it, and having applied other treatment, I had not benefited it much, and so had desisted; would he not have come to the doors of my surgery and cried out against me, accusing me of great remissness, for that I had of myself withdrawn, while the disease remained; and if, on being blamed, I had said in reply to these things, that I had covered it up, and anointed it; would he have endured it? By no means, but would immediately hays said; "And what is the advantage, if I still suffer pain." Reason thus also with respect to thy soul. But what if after having often fomented a hand that was lifeless and shrunk, I had not succeeded in mollifying it? Should I not have heard the same thing? And even now a hand that is shrunk and withered we bathe, and for this reason, until we can stretch it out perfectly, we will not desist. Would that you too were to discourse of nothing else, at home and at market, at table and at night, and as a dream.

For if we were always careful about these things by day, even in our dreams we should be engaged in them.

What sayest thou? Am I forever speaking of almsgiving? I would wish myself that there were not great need for me to address this advice to you, but that I were to speak of the battle against the Jews, and heathens, and heretics; but when ye are not yet sound, how can any one arm you for the fight? How should he lead you to the array, yet having wounds and gashes. Since if indeed I saw you thoroughly sound in health, I should lead you forth to that battle array, and ye would see by the grace of Christ ten thousands lying dead, and their heads cast one upon another. In other books at any rate, many discourses have been spoken by us touching these things, but not even so are we able thoroughly to triumph in the victory, because of the remissness of the multitude. For when we conquer them ten thousand times over in doctrines, they reproach us with the lives of the multitude of those who join our congregations, their wounds, their diseases in their soul.

How then shall we with confidence show you in the battle array, when ye rather do us mischief, being straightway wounded by our enemies, and made a mock of? For one man's hand is diseased, and shrunk so as not to be able to give away. How then should such a one hold a shield, and thrust it before him, and avoid being wounded by the jeers of cruelty. With others the feet halt, as many as go up to the theatres, and to the resorts of the harlot women. How shall these then be able to stand in the battle, and not to be wounded with the accusation of wantonness? Another suffers and is maimed in his eyes, not looking straight, but being full of lasciviousness, and assailing women's chastity, and overthrowing marriages. How then should this man be able to look in the face of the enemy, and brandish a spear, and throw his dart, being goaded on all sides with jeers. We may see also many suffering with the belly not less than the dropsical, when they are held in subjection by gluttony and drunkenness. How then shall I be able to lead forth these drunken men to war? With others the mouth is rotten; such are the passionate, and revilers, and blasphemers. How then shall this man ever shout in battle, and achieve anything great and noble, he too being drunk with another drunkenness, and affording much laughter to the enemy ?

Therefore each day I go about this camp, dressing your wounds, healing your sores. But if ye ever rouse yourselves up, and become fit even to wound others, I will both teach you this art of war, and instruct you how to handle these weapons, or rather your works themselves will be weapons to you, and all men will immediately submit, if ye would become merciful, if forbearing, if mild and patient, if ye would show forth all other virtue. But if any gainsay, then we will also add the proof of what we can show on our part, bringing you forward, since now we rather are hindered (at least as to your part) in this race. And mark. We say that Christ hath done great things, having made angels of men; then, when we are called upon to give account, and required to furnish a proof out of this flock, our mouths are stopped. For I am afraid, lest in the place of angels, I bring forth swine as from a style, and horses mad with lust.

I know ye are pained, but not against you all are these things spoken, but against the guilty, or rather not even against them if they awake, but for them. Since now indeed all is lost and ruined, and the church is become nothing better than a stable of oxen, and a fold for asses and camels, and I go round seeking for a sheep, and am not able to see it. So much are all kicking, like horses, and any wild asses, and they fill the place here with much dung, for like this is their discourse. And if indeed one could see the things spoken at each assemblage, by men, by women, thou wouldest see their words more unclean than that dung. Wherefore I entreat you to change this evil custom, that the church may smell of ointment. But now, while we lay up in it perfumes for the senses, the uncleanness of the mind we use no great diligence to purge out, and drive away. What then is the advantage? For we do not so much disgrace the church by bringing dung into it, as we disgrace it by speaking such things one to another, about gains, about merchandise, about petty tradings, about things that are nothing to us, when there ought to be choirs of angels here, and we ought to make the church a heaven, and to know nothing else but earnest prayers, and silence with listening.

This then let us do at any rate, from the present time, that we may both purify our lives, and attain unto the promised blessings, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory world without end. Amen.

Homily 89

Matthew Chapter 27, Verse 62-Matthew Chapter 27, Verse 64

”Now the next day,that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest His disciples come and steal Him away, and say to the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error should be worse than the first.” Everywhere deceit recoils upon itself, and against its will supports the truth. And observe. It was necessary for it to be believed that He died, and that He rose again, and that He was buried, and all these things are brought to pass by His enemies. See, at any rate, these words bearing witness to every one of these facts. ”We remember,” these are the words, ”that that deceiver said, when He was yet alive,” (He was therefore now dead), ”After three days I rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be sealed,” (He was therefore buried), ”lest His disciples come and steal Him away.” So that if the sepulchre be sealed, there will be no unfair dealing. For there could not be. So then the proof of His resurrection has become incontrovertible by what ye have put forward. For because it was sealed, there was no unfair dealing. But if there was no unfair dealing, and the sepulchre was found empty, it is manifest that He is risen, plainly and incontrovertibly. Seest thou, how even against their will they contend for the proof of the truth?

But mark thou, I pray thee, the disciples’ love of truth, how they conceal from us none of the things that are said by His enemies, though they use opprobrious language. Behold, at any rate, they even call Him a deceiver, and these men are not silent about that. But these things show also their savageness (that not even at His death did they let go their anger), and these men’s simple and truthful disposition. But it were worth while to inquire concerning that point also, where He said, ”After three days I rise again?” For one would not find this thus distinctly stated, but rather the example of Jonah. So that they understood His saying, and of their own will dealt unfairly. What then saith Pilate? ”Ye have a watch; make it as sure as ye can. And they made it sure, sealing the sepulchre, and setting the watch.” He suffers not the soldiers alone to seal, for as having learnt the things concerning Christ, he was no longer willing to co-operate with them. But in order to be rid of them, he endures this also, and saith, ”Do ye seal it as ye will, that ye may not have it in your power to blame others.” For if the soldiers only had sealed, they might have said (although

the saying would have been improbable and false, yet nevertheless as in the rest they cast aside shame, so in this too they might have been able to say), that the soldiers, having given up the body to be stolen, gave His disciples opportunity to feign the history concerning His resurrection, but now having themselves made it sure, they are not able to say so much as this.

Seest thou how they labor for the truth against their will? For they themselves came to Pilate, themselves asked, themselves sealed, setting the watch, so as to be accusers, and refuters one of another. And indeed when should they have stolen Him? on the Sabbath? And how? for it was not lawful so much as to go out. And even if they transgressed the law, how should they have dared, who were so timid, to come forth? And how could they also have been able to persuade the multitude? By saying what? By doing what? And from what sort of zeal could they have stood in behalf of the dead? expecting what recompense? what requital? Seeing Him yet alive and merely seized, they had fled; and after His death were they likely to speak boldly in His behalf, unless He had risen again? And how should these things be reasonable? For that they were neither willing nor able to feign a resurrection, that did not take place, is plain from hence. He discoursed to them much of a resurrection, and continually said, as indeed these very men have stated, "After three days I rise again." If therefore He rose not again, it is quite clear that these men (having been deceived and made enemies to an entire nation for His sake, and come to be without home and without city) would have abhorred Him, and would not have been willing to invest Him with such glory; as having been deceived, and having fallen into the utmost dangers on His account. For that they would not even have been able, unless the resurrection had been true, to feign it, this does not so much as need reasoning.

For in what were they confident? In the shrewdness of their reasonings? Nay of all men they were the most unlearned. But in the abundance of their possessions? Nay, they had neither staff nor shoes. But in the distinction of their race? Nay, they were mean, and of mean ancestors. But in the greatness of their country? Nay, they were of obscure places. But in their own numbers? Nay, they were not more than eleven, and they were scattered abroad. But in their Master's promises? What kind of promises? For if He were not risen again, neither would those be likely to be trusted by them. And how should they endure a frantic people. For if the chief of them endured not the speech of a woman, keeping the door, and if all the rest too, on seeing Him bound, were scattered abroad, how should they have thought to run to the ends of the earth, and plant a feigned tale of a resurrection? For if he stood not a woman's threat, and they not so much as the sight of bonds, how were they able to stand against kings, and rulers, and nations, where were swords, and gridirons, and furnaces, and ten thousand deaths day by day, unless they had the benefit of the power and grace of Him who rose again? Such miracles and so many were done, and none of these things did the Jews regard, but crucified Him, who had done them, and were they likely to believe these men at their mere word about a resurrection? These things are not, they are not so, but the might of Him, who rose again, brought them to pass.

2. But mark, I pray thee, their craft, how ridiculous it is. "We remember," these are their words, "that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, After three days I rise again." Yet if He were a deceiver, and boastfully uttered falsehood, why are ye afraid and run to and fro, and use so much diligence? We are afraid, it is replied, lest perchance the disciples steal Him away, and deceive the multitude. And yet this has been proved to have no probability at all. Malice, however, is a thing contentious and shameless, and attempts what is unreasonable. And they command it to be made sure for three days, as contending for doctrines, and being minded to prove that before that time also He was a deceiver, and they extend their malice even to His tomb. For this reason then He rose sooner, that they might not say that He spake falsely, and was stolen. For this, His rising sooner, was open to no charge, but to be later would have been full of suspicion. For indeed if He had not risen then, when they were sitting there, and watching, but when they had withdrawn after the three days, they would have had something to say, and to speak against it, although foolishly. For this reason then He anticipated the time. For it was meet the resurrection should take place, while they were sitting by and watching. Therefore also it was fit it should take place within the three days, since if it had been when they were passed, and the men had withdrawn, the matter would have been regarded with suspicion. Wherefore also He allowed them to seal it, as they were minded, and soldiers sat around it.

And they cared not about doing these things, and working on a Sabbath day, but they looked to one object only, their own wicked purpose, as though by that they were to succeed; which was a mark of extreme folly, and of fear now greatly dismaying them. For they who seized Him, when living, are afraid of Him when dead. And yet if He had been a mere man, they had reason to have taken courage. But that they might learn, that when living also He endured of His own will, what He did endure; behold, both a seal, a stone, and a watch, and they were not able to hold Him. But there was one result only, that the burial was published, and the resurrection thereby proved. For indeed soldiers sat by it, and Jews are on the watch. "But in the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And behold there was a great earthquake. For an angel of the Lord descended from Heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door of the tomb, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow."

After the resurrection came the angel. Wherefore then came he, and took away the stone? Because of the women, for they themselves had seen Him then in the sepulchre. Therefore that they might believe that He was risen again, they see the sepulchre void of the body. For this cause he removed the stone, for this cause also an earthquake took place, that they might be thoroughly aroused and awakened. For they were come to pour oil on Him, and these things were done at night, and it is likely that some also had become drowsy. And for what intent and cause doth he say, "Fear not ye?" First he delivers them from the dread, and then tells them of the resurrection. And the ye is of one showing them great honor, and indicating, that extreme punishment awaits them that had dared to do, what the others

had dared, except they repented. For to be afraid is not for you, he means, but for them that crucified Him.

Having delivered them then from the fear both by his words, and by his appearance (for his form he showed bright, as bearing such good tidings), he went on to say, "I know that ye seek Jesus the Crucified." And he is not ashamed to call Him "crucified;" for this is the chief of the blessings. "He is risen." Whence is it evident? "As He said." So that if ye refuse to believe me, he would say, remember His words, and neither will ye disbelieve me. Then also another proof, "Come and see the place where He lay." For this he had lifted up the stone, in order that from this too they might receive the proof. "And tell His disciples, that ye shall see Him in Galilee." And he prepares them to bear good tidings to others, which thing most of all made them believe. And He said well "in Galilee," freeing them from troubles and dangers, so that fear should not hinder their faith.

"And they departed from the sepulchre with fear and joy." Why could this be? They had seen a thing amazing, and beyond expectation, a tomb empty, where they had before seen Him laid. Wherefore also He had led them to the sight, that they might become witnesses of both things, both of His tomb, and of His resurrection. For they considered that no man could have taken Him, when so many soldiers were sitting by Him, unless He raised up Himself. For this cause also they rejoice and wonder, and receive the reward of so much continuance with Him, that they should first see and gladly declare, not what had been said only, but also what they beheld. 3. Therefore after then they had departed with fear and joy, "Behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail." But "they held Him by the feet," and with exceeding joy and gladness ran unto Him, and received by the touch also, an infallible proof, and full assurance of the resurrection. "And they worshipped Him." What then saith He? "Be not afraid." Again, He Himself casts out their fear, making way for faith, "But go, tell my brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me." Mark how He Himself sends good tidings to His disciples by these women, bringing to honor, as I have often said, that sex, which was most dishonored, and to good hopes; and healing that which was diseased.

Perchance some one of you would wish to be like them, to hold the feet of Jesus; ye can even now, and not His feet and His hands only, but even lay hold on that sacred head, receiving the awful mysteries with a pure conscience. But not here only, but also in that day ye shall see Him, coming with that unspeakable glory, and the multitude of the angels, if ye are disposed to be humane; and ye shall hear not these words only, "All hail !" but also those others, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world."

Be ye therefore humane, that ye may hear these things; and ye women, that wear gold, who have looked on the running of these women, at last, though late. lay aside the disease of the desire for golden ornaments. So that if ye are emulous of these women, change the ornaments which ye wear, and clothe yourselves instead with almsgiving. What is the use, I pray you, of these precious stones, and of the garments spangled with gold? "My soul,"

you say, "is glad, and is pleased with these things." I asked thee the profit, but thou tellest me the hurt. For nothing is worse than being taken up with these things, and delighting in them, and being riveted to them. For more bitter is this grievous slavery, when any one finds delight even in being a slave. For in what spiritual matter will she ever be diligent as she ought; when will she laugh to scorn, as she should, the things of this world, who thinks it a worthy matter for joy, that she hath been chained in gold? For he that continues in prison, and is pleased, will never desire to be set free; as indeed neither will this woman; but as having become a kind of captive to this wicked desire, she will not endure so much as to hear spiritual language with becoming desire and diligence, much less to engage in such work.

What then is the profit of these ornaments and this luxury? I pray thee. "I am pleased with them," thou sayest. Again thou hast told of the hurt and the ruin. "But I enjoy also," thou sayest, "much honor from the beholders." And what is this? This is the occasion of another destruction, when thou art lifted up to haughtiness, to arrogance. Come now, since thou hast not told me of the profit, bear with me while I tell thee of the mischiefs. What then are the mischiefs resulting therefrom? Anxiety, which is greater than the pleasure. Wherefore many of the beholders, these I mean of the grosset sort, derive more pleasure from it than she who wears the gold. For thou indeed deckest thyself with anxiety, but they, without this, feast their eyes.

Moreover, there are other things again, the debasing of the soul, the being looked upon with envy on all sides. For the neighboring women stung by it, arm themselves against their own husbands, and stir up against thee grievous wars. Together with these things, the fact that all one's leisure and anxiety are spent on this object, that one doth not apply one's self earnestly to spiritual achievements; that one is filled with haughtiness, arrogance, and vainglory; that one is riveted to the earth, and loses one's wings, and instead of an eagle, becometh a dog or a swine. For having given up looking up into Heaven, and flying thither, thou bendest down to the earth like the swine, being curious about mines and caverns, and having an unmanly and base soul. But dost thou, when thou appearest, turn towards thee the eyes of them at the market-place? Well then; for this very reason, thou shouldest not wear gold, that thou mayest not become a common gazing stock, and open the mouths of many accusers. For none of those whose eyes are toward thee admireth thee, but they jeer at thee, as fond of dress, as boastful, as a carnal woman. And shouldest thou enter into a church, thou geest forth, without getting anything but countless leers, and revilings, and curses, not from the beholders only, but also from the prophet. For straightway Isaiah, that hath the fullest voice of all, as soon as he hath seen thee, will cry out, "These things saith the Lord against the princely daughters of Sion; because they walked with a lofty neck, and with winkings of the eyes, and in their walking, trailing their garments, and mincing at the same time with their feet; the Lord shall take off their bravery, and instead of a sweet smell there shall be dust, and instead of a stomacher, thou shalt gird thyself with a cord."

These things for thy gorgeous array. For not to them only are these words addressed, but to every woman that doeth like them. And Paul again with him stands as an accuser, telling Timothy to charge the women, "not to adorn themselves with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array." So that everywhere the wearing of gold is hurtful, but especially when thou art entering into a church, when thou passest through the poor. For if thou weft exceedingly anxious to bring an accusation against thyself, thou couldest not put on any other array than this visage of cruelty and inhumanity. 4. Consider at any rate how many hungry bellies thou passest by with this array, how many naked bodies with this satanical display. How much better to feed hungry souls, than to bore through the lobes of thy ears, and to hang from them the food of countless poor for no purpose or profit. What? is to be rich a commendation? What? is to wear gold a praise? Though it be from honest earnings that these things are put on you, even so what thou hast done is a very heavy charge against thee; but when it is moreover from dishonesty, consider the exceeding greatness of it.

But dost thou love praises and honor? Strip thyself therefore of this ridiculous clothing, and then all will admire thee; then shalt thou enjoy both honor and pure pleasure; since now at any rate thou art overwhelmed with jeers, working for thyself many causes of vexation arising out of these things. For should any of these things be missing, consider how many are the evils that have their birth therefrom, how many maidservants are beaten, how many men put to trouble, how many led to execution, how many cast into prison. And trials arise hence, and actions, and countless curses and accusations against the wife from the husband, against the husband from her friends, against the soul from itself. "But it will not be lost." In the first place, this is not easy to secure, but even if it be kept safe constantly, yet by being kept, it occasions much anxiety and care and discomfort, and no advantage.

For what kind of profit arises from hence to the house? What advantage to the woman herself who wears it? No advantage indeed, but much unseemliness, and accusation from every quarter? How wilt thou be able to kiss Christ's feet, and cling to them, when thus dressed? From this adorning He turneth away. For this cause He vouchsafed to be born in the house of the carpenter, or rather not even in that house, but in a shed, and a manger. How then wilt thou be able to behold Him, not having beauty that is desirable in His eyes, not wearing the array that is lovely before Him, but what is hateful. For he that cometh unto Him must not deck himself out with such garments, but be clothed with virtue. Consider what after all these jewels are Nothing else than earth and ashes. Mix water with them, and they are clay. Consider and be ashamed to make clay thy master, forsaking all, and abiding by it, and carrying and bearing it about, even when thou enterest into a church, when most of all thou oughtest to flee from it. For neither for this cause was the church built, that thou shouldest display therein these riches, but spiritual riches. But thou, as though thou wert entering into a pompous procession, thus deckest thyself out on every side, imitating the women on the stage, even so dost thou carry about in profusion that ridiculous mass.

Therefore, I tell thee, thou comest for mischief to many, and when the congregation is dismissed, in their houses, at their tables, one may hear the more part describing these things.

For they have left off saying, thus, and thus said the prophet and the apostle, and they describe the costliness of your garments, the size of your precious stones, and all the other unseemliness of them that wear these things. This makes you backward in almsgiving, and your husbands. For one of you would not readily consent to break up one of these ornaments to feed a poor man. For when thou wouldest choose even thyself to be in distress rather than to behold these things broken to pieces, how shouldest thou feed another at the cost of them? For most women feel towards these things, as to some living beings, and not less than towards their children. "God forbid," thou sayest. Prove me this then, prove it by your works, as now at least I see the contrary. For who ever of those that are completely taken captive, by melting down these things, would rescue a child's soul from death? And why do I say a child's? Who hath redeemed his own soul thereby, when perishing? Nay, on the contrary, the more part even set it to sale for these things every day. And should any bodily infirmity take place, they do everything, but if they see their soul depraved, they take no such pains, but are careless both about their children's soul, and their own soul, in order that these things may remain to rust with time.

And whilst thou art wearing jewels worth ten thousand talents, the member of Christ hath not the enjoyment so much as of necessary food. And whereas the common Lord of all hath imparted to all alike of heaven, and of the things in Heaven, and of the spiritual table, thou dost not impart to Him even of perishing things, on purpose that thou mayest continue perpetually bound with these grievous chains. Hence the countless evils, hence the fornications of the men, when ye prepare them to cast off self-restraint, when ye teach them to take delight in these things with which the harlot women deck themselves. For this cause they are so quickly taken captive. For if thou hadst instructed him to look down upon these things, and to take delight in chastity, godly fear and humility, he would not have been so easily taken by the shafts of fornication. For the harlot is able to adorn herself in this way even to a greater degree than this, but with those other ornaments not so. Accustom him then to take delight in these ornaments, which he cannot see placed on the harlot. And how wilt thou bring him into this habit? If thou take off these, and put on those others, so shall both thy husband be in safety, and thou in honor, and God will be propitious to you, and all men will admire you, and ye will 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 90

Matthew Chapter 28, Verse 11-Matthew Chapter 28, Verse 14

”Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and declared unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they had assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole Him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor’s ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.” Fort the sake of these soldiers that earthquake took place, in order to dismay them, and that the testimony might come from them, which accordingly was the result. For the report was thus free from suspicion, as proceeding from the guards themselves. For of the signs some were displayed publicly to the world, others privately to those present on the spot; publicly for the world was the darkness, privately the appearance of the angel, the earthquake. When then they came and showed it (for truth shines forth, being proclaimed by its adversaries), they again gave money, that they might say, as it is expressed, ”that His disciples came and stole Him.”

How did they steal Him? O most foolish of all men! For because of the clearness and conspicuousness of the truth, they are not even able to make up a falsehood. For indeed what they said was highly incredible, and the falsehood had not even speciousness. For how, I ask, did the disciples steal Him, men poor and unlearned, and not venturing so much as to show themselves? What? was not a seal put upon it? What? were there not so many watchmen, and soldiers, and Jews stationed round it? What? did not those men suspect this very thing, and take thought, and break their rest, and continue anxious about it? And wherefore moreover did they steal it? That they might feign the doctrine of the resurrection? And how should it enter their minds to feign such a thing, men who were well content to be hidden and to live? And how could they remove the stone that was made sure? how could they have escaped the observation of so many? Nay, though they had despised death, they would not have attempted without purpose, and fruitlessly to venture in defiance of so many who were on the watch. And that moreover they were timorous, what they had done before showed clearly, at least, when they saw Him seized, all rushed away from Him. If then at that time they did not dare so much as to stand their ground when they saw Him alive, how when He was dead could they but have feared such a number of soldiers? What? was it to burst open a door? Was it that one should escape notice? A great stone lay upon it, needing many hands to move it.

They were right in saying, "So the last error shall be worse than the first," making this declaration against themselves, for that, when after so much mad conduct they ought to have repented, they rather strive to outdo their former acts, feigning absurd fictions, and as, when He was alive, they purchased His blood, so when He was dead and risen again, they again by money were striving to undermine the evidence of His resurrection. But do thou mark, I pray thee, how by their own doings they are caught everywhere. For if they had not come to Pilate, nor asked for the guard, they would have been more able to act thus impudently, but as it was, not so. For indeed, as though they were laboring to stop their own mouths, even so did they all things. For if the disciples had not strength to watch with Him, and that, though upbraided by Him, how could they have ventured upon these things? And wherefore did they not steal Him before this, but when ye were come? For if they had been minded to do this, they would have done it, when the tomb was not yet guarded on the first night, when it was to be done without danger, and in security. For it was on the Sabbath that they came and begged of Pilate to have the watch, and kept guard, but during the first night none of these was present by the sepulchre.

2. And what mean also the napkins that were stuck on with the myrrh; for Peter saw these lying. For if they had been disposed to steal, they would not have stolen the body naked, not because of dishonoring it only, but in order not to delay and lose time in stripping it, and not to give them that were so disposed opportunity to awake and seize them. Especially when it was myrrh, a drug that adheres so to the body, and cleaves to the clothes, whence it was not easy to take the clothes off the body, but they that did this needed much time, so that from this again, the tale of the theft is improbable. What? did they not know the rage of the Jews? and that they would vent their anger on them? And what profit was it at all to them, if He had not risen again?

So these men, being conscious that they had made up all this tale, gave money, and said, "Say ye these things, and we will persuade the governor." For they desire that the report should be published, fighting in vain against the truth; and by their endeavor: to obscure it, by these even against their will they occasioned it to appear clearly. For indeed even this establishes the resurrection, the fact I mean of their saying, that the disciples stole Him. For this is the language of men confessing, that the body was not there. When therefore they confess the body was not there, but the stealing it is shown to be false and incredible, by their watching by it, and by the seals, and by the timidity of the disciples, the proof of the resurrection even hence appears incontrovertible. Nevertheless, these shameless and audacious men, although there were so many things to stop their mouths, "Say ye," these are their words, "and we will persuade, and will secure you." Seest thou all depraved? Pilate. for he was persuaded? the soldiers? the Jewish people? But marvel not, if money prevailed over soldiers. For if with His disciple it showed its might to be so great, much more with these.

"And this saying is commonly reported," it is said, "until this day." Seest thou again the disciples' love of truth, how they are not ashamed of saying even this, that such a report

prevailed against them. "Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, and some worshipped, and some when they saw Him doubted." This seems to me to be the last appearance in Galilee, when He sent them forth to baptize. And if "some doubted," herein again admire their truthfulness, how they conceal not even their shortcomings up to the last day. Nevertheless, even these are assured by their sight. What then saith He unto them, when He seeth them? "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth." Again He speaketh to them more after the manner of man, for they had not yet received the spirit, which was able to raise them on high. "Go ye, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;" giving the one charge with a view to doctrine, the other concerning commandments. And of the Jews He makes no mention, neither brings forward what had been done, nor upbraids Peter with his denial, nor any one of the others with their flight, but having put into their hands a summary of the doctrine, that expressed by the form of baptism, commands them to pour forth over the whole world.

After that, because he had enjoined on them great things, to raise their courage, He says, "Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Seest thou His own proper power again? Seest thou how those other things also were spoken for condescension? And not with those men only did He promise to be, but also with all that believe after them. For plainly the apostles were not to remain here unto "the end of the world;" but he speaks to the believers as to one body. For tell me not, saith He, of the difficulty of the things: for "I am with you," who make all things easy. This He said to the prophets also in the Old Testament continually, as well to Jeremiah objecting his youth, as to Moses and Ezekiel shrinking from the office, "I am with you," this here also to these men. And mark, I pray thee, the excellence of these, for the others, when sent to one nation, often excused themselves, but these said nothing of the sort, though sent to the world. And He reminds them also of the consummation, that He may draw them on more, and that they may look not at the present dangers only, but also at the good things to come that are without end.

"For the irksome things, saith He, that ye will undergo are finished together with the present life, since at least even this world itself shall come to an end, but the good things which ye shall enjoy remain immortal, as I have often told you before." Thus having invigorated and roused their minds, by the remembrance of that day, He sent them forth. For that day to them that live in good works is to be desired, even as on the other hand to those in sin, it is terrible as to the condemned. But let us not fear only, and shudder, but let us change too, while there is opportunity, and let us rise out of our wickedness, for we can, if we be willing. For if before grace many did this, much more after grace. 3. For what grievous things are we enjoined? to cleave mountains asunder? to fly into the air? or to cross the Tuscan sea? By no means, but a way of life so easy, as not so much as to want any instruments, but a soul and purpose only. For what instruments had these apostles, who effected such things? Did they not go about with one vestment and unshod? and they got the better of all.

For what is difficult of the injunctions? Have no enemy. Hate no man. Speak ill of no man. Nay, the opposites of these things are the greater hardships. But He said, you reply, Throw away thy money. Is this then the grievous thing? In the first place, He did not command, but advised it. Yet even if it were a command, what is it grievous not to carry about burdens and unseasonable cares? But oh covetousness! All things are become money; for this cause all things are turned upside down. If anyone declares another happy, he mentions this; should he pronounce him wretched, hence is derived the description of wretchedness. And all reckonings are made on this account, how such an one gets rich, how such an one gets poor. Should it be military service, should it be marriage, should it be a trade, should it be what you will that any man takes in hand, he does not apply to what is proposed, until he see these riches are coming in rapidly upon him. After this shall we not meet together and consult how we shall drive away this pest? Shall we not regard with shame the good deeds of our fathers? of the three thousand, of the five thousand, who had all things common?

What is the profit of this present life, when we do not use it for our future gain? How long do ye not enslave the mammon that hath enslaved you? How long are ye slaves of money? How long have ye no love for liberty, and do not rend in pieces the bargains of covetousness? But while, if ye should have become slaves of men, you do all things, if any one should promise you liberty; yet being captives of covetousness, ye do not so much as consider how ye may be delivered from this bitter bondage. And yet the one were nothing terrible, the other is the most bitter tyranny. Consider how great a price Christ paid for us. He shed His own blood; He gave up Himself. But ye, even after all this, are grown supine; and the most grievous thing of all is, that ye even take delight in the slavery, ye luxuriate in the dishonor, and that, from which ye ought to flee, is become an object of desire to you.

But since it is right not only to lament and to blame, but also to correct, let us see from what cause this passion and this evil have become an object of desire to you. Whence then, whence hath this come to be an object of desire? Because, thou sayest, it makes me to be in honor and in security. In what kind of security, I pray thee? In the confidence, not to suffer hunger, nor cold, not to be harmed, not to be despised. Wilt thou then, if we promise thee this security, refrain from being rich? For if it is for this that riches are an object of desire, if it be in your power to have security without these, what need hast thou of these any more? "And how is it possible," thou sayest, "for one who is not rich to attain to this?" Nay, how is it possible (for I say the opposite thing) if one is rich? For it is necessary to flatter many, both rulers and subjects, and to entreat countless numbers, and to be a base slave, and to be in fear and trembling, and to regard with suspicion the eyes of the envious, and to fear the tongues of false accusers, and the desires of other covetous men. But poverty is not like this, but altogether the contrary. It is a place of refuge and security, a calm harbor, a wrestling ground, and school of exercise to learn self-command, an imitation of the life of angels.

Hear these things, as many as are poor; or rather also, as many as desire to be rich. It is not poverty that is the thing to be feared, but the not being willing to be poor. Account poverty to be nothing to fear, and it will not be to thee a matter for fear. For neither is this fear in

the nature of the thing, but in the judgment of feeble-minded men. Or rather. I am even ashamed that I have occasion to say so much concerning poverty, to show that it is nothing to be feared. For if thou practise self-command, it is even a fountain to thee of countless blessings. And if any one were to offer thee sovereignty, and political power, and wealth, and luxury, and then having set against them poverty, were to give thee thy choice to take which thou wouldest, thou wouldest straightway seize upon poverty, if indeed thou knewest the beauty thereof.

4. And I know that many laugh, when these things are said; but we are not troubled but we require you to stay, and soon ye will give judgment with us. For to me poverty seems like some comely, fair, and well-favored damsel, but covetousness like some monster shaped woman, some Scylla or Hydra, or some other like prodigies feigned by fabulous writers. For bring not forward, I pray thee, them that accuse poverty, but them that have shone thereby. Nurtured in this, Elias was caught up in that blessed assumption. With this Eliseus shone; with this John; with this all the apostles; but with the other, Ahab, Jezebel, Gehazi, Judas, Nero, Caiaphas, were condemned. But if it please you, let us not look to those only that have been glorious in poverty, but let us observe the beauty itself of this damsel. For indeed her eye is clear and piercing, having nothing turbid in it, like the eye of covetousness, which is at one time full of anger, at another sated with pleasure, at another troubled by incontinence. But the eye of poverty is not like this, but mild, calm, looking kindly on all, meek, gentle, hating no man, shunning no man. For where there are riches, there is matter for enmity, and for countless wars. The mouth again of the other is full of insults, of a certain haughtiness, of much boasting, cursing, deceit; but the mouth and the tongue of this are sound, filled with continual thanksgiving, blessing, words of gentleness. of affection, of courtesy, of praise, of commendation. And if thou wouldest see also the proportion of her members, she is of a goodly height, and far loftier than wealth. And if many flee from her, marvel not at it, for indeed so do fools from the rest of virtue.

But the poor man, thou wilt say, is insulted by him that is rich. Again thou art declaring to me the praise of poverty. For who, I pray thee, is blessed, the insulter, or the insulted? It is manifest that it is the insulted person. But then, the one, covetousness, urges to insult the other; poverty persuades to endure. "But the poor man suffers hunger," thou wilt say. Paul also suffered hunger, and was in famine. "But he has no rest." Neither "had the Son of Man where to lay His head." Seest thou how far the praises of poverty have proceeded, and where it places thee, to what men it leads thee on, and how it makes thee a follower of the Lord? If it were good to have gold, Christ, who have the unutterable blessings, would have given this to His disciples. But now so far from giving it them, He forbad them to have it. Wherefore Peter also, so far from being ashamed of poverty, even glories in it, saying, "Silver and gold have I none; but what I have give I thee." And who of you would not have desired to utter this saying? Nay, we all would extremely, perhaps some one may say. Then throw away thy silver, throw away thy gold. "And if I throw it away, thou wilt say, shall I receive the power of Peter?" Why, what made Peter blessed, tell me? Was it indeed to have lifted up the lame man? By no means, but the not having these riches, this procured him Heaven.

For of those that wrought these miracles, many fell into hell, but they, who did those good things, attained a kingdom. And this you may learn even of Peter himself. For there were two things that he said, "Silver and gold have I none;" and, "In the name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk."

Which sort of thing then made Him glorious and blessed, the raising up the lame man, or the casting away his money? And this you may learn from the Master of the conflicts Himself. What then doth He Himself say to the rich man seeking eternal life? He said not, "raise up the lame," but, "Sell thy goods, and give to the poor, and come and follow me, and thou shall have treasure in Heaven." And Peter again said not, "Behold, in Thy name we east out devils;" although he was casting them out, but, "Behold, we have forsaken all and followed Thee what shall we have?" And Christ again, in answering this apostle, said not, "If any man raise up the lame," but, "Whosoever hath forsaken houses or lands, shall receive an hundredfold in this world, and shall inherit everlasting life." Let us also then emulate this man, that we may not be confounded, but may with confidence stand at the judgment seat of Christ; that we may win Him to be with us, even as He was with His disciples. For He will be with us, like as He was with them, if we are willing to follow them, and to be imitators of their life and conversation. For in consequence of these things God crowns, and commends men, not requiring of thee to raise the dead, or to cure the lame. For not these things make one to be like Peter, but the casting away one's goods, for this was the apostles' achievement.

But dost thou not find it possible to east them away? In the first place, I say, it is possible; but I compel thee not, if thou art not willing, nor constrain thee to it; but this I entreat, to spend at least a part on the needy, and to seek for thyself nothing more than is necessary. For thus shall we both live our life here without trouble, and in security, and enjoy eternal life; unto which God grant we all may attain, by the grace and love towards man of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and might, together with the Father and the Holy Ghost, now and always, and world without end. Amen.parparpar

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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.