

SAINT PETER DAMIAN

APOLOGY ON CONTEMPT OF THE  
WORLD

*Apologeticum de Contemptu Saeculi*

---

SABBATISMUS

Saint Peter Damian (1007–1072)  
Apologeticum de Contemptu Saeculi · Apology on Contempt of the World

Latin text: public domain.  
Translation, alignment and edition © 2026 Inversiones San Juan Diego (Sabbatismus). Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International license (CC BY-SA 4.0).

Facing-page bilingual edition: Latin on the left-hand pages, English on the right.  
Sabbatismus is the imprint of the Inversiones San Juan Diego foundation, San Pedro Sula, Honduras.  
Set in EB Garamond and Cinzel.  
[sabbatismus.com](http://sabbatismus.com)

## CONTENTS

|                                                                                                                    |    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| TWELFTH WORK. A DEFENSE CONCERNING THE CONTEMPT OF THE<br>WORLD. TO ALBIZO THE HERMIT AND PETER THE MONK . . . . . | 5  |
| [A DEFENSE CONCERNING THE CONTEMPT OF THE WORLD.] . . . . .                                                        | 5  |
| Chapter IV. . . . .                                                                                                | 9  |
| Chapter VIII. . . . .                                                                                              | 17 |
| Chapter IX. . . . .                                                                                                | 23 |
| Chapter X. . . . .                                                                                                 | 23 |
| Chapter XI. . . . .                                                                                                | 27 |
| Chapter XII. . . . .                                                                                               | 31 |
| Chapter XIII. . . . .                                                                                              | 33 |
| Chapter XIV. . . . .                                                                                               | 35 |
| Chapter XV. . . . .                                                                                                | 39 |
| Chapter XVI. . . . .                                                                                               | 41 |
| Chapter XVIII. . . . .                                                                                             | 45 |
| Chapter XIX. . . . .                                                                                               | 47 |
| Chapter XXI. . . . .                                                                                               | 51 |
| Chapter XXII. . . . .                                                                                              | 53 |
| Chapter XXIV. . . . .                                                                                              | 61 |
| Chapter XXV. . . . .                                                                                               | 63 |
| Chapter XXVII. . . . .                                                                                             | 67 |
| Chapter XXVIII. . . . .                                                                                            | 71 |
| Chapter XXIX. . . . .                                                                                              | 75 |
| Chapter XXX. . . . .                                                                                               | 81 |
| Chapter XXXI. . . . .                                                                                              | 83 |
| Chapter XXXII. . . . .                                                                                             | 85 |
| Chapter XXXIII. . . . .                                                                                            | 89 |
| SCHOLIA . . . . .                                                                                                  | 93 |

OPUSCULUM DUODECIMUM. APOLOGETICUM DE  
CONTEMPTU SAECULI. AD ALBIZONEM  
EREDITAM ET PETRUM MONACHUM  
*ARGUMENTUM.*

In hoc libello miserabilem suo tempore religionis statum quotidie in deterius prolabentem, ob monasticae disciplinae contemptum, omni animi contentione deplorat. Invehitur in monachos, qui cum mundo se nuntium remisisse profiteantur, mundanis tamen fluctibus, et negotiis irretiti teneantur. Queritur apud eos nullius auctoritatis esse leges, et instituta Patrum: quippe cum pecuniam, quam seorsum habere sub gravissimi sacrilegii poena prohibentur, nihil veriti singuli possideant, et passim quaerant. Exaggerat eorumdem levitatem et inconstantiam, quod non in cella, ut debent, permaneant: sed passim ubique evagentur, unde fiat ut in gravissima peccata prolabantur. Detestatur superbiam et arrogantiam, quod speciosis vestibus utantur, quodque sint popularis aerae per fictam probitatem affectatores. Tum externas occupationes et saecularium negotiorum moles, quibus se implicant, graphice describit, et ante oculos ponit. Tandem concludit eosdem obsecrans, ut si suae salutis curam habent, omnino se a saeculo subtrahant, et re ipsa, non specietenus, se mundo abdicasse omnibus palam faciant.

[APOLOGETICUM DE CONTEMPTU SAECULI.]

*CAPUT PRIMUM. Queritur de monasticae disciplinae lapsu.*

De contemptu saeculi hujus, fratres charissimi, Albizo videlicet venerabilis eremita, et Petre de mundi rhetore jam Christi philosophe, saepe, ut nostis, familiari quodam studio disputare soliti, tum de nostra ipsorum imperfectione dolumus, tum etiam de nonnullis hujus sacrae militiae fratribus per abrupta vagantibus conquesti sumus. Ad tantam quippe faecem quotidie semetipso deterior mundus iste devolvitur, ut non solum cujuslibet sive saecularis, sive ecclesiasticae conditionis ordo a statu suo collapsus jaceat, sed etiam ipsa monastica disciplina solotenus, ut ita dixerim, reclinata, ab assueta illa celsitudinis suae perfectione languescat. Periit pudor, honestas evanuit, religio cecidit, et velut facto agmine omnium sanctarum virtutum turba procul abscessit. Omnes enim quae sua sunt, quaerunt (Philipp. II), et contempto coelesti desiderio, terram insatiabiliter concupiscunt.

TWELFTH WORK. A DEFENSE CONCERNING THE  
CONTEMPT OF THE WORLD. TO ALBIZO THE  
HERMIT AND PETER THE MONK  
*ARGUMENT.*

In this little book, he deplores with all the contention of his spirit the miserable state of religion in his time, daily slipping into a worse condition on account of the contempt for monastic discipline. He inveighs against the monks who, although they profess to have renounced the world, are nevertheless held entangled by worldly tides and affairs. He complains that among them the laws and institutes of the Fathers are of no authority, since indeed, fearing nothing, each one possesses and everywhere seeks money, which they are forbidden to have for themselves under penalty of the most grievous sacrilege. He emphasizes their levity and inconstancy, in that they do not remain in their cells as they ought, but wander about everywhere, from which it happens that they fall into the most grievous sins. He detests their pride and arrogance, in that they use showy garments and are seekers of popular favor through feigned probity. Then he graphically describes and places before the eyes the external occupations and the burdens of secular affairs in which they entangle themselves. Finally, he concludes by beseeching them that, if they have any care for their own salvation, they should withdraw themselves completely from the world and make it clear to all that they have renounced the world in reality, not just in appearance.

[A DEFENSE CONCERNING THE CONTEMPT OF  
THE WORLD.]

*CHAPTER I. A complaint concerning the decline of monastic discipline.*

Concerning the contempt of this world, dearest brothers—namely Albizo, the venerable hermit, and Peter, once a rhetorician of the world, now a philosopher of Christ—we have often, as you know, been accustomed to dispute with a certain familiar zeal, and have both lamented our own imperfection and complained about certain brothers of this sacred warfare who wander through precipices. Indeed, this world is daily sinking into such dregs, becoming worse than itself, that not only does every order of whatever condition, whether secular or ecclesiastical, lie collapsed from its proper state, but even monastic discipline itself, utterly cast down, so to speak, languishes far from its accustomed perfection of loftiness. Shame has perished, honor has vanished, religion has fallen, and, as if forming a battle line, the whole crowd of holy virtues has departed far away. For "all seek what is their own" (Philippians 2), and, despising celestial desire, they insatiably covet the earth.

Et quia sub ipso mundi fine postmodum inhiare non desinunt, quasi post alta pelagi in littus evecti, terram remigio inaniter pulsant, dum adhuc pervicaces navigare festinant. Et cum laborandi finis procul dubio quies sit, quibus ultro quiescendi locus offertur, supervacuio laboris studio poenaliter fatigantur.

Sed esto, ut filii hujus saeculi in fluctivaga saecularium procellarum inundatione versentur, et nunc semina, quibus propensius oblectantur, aspergant, ut non quas voluerint, postmodum fruges metant. Quid enim mihi, juxta Apostolum, de his qui in mundo sunt, judicare? (I Cor. V.) Nos autem, qui mundi abrenuntiationes dicimur, qui terreni fluctus naufragium evasisse gloriamur, cur ad illud denuo, velut quodam vertice violenter absorbente relabimur? Cur ad ea, quae pro divino amore contemptissimus, retrogradis nitentes gressibus, male aestuanti desiderio recalemus? Cur non veremur illud inhonestae ambitionis importunitate repetere, quod neque terrena jura, neque divinae legis auctoritas vetuerat possidere? Porro nos fecimus, ut a nobis juste possessa jam nostra non fierent, et quae nostri juris erant, in alienum dominium translata prodirent. Quod ergo consilium fuit in tam periculosum nosmetipsos certamen adducere, ut contra omnium humanarum divinarumque legum decreta, quarum videlicet pace fruebamur, nunc necesse sit dimicare? Nos siquidem minime lacessiti ultronea temeritate bellum movimus, et nunc contra sacrae Scripturae sententias configere non timemus.

Quis, rogo, Ananiam et Saphiram rebus propriis abrenuntiare coegit? (Act. V.) Sed quia partem pecuniae uterque pro sustentanda quasi longa vita retinuit, repentinae mortis sententiam non evasit. Et quia nequaquam juxta abrenuntiatorum regulam contenti sunt vivere, juxta praevaricatorum animadversionem coacti sunt immaturo exitu infelicitur expirare. Et quidem illi, utpote rudes, et ad fidem denuo venientes, necdum fortasse ad plenum evangelica praecepta didicerant, necdum sacri novae doctrinae codices ad publicum in commune processerant; attamen qui in ipso fidei tirocinio quodammodo simpliciter peccaverunt, districto quidem, sed pio judicio, sola, ut credimus, sunt corporum morte multati. Nos autem, qui cuncta sacri eloquii volumina novimus, qui innumerabilium sanctorum Patrum vitas atque praecepta post illud aureum apostolorum saeculum existentium, prae oculis assidua discussione versamus, ante tribunal Christi quid excusationis obtendere, quod tergiversationis argumentum poterimus invenire? Ecce longe nobiliores quaestus, et lucra quaeque terrena non modo reliquimus, sed et perpetuam eorum abrenuntiationem non homini, sed Deo potius professi sumus.

And because they do not cease to gape for things even at the very end of the world, it is as if, having been carried to the shore after the high seas, they strike the land in vain with their oars, while they still stubbornly hasten to sail. And although the end of labor is without doubt rest, those to whom a place of rest is freely offered are penally fatigued by a superfluous zeal for labor.

But let it be that the sons of this age are tossed about in the wave-wandering flood of worldly storms, and now scatter the seeds in which they take greater delight, only to reap afterwards not the fruits they wished for. For what is it to me, according to the Apostle, to judge concerning those who are in the world? (I Cor. V). But we, who are said to have renounced the world, who glory in having escaped the shipwreck of the earthly tide, why do we slide back to it again, as if violently absorbed by some vortex? Why, striving with backward steps, do we grow warm again with ill-seething desire for those things which we scorned for the sake of divine love? Why do we not fear to seek again, with the importunity of dishonest ambition, that which neither earthly laws nor the authority of divine law had forbidden us to possess? Furthermore, we ourselves have brought it about that what was justly possessed by us should no longer be ours, and that which was under our jurisdiction should pass over and come into another's dominion. What counsel was it, therefore, to bring ourselves into so perilous a contest, that now it should be necessary to fight against the decrees of all human and divine laws, by whose peace we were, in fact, enjoying ourselves? For we indeed, though not at all provoked, have with spontaneous recklessness started a war, and now we do not fear to contend against the sentences of Holy Scripture.

Who, I ask, compelled Ananias and Sapphira to renounce their own property? (Acts 5) But because each of them retained a part of the money as if to sustain a long life, they did not escape the sentence of sudden death. And because they were by no means content to live according to the rule of those who have renounced, they were compelled, according to the punishment for transgressors, to expire unhappily by a premature end. And indeed, they, being unlearned and newly come to the faith, had perhaps not yet fully learned the evangelical precepts, nor had the sacred books of the new doctrine yet gone forth to the public for common use; nevertheless, having sinned in a certain simple way in the very apprenticeship of faith, they were punished, by a strict but pious judgment, we believe, only with the death of the body. But we, who know all the volumes of sacred eloquence, who keep before our eyes with constant examination the lives and precepts of innumerable holy Fathers existing after that golden age of the apostles, what excuse shall we be able to offer, what argument for evasion shall we be able to find before the tribunal of Christ? Behold, we have not only left behind far nobler gains and all earthly profits, but we have also professed a perpetual renunciation of them not to man, but rather to God.

Si ergo adhuc marsupio nostro nummus includitur, si ad interni spectatoris injuriam quantumlibet pecuniae reservatur, quid illi in reddenda ratione dicemus? qua nos defensionis arte purgabimus? Huc accedit quod illi, vacillante adhuc fide, in nulla videbantur ecclesiastica posse sustentatione confidere; nimirum dum in ipso Christianae religionis exordio ipsae quoque Ecclesiae necdum fuerant per materiale aedificium fabricatae.

Nos autem, qui ubique terrarum tam largissima ecclesiarum patrimonia cernimus, ut quotidie, dum mundus imminuta possessione contrahitur, Ecclesia copiosissime dilatetur; si tanquam de futuris alimentis lucrum carnale reponimus, dum nobis in posterum providendo ditescimus, thesauro fidei nos vacuos esse monstramus. 246 De quo Apostolus: «Habemus, inquit, thesaurum istum in vasis fictilibus (II Cor. IV).» Et dum cautionem, quam cum Christo pepigimus, frangimus, violatae fidei potius tormenta metuere, quam praemia possumus de nostra conversione sperare. In conventionem etenim pacti, quod inter duos fit, sponsionis vox ex utraque parte procedit: ut nimirum uterlibet, qui conducta servaverit, modum deliberati fructus accipiat; e contra qui transgressus fuerit, jacturam violatae sponsionis incurrat.

In pactione autem illa, qua cum Deo nostro convenimus, vox nostra haec procul dubio fuit, quia Christum sequentes, mundum, et quaeque sunt mundi, abrenuntiare promisimus. Divina autem vox consequenter ad ista respondit: «Amen, inquit, dico vobis, quia vos qui secuti estis me, in regeneratione cum sederit Filius hominis in sede majestatis suae, sedebitis et vos super sedes duodecim judicantes duodecim tribus Israel (Matth. XIX).» Et hoc quidem, si propositae sponsionis jura servamus; alioquin si post terga respicimus, terribile mox oraculum divinae comminationis audimus: «Nemo, inquit, mittens manum suam ad aratrum, et respiciens retro, aptus est regno Dei (Luc. IX).» Ecce audivimus, qui perfectis renuntiatoribus non qualiacunque munera promittuntur, sed sedes, quibus videlicet praesidebunt iudices facti, qui de suis olim timuerant excessibus judicari. Nimirum decebat, ut haec dexterarum Excelsi immutatio fieret, quatenus qui amore perfectionis pro Christo effecti sunt pauperes, jam cum ipso divites facti communiter sedeant coelestis curiae senatores, sicut scriptum est: «Nobilis in portis vir ejus, cum sederit cum senatoribus terrae (Prov. ult.).

#### CAPUT IV.

*Quod monachus nequeat Christum simul et pecunias possidere.*

If, therefore, a coin is still enclosed in our purse, if any amount of money is reserved, to the injury of the internal spectator, what shall we say to Him when rendering an account? By what art of defense shall we clear ourselves? To this is added that they, with their faith still wavering, seemed unable to trust in any ecclesiastical support; doubtless because in the very beginning of the Christian religion, the churches themselves had not yet been constructed as material buildings.

But we, who see everywhere on earth such very large patrimonies of the churches that daily, while the world is contracted with diminished possession, the Church is most copiously expanded; if we set aside carnal profit as if for future sustenance, while we grow rich by providing for ourselves for the future, we show ourselves to be empty of the treasure of faith. 246 Concerning which the Apostle says: "We have," he says, "this treasure in earthen vessels (II Cor. 4)." And when we break the bond which we have made with Christ, we should rather fear the torments for violated faith than hope for rewards from our conversion. For in the agreement of a pact, which is made between two, the voice of the pledge proceeds from both sides: so that, to be sure, whichever of the two shall have kept the agreements, receives the measure of the intended fruit; on the contrary, he who shall have transgressed, incurs the loss for the violated pledge.

But in that pact which we made with our God, our voice was without doubt this: that in following Christ, we promised to renounce the world and all that is of the world. The divine voice, however, consequently responded to these things: "Amen," it says, "I say to you, that you who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the seat of his majesty, you also shall sit upon twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19)." And this, indeed, if we keep the laws of the proposed pledge; otherwise, if we look behind, we soon hear the terrible oracle of the divine threat: "No one," it says, "putting his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God (Luke 9)." Behold, we have heard that to those who renounce perfectly are promised not just any gifts, but seats, on which, made judges, they will preside—they who once feared to be judged for their own excesses. Doubtless it was fitting that this change of the right hand of the Most High should occur, so that those who for the love of perfection were made poor for Christ, now made rich with Him, might sit together as senators of the celestial court, as it is written: "Her husband is noble in the gates, when he sitteth with the senators of the land (Prov. 31).

#### CHAPTER IV.

*That a monk cannot possess Christ and money at the same time.*

Qui vero ad ea, quae reliquit, terrena quaelibet congerendo, revertitur, sicut alienus est a saeculo, quo se decrevit exuere, ita etiam regno Dei aptus ultra non est, quod indubitanter acceptum noluit possidere. Fatuus nimirum viator, nec eo reverti potest, unde irrevocabiliter prodiit, et quo ire disposuerat, non pertinxit. Enimvero cum mundo renuntiavimus, proprietatem nostram Deum esse constituimus: et nos illius proprietates consequenter effecti sumus, ut et ille esset portio nostra, et nos peculiariter haereditas sua. Dicimus enim: «Portio mea, Domine (Psal. CXVIII).» Et ille nobis: «Opus manuum mearum tu es, haereditas mea, Israel (Isa. XIX).» Nam de haereditate terrena scriptum est: «Haereditas, ad quam in principio festinatur, in novissimis benedictione carebit (Prov. XX).» Si ergo portio nostra ipse omnipotens Deus esse dignatur, quod, rogo, divitiarum genus quispiam valebit acquirere, quod super hunc singularem thesaurum merito debeat cumulare? Thesaurus namque ille huiusmodi est, ut si solus sit, omnes in illo divitiae valeant veraciter possideri. In pectore namque Jesu omnes thesauri sapientiae et scientiae absconditi sunt (Coloss. II). Si vero alias 247 atque peregrinas divitias super hunc is, qui potitur, constipare voluerit, illico vilis atque ignobilis copiae dedignatur omnino consortium; et indigni contubernalis impatiens, dum retineri putatur, amittitur; atque hoc modo ex frustrati avolat manibus possessoris: «Nemo enim potest Deo servire et mammonae (Matth. VI).»

Quapropter, o monache, vis in tuo loculo recondere Christum? excute prius nummum; neque enim in uno receptaculo congrue sociantur; nam si utrumque simul incluseris, alterum sine altero vacuus possessor invenies. Quanto quippe in egenis mundi lucris copiosior fueris, tanto a veris divitiis aerumnosius inanescis. Nummus ergo si est, in aliena protinus iura concedat, ut vacuum tui pectoris arcam Christus inveniat. Magnus nempe hospes in diversorii tui quaerit angusta descendere, atque idcirco solus vult, et sine consortibus habitare. Quem enim coeli terraeque non valet vastitas capere, quo pacto in exiguo tui domatis angulo niteris illi peregrinos ad cohabitandum socios adhibere? Cedat, cedat terrena pecunia, ubi coelestis thesaurus admittitur: «Quae enim societas lucis ad tenebras?» (II Cor. VI) Quae conventio Dei ad mammonam iniquitatis? Abjiciatur ergo pecunia, aerugini tineaeque et furtis obnoxia. Vacet exedra cordis, quae coelesti mercimonio possit impleri: «Nolite, inquit, thesaurizare vobis thesauros in terra, ubi aerugo et tinea demolitur, et ubi fures effodiunt et furantur (Matth. VI).»

But he who returns to the earthly things he has left behind by accumulating them, just as he is a stranger to the world which he has resolved to cast off, so also is he no longer fit for the kingdom of God, which he has undoubtedly refused to possess when it was offered. A foolish traveler, indeed, he can neither return to whence he has irrevocably departed, nor has he reached where he had intended to go. For when we renounced the world, we established God as our property; and consequently, we have been made His property, so that He might be our portion, and we His special inheritance. For we say: "You are my portion, O Lord" (Psalm 118). And He says to us: "You are the work of my hands, my inheritance, O Israel" (Isaiah 19). For concerning earthly inheritance it is written: "An inheritance gotten hastily at the beginning, in the end shall be without a blessing" (Proverbs 20). If, therefore, almighty God Himself deigns to be our portion, what kind of riches, I ask, will anyone be able to acquire that he ought deservedly to heap upon this singular treasure? For that treasure is of such a kind that, if it is alone, all riches can be truly possessed in it. For in the heart of Jesus are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2). But if he who possesses this treasure should wish to pile upon it other and foreign riches, it immediately disdains entirely the companionship of a vile and ignoble abundance; and, impatient of an unworthy companion, it is lost while it is thought to be retained; and in this way it flies from the hands of its frustrated possessor: "For no one can serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6).

Therefore, O monk, do you wish to store Christ in your coffer? First, cast out the coin; for they are not suitably joined in one receptacle; for if you enclose both together, you, an empty possessor, will find one without the other. For the more you abound in the paltry gains of the world, the more wretchedly you are emptied of true riches. Therefore, if there is a coin, let it pass at once into another's possession, so that Christ may find the coffer of your breast empty. For a great guest seeks to descend into the narrow confines of your lodging, and for that reason He wishes to dwell alone and without companions. He whom the vastness of heaven and earth cannot contain, how do you strive to bring in foreign companions to cohabit with Him in a tiny corner of your dwelling? Let earthly money yield, let it yield, where the heavenly treasure is admitted: "For what fellowship has light with darkness?" (2 Corinthians 6). What agreement has God with the mammon of iniquity? Let money, therefore, be cast away, which is subject to rust and moth and thieves. Let the chamber of the heart be empty, that it may be filled with heavenly merchandise: "Do not," He says, "lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where rust and moth destroy, and where thieves break in and steal" (Matthew 6).

Periculosior namque est animae pecunia cum acquiritur, quam cum ultro suppeditans possidetur. In ista siquidem terreno more est justa possessio, in illa vero feralis saepe regnat ambitio. Salubrius ergo fuerat habita quieto animo possidere, quam abjecta non sine quadam solliciti rancoris anxietate requirere. Pudeat ergo te, o miles Christi, peritura in hoc saeculo facultate ditescere, ne in futuro cogaris nudus, et inops perpetuo mendicare. In talis quippe militiae arma jurasti, quae nudos et agiles expetit bellatores; onustos atque in Deo segnes a castrorum excubiis donativi arcet immunes. Abjurat illa malitia sarcinis praegravatum, et turpiter ante tempus merito subrogat expeditum. Non licet illic marsupia pendere nummorum, ubi thecae tantummodo vibrantium cernuntur armorum. In bellicosa scilicet acie, inertī pecuniae non tuto servitur, ubi constipatis cuneis assidua dimicatione confligitur. Non ille solidorum summam securus enumerat, qui circumfusa hostium multitudine telorum missilia indesinenter exspectat. Saepe namque in talibus dum talentum metalli cujuslibet trutinatur, improvisa veniens occulti hostis sagitta, stomacho librantis infigitur; sicque fit, ut qui solus sibimet sine rei familiaris adminiculo minime videbatur posse sufficere; jam se et sua repentino casu lugeat irrecuperabiliter amisisse; et qui pauper cum Christo in libertate 248 dedignatus est vivere, dives absque illo, sed servus pecuniae compellitur damnabiliter interire. Audi, quid divitibus vox divina promittat: «Vae vobis, divites, quia recepistis consolationem vestram (Luc. XVI).» Nec te praetereat et hoc, quod Jacobus dicit: «Vae vobis, divites; divitiae vestrae putrefactae sunt, vestimenta vestra a tineis comesta sunt, aurum et argentum vestrum aeruginavit, et aerugo eorum in testimonium vobis erit, et manducabit carnes vestras, sicut ignis (Jac. III).»

Audisti, obsecro, nummicola et monache, quid tibi aestus avaritiae pariat? Audisti ad quem finem pecunia congesta perducatur? Justum quippe est, cujus nunc mens amore carnis ardet in concupiscentia, illius postmodum et ipsa caro comburatur in poena. Nunc fornax mentis invisibili concupiscentiae ardore succenditur, dignum est, ut tunc quoque caro materialis incendii flammam inextinguibiliter depascatur. Audi adhuc, nummicola: quod autem te nummicolam appello, a qualitate tui operis vocabulum traho, non contumeliae in te nomen usurpo; nummos enim colis, qui pecuniam diligis.

For money is more dangerous for the soul when it is being acquired than when it is possessed as something readily available. In the latter case, indeed, there is a just possession in an earthly manner, but in the former, a deadly ambition often reigns. It would have been more salutary, therefore, to possess what one has with a quiet mind, than to seek again what was cast aside, not without a certain anxiety of troubled rancor. Therefore, be ashamed, O soldier of Christ, to grow rich in this world with perishable wealth, lest in the future you be forced, naked and destitute, to beg perpetually. For you have sworn by the arms of such a militia, which seeks naked and agile warriors; but it keeps those who are burdened and sluggish in God away from the watches of the camp, exempt from the donative. That militia renounces the one heavily burdened with baggage, and deservedly substitutes the unburdened one for him, shamefully and before his time. It is not permitted there for purses of coins to hang, where only the sheaths of gleaming weapons are seen. Namely, in the line of battle, one does not safely serve inert money, where the conflict is waged with constant struggle in crowded ranks. That man does not safely count the sum of his coins, who, surrounded by a multitude of enemies, constantly expects the flying of projectiles. For often in such situations, while a talent of whatever metal is being weighed, an unexpected arrow, coming from a hidden enemy, pierces the stomach of the one weighing it; and so it happens that he who seemed least able to be sufficient for himself alone, without the support of his household property, now laments that by a sudden misfortune he has irretrievably lost both himself and his possessions; and he who disdained to live poor with Christ in freedom, is compelled, rich without Him but a slave to money, to perish damnably. Hear what the divine voice promises to the rich: "Woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation (Luke 16)." And let this not escape you, which James says: "Woe to you who are rich; your riches have rotted, and your garments are moth-eaten, your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will be a testimony against you, and will eat your flesh like fire (James 3)."

Have you heard, I ask, O money-worshipper (*nummicola*) and monk, what the heat of avarice brings forth for you? Have you heard to what end hoarded money leads? For it is just that he whose mind now burns with desire in the love of the flesh, should afterwards have that very flesh burned in punishment. Now the furnace of the mind is kindled with the invisible fire of concupiscence; it is fitting that then the flesh, too, should inextinguishably feed upon the flame of material fire. Listen further, money-worshipper: when I call you a money-worshipper, I draw the term from the quality of your work; I do not usurp a name as an insult to you, for you worship coins, you who love money.

Et cum Dominus per Prophetam dicat: «Vacate et videte, quoniam ego sum Dominus (Psal. XLV);» vacationis quidem cultum, quem Deo debueras, nummis exhibes, circa quorum custodiam vacas. «Ubi enim est thesaurus tuus, ibi est et cor tuum (Matth. VI).» Quocirca sicut qui Christum colit, jure Christicola dicitur; ita et qui nummis per custodiam servit, non immerito nummicola perhibetur. Sed adhuc fortasse proprii cordis sequi arbitrium judicor, si etymologiam nominis hujus sacrae Scripturae testimoniis non affirmo. Ipsa nempe Veritas dicit: «Non potestis Deo servire et mammonae (Matth. VI),» ac si aperte dicat: Nemo potest Deum simul et pecunias colere. Quod Apostolus manifestius declarat, cum ait: «Hoc autem scitote, intelligentes, quod omnis fornicator, aut immundus, aut avarus, quod est idolorum servitus, non habet haereditatem in regno Christi et Dei (Ephes. V).» Tot ergo criminibus simpliciter enumeratis dum solam avaritiam idolorum asserit servitutem, luce clarius docet avarum non Dei, sed nummorum, ac per hoc daemoniorum esse cultorem.

Sed dum in exponendo nummicolae nomen diutius immoror, ab effundenda ipsa nummorum congerie manum disputationis, imo dissipationis avertō. Facta igitur tibi de proprio nomine satisfactione, nummicola, jam quod dicturus eram vigilanter ausculta. Audi ergo quid de te, tuisque similibus Veritas dicat: «Difficile, inquit, qui divitias habent, intrabunt in regnum coelorum (Matth. XIX).» Et haec quidem sententia de iis, qui divitias juxta morem saeculi possident; caeterum hi, qui rejectis omnibus, denuo ad vomitum sunt relapsi, nisi respiscant, regnum coelorum nulla, vel cum difficultate, possunt fiducia promereri.

Sed ex isto nummicolarum numero cerebrosus quisquam fortasse non deerit, qui mihi ad ista respondeat: Divitiarum me cur mordaciter impetis, quem perexigua summa contentum vix paucos habere obulos cernis? cumque hoc propriae fragilitati consentio, relevandae tantummodo futurae necessitati prospicio; non affluere divitiis quaero. Teste siquidem totius fraternitatis meae conventu, a filo subtegminis usque ad corrigiam caligae de monasterii mei facultatibus non accipio: et si propriis me quibuscunque reculis prorsus evacuo, qualiter vivo? Ecce proprietarius noster, sive melius, ut ante, nummicola, paupertatis patrociniō utitur, ut ipse dives irreprehensibiliter videatur; et quibus argumentorum fucis mortale vitium palliat, ut quodammodo sepulcrum foedis cadaveribus plenum superductae calcis albore candescat?

And while the Lord says through the Prophet: "Be still, and know that I am God" (Psalm 45); you offer to coins the worship of stillness that you owed to God, for you are at leisure in guarding them. "For where your treasure is, there your heart is also" (Matthew 6). Therefore, just as he who worships Christ is rightly called a Christian (Christicola), so too he who serves coins by guarding them is not undeservedly said to be a money-worshipper. But perhaps I am still judged to be following the whim of my own heart, if I do not affirm the etymology of this name with testimonies from Holy Scripture. Indeed, Truth Himself says: "You cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6), as if to say openly: No one can worship God and money at the same time. The Apostle declares this more clearly when he says: "But know this and understand, that no fornicator, or unclean person, or covetous man, which is a serving of idols, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (Ephesians 5). Therefore, while so many crimes are simply enumerated, by asserting that avarice alone is the serving of idols, he teaches more clearly than light that the avaricious man is a worshipper not of God, but of coins, and thereby of demons.

But while I linger too long in explaining the name 'money-worshipper,' I turn the hand of my disputation, or rather, of my dissipation, from pouring out this heap of coins. Therefore, having given you satisfaction concerning your own name, O money-worshipper, now listen attentively to what I was about to say. Hear, then, what Truth says about you and those like you: "With difficulty," He says, "will they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19). And this sentence indeed concerns those who possess riches according to the custom of the world; as for those who, having rejected everything, have relapsed to their vomit, unless they repent, they can merit the kingdom of heaven with no confidence, not even with difficulty.

But from this number of money-worshippers, some hot-headed person will perhaps not be lacking to answer me thus: 'Why do you attack me so bitingly for my riches, when you see that I, content with a very small sum, have scarcely a few small coins?' 'And while I consent to this for my own frailty, I am only providing for future necessity to be relieved; I do not seek to abound in riches.' 'Indeed, with the whole community of my brotherhood as witness, from a weft thread to a shoe-latchet I receive nothing from the resources of my monastery: and if I empty myself completely of my own few trifles, how do I live?' Behold, our man of property, or better, as before, our money-worshipper, uses the patronage of poverty so that he himself might seem irreprehensibly rich; and with what painted arguments does he conceal this mortal vice, so that in a way a tomb full of foul corpses might gleam with the whiteness of the plaster laid over it?

Age, frater, si ex monasterialibus impensis commodum tibi sperare licuisset, nunquid non vestes, quas mox ut praeberentur indueres, non autem pecuniae lucra darentur, quae loculis famulatura servares? Cur non eodem compendio uteris in his etiam quae ab extraneis conferuntur? Videlicet ut percepto quolibet munere mox necessaria redimantur, et virus apud te pecuniae non moretur? Hoc enim modo et indigentiae tuae velox consolatio provehit, et lepra pecuniae foedis te maculis non aspergit. Cur autem tibi de exiguitate pecuniae tanquam securus applaudis, qui tibi sic chalcum, sicut et ipsum assem prohibitum esse non ambigis? Cui vero tota ei cujuslibet universitas intercluditur, excusationis aufugium de minutiis non lucratur: et cui totum cessit, pars procul dubio non remansit; praesertim cum haec sit mentis humanae natura, ut ita occupetur circa minima, si sit indigens, sicut erga multa, si dives. Sive enim sumptuosa divitiarum inundatione circumfluas, sive tenuissima te rei familiaris angustia premat, sententia illa mutari non potest: «Ubi est thesaurus tuus, ibi est et cor tuum (Matth. VI).» Croesus et Amyclas, diversi quidem possessores, sed non diversas circa haec, quibus fruuntur, exhibent voluntates. Licet enim ille aureos metiatur, iste millium numeret, discreta quidem facultatum quantitate caeduntur, sed non dissimili circa illa, quae cuique viritim suppetunt, amore tenentur. Porro si exiguumus, vel quodcunque reptantium in quamlibet capacissimam tunnam casu decadat, nunquid non protinus cum securibus hinc inde concurritur, totum, quidquid illud erat, effunditur, cunctisque screantibus, vomitum minante stomacho nauseatur? Si tenuissima veneni stilla pando oleris aheni diffunditur, nonne totum, esculentius licet, edulium prorsus abominabile iudicatur?

Si ergo perexigua mala largissima saepius bona corrumpunt, quo pacto te de lenocinante conscientia jactas, quia minimum est, quod contra professionis tuae propositum privata proprietate possideas? Nam juxta Apostolum: «Modicum fermentum totam massam corrumpit (I Cor. V).» Et alibi: «Qui modica spernit, paulatim decedit (Eccli. X).» Neque enim primi parentes nostri ex illo prohibito pomo (Genes. III) frequentibus sunt conviviis crapulati, cujus una tantum leguntur infausta perceptione corrupti; sed non idcirco momentaneae ultionis perplexi sunt poena, quia diutius non perstitere transgressores in culpa.

## CAPUT VIII.

*Qualiter ad veras possit monachus divitias pervenire.*

Come now, brother, if you had been allowed to hope for any benefit from the monastery's expenses, would you not have been given clothes to wear as soon as they were offered, rather than profits of money to be kept in service to your coffers? Why do you not use the same shortcut in those things also which are conferred by outsiders? Namely, that upon receiving any gift, necessities might be immediately purchased, and the poison of money not linger with you? For in this way, both a swift consolation for your need is advanced, and the leprosy of money does not sprinkle you with its foul spots. But why do you applaud yourself as if secure on account of the smallness of your money, when you do not doubt that a copper coin, just as a penny, is forbidden to you? He for whom the entire whole of anything is forbidden does not gain a refuge of excuse from the minutiae; and for whom the whole has been ceded, a part without doubt has not remained; especially since this is the nature of the human mind, that it is as occupied with the smallest things, if it is in need, as with great things, if it is rich. For whether you are awash in a sumptuous flood of riches, or the most tenuous straits of household affairs press upon you, that sentence cannot be changed: "Where your treasure is, there your heart is also" (Matthew 6). Croesus and Amyclas, possessors of different things, indeed, yet do not exhibit different wills concerning those things which they enjoy. For although the one measures out gold pieces, and the other counts his thousands, they are afflicted by a discrete quantity of means, but are held by a not dissimilar love for those things which fall to each one individually. Furthermore, if a tiny mouse, or any crawling thing, should by chance fall into the most capacious cask, do they not immediately run up from all sides with axes, is not the whole of whatever was in it poured out, and with everyone hawking and spitting, is there not a nausea with the stomach threatening to vomit? If the tiniest drop of poison is diffused in a wide pot of vegetables, is not the whole dish, however delicious, judged utterly abominable?

If, therefore, very small evils most often corrupt the greatest goods, how can you boast of a flattering conscience, because what you possess in private property against the resolution of your profession is minimal? For according to the Apostle: "A little leaven corrupts the whole lump" (1 Corinthians 5). And elsewhere: "He that contemneth small things shall fall by little and little" (Ecclesiasticus 10). For our first parents were not debauched in frequent feasts on that forbidden fruit (Genesis 3), but are read to have been corrupted by a single, ill-fated partaking of it; yet they were not for that reason perplexed by the punishment of a momentary penalty, because they did not persist longer as transgressors in their fault.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*How a monk can attain to true riches.*

Si ergo, frater, quisquis es, sumptus te delectat acquirere, unde futurae possis occurrere paupertati, veras providus divitias appete, verae etiam paupertatis inopiam pertimesce. Illius namque paupertatis intuitu, facillime paupertas ista contemnitur; illarum comparatione divitiarum omnis terrenae substantiae copia, tanquam littorea alga despicitur, quae pedibus conculcatur. Igitur si vere contendis inopiam taediosissimae illius paupertatis evadere, stude in agro cordis tui optimarum frugum sationibus insudare. Teste enim Apostolo: «Qui seminat in spiritu, de spiritu metet vitam aeternam (Gal. VI).» Et iterum: «Bonum autem facientes non deficiamus; tempore enim suo metemus non deficientes (Ibid.).» Illud summum et unicum granum in novalibus tuae mentis occulta: quod videlicet cadens in terra mortuum fuit, et multum attulit fructum (Joan. XII). Hoc tibi thesaurus, hoc tibi sit omnigenarum ubertas frugum. In illo acquirendi finem constitue, in illo omnem utriusque vitae fiduciam pone. Dominus enim omnium est, et dives in omnes qui invocant illum (Rom. XXVI).

Enimvero si granum illud competenti cura servare studueris, videbis apothecas interioris cellarii tui, auri, et argenti omniumque divitiarum talentis affluere. Videbis et horrea tua novo proventu segetum incomparabiliter redundare. Illum ergo thesaurum curiosa sollicitudine jugiter excole, circa illum nocturnas diurnasque excubias vigili sedulitate depende. In illo enim uno omnium dives eris, nec eorum, quae tibi fuerint necessaria, copia poteris indigere. In illo quippe possidebis aurum divinae sapientiae, argentum aedificatricis eloquentiae. In illo diversa pallia decorae et honestae conversationis, bis tinctum videlicet coccum geminae charitatis, colobium nitidae castitatis. In illo byssum patientiae, flammeum birotinum divini timoris, purpuram regiae dignitatis. Quia enim muriceo sanguine tingitur, ut in purpureum colorem lana vertatur, quisquis solio recti examinis ita praesidet, ut omnes suae carnis illecebras, vitiorumque barbariem violento imperio mortificare festinet, hic rex non immerito dicitur, et spiritualis purpurae, decore vestitur. In illo diupisticum virentis semper spei, nimirum vocatus in haereditatem incontaminatam, immarcescibilem, conservatam in coelis (II Pet. I). In illo habebis annulum fidei, armillas perfecti in activa vita operis, dextralia etiam speculativae contemplationis. «Leva enim ejus sub capite tuo, et dextera illius amplexabitur te (Cant. II).»

Therefore, brother, whoever you are, if it delights you to acquire provisions by which you might meet future poverty, prudently seek true riches, and fear the want of true poverty. For in consideration of that poverty, this poverty is most easily scorned; in comparison with those riches, all abundance of earthly substance is despised like seaweed on the shore, which is trampled underfoot. Therefore, if you truly strive to escape the want of that most wearisome poverty, endeavor to labor at sowing the best of crops in the field of your heart. For as the Apostle testifies: "He who sows in the spirit, from the spirit will reap eternal life (Gal. 6)." And again: "And let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up (Ibid.)." Hide that supreme and unique grain in the fallow fields of your mind: which, falling into the ground, died and brought forth much fruit (John 12). Let this be your treasure, let this be for you an abundance of all kinds of fruits. In it establish the end of your acquiring, in it place all your confidence for both lives. For the Lord is Lord of all, and is rich to all who call upon him (Rom. 10).

Indeed, if you strive to keep that grain with competent care, you will see the storerooms of your inner cellar overflow with talents of gold, silver, and all riches. You will also see your barns overflow incomparably with a new harvest of crops. Therefore, cultivate that treasure constantly with careful solicitude; keep nightly and daily watches around it with vigilant assiduity. For in that one thing you will be rich in all things, nor will you be able to lack an abundance of those things which are necessary for you. Indeed, in it you will possess the gold of divine wisdom, the silver of edifying eloquence. In it, the diverse cloaks of a seemly and honorable way of life, namely, the scarlet twice-dyed of twofold charity, the tunic of shining chastity. In it, the fine linen of patience, the flame-colored veil of divine fear, the purple of royal dignity. For just as wool is dyed with the blood of the murex to be turned into the color purple, whoever so presides on the throne of right judgment that he hastens to mortify all the allurements of his flesh and the barbarity of vices by a violent command, he is not undeservedly called a king and is clothed in the beauty of spiritual purple. In it, the two-ply garment of ever-green hope, being called, of course, to an inheritance that is undefiled, unfading, and kept in heaven (1 Pet. 1). In it you will have the ring of faith, the bracelets of perfect work in the active life, and also the armlets of speculative contemplation. "For his left hand is under your head, and his right hand will embrace you (Cant. 2)."

Et quid tibi plura pollicear? quandoquidem in illo omnium virtutum gemmis, cunctorum perfrueris charismatum margaritis? Nec tibi deerunt omnium mundorum scilicet immundorumque animalium greges, quae sub virga tuae transeant disciplinae. Immunda siquidem vitiorum armenta sub tuae ditionis imperio domabuntur; munda vero interioris tui hominis ventrem suavissimae refectionis dapibus saginabunt. Ovini velleris turma delicatius accurata, dulcis innocentiae praebebunt tuis ferculis alimenta. Domesticae altilium carnes non cessabunt in te divini amoris augere pinguedinem. Universa genera volucrum super mentis tuae mensam sumptuosius instruent spiritale convivium; at vero taurina cervix superbiae suppositum tuae ditionis emugiet jugum. Equinae luxuriae effrenata libertas sub te chamati oris mandet insatiabiliter ferrum. Omnes belluae vitiorum, universa portenta reptilium tremefacta pavebunt tuae dominationis imperium. Et haec quidem omnia in hac vita in tuum cedent ultro peculium, si pretiosum illum ac singularem, quem praediximus, caute studueris custodire thesaurum.

Caeterum in illa verae beatitudinis vita quanta tibi, et quam potiora dabuntur, non est, fateor, nostrarum virium disputare, non est nostrae facultatis evolvere. Hoc tantum ad compendiosum inexplicabilis negotii exitum referre sufficiat, quia hoc accepturi sunt, qui mundum perfecte reliquerunt: «Quod oculus non vidit, nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascendit, quae praeparavit Deus diligentibus se (II Cor. II).»

Hunc ergo thesaurum, Christum videlicet, Deum et Dominum nostrum, qui nobis factus est redemptor et pretium, ipse promissor et praemium, qui et vita est hominum et perennitas angelorum, hunc, inquam, in exedra tui pectoris diligenti cura reconde. In illum omnem cujuscunque necessitatis sollicitudinem projice. In ipso per assiduae orationis colloquium delectare. In ipso te vigilibus sanctarum cogitationum epulis refice. Ipse tibi sit cibus, ipse nihilominus indumentum. Si contigerit autem, ut etiam cujuspiam commodi exterioris indigeas, nihil haesites, nihil de ejus fida promissione diffidas, qua pollicetur, dicens: «Primum quaerite regnum Dei, et haec omnia adjicientur vobis (Matth. VI).» Qui enim sitientibus Israeliticae plebis agminibus ex illo aridae metallo rupis uberes aquarum rivos jussit effluere (Exod. XVI), qui esurientibus coeleste manna per annosa temporum potuit spatia ministrare, qui innumeram ortygometrarum multitudinem praecepit in murmurantium castra descendere, uni homuncioni suis jugiter obsequiis insistenti non poterit necessaria providere? Et qui per quadraginta circiter annorum curricula infinitae illius turbae vestimenta servavit illaesa, difficile sibi est attritis veteribus novas tibi exuvias reparare?

And what more shall I promise you? since in it you will enjoy the gems of all virtues, the pearls of all charisms? Nor will you lack flocks of all clean and unclean animals, which will pass under the rod of your discipline. Indeed, the unclean herds of vices will be tamed under the command of your authority; but the clean ones will fatten the belly of your inner man with the dishes of a most sweet refection. The flock of the sheep's fleece, more delicately tended, will provide the food of sweet innocence for your dishes. The meat of fattened domestic fowl will not cease to increase the richness of divine love in you. All kinds of birds will more sumptuously prepare a spiritual banquet upon the table of your mind; but the bull's neck of pride, placed under your dominion, will groan under the yoke. The unbridled liberty of equine lust will, under you, insatiably chew the iron bit of a bridled mouth. All the beasts of vices, all the monsters of reptiles, trembling, will dread the command of your dominion. And indeed, all these things in this life will willingly become your own private property, if you have carefully striven to guard that precious and singular treasure which we have mentioned before.

Moreover, what great and better things will be given to you in that life of true beatitude, it is not, I confess, within our strength to discuss, nor within our ability to unfold. Let it suffice to report this only for a summary conclusion of an inexplicable matter, that those who have perfectly left the world will receive this: "What eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man, what God has prepared for those who love him (1 Cor. 2)."

Therefore, this treasure—namely Christ, our God and Lord, who was made for us both redeemer and price, himself the promiser and the prize, who is both the life of men and the eternity of angels—this treasure, I say, store away with diligent care in the chamber of your breast. Cast upon him all solicitude for any necessity whatsoever. Delight yourself in him through the conversation of assiduous prayer. Refresh yourself in him with the watchful feasts of holy thoughts. Let him be your food, and likewise your clothing. But if it should happen that you are in need of any external comfort, do not hesitate at all, nor distrust his faithful promise, by which he pledges, saying: "Seek first the kingdom of God, and all these things will be added to you (Matt. 6)." For he who commanded abundant rivers of water to flow from that dry metal of the rock for the thirsty hosts of the Israelite people (Exod. 17), who was able to minister heavenly manna to the hungry through long spans of time, who commanded an innumerable multitude of quails to descend into the camp of the murmurers—will he not be able to provide the necessities for one little man who constantly persists in his service? And he who for the course of about forty years kept the garments of that infinite crowd unharmed, is it difficult for him to provide new clothes for you when the old are worn out?

Nos certe nos minimae fidei, compellimus Christum esse tenacem. Nempe pusillanimatorum diffidentia facit pauperem Christum; at plena fides divitem illum et largum in exhibendis experitur. Satage tantum in his te exercere, quae jussit, et nulla prorsus ex his maneat dubietas, quae promisit. Sit securus exactor, ubi ad reddendum promptus est debitor. Sine causa diffiditur, ubi ille promissor est, qui nunquam mentitur. Securus creditor graditur, cum simplex veritas promissione tenetur

Haec autem de proprietatem habentibus monachis brevi perstringere compendio duximus; nunc autem ad eos, qui equinis vocationibus assidue delectantur, disputationis articulum transferamus.

## CAPUT IX.

### *De monachis assidue discurrentibus.*

Nec reor de vestra excidere potuisse memoria, fratres charissimi, quia saepenumero de hac quoque monachorum pernicie concordi inter nos familiaritate doluimus: et inquietis fratribus ac vagationis vitio pereuntibus, fraternae charitatis affectu compassumus. Sunt namque nonnulli, quibus dum saeculi militiam bajularent, pertaesum erat sub humanae servitutis jugo huc illucque discurrere, adeo ut deliberarent ad monasteriale otium libertatis amore transire; nunc autem tanto sunt pestiferae inquietudinis ardore succensi, ut si quando non praebetur occasio dictans longius progredi, tenebroso carcelaris custodiae videantur horrore concludi: quod procul dubio fieri antiqui hostis non ignoratur astutia. Quos enim adhuc sessor nequissimus equitat, idcirco importunis vagandi calcaribus urget, ut et ipsi ad saeculi vanitatem redeunt pereant, et alios ab arripiendo tramite verae salutis avertant. Sunt enim quamplures in saeculari habitu constituti, qui nisi ad hunc monasticae institutionis portum, Christo duce, confugiant, aliter se in illis procellosis mundani pelagi fluctibus salvari posse omnino diffidant.

## CAPUT X.

### *Quid laici de monachis saecularibus dicant.*

We, certainly, we of little faith, compel Christ to be stingy. Indeed, the diffidence of the fainthearted makes Christ poor; but full faith experiences him as rich and generous in giving. Only be busy to exercise yourself in those things which he has commanded, and let there remain no doubt at all concerning those things which he has promised. Let the collector be secure where the debtor is ready to pay. One distrusts without cause where the promiser is he who never lies. The creditor walks secure when simple truth is bound by the promise.

We have thought it fit to touch briefly upon these matters concerning monks who hold property; but now let us transfer the article of our discourse to those who are constantly delighted by riding horses.

## CHAPTER IX.

*On monks who constantly wander about.*

Nor do I think it could have escaped your memory, dearest brothers, that we have very often lamented together in harmonious fellowship about this ruinous conduct of monks: and we have commiserated with brotherly charity for the restless brothers who are perishing through the vice of wandering. For there are some who, while they were engaged in the service of the world, grew weary of running hither and thither under the yoke of human servitude, so much so that they decided, for the love of freedom, to pass over to the leisure of the monastery; but now they are so inflamed with the ardor of a pestilential restlessness that if ever an occasion does not present itself dictating that they should travel further, they seem to be enclosed in the dark horror of a prison's confinement: which, without a doubt, is known to be done by the cunning of the ancient enemy. For those whom the most wicked rider still mounts, he therefore spurs on with the relentless goads of wandering, so that they themselves may perish by returning to the vanity of the world, and may turn others away from seizing the path of true salvation. For there are very many established in the secular life who, unless they take refuge in this port of monastic institution with Christ as their guide, despair completely of being able to be saved otherwise in those stormy waves of the worldly sea.

## CHAPTER X.

*What the laity say about secular monks.*

Sed cum contemplantur eos qui nuper cuncta quae mundi sunt, cum magno fere contempserant, nunc ad saecularium negotiorum turbinem inhianter redigi, et in ejusdem, quam evaserant, coenosa volutabri faece versari, stupor mirantibus oritur, suspirium ab imis visceribus trahitur, et in eorum mentibus desperatio generatur. In semetipsum namque unusquisque hujusmodi querelam deponit, dicens: Vae, vae, ubi ego propriae salutis spem posui? Cur autem capitis mei periculo ad ordinem illum transire decrevi? Paulo minus brevi puncto corpus simul et animam perdi. Pene me in ignem apertis oculis propria voluntate conjeci. Quis enim illo ferventior aliquando monasterium petiit? Quis, ut videbatur, animosiori constantia ad Christi militiam properavit? Nunc autem omnium, quae promisit, oblitus, in terrenis se negotiis jugiter versat, saeculum tractat, saeculum spirat: et quem mihi mortificationis habitus dissimilem reddit, mecum mundo non dissimiliter vivit. Plane, ut perspicuum est, mutare corpus exteriorem speciem potuit, sed mens in eo, quo fuerat statu, male fixa permansit. Quid mihi conversionis ejus incentores accusare? In rebus siquidem bellicis solummodo commilitonem perdi, sed in reliquis terrenis actibus socium non amisi. Mecum certe forenses lites agitat, mecum in tribunalibus judicum perorare non cessat, mecum importunus atria principum penetrat, mecum simul eorum auribus consilia terrenae profunditatis instillat.

Sed qua temeritate socium nuncupare praesumo, quem jam consuetudinaliter socium, sed in cunctis tanquam pedissequa, vix praeambulum sequor? Sane tantum a populo gloriam de sua conversione lucratur, ut supervenienti omnes assurgant, quidquid attulerit, velut prophetiae oraculum credant, et devotionis illi obsequium reverenter exhibeant. Sed videlicet quantum ad carnem, nequaquam infructuosa illius creditur fuisse conversio; quia qui saecularem vestem non cum mente deposuit, saecularem pompam callidus permutator plenius acquisivit.

Has itaque, atque hujusmodi murmurationes dum detrectatores effundunt, quantis sit occasio pereundi in saeculo pervagatio monachorum quis enumerare sufficiat? Facilius enim in saeculari habitu etiam perire deliberant, quam perditorum exempla sequendo, utrumque simul, ut aiunt, saeculum perdant. Et revera non est mirandum, si videntibus hoc scandalum nascitur, quod et Deo, et sacrae auctoritati probatur esse contrarium. Ait enim Apostolus: «Nemo militans Deo, implicat se negotiis saecularibus, ut ei placeat, cui se probavit (II Tim. II).» Et ipse Dominus admonet discipulos suos, dicens: «Cavete, ne graventur corda vestra in crapula, et ebrietate, et curis hujus saeculi (Luc. XXI).»

But when they contemplate those who recently, with great fervor, had scorned all worldly things, now being eagerly drawn back into the whirlwind of secular affairs, and wallowing in the filthy dregs of the same muddy pit they had escaped, astonishment arises in the onlookers, a sigh is drawn from their inmost depths, and despair is generated in their minds. For each one lays down a complaint of this kind within himself, saying: Woe, woe, where have I placed the hope of my own salvation? Why, then, did I decide to pass over to that order at the peril of my own head? In a short moment, I almost lost both body and soul at once. I nearly cast myself into the fire with open eyes and by my own will. For who ever sought the monastery more fervently than he? Who, as it seemed, hastened to the soldiery of Christ with more courageous constancy? But now, forgetful of all that he promised, he continually involves himself in earthly business, he handles the world, he breathes the world: and he whom the habit of mortification makes unlike me, lives with me in the world in a not dissimilar way. Plainly, as is clear, the body was able to change its external appearance, but the mind remained badly fixed in the state in which it had been. Why should I accuse the instigators of his conversion? Indeed, in matters of warfare I have only lost a fellow soldier, but in the remaining earthly acts I have not lost a companion. With me, certainly, he stirs up forensic disputes; with me, he does not cease to plead in the tribunals of judges; with me, importunately, he penetrates the courts of princes; with me, at the same time, he instills into their ears counsels of earthly profundity.

But with what temerity do I presume to call him a companion, whom I now customarily follow not as a companion, but in all things as a foot-servant, scarcely as a forerunner? Indeed, he gains so much glory from the people for his conversion that all rise for him when he arrives, they believe whatever he brings forth as if it were an oracle of prophecy, and they reverently show him the deference of devotion. But evidently, as far as the flesh is concerned, his conversion is not believed to have been fruitless; because he who did not lay aside his secular garment with his mind, as a cunning trader, has more fully acquired secular pomp.

And so, while detractors pour forth these and similar murmurings, who can suffice to enumerate for how many the wandering of monks in the world is an occasion of perishing? For they more easily resolve to perish even in the secular habit than, by following the examples of the lost, to lose both worlds at once, as they say. And in truth, it is not to be wondered at if this scandal arises for those who see it, which is proven to be contrary both to God and to sacred authority. For the Apostle says: "No one serving as a soldier for God entangles himself in secular affairs, so that he may please him to whom he has enlisted (2 Tim. 2)." And the Lord himself admonishes his disciples, saying: "Take heed, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, and drunkenness, and the cares of this life (Luke 21)."

## CAPUT XI.

*Quod discursio monachi et virtutes expellat, et vitiorum multitudinem introducat.*

Ex hac namque inquietudinis venenata radice tot vitiorum propaggines oriuntur, ut in quocunque vigere cognoscitur, omni monasticae perfectionis fructu velut arbor arida denudetur. Et tanquam grossi ficulneae ventis expositi stare nequeunt, sic in illo diversis mundi tentationibus hinc inde perflantibus bonorum operum fructibus permanere non possunt. Hoc namque vitium tantae violentiae est, ut postquam sibi in pectore monachi semel imperium vindicaverit, mox ex maxima parte, si inest virtutum chorus, abscedat; nonnulla vitiorum portenta velut ergastulum proprii juris irrumpat. Nam ut pauca referantur e multis, monachus in itinere positus tenere jejunium nequit, quia hospitalis ei humanitas non permittit; non sapienter psallit, quia obambulantis comitatus eum loquacitas impedit; nocturni non insistit excubiis, quia secretum deest singularitatis; flectendis genibus non insudat, quia sanctae devotionis studio labor itineris non concordat; nequaquam sub silentii censura constringitur, quia frequenter emergentibus causis, invitus etiam per multiloquia diffrenatur.

Quid dicam, quia lectioni vel orationi minime vacat, quem extra semetipsum egredi, et terrena quaeque tractare imminens potius necessitas dictat? Charitas in eo minuitur, quia mens, quae tot actionum saecularium ventos recipit, ab amoris intimi fervore tepescit. Suum quoque castitas mentis dispendium patitur, quia nonnunquam mens concupiscentiae telo configitur per carnis speciem, quam exterius contemplatur. Robur etiam patientiae frangitur, quia quodlibet inceptanti dum saepe contra votum repentini casus emergentes obviant, qui suum accelerabat explicare negotium, non aequanimiter portat: et talia tunc per impatientiam verba profundit, quae cum ad otium revertitur, ultricibus lacrymis graviter punit. Sobrietatis regula non servatur, quia dum lautioribus cibis convivii apparatus instruitur, dum hospitalis officii sedulitas exhibetur, quia inhumanum putat invitantium precibus non condescendere, delectat etiam ventri sub charitatis specie molliter indulgere.

## CHAPTER XI.

*That the wandering of a monk both expels virtues and introduces a multitude of vices.*

For from this poisoned root of restlessness so many offshoots of vices arise that whomever it is known to flourish in is stripped of every fruit of monastic perfection, like a dry tree. And just as unripe figs exposed to the winds cannot remain on the tree, so in him the fruits of good works cannot remain, with the diverse temptations of the world blowing from this side and that. For this vice is of such violence that once it has claimed dominion for itself in the breast of a monk, the choir of virtues, if present, soon for the most part departs; and several monstrosities of vices burst in, as if into a prison of their own right. For, to mention a few things out of many, a monk on a journey cannot keep the fast, because the kindness of hospitality does not permit it; he does not chant the psalms wisely, because the talkativeness of his traveling company hinders him; he does not persist in the night vigils, because the secret place of solitude is lacking; he does not labor in bending his knees, because the labor of the journey does not accord with the practice of holy devotion; he is by no means constrained under the rule of silence, because with causes frequently arising, even unwillingly he is let loose into much talking.

What shall I say, that he has no time for reading or prayer, whom an imminent necessity rather dictates to go outside himself and to handle all sorts of earthly matters? Charity is diminished in him, because the mind, which receives so many winds of secular actions, grows lukewarm from the fervor of intimate love. The chastity of his mind also suffers its own loss, because sometimes the mind is pierced by the dart of concupiscence through the sight of the flesh, which it contemplates outwardly. The strength of patience is also broken, because while he is undertaking anything, unexpected events often arise against his wish and stand in his way, and he who was hastening to carry out his business does not bear it with equanimity: and then through impatience he pours forth such words, which, when he returns to leisure, he severely punishes with avenging tears. The rule of sobriety is not observed, because while the preparation for a banquet is arranged with richer foods, and while the diligence of the duty of hospitality is shown, since he thinks it inhuman not to condescend to the requests of his hosts, he also delights in softly indulging his belly under the guise of charity.

In quo nimirum articulo in mente servi Dei saepe dubietas oritur, ne videlicet unde sobrietati consulitur, inde quoque hypocrisi (quod abominabile est vitium) serviatur. Unde apud quosdam sobrietatis modus omnino contemnitur, ut hypocrisis quoque nota procul abesse videatur. Sed hoc modo in eo, quod discrete agi creditur, discretio non tenetur. Ille enim scit recte discernere, qui virtutem novit a vitio separare: qui autem cum zizaniis simul etiam triticum eradicat, hic procul dubio vim discretionis ignorat. Quisquis ergo solo supernae remunerationis intuitu sobrietatis limitem non excedit, et hypocrisim sub humilitatis suae pedibus calcatur, et custoditae sobrietatis praemium incunctanter exspectat.

Ut autem adhuc quoque de monacho discurrente dicamus, lacrymarum compunctionem quibus peccata defleat, non habet; quia mens arida, quae per aestum terrenae conversationis incedit, dum perfundi rore sancti Spiritus non meretur, arescit: et terrenarum cogitationum coeno plena, quia aquam capitis interius gratia largiente non concipit, nullas extra se lacrymas fundit. Aliquando fortasse circumfusus auditoribus praedicat, sed repente vana gloria subripit, et quasi ex insidiis prodians, eum, qui aliis medebatur, occidit. Si autem et hoc praecavens, sub silentii se censura constringit, nihil eorum posse perficere, quorum gratia venerat, erubescit. Si morosae gravitatis, ut dignum est, speciem servat, valde pertimescit, ne et hic hypocrisis notam simulator incurrat. Si autem a suae mortificationis rigore quantumlibet se in lenitatem resolvit, hic etiam multo minus securus est, ne videlicet suo exemplo alios destruat. Si quando inter dissidentes sequestrae pacis vult reformare concordiam, si districtae veritatem exsequitur, reconciliationis inter eos unitas non conflatur; quod si uti mendaciis acquiescit, peccati laqueos non evadit. Cum vult peccantes arguere, culpam non minimam deputat, tot proximorum suorum adversum se odia concitare. Videre autem, et conticescere, quid aliud arbitratur, nisi prave agentibus consentire? Et haec quidem ex illis, qui quantolibet calent superni fervoris igniculo. Caeterum frigidi quique, qui spretis divinae militiae castris, ad mundanae vertiginis molam sinistro postliminio revolvuntur, quam judicabiliter agant, quam inconsiderate vivant, referant qui volunt. Nobis consultius videtur, eos pia compassione deflere, quam execrandae conversationis gesta conscribere, ne quibus solas compatiendi lacrymas debemus impendere, his videamus censoriis litteris obtrectare.

In which matter, to be sure, a doubt often arises in the mind of the servant of God, lest, namely, where sobriety is provided for, there also hypocrisy (which is an abominable vice) be served. Hence among some, the measure of sobriety is entirely scorned, so that the mark of hypocrisy may also seem to be far away. But in this way, in that which is believed to be done with discretion, discretion is not maintained. For he knows how to discern rightly who knows how to separate virtue from vice; but he who eradicates the wheat along with the tares, this one without doubt is ignorant of the power of discretion. Whoever therefore, with a view only to the heavenly reward, does not exceed the limit of sobriety, both tramples hypocrisy under the feet of his humility and unhesitatingly awaits the reward for the sobriety he has kept.

But to say still more about the wandering monk, he does not have the compunction of tears with which to weep for his sins; because his arid mind, which walks through the heat of earthly conversation, grows dry since it does not merit being sprinkled with the dew of the Holy Spirit: and full of the mire of earthly thoughts, because it does not conceive within the water of the head which grace bestows, it pours forth no tears outside itself. Sometimes perhaps he preaches to the listeners gathered around, but suddenly vainglory steals in, and coming forth as if from an ambush, it kills him who was healing others. But if, guarding against this as well, he constrains himself under the rule of silence, he is ashamed of being able to accomplish none of those things for which he had come. If he maintains an appearance of solemn gravity, as is fitting, he is greatly afraid lest here too, as a pretender, he incur the mark of hypocrisy. But if from the rigor of his mortification he relaxes himself ever so little into leniency, here he is even much less secure, lest, that is, he destroy others by his example. If at any time among those who are disagreeing he wishes as a mediator of peace to restore harmony, if he strictly pursues the truth, the unity of reconciliation is not forged between them; but if he acquiesces to using lies, he does not escape the snares of sin. When he wants to reprove sinners, he considers it no small fault to stir up the hatred of so many of his neighbors against himself. But to see and to be silent, what else does he judge it to be, than to consent to those who act wickedly? And these things are said of those who are warmed by however small a spark of heavenly fervor. But as for the lukewarm, who, having scorned the camps of the divine warfare, are rolled back by an ill-omened return to the millstone of worldly giddiness—how judgmentally they act, how inconsiderately they live, let those who wish relate. To us it seems more advisable to weep for them with pious compassion than to write down the deeds of their execrable way of life, lest we be seen to disparage with censorious letters those for whom we ought to expend only tears of compassion.

## CAPUT XII.

*Quae mala infelix anima monachi patiatur, cum ad inferiora revertitur.*

Hoc autem absolute dicimus, quod tantis insidiarum tendiculis hoc tempore mundus ille densatus est, ut quisquis hujus sacri ordinis desiderat innocenter vivere, ab illius processu cautissime se expediat abstinere: cujus videlicet iter si saepe terit, procuratos insidiarum laqueos non evadit; et tanquam arbor munientis se corticis defensione nudata, nec virtutum fructus afferre, nec vitiorum quasi terendorum scaturientium cariem poterit evitare. Cum vero ad propriae habitationis claustra revertitur, cominus illum quasi quaedam conglobata turba omnium quae viderat, vel audierat, comitatur, ut tumultuantium negotiorum strepitum, quem illic tolerabat in corpore, multo ingruentius, multoque importunius hic patiatur in mente; praecipue si orationi vacare enixius coeperit, ecce phantasmata cogitationum, ecce imagines, quas viderat, rerum, ita ut in quolibet angulo constitutus, videatur sibi ludis theatralibus interesse, vel inter agitantes forense litigium residere. Et quidem homo renititur, et quasi circumvolantes muscas abigere a suae mentis ore conatur. At illae mox, ut abscedunt, protinus redeunt; illico ut repelluntur, assistunt: ut quasi fugitivum suum persequentes capere, et in propriae servitutis moliantur exercitia revocare. Tunc infelix anima discit, quanti sibi constiterit, quod se per latitudinem saeculi inaniter relaxavit. Tabescit enim sicca, obscura, lapidea; in modum namque lapidis obdurata, nec in lacrymarum fluentia prorumpere, nec lumen potest tenebris undique circumfusa videre. Psalmorum quidem mysteriis intendere nititur, sed tanquam lippientibus oculis intolerabili lumine reverberatur. Anhelat virtute, qua potest, ad summa contendere, sed quodam suo pondere praegravata, in imis cogitur humiliata jacere. Cui propheticum illud non inconvenienter aptatur: «In tenebrosis collocavit me quasi mortuos sempiternos, circumaedificavit adversum me, ut non egrediar, aggravavit compedem meum, sed et cum clamavero, et rogavero, exclusit orationem meam (Thren. III).» Moeret, anxietur, anhelat; et quia nec ipsam hanc ejus miseriam sibi flere permittitur, acriori doloris amaritudine repleta turbatur. Saltem hanc ploratus vocem cum propheta daretur effundere, qua dicitur: «Idcirco, inquit, ego plorans, et oculus meus deducens aquam; quia longe factus est a me consolator, convertens animam meam (Thren. I).» Sed infelix 256 illa anima, cum et se flebilem videat, et tamen flere non possit, quam procul sit a salute, quasi in quemdam lacum devoluta miseriae, longius conspicit.

## CHAPTER XII.

*What evils the unhappy soul of a monk suffers when it returns to lower things.*

But we say this absolutely, that in this time that world has been so thickened with snares of treachery, that whoever desires to live innocently in this sacred order should most cautiously take care to abstain from its goings-on: namely, if he often travels its path, he does not escape the prepared snares of treachery; and like a tree stripped of the defense of its protecting bark, he will be able neither to bear the fruits of virtues nor to avoid the decay of vices springing forth as if from rubbing. But when he returns to the cloisters of his own dwelling, a certain crowded throng, as it were, of all that he had seen or heard, accompanies him at close quarters, so that he suffers the clamor of tumultuous affairs, which he tolerated there in the body, much more pressingly and much more importunately here in the mind; especially if he begins to apply himself more earnestly to prayer, behold the phantoms of thoughts, behold the images of the things he had seen, so that, standing in any corner, he seems to himself to be present at theatrical plays, or to be sitting among those engaged in a legal dispute in the forum. And indeed the man struggles, and tries to drive away, as it were, flying flies from the mouth of his mind. But as soon as they depart, they immediately return; as soon as they are repelled, they are present: so that, as if pursuing their fugitive, they strive to capture him and call him back to the exercises of their own servitude. Then the unhappy soul learns how much it has cost it, that it has idly relaxed itself throughout the breadth of the world. For it wastes away, dry, dark, stony; for, hardened in the manner of a stone, it can neither burst forth into floods of tears, nor, being surrounded on all sides by darkness, can it see the light. It tries, indeed, to attend to the mysteries of the Psalms, but it is beaten back by the intolerable light as if with bleary eyes. It pants with what strength it has to strive for the highest things, but, weighed down by a certain weight of its own, it is forced, humiliated, to lie in the lowest places. To which that prophetic saying is not unfittingly applied: "He has set me in dark places, as those that are dead of old. He has built a wall around me, that I may not get out: he has made my fetter heavy. And when I have cried and shouted, he has shut out my prayer (Lamentations 3)." It grieves, is anxious, it pants; and because it is not permitted to weep even for this its own misery, it is troubled, filled with a sharper bitterness of sorrow. If only it were given to it to pour forth this cry of weeping with the prophet, where it is said: "Therefore, he says, I am weeping, and my eye runs down with water: because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me (Lamentations 1)." But that unhappy soul, since it sees itself to be pitiable and yet cannot weep, perceives from afar, as if rolled down into a certain lake of misery, how far it is from salvation.

Nimirum cum flere via tantummodo sit, ut peccatorum valeat ad indulgentiam pervenire: ergo cum illa reatum suum plangere nequeat, videtur sibi, quod necdum etiam in viam pedem posuerit, qua pertingere ad indulgentiam possit.

Huic simile est, quod ex imperfectorum persona per Prophetam dicitur: «Concupivit anima mea desiderare justificationes tuas in omni tempore (Ps. CXVIII).» Qui enim legem Dei, quae procul dubio justificatio ejus est, omni tempore nondum desiderat, sed jam desiderare concupiscit, jam quidem utcunque eminus suspicit, sed nequaquam perfectionis alta conscendit. Fit ergo menti miserae tam tenebrosa confusio, ut quocunque se verterit, se versari in saeculo videat, cum saeculum sine se esse indubitanter agnoscat. Cum illo itaque est, quod cum ipsa non est; quia scilicet mundum, quem corporali digressionem deseruit, secum per phantasticas imaginationes in mente depingit. Enimvero ista in humana mente calamitas, et peccatum est, et poena peccati. Justum quippe est, ut quod quisque volens admisit, patiatur invitus. Nimirum ut qui noluit se intra secretum sui ordinis cohibere, cum potuit, nequaquam saeculo carere potuisset etiam cum reliquit.

Mens igitur humana tantae egestatis atque penuriae necessitate constricta dolet, gemit, atque ab imis visceribus suspirium trahit; quia videlicet recessus sui munditiam vagationis vitio perdidit, et se rursus in volutabro saeculi velut sus lutulenta provolvit (Prov. XXVI; II Petr. II). Tunc se levitatis atque inconstantiae mordaciter arguit; se vagam atque fallacem vehementer accusat, et Dei judicium rectum esse, et aequitatis jura tenere veraciter probat, dicens cum propheta: «Bonus est Dominus sperantibus in eum, animae quaerenti illum. Bonum est praestolari cum silentio salutare Domini. Bonum est viro cum portaverit jugum ab adolescentia sua: sedebit solus, et tacebit, quia levavit se super se (Thren. III).» Quae enim, si secreta diligeret, super semetipsam gauderet evecta, moereret nunc, quia ad publicum exiens, se sub se videt jacere prostratam.

### CAPUT XIII.

*Quod is qui foras egreditur, cum excommunicatis communicare cogatur.*

Est etiam aliud, quod etsi impedimenta deessent, solum sufficere poterat, ut monachos a mundi vagatione compesceret. Quis enim hoc tempore quorumlibet saecularium possit invenire conventum, ubi non sit hujusmodi, qui pro sui reatus piaculo excommunicationis debeat subire judicium? Jam dudum enim omnia per mundum crimina communiter emergerunt, universa flagitiorum mala nunc vigent, atque eo se diffusius quotidie pullulando dilatant, quo vicinius mundi terminus appropinquat.

For since weeping is the only way by which a sinner can attain to pardon, therefore, since that soul cannot bewail its guilt, it seems to itself that it has not yet even set foot on the path by which it might reach pardon.

Similar to this is what is said by the Prophet in the person of the imperfect: "My soul has coveted to long for your justifications at all times (Psalm 118)." For he who does not yet desire the law of God, which is without doubt His justification, at all times, but already covets to desire it, already indeed looks up to it from afar in some way, but by no means ascends the heights of perfection. Therefore, such a dark confusion comes upon the wretched mind that, wherever it turns, it sees itself engaged in the world, although it knows without a doubt that the world is without it. Thus, it is with that with which it is not; because, that is, it depicts in its mind through fantastical imaginations the world which it has deserted by its bodily departure. Indeed, this calamity in the human mind is both a sin and the punishment for sin. For it is just that what each person has willingly admitted, he should suffer unwillingly. To wit, so that he who was unwilling to restrain himself within the secret of his order when he could, could by no means be without the world even when he left it.

The human mind, therefore, constrained by the necessity of such great want and poverty, grieves, groans, and draws a sigh from its inmost depths; because, that is, it has lost the purity of its retreat through the vice of wandering, and has rolled itself again in the mire of the world like a sow in the mud (Proverbs 26; 2 Peter 2). Then it sharply reproaches itself for its levity and inconstancy; it vehemently accuses itself of being wandering and deceitful, and truly proves that the judgment of God is right and holds to the laws of equity, saying with the prophet: "'The Lord is good to them that hope in him, to the soul that seeks him. It is good to wait with silence for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for a man when he has borne the yoke from his youth: he shall sit solitary, and shall keep silence, because he has lifted himself up above himself (Lamentations 3).'" For that which, if it loved secret things, would rejoice, having been lifted up above itself, now grieves because, going out into public, it sees itself lying prostrate beneath itself.

### CHAPTER XIII.

*That he who goes out is forced to associate with the excommunicated.*

There is also another reason, which, even if impediments were lacking, could alone suffice to restrain monks from wandering in the world. For who in this age could find any gathering of secular people where there is not someone of this kind, who for the offense of his guilt ought to undergo the judgment of excommunication? For long ago all crimes have commonly emerged throughout the world, all the evils of wickedness now flourish, and they spread themselves more widely every day by multiplying, the nearer the end of the world approaches.

Quapropter impossibile est monacho, qui ad publicum egreditur, ut non sive cum 257 excommunicatis, sive cum excommunicandis, quod pene tantumdem est, communicare cogatur. Cum homicidis enim, cum perjuris, cum incestuosis, cum incensoribus aedium, cum adulteris loquitur: quibus, etiam si adversus exhorreat, plerumque tamen osculo jungitur, simul etiam communi ferculo, prout necessitas imminet, convivatur, cum econtrario Apostolus clamet: «Si is qui frater nominatur, est fornicator, aut immundus, aut ebriosus, aut rapax, cum huiusmodi nec cibum sumere (I Cor. V).»

Et certe satis formidolosum est, nimisque contrarium, cum his qui a Deo divisi sunt, habere consortium, praesertim monachis, qui Deo ita sunt peculiari quadam, atque, ut ita loquar, domestica familiaritate conjuncti, ut abjurato saeculo, solis sint divinis obsequiis irrevocabiliter deputati. Sicut enim ab ipso reproborum capite, ita quoque a membris illius, nisi causa conversionis exegerit, studendum est declinare. Una siquidem hic abominationis repulsa debetur, quibus illic unus ignis, attestante Veritate, paratur, dum ad sinistram positus dicitur: «Ite, maledicti, in ignem aeternum, qui paratus est diabolo et angelis ejus (Matth. XXV).» Quos ergo ad aliam cernimus patriam tendere, non debemus eis in via noxiae societatis glutino foederari, ne quos inordinatus amor associat, simul etiam poena extremae ultionis involvat.

#### CAPUT XIV.

*Quod sicut ab excommunicatis, ita etiam ab excommunicandis oporteat declinare.*

Enimvero ut enucleatius pateat, quantum bonos pravorum societas laedat, hac possumus perspicua ratione colligere, quia videlicet eorum alii sunt sacerdotali sententia nuper excommunicati, alii tantummodo canonico sanctorum Patrum iudicio communione privandi. Sed de his qui nuper excommunicati sunt, nulli dubium, quin omnis, qui eorum participio utitur, similem damnationis sententiam sortiatur. De his autem, qui pro commissis criminibus canonica quidem sunt auctoritate damnandi, nec dum tamen vivis sacerdotum vocibus ab ecclesiastica videntur unitate praecisi, a nonnullis ambigitur, utrum eorum tuto societas admittatur; sed si rem pensiori subtilitate perpendimus, nullam pene inter eos esse distantiam invenimus. Sive enim a modernis, sive ab antiquis Patribus quis jure damnetur, idem est: nec temporum diversitas solvit, quem eadem perpetrati piaculi causa constringit, et aetatum varietas judiciali calculo non praejudicat, ubi una limatae aequitatis regula sententiam dictat.

Therefore, it is impossible for a monk who goes out into public not to be forced to associate either with the excommunicated or with those who are to be excommunicated, which is almost the same thing. For he speaks with murderers, with perjurers, with the incestuous, with arsonists, with adulterers: with whom, even if he shudders at them, he is nevertheless often joined by a kiss, and even dines with them at a common table, as necessity dictates, when on the contrary the Apostle proclaims: "If anyone who is called a brother is a fornicator, or unclean, or a drunkard, or a robber, with such a one do not even eat (I Cor. V)."

And it is certainly quite fearful, and exceedingly contrary, to have fellowship with those who are separated from God, especially for monks, who are so joined to God by a certain special and, so to speak, domestic familiarity, that having renounced the world, they are irrevocably deputed to divine services alone. For just as one must turn away from the head of the reprobate himself, so also from his members, unless the cause of conversion demands it. Indeed, one and the same repulsion of abomination is owed here to those for whom one fire is prepared there, as the Truth attests, when it is said to those placed on the left: "Go, you cursed, into the eternal fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. XXV)." Therefore, those whom we see heading to another homeland, we ought not to be bound to them on the way by the glue of a harmful association, lest the penalty of final vengeance also envelop those whom a disordered love joins together.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

*That one must withdraw just as from the excommunicated, so also from those who are to be excommunicated.*

Indeed, so that it may be more clearly evident how much the company of the wicked harms the good, we can gather this by this clear reasoning: namely, that some of them have recently been excommunicated by a priestly sentence, while others are only to be deprived of communion by the canonical judgment of the holy Fathers. But concerning those who have recently been excommunicated, there is no doubt to anyone that everyone who partakes with them receives a similar sentence of damnation. But concerning those who, for crimes committed, are indeed to be condemned by canonical authority, but have not yet been seen to be cut off from ecclesiastical unity by the living voices of priests, it is debated by some whether their company may be safely admitted; but if we weigh the matter with more careful subtlety, we find there is almost no difference between them. For whether someone is justly condemned by modern or by ancient Fathers, it is the same: nor does the difference of times absolve him whom the same cause of a perpetrated crime binds, and the variety of ages does not prejudice the judicial reckoning, where a single rule of refined equity dictates the sentence.

Sed quod approbare volumus, melius ostendemus, si ipsa excommunicantium Patrum et antiquorum scilicet et novorum verba ponamus. Sacri siquidem canones dicunt: Qui hoc, vel illud fecerit, excommunicetur. Moderni quoque pontifices in iaculanda excommunicationis sententia, eadem fere verba depromunt, dicentes: Ille, qui haec fecerit, excommunicetur. Quorum igitur sunt eadem verba, eadem nihilominus est intelligenda sententia, et cum praesentium sanctorum pontificum omne iudicium ab antiquorum Patrum definitionibus pendeat, nullum isti damnare praesumunt, nisi quos jam ab illis damnatos esse noverunt. Non ergo quemlibet isti noviter damnant, sed jam prolatam majorum sententiam sequendo confirmant. Concludendum est igitur (vide scholia ad calcem opusculi), quia sicut ab his cavendum est, quos moderna synodorum concilia ab ecclesiastica societate repellunt: ita et ab illis nihilominus declinandum, quos antiqui Patres eliminandos esse decernunt.

Haec itaque causa non minima est, quae monachum a saeculi discursionibus retrahat, et in sui recessus angulo stabilem reddat; quia valde miserum est a propriis quidem excessibus reprimi; sed alieni reatus maculis inquinari, cum aliis non delinquere, et alieni delicti supplicia sustinere. Malorum namque, cum incaute amicitii jungimur, culpis ligamur. Unde Josaphat qui tot de anteacta vita praeconiis attollitur, de Achab regis amicitiiis pene periturus increpatur, cui a Domino per prophetam dicitur: «Impio praebes auxilium, et his qui oderunt Dominum amicitia jungeris, et idcirco iram Domini merebaris, sed bona opera inventa sunt in te, eo quod abstuleris lucos de terra Juda (II Par. XIX).» Ab illo enim, qui summe rectus est, eo ipso jam discrepat, quo perversorum amicitiiis vita nostra concordat. Quem enim vox illa apostolica non terreat, qua nobis contestans, et a pravorum contubernio revocans, clamat? «Denuntio, inquit, vobis in nomine Domini Jesu, ut subtrahatis vos ab omni fratre ambulante inordinate, et non secundum traditionem quam tradidimus vobis (II Thess. III).» Si ergo ab his omnibus nosmetipsos debemus caute subtrahere, quos non secundum traditionem apostolicam cernimus ambulare; quanti in illo saeculari supersunt ordine, cum quibus absque periculo valeamus contubernium familiaritatis habere!

But what we wish to prove, we will show better, if we set forth the very words of the excommunicating Fathers, both ancient and new. For the sacred canons say: "Whoever has done this, or that, let him be excommunicated." Modern pontiffs also, in casting the sentence of excommunication, bring forth almost the same words, saying: "He who has done these things, let him be excommunicated." Therefore, of those whose words are the same, the sentence must be understood to be no less the same; and since every judgment of the present holy pontiffs depends on the definitions of the ancient Fathers, these latter do not presume to condemn anyone except those whom they know to have already been condemned by the former. Therefore, these latter do not newly condemn anyone, but by following, they confirm the sentence already pronounced by their predecessors. It must be concluded, therefore (see the scholia at the end of the little work), that just as one must beware of those whom the modern councils of synods repel from ecclesiastical society, so also must one no less withdraw from those whom the ancient Fathers decree are to be eliminated.

And so this is not the least cause which should draw a monk back from the runnings-about of the world and render him stable in the corner of his retreat; because it is very miserable to be restrained indeed from one's own excesses, but to be stained by the spots of another's guilt, while not sinning with others, and to endure the punishments of another's crime. For when we are incautiously joined in friendship with the wicked, we are bound by their faults. Wherefore Jehoshaphat, who is extolled with so many praises for his past life, was rebuked, being on the point of perishing, for his friendship with King Ahab, to whom it is said by the Lord through the prophet: "You give help to the impious, and you are joined in friendship with those who hate the Lord, and therefore you deserved the wrath of the Lord; but good works have been found in you, because you have taken away the groves out of the land of Judah (2 Chr. 19)." For our life, by the very fact that it agrees with the friendships of the perverse, already differs from Him who is supremely righteous. For whom would that apostolic voice not terrify, by which, testifying to us and calling us back from the company of the wicked, it cries out? "I charge you," it says, "in the name of the Lord Jesus, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which we delivered to you (2 Thess. 3)." If, therefore, we must cautiously withdraw ourselves from all those whom we see not walking according to the apostolic tradition, how few remain in that secular order with whom we might be able to have familiar company without danger!

Porro autem qui apostolica traditione contempta, aliam doctrinam sive dogmatizando, sive vivendo superinducere nititur, orthodoxi et religiosi viri perfrui consortio non meretur, apostolo quoque Joanne attestante, qui ait: «Si quis venit ad vos, et hanc doctrinam non affert, nolite recipere eum in domo, nec Ave ei dixeritis; qui enim dicit illi Ave, communicat operibus ejus malignis (II Joan. XIII).» Quibus nimirum apostolicae veritatis instructi sententiis evidentissime comprobamus, quia qui cum sceleratis hominibus carnaliter amicitias jungunt, alieni reatus participes fiunt; et cum illis simul extremae ultionis coguntur subire iudicium, cum quibus tamen in hac vita simul non admisere peccatum.

## CAPUT XV.

### *De monachis qui pretiosis vestibus delectantur.*

Hoc etiam vitium, quod videlicet jam persecuti sumus, discurrentem monachum familiariter obsidet, quia profecto nunquam sic ad purum valet a se lepram virosae proprietatis excutere, quin sibi necessarium videatur, quantumlibet apud se occasione itineris retinere. Hinc etiam pretiosarum amor vestium nascitur, ne videlicet in publicum prodiens, despicibilis esse videatur. Verumtamen dum exterioris indumenti phalera quaeritur, cuncta interioris hominis compositio dissipatur. Haec autem insania falsa, nescio quo pacto, ita perversae mentis oculos caecat, ut nec quae apud homines honestas sit, videat; neque unde apud Deum quis clarius videri possit, attendat. Et revera insania est, et falsa est. Insanum quippe est, occulti arbitri iudicium superbiendo contemnere, et humani favoris auram molliori veste captare. Falsum vero est, quia unde oculos superni Spectatoris offendit, inde etiam nihilominus apud humanae existimationis iudicium cadit; et ex qua re hominibus videri clarior appetit, ex ea se quodammodo dentibus publicae obrectationis exponit; cumque nitor indumenti ad intuendum se oculos provocat, linguas etiam ad carpendum hunc, qui induitur, derogationum spiculis armat. Quis enim monachum mollibus indutum videat, et non protinus illum divino vacuum spiritu, terrenis potius, quam coelestibus inhiare decernat? Quae enim sit mens ex veste colligitur, et juxta exteriorem cultum quae sit intentionis species iudicatur. Quod nimirum cum evangelica auctoritate concordat, cum dicitur: «A fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos (Matth. VII).» Quanquam isti non veniant ad nos cum vestimentis ovium; quandoquidem vestimentum ovium vestis est humilitatis et innocentiae, non arrogantiae vel rapinae. Illa autem vestis rapinae esse non immerito nuncupatur, quae duarum, vel etiam trium vestium summa coemittitur.

Furthermore, he who, having scorned the apostolic tradition, strives to introduce another doctrine, whether by dogmatizing or by living, does not deserve to enjoy the fellowship of an orthodox and religious man, as the Apostle John also attests, who says: "If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into the house, nor say 'Hail' to him; for he who says 'Hail' to him communicates with his evil works (2 John 1:10-11)." Instructed by these sentences of apostolic truth, we prove most evidently that those who carnally join in friendship with wicked men become participants in another's guilt; and are compelled to undergo the judgment of extreme vengeance together with them, with whom, however, they did not commit sin together in this life.

## CHAPTER XV.

### *On monks who delight in precious clothing.*

This vice also, which we have just now pursued, familiarly besieges the wandering monk, because, in truth, he is never able to so purely cast off from himself the leprosy of poisonous proprietorship that it does not seem necessary to him to retain some amount for himself on the occasion of a journey. From this also is born the love of precious garments, lest, that is, appearing in public, he should seem despicable. Yet while the trappings of exterior clothing are sought, the entire composition of the interior man is dissipated. But this false madness, I know not how, so blinds the eyes of the perverse mind that it neither sees what is honorable among men, nor considers whence one might appear more glorious before God. And it is truly madness, and it is false. For it is insane to contemptuously disregard the judgment of the hidden arbiter through pride, and to capture the breeze of human favor with softer clothing. And it is false, because from that by which he offends the eyes of the heavenly Spectator, he nonetheless also falls in the judgment of human estimation; and from that by which he desires to appear more glorious to men, he in a way exposes himself to the teeth of public detraction; and while the splendor of his garment provokes eyes to look at him, it also arms tongues with the darts of derogation to criticize him who is so clothed. For who could see a monk clothed in soft garments and not immediately judge him to be empty of the divine spirit, aspiring to earthly rather than heavenly things? For the state of the mind is inferred from the clothing, and the nature of the intention is judged according to the exterior adornment. This certainly agrees with the authority of the Gospel, when it is said: "By their fruits you shall know them (Matt. 7)." Although these men do not come to us in sheep's clothing; since the clothing of sheep is the garment of humility and innocence, not of arrogance or rapine. But that garment is not undeservedly called a garment of rapine which is bought for the price of two or even three garments.

Rapinae namque scelus admittit, qui vanae gloriae deditus in sui corporis indumentum solus insumit, unde et fratrem suum secum contegere communiter potuit. Rapinam procul dubio perpetrat, qui vani honoris ardore succensus, duarum impensas vestium in unam prodigit, et proximum suum, quem sicut semetipsum amare debuerat, in sua nuditate relinquit.

Sed hoc distat inter istos encoeniatus, videlicet monachos, et illos hypocritas quos Evangelium notat; quia illi, teste Veritate, veniunt ad nos in vestimentis ovium, intrinsecus autem sunt lupi rapaces (Matth. VII); isti autem intus vento vanae gloriae crepantibus ilibus intumescunt, foris autem in veste rapinae, sicut probatum est, ac per hoc in veste luporum arroganter incedunt. Itaque cum Dominus de Joanne dicat Judaeis: «Quid existis videre? hominem mollibus vestitum? Ecce qui mollibus vestiuntur, in domibus regum sunt (Matth. XI);» profecto monachus, qui nitorem pretiosae vestis affectat, non superni Regis, sed mundi hujus militiam bajulat: et licet videatur specietenus Deo suae quasi obedientiae munus offerre, sed aperte convincitur, humanum captando favorem, vanae gloriae veraciter deservire. Porro autem si sub obtentu obedientiae licet mollibus indui, cui potuit haec remissio liberiori dispensatione concedi, quam B. Joanni, qui praecipue obsequelae donatus officio, venerat corda patrum in filios nova praedicatione convertere, et perfectam plebem Christo Domino praeparare (Luc. I)? Nunquid et ipse Dominus providere sibi calceamenta non potuit, cujus gentilis perfidia sola inter se vestimenta divisit? Nam si ei minime calceamenta deessent, de illis etiam sacrae historiae series non taceret.

## CAPUT XVI.

*Quod sicut pretiosa vestis ad iram, ita humilis Deum ad indulgentiam provocat.*

Rex Ninive purpura indutus propriae civitatis excidium meruit; coopertus sacco divini furoris motum contriti cordis humilitate placavit (Jon. III). Ezechias quoque cultu regio decoratus, terribiles regis Assyriorum minas tremefactus audivit; sed mox ut ipse cilicio tegitur, cilicioque contextos ad prophetam mittere nuntios non erubuit, propinquae divinae victoriae, et optatae prosperitatis oraculum reportavit (IV Reg. XIX). Quae nimirum promissio, Scriptura teste, celerem pervenit ad exitum. Nam ecce angelus Domini centum octoginta quinque millia Assyriorum una nocte percussit, deinde ipsum Sennacherib regem uterque filius parricidali quidem, sed digno gladio trucidavit (ibid.).

For he commits the crime of rapine who, devoted to vainglory, spends on his own body's clothing alone what he could have used to clothe his brother along with himself. Without a doubt, he perpetrates rapine who, inflamed with the ardor of vain honor, lavishes the expense of two garments on one, and leaves his neighbor, whom he ought to have loved as himself, in his nakedness.

But this is the difference between these "renewed" monks, so to speak, and those hypocrites whom the Gospel notes; because the latter, as Truth testifies, come to us in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves (Matt. 7); but these monks swell up within with the wind of vainglory rattling in their entrails, while outwardly they walk arrogantly in the garment of rapine, as has been proven, and thus in the clothing of wolves. Therefore, when the Lord says to the Jews concerning John: "What did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Behold, those who wear soft garments are in the houses of kings (Matt. 11);" surely the monk who affects the splendor of a precious garment carries the warfare not of the heavenly King, but of this world: and although he may seem on the surface to offer to God the gift of his supposed obedience, he is openly convicted of truly serving vainglory by capturing human favor. Furthermore, if it is permissible to be clothed in soft garments under the pretext of obedience, to whom could this remission have been granted with a more liberal dispensation than to the Blessed John, who, especially gifted with the office of service, had come to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children with a new preaching, and to prepare a perfect people for Christ the Lord (Luke 1)? Could not the Lord Himself, whose garments alone the treachery of the Gentiles divided among themselves, have provided sandals for Himself? For if He had not lacked sandals in the least, the course of sacred history would not have been silent about them.

## CHAPTER XVI.

*That just as a precious garment provokes God to anger, so a humble one provokes Him to forgiveness.*

The king of Nineveh, clothed in purple, earned the destruction of his own city; covered in sackcloth, he placated the movement of divine fury with the humility of a contrite heart (Jonah III). Hezekiah also, adorned in royal attire, heard trembling the terrible threats of the king of the Assyrians; but as soon as he himself was covered in haircloth, and did not blush to send messengers covered in haircloth to the prophet, he brought back an oracle of imminent divine victory and desired prosperity (IV Kings XIX). Which promise, indeed, as Scripture testifies, quickly came to pass. For behold, the angel of the Lord struck down one hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrians in one night, and then both of his sons slew King Sennacherib himself with a parricidal, yet worthy, sword (ibid.).

Vides igitur apud Deum quantum vestis fluxa distet ab aspera. Perpendis, quia quem iratum experiri delicata meruerat, vilis et abjecta vestis iudicem placat; et quem plectibilem illa reddiderat, venia dignum ista commendat. Cujus autem momenti apud Deum vestium sit ornatus, egregius ille prophetarum Isaias evidenter ostendit, qui nimirum ad divinae jussionis imperium vestimenta deposuit, et per trium annorum spatium nudus, et discalceatus incessit. Erubescat igitur humana superbia, confundatur mens misera vanae gloriae peste corrupta, dum ille videlicet organum Dei, templum Spiritus sancti, divinae justitiae propalator, non dubitavit publice nudus incedere. Et infelix homo, qui ne ullum quidem meruit divinae familiaritatis indicium, superstitiosum laciniosae vestis affectat ornatum; et dum male coloratae vestis fucos induitur, lubricus aspici a semetipso, superni Speculatoris oculos non veretur averti. Ita sane dum indumentum illud arrogantiae sub divina aestimatione despicitur, is etiam qui induitur, consequenter abominabilis judicatur.

Sed esto, videlicet ut Isaias nudus incesserit, nunquid tunc cum vestitus ire consueverat, indui mollioribus indulgebat? Interrogemus ergo ipsam propheticae narrationis historiam, et audiamus quid sibi vox divina praecipiat: «Locutus est, inquit, Dominus in manu Isaiae filii Amos, dicens: Vade, et solve saccum de lumbis tuis, et calceamenta tolle de pedibus tuis (Isa. XX).» Qui enim non aliud quoddam vestimenti genus, sed saccum de lumbis auferre praecipitur, profecto quanti sibi vestium litura constiterit, liquido declaratur. O quanta tunc erant regum, et principum terrae triclinia deaurata! quot pictis circumfusa tholis purpurata cubilia! quanta praedivum ornamenta gemmis micantibus insignita! quot laquearia cedrinis et cypressinis instructa sigillis! et tamen omnibus spretis, despicabiliterque contemptis, hunc saccina deformitate contectum dignatus est omnipotens 261 Deus templum sibi rationale construere, et per eum quasi organum, secreti sui mysteria mortalibus revelare.

Discat ergo, discat encoeniatus monachus, quam male mercatur, quia unde clarus apparere humanis oculis appetit, hinc procul dubio in superni Judicis aestimatione sordescit: unde impensius ab hominibus honoratur, inde magis a Deo despicitur; cumque in admirationem sui intuentium oculos provocat, ab obtutibus se divinae gratiae contenebratus elongat.

You see, therefore, how much a flowing garment differs from a rough one in the eyes of God. You perceive that a vile and abject garment placates the judge whom a delicate one had deserved to experience as wrathful; and this one commends as worthy of pardon him whom that one had rendered punishable. Moreover, of what importance the adornment of clothing is before God, that excellent prophet Isaiah clearly showed, who indeed, at the command of a divine order, laid aside his garments, and for the space of three years went about naked and barefoot. Let human pride therefore blush, let the wretched mind corrupted by the plague of vainglory be confounded, while he, namely an instrument of God, a temple of the Holy Spirit, a proclaimer of divine justice, did not hesitate to go about naked in public. And unhappy is the man who, having merited not even a single sign of divine familiarity, affects the superstitious adornment of a fringed garment; and while he puts on the false colors of a badly dyed garment, slippery to be looked upon by himself, he does not fear to be turned away from the eyes of the supernal Beholder. Thus, indeed, while that garment of arrogance is despised in the divine estimation, he who wears it is consequently judged abominable.

But let it be, namely that Isaiah went about naked; did he then, when he was accustomed to go clothed, indulge in wearing softer things? Let us therefore interrogate the history of the prophetic narrative itself, and let us hear what the divine voice commands him: "The Lord spoke," it says, "by the hand of Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying: Go, and loose the sackcloth from thy loins, and take off thy shoes from thy feet (Isa. XX)." For he who is commanded to take off not some other kind of garment, but sackcloth from his loins, it is thereby clearly declared of what great value the plainness of his clothing was to him. Oh, how many gilded dining rooms of kings and princes of the earth there were then! how many purple-clad bedchambers surrounded by painted domes! how many ornaments of the very rich, marked with glittering gems! how many paneled ceilings constructed with seals of cedar and cypress! and yet, with all these things spurned and despicably contemned, almighty God deigned to build for Himself a rational temple of this man covered in the deformity of sackcloth, and through him, as through an instrument, to reveal the mysteries of His secret to mortals.

Let him learn, therefore, let the finely-clad monk learn, how bad a bargain he makes, because from that by which he desires to appear distinguished in human eyes, from this he undoubtedly becomes sordid in the estimation of the supernal Judge: from that for which he is more intensely honored by men, for that he is the more despised by God; and when he provokes the eyes of onlookers to admiration of himself, he, being darkened, removes himself from the gaze of divine grace.

Sed quoniam loquendi de vanitate vestium se occasio praebuit, sicut de his qui mollibus delectantur pauca perstrinximus, ita etiam de illis, qui eodem quidem laborant morbo, sed diversa feruntur insania, breviter disseramus. Sunt namque nonnulli, qui vilium deformitate vestium favorabilem vulgi mercantur applausum; et hac jucundius delectatione pascuntur, si dum pro accuratae deformitatis industria videntur abjecti, per efferentium populorum ora volitant gloriosi. Gaudent de se inquiringentium discussiones fieri; gaudent se, velut mirandum aliquid, digito demonstrari; qui nimirum de sua deformitate compositi, de obscuritate conspicui, de humilitate videri machinantur excelsi. Versuta siquidem diabolicae calliditatis astutia ad hoc deprimuntur, ut sublimes appareant; ad hoc deturpantur, ut oculis intuentium spectabiles enitescant.

Porro autem isti cum superioribus diversa quidem summa est, quam expendunt; sed unae sunt merces, quas concorditer emunt. Vana gloria nempe, quasi quaedam negotiandi materia in medio posita est, ad quam videlicet diversi mercatores accedunt. Alii vilia indumenta tanquam pretium de marsupio proferunt, alii redhibere pretiosa contendunt. Sed dum quique pro suis partibus satagunt, qui viles vestes afferunt, reliquis emptoribus continuo praeferuntur. Qui enim delicatis vestibus utitur, sicut superius dictum est, saepe unde captare auram favoris aestimat, inde latius obtrektorum morsibus patet; qui vero vilis indumenti extremitate contentus est (porro de monachis loquor) cujuscunque intentionis studio, scilicet sive prave, sive recte id faciat, sanctitatis illum opinio contuentibus plerumque commendat; et quo in exteriori habitu deformior quisque conspicitur, eo majori saepe dignus reverentia judicatur.

## CAPUT XVIII.

### *De vera humilitate David.*

Verumtamen quisquis ille est, qui de proprii habitus vilitate supernae retributionis praemium sperat, necesse est, ut omnem laudis humanae favorem sub pedibus suae mentis, ac si coenosum lutum calcare non desinat; qualemque se spectantium obtutibus praebet, talem se intra conscientiae suae secreta dijudicet.

But since the occasion has presented itself to speak of the vanity of garments, just as we have briefly touched upon those who delight in soft things, so also let us briefly discuss those who labor under the same disease, but are carried away by a different madness. For there are some who, by the ugliness of their cheap clothes, purchase the favorable applause of the crowd; and they feed on this delight all the more pleasantly if, while they seem abject for their diligence in studied ugliness, they fly gloriously through the mouths of the praising populace. They rejoice when discussions are held about them; they rejoice to be pointed out with a finger, as if something to be marveled at; who, indeed, composed in their ugliness, conspicuous in their obscurity, contrive to seem exalted through their humility. Indeed, by the cunning craftiness of diabolical cleverness, they are brought low for this purpose, that they may appear sublime; for this they are made unsightly, that they may shine forth as spectacles in the eyes of beholders.

Furthermore, the sum which these men spend is indeed different from that of the former; but the wares which they concordantly buy are one and the same. Namely, vainglory (*vana gloria*) is set forth in the middle, as if it were a certain matter for trade, to which, evidently, different merchants approach. Some bring forth cheap garments from their purse as a price, others strive to offer precious ones. But while each one bustles about for their own part, those who bring cheap clothes are immediately preferred to the other buyers. For he who uses delicate garments, as was said above, often from the very source whence he expects to capture the breeze of favor, is more widely exposed to the bites of detractors; but he who is content with the extremity of cheap clothing (I speak, moreover, of monks), with the zeal of whatever intention—that is, whether he does it wrongly or rightly—the opinion of sanctity generally commends him to those who behold him; and the more unsightly anyone is seen in his outward habit, the more he is often judged worthy of greater reverence.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### *On the true humility of David.*

Nevertheless, whoever it is that hopes for the reward of a heavenly recompense from the lowliness of his own habit, it is necessary that he should not cease to trample all favor of human praise under the feet of his mind, as if it were filthy mud; and just as he presents himself to the gaze of onlookers, so should he judge himself within the secrets of his own conscience.

Unde David cum eum Michol filia Saul objurgaret, dicens: «Quam gloriosus fuit hodie rex Israel discooperiens se ante ancillas servorum suorum, et nudatus est, quasi si nudetur unus de scurris (II Reg. VI; I Par. XV);» ut ostenderet, quia eadem humilitas vigeat in mente, quam prandebat in corpore, non iratus efferbuit, non elationis verba respondit, sed humiliter dixit: «Vivit Dominus, quia ludam, et vilior fiam plusquam factus sum, et ero humilis in oculis meis (ibid.).» In quibus verbis verae humilitatis forma proponitur, dum non minus interior, quam exterior humilitas demonstratur. Nonnulli enim quo se deformius in exteriori compositione dejiciunt, eo de se intrinsecus majora decernunt. Qui profecto aliud optant se in superficie videri, aliud latenter intelligi: et unde se humiliter in publico deprimunt, inde in occulto elatius intumescunt. David autem, ut extrinsecus se humilem praebeat, dicit: «Ludam et vilior fiam plusquam factus sum.» Ut vero humilitatem mentis ostendat, adjungit: «Et ero humilis in oculis meis;» ac si patenter dicat: Et exterius humiliabor, ut aliis exemplum salutis exhibeam; et intus humilis ero, ut in ejusdem salutiferae humilitatis radice et ipse persistam. Qui ergo ita simpliciter graditur, ut qualem se in deformatione sui habitus praebeat, talem se in opinione videntium esse desideret, hic profecto Christi impropriū veraciter portat, et crucem post eum mundo mortuus bajulat, tantoque in divinis obtutibus clarior redditur, quanto apud humanos oculos despicabilior judicatur, et fructuoso commercio is, quem vestis exterior foedat, gratia interiore coruscat.

## CAPUT XIX.

*Quod mollia indumenta minus perfecti fastidiant, perfectiores aliquando indifferenter admittant.*

Nonnulli etiam sunt, qui rectae intentionis studio vilibus indumentis diutius assueti, si contingat aliquando, ut quantumlibet mollioribus contegantur, liberae humilitatis supercilio dedignante fastidiunt; et sicut alii foedis, ita isti pretiosis indui vestibus erubescunt; delicatos sane habitus tolerant, despicabilium asperitate fruuntur; fiunt illis omnia corporum ornamenta dedecori, deformitas honestati. Horum quidem Esther speciem tenuerat, cum dicebat: «Tu scis, Domine, necessitatem meam, quod abominer signum superbiae et gloriae meae, quod est super caput meum in diebus ostentationis meae, et detester illud quasi pannum menstruatæ et non portem in diebus silentii mei (Esther XIV).» Hi quidem sancti desiderii ardore fervescunt, adhuc tamen adversum passionum suarum tentamenta configunt.

Hence, when Michal, the daughter of Saul, rebuked David, saying: "How glorious was the king of Israel today, uncovering himself before the handmaids of his servants, and was naked, as if one of the buffoons were to be naked" (2 Samuel 6; 1 Chronicles 15); to show that the same humility which he displayed in his body thrived in his mind, he did not boil over with anger, nor did he respond with words of pride, but humbly said: "As the Lord lives, I will play, and I will make myself more vile than I have done, and I will be humble in my own eyes" (ibid.). In these words the form of true humility is set forth, since an interior humility is demonstrated no less than an exterior one. For some, the more basely they abase themselves in their external appearance, the greater things they decree for themselves inwardly. These people indeed wish to be seen as one thing on the surface, and to be understood as another in secret: and from the same source whence they humbly abase themselves in public, they swell up more pridefully in secret. David, however, to show himself humble outwardly, says: "I will play, and I will make myself more vile than I have done." But to show the humility of his mind, he adds: "And I will be humble in my own eyes;" as if he were to say openly: I will be humbled externally, so that I may offer an example of salvation to others; and I will be humble internally, so that I myself may also persist in the root of this same salvific humility. He, therefore, who walks so simply that he desires to be in the opinion of onlookers just as he presents himself in the baseness of his habit, this man truly bears the reproach of Christ, and, dead to the world, carries the cross after Him; and he is rendered all the brighter in the divine sight, the more despicable he is judged in human eyes, and by a fruitful exchange, he whom his outer garment defiles, shines with inner grace.

## CHAPTER XIX.

*That the less perfect disdain soft garments, while the more perfect sometimes accept them indifferently.*

There are also some who, through a zeal for right intention, having long been accustomed to cheap clothing, if it should ever happen that they are covered with garments however soft, disdain them with the disdainful pride of a self-conscious humility; and just as others blush to be clothed in foul garments, so these blush to be clothed in precious ones. They indeed endure delicate attire, but they delight in the harshness of contemptible things. All ornaments of the body become a disgrace to them, and deformity an honor. Esther had indeed shown the type of these people when she said: "You know, O Lord, my necessity, that I abominate the sign of my pride and glory, which is upon my head in the days of my public appearance, and I detest it as a menstruous rag, and do not wear it in the days of my silence (Esther 14)." These indeed burn with the ardor of holy desire, yet they still struggle against the temptations of their passions.

Alii autem ad tantae mortificationis celsitudinem pervenerunt, quod jam ad utraque velut insensibiles facti, sicut vilibus indui consuetudinaliter expetunt, ita etiam ubi res exigit, pretiosa quaeque, vel nitida nullatenus perhorrescunt: utraque scilicet uno contemplantes aspectu, quos nimirum 263 mollia non resolvunt, et aspera non affligunt.

Istorum quoque forma Judith fuerat, quae videlicet ciliciis eatenus usa, cum necessitas petiit, diversis se corporeae venustatis infulis adornavit, sacra testante Scriptura, quae ait: «Abstulit a se Judith cilicium, et exuit se vestimentis viduitatis suae, et lavit corpus suum, et unxit se myrto optimo, et discriminavit crinem capitis sui, et imposuit mitram super caput suum, et induit se vestimentis jucunditatis suae, induitque sandalia pedibus suis, et assumpsit destrariola, et lilia, et innaures, et annulos, et omnibus ornamentis suis ornavit se (Judith X).» Cum his igitur ornamentis sancta femina et verae circa se humilitatis custodiam tenuit, et eum, quo locupletata fuerat, paupertatis spiritum non amisit.

Sed dum ego monachum pretiosis indutum exuere gestio vagantem, quem arripueram, de manu propriae disputationis amitto: et jam procul elongantem vix aspicio, dum solas mihi in manibus vestes remansisse perpendo. Abjectis itaque vestibus, ipsum perneciter insequamur, et comprehendentes, si fieri possit, sistere laboremus. Noverit ergo monachus vitio vagationis addictus, quia nisi a saeculo pedem retrahat, et ad serviendum Deo in loco remotionis se perseveranter accingat, nec perfectionis culmen attingere, nec ordinis sui digne poterit munia custodire. Dina quippe Jacob filia, quandiu se intra tabernacula paterna cohibuit, illibatae virginitatis jura servavit; postquam vero ad videndas mulieres regionis illius egressa, publicum petiit, hostem protinus virginitas pertulit, et alienae libidini turpiter prostituta servivit (Gen. XXXIV). Uxor Levitae de latere montis Ephraim, donec in penetralibus posita curis se domesticis occupavit, conjugalis thalami pudicitiam custodivit; ducta autem relictæ cognitionis affectu, patriam parentesque revisit: dehinc rediens multis corruptionibus furiosae libidinis praeda succubuit: et dum in carne periclitantis pudicitiae naufragium pertulit, ignominioso vexata ludibrio etiam spiritum exhalavit (Judic. XIX). Thamar soror Absalon, dum in fraternis laribus simpliciter habitat, intemeratae virginitatis genium servat; cum vero Amnon filio David fraternae dependit visitationis officium, praereptae virginitatis plorat incurrisse dispendium (II Reg. XIII); et tandem experta quod tutius esset manere, quam progredi, licet sero, secretum otium noxiae praetulit vagitati.

Others, however, have arrived at such a height of mortification that, having become as it were insensible to both extremes, just as they customarily seek to be clothed in cheap things, so also, where the situation requires it, they in no way shrink from precious or fine things: that is, contemplating both with a single glance, whom, to be sure, soft things do not weaken, and harsh things do not afflict.

Of these, Judith was also a model, who, having used hairshirts up to that point, when necessity demanded, adorned herself with various emblems of bodily beauty, as Holy Scripture testifies, which says: "Judith took off the haircloth from herself, and put off the garments of her widowhood, and she washed her body, and anointed herself with the best myrrh, and parted the hair of her head, and put a mitre upon her head, and she put on her the garments of her gladness, and she put sandals on her feet, and took her bracelets, and lilies, and earrings, and rings, and adorned herself with all her ornaments (Judith 10)." With these ornaments, therefore, the holy woman both maintained the guard of true humility about herself and did not lose the spirit of poverty with which she had been enriched.

But while I am eager to strip the wandering monk, whom I had seized, of his precious garments, I lose him from the hand of my own discourse; and now I barely glimpse him moving far away, as I realize that only his clothes have remained in my hands. Therefore, casting aside the clothes, let us pursue him swiftly, and seizing him, if it be possible, let us labor to make him stand still. Let the monk, therefore, who is addicted to the vice of wandering (\*vagatio\*), know that unless he withdraws his foot from the world and diligently girds himself to serve God in a place of seclusion, he will be able neither to attain the summit of perfection nor to worthily keep the duties of his order. For Dinah, the daughter of Jacob, as long as she kept herself within her father's tents, preserved the rights of her unsullied virginity; but after she went out to see the women of that region and sought the public space, her virginity at once suffered an enemy, and, shamefully prostituted, she served a foreign lust (Gen. XXXIV). The wife of the Levite from the hill country of Ephraim, as long as she remained in the inner rooms and occupied herself with domestic cares, guarded the chastity of the conjugal bed; but, led by affection for the kindred she had left behind, she revisited her homeland and parents. Then, upon returning, she fell prey to the many corruptions of a furious lust; and while in the flesh she suffered the shipwreck of her endangered modesty, she was tormented by ignominious mockery and even gave up her spirit (Judges XIX). Tamar, the sister of Absalom, as long as she lived simply in her brother's house, preserved the spirit of her inviolate virginity; but when she performed the duty of a sisterly visit to Amnon, son of David, she lamented having incurred the loss of her stolen virginity (II Samuel XIII); and at last, having learned that it was safer to remain than to go forth, though late, she preferred secret leisure to harmful wandering.

Et tu igitur si vis animam tuam in suae virginitatis integritate persistere, si abominandum ducis foedis et violentis corruptoribus subjacere, secretum appete, recessum singularitatis inquire, aures et oculos a negotiorum saecularium vanitate firmiter obstrue, carnalium hominum colloquia destructioni magis, quam aedificationi profutura contemne. Nam juxta Salomonem: «Qui tangit picem, inquinabitur ab ea (Eccli. XIII).» Intra conscientiae ergo tuae te cubiculum collige. Cunctis domus tuae foribus, cunctis videlicet sensibus censoriae disciplinae repagula, ne quis ingreditur, appone. Fons enim, cui circumquaque ne effundatur occluditur, undis ad alta profluentibus elevatur; e contra, qui per plures rivos hinc inde deducitur, mox ut super eum aestus ferventior incubuerit, exsiccatur. Denique si deambulanti David in solario domus regiae clausae fores obsisterent, in lavantis se Bersabee concupiscentiam nullatenus exarsisset (II Reg. XVII); sed quia oculum sub custodia disciplinae non tenuit, ipse quoque post eum in immane hiantis ruinae barathrum totus in praeceps ruit. Lubricatis enim gressibus, totius sui expertus est lapsum, dum solius frenum relaxavit obtutus; cui videlicet illud Jeremiae aptissime congruit: «Depraedatus est, inquit, oculus meus animam meam (Thren. III).» Si ergo tam sublimis coeli columna propter solam oculorum vagationem gravissime corruit, quid de nobis infirmis et parvalis sentiendum, qui per saeculum discurrentes, nos extra nosmetipsos prorsus educimus; et visum, atque auditum, omnesque sensus nostros hauriendis mundi vanitatibus occupamus?

## CAPUT XXI.

*Quod Esau vagatio dejecit, Jacob stabilitas exaltavit.*

Quae autem distantia sit inter monachos, qui secreti remotionem diligunt: et eos qui se per exteriora diffundunt, in duobus Isaac filiis luce clarius edocemur. Scriptum namque est: «Quia factus est Esau vir gnarus venandi, et homo agricola, Jacob autem simplex habitabat in tabernaculis (Gen. XXV).» Sed iste prudenter simplex fratris primogenita, et benedictionem patris, provectus sui cautus exsecutor accepit; ille fatuitate gnarus, quia in gladio viveret, et fratri suo velut domino famulus serviturus esset, audivit. Attamen iste nisi in tabernaculis resedisset, procul dubio primitivae benedictionis immunis existeret; ille nisi pervagus se in exteriora projiceret, primatus sui privilegio non careret. Iste domesticae quietis otium tenuit et divina largiente gratia, in aliena jura subsiluit; ille venandi labore confectus, et hoc, quod sibi jure competebat, amisit.

And you, therefore, if you wish your soul to persist in the integrity of its virginity, if you consider it abominable to be subjected to foul and violent corrupters, seek secrecy, inquire after the retreat of solitude, firmly block your ears and eyes from the vanity of worldly affairs, and despise the conversations of carnal men, which are more likely to lead to destruction than to edification. For according to Solomon: "He who touches pitch will be defiled by it (Ecclesiasticus XIII)." Therefore, gather yourself into the chamber of your conscience. Place the bars of censorial discipline on all the doors of your house, that is, on all your senses, so that no one may enter. For a fountain that is enclosed on all sides lest it pour out, is raised up by its waters flowing to the heights; on the contrary, one that is drawn off hither and thither through many channels, as soon as a more fervent heat beats down upon it, is dried up. Finally, if closed doors had stood in the way of David as he walked on the roof of the royal house, he would in no way have been inflamed with desire for Bathsheba as she bathed (II Samuel XVII); but because he did not keep his eye under the custody of discipline, he too, after it, rushed headlong into the immense abyss of a gaping ruin. For with slippery steps, he experienced the fall of his whole self, when he relaxed the rein of his gaze alone; to which, indeed, that saying of Jeremiah most aptly corresponds: "My eye," he says, "has plundered my soul (Lamentations III)." If, therefore, so sublime a pillar of heaven fell so grievously on account of the mere wandering of the eyes, what is to be thought of us, weak and small ones, who, running about through the world, lead ourselves completely out of ourselves, and occupy our sight, and hearing, and all our senses in absorbing the vanities of the world?

## CHAPTER XXI.

*That wandering cast down Esau, while stability exalted Jacob.*

Moreover, what a distance there is between monks who love the seclusion of a retreat and those who pour themselves out into external things, we are taught more clearly than light by the two sons of Isaac. For it is written: "That Esau became a man skilled in hunting, and a man of the field, but Jacob, a simple man, dwelt in tents" (Gen. XXV). But the latter [Jacob], prudently simple and a cautious executor of his own advancement, received his brother's birthright and his father's blessing; the former [Esau], skilled in his foolishness, heard that he would live by the sword and would serve his brother as a servant to a lord. Yet if the latter had not remained in the tents, he would doubtless have been without the first blessing; and if the former, as a wanderer, had not cast himself into external things, he would not have been deprived of the privilege of his birthright. The latter held to the leisure of domestic quiet and, by the bestowal of divine grace, leaped into the rights of another; the former, worn out by the labor of hunting, lost even that which by right belonged to him.

Ut autem supersedeant scutum excusationis opponere, qui saeculum perlustrantes, jactant se obedientiae legibus deservire, non ignorent, quia et Esau venatum prodiens, paternis jussionibus paruit; et tamen nec patri cibos offerre, nec optatae benedictionis meruit primitias obtinere. Quisquis enim rem quae ad vitium pertinet, consuetudine ductus, propriae voluntatis instinctu libenter exsequitur, peccat etiam si alienis imperiis specietenus obtemperare videatur. Nam cum dicitur: «Quia Isaac amabat Esau, eo quod de venationibus illius vesceretur (Gen. XXVII);» constat nimirum, quia Esau, ut patri cibos studio venationis acquireret, non magis paternae jussioni per obedientiam paruit, quam inolitae consuetudini quodammodo tributa persolvit. Qui ergo discurrendo per saeculum propriae libidini satisfacit, et tamen obedire se majorum jussionibus asserit, noverit Deum non tam coloratis verborum verborum credere, quam de occultis hominum juxta conscientiam judicare.

Notandum autem quod nonnulli quandiu in ipsa vagatione sunt positi, non graviter corruunt; revertentes autem quasi quodam negotiorum saecularium temeto ebrii, in immane praecipitium devolvuntur. Actionum quippe saecularium fumo suffusi oculos redeunt, atque idcirco propriis liminibus redditi, ubi pedem operis ponere debeant, non attendunt. Quod profecto idem Esau patenter insinuat, qui dum de agro rediens, oppido se conqueritur lassum, damnosum valde pepigit cum fratre commercium; dumque in se immoderatam famis rabiem saevire permisit, magnum primogenitorum decus vili parvae lenticulae coctione distraxit (Gen. XXV). Sic nimirum, sic qui exterioribus deditus, semetipsum deseruit, et sua postmodum corpore, non corde in interiora revocatus amisit. Contingit etiam vagationis vitio laborantibus, ut pulveratis interioribus oculis, sicut non praecavent ne in reatus foveam corruant, ita etiam postmodum quo ceciderint non advertant: itaque dum admissa quaeque considerare subtiliter negligunt, quidquid illud est, quod deliquerant, confuso mentis examine parvipendunt, culicem siquidem non liquantes, etsi camelum glutientes. Cujus quoque caecitatis Esau non immunis exstitisse cognoscitur, sicut sacra historia testante perhibetur, ubi postquam dicitur: «Quia juravit Esau, et vendidit primogenita;» deinde subnectit: «Et sic accepto pane et lentis edulio, comedit et bibit, et abiit, parvipendens quod primogenita vendidisset.»

## CAPUT XXII.

*In duobus his fratribus patet, quid inter vagos monachos et stabiles distet.*

But so that those who, wandering through the world, boast that they serve the laws of obedience may cease to raise the shield of excuse, let them not be ignorant that Esau too, in going forth to hunt, obeyed his father's commands; and yet he deserved neither to offer food to his father nor to obtain the first fruits of the desired blessing. For whoever, led by custom, willingly carries out by the instinct of his own will a thing that pertains to vice, sins even if he seems to be outwardly obeying the commands of others. For when it is said, "Because Isaac loved Esau, for he ate of his hunting" (Gen. XXVII), it is certainly clear that Esau, in acquiring food for his father through the pursuit of hunting, did not so much obey his father's command out of obedience as he, in a way, paid tribute to his ingrained habit. Therefore, let him who, by running about the world, satisfies his own desire, and yet asserts that he is obeying the commands of his superiors, know that God does not so much believe colorful verbiages as He judges the hidden things of men according to their conscience.

It should be noted, however, that some, as long as they are engaged in this wandering, do not fall gravely; but upon returning, as if drunk with some intoxicating drink of secular affairs, they are rolled down into a huge precipice. Indeed, they return with their eyes clouded by the smoke of secular actions, and therefore, having been returned to their own thresholds, they do not pay attention to where they ought to place the foot of their work. This, in fact, the same Esau clearly shows, who, while returning from the field and complaining that he was exceedingly weary, made a very damaging bargain with his brother; and while he allowed the immoderate rage of hunger to rage within him, he sold the great honor of the firstborn for a vile pottage of a few lentils (Gen. XXV). Thus indeed, thus he who, given over to external things, deserted himself, and afterwards, recalled to the interior in body but not in heart, lost what was his. It also happens to those who labor under the vice of wandering that, with their interior eyes covered in dust, just as they do not take care lest they fall into the pit of guilt, so also afterwards they do not notice where they have fallen. And so, while they neglect to consider subtly each of their faults, whatever it is that they have done wrong, they esteem it lightly in a confused examination of mind, not even straining out a gnat, even while swallowing a camel. Of this blindness Esau also is known not to have been free, as is related by the testimony of sacred history, where, after it is said, 'Because Esau swore, and sold his birthright,' it then adds: 'And so, having received the bread and the pottage of lentils, he ate and drank, and went his way, esteeming it a small matter that he had sold his birthright.'

## CHAPTER XXII.

*In these two brothers, it is clear what difference there is between wandering and stable monks.*

In his igitur duobus fratribus (Gen. XXVII) manifeste deprehenditur quanta inter residentes atque vagabundos monachos esse distantia sentiatur. Ille enim nisi se instabilem, et sui prodigum per exteriora diffunderet, nequaquam benedictionis paternae mysterium una cum primogenitis amisisset; iste nisi intra domestici se laris septa comprimeret, infra praescriptum subsecutionis suae limitem junior humiliter desedisset. Ille gnarus et solers a suae praerogativae jure dilabitur; iste quietus et simplex, subactis fratribus, singulari privilegio principatur. Alter saltus et lustra peragrande defessus, a primatus sui dignitate dejicitur; alter in conclavi amoeno fruens otio, ad capessendam super populos, tribusque monarchiam divinitus sublimatur.

Desinat ergo monachus, quisquis est, cum Esau ex remotionis suae claustris frequenter erumpere; desinat cum eo sub obedientiae specie causis se saecularibus implicare; ne quandoque se cum ipso lugeat divinae benedictionis extorrem, quem noxiae vagationis sortitur auctorem. Cum Jacob igitur se domesticum praebeat, cum Jacob in tabernaculis simpliciter vivat, quatenus Deum, qui vere pater est electorum, 266 boni operis vesci dapibus cupientem, non silvestrium ferarum, sed domestici gregis apparatione reficiat, quando non de externae sanctitatis superficie, sed suave sibi de conscientiae suae virtutibus edulium parat. Neque enim Deus hostiarum pelles in sacrificio sibimet mandat offerri, sed interiora potius viscerum cum ipsis quoque medullis praecipit exhiberi. Unde et in ostendendo ipso sacrificiorum ritu Moyses praecipit, dicens: «Subtracta pelle, hostiae artus in frusta concidant (Levit. I);» cui mandato etiam mysticus intellectus inesse deprehenditur, si subtilius indagetur. Pellem namque hostiae subtrahimus, cum a mentis nostrae oculis superficiem virtutis amovemus. Cujus artus in frusta concidimus, cum distinguentes subtiliter ejus intima, membratimque cogitamus, ut quae foris sincera videntur et solida, intus non habeantur latebrosae vanitatis vitio cavernosa. David autem pro magno munere medullata se Deo sacrificia oblaturum esse pollicetur, dicens: «Holocausta, inquit, medullata offeram tibi, cum incenso et arietibus (Psal. LXVIII).»

Quisquis autem se per negotiorum saecularium exercitia delectabiliter fundit, holocausti sui medullas cum visceribus subtrahit, et solam victimae pellem Deo, quae offerri prohibetur, adolere contendit; qui vero suave Deo sacrificium offerre desiderat, recessus petat, interiora sectetur, animam suam integram, illibatamque in propria virginitate custodiat; nec discurrendo per lupanaria saeculi immundis corruptoribus, prostibuli more, substernat.

In these two brothers (Gen. XXVII), therefore, it is manifestly understood how great a distance is perceived to be between resident and wandering monks. For if the one had not poured himself out into external things, unstable and prodigal of himself, he would by no means have lost the mystery of the paternal blessing along with his birthright; and if the other had not confined himself within the enclosures of the domestic hearth, he, being younger, would have humbly remained below the prescribed limit of his succession. The one, knowledgeable and skillful, slips from the right of his prerogative; the other, quiet and simple, with his brothers subdued, rules with a singular privilege. The one, exhausted by traversing forests and lairs, is cast down from the dignity of his primacy; the other, enjoying leisure in a pleasant chamber, is divinely exalted to take up monarchy over peoples and tribes.

Let the monk, whoever he may be, therefore cease to erupt frequently with Esau from the cloisters of his seclusion; let him cease to involve himself with him in secular causes under the guise of obedience, lest at some point he mourn with him, exiled from the divine blessing, he whom he takes as the author of his noxious wandering. With Jacob, therefore, let him show himself domestic; with Jacob let him live simply in tents, so that he may refresh God—who is truly the father of the elect, desiring to feast on the banquet of good works—not with the provision of wild beasts, but of the domestic flock, when he prepares a sweet meal for Him not from the surface of external holiness, but from the virtues of his own conscience. For God does not command the skins of victims to be offered to Himself in sacrifice, but rather He commands the inner parts of the viscera with the very marrow to be presented. Whence also, in showing the very rite of sacrifices, Moses commands, saying: “The skin having been removed, they shall cut the limbs of the victim into pieces (Levit. I)”]; in which command a mystical understanding is also found to be present, if it is investigated more subtly. For we remove the skin of the victim when we remove the surface of virtue from the eyes of our mind. We cut its limbs into pieces when, subtly distinguishing its intimate parts, we consider them member by member, so that what appears sincere and solid on the outside may not be found to be cavernous within with the vice of hidden vanity. David, however, promises as a great gift that he will offer sacrifices full of marrow to God, saying: “I will offer you holocausts full of marrow, with the incense of rams (Psal. LXVIII).”

Whoever, however, delightfully pours himself out through the exercises of secular affairs, removes the marrow of his holocaust with the viscera, and strives to burn for God only the skin of the victim, which is forbidden to be offered; but he who desires to offer a sweet sacrifice to God, let him seek retreats, pursue interior things, guard his soul whole and unstained in its own virginity; and let him not, by running through the brothels of the world, submit it to impure defilers in the manner of a prostitute.

Ut ergo interni sponsi conspectui placeat, non oculos suos stibio cum Jezabele depingat (IV Reg. IX), id est, non se fucis pompae saecularis obducat, sed cum Judith myrto optimo sua membra perungat (Judith X): omnes videlicet mentis suae sensus immortalis unguine castitatis obliniat, ne in mortem per incontinentiam corruens, in fetore luxuriae computrescat.

In conclavi igitur sanctae Ecclesiae anima se pudica concludat, sicque in aeterni Regis thalamo jugiter requiescat. Non carnalium propinquorum, non complicitium quorumlibet requirat affectus, sed solius veri Sponsi delectetur amplexibus. Neque enim sine causa scriptum est: «Audi, filia, et vide, et inclina aurem tuam, et obliviscere populum tuum, et domum patris tui, quoniam concupivit Rex speciem tuam (Psal. XLIV).» In hujus igitur Sponsi cubiculo anima sancta ab omni saecularis strepitus turbine dormitat, super hoc suae virginitatis auctore casti amoris facibus inardescat; cantans nimirum, et dicens: «Introduxit me Rex in cellaria sua, exsultabimus, et laetabimur in te (Cant. I).» Et iterum: «Fasciculus myrrhae dilectus meus mihi, inter ubera mea commorabitur (ibid.).» Si vero cujuslibet occasionis articulus accadat, ut egrediendi necessitas imminere videatur, non mox ad vagandum se leviter proruat, non colloquio consanguinitatis aggliscat, non ad saeculi vanitatem fixus mundo animus incalescat, sed morose ac graviter inter se deliberet, dicens: «Exspoliavi me tunica mea, quomodo induar illam? Lavi pedes meos, quomodo inquinabo illos (Cant. V)?»

267 CAPUT XXIII. Quod divina dispositio sicut bonis spirituale otium tribuit, sic et pravos diffundi in exteriora permittit. Si igitur singularis ille Sponsus hoc desiderium animae sanctae inesse perspexerit, quia procul dubio princeps est pacis, liberam sibi spiritualis otii requiem tribuit, et omnes emergentium causarum fluctus placida circa illam tranquillitate componit. Hinc est enim quod in Canticis canticorum dicit: «Adjuro vos, filiae Jerusalem, ne suscitetis, neque evigilare faciatis dilectam, donec ipsa velit (Cant. II).» Quo contra menti reprobae, negotiisque saecularibus inhianti, sub Babylonis specie per prophetam dicitur: «Descende, sede in pulvere, virgo filia Babylonis, sede in terra, non est solium filiae Chaldaeorum (Isa. XLVII).» Hoc enim loco humana mens, virgo, non incorrupta, ut arbitror, dicitur, sed infecunda. Et quia Babylon confusio interpretatur, recte infecunda mens Babylonis filia vocatur, quae in eo quod nequaquam bona opera germinat, dum nullo ordine rectae vitae componitur, quasi confusione matre generatur.

Therefore, that she may please the sight of the internal spouse, let her not paint her eyes with kohl like Jezebel (IV Kings IX), that is, let her not cover herself with the cosmetics of worldly pomp, but with Judith let her anoint her limbs with the best myrrh (Judith X): that is, let her smear all the senses of her mind with the ointment of immortal chastity, lest, falling into death through incontinence, she rot in the stench of luxury.

In the chamber of the Holy Church, therefore, let the chaste soul enclose herself, and so may she rest continually in the bridal chamber of the eternal King. Let her not seek the affections of carnal relatives, nor of any accomplices, but let her delight in the embraces of the one true Spouse. For it is not written without cause: "Hear, O daughter, and see, and incline your ear; forget your people and your father's house, for the King has desired your beauty (Psal. XLIV)." In the chamber of this Spouse, therefore, the holy soul slumbers away from every whirlwind of secular noise; may she burn with the torches of chaste love for this author of her virginity, singing, to be sure, and saying: "The King has brought me into his chambers; we will exult and be glad in you (Cant. I)." And again: "A bundle of myrrh is my beloved to me, he shall abide between my breasts (ibid.)." But if an occasion of any kind should arise, so that the necessity of going out seems imminent, let her not rush forth lightly to wander, let her not be enticed by conversation with relatives, let not her mind, fixed on the world, grow warm for the vanity of the age, but let her deliberate with herself slowly and gravely, saying: "I have put off my tunic, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I soil them (Cant. V)?"

CHAPTER XXIII. That divine disposition, just as it grants spiritual leisure to the good, so it permits the wicked to be dispersed into external things. If, therefore, that singular Spouse perceives this desire to be in the holy soul, since He is without doubt the prince of peace, He grants her the free repose of spiritual leisure, and He calms all the waves of emerging causes with a placid tranquility around her. Hence it is that in the Song of Songs He says: "I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that you not stir up, nor awaken the beloved, until she herself wills it (Cant. II)." In contrast, to the reprobate mind, which is eager for secular business, it is said under the figure of Babylon through the prophet: "Come down, sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon, sit on the ground, there is no throne for the daughter of the Chaldeans (Isa. XLVII)." For in this place the human mind is called virgin (\*virgo\*), not as incorrupt, I think, but as unfruitful. And because Babylon is interpreted as \*confusion\*, the unfruitful mind is rightly called the daughter of Babylon, which, in that it in no way brings forth good works, while it is not ordered by any rule of right life, is generated as if by confusion as its mother.

Sin autem virgo non infecunda dicitur, sed incorrupta, postquam statum salutis perdidit, ad confusionis suae cumulum appellatur quod fuit. Cui apte per increpationem dicitur divina voce: Descende. In alto quippe humanus animus stat, quando supernis retributionibus inhiat. Sed ab hoc statu descendit, cum turpiter victus sese defluentibus mundi desideriis subjicit. Cui bene mox additur: Sede in pulvere. Descendens enim in pulvere residet, quia coelestia deserens, terrenis cogitationibus aspersus in infimis vilescit.

Ubi adhuc ingeminando subjungitur: Sede in terra. Ac si aperte exprobrans dicat: Quia coelesti conversatione noluisti te regere, sub temetipso prostratus in terrenis actibus humiliare. Unde et necessario protinus additur: Non est solum filiae Chaldaeorum. Chaldaei namque feroces interpretantur. Valde autem feroces sunt, quia voluntates proprias sequentes, nec suis parcere moribus sciunt. Ferocia sunt terrena desideria, quae non solum contra praecepta Conditoris, sed saepe etiam contra percussorum verbera duram atque insensibilem mentem reddunt. Sed filia ferocium solum non habet, quia mens, quae ad amorem mundi ex pravis desideriis nascitur, atque eisdem desideriis obduratur, in eo quod se terrenis concupiscentiis subjicit, sedem iudicii amittit, nullique apud se solio praesidet, quia examine discretionis caret: quasi a iudicii sui sessione repellitur, quia per exterioris desiderii concupiscentiam vagatur. Liquet enim, quod mens quae intus consilii sedem perdiderit, foras se per desideria innumerabiliter spargit; et quia agere intellecta dissimulat, caecatur etiam ut nesciat quid agat: et saepe justo Dei iudicio in sua voluntate relinquitur, et sub ea quae anxie appetit laboriosa mundi ministeria relaxatur. Unde et apte illic subditur: «Quia ultra non vocaberis mollis, et tenera: tolle molam, et mole farinam (ibid.).» 268 Constat nimirum, quod tenerae suae filiae parentes parcunt, nec duris atque servilibus hanc operibus affligunt.

Omnipotens ergo Deus quasi teneram filiam vocat, quando dilectam uniuscujusque animam a laboriosis hujus mundi servitiis revocat, ne dum exterioribus actibus afficitur, ab internis desideriis induretur. Sed Chaldaeorum filia mollis, et tenera non vocatur, quia mens pravis desideriis dedita in eo, quem anxie appetit, hujus saeculi labore relinquitur: ut foris mundo velut ancilla serviat, quae intus Deum ut filia nequaquam amat. Unde et molam tollere, ac farinam molere jubetur. Mola in gyro ducitur, et farina profertur.

But if she is called virgin not as unfruitful, but as incorrupt, after she has lost the state of salvation, she is called what she was, to the heaping up of her confusion. To her it is aptly said by the divine voice in rebuke: *\*Come down\**. For the human soul stands on high when it yearns for supernal rewards. But it descends from this state when, shamefully conquered, it subjects itself to the fleeting desires of the world. To which is well added soon after: *\*Sit in the dust\**. For one who descends sits in the dust, because, deserting heavenly things, being sprinkled with earthly thoughts, he becomes vile in the lowest things.

Where it is further added, by way of repetition: *\*Sit on the ground\**. As if openly reproaching, it says: Because you were unwilling to govern yourself by a heavenly conversation, prostrate beneath yourself, be humbled in earthly acts. Whence it is also necessarily added at once: *\*There is no throne for the daughter of the Chaldeans\**. For Chaldeans are interpreted as *\*fierce ones\** (*\*feroces\**). And they are very fierce, because, following their own wills, they do not know how to spare their own customs. Fierce are earthly desires, which render the mind hard and insensible not only against the precepts of the Creator, but often even against the scourges of punishments. But the daughter of the fierce ones has no throne, because the mind, which is born to the love of the world from wicked desires, and is hardened by those same desires, in that it subjects itself to earthly concupiscences, loses the seat of judgment, and presides over no throne within itself, because it lacks the examination of discretion: it is as if repelled from the session of its own judgment, because it wanders through the concupiscence of external desire. For it is clear that the mind which has lost the seat of counsel within, scatters itself abroad innumerable through desires; and because it neglects to act on what it understands, it is also blinded so that it does not know what it does: and often by the just judgment of God it is left to its own will, and is given over to the laborious ministries of the world which it anxiously seeks. Whence it is aptly added there: “Because you shall no longer be called delicate and tender: take the millstone and grind meal (*ibid.*).” It is certain, of course, that parents spare their tender daughter, and do not afflict her with hard and servile works.

Almighty God, therefore, calls the beloved soul of each person as if she were a tender daughter, when He calls her back from the laborious services of this world, lest while she is affected by external acts, she be hardened from internal desires. But the daughter of the Chaldeans is not called delicate and tender, because the mind given to wicked desires is left in the labor of this world which it anxiously seeks: so that it may serve the world outwardly as a handmaid, which inwardly does not love God as a daughter. Whence she is also commanded to take the millstone and grind meal. The millstone is turned in a circle, and flour is brought forth.

Unaquaeque autem mundi hujus actio mola est, quae dum multas curas congerit, humanas mentes quasi per gyrum vertit; atque ex se quasi farinas projicit, quia seducto cordi semper minutissimas cogitationes gignit. Nonnunquam vero qui quietus alicujus esse meriti credebatur, positus in qualibet actione denudatur. Unde illic protinus subinfertur: «Denuda turpitudinem tuam, discooperi humerum, revela crura, transi flumina (ibid.).»

In administratione quippe operis turpitudine denudatur, dum vilis mens, abjectaque in actionis ostentatione cognoscitur; quae quieta prius magna putabatur. Humerum mens discooperit, quando opus suum, quod ignorabatur, ostendit. Crura revelat, quia quibus desideriorum passionibus lucris mundi inhiat, manifestat. Flumina etiam transit, quia actiones hujus saeculi, quae quotidie ad terminum defluunt, indesinenter appetit; dumque alia relinquit, alia sequitur, quasi semper de flumine ad flumen tendit.

Haec autem diximus, ut mens a solio sanctae intentionis excussa, et vagationis vitio dedita, in quo jaceat, monstraremus; quia si ad ea quae superna sunt, inhiare cessaverit, sub semetipsam etiam indesinenter ruit. In alto autem figitur, si amorem temporalium deserens, ad spem incommutabilis aeternitatis ligatur. Nec nos his verbis illud astruimus, ut monachus pervicaci proposito in sua jugiter remotione permaneat, nec aliquando progredi, ubi violenta poposcerit necessitas, acquiescat; sed hoc potius suademus, quatenus id tanto parcius, tantoque rarius agat, quanto scit, quia vagando per saeculum, neque spiritualiter vivere, neque ad perfectionis culmen valeat, etiam si diligenter invigilet, pervenire.

#### CAPUT XXIV.

*De eremitis, qui in vagatione sunt positi.*

Sed inter omnia hominum a suo proposito deviantium genera, illud non mediocriter displicet, quod etiam ipsis sanctissimis eremitis quidam videntur admisti, quos idem pestiferae vagationis morbus exagitat: et (si dicere liceat) quasi Vertumnus, quoddam scilicet daemoniorum genus, vexat. Vertumni siquidem apud antiquos dicebantur daemones, quorum instinctu homines in vertigine positi reddebantur instabiles.

Every action of this world, however, is a millstone, which, while it gathers many cares, turns human minds as if in a circle; and it casts forth flours, as it were, from itself, because to the seduced heart it always begets the most minute thoughts. Sometimes, indeed, one who was believed to be of some merit while at rest, is laid bare when placed in any action. Whence it is immediately inferred there: “Uncover your shame, bare your shoulder, reveal your legs, cross the rivers (ibid.).”

Indeed, in the administration of work, shame is laid bare, when the vile and abject mind is recognized in the display of action, which was previously thought great when at rest. The mind bares its shoulder when it shows its work, which was unknown. It reveals its legs, because it manifests by what passions of desires it yearns for the profits of the world. It also crosses rivers, because it unceasingly seeks the actions of this world, which daily flow away to their end; and while it leaves some, it follows others, as if always tending from river to river.

We have said these things, however, to show in what state the mind lies that is cast down from the throne of holy intention and given over to the vice of wandering; because if it ceases to yearn for the things that are above, it also unceasingly rushes down beneath itself. But it is fixed on high if, deserting the love of temporal things, it is bound to the hope of immutable eternity. Nor by these words do we assert that a monk should with a stubborn purpose remain perpetually in his seclusion, and not consent to go forth sometimes when violent necessity demands; but rather we persuade this, that he should do it so much the more sparingly and so much the more rarely, the more he knows that by wandering through the world, he is not able to live spiritually, nor to arrive at the summit of perfection, even if he watches diligently.

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

*Concerning hermits who are given to wandering.*

But among all the types of men who deviate from their purpose, that one is not moderately displeasing, that even among the most holy hermits some seem to be mixed in, whom the same disease of pestiferous wandering agitates: and (if it may be said) vexes them like Vertumnus, that is, a certain kind of demon. Indeed, among the ancients, Vertumni were said to be demons by whose instigation men, placed in a state of vertigo, were rendered unstable.

Quibus nimirum illi non immerito videntur obnoxii, qui solo quadragesimali tempore 269 in cellulis commorantes, toto pene anni circulo huc illucque discurrunt, et sic vitam suam inaniter spatiando consumunt. Qui nimirum dummodo summotenus remotiora sectantes, modo in publicum crebrius prodeuntes, in utramque se vitam, contemplativam scilicet et activam, gloriantur extendere, in neutram plenum salutis fructum probantur afferre: cumque sibi applaudant cum Jacob duarum conjugium speciali quadam copula foederari, deprehenditur illis propriae opinionis sententia in contrarium verti. Quibus nimirum contra consuetudinem et Rachel lippa, et Lia redditur infecunda; altera siquidem hebetatione visus obtunditur, altera sterilitatis animadversione feritur; quia videlicet huiusmodi homines, et per publicum discurrentes, utputa sinistrae opinionis apud populum habiti, nequaquam possunt spirituales Deo filios gignere, et velut ebrii de saeculo redeuntes, intima nequeunt penetrare. Quisquis enim desiderat ad illud inaccessibile lumen acie mentis attingere, necessarium sibi est interiores oculos per diuturna vagationis spatia ab omni mundanae actionis labe purgare; ne dum ad summa speculanda oculos elevat, terrenae conversationis pulvis obsistat, et magis tenebras quas reliquerat, videat, quam lumen ad quod nititur, apprehendat.

## CAPUT XXV.

*Quod cellam consuetudo dulcem, vagatio reddat horribilem.*

Huc accedit, quod iis qui vitam suam sub hac inconstantia mutationis alternant, eo fit vita remotionis austerior, quo inolita vagandi consuetudine retrahuntur; ita ut eremitica dictinctio gravissimae difficultati, cella ipsa illis videatur horrori. Consuetudo enim facit monacho cellulam dulcem, vagatio videri facit horribilem. Vagantibus cellula carcer est, permanentibus suave cubiculum; silentium perseverantem monachum vigilem reddit, extrinsecus venientem sopor deprimit, assuetum jejuniis corpus sobrietas roborat, affluentium epularum fluxus enervat. Vigilia moderata aciem humanae mentis exacuit, geminatio repetiti soporis obtundit. Confabulatio crebra in mente monachi esuriem parit, secreta remotio animam in assuetae continentiae rigore custodit. Saecularium negotiorum relatio animam passionibus desiderii facit obnoxiam, sacri eloquii assidua meditatio mundo reddit extinctam. Paupertas monachi securitas est mentis, securitas mater est puritatis. Econtra rerum abundantia aculeos parit sollicitudinis, sollicitudo radix est anxietatis.

To these, indeed, those men not undeservedly seem subject, who, dwelling in their cells only during the Lenten season, run hither and thither for almost the entire circle of the year, and thus consume their life by wandering in vain. Indeed, while these men, on the one hand superficially pursuing more remote things, and on the other more frequently going out into public, boast that they extend themselves into both lives, namely the contemplative and the active, they are proven to bring the full fruit of salvation in neither; and while they applaud themselves for being united, like Jacob, by a certain special bond to two wives, the verdict of their own opinion is found to be turned against them. For them, indeed, contrary to the usual account, Rachel is rendered bleary-eyed and Leah is rendered barren; the one is indeed dulled by a dimness of sight, the other is struck by the affliction of sterility; because, to be sure, men of this kind, running about in public and thus held in poor opinion among the people, can by no means beget spiritual sons for God, and, returning as if drunk from the world, they are unable to penetrate intimate things. For whoever desires to attain to that inaccessible light with the keenness of his mind, it is necessary for him, during long periods of wandering, to purge his inner eyes of every stain of worldly action; lest, while he raises his eyes to contemplate the highest things, the dust of earthly conversation obstruct his view, and he see more of the darkness he has left behind than apprehend the light toward which he strives.

#### CHAPTER XXV.

*That custom makes the cell sweet, wandering makes it horrible.*

To this is added that, for those who alternate their life under this inconstancy of change, the life of removal becomes more austere the more they are drawn back by the ingrained habit of wandering; so that the eremitical discipline seems to them a most grave difficulty, and the cell itself a horror. For custom makes the cell sweet to the monk; wandering makes it seem horrible. To those who wander, the cell is a prison; to those who remain, a pleasant chamber. Silence makes the persevering monk vigilant; sleep oppresses him who comes from without. Sobriety strengthens a body accustomed to fasting; the flow of abundant feasts enervates it. A moderate vigil sharpens the edge of the human mind; the doubling of repeated sleep dulls it. Frequent conversation begets a hunger in the monk's mind; secret removal keeps the soul in the rigor of accustomed continence. The recounting of secular affairs makes the soul subject to the passions of desire; assiduous meditation on the sacred word renders it dead to the world. The poverty of the monk is the security of his mind; security is the mother of purity. On the contrary, an abundance of things begets the stings of solicitude; solicitude is the root of anxiety.

Pedes illoti, manus neglectae, inculta caesaries, quasi quaedam anchora est monachi in cella jugiter permanendi; e diverso accurata delicati corporis compositio lomes est, et occasio in publicum prodeundi.

Quisquis ergo vult, ut sibi eremitica vita dulcescat, profecto necesse est, ut in ea constanti animo jugiter perseverare contendat; nec alternet vicibus, si suave jugum Domini vult portare quietus. Vita namque eremitica continuata quidem est refrigerium, intermissa quoddam videtur esse tormentum. Remotione quoque continua illuminatur anima, vitia deteguntur, et quidquid hominem de semetipso latuerat, aperitur. Cum aqua de vivario, remotis quae opponebantur, egeritur, pisces in siccum remanentes, humanos patiuntur aspectus: et a nobis cum terrenae actionis fluctus elabitur quidquid in profundo procellarum emergentium subnatere consueverat, denudatur. Venator quoque oppilatis anfractibus, densis circumsepit saltuum lustra fruticibus, unumque pro multis aditum feris fugacibus ex arte relinquit, atque illic se vibrata stringendo venabula in insidiis ponit; sicque compendium sibi laboriosae venationis attribuit, dum pernecium ferarum vestigia, quae persequi per infinita nequiverat, in egressionis solo vestibulo negotioso otio quietus exspectat. Et nos cum vitiis ad pravi operis libertatem prodire nitentibus, terrenae actionis meatus occludimus, quasi uno in loco illis insidias ponimus, quia cum solis cogitationibus jugiter dimicamus. Sicque vitiorum nostrorum bestialis feritas facile capitur, dum solum cogitationis humanae pervium singulariter custoditur. Auceps etiam cunctos undique gurgites ramalium densitatibus operit, atque ad unum hauriendae dulcis aquae locum confluere volucres praescripta necessitate compellit; dumque solus ille ad bibendum locus exponitur, circumposita muscipularum argumenta felicitis aucupii proventionem ditantur. Ut ergo diversis animi passionibus facile possimus laqueos captionis injicere, obtrusis negotiorum saecularium rivulis, adversus solos cogitationum impetus studeamus viriliter decertare, ut dum vitia nostra ab actione deterrita, solis cogitationum fluctuationibus advolant, facile in sanctae prudentiae laqueos cadant.

Notandum autem, quia saepe servus Dei per hujus mundi membra decipitur, dum ad dirimendas dissidentium lites, vel ad aliqua peragenda, ecclesiasticis scilicet usibus profutura, importunius invitatur: imminens namque periculum multorumque commune discrimen, nisi progrediatur, exaggerant. Quod si accesserit, cuncta ad suae voluntatis arbitrium, atque ad felices exitus proventura, multipliciter asseverant.

Unwashed feet, neglected hands, unkempt hair are, as it were, a certain anchor for the monk to remain continually in his cell; on the other hand, the careful arrangement of a delicate body is a bait and an occasion for going out in public.

Whoever, therefore, wishes the eremitical life to become sweet to him, it is surely necessary that he strive to persevere in it continually with a constant mind; nor should he alternate in turns, if he wishes to bear the sweet yoke of the Lord in peace. For the eremitical life, when continued, is indeed a refreshment; when interrupted, it seems to be a kind of torment. By continuous removal, too, the soul is illuminated, vices are detected, and whatever had been hidden from a man about himself is opened up. When the water is drained from a fishpond, with the barriers removed, the fish remaining on dry ground suffer human gazes: and for us, when the flood of earthly action recedes, whatever was accustomed to swim beneath in the depths of rising storms is laid bare. The hunter, too, having blocked the winding paths, surrounds the lairs of the forest with dense thickets, and artfully leaves one entrance instead of many for the fleeing beasts, and there he places himself in ambush, brandishing his drawn hunting-spears; and thus he gains for himself a shortcut in the laborious hunt, while he quietly waits with busy leisure in the sole entryway for the tracks of the swift beasts, which he had been unable to pursue through endless paths. And we, when we block the passages of earthly action for the vices that strive to go forth to the liberty of wicked work, we, as it were, lay an ambush for them in one place, because we struggle continually with thoughts alone. And thus the bestial ferocity of our vices is easily captured, while the sole passage of human thought is singularly guarded. The bird-catcher also covers all the pools on every side with a density of branches, and by a prescribed necessity compels the birds to flock to one place to drink the sweet water; and while that one place for drinking is exposed, the surrounding contrivances of traps are enriched by the outcome of a successful fowling. Therefore, so that we may easily cast the snares of capture upon the diverse passions of the soul, having blocked the streams of secular affairs, let us strive to fight manfully against the impulses of thoughts alone, so that while our vices, deterred from action, fly to the fluctuations of thoughts alone, they may easily fall into the snares of holy prudence.

It should be noted, however, that the servant of God is often deceived by the members of this world, when he is importunately invited to settle the disputes of dissidents, or to carry out some tasks, namely those profitable for ecclesiastical uses; for they exaggerate the imminent peril and the common danger to many, unless he proceeds. And if he should go, they assert in many ways that all things will turn out according to his will and come to happy conclusions.

Antiquus enim hostis videns militem Christi in procinctu sancti certaminis positum, non aliter posse a sui propositi fervore tepescere, machinatur uberius cujusdam fructus superficiei bonum adumbrare, ut dum lucrum majus attenditur, bonum, quod in praesenti est, ad tempus quasi dispensatorie postponatur. Sed qui mendacis mundi consuetudinem frequenter expertus est, prudenter novit et vana suggerentium commenta respuere, et se ab infructuosi laboris exercitio graviter custodire.

Apud quosdam namque absentis monachi auctoritas gravis est; si autem praesens adfuerit, nullius judicatur esse momenti. Saepe enim cujuspiam venerabilis viri litteris reverentiae honor impenditur, qui personae, si adsit, indevotius exhibetur. Apud saeculares nempe religiosus quisque veluti pictura est. Pictura siquidem si procul assistat, inhianter, et cum aviditate prospicitur; si juxta sit, contemptibilis judicatur. Et spiritalis quisque carnalibus absens quidem timori, praesens autem videtur despectui. Quod et Apostolus sibimet contigisse testatur, cum ait: «Epistolae graves sunt, et fortes, praesentia autem corporis infirma, et sermo contemptibilis (II Cor. X).» Quos enim Epistolarum fortitudine et gravitate terruerat, his corporali praesentia despiciabilis apparebat.

Quid autem mirum, si justis quibuslibet viris ista contingant, cum et de ipso electorum capite, Redemptore videlicet nostro, non dissimile quid evangelica series asserat? «Herodes, inquit, viso Jesu, gavisus est valde; erat enim cupiens ex multo tempore videre eum, eo quod audierat multa de illo (Luc. XXIII).» Sed videamus hoc tam magnum, tam diuturnum desiderium, quod in absentem Dominum falsitas Herodiana tenuerat, in quem tandem exitum oblata vivendi facultate concluderit. Quod nimirum manifeste declaratur, cum paulo inferius subditur: «Sprevit autem eum Herodes cum exercitu suo, et illisit indutum veste alba, et remisit ad Pilatum (ibid.).» Ecce quem vulpes illa malitiosa desideraverat, sprevit: quem videre cupiebat, illisit; et quia vitam non pro vivendi amore quaesivit, remittens eum ad Pilatum, in impietatis suae morte remansit.

## CAPUT XXVII.

*Ut monachus se a mundi implicatione custodiat.*

For the ancient enemy, seeing the soldier of Christ placed in readiness for the holy contest and that he cannot otherwise grow lukewarm from the fervor of his purpose, contrives to sketch out the superficially good appearance of some more abundant fruit, so that while a greater gain is considered, the good which is at hand may be postponed for a time, as if by dispensation. But he who has frequently experienced the custom of the deceitful world knows prudently both to reject the vain fictions of those who suggest them and to guard himself carefully from the exercise of fruitless labor.

For among some, the authority of an absent monk is weighty; but if he is present, he is judged to be of no importance. For often the honor of reverence is paid to the letters of some venerable man, which is shown more irreverently to his person, if he be present. Indeed, among secular people, every religious person is like a picture. For if a picture stands at a distance, it is gazed upon eagerly and with avidity; if it is near, it is judged contemptible. And so every spiritual person seems to carnal men an object of fear when absent, but of contempt when present. The Apostle also testifies that this happened to him, when he says: "His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible (II Cor. 10)." For to those whom he had terrified by the strength and weight of his letters, he appeared despicable in his bodily presence.

But what wonder is it, if these things happen to any just men, when the evangelical narrative asserts something not dissimilar about the very head of the elect, namely our Redeemer? "Herod," it says, "seeing Jesus, was very glad; for he had been desirous for a long time to see him, because he had heard many things about him (Luke 23)." But let us see to what end this so great, so long-standing desire, which the Herodian falsehood had held for the absent Lord, finally concluded when the opportunity of seeing him was offered. This is indeed manifestly declared when a little below it is added: "But Herod with his army despised him, and mocked him, clothing him in a white garment, and sent him back to Pilate (ibid.)." Behold, he whom that malicious fox had desired, he despised; him whom he wished to see, he mocked; and because he did not seek the Life for the love of living, by sending him back to Pilate, he remained in the death of his own impiety.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

*That the monk should guard himself from worldly entanglement.*

Quisquis ergo in procinctu coelestis militiae positus ad supernae patriae municipium properat, studeat male blandientis mundi promissa respuere, abhorreat se sub qualibet specie actionum saecularium laqueis irretire. Habet deputatum sibi propriae servitutis officium: sufficere sibi credat, si indictae sibi obedientiae praescriptum munus possit implere. Illud ad memoriam revocet quod scriptum est: «Cave ne in multis sint actus tui (Eccli. XI).» Saecularibus relinquatur saecularia jura componere. Satis sit servis Dei perituro huic mundo se mortuos exhibere. Sicut enim absurdum est, bonis mala praeferre; ita etiam fatuum, optimum bono inferius judicare. Maria, quia optimam partem elegit, sufficere sibi credidit; nec se ad bona Marthae, frequens videlicet ministerium, reclinavit (Luc. X). Moyses, quia ab humana conversatione remotus, bis quadragenario dierum numero jejunavit, bis etiam legem Domini digito scriptam suscipere meruit (Exod. XXIV); Aaron autem, qui ad custodiam populi derelictus est, cognoscitur idola fabricatus (Exod. XXXII).

Sic nimirum, sic plerumque contingit, ut qui propria non contentus, alienae progreditur saluti consulere, sui potius cogatur periculum sustinere; cumque alii, velut inter procellosa naufragia palpitanti, manum porrigit, ipsum quoque praecipitem vorax fluctus involvit. Tutius ergo est sub hujus vitae nocturna caligine, nos 272 in littore positos naufragantibus lumen ingerere, quam ad eos compassionis gratia cum propriae vitae periculo pernatare; quatenus ipsi per nos dato recti cursus indicio, sinum tuti portus attingant, non autem nos ad eos transfretantes vorago spumosi maris absorbeat. In vertice montis Raphidim Moyses orabat, et duce Josue, Israel in convalle pugnabat. Sed si Moyses in adiutorium populi sui ad campestria descendisset, Amalech procul dubio Israelitarum caedentium terga percuteret. Si ille manus ad corripienda arma deponeret, facta suorum strage, facilem victoriam adversariis triumphantibus praeberet. Quod nimirum patenter agnoscitur, si ipsa sacrae historiae series subtiliter attendatur, ubi dicitur: «Quia cum levaret Moyses manus, vincebat Israel; sin autem paululum dimisisset, superabat Amalech (Exod. XVII).»

Whoever, therefore, being placed in the battle-array of the heavenly militia, hastens to the city of the supernal fatherland, let him strive to reject the promises of the wickedly flattering world, and let him abhor being ensnared in the traps of secular actions under any guise. He has a duty of his own servitude assigned to him: let him believe it to be sufficient for himself if he can fulfill the prescribed task of the obedience enjoined upon him. Let him recall to memory what is written: "Beware lest thy acts be in many things" (Ecclesiasticus 11). Let it be left to the secular to settle secular affairs. Let it be enough for the servants of God to show themselves as dead to this perishable world. For just as it is absurd to prefer evil things to good, so also is it foolish to judge the best to be inferior to the good. Mary, because she chose the best part, believed it to be sufficient for herself; nor did she incline herself to the good things of Martha, namely, frequent service (Luke 10). Moses, because he was removed from human conversation and fasted twice for a number of forty days, twice also merited to receive the law of the Lord written by His finger (Exodus 24); Aaron, however, who was left behind to guard the people, is known to have fashioned idols (Exodus 32).

Thus indeed, thus it very often happens, that he who, not content with his own affairs, proceeds to look after the salvation of another, is forced rather to sustain danger to himself; and while he extends a hand to another who is, as it were, struggling amidst stormy shipwrecks, the devouring wave also envelops him headlong. It is safer, therefore, in the nocturnal darkness of this life, for us who are placed on the shore to bring a light to the shipwrecked, than to swim out to them for the sake of compassion with peril to our own life; so that they, by the indication of the right course given by us, may reach the bosom of a safe harbor, and the abyss of the foaming sea may not absorb us as we cross over to them. On the summit of the mountain at Rephidim Moses was praying, and with Joshua as leader, Israel was fighting in the valley. But if Moses had descended to the plains to aid his people, Amalek without a doubt would have struck the backs of the Israelites as they were being cut down. If he were to put down his hands to take up arms, a slaughter of his own people having been made, he would have offered an easy victory to the triumphant adversaries. This is indeed clearly recognized if the very series of sacred history is subtly attended to, where it is said: "For when Moses lifted up his hands, Israel prevailed; but if he let them down a little, Amalek overcame" (Exodus 17).

Orantis ergo manus, manus praeliantium roborabant; et quia istae imbelles ad coelum patebant, idcirco illae dimicantes victoriam caesis hostibus obtinebant. Illarum quidem fuit pugna, sed istarum non ambigitur fuisse victoria; quia ut illis daretur vincere, istae meruerunt divinitus impetrare. At contra, Balaam filius Beor, qui ad praelium cum Madianitis egreditur, cum his, quos jugulare decreverat, gladio trucidatur (Num. XXXI). Et jure, qui proprio non est contentus officio, discrimini redditur obnoxius alieno. Infelix meruit inter bellantium cuneos hostilibus gladiis confossus occumbere, qui in pace positus per prophetiae oraculum ipsius belli potuisset exitum renunciare.

## CAPUT XXVIII.

*De libertate, et discretione Elisei.*

Nequaquam sic Eliseus, qui nimirum Joram regem Israel adversus Moab prope-  
rantem, non ad bella secutus est, sed tantum sufficere credidit, quod ei successum belli  
et adfuturam concisis hostibus victoriam praedixit (IV Reg. III). Sed cur dicimus, quia  
nequaquam in praelium regia castra secutus sit, cum et Naaman de remotis Syriae  
finibus veniente, et ostio domus suae cum equis, et curribus humiliter assistente, non  
limen egredi dignum duxit, non januam ut ingrederetur aperuit: sed per nuntium  
potius quae fuerint facienda, mandavit? Et certe Naaman isti multiplex mundanarum  
dotum suppetebat copia, quibus honorandus esse videretur. Sicut enim testatur histo-  
ria: «Princeps erat militiae, vir quoque magnus apud dominum suum, et honoratus  
(ibid.).» Per illum enim dedit Dominus salutem Syriae. Erat insuper, sicut scriptum  
est, vir fortis et dives. In ipsa etiam expeditione positus, substantiae facultate non erat  
omnino vacuus. Tulerat enim secum, sicut legitur, decem talenta argenti, et sex mille  
aureos, decem nihilominus mutatoria vestimentorum quae etsi cujusmodi fuerint,  
Scriptura non dicat, gravibus tamen auri, argentineque connumerata ponderibus pre-  
tiosa fuisse quis ambigat? Quanti sunt hodie qui monasticae institutionis professione  
censentur, quibus si tam potens, tamque famosus vir pro foribus dignaretur assistere,  
mox etiam festinantes reverenter occurrerent, ut ingrederetur, humiliter obsecrarent,  
et non tam quae utiliter implerentur, quam quae libenter audirentur, assentationis  
verba proferrent?

The hands of the one praying, therefore, strengthened the hands of those fighting; and because the former, unwarlike, were open to heaven, for that reason the latter, contending, obtained victory with the enemies slain. Theirs [the soldiers'] was the battle, but his [Moses'] was undoubtedly the victory; for so that they might be granted to conquer, he merited to obtain it from heaven. But on the contrary, Balaam son of Beor, who went forth to battle with the Midianites, was slain by the sword with those whom he had resolved to slaughter (Numbers 31). And rightly so, for he who is not content with his own office is rendered subject to the peril of another's. The unfortunate man deserved to fall among the wedges of warriors, pierced by hostile swords, who, being placed in peace, could have announced the outcome of that very war through the oracle of prophecy.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### *On the liberty and discretion of Elisha.*

Not so Elisha, who, to be sure, did not follow Joram, king of Israel, to the wars as he hastened against Moab, but believed it sufficient that he foretold to him the success of the war and the future victory over the slaughtered enemies (4 Kings 3). But why do we say that he by no means followed the royal camp into battle, when, even as Naaman came from the remote borders of Syria and stood humbly at the door of his house with his horses and chariots, he did not deem it worthy to cross the threshold, nor did he open the door for him to enter, but rather sent word by a messenger what was to be done? And certainly this Naaman had at his disposal a manifold abundance of worldly endowments, for which he might seem worthy of being honored. For as the history testifies: "He was the commander of the army, a great man also with his lord, and honorable" (ibid.). For by him the Lord had given deliverance to Syria. He was, moreover, as it is written, a mighty man and rich. Even while engaged in that expedition, he was by no means lacking in the means of substance. For he had brought with him, as we read, ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and likewise ten changes of garments, which, although Scripture does not say of what kind they were, who can doubt that they were precious, being counted with such heavy weights of gold and silver? How many are there today, counted among those who profess the monastic rule, who, if so powerful and famous a man were to deign to stand before their doors, would immediately hasten to meet him reverently, humbly beseech him to enter, and utter words of flattery, not so much those that would be usefully fulfilled as those that would be gladly heard?

Qui etiam si tantopere rogarentur, nequaquam suscipere oblata renuerent, praesertim si aliquantulum numerosior alendorum fratrum sibi conventus adesset. Eliseus autem Spiritus sancti discipulus, spe dives, thesauro fidei locuples, licet centum prophetarum filios sub disciplinae suae magisterio sustentaret, pecuniam sprexit, munera repulit, et impensae gratiae vicem recipere laudabiliter recusavit, ne videlicet quod gratis acceperat, ad dantis injuriam vendere videretur. Venienti autem Naaman nequaquam superbe, sed prudenter non assurrexit, ne videlicet alienigenae, et de terrena adhuc gloria praesumentis reverentiam exhiberet: nimirum jam tunc apostolicae dignitatis imaginem praeferebat, quam Paulus postmodum expressam repraesentat, dicens: «Quandiu sum apostolus gentium, ministerium meum honorificabo (Rom. XI).» Nunquid enim minister humilitatis existimandus est, Naaman superbe fixisse pro foribus, qui de monte Carmeli in quo manebat, a femina se passus est pertrahi, et Sunamitem illam non solum comitatus, verum insuper est secutus? Nam cum illa diceret (IV Reg. IV): «Vivit Dominus, et vivit anima tua, non dimittam te;» mox sequitur Scriptura, dicens: «Surrexit, et secutus est eam.» Nunquid etiam copiosa munera tumidi fastus supercilio respuit, qui a viro quodam de Balsalica veniente, viles hordeaceos panes charitative suscipere non despexit?

Sed hic dum prophetae obstaculum, ne tumidae elationis arguatur, apponimus, in nosmetipsos exactoriae quaestionis aditum aperimus. Potest enim adversus haec quae proponimus, quaestio hujusmodi fieri: Si tantus propheta, et panes de manibus offerentis accepit, et exire de eremo feminea supplicatione consensit; qua ratione monachus, vel saeculum frequentare non audeat, vel suscipere munera difficiliter acquiescat? Ad quod nos sub compendio respondentes, nequaquam quid accipiendi licentiam monacho prorsus abscidimus, sed quo id temperatius, et cum discretione fiat, cum fraterna devotio postulat, suademus: nimirum ut necessaria quaeque, sicut propheta panes quibus indigebat, accipiat, et quae superflua judicaverit, sicut ille pecuniam, non admittat.

Quod autem Eliseus ad resuscitandum Sunamitis filium, de montana remotione descendit, hujus temporis monachis potius est venerationi habendum, quam imitandum. Liceat sane monacho ad saeculum ex voluntate recurrere, quoties mortuum hominem ad vitam potuerit suscitare. Illud namque propheticum iter omnino cognoscitur, et virtute plenum per resurrectionis humanae miraculum, et typicum per significationis internae mysterium. Quid autem significet non otiosum creditur, si breviter apponatur.

Who also, if they were so earnestly entreated, would by no means refuse to accept the offerings, especially if a somewhat numerous community of brethren to be fed were present with them. But Elisha, a disciple of the Holy Spirit, rich in hope, wealthy with the treasure of faith, although he sustained a hundred sons of the prophets under the mastership of his discipline, scorned the money, rejected the gifts, and laudably refused to receive a return for the grace bestowed, lest, indeed, he should seem to sell what he had received for free, to the injury of the giver. However, he did not rise for the approaching Naaman, not out of pride, but out of prudence, lest, you see, he should show reverence to a foreigner who still presumed upon earthly glory: doubtless even then prefiguring the image of apostolic dignity, which Paul afterwards represented explicitly, saying: "Inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I will honor my ministry" (Rom. 11). For is he to be thought a minister of humility who proudly fixed Naaman before the doors, when he allowed himself to be drawn from Mount Carmel, where he dwelt, by a woman, and not only accompanied that Shunammite but even followed her? For when she said (4 Kings 4): "As the Lord lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you," Scripture immediately follows, saying: "He arose, and followed her." Did he also with the haughtiness of swollen pride reject copious gifts, who did not disdain to charitably receive vile barley loaves from a certain man coming from Baal-shalishah?

But here, while we present an obstacle to the prophet's being accused of swollen pride, we open the way for a demanding question against ourselves. For against these things that we propose, a question of this kind can be raised: If so great a prophet both accepted bread from the hands of the one offering it and consented to leave the desert at a woman's supplication, for what reason should a monk not dare to frequent the world, or be more reluctant to acquiesce in receiving gifts? To which we, responding briefly, by no means completely cut off the license for a monk to receive anything, but we recommend that it be done more temperately and with discretion when fraternal devotion requires it: namely, that he should accept whatever is necessary, just as the prophet accepted the bread he needed, and not admit what he has judged to be superfluous, as that prophet did with the money.

But the fact that Elisha descended from his mountain seclusion to resuscitate the son of the Shunammite is something for the monks of this time to hold in veneration rather than to imitate. Let a monk, indeed, be permitted to return to the world at will, as often as he is able to raise a dead man to life. For that prophetic journey is known to be altogether full of power through the miracle of human resurrection, and typological through the mystery of its inner meaning. And it is believed not to be unprofitable to add briefly what it signifies.

Sunamitis nempe filium puer ab Eliseo missus cum baculo non resuscitavit: per semetipsum vero Eliseus veniens, seque super mortuum sternens, atque ad ejus membra se colligens, huc illucque deambulans, et in ore mortui septies aspirans, hunc ad redivivam lucem protinus per mysterium compassionis animavit. Auctor siquidem humani generis Deus quasi mortuum puerum doluit, cum exstinctos nos iniquitatis aculeo miseratus aspexit. Et quia per Moysen terrorem legis protulit, quasi per puerum virgam misit. Per legem quippe Deus virgam tenuerat, cum dicebat: «Si quis haec vel illa fecerit, morte moriatur (Exod. XX, XXI).»

A peccati igitur morte lex nos suscitare non valuit, sed ad statum vitae Deus aspirata mansuetudinis gratia clementer erexit. Sed puer cum baculo mortuum suscitare non valuit, quia Paulo attestante: «Nihil ad perfectum adduxit lex (Hebr. VII).» Ille autem per semetipsum veniens, et super cadaver se humiliter sternens, ad exaequanda sibi mortui membra se collegit: «Quia cum in forma Dei esset, non rapinam arbitratus est se esse aequalem Deo, sed semetipsum exinanivit formam servi accipiens, in similitudinem hominum factus, et habitu inventus ut homo (Philip. II).» Huc illucque deambulat, quia et Judaeam juxta se, et longe positas gentes vocat. Super mortuum septies aspirat, quia ad perceptionem divini muneris gratia septiformis Spiritus in peccati morte jacentes inflammat. Moxque vivens erigitur, quia is, quem terroris virga suscitare non potuit, per amoris spiritum puer ad vitam redit (IV Reg. IV).

Quis ergo propheticum discursum jure audeat in exemplum trahere, cujus nimirum constat, quia neque virtutem, neque mysterium possit aequare? Excubet igitur assidue bellator Christi in procinctu coelestis militiae lorica munitus fidei; pro castris sui imperatoris ad dimicandum paratus semper assistat, ne fortassis extra castra vagantem reperiens eum gladius hostilis absumat. Donec Abner commilitonum castris interfuit, adversariorum cuneis terribilis exstitit; postquam vero arma deposuit, rudioris adhuc militis gladio, caesi nuper Asael poenas exsolvit (II Reg. II). Uriae quoque si propriae domus hospitium placuisset, sententiam procul dubio regiae indignationis, ac fraudis evaderet. Sed quia extrinsecus in alienis, quam in proprio dormire cubiculo maluit, auctores suae mortis litteras ad castrorum urbem obsidentium principem reportavit (II Reg. XI).

## CAPUT XXIX.

*Quod hoc tempore praedicatio non, sicut olim, sit admodum fructuosa.*

For the boy sent by Elisha with the staff did not resuscitate the Shunammite's son; but Elisha himself, coming in person, and stretching himself over the dead body, and conforming himself to its limbs, walking to and fro, and breathing seven times into the mouth of the dead one, straightway animated him to renewed light through the mystery of compassion. Indeed, God, the author of the human race, grieved as for a dead child when He looked with pity upon us, extinguished by the sting of iniquity. And because He brought forth the terror of the Law through Moses, it was as if He sent a staff through a boy. For through the Law, God had held a rod, when He said: "If anyone does this or that, he shall surely die" (Exod. 20, 21).

Therefore, the Law was not able to raise us from the death of sin, but God mercifully raised us to the state of life by the breathed-in grace of gentleness. But the boy with the staff was not able to raise the dead, because, as Paul attests: "The Law brought nothing to perfection" (Heb. 7). But He, coming by Himself, and humbly stretching Himself over the corpse, gathered Himself to make the dead one's limbs equal to His own: "Who, being in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and in habit found as a man" (Phil. 2). He walks to and fro, because He calls both Judea, which is near Him, and the nations that are far off. He breathes seven times upon the dead one, because the grace of the sevenfold Spirit inflames those lying in the death of sin to receive the divine gift. And soon he is raised up living, because he whom the rod of terror could not raise, the boy returns to life through the spirit of love (4 Kings 4).

Who then would dare rightly to draw the prophet's running about as an example, when it is clear that he can equal neither its power nor its mystery? Let the warrior of Christ therefore keep watch assiduously, girded for battle in the heavenly militia, fortified with the breastplate of faith; let him always stand ready to fight for the camp of his emperor, lest perhaps the hostile sword find him wandering outside the camp and consume him. As long as Abner was in the camp of his fellow soldiers, he was terrible to the enemy's ranks; but after he laid down his arms, he paid the penalty for the recently slain Asahel by the sword of a still rougher soldier (2 Kings 2). If the hospitality of his own house had also pleased Uriah, he would without doubt have escaped the sentence of royal indignation and fraud. But because he preferred to sleep outside in others' quarters rather than in his own chamber, he carried back to the commander of the camp besieging the city the letters that were the authors of his own death (2 Kings 11).

## CHAPTER XXIX.

*That in this time, preaching is not as fruitful as it once was.*

Et quidem fuit olim tempus, quo bona annuntiantibus mundus egebat, sed elapsa sunt, ac evoluta tempora, quibus religiosus quisque potuerit saecularibus fructuose consulere, et in mente carnalium spiritualia non inutiliter seminare. Nunc infelices quique verba vitae fabulas deputant, et salutaribus monitis licet aures adhibeant, ea tamen servare declinant. Porro si fidei oculos ad transacta reducimus, velut fructuosos ramos in sterilia degenerasse vitulamina, praeteritum in hoc praesens saeculum invenimus.

Quis enim non miretur, quod Ninive, spatiosa nimis et incomparabilis civitas, ad vocem unius hominis tam facile a sua pravitate 275 convertitur; et innumerabilis populus, non solum cum parvulis et mulieribus, sed etiam cum jumentis ad poenitentiam revocatur (Jon. III)? Quis hoc tempore, non dicam infirmæ aetati, vel sexui, sed ipsis etiam viris praesumat jejunia triduana praescribere, ut nec aquam bibere, nec quidquam omnino cibi liceat degustare? Ecce apud gentiles bruta etiam pecora ad prophetae vocem triduanos cibos levant; cum et ipsi homines sub evangelica disciplina, ultra diem jejunare contemnunt. Illi ad poenitentiam uno praedicante unanimiter confluent; isti praedicatorum turbas indesinenter audiunt, et obedire nullatenus acquiescunt. Quis etiam non obstupescat, quod omnes viri Juda et Benjamin, quicumque uxores alienigenas duxerant, ad praedicationem Esdrae sacerdotis non solum illicita connubia dissolverunt, sed et omnem sobolem quae ex eis genita fuerat, abjecerunt (I Esdr. X)? Quis nesciat quantus virorum amor circa uxores proprias vigeat, quanta circa filios pietas paternum pectus astringat? Quis ignoret ad dissolvendum duplex hujus necessitudinis vinculum, quo moerore, qua amaritudine se potuerunt viscera humana concutere? Quo vehementissimi doloris incendio paternus affectus, conjugalis animus compulsus est aestuare? Habentes tamen veram circa Deum pietatem, ad nihilum redegerunt falsae pietatis imaginem; atque ut essent in spiritu veraciter pii, facti sunt contra carnem et sanguinem laudabiliter rigidi. Armaverunt se contra jura naturae, ut naturarum Auctori fideliter militarent. Obliti sunt erga filios, quod fuerant genitores, ut veri patris ipsi ascriberentur haeredes; atque ut supernae pacis sibi foedera resarcirent, conjugalisi tori copulam resciderunt. Nesciunt servare matrimonii fidem, ubi fides melior ad proprium recalescit auctorem. Quibus utique convenienter aptatur quod per Moysen dicitur: «Qui dixit patri suo et matri suae, nescio vos; et fratribus suis, ignoro vos, et nescierunt filios suos, ii custodierunt eloquium tuum, et pactum tuum servaverunt (Deut. XXXIII.)»

And indeed there was once a time when the world needed those who announced good things, but those times have passed and evolved, times in which any religious person could fruitfully counsel the secular, and not uselessly sow spiritual things in the minds of the carnal. Now, all the wretched consider the words of life to be fables, and although they lend their ears to salutary warnings, they nevertheless decline to observe them. Furthermore, if we turn the eyes of faith back to the past, we find that the present age has degenerated from the past, like fruitful branches into sterile shoots.

For who would not marvel that Nineveh, a city exceedingly spacious and incomparable, was so easily converted from its wickedness at the voice of a single man; and that an innumerable people, not only with their little ones and women, but even with their beasts of burden, were called back to penance (Jonah 3)? Who in this time would presume to prescribe a three-day fast, not to mention for the weak of age or sex, but even for men themselves, such that they are not allowed to drink water or taste any food at all? Behold, among the gentiles, even the brute beasts at the prophet's voice forwent food for three days; whereas men themselves, under evangelical discipline, scorn to fast for more than a day. The former flock together unanimously to penance at the word of one preacher; the latter incessantly hear crowds of preachers, and in no way consent to obey. Who would not also be astounded that all the men of Judah and Benjamin, whoever had taken foreign wives, at the preaching of Ezra the priest not only dissolved their illicit unions, but also cast off all the offspring that had been born from them (1 Ezra 10)? Who does not know how great is the love of men for their own wives, how great the devotion for their children that binds a father's heart? Who can be unaware of the sorrow, the bitterness, with which human hearts must have been shaken to dissolve this twofold bond of necessity? By what fire of most vehement grief was the paternal affection, the conjugal spirit, forced to burn? Yet, having true piety (*\*pietas\**) towards God, they reduced the image of a false piety to nothing; and so that they might be truly pious in spirit, they became laudably rigid against flesh and blood. They armed themselves against the laws of nature, so that they might faithfully serve the Author of natures. They forgot towards their children that they had been fathers, so that they themselves might be inscribed as heirs of the true Father; and so that they might repair for themselves the covenants of heavenly peace, they severed the bond of the conjugal bed. They know not how to keep faith with marriages, where a better faith is rekindled towards its proper author. To them is certainly aptly applied what is said through Moses: "Who said to his father and to his mother, 'I do not know you'; and to his brothers, 'I do not know you,' and they knew not their own children, these have kept your word, and have observed your covenant (Deut. 33)."

Quis, rogo, nunc possit incestuosa conjugia quantumvis instantissima praedicatione rescindere? Quis valeat, non dicam populum, sed vel unum hominem ad illiciti matrimonii repudium provocare? Clamant sacri canones, humanae in tantum scelus vindicant leges, obsistunt praedicatores Ecclesiae: et cuncta haec perditis hominibus velut aniles naeniae risum potius movent, quam ad corrigendi piaculi lamenta compungant. Ecce insuper hoc anno, sicut nostis, per Romanae sedis antistitem bis congregatum est synodale concilium, ubi denuo omnes incestuosi juxta canonum decreta, ecclesiastica sunt communione privati.

Sed quis ex tot millibus hominum saltem unum vidit ab infausti foederis abominatione divulgum? Imo ne profundiori juste clamitantis absorberetur hiatus, quis eorum post haec, Ecclesiae limen terere destitit? Aut quis insuper ista considerans, ab eorum se familiaritate removit? In omnes itaque lethalis leprae contagium serpit, quia nimirum omnes eorum complices apostolicae excommunicationis nexus astringit. Enimvero quisquis conjugalis prosapiae 276 titulis insignitur, quisquis male blandientis formae avita venustate mulcetur, praesertim si largioris substantiae dotibus affluit, vel subcrescentis sobolis indoles spem sibi futurae posteritatis infundit; consultius judicat a Deo manifeste recedere, quam adeo lucrosi matrimonii glutinum disgregare. Si vero his contraria evenerint, atque luxuriae calamitatis incommoditate percellatur, ipse vir falsae consanguinitatis lineam texit, et inaudita proavorum nomina per multa argumenta confingit, atque senes quosdam in hujus allegationis testimonium advocat, quos tamen per vitae terminum sublato e medio non ignorat. Ipse itaque sibimet accusator, et reus crimen impingit, scelus exaggerat, atque adminiculum, quo ex tam periculoso naufragio enatare possit, inquirat.

Eat ergo nunc monachus, salutiferum vitae suae otium deserat, vitamque suam sub specie lucrandi animas, inania sectando, consumat. Quis enim Simoniacus nostrae commonitionis instinctu sua se aliquando sponte deposuit? Quis alieni juris violenter invasor, paterno solo depulsos in patrimonia sublata restituit? Quis in campo bellicosus armatorum cuneis constipatus, si ex aequo congredi potuit, obstaculo sequestrae pacis ad propria nisi fuso sanguine repedavit? Quis exactor egeno debitori praefixum chirographo fenus indulsit? Quis debitor creditoris haeredibus bonae fidei jura servavit?

Who, I ask, can now rescind incestuous marriages, however insistent the preaching? Who has the power, I will not say to provoke a people, but even one man to the repudiation of an illicit marriage? The sacred canons cry out, human laws avenge so great a crime, the preachers of the Church stand against it: and all these things, to lost men, like old wives' tales, move them to laughter rather than pricking them to lament the sin that must be corrected. Behold, moreover, this year, as you know, a synodal council has been twice convened by the pontiff of the Roman see, where again all the incestuous, according to the decrees of the canons, have been deprived of ecclesiastical communion.

But who, out of so many thousands of men, has seen even one torn away from the abomination of an ill-omened union? Indeed, lest he be swallowed by the deeper abyss of the one justly crying out, which of them after this has ceased to frequent the threshold of the Church? Or who, moreover, considering these things, has removed himself from their company? And so the contagion of a lethal leprosy creeps into all, because, to be sure, the bond of apostolic excommunication binds all their accomplices. For indeed, whoever is distinguished by the titles of a conjugal lineage, whoever is charmed by the ancestral beauty of a wickedly flattering form, especially if he abounds in the dowries of a larger substance, or if the character of his growing offspring instills in him the hope of future posterity; he judges it more prudent to manifestly withdraw from God than to break apart the glue of so lucrative a marriage. But if the contrary should happen, and he is struck by the inconvenience of a calamitous extravagance, the man himself weaves a false line of consanguinity, and invents unheard-of names of ancestors through many arguments, and calls upon certain old men as witnesses for this allegation, whom, however, he knows well have been removed from our midst by the end of their lives. And so, as his own accuser and defendant, he imputes the crime, exaggerates the wickedness, and seeks a means by which he might swim out from so dangerous a shipwreck.

Let the monk therefore go now, let him desert the salutary leisure of his life, and consume his life under the pretext of winning souls, by pursuing vanities. For what simoniac, at the prompting of our admonition, has ever voluntarily deposed himself? What violent invader of another's right has restored to their stolen patrimonies those driven from their paternal soil? Who, when surrounded on the field by warlike troops of armed men, if he could engage on equal terms, has ever returned to his own lands by the obstacle of a mediating peace, without bloodshed? What tax collector has forgiven a needy debtor the interest fixed by a written bond? What debtor has kept the laws of good faith with the heirs of his creditor?

Omnia in orbe confusa, cuncta pietatis ac fidei decreta convulsa. A iudicibus iustitia venditur. A legisperitis veritas tenebroso cavillatoriae argumentationis colore fuscatur. Venales sunt siquidem leges, et pecunia iustificat delinquentes. Aurum nunc ipsis senatoribus praesidens in tribunalibus iudicat, et velut imperator quidam pragmaticae sanctionis edicta promulgat. Sicut enim rex in secretalibus adytis de regni statu, de rerum summa deliberat; quodammodo sic aurum et latet in occulto, et sententiam depromit in publico. In sudario angusto concluditur, et decisis negotiis calculos iudiciales apponit. Plerumque enim quos causa condemnat, mendax pecunia praemio dignos procaciter asseverat; e contra, quos conscientia testatur innoxios, statuit impia coram iudicibus reos. Nummus nempe momenta legibus tribuit, atque ad suum intellectum obscuras sententias falsus interpretator inflectit. Nummus cor iudicum circa divites oleo impietatis emollit; erga pauperes vero ad exercendum vigorem rigidae animadversionis impellit. Nunc igitur avaritia malorum omnium radix, uberius pullulat, et tanquam virosae propaginis ramos per totum orbem feralium vitiorum portenta dilatat.

## CAPUT XXX

*Quod nunc omnia vitiorum monstra feralius vigeant.*

Haec nimirum tempora apostolico denuntiantur oraculo, dum Timotheo futura praedicat: «In novissimis, inquit, diebus erunt tempora periculosa, et erunt homines seipsos amantes, cupidi, elati, superbi, blasphemi, parentibus inobedientes, ingrati, scelesti, sine 277 affectione, sine pace, criminatores, incontinentes, immites, sine benignitate, proditores, protervi, tumidi, voluptatum amatores magis quam Dei, habentes speciem quidem pietatis, virtutem autem ejus abnegantes (II Tim. III);» atque his praemissis, illico subjungit: «Et hos devita (ibid.).» Nunquid usque ad mundi hujus terminum Timotheus perventurus erat, cui cum pravitates hominum in novissimis diebus futuras Apostolus enumeraret, protinus ut devitaret adjecit? an potius in unius persona discipuli, illis mandatum hoc communiter indidit, quos adhuc deputatos officio juxta finem saeculi fore praevidit? Igitur dum non dicit: His praedica, his verba vitae denuntia, sed «hos devita,» profecto modernae temeritatis insolentiam arguit, atque ab infructuosa tumidos quosque praedicatione compescit.

Quid ad haec nos monachi dicimus, qui mensurae nostrae metas excedimus, atque jus nobis alieni muneris usurpatorie vindicamus? Si Paulus discipulum in hoc ipso specialiter constitutum ab incorrigibilium praedicatione prohibuit, qua nos audaciae nota corripimur, qui nequaquam nobis delegato praedicationis officio, importune nosmetipsos ingerimus, et nostra salute postposita, alienis quasi profectibus inaniter insudamus?

All things in the world are in confusion, all decrees of piety and faith are overturned. Justice is sold by judges. By legal experts, truth is obscured by the dark color of sophistical argumentation. For laws are for sale, and money justifies the delinquent. Gold now presides over the senators themselves in the tribunals and judges, and like some emperor, promulgates the edicts of a pragmatic sanction. For just as a king in his secret chambers deliberates on the state of the kingdom, on the sum of things; in a way, so gold both lies hidden in secret and brings forth its sentence in public. It is enclosed in a narrow cloth, and having decided the business, it casts the judicial votes. For often, those whom the case condemns, deceitful money brazenly asserts to be worthy of a reward; on the contrary, those whom conscience attests to be innocent, it impiously establishes as guilty before the judges. Indeed, coin gives weight to the laws, and as a false interpreter, bends obscure sentences to its own understanding. Coin softens the hearts of judges towards the rich with the oil of impiety; but towards the poor, it impels them to exercise the vigor of rigid censure. Now, therefore, avarice, the root of all evils, sprouts more abundantly, and like the branches of a poisonous shoot, spreads the portents of deadly vices throughout the whole world.

### CHAPTER XXX.

*That now all monstrous vices flourish more savagely.*

These are indeed the times announced by the apostolic oracle, when he foretold the future to Timothy: 'In the last days,' he says, 'perilous times will come, and men will be lovers of themselves, covetous, haughty, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, wicked, without affection, without peace, accusers, incontinent, cruel, without kindness, traitors, reckless, swollen with pride, lovers of pleasures more than of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying the power thereof (II Tim. 3);' and having stated these things, he immediately adds: 'And avoid them' (ibid.). Was Timothy, then, going to reach the end of this world, that the Apostle, after enumerating the depravities of men that would be in the last days, immediately added that he should avoid them? Or rather, in the person of this one disciple, did he not give this command in common to those whom he foresaw would still be appointed to their office near the end of the age? Therefore, when he does not say, 'Preach to them, announce to them the words of life,' but 'avoid them,' he surely condemns the insolence of modern temerity and restrains the proud from fruitless preaching.

What shall we monks say to these things, we who exceed the limits of our measure and usurp for ourselves the right of another's office? If Paul forbade a disciple specially appointed for this very task from preaching to the incorrigible, by what mark of audacity are we seized, who, though the office of preaching has by no means been delegated to us, importunately thrust ourselves forward and, neglecting our own salvation, sweat in vain for the supposed progress of others?

Cedat ergo, cedat sterilis cura negotii. Superfluum judicetur infructuoso indulgere labori. In semetipsa mens totis collecta viribus redeat, adversus infatigabiles adversarios pervigil se ad certamen accingat. Charitatis quidem visceribus erga omnes intrinsicus affluat, ad exteriora vero se causa alienae salutis extendere supervacuum ducat. Ad se venientibus monita salutis impendat, nullius hortatu leviter propriae quietis lucra postponat. Imperialis edicti pagina veredario discurrante defertur; bullatae nobis apochae ab auctore sedis apostolicae diriguntur; synodus congregatur, religiosis viris totius concilii summa committitur. Solotenus illico se monachus flectat, honorem sacris litteris reverenter exhibeat; hujus tamen expeditionis munus a se alienum irtractabiliter ducat, reputans intra se: Quid mihi cum regibus terrae? quid mihi cum synodali conventu? Sufficiat mihi peccatis meis flendis insistere; satis mihi sit me huic mundo mortuum exhibere.

Nolite, quaeso, monachi, nolite sub ecclesiasticae compassionis specie regum aulas irrumpere; nolite aures principum velut salutaria suggerendo, fastidiosa importunitate pulsare; credite experto, credite in hujus gratiae studiis non leviter fatigato. Imperatoriae namque majestati saepe quae suggerenda videbantur expressimus; a summis pontificibus invitati, synodalibus conciliis interfuimus; sed qui hoc tempore ista prosequitur, tanquam si semina crederet arenosis littoribus videatur.

#### CAPUT XXXI.

*Quod in synodo monachus ad episcoporum invidiam libere loqui non audeat.*

Saepe namque in conciliis synodalibus positi, quosdam sibi feraliter conscios praesidere 278 in numero sacerdotum vidimus, non modo sui securos, sed ultro etiam ad aliorum crimina defendenda impudenter accinctos: qui nimirum, ut ferebatur, et cum Simone prius emerant (Act. II), et cum Giezi postmodum charismatum dona venderant (IV Reg. V). Quorum tanta vis erat ad excusandas excusationes in peccatis, ut inter caetera mala, etiam Simoniacae haereseos non modo defensores, sed viderentur potius assertores. Quis ad istorum invidiam monachus mutire praesumeret? Quis ad arguenda crimina, vel justitiam declarandam, vindicare sibi jus libertatis auderet? Illico saevirent, illico in nos durae suggillationis arma corripere, et praemisso jurgio, silentium imperarent, inter se scilicet hoc modo invicem conquerentes: Ad concilium hoc judicaturi convenimus.

Let it cease, therefore, let the sterile care for business cease. Let it be judged superfluous to indulge in fruitless labor. Let the mind, gathered into itself with all its strength, return, and let it gird itself vigilantly for the contest against indefatigable adversaries. Let it indeed abound inwardly with the bowels of charity towards all, but let it consider it superfluous to extend itself to external matters for the sake of another's salvation. To those who come to it, let it offer admonitions of salvation; at no one's urging let it lightly postpone the gains of its own quiet. A page of an imperial edict is delivered by a running courier; sealed documents are sent to us from the author of the apostolic see; a synod is convened, the whole council's authority is committed to religious men. Let the monk immediately bow to the ground, let him reverently show honor to the sacred letters; yet let him consider the duty of this expedition irrevocably alien to himself, thinking within himself: 'What have I to do with the kings of the earth? What have I to do with a synodal assembly?' Let it be enough for me to persist in weeping for my sins; let it be sufficient for me to show myself dead to this world.

Do not, I beg you, monks, do not burst into the courts of kings under the guise of ecclesiastical compassion; do not strike the ears of princes with tiresome importunity, as if suggesting salutary things; believe one who has experience, believe one who is not lightly fatigued in the pursuit of this grace. For we have often expressed to the imperial majesty what seemed needful to suggest; invited by the supreme pontiffs, we have been present at synodal councils; but whoever pursues these things at this time seems as if he were entrusting seeds to sandy shores.

#### CHAPTER XXXI.

*That in a synod a monk dare not speak freely for fear of the bishops' ill will.*

For often, being present at synodal councils, we have seen certain men, fatally conscious of their own guilt, presiding among the number of priests, not only secure in their own position, but even impudently prepared to defend the crimes of others: who, indeed, as was reported, had both formerly bought with Simon (Acts 2), and afterwards sold the gifts of grace with Gehazi (4 Kings 5). Their power was so great in making excuses for sins, that among other evils, they seemed to be not merely defenders, but rather champions of the Simoniacal heresy. What monk would presume to mutter a word against the ill will of these men? Who would dare to claim for himself the right of freedom to denounce crimes or to declare justice? Immediately they would rage, immediately they would take up the weapons of harsh censure against us, and having first started a quarrel, they would command silence, complaining among themselves in this manner: We have gathered at this council to judge.

Sed, o nova praesumptio! mortuorum sententiis subjacemus, et episcoporum sunt iudices facti, qui legaliter sub eorum fuerant legibus constituti. Quibus aliquando respondetur: Venerabiles Patres, et domini, sicut vobis specialiter praerogatum est judicare, ita etiam minoribus Ecclesiae membris competit quod sentiunt in commune conferre; nec ulla canonum auctoritas prohibet juniores quae Ecclesiae ducunt profutura depromere, dum tamen ventilata negotia pontificalis iudicii debeat clausula terminare. Si quando ergo hoc, aut aliquid hujusmodi illis cum humilitate suggeritur, nequaquam patienter admittitur: sed quidquid a nobis in synodo dictum est, totum ad invidiam nostram superbo vocabulo iudicium nuncupatur.

Haec breviter idcirco perstrinxerim, ut in me quilibet inexpertus discat, sibimet etiam a talibus declinare quam diligenter expediat. In uno siquidem praevadante colligitur, utrum a subsequenti exercitu ignotae aquae tuto fides habeatur. Protinus se ab impetu proprii cursus institores venalium reprimunt, cum vel unum ex suis redire a nundinis vacuum non distractis mercibus cernunt. Quem ruralibus curis intentum frequenter seges negata delusit, quamplures a sterili arvi cultura compescuit. Cum scrutator fluctuum labore frustratus, vacua lassus lina reportat, facile jam nudatos a perlustrandis inopis aquae finibus revocat. Sic nimirum me, non mihi soli, sed et cunctis fratribus meis talia tentasse sufficiat, ut dum unius labor inutilis fuisse perpenditur, non uni, sed multis a supervacui laboris impendio cautela praebetur.

## CAPUT XXXII.

*Quod monachus se a mundo cohibeat, et Dei iudicium suis semper oculis anteponat.*

Quisquis ergo monachus perfectionis culmen festinat attingere, intra remotionis suae se claustra cohibeat, spirituale otium diligit; discurrere vero per saeculum, velut mersare se in lacum sanguinis, perhorrescat. Tot enim criminum magis ac magis in dies mundus contaminatione polluitur, ut quaelibet sancta mens sola ejus consideratione foedetur. Et dum veteribus nova semper augentur, quid aliud agitur, quam Antichristi via procul dubio sternitur, ut jam ultra finem saeculi in mundum veniens, sine offendiculo liber ingrediatur? Et cum illius via nihil aliud prorsus quam nostra sint absque dubio scandala, eadem causa debet vestigia nostra compescere, quae illi spondet liberis posse gressibus [.....] tare.

But, oh, what new presumption! We are subject to the opinions of the dead, and those who were legally established under their laws have become the judges of bishops. To whom it is sometimes answered: Venerable Fathers and lords, just as it is your special prerogative to judge, so also it is fitting for the lesser members of the Church to contribute in common what they think; nor does any authority of the canons prohibit the younger members from bringing forth what they consider will be profitable to the Church, provided, however, that the matters discussed must be concluded by the clause of a pontifical judgment. Therefore, if at any time this, or anything of this kind, is suggested to them with humility, it is by no means patiently received: but whatever is said by us in the synod is, to our detriment, called by the proud name of "judgment."

I have briefly touched upon these things for this reason, so that any inexperienced person may learn from my example how diligently it is expedient for him to avoid such men. Indeed, from one who goes before, it is inferred whether trust may safely be placed in an unknown water by the army that follows. Sellers of wares immediately restrain themselves from the rush of their usual course when they see even one of their own return from the market empty-handed, his goods unsold. He whom a failed harvest has frequently disappointed while intent on rural cares has restrained many from cultivating a barren field. When the searcher of the waves, frustrated in his labor, wearily brings back empty nets, he easily calls back those now stripped of hope from exploring the boundaries of the poor water. Thus, indeed, let it be sufficient that I have attempted such things, not for myself alone, but also for all my brothers, so that while the labor of one is perceived to have been useless, caution may be provided not to one, but to many, against the expense of superfluous labor.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

*That a monk should keep himself from the world, and always set the judgment of God before his eyes.*

Therefore, whatever monk hastens to attain the summit of perfection, let him confine himself within the cloisters of his seclusion and cherish spiritual leisure; let him shrink in horror from running about through the world, as if from plunging himself into a lake of blood. For the world is polluted daily by the contamination of so many crimes, more and more, that any holy mind is defiled by the mere consideration of it. And while new crimes are ever added to the old, what else is being done but that, without a doubt, the way of the Antichrist is being paved, so that when he comes into the world beyond the end of the age, he may enter freely without obstacle? And since his way is, without doubt, nothing other than our scandals, the same cause that promises he will be able to tread with free steps ought to restrain our own footsteps.

Reprimatur ergo quilibet frater nunc in angusto suae remotionis ergastulo, ut infinitae magnitudinis domus sibi paretur in coelo. Jeremias ait: «O Israel, quam magna est domus Dei, et ingens locus possessionis ejus: magnus, et non habet consummationem, excelsus, et immensus!» (Baruch. III.) Nunc se vinculo divini timoris obstringat, ut postmodum jus verae libertatis obtineat. Requiescens in Christo, reputet nil sibi commune esse cum mundo; ut quod Joannes apostolus jubet, non solum corde, sed et corpore ipso conservet: «Nolite, inquit, diligere mundum, nec ea quae in mundo sunt. Si quis diligit mundum, non est charitas Patris in eo (II Joan. II).» Clarescat servum Christi, nulla mundum affectione cordis diligere, atque ad hoc probandum corporalibus etiam hunc fastidiat gressibus frequentare. Ipsa porro corporalis abstinentia pia mentis odium comprobet, ut quo quisque a noxia mundi notitia magis alienatus, eo arctiori Deo familiaritate jungatur. Nunc flebilis, et moerens defixos in terram oculos teneat, quos ad eum videndum, qui venturus est in nubibus coeli cum potestate magna, et majestate (Matth. 26), tunc laetus attollat, sicut scriptum est: «Respicite, et levate capita vestra, quoniam pinquat redemptio vestra (Luc. XXI).»

O quam ad pronuntiandum brevissima verba, quam ad pertractandum medullitus infinita sententia! videlicet cum reprobi ejulantes tremefactis visceribus dicent: «O montes, cadite super nos, et colles, operite nos a facie Sedentis in throno (Luc. XXIII).» Cum denique «sol obscurabitur, et luna non dabit lumen suum, et stellae cadent de coelo (Matth. XXIV)» Tunc nimirum cum videbit eum omnis oculus, et qui eum pupugerunt, et plangent se super se omnes tribus terrae. Quae autem mens humana concipere, quae lingua valeat explicare quantum erit tunc electorum gaudium, quam inenarrabilis laetitia beatorum, cum periclitante mundo, ipsi de caetero subiacere periculis desinunt, et venienti immortalī Sponso accensis lampadibus tripudiantes occurrunt! (Matth. XXV.) Cum membra mundi ad perferenda tartareae combustionis supplicia corruunt, ipsi ad percipienda inaccessibilis gloriae praemia felices assurgunt! Cum illorum vita repente mors immortalis intercipit, istorum mortalitatem virtute resurrectionis absorptam, incorruptio gloriosa consumit!

Let every brother, therefore, be restrained now in the narrow prison of his seclusion, so that a house of infinite magnitude may be prepared for him in heaven. Jeremiah says: "O Israel, how great is the house of God, and how vast is the place of his possession! It is great and has no end, it is high and immense!" (Baruch 3). Let him now bind himself with the chain of divine fear, so that he may afterwards obtain the right of true liberty. Resting in Christ, let him consider that he has nothing in common with the world, so that what John the Apostle commands, he may observe not only in heart, but also in his very body: "Do not love the world," he says, "nor the things that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2). Let it be clear that the servant of Christ does not love the world with any affection of the heart, and to prove this, let him disdain to frequent it even with his bodily steps. Furthermore, let this very bodily abstinence prove the pious mind's hatred for the world, so that the more one is alienated from the harmful knowledge of the world, the more closely he may be joined to God in intimacy. Now, weeping and sorrowful, let him keep his eyes fixed on the ground, which he may then joyfully lift up to see Him who is to come on the clouds of heaven with great power and majesty (Matthew 26), as it is written: "Look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is at hand" (Luke 21).

Oh, how very brief are the words to pronounce, yet how infinite is the meaning to be thoroughly pondered! Namely, when the reprobate, wailing with trembling hearts, will say: "O mountains, fall on us, and hills, cover us from the face of the One who sits on the throne" (Luke 23). When, finally, "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven" (Matthew 24). Then, indeed, when every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over him. But what human mind can conceive, what tongue can explain, how great will then be the joy of the elect, how ineffable the gladness of the blessed, when, as the world is in peril, they themselves cease to be subject to dangers henceforth, and dancing with lighted lamps, they run to meet the immortal Bridegroom as He comes! (Matthew 25). When the members of the world fall down to endure the torments of hellish fire, they themselves happily rise up to receive the rewards of inaccessible glory! When immortal death suddenly seizes their life, glorious incorruption consumes the mortality of these others, which has been absorbed by the power of the resurrection!

Hoc cunctis saeculis admirandum singulare spectaculum incessanter sibi mens sancta proponat. Hanc tremendam venturae discussionis imaginem assidua prae oculis meditatione depingat. Jam se vir electus ad tribunal raptum Iudicis deputet, jam se in examine positum ad reddendam rationem divinis quaestionibus perurgeti formidabiliter penset. Mundo se extraneum reddat, ut Deo propensioris gratiae largitate familiaris adhaereat. Hoc itaque modo mortuus vivat, a terrenis vexationibus se subtrahat, ac velut in sepulcro jam positus, in solo Creatoris sui desiderio suaviter requiescat. Sicque in Deo vita ejus abscondita, quatenus apparente Christo, et ipse cum eo apparere mereatur in gloria (Coloss. III). Amen.

## CAPUT XXXIII.

*His scriptor alloquitur venerabiles monachos Petrum et Albizonem.*

Nunc igitur, fratres charissimi, alter scilicet teres forma coenobitarum, alter imitandum eremiticae conversationis exemplum, ad vos styli hujus articulum revoco, ut quibus primordium incipientis intenditur, in eos etiam consequenter peracti opusculi clausula terminetur. Videtis igitur, quam celeriter brevis haec vita pertranseat, videtis, quia mundus hic vicinum sui terminum indicis jam evidentioribus clamat. Tellus enim genitalibus effeta humoribus, quodammodo invita aratrum tolerat, dum ferre fructus suis cultoribus negat; et velut anilis alvus, dum sanguis in corpore, vulva marcescente, frigescit, etiamsi procreandi studium non defuerit, ad gignendam tamen sobolem non assurgit. Aqua etiam nihilominus sterilitatem patitur, ut jam piscator retibus impendium deneget, dum inopis capturae quaestus duris per elementum liquidum laboribus non respondet. Nec te, aer olim fecunde, praeteream, qui nunc, dum diversis tendicularum argumentis in volucrum captione non provenis, nimirum aucupes casso labore frustratos, ad exercitium rurale remittis; et quos dudum ad sublimia captandis tuis muneribus faciebas intentos, jam ut meminerint, cui sustentandae vitae adminiculum acceptum referre debeant, alumnae terrae reddis obnoxios: quique tunc largus quaelibet grossiora edulia tuis jubebas deliciis cedere, jam nunc ad te manum retrahens, vilia facis oluscula, velut accuratas epulas, mensas divitum infercire.

Let the holy mind incessantly set before itself this singular spectacle, to be marveled at for all ages. Let it depict this tremendous image of the coming judgment before its eyes with assiduous meditation. Let the chosen man now consider himself snatched away to the tribunal of the Judge; let him now think of himself as placed under examination, being formidably pressed by divine questions to render an account. Let him make himself a stranger to the world, so that he may adhere intimately to God with the bounty of a more favorable grace. In this way, therefore, let him live as one dead; let him withdraw himself from earthly vexations and, as if already placed in a tomb, rest sweetly in the desire for his Creator alone. And so may his life be hidden in God, so that when Christ appears, he himself may merit to appear with Him in glory (Colossians 3). Amen.

### CHAPTER XXXIII.

*In which the writer addresses the venerable monks Peter and Albizo.*

Now therefore, most beloved brothers—one of you a polished model for cenobites, the other an example of the eremitical life to be imitated—I turn the point of this pen to you, so that this little work, which was directed to you at its beginning, might also fittingly find its conclusion in you upon its completion. You see, therefore, how swiftly this short life passes by; you see that this world proclaims its approaching end with ever more evident signs. For the earth, exhausted of its generative humors, endures the plow as if unwillingly, as it denies fruit to its cultivators; and like an aged womb, when the blood in the body grows cold and the uterus withers, even if the desire to procreate is not lacking, it does not rise to the task of bringing forth offspring. Water, likewise, suffers from sterility, so that the fisherman now denies his nets the expense, as the profit of a meager catch does not reward his hard labors through the liquid element. Nor shall I pass you by, O once-fertile air, who now, since you do not yield in the capture of birds by the various devices of snares, doubtless send the fowlers, frustrated in their vain labor, back to rural work; and those whom you once made intent on lofty things by capturing your gifts, you now render subject to their nurse, the earth, so that they may remember to whom they should credit the support for sustaining life. And you who then, being generous, commanded all coarser foods to yield to your delicacies, now, withdrawing your hand, you cause vile vegetables to cram the tables of the rich, as if they were exquisite feasts.

Mundus itaque, ut praedictum est, quasi longo lassatus jam senio per cuncta sua membra probabiliter indicat quia cursus sui terminos diutius non elongat. Huc accedit quod homines nunc in juventute senescunt, et juvenili adhuc decore vernante intempestivis canis verticem spargunt. Nimirum quos propria dictat aetas immaturae venustatis adhuc flore virescere, senex mundus quodam violentae auctoritatis imperio secum praecipit decrepitos apparere. Quo fit ut sicut cavernosae arboris poma mox ut producta fuerint, ante maturitatem corruunt: ita nimirum homines acerbo, ut ita dixerim, exitu priusquam ad aetatis plenitudinem veniant, moriuntur.

Cum itaque mundus praecipitem et jamjam protinus prae oculis imminentem sui cursus minetur occasum, homines etiam quotidie immaturo praeventi rapiantur interitu, quid restat nisi ut hoc brevi puncto, quo vivimus, lapsura quaeque velut jam lapsa despicere, et ad ea quae permanent, pleno fervidae mentis studeamus desiderio festinare? Ecce non levia currentibus praemia proponuntur, et itineris nostri stadium quotidie breviatur. Nulla ergo vitae praesentis offencula nostri cursus iter impediant, nullas nobis moras carnalis illecebrae torpor innectat. Quisque jam ad promissa munera perspicacis fidei oculos dirigat, et a brutis ignaviae vinculis obviantia quaeque terrenae pravitatis obstacula robustae spei penna transcendat. Ecce enim qui de longinquo vocaverat, manum jam appropinquantibus porrigit; et quasi teneros filios vacillantibus nutantes poplitibus firmat, blandeque ac leniter in gremium suae charitatis invitat.

Adeamus ergo cum fiducia thronum gloriae (Hebr. IV), arripiamus tantae insignia pietatis; et quod temeritatis fuerat quaerere non promissum, pudoris sit nolle suscipere vel oblatum. Dedignemur jam coenosi hujus mundi lutum saepius corporaliter terere, cujus amorem Deo inspirante didicimus libero mentis pede calcare. Ab eo itaque, quem non diligit animus, ipse etiam corporeus reprimatur incessus: indignum censeamus visitationis nostrae frequentia, qui de nostra gliscit triumphare ruina. Inimicitias mentis ipsa quoque testetur absentia corporalis, nec crebro nostros mereatur ille discursus, quorum foedare consuevit obtutus; solusque in insidiarum suarum foveas incidat, qui nostris assidue gressibus deceptionum laqueos parat. Sic sic frustratas fraudum suarum excubias lugeat, dum nobis in pace quiescentibus nocturnae nostrae profectionis aditum callidus insidiator explorat.

The world, therefore, as has been said, as if now weary from a long old age, indicates with probability through all its members that it will not long extend the limits of its course. To this is added the fact that men now grow old in their youth, and while their youthful beauty is still flourishing, they sprinkle their heads with untimely gray hairs. Doubtless, those whom their own age dictates should still be green with the flower of immature beauty, the old world, by a certain command of violent authority, forces to appear decrepit along with itself. Whence it happens that just as the fruits of a hollow tree fall before they are ripe as soon as they are produced, so indeed do men die by a bitter end, so to speak, before they come to the fullness of age.

Since, therefore, the world threatens an imminent and precipitous end to its course, right before our eyes, and since men are also snatched away daily, overtaken by an untimely death, what remains but that in this brief moment in which we live, we should despise all perishable things as if they had already perished, and strive to hasten with the full desire of a fervent mind toward those things that are permanent? Behold, no light prizes are proposed for those who run, and the stadium of our journey is shortened daily. Therefore, let no hindrances of the present life impede the path of our course; let no torpor of carnal allurements weave delays for us. Let each one now direct the eyes of perspicacious faith toward the promised rewards, and with the wing of robust hope, transcend all the opposing obstacles of earthly depravity from the brutish chains of sloth. For behold, He who called from afar now extends His hand to those who are approaching; and He strengthens them like tender children tottering on trembling knees, and gently and softly invites them into the bosom of His charity.

Let us therefore approach the throne of glory with confidence (Heb. 4), let us seize the emblems of such great piety; and let it be a matter of shame not to accept what is offered, when it would have been temerity to seek what was not promised. Let us now disdain to tread so often in body the mud of this miry world, whose love, by God's inspiration, we have learned to trample with the free foot of the mind. Therefore, let our bodily steps be restrained from that which the soul does not love; let us deem him unworthy of our frequent visits who rejoices in our ruin. Let our very bodily absence testify to the enmity of the mind, nor let him who is accustomed to defile our gazes merit our frequent wanderings; and let him alone fall into the pits of his own snares, who assiduously prepares the traps of deception for our steps. Thus, thus let the crafty plotter lament the frustrated watches of his deceits, while he explores the path of our nocturnal journey as we rest in peace.

Sufficiat autem nostrae discursioni divini campus eloquii. Per hunc campum jugiter gradiamur, in eo delectabiliter spatiamur. Licet illic liberis gressibus per parilem sacrarum historiarum planitiem currere. Possumus etiam per mysticae intelligentiae profunditatem quodammodo praeceptorum illic montium celsitudinem repere. Illic perfruemur fidelium amicorum dulci colloquio, illic diversi apparatus, epularumque coelestium jure convivium. His dapibus inhians fidelis anima, assiduae lectionis alimento vegetata robur accipiat, et purissimae orationis adipe saginata pinguescat. Relinquatur fames saeculi fastidientibus convivium mundi. Nos autem illas didicimus epulas esurire, quae et famelicis satietatem assolent cum jucunditate tribuere, et tamen satiatis nesciunt fastidium generare. Quae nimirum epulae et mentis nostrae stomachum suaviter replent, et tamen cloacarum secessibus nihil debent. Nihil enim de se prorsus egestionem relinquunt, sed ad praebendas vires per omnium se venarum poros, cunctorumque viscerum penitus interna diffundunt.

His itaque coelestis mensae dapibus mens intenta inexplēbilitate vacet, his oculus solerter invigilet; lingua articularis styli verba percurrat; cor, quae leguntur, intelligat, et mysterii latentis arcana revolvat. Hoc pabulum sacra animalia per assiduae retractationis studium jugiter ruminant, quae nimirum a ventre scientiae ad memoriae guttur saepius iterata meditatione redundant. Has, inquam, dapes mens jejuna semper esuriat, ab his vero nunquam satiata recedat; sed quo magis expletur, eo rursus ad earum appetitum avidius accendatur: sicque omnes sensus nostros circa istas vitales epulas occupemus, ut cunctis causarum saecularium negotiis insensibiles facti, vere mortui mundo, soli vivamus Deo; quatenus ipse auctor, et instructor felicissimi hujus ferculi, illis suis convivis nos dignetur ascribere, qui ex ore Veritatis merebuntur audire: «Ego dispono vobis sicut disposuit mihi Pater meus, regnum, ut edatis et bibatis super mensam meam in regno meo (Luc. XXII).»

Omnipotens Deus, qui charitas est (I Joan. IV), fratres charissimi, sancto cordi vestro clementer inspiret, ut pro me peccatore dignemini semper orare.

## SCHOLIA.

Concludendum est igitur, quia sicut ab his cavendum est, quos moderna synodorum concilia ab ecclesiastica societate repellunt; ita et ab illis nihilominus declinandum, quos antiqui Patres eliminandos esse decernunt. Hoc loco beatus Damianus loqui videtur juxta Ecclesiae morem, qui ejus aetate servabatur. Ante concilium enim Constantiense in universum prohibebatur fidelibus participare cum excommunicatis, cap. Cautum est 11, qu. 3. et cap. Cum desideres. Et alibi saepe.

But let the field of divine eloquence suffice for our discourse. Through this field let us continually walk, in it let us delightfully stroll. There it is permitted to run with free steps through the level plain of the sacred histories. We can also, through the profundity of mystical intelligence, creep up the heights of the steep mountains there, as it were. There we shall enjoy the sweet conversation of faithful friends; there, a varied store and a perpetual banquet of celestial feasts. Yearning for these dishes, may the faithful soul, nourished by the food of assiduous reading, receive strength, and fattened by the richness of the purest prayer, may it grow plump. Let the hunger of the world be left to those who loathe the world's banquet. But we have learned to hunger for those feasts which are wont to give satiety with joy to the famished, and yet do not generate disgust in the satiated. These feasts, to be sure, both sweetly fill the stomach of our mind and yet owe nothing to the sewers' drains. For they leave nothing of themselves at all for excretion, but diffuse themselves through the pores of all the veins and deep into the interior of all the viscera to provide strength.

Therefore, let the attentive mind be insatiably devoted to these dishes of the celestial table; let the eye diligently keep watch over them; let the tongue run through the words of the articulated text; let the heart understand what is read and ponder the secrets of the hidden mystery. Let the holy animals continually ruminate this fodder through the practice of assiduous reconsideration, so that it may flow back from the belly of knowledge to the throat of memory by oft-repeated meditation. These feasts, I say, let the fasting mind always hunger for, and from them may it never depart satiated; but the more it is filled, the more ardently may it be kindled again to the appetite for them. And so let us occupy all our senses with these vital feasts, so that, having become insensible to all the affairs of worldly causes, truly dead to the world, we may live for God alone; so that the Author and Instructor of this most blessed meal may deign to count us among His own guests, who will deserve to hear from the mouth of Truth: "I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom (Luke 22)."

May Almighty God, who is love (1 John 4), most beloved brothers, graciously inspire your holy hearts, that you may deign always to pray for me, a sinner.

## SCHOLIA

It must be concluded, therefore, that just as one must beware of those whom the modern councils of the synods repel from ecclesiastical society, so too must one withdraw from those whom the ancient Fathers decreed should be eliminated. Here the blessed Damian seems to speak according to the custom of the Church that was observed in his age. For before the Council of Constance, it was universally forbidden for the faithful to associate with the excommunicated, ch. \*Cautum est\* 11, q. 3, and ch. \*Cum desideres\*. And often elsewhere.

Verum in concilio Constantiensi, per Martini V Constitutionem, quae incipit: Ad evitanda multa scandala, quam et Leo X in concilio Lateranensi, sess. 11, confirmavit, eamque refert Martinus Navarus in Summa, cap. 27, num. 36, cujus adhuc meminit Didacus, Covarr. in cap. Alma mater, I par. Relect. paragr. 2, decretum est, «Licere fidelibus communicare excommunicatis, exceptis duobus, iis videlicet, qui nominatim fuerint denunciati, aut notorii clericorum percussores.» Juxta quod decretum, nostri doctoris zelum et sententiam interpretabimur.

Sit nomen Domini benedictum.

But in the Council of Constance, through the Constitution of Martin V, which begins: *\*Ad evitanda multa scandala\**, which Leo X also confirmed in the Lateran Council, session 11, and which Martinus Navarrus refers to in his *\*Summa\**, ch. 27, no. 36, and which Didacus Covarrubias still mentions in ch. *\*Alma mater\**, I par. *\*Relect.\**, paragr. 2, it was decreed: “It is lawful for the faithful to communicate with the excommunicated, with two exceptions, namely, those who have been denounced by name, or notorious strikers of clerics.” In accordance with this decree, we shall interpret the zeal and opinion of our doctor.

Blessed be the name of the Lord.