

The Blickling Homilies

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I. The Annunciation of Saint Mary

[Jesus came into the world in order that his divine] nature might be manifested, and that sin might be eradicated; and the doom of Eve's infelicity, which was denounced against her (that she should bring forth her children in pain and in sorrow) was reversed when Mary brought forth the Lord with rejoicing. Eve conceived through carnal lust, Mary in her womb conceived the merciful and the innocent Christ. Eve bare tears in her womb, Mary brought forth through herself the everlasting joy for all the world. Eve brought forth her child in pain because she had conceived in sin. The Holy Ghost sowed the pure seed in the undefiled womb (of Mary), wherefore she, being a virgin became a mother, because, being a virgin, she had conceived. Each of these circumstances was miraculous, both that she had conceived without defilement, and that in child-bearing she continued ever immaculate. Gabriel was the messenger of these nuptials. What spake he to her, or what heard she when he spake? 'Hail, Mary! full of grace, the Lord is with thee!' And through this greeting (salutation) she conceived, because he brought her everlasting salvation upon his tongue; but the devil, through the venom-bearing (venomous) adder (serpent), deceived the first woman with his evil suggestions and treachery, wherefore the angel spake to our Lord's mother, and thus addressed her: 'Hail (Mary) full of grace, the Lord is with thee!' The grace was brought for the sin of the first woman. She was called 'full,' and not 'empty,' because she was filled with grace, and [through her] sin was eradicated. Let us hear now, in what manner, rejoicing and exulting in her song, the pious and holy virgin sang, and thus said: 'He filleth the hungry with good things, and the rich he sendeth away empty.' The angel said to her, 'Hail Mary! full of grace, the

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Lord is with thee, in thy heart and in thy womb, and is also with thee as thy helper. But rejoice, thou virgin; for Christ shall descend from his heavenly exaltation, and from his angelic majesty, into thy womb; and he shall so far humble himself that he [shall come] from his paternal bosom, [and choose] thee as his mother'..... because it receiveth him, it does not comprehend him, but the faith must be proclaimed from earth up to heaven. Lo! we have now heard that the Heavenly King entered the humble womb of the ever-pure virgin – that was the temple of piety and of all purity. The angel said to her, 'Blessed be thou among all women, for blessed is the fruit of thy womb.' In the words of the angel was heard, that through her offspring should be healed all man and womankind. The first mother of mankind brought affliction (vengeance) into the world when she brake God's behests, and into this affliction was she cast. She brought upon herself and all her kin the greatest misery. And moreover that affliction was so grievous, that every man should come with sorrow into this world, and here live in sorrow, and depart in pain. And now this holy virgin Mary brought to all believers these blessings, and eternal salvation; therefore, let all mankind love and honour her with word and with deed – because... she concealed much she received into her humble bosom the Son of God the Father, whom heaven and earth are unable to comprehend. Let us love our creator, and praise him according to our means with all our might, even as we may hear that the holy virgin did, who loved him with sincerity of heart; and with a joyful mind she sang in her psalm, and thus said, 'My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit doth rejoice in God my Saviour, for he hath seen the meekness of his handmaiden, and from thenceforth all generations have called me blessed; for he that is mighty hath done to me great things, and holy is his name; and his mercy is great towards Israel, and towards all mankind who fear him.' The Lord came into the world among the people of Israel, and set forth to them example of eternal life, and invited them to heaven's kingdom, through his miracles and evangelical lore (teaching). And then men despised his teaching and gave way to envy, and hung him on the cross, and he through his passion overcame the old traitor, and put down the devil's kingdom on this earth, and then was excluded the lamentation of Eve through the ever-pure

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virgin. It is to be observed that, after the blessing and salutation of the angel, Mary pondered a long time, and silently considered what the greeting might be. Then the heavenly messenger explained it to her, and said, 'Fear not Mary, for thou hast found favour with God—thou shalt bring forth a son and shalt call him Saviour (Jesus).' When the virgin heard the beginning of this divine issue, then spake she thus: 'How may this be, seeing that I have known no man?' Then said the angel unto her, 'The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall encompass thee, and he that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.' And again he spake: 'Open now thy fairest and pure bosom, and let the tabernacle of thy womb be expanded, and let the inspiration of the Heavenly embrace be blown into thee; and the natural heat, through the might of the Holy Ghost, shall be quiescent in thee, and let thy expansive womb be decked with all adornments. The redness of the rose glitters in thee, and the whiteness of the lily shines in thee; let Christ's bride-bower (chamber) be adorned with every variety of flowers that are produced.' Then the angel spake again, 'Answer, thou, virgin, wherefore delayest thou to illumine the earth? And the angel of the Lord awaiteth thy permission. Lo! thou hast just heard how it may come to pass that the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall shine around thee, and thou shalt bring forth the King of all purity, and thy virginity thou shalt not impair. Now, for a long time, the door of heaven's kingdom, through which I have been sent hither, stands closed through [the sin of] the first persons, but now through thee they shall be unclosed. O thou blessed Mary, all this captive world awaiteth thy consent; for God hath appointed thee as a surety here in this world, and through thee shall intercession be made for Adam's guilt to him who formerly, on account of man's sin, was so angry that he closed the holy home; but through thee shall the entrance again be opened, and thou shalt succour mankind. Wherefore the Heavenly King shall prepare thy womb as a bridal chamber for his son, and also great joy in the bride chamber; and he shall forgive all offences whatsoever this world has previously committed against him.' O dearest men, great was this messenger, and a great message brought he, wherefore his name signifies 'the strength of God.' Well was he so named, since he

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whose coming he spake of and announced had power over all creatures; and neither the beginning of his kingdom, nor his might nor his majesty shall ever be diminished, but he shall be ever eternal. Then the evangelist informs us that the blessed virgin St. Mary was affrighted, and with trembling voice meekly replied, and thus said, 'I am the handmaiden of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word.' O what beautiful meekness was there found in the ever pure virgin! The angel said to her that she should be the mother of her creator, and she called herself a 'handmaiden.' Then the heavenly messenger returned home unto the kingdom above, from whence he previously was sent. The Lord in the chamber of the virgin, in that seemly throne, took a bodily garment for his divinity. Then was sent the treasure of divine majesty into the bond (receptacle) of the pure womb [of the virgin]. And after an interval of nine months he came forth, as the prophet declared concerning him, thus saying: 'The Lord hath set his house in the sun, and from it hath gone out as a bridegroom from his bridal chamber.' That came to pass when the King of Glory, upon this earth, came forth from the womb of the ever-pure virgin; and then as the exulting giant so the Lord dwelt joyfully on the earth until he came to the throne of the rood, in the ascent of which all our lives he supported; and he gave his red gem, which was his holy blood, and thereby made us participators of the heavenly kingdom; and it shall come to pass on Doomsday that he will come to judge the quick and the dead. Then shall all creatures, both the hosts of heaven and of earth, be afraid. Let us rejoice then in the union of God and men, and in the union of the bridegroom and the bride, that is Christ and the holy church. Let us honour Christ set in the manger, because, through meekness, he hath filled fourfoldly this earth with believers. Let us honour also the clothes of his person (humanity), by which our nature (or original condition) was renewed. Let us honour St. Mary, for we ought to praise and bless her, because hosts of angels called her blessed. So must we believe that angels earnestly beheld her from the day that they knew that the blessed Mary had conceived of the Holy Ghost. In her was fulfilled what was sung in the Song of Songs, thus saying: 'Solomon's bed was surrounded by guards, that is by sixty men, the strongest that were in Israel, and each of them had a sword girt to his hip (side), on account of the

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terror of the night.' Now then what was Solomon's bed else but the holy womb of the ever pure virgin? The peace-loving king, our Lord Jesus Christ, chose and sought that womb. But what meant the sixty strong men who were standing about the bed for fear of nightly alarm? That was when the holy virgin was encompassed with the heavenly hosts of angels for protection, because they knew that in her abode the heavenly king. So then the heavenly angels shield and guard all holy souls in which the king of peace abides. On this day descended the heavenly treasure into this world from the throne of our creator, that was Christ, the son of the living God, who came for the adorning and honouring of his bride, that is, all who are, holy. Therefore let us love our Lord with all our lives, and above all other things, because, of his great mercy, he so humbled himself, that he sought (visited) us in this our exile and gave us a healthful mind and heavenly behests. Therefore we must lead our whole life in meekness after the example of the holy queen of God, for she perceived that the living son of God had sought her. Then was she in all things the meeker, as she manifested in the words with which she praised the Lord, thus saying: My soul magnify the Lord.' She praised him not only with words but with all her heart. Let us love him now and magnify his name, not only in prosperous circumstances but also in adverse circumstances, then he will not permit us to be tempted beyond measure. If we through meekness endure all things, then will our Lord be the firmest support and the best shield against all the temptations of the devil. She said 'I am the handmaiden of my Lord, let it be unto me according to thy word.' That was undoubted humility when she called herself 'handmaiden,' and the angel had announced to her that she was chosen as the mother of her creator, and had made known to her that she was the most blessed above all womankind. Well it seemed then that she was humble who bore the humble and merciful king, who concerning himself thus spake to his disciples: 'Learn of me, for I am merciful and lowly;' and most fitting was it too that he should descend to earth through the pure members of the holy virgin, that we may the more assuredly know that he is the origin and teacher of all purity, and we believe therefore and know assuredly that Christ's dwelling-place or abode is not in the heart of any man who hath no

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mercy. Now then, dearest men, let us believe in our Lord, and love him and keep his behests, then shall be fulfilled in us what he himself hath declared—'Blessed be the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' In that sight shall be all believers, and of his bliss there shall be no end, but ever may they rejoice with him, where he liveth and reigneth, ever without end everlastingly. Amen.

II. Quinquagesima (Shrove Sunday)

Hear now, dearest men, how Luke the evangelist spake concerning this present time, and also of the time to come; and how our Lord would come to the place in which he was to suffer. Then when the time was nigh at hand, the Saviour took his twelve disciples apart from the company and said to them, 'Now we shall go to Jerusalem, and then shall be fulfilled all the holy writings that were written concerning the Son of Man. And he shall be given into the hands of heathen men, that they may mock him; they shall bind him and scourge him and spit in his face; and after the scourging they shall slay him, and the third day he shall rise from death.' Christ's disciples were not able then to understand any of these sayings, but they were hidden from them because they were still veiled by worldly thoughts. Then it came to pass that the Saviour came nigh to Jericho, and there sat by the way a blind beggar, and heard a great multitude going before him. Then he asked what it might be. They answered him, and said, 'It is Jesus of Nazareth.' Then he cried with a loud voice, and thus spake: 'Have mercy upon me, Son of David, have mercy upon me.' Those who were going before (the Saviour) bade him be silent, and the more they restrained him the louder he cried, and thus spake: 'Have mercy upon me, thou Son of David, have mercy upon me!' Then the Saviour stood still, and bade the blind man be brought unto him; and when he drew near unto him, he said to him, 'What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?' The blind man answered him and said, 'Lord, that I may see!' The Saviour said unto him, 'Receive thy sight; thine own faith hath made thee whole.' Then forthwith he saw, and immediately followed our Lord, and praised and worshipped him. And all the people who saw this miracle magnified his

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name. Lo! we have now heard this holy gospel read before us; nevertheless we must repeat it, so that we may the better understand that it concerns us as an example of eternal life. Now we have previously heard that the Saviour spake to his disciples concerning his passion, and pain, and the mockery which he should suffer at the hands of the Jews. He did this because he would that, when they should see his hard bonds, they should not be troubled in mind; and in order that they should be comforted when they saw him dying, he gave them the promise of his resurrection, which he truly performed, as he also ere did with respect to his passion.' His disciples were as yet carnal-minded, and were not yet confirmed with the power of the Holy Spirit, therefore they were not able to understand the words of the heavenly mystery. Nevertheless, he confirmed their belief by means of his heavenly works, though they understood not the words of the heavenly mystery. Now, dearest men, we must turn (apply) those marvels to the truth of (our) faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, those wonders, namely, which he, through his great power, wrought before men's eyes. We knew not previously who the blind man was, but now we may understand what the mystery betokeneth. All mankind was in blindness after that the first persons were driven from the bliss of paradise, and left the brightnesses of the heavenly light, and endured the darknesses and poverties of this world. Our Lord, then, by his coming, illumined this world, and restored, to all believers, the path to the way of life, so that they may, with willingness of mind and good deeds, merit the light of the eternal life. Holy Scriptures liken this world unto the moon, because when it waxeth it is like to the good man, who directs his hopes to the eternal light; and when the moon waneth, then betokeneth it our mortality and the waning of this world. The evangelist hath said that when the Saviour came nigh to Jericho, that light returned to the blind. That means that the deity took our frail nature, and then forthwith the heavenly light which the first man forsook returned to mankind; and therefore God came down to us because he would that we should be upraised to his divine nature. Right was it that the blind man sat by the way begging, because the Lord himself hath said, 'I am the way of truth,' and he who knows not the brightness of the eternal light is blind; and he liveth and believeth who sitteth by the way begging, and prays for

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the eternal light, and ceaseth not. He who perceiveth not the darkness of his own sins, let him know that he shall be deprived of the eternal light except he make amends for what he hath previously forgotten. Let us now cry out with sorrowfulness of mind and with sincerity of heart, as the blind man did, and say, 'Have mercy upon me, Son of David, have mercy upon me!' Let us now consider and think what was denoted by the multitude that endeavoured to restrain the blind man from crying out. I will tell you what the multitude denoteth. It betokeneth the carnal will and the unrestrained lusts (vices) which often come through the suggestions of the devil into men's hearts before the Lord's works may abide there; and their minds are thereby moved with various thoughts, so that the voice of their hearts is much troubled in their prayers. Let us now hear why the blind man received light, and what he did when the multitude rebuked him in order that he should be silent. He cried out the more, and the more earnestly entreated the Saviour to have mercy upon him. Then ought we to learn by this example that, when we are occupied with great desire of evil thoughts, then we must earnestly pray God to shield us from the thousand crafts of the devil's temptations. The evangelist said that the Saviour went forth, and when he heard the blind man cry out, he at once stood still and wrought the miracle by which he gave light to the blind man. Let us hear, now, that human nature is ever going on, and the divine might standeth ever firm. What did the divine obtain by passing through the human nature but the power of being born, and being able to move and to arise and to go from one place to another. But, moreover, there was no change either of the divine nature or of the divine power in its imprisonment in the human nature. He (God) is ever living and everywhere present, and filleth every place, and comprehendeth all things, and he shall ever be eternal. This denoteth that he, through his humanity, heareth the voice of our blindness; when we confess our sins and pray for forgiveness, then will he at once compassionate us, and speedily have mercy upon us and forgive us our sins. We must also think of what our Lord spake when the blind man came unto him. He said 'What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?' He did not say this because he (who knows all things and gave the blind man light) knew not what the blind man wanted, but the Lord (who hath

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previously decreed to give eternal life to those that ask for it) desireth that men should pray to him. Fortunately he hath taught and instructed us how we ought to pray, and, nevertheless, he hath said, 'Your father which is in heaven knows what is needful for you, before ever ye ask him.' We may perceive that he, therefore, has created us that we should pray to him; wherefore then, we must also in the time of prayer cleanse our hearts from other thoughts. Let us hear, too, how the blind man asked not for gold or silver, or worldly splendour, but asked for his eye-sight. Thus we learn then, that the man is blind though he possess much wealth and great beauty, and that it is a great calamity if he is unable to see it. Dearest men, let us imitate the blind man, who was healed both in body and in mind. Let us not entreat our Lord for this transitory wealth, nor for those earthly gifts that swiftly pass away from men, but let us ask the Lord for the light that never endeth. This (earthly) light we have in common with the brute creation, but we must seek the (heavenly) light that we may have it in common with the angels in the spiritual assembly. That (spiritual) light shall never fail. In that light is the way of perfection in which we must walk, that is to say, the true belief (faith). It may very easily happen that some men will either think or say, 'How may I seek that spiritual light which I am unable to see, or whence shall that be manifested to me which with bodily eyes I am unable to see?' To such a man an answer may very soon be given. What believeth the body but by the soul? Let those men think that they are unable to see their own souls. But whatsoever the visible body does or accomplishes, all that doth the invisible soul, through the body, and when the soul separates from the body, what shall it then be but, as it were, a stone or a log; and after the invisible soul has departed from it, it is motionless, and soon rotteth, and turneth to that same earth from which it was previously created, until the Lord shall come on Doomsday and shall command the earth to give back that which it previously received. And then the body shall be immortal though it were previously mortal when the soul (first) received it (the body), and (its state) must, nevertheless, be according to its deserts. Let us now hear, dearest men, what is written in God's books—that the man who beginneth good and then ceaseth (from it), shall not be God's friend at the last day. But he who

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beginneth good, and continues therein unto the end of his life shall be saved. Therefore it is needful for us to perceive the blindness of our pilgrimage; we are in the foreign land of this world—we are exiles in this world, and so have been ever since the progenitor of the human race brake God's behests, and for that sin we have been sent into this banishment, and now we must seek here-after another kingdom, either in misery or in glory, as we may now choose to merit. If we will now believe on the Lord and know him, then do we sit by the way as the blind man did. That is to say, then, that we must believe on him and follow up that knowledge with good deeds. Then do we follow our Saviour as the blind man did after that he was able to see. Here is made known to us what the evangelist said—how the Lord spake to Peter when he asked that he might go and bury his father. The Saviour answered him and said, 'Thou shalt follow me, and let the dead bury their dead.' Herein he hath taught us that no man shall love or attend to his relatives if he should first hinder himself from the service of God. Let us also bear in mind that the Lord created the angels, the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all the creatures that are therein. He fills, and comprehends, and sustains all places, and is everywhere present. Nevertheless, he so humbled himself for our necessities, that he descended into the lowly womb of the ever pure virgin, and for our sakes he received that same nature which he previously had created. He would not, then, choose wealthy parents, but those who had little worldly riches, and had not even a lamb to offer for him, but there sufficed for him two young doves and a pair of turtle-doves; and yet they (his parents) were descended from David's kin, the true royal line. Now we hear that the Lord disregarded this world's wealth, and again, after a time, he suffered many contumelies from the wicked Jews. They scourged him and bound him, and spat in his face, and with open hands struck him, and beat him with their fists, and then they wove a crown of thorns and set it on his head as a royal diadem, and then they hung him on the cross. All this he suffered for our sakes and for our salvation because he was desirous that we should receive that heavenly kingdom which the first persons forfeited through their avarice and presumption. What do we desire to bring forth on Doomsday of that which we have endured for our Lord, since he has

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suffered so much for our sakes? There are, many men who say that they believe in God and love him, and yet will not cease from their unrighteous acquisitions and covetousness, but they are uplifted in their pride, and also are inflamed with bitter envy, and are also defiled with the unclean lust of the flesh. (Dearest) men, the men who follow these vices do not observe the Lord's behests nor follow his instructions; but they rather follow the devil's lore and his instigations; and he ever entices them to all wickedness and to the love of this world by his false-crafts (deceptions); and to him, then, who will not withstand him, the devil shall become terrible at his death, and shall lead him away into everlasting perdition. Let us be mindful, now, of our daily sins, which we have committed contrary to the will of God, so that we, with all our might, may atone for them with fasts, with prayers, with almsdeeds, and with true penitence. That is true penitence when a man confesses the sins he has committed and earnestly makes amendment. Let us weep now, and repeat and remember how the Lord said, 'Blessed are they that weep now, for they shall be afterwards comforted.' So we have now heard that we may with true penitence merit eternal bliss. Again he hath said, 'Woe to you who now laugh, for ye shall hereafter weep everlastingly.' That is the unspeakable vengeance and the eternal torment that is prepared there for the wicked. Better it were for him never to have been born. Therefore we must be mindful of God's behests and of our soul's need the while we may; and let us earnestly beseech our Lord to deliver us from the eternal death, and bring us into the joy of his glory where there is eternal bliss, and the everlasting kingdom; there no sorrow is found, nor sickness, nor pain, nor any sadness; there is no awe (fear), no strife, no wrath, nor any opposition; but there is joy and bliss, and fairness; and the home (abode) is filled with heavenly spirits, with angels, archangels, with patriarchs, and apostles, and with the innumerable host of holy martyrs who shall all dwell with our Lord for ever and ever. Amen.

III. The First Sunday in Lent

Dearest men, here saith Matthew the Evangelist, that the Saviour was led into the wilderness and that he was tempted by the devil; and when that he had fasted forty days and forty nights he became hungry. The tempter then went to him, and said to him, 'If thou be God's son command that the stones become bread.' The Saviour then answered him and said to him, 'Man's life is not in bread alone, but of every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God.' Then the accursed spirit took him and led him into the holy city and set him upon the pinnacle (shelf) of the temple, and said unto him, 'If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from this height; for it is written that thy angels shall have thee in hand lest thy foot should stumble.' The Saviour again answered and said, 'Tempt not thou the Lord thy God.' The devil then took him a third time, and led him up to a very high hill, and showed him all the kingdoms of the earth and the vain glory of this world, and said unto him, 'All these things will I give thee if thou wilt fall down to me and worship me.' The Saviour answered him and said, 'Get thee behind me Satan, for it is written, Worship the Lord thy God and serve him only.' Then the tempter left him, and his angels came to him and ministered unto him. Dearest men, it is certain that, as soon as the Lord went out of the bath of baptism, he fasted immediately; and the holy fathers and teachers of God's people have instituted the time of this fast [i.e. Lent] before the passion of Christ [i.e. Passion Week], and they have plainly shown that the awful Doomsday shall come about the time that the Son of God suffered upon the rood-gallows (the cross). But we must bear in mind that our Lord after his baptism fasted and was also tempted. It is needful then for us to fast, because we are often tempted by the devil after

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our baptism. The Lord admonished us by his fasting and by all his works, that we should serve him and overcome the devil, and gain for ourselves eternal life. We must then bear it well in mind that the Almighty, who was in the likeness of God, co-eternal with God the Father, took upon himself the form of our weak nature. Think, too, that were there other animals to be saved and led to eternal life, he would have taken upon him their likeness. But he desired to take upon him our form, (and) so has he given us example of every thing that is good. Wherefore whatsoever good thing we do either in mercy, in humility, in the power of spiritual strength, in the performance of God's behests, or in the fervour of true love to God and man – all these good things come from the fountain of God's mercy and are derived from the might of the Holy Trinity. Lo! we have heard that the evangelist said that the Saviour was led into the wilderness and that he was tempted by the devil. We must believe that he came thither and was not compelled or constrained, but came willingly. And he came thither because he would fight with the accursed spirit. Right was it that he went into the wilderness, where Adam was previously undone. For three reasons the Saviour went into the wilderness because he would invite the devil to fight with him and deliver Adam from his long banishment, and show to mankind that the accursed spirit contendeth with those whom he sees hastening to God. The temptation was of a threefold nature – First, the tempter said, 'Do as I bid you two, then shall ye two be as God.' Now likewise he tempted God's son through vainglory when he said, 'If thou be the Son of God cast thyself down.' Holy men then knew that he was the true Son of God, because the voice of God the Father was heard at his baptism, thus saying, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' Then is it certain that the accursed spirit began to expound God's books and forthwith lied; for it is not said concerning Christ that his foot should strike against a stone, but concerning holy men. For the angels are ever like a shield, a protection to holy men. The Saviour said unto him, 'Tempt not the Lord thy God.' It was not his place to tempt him; nevertheless he went on in his audacity and wished to try whether he would set himself free. He said, 'All these will I give thee if thou wilt fall down to me and worship me.' Lo! truly he falleth who worshipping the devil. We must believe that

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our Lord might in one hour of the day see the delights of all this world, both in its gold and in its precious raiment. But the perverted spirit spake perverse words when (he said) he would give earthly kingdoms to the exalted and heavenly king—to him who shall prepare heavenly kingdoms for all believers. But that sinful creature would that Jesus should worship him—he who ascendeth to the throne of heaven’s kingdom and whose footstool is this earthly kingdom—whom none from hence may behold, but there all saints praise and worship him in his exalted power. So must we worship him with words and serve him with deeds. He said, ‘Get thee behind me, and bethink thee how great an evil befell thee for thy covetousness and pride, and for thy vain boasting, and therefore I shall not follow thee, for in these three (trials) thou art overcome.’ This testimony (of Scripture) the Lord took in this wise. Well did David devise it when he would fight with Goliath, when he took five stones in his shepherd’s bag, and yet with one he struck down the giant. So Christ overcame the devil with this testimony (of holy writ). We must bear in mind then to praise and love our Lord with all thanksgivings and extollings for these deeds thus performed by him, because, as he had decreed and ordained before all worlds, he would by means of his son’s body deliver this world out of the devil’s power, The same son was before all times begotten of God the Father—the Almighty of the Almighty, and the eternal of the eternal wherefore his might shall be ever eternal and his kingdom shall never be impaired. So the prophet spake concerning him. A man shall be born of Judah and shall rule over all nations. And, therefore, of all the gifts that he has given to this world through his advent, there is no power greater or more useful to the frailty of mankind than his overcoming the accursed spirit and the cruel enemy of mankind. Wherefore now every man may overcome him; and he hath no might against us except against such a man as through inconstancy (weakness) of mind will not withstand him. Through Christ’s victory all holy men, who serve him in righteousness and in holiness, were set free. So then shall sinners be subdued by the chief of them (the devil) even as he was subdued (by Christ). Lo! we have heard that the evangelist said that the Saviour was led by the devil into the holy city and also unto the lofty mountain. To believers this then appears very

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dreadful to hear, but if we consider the humble deeds that he wrought, then that will not appear marvellous to us. It is certain that the accursed spirit is the head (source) of all unrighteous deeds, and also unrighteous men are, as it were, the devils limbs (members), therefore it is not marvellous that the high king and the eternal lord permitted himself to be led unto the high hill, for he permitted himself by the devil's limbs and by evil men to be hanged on the rood (cross). It is not to be wondered at, though he were tempted since he came, that he should be put to death. Wherefore he with his temptation hath overcome our temptation, and our death by his death. The Lord became incarnate in the womb of the ever pure virgin, and without sin he came into the world, and all his life he lived without sin, though he permitted himself to be tempted. But we must consider that the Lord in his temptation did not desire to manifest his great power—he who might, if he wished, at once have caused the tempter to sink into hell's abyss—but with the word of divine writ he overcame him. By his patience he hath set us an example, that as often as we suffer any thing grievous at the hands of evil men, then must we be the more aroused and instigated to divine love, and be more eager to observe God's behests than to avenge our wrongs, We must also remember how great is God's long-suffering and how great is our impatience, and if any one offend us, then are we soon angry and desire, if we can, to take revenge, and [if we are unable] we nevertheless threaten to do so. O how patiently our Lord bore the temptation of the devil—he would not reply to him otherwise than with meekness—he who might have at once punished him in hell. But he would that his praise (renown) should wax the more exalted, therefore he overcame him by patience rather than by destroying him at once. But in him was manifested that he was of two natures in one person—he was true man, therefore the devil dared to tempt him, he was also true God, for angels ministered unto him. We may perceive in him our frail nature, (for) if the devil had not seen him in our nature he would not have tempted him.

Let us worship the Lord's divinity, for if he were not true God above all creatures, angels would not have ministered unto him. In this example is manifested that angels minister to all believers when they have overcome the devil. Lo! we have heard that the fast of this forty days began

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immediately after he rose from his baptism, and then he at once went into the desert; and therefore the elders of the church have instituted that fast before his passion and also before the coming of the awful doomsday. Right is it that all believers should this forty days live in abstinence, and we should also recollect that we must observe the ten commandments and the lore (teachings) of the four evangelists, forasmuch as our body was created of the four elements – of earth, of fire, of water, and of air, so also we sin through four things – through thoughts, words, works, and through will; also there are four times in the year in which we often sin. Then must we again in that abstinence and in these forty nights purify ourselves. Lo! we have now heard that, as commandment was given of old to God's people, we, during this quadragesimal or Lenten period, should give the tenth part of our worldly wealth which we have, so also we must live the tenth part of our days in abstinence. We know well that in the year there are three hundred and sixty-five days; if we then in the six weeks omit the six Sundays of the fast, then there remain no more than six and thirty of the fast days, and if we live perfectly before God during those days, then do we give for God the tenth part of our days. And let us remember that all this year we have lived carnally minded. Now is there great need that we should give for God the tenth part, and live in abstinence and cleanse us of our sins and earn for ourselves eternal life. The days of this forty nights betoken the present world, and the Easter days denote the eternal blessedness; and the more we now live during those days in abstinence, and the more we are in adverse circumstances in this world, the greater bliss may we have during the Easter days, and so we shall the while we live here in this world. Let us perform for our Lord true repentance and amendment, so that we thereby earn remission of our sins, and eternal life after this world, in eternal blessedness. Let us earnestly consider that we should keep ourselves at this and every time from deadly sins, for each man who dieth in these shall be doomed to everlasting torment. Then must we now, at this time because of our daily sins diligently cleanse ourselves with fasts and with holy vigils and with alms; so must we also fill our hearts with the sweetness of the divine behests that there may not be found in us any place devoid of spiritual power, where-in wicked vices may

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dwell. We cannot be without venial sins, but we must at this time, these few days, live in abstinence and cleanse our body and heart from evil thoughts as much as we are able, because the bliss and the excess of the body leadeth man to sin, and abstinence cleanseth him and leadeth him to forgiveness. Let no man believe that this fast sufficeth him for eternal salvation, except he add thereto other good deeds; and he who desires to present his abstinence (fasting) as an acceptable offering to the Lord, must perfect it with alms and with works of mercy. Concerning that Isaiah the prophet hath said, 'Break (share) thy loaf with the needy, and as soon as thou seest a naked beggar, clothe him, and disregard never thy kind.' Lo! we have heard that fasting is very pleasing to God, if the man raise his hands to almsdeeds. The merciful Lord our Creator receiveth very joyfully all the good deeds which any man doth to his neighbour from a pious and merciful heart. And whatever man may fast with good will and deprive his body of next day's meat that he may cheerfully fill the poor man's body, and comfort his neighbour with that by which he has distressed himself, then is that fasting pure and holy. Concerning that Joel the prophet said, 'Hallow your fast and bring a small offering to the Lord,' that is our bodily abstinence and almsdeed, which rejoiceth the poor. All men however cannot do this, but those must do so to whom God hath given [the goods of] this world, and therefore he giveth them wealth so that they shall succour the poor. Then must we bear in mind at this holy time, when we cleanse our bodies with fastings and with prayers, that we also cleanse our minds from evil words; and ever, with joyful spirit, let us keep God's behests. Then shall he bring us into eternal life, where hereafter we may see all the saints and the fair countenance of our Creator, where he liveth and ruleth without end everlastingly. Amen.

IV. The Third Sunday in Lent

Hear now, dearest men, what the excellent teacher (St. Paul) hath said concerning men's tithes. He said 'the time is nigh at hand that we should gather together our substance and our gains.' Let us, then, earnestly give thanks to the Lord who hath given us these fruits, and let us be mindful of what Christ himself has commanded us in the gospel. He hath said that we should, every twelvemonth, give (to God) the tithe of our increase. Lo! our Lord so humbled himself as to give us all the fruits which the earth produces. Though he distributes them variously to men, nevertheless he has bidden us to distribute every twelvemonth, for his sake, the tenth part of our fruits and of our cattle. He did not enjoin that because he had any need thereof, but because he would manifest to us his mercy both in heaven and on earth. It is very needful for us, then, to be obedient to him, so that we may enjoy the beauty of his glory. Thus the Lord himself spake by the prophet, saying, 'Bring your tithes into my barn.' What barn meant he but the kingdom of heaven? And he also said, 'So do, that there may be meat prepared for you in my house.' What else meant he but that we should fill the belly of the needy with our riches? Then shall we never hunger in eternity; but he will open for us the fountains of heaven, and he will give us the abundance of his fruits; and by all these things think, O foolish man, what evils has the Lord ever enjoined that his lore were not worthy of one's obeying it? Then it is said in these books that the Lord himself hath declared that mankind should not neglect to give their first-fruits for God, and now if we do not that, then we commit a great sin thereby. And yet it is worse for us to give tithes of our goods if we desire to give the worst to God. The eminent teacher (St. Paul) hath said, 'Worship

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your Lord God with meet things, and offer to him the fruits of soothfastness (sincerity). Then shall the Lord fill your barn with plenty.' Ye need not think that you are giving that without return (gratuitously) which ye give under the Lord's security, though ye receive not at once the recompense. It may be, however, that many a man will consider what reward he shall receive from the Lord, or how God will afterwards requite him for what he previously gave to the poor for his sake. 'If ye then believe,' said the Lord, 'that what ye give here, in my name, shall turn out to your advantage, then shall it be given advantageously to you, and it shall bring forth for your souls a hundredfold reward.' But if ye doubt concerning the alms ye give for God's sake, and fear that ye will receive insufficient reward, then shall you wholly lose the alms which ye now give for God's sake, and they (alms) shall not become of any benefit to you. In this gospel it saith that our tithes are the tribute of poor men. Give, now, the tenth part of all your acquisitions to poor men, and to God's church, to the poorest of God's servants, who, with divine songs do honour the church, because the church must feed those who dwell therein. Behold, now, how joyful the poor are when any one comforts them with food and clothing. Much more joyful shall be the soul of that man when for her he distributes his alms. For on account of his alms, and his fasting, she shall live everlastingly. (But) he who liveth without alms and fasting shall perish in hell, and he shall never have rest. St. Paul hath also said that God commanded all those who forsake their church and neglect to hear the songs of God, to pine at the door of heaven's kingdom. Because no man need have any doubt of this, that the forsaken church will not take care for those that live in her neighbourhood, therefore, my dearest brethren, give your tithes to her, and for God's sake distribute them to those who observe their orders with purity of life, and will rightly be diligent about the praise of God. So the excellent teacher has commanded us rightly to observe God's law and to support firmly God's Church—both the laity and the clergy. The mass priests, who are the teachers of God's churches, shall rightly teach their confessionals, and give instruction according as our fathers have previously determined. Let no priest, neither for fear of a rich man, nor for reward, nor for any man's favour (love), be afraid of always

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deciding rightly if he desire to escape God's judgments. And he must not be too desirous of dead men's wealth, nor be too little thankful for their alms because they think that he can absolve their sins. And the teachers must humbly teach and instruct sinful men, so that they may know how to confess their sins aright – because they (sins) are so very various, and some so very impure, that a man will avoid ever telling them except the priest ask him concerning them. 'Oh!' said St. Paul, 'that is accounted the devil's treasure for a man to hide his sins from his confessor,' because to our adversary (the devil) a man's sins are more acceptable than all earthly treasure. The priest that is very tardy in driving out the devil from a man, and in speedily ridding the soul with oil and water from the adversary, shall be assigned to the fiery river and the iron hook. For St. Paul said that he saw not far from the side of the priest, of whom we have said above that he was drawn by the iron hook into the pitchy river, another old man, whom four accursed angels led, with great cruelty, and sank him into the fiery water up to his knees; and they had bound him with fiery chains, so that he could not say, 'God have mercy upon me!' Then said the eminent teacher to the angel that led him, 'Who is this old man?' The angel replied, 'He is a bishop who did more evil than good. Before the world he had a great name, and disregarded it all, and his Creator, who had given him that name.' Then said St. Paul, that (since) the bishop had not shown mercy to widows, nor to orphans, nor to any of God's poor, he was requited according to his own deeds. And we are told in these books, that to those bishops who are here in the world, there shall befall a fate very similar to the bishop's whom St. Paul saw in the fiery hell, if they will not observe God's law as Holy Scripture biddeth them. The bishop must, if he will obtain God's mercy and forgiveness of his sins, compel the priests with love or with fear, rightly to observe God's law, and (also) the community over whom they are [set], and the laity over whom they ought to be rulers; and that they do not stiffer them to lead a wicked life, but that they themselves set a good example to the people. For the good teacher hath said that, when the priest or the bishop was led into eternal perdition, they could not be of any service, neither for themselves nor for the flock, which they previously should have kept for God. Whom does God remind of

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tribute more than the bishop? because the bishop is God's vassal, and he is equally holy with his apostles, and equal in rank with his prophets, if he permit not God's people to lead a wicked life. So St. Paul hath said that Christ himself bade Moses to say to other teachers, that if they could not by love convert Christian people to observe rightly God's law, that many evil men should pay the penalty with their lives, and then the other folk would turn to God's true service. As the eminent teacher has said, the king and the bishop ought to be shepherds of Christian people, and turn them from all unrighteousness. And if he then shall be unable to turn them to what is right so that they should cease from their iniquities, then shall each man atone for his iniquities according to the measure of his guilt. The bishop and the priest, if they will rightly serve God, must minister daily to God's people, or at least once a week sing mass for all Christian people who have ever been born, from the beginning of this world. And it is God's will that they should intercede for them. Then shall they receive from God greater reward than they may do by any other gifts—for very dear to God are his people. And those that are in heaven shall intercede for those who are engaged in this song. And they shall be in the prayers of all earthly folk, who have been Christians, or yet may be; and they shall never die in their sins, and God's mercy and that of all saints shall be upon them. And God hath permitted earthly men to bless all Christian people and to present to him frequently divine offerings, for they are called God's children, and are in communion with all the saints. And this work is the greatest source of annoyance to devils, because they have many souls in their power to whom God will yet show mercy on account of their powerful supplications, and on account of the prayers of earthly men, and of all saints, and for his great mercy. The holy teacher hath said, 'Let us, the children of men, not cease to please God and annoy the devil day and night, and to bless ourselves with the token (sign) of Christ's Cross. Then the devil will flee from us, because it is a greater terror to him than the sword may be to any man, if one were about to strike off his head.' And to all Christian men it is commanded that they shall bless their entire bodies seven times with the sign of Christ's Cross. First in the early morning, the second time at undertide (nine o'clock), the third time at midday, the

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fourth time at the hour of none (three o'clock), the fifth time in the evening, the sixth time at night, ere he go to rest, the seventh time at dawn. At all events he should commend himself to God. And if the teachers will not constantly enjoin this upon God's people, then shall they be very guilty before God, because God's people ought to know how to shield themselves from devils. And the teachers hereafter shall be deserving of condemnation if they will not teach the people to cease from their sins and observe God's behests. The bishop must lay a great injunction upon the priests, if they will preserve themselves from the wrath of God, to tell God's people that on Sundays and Mass-days they should diligently visit God's church, and joyfully hear there the divine instruction. The teachers shall not neglect the instruction, nor shall the people be too proud to humble themselves to him if they desire God's forgiveness. For where the gospel is said, there many a man's heart is touched, and God will be merciful to the men who, with meek heart, believe in him. Then must the bishops and priests diligently urge men of all ranks and bid them rightly to observe God's decrees; the servants of God to keep their divine services and their churches rightly, and the laity as it properly behoveth them. But if any one will not listen to him, then must the priest punish him as it is here enjoined. If the servant of God will not rightly serve the church, then let him receive along with the laity the hardest service. And this must the mass-priest needs enjoin, or take upon him the sins of God's servant; then shall he be like the angels who of yore contended against God and then were cast into hell. Therefore the eminent teacher hath said this concerning those same, that they thereby might teach other men; and the bishop and the priest shall then be guiltless before God. Moses received a shining crown of glory because he always punished those who despised God. He who despiseth God's behest shall be like a heathen, and many a devil shall abide in him. St. Paul said, 'Great (important) is the injunction of the apostolical order'; because our Lord said to him that whomsoever he bound on earth should be bound in heaven, and whomsoever he loosed on earth should be loosed in heaven. Then I counsel you, my brethren, to give the tenth of your goods to poor men, who before the world have but little. Then shall all the saints rejoice over you, and God himself shall be with you, and ye with him, and ye shall

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receive forgiveness of your sins. And whatever man will not distribute the tithe of his substance and his gains for God's sake, to him shall not be given the Lord's mercy nor forgiveness of sins, but he shall be afflicted with punishments after his death, and of all his goods he shall then be empty-handed, and all things shall then be taken forcibly away from him. And this is enjoined on each man who may be skilful in anything, either in greater wisdom or less. Then let him ever yield to the Lord his tithes on account of his earthly gains, and on account of the fruits of eternal life. Therefore the Lord ever reminds every man of what he here gives him; and if we then joyfully and largely distribute to poor men the wealth which God has previously given us, then shall we receive both earthly and heavenly reward. 'Oh,' said the eminent teacher, 'thou foolish and unwise man, wherefore hast thou deprived thyself of the twofold blessings by breaking God's behests. Why consideredst thou not that it is all God's 'Oh, thou covetous and rich man, what wilt thou do if the Lord taketh from thee nine parts of thy wealth, and letteth thee have only the tenth part? For it is right that nine parts should be taken from the man that refuseth God the tenth part.' It is written in Christ's books that the Lord himself said that the tenth parts of our goods were under our own control, both as regards land and other possessions and other acquisitions; wherefore at the last day it shall ever turn to grief to that man who refuseth it to God. If, however, we will distribute them cheerfully and bountifully to poor men, then will the Lord open for us the fountains of heaven; and he will send us his blessings from above, and our wheat, and our vineyards, and all our earthly riches shall be blessed if we act aright; and he will also shield us from all enemies. Lo! each man desireth that the Lord should give him all that is needful, and yet is not willing to do his will by distributing, for his sake, what he has previously given him. Why can we not consider that the earth is God's, and the substance by which we live is God's, and we are all his; and under his control is all the earth; and the winds and the rains which produce the fruits of the earth are all his; and the sun's heat that warmeth the earth and all creatures are his; and he wrought them all, and hath them under his control. And our Lord is very mindful of all the gifts that he has bestowed upon us, and at the last day we must restore all that he has previously

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given to us on earth, and he will then recompense us according as we have done here, both good and evil. Dearest men, let us consider, if we for awhile are in any tribulation where we despair of our lives, do we not then pray for God's mercy, and will he not then be dearer to us than all worldly riches, if he will spare and have mercy upon us? Wherefore let us consider what that torment will be to which no termination comes. 'Therefore do I now admonish by the divine message,' the great teacher said, 'that ye absolve you of your sins before ye die;' because it now rapidly draweth nigh to our dying day; and it is very uncertain whether our heirs and successors will act faithfully after our lives, if previously we ourselves have been negligent, because few are they who are true to the dead. Of a truth, I tell you, whosoever will not love the Lord, and for his sake distribute his goods, shall be deprived of them by the Lord with great severity. And as many poor men as die in the neighbourhood of the rich and wealthy, and because he will not give them the tenth part of his wealth, of all those men's death shall he be guilty and a murderer before the throne of the eternal Judge, because that he wretchedly and arrogantly previously kept his wealth, and refused it to the Lord's poor. Let the man who desires to obtain the heavenly blissfulness, ever rightly give the tenth of his goods to God, and distribute his alms even from the nine remaining parts, and give to poor men the remains of his table, and his old garments. Then shall it be hereafter kept for him in the heavenly treasury; and whatever God may give us more than we shall necessarily make use of, let us always bestow it upon those that have less. He does not give it to us in order that we should hide or give it ostentatiously, or to any men who do not love God much, but we must give it to God's church, and bestow it upon the poorest men. Then is that a good thing here in this world, and also in the world to come. Riches, and great ostentation, and unrighteous greed, and denying the poor, are very great sins before God. Forsake, now, the deceitful riches and the unlawful acquisitions, as the saints did who, in this life, sought naught nor yearned to have aught but that they might bring into the exaltation of heaven all that they had gained on earth through God's assistance. It is not forbidden you, however, to possess wealth, if ye acquire it aright, because it is very acceptable to God that ye should give to poor men, and with your

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wealth so merit it as to obtain the everlasting joy in which the Lord is with his saints, and with all those that will observe and perform his behests. To the Lord be praise, and glory, and peace in eternity, for ever, world without end. Amen.

V. The Fifth Sunday in Lent

Here is related how the excellent teacher spake and said, 'Dearest men, it behoveth us first to hear the words of holy writ, and afterwards to give and yield meet fruits.' What use is it for a man to listen earnestly to the words of the holy gospel, if he will not have and hold them in his heart? if nevertheless the root of the holy record be pulled up and removed from his heart? How may he then have and hold spiritual fruit, if he will not believe in God, and with sincere heart bear in mind and consider how David the Psalmist began to ponder and think as to what were the works and deeds of the good man? And he therefore thus spake: 'The man who speaketh truth with his mouth, and sincerely thinketh it in his heart, and truly performeth it, and puts down the deceitful words of his tongue—he is the man who hath and holdeth the belief of God's kingdom, because he would not deceive his neighbour through treacherous words.' It is the practice of many a man ever to say to his neighbour the words that he thinketh may be most pleasant for him to hear, and nevertheless, at the same time, he taketh thought how he may most easily betray him through the sweetness of those words. It is the devil's practice ever to betray the unwary through the sweetness of sins, and he will afterwards recompense him for it all cruelly and ill. There are many men who joyfully hear the words of the holy lore, and yet quickly forget, what they a little before, with anxious ears and with inward thought, had heard related and told. Wherefore they neither bear nor have with them spiritual fruit, because that the holy seed, which previously was proclaimed and told them by the mouth of the teacher, has faded and died in them, therefore the hearing and the zeal is of no use to the unbelieving and careless men, as David the Psalmist has said.

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Many men there are who, before other men, begin to do a little good and quickly abandon it. Wherefore Christ himself has said that he will not hear the negligent and forgetful man's prayers. It is all to no purpose for a man to eat good meat, or at a feast to drink the best wine, if it happeneth that he afterwards spews up and loses that which he previously received for enjoyment, and for the advantage of his body. So, then, we must not unwarily relinquish the spiritual teaching by which our soul liveth and is fed. As the body cannot live without meat and drink, so then the soul, if she be not spiritually fed with God's word, will perish through hunger and thirst. Therefore much more ought we to take thought of spiritual than of carnal things. As the body will depart from the things of this world, even so will the soul live with spiritual things in eternity. She will again receive her body at the last day, and with it shall atone for all the deeds of the body. Many men there are whose hearts are hard, who hear the divine instruction, and, though they are often preached to and addressed, become negligent. These, hereafter, on the terrible doomsday, shall be unable to make any excuse, but shall then, along with devils, fall into eternal torment. Wherefore let us withdraw our minds from the love of this world's sinful indulgences and desires, lest this world's love cut us off from the enjoyment (love) of eternal life and everlasting light, in which God dwelleth with his saints in heaven and with all the souls who here in this world shall rightly turn to God, and with pure heart confess their sins and make amends toward God. Lo! we know that all the glory and comeliness (beauty) of this life hieth and hasteneth to an end, for the body grows old, and its beauty fades and returns to dust. So, then, the glory and comeliness of the soul, that in eternity dwelleth in the joy of heaven's kingdom, there rejoiceth and shineth with Christ. Wherefore, dearest men, I pray and beseech each of you to contemplate himself in his heart with silent mind, what the mortal body is like when the soul is gone, and the beauty which he loved here in this world like to the flowering tree and blooming flowers. We know that Christ himself said by his own mouth, 'When ye see growing and blowing all the fruits of the earth, and the fragrant odours exhaling from plants, then soon afterwards they shall dry up and dwindle away on account of the summer's heat.' So is it like to the

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nature of man's body when youth first bloometh and is fairest; then quickly the beauty fadeth and turneth to old age, and afterwards he is troubled by sorrow and by various aches (ailments) and infirmities. And the whole body loatheth to perform those youthful lusts that he aforetime so earnestly loved, and which were sweet to him to perform. Then, again, they shall appear very bitter to him, after that death shall come to him to announce God's judgment. The body then, shall be turned to the strongest and foulest stench, and his eyes shall then be sealed up, and his mouth and his nostrils shall be closed, and then with difficulty will the dead man be kept in proximity to any living man. Where shall be the vain desires then, and the sweetness of the carnal lust which he previously loved so heartily? Where shall be the feastings then, and the vanities, and the immoderate mirth, and the false vaunting, and all the idle words to which he aforetime wickedly gave utterance? All those shall pass away as a cloud and as a stream of water, and shall never again make their appearance. Such shall be the end of the body's comeliness, which now foolish and unwise men much love, because they do not consider how late they were born into this world, and how soon they must again depart from it; and in what pain they were conceived by their mothers, and in what toil they shall afterward live, and how this world each day decayeth and hasteneth to an end. What else is the life of this world but a little interval or delay of death? As the long illness of the sick man when God will not permit him to live in ease, nor yet may he die, and nevertheless until death he afflicts him, so is this earthly life. Truly, indeed, may we think that it (life) is death's interval rather than life's. What man is he that may number all the pains and the diseases that man is born to? In sin he is conceived, and he is brought forth in his mother's pain. He is nurtured in hunger, in thirst, and in cold. In toil and in sweat he liveth. In weeping, and in sadness, and in pain his body must here abide, and then the sinful shall end his life in the sulphurous fire of hell. Woe to those men, then, that consider not the miseries of this world to which they are ordained, and will not be mindful of the day of their departure, nor of the fearful Day of Doom, and will not trust in the eternal glory of the heavenly kingdom, nor perceive that they were at first created in the image of God, and also for eternal life, and not for eternal death. And

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they do not consider that the door of the heavenly kingdom is ever open to those who believe and do aright, and also shut to those who are sinful and act unrighteously. And they do not consider that the greedy hell is ever open to devils and to those men who now live after the devil's lore, that is, murderers, perjurers, and those who commit adultery with other men's wives, and with those persons that are consecrated as brides to Christ after that they have been covered with the consecrated veil. It is said that the same adversary that previously taught them to sin, will afterwards torment them with great torments, unless they previously will amend their lives. Wherefore, said the eminent teacher, that they should with fasts, and with prayers, and with shedding of tears overcome all the devil's will. In hell are thieves, chiders, covetous men, who deprive men wrongfully of their property, proud men, and magicians who practise enchantments and deceptions, and deceive and mislead unwary men thereby, and wean them from the contemplation of God by means of their sleights and deceptions. There are also evil reeves (governors) who now give wrong judgments, and pervert the right laws of just men, which aforetime were rightly instituted. Concerning those judges Christ himself hath spoken. He said, 'Judge now, as ye will that ye should be judged again at the last day of this world.' Verily, the evil judge receiveth a paltry reward, and perverteth the righteous judgment for sake of the reward. It is said, then, that he shall receive eternal condemnation along with devils, because he previously, in this world, performed his own will; and then shall he abide endlessly in eternal torments, where he shall then have boiling flames, and anon the severest cold; all grief, strife, hunger, thirst, weeping, wailing, and miseries more than is possible for any man's invention to recount. There need be never hope for any light, nor for a friend who may ever deliver him from the power of the grim devil because of the opposition he made against God, and because he would not believe in the teaching of God's books. Wherefore, dearest men, it is very needful for us to know that Judas is now tormented by devils in eternal torments, because he sold Christ for the sake of a bribe. So, then, with him now must burn those who despise their own souls for the sake of meed, and love unrighteous gains. They have the name of judges, but the actions of thieves; for they are, among themselves,

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ravenous wolves, when, for the sake of bribes, they condemn the innocent poor. To them was injunction rightly given to punish ever with severity wicked doers—thieves, manswearers, adulterers, those who practise divination and will not forsake it; those men should the judges severely chastise. But, nevertheless, all judges are not here spoken of alike, for some are much readier to correct God's people than they are to rob the poor and the innocent, and they give their judgments through the fear of God and of his saints, much more than for the sake of bribery. And they shield the innocent and judge severely the guilty. Those judges are rather to be praised than blamed, for they desire to lead aright the unbelieving men who now thoughtlessly and heedlessly serve God. Those judges are, by God's favour, everywhere, both that they may guard themselves from sins, and also set right others that sin. Therefore, on doomsday they shall hear from God this word which he shall speak: 'Thou good and faithful servant, go thou now into the eternal joy of the heavenly glory which thou previously in this world didst earn, by belief in me and my saints, and by a right understanding.' Then must each of us bear his deeds before the throne of Christ, and of all his saints, and then we must yield account for the deeds of our whole life, which we ever ere wrought in this world wherefore we must now preserve ourselves from great sins, so that we may the easier amend the venial ones. Many men ween that murder is the greatest sin, but we must be aware that there are murders of three kinds. The first is for a man to have enmity towards another, and to hate him and to backbite him. Wherefore it is a very great sin for one man to hate another and to slander him. It has been said that it is the root of all other sins. Very seldom will a man confess that he is envious or slanderous. The man who killeth another and immediately convinces himself that he has committed a great crime and a great sin—many such men, then, oft turn to penitence and to confession, and pray to our Lord for forgiveness; for there is no doubt that he will grant forgiveness to those who desire to merit it. The envious and the slanderous, indeed, though they be guilty of murder, do not believe that they are guilty of any sin. The envious do not perceive their guilt, though they are worthy of death, therefore they never pray to God for forgiveness. This deadly vice is to be shunned by us all, lest it sink us

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into hell's abyss. Verily, the glory of this world is brief and transitory, (but) the glory of the Lord and his kingdom continueth for ever. There is that eternal light without darkness; there is youth without age; there is that excellent life without ending; there is joy without sadness; there no hunger shall be, nor thirst, nor wind, nor storm, nor the noise of water. There shall be no separation of loved ones, nor reunion of those at enmity, but there shall be eternal rest, and the festivity of saints shall last there for ever. There is that unspeakable kingdom which God giveth to all those that will love him. Let us love him, then, with all our heart's might, then will he love us in heaven with all his saints. Ever, to all ages, be to our Lord praise, and glory, and honour, without end, everlastingly. Amen.

VI. Palm Sunday

Here is related, dearest men, concerning the honour of this holy time, how that the merciful Lord and the Redeemer of mankind so humbled himself that he descended from the exaltation of the paternal glory into this earth, because that he would suffer for the salvation of all men and release us from the devil's servitude, and reveal to us his power and his will; and how with undaunted mind he drew nigh to the place in which he should suffer for our redemption and for the humiliation of the devil. On this day our Lord Jesus was honoured and praised by the folk of the Jews, because they perceived that he was Christ the Saviour, through the marvellous work of raising Lazarus from the dead on the fourth day of his being entombed. Then they did bear before him blowing palm-twigs, because it was a Jewish custom when their kings had obtained victory over their foes and were returning home again, to go to meet them with blowing palm-twigs in honour of their victory. And it was very fitting that our Lord did so in like manner, because he was the king of glory. This day they called the day of victory. The name denotes the victory by which the triumphant Lord withstood the devil, when that he by his death overcame the eternal death, as he himself spake by the prophet—he said, 'O death, I will be thy death, and I will be thy sting in hell.' A great sting put our Lord in hell when he descended thither and spoiled (harrowed) hell, and led away from thence the souls of the just, and delivered from the devil's power, those whom from the beginning of the world he had there gathered together in bondage. He led them away from hell's abyss unto the exalted majesty of heaven's kingdom. John, the beloved disciple (of our Lord), has made it known to us in the gospel, and thus spoke—'Jesus came six days

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before the Jewish Easter to Bethany, where Lazarus had died, and raised him from the dead.' Martha, his sister, then made preparation for the evening repast for the Saviour; and her sister, whose name was Mary, sat at the Saviour's feet, for she would hear his words and his teaching. Martha was desirous to minister to the Saviour to his satisfaction. She stood before him and said unto him, 'Why wilt thou not heed that my sister leaveth me alone to serve? speak to her that she may help me.' The Saviour answered her and said, 'Martha, Martha, be thou heedful and mindful of the things of Mary, that is, that thou at all times perform the will of God, which is the one best thing wherewith thou mayest please God. Mary hath chosen the best part, which shall never be taken from her.' Lazarus was then sitting alone with the Saviour and his disciples. Mary took a pound of precious ointment and anointed the feet of the Saviour and afterwards dried them with her locks. Then was all the house filled with the sweet smell of the precious ointment. One of the Saviour's disciples named Judas Iscariot, because he came from the town called 'Scariot,' was then exceedingly angry and said, 'Why should this ointment thus be put to loss? easily might it have been sold for three hundred pence, and that distributed to poor men.' He said not that because he took any thought for needy men, but because he was a covetous man and the most wicked thief, wherefore the apostles allowed him to carry their wallets, because they wished thereby to try his covetousness. [But] he was also the worst covetous man, because he sold for money the Lord of heaven and of all the world. The Saviour then answered him and said, 'Why are ye on account of this deed so grieved? She has wrought a good work upon me. Ye have the poor always (with you) if ye desire to do good, but me ye have not always. But let this deed thus be a witness of my burial. Verily I say unto you, that this gospel shall be said and preached throughout all the world, because this was done in remembrance of me.' When the Jewish folk knew that Jesus was come to the home of Lazarus, then they proceeded thither, nevertheless, not for his (Jesus') sake, but out of a desire of curiosity on account of the miracle, and they wished to see Lazarus, whom he had previously raised from the dead. Then was fulfilled that which aforetime was spoken: 'This people honour me with their words, and yet their heart is far from me.' Then the rulers

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and the elders purposed to kill Lazarus, because many men believed on the Saviour when he raised him from the dead. Then in the morning came thither a great multitude for the feast-day. Then the Saviour went thence to Jerusalem, and when they saw that, they took blooming palm-twigs and bore them before him, and bowed down to him and honoured him, as is befitting a king; when that he drew nigh to Jerusalem then came he first to the town of Bethphage near Mount Olivet. The Saviour then said to his two disciples, to Peter and John, 'Go now into this village that standeth over against you; then ye shall find there an ass tied and her foal; unloose them and bring them to me. And if any one forbiddeth it you, say that the Lord hath need thereof, then forthwith they shall let them go for me.' This came to pass that the prophecy might be fulfilled which was previously spoken, 'Say to the daughters of Sion, that their King cometh, meek and humble, sitting upon an ass, (even) the foal of the animal.' His disciples then did as he bade them, and brought him the ass, and made him sit thereon. All the people that went before him strewed their garments before him. Some took branches from the trees and strewed them in the way. The multitude who went before, and those that followed after, all cried and said, 'Jesus, Son of David, blessed art thou in the name of the Lord, save us on high (Hosanna in the highest).' When that the Saviour then went into the city, all the place was moved, and the citizens cried and said, 'Who is this mighty one that thus magnificently cometh?' The people answered them and said, 'It is the Nazarene prophet of Galilee, who should be praised among all nations and honoured also by the mouth of milk sucking children.' He then went into Solomon's holy temple and then cast out the shambles of the chapmen, and the seats of the money changers, and said, 'My house should be called the house of prayer, but ye make it dens for thieves.' Then went to him the blind and the halt, and he forthwith healed them. All this came to pass that we should acknowledge the power of our Lord and honour him with great love. The evangelist has said that the Saviour came to Bethany six days before Easter. By this it is signified that he came in the sixth age into this world to redeem mankind. Our Lord left not this world without instructors any longer than two hundred years, but he sent patriarchs and prophets who should speak of his advent. So he then, on the six days before his

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passion, manifested various works each day. First, on the Saturday, he raised Lazarus from the dead, and on the Lord's Sunday, which is now present, he was recognised as king and praised, and also by the mouths of children acknowledged and honoured. And on the following day he cursed the figtree, on which he found no fruit; that denoteth the sinful, who have no fruit of good works. On the third day he said to his disciples, 'Now in two days shall the Son of Man be given into the hands of sinful men.' On the fourth day he was in the house of Simon the leper, where-in the woman poured out the precious ointment on his head. On the fifth day he washed the feet of his disciples, and sat with them at the evening feast, and to them gave his body under the form of bread, and his blood in the form of wine. The sixth day the Jews hanged him on the Cross, where he shed his blood for our salvation and redeemed us from the devil's bondage. The evangelist has said that Martha and Mary betoken this transitory and fleeting life. Martha received Christ in her house, that she might minister unto him. What does she signify but the holy church, that is, believing men who prepare a clean habitation in their hearts for Christ himself? He hath said, 'I will dwell in them, and I will be their God for ever.' Of that the apostle said, 'The Almighty God seeketh the pure heart for to dwell therein; therefore God's temple must not be defiled, but the man of God must be perfect in righteous works.' The writer hath said that Mary took a pound of precious ointment and anointed therewith the Saviour's feet and dried them with her locks. Then was all the house filled with the sweet smell. This ointment was made of eighteen kinds of herbs. There were three of the best—olive, nard, and spike, which is of a brown colour and of a good smell, and that which is anointed therewith never becomes foul. This was done for us for an example of life, and if we now will anoint our souls with the oil of mercy, then may we bring to the Lord the unwithered fruits of good works. Let us be ever mindful that we do those good things that God's books teach us, that is, fasts and holy vigils, and almsgiving according to our means; and with many other spiritual virtues we may deserve to bring to our Lord the sweet smell of good works. Mary, who sat at the Saviour's feet to hear his words and his teaching, betokeneth holy church in the future world, which shall be freed from all its labours, and

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shall have sight alone of the heavenly glory, and shall rest in the presence of our Lord, and shall unceasingly praise him. St. John the evangelist hath revealed to us that he heard hosts of angels singing praises to God, thus saying, 'Worthy art thou Lord God to receive glory, and honour, and power, and blessings, and thanks of all thy creatures that thou hast created in heaven and in earth, according to thy will.' Lazarus, whom Christ raised on the fourth day after that he was abiding corrupt in the tomb, betokeneth this world, which was corrupt through the practices of the most grievous impurity of sins and of wickednesses. Even so the heavy burden of the tomb and of death sitteth on the dead bodies, and the stone and the earth oppress them (the dead bodies). So sat, then, the intolerable burden of sins on all mankind [until the coming] of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now we ought to imitate Mary, who anointed the Saviour's feet and dried them with her locks; that is, that we should do good works and live aright; then follow we the Lord's footsteps, that is, if we teach other men well, and they rightly after our lore live to God; then do we bring the Lord a sweet savour in our deeds and in our precepts, as Paul the apostle hath said, 'We may anoint the Lord's feet if we will do good to other believers and help the poor—he who best can—and if we ever commiserate another's afflictions, and likewise also greatly rejoice at another's welfare.' The evangelist hath said that Judas was very angry because of the ointment. He said that it would be more profitable if it were sold for three hundred pence and distributed to the poor. Judas was like those men who will do ill to and destroy God's church. Yet he who was the teacher and example of soothfastness, and the king of all purity, permitted this godless thief to be with him. But by this example he hath shown us that true men have among them thieves and sinful men, and nevertheless they must suffer patiently their wickedness against themselves. Christ hath set us an example of patience. He did not say to Judas, 'Thou speakest this by reason of thy covetousness and thy thievery;' but he said, 'Let this be so, a good work has she wrought upon me.' With these words he manifested that he would suffer death. He said, 'Ye have the poor always with you, but me ye have not always.' The holy church is never without the poor. Those men alone have Christ in their hearts who are decreed to eternal life. Christ himself said, 'Ye have me ever

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present among believing men, through the glory of my divine nature;’ and nevertheless, the hidden presence hath not departed from us. Many men have him through the holy baptism, and through true belief of Christ’s sacrifice that we receive at the altar; but those men who live wickedly have not Christ in their hearts, but they prepare a habitation for devils, and eternal punishment for themselves. The evangelist said, ‘The elders of the priests determined to slay Lazarus;’ and those wicked ones would not think that the Lord might again raise him as he had previously raised him from soul’s death through his divine power. Matthew, the evangelist, said, ‘When the Saviour would draw near to Jerusalem, he first came to Bethphage.’ This was very fitting when he had come from heaven to earth, that he would suffer for mankind, and should draw near to the time of our redemption. The town of Bethphage betokeneth Holy Church, in which are sung the holy mysteries (or sacraments) and where men confess their sins, and there pray to God for forgiveness. We have previously heard that the Saviour sent his two disciples, by which are betokened holy teachers, who must continue in true belief and in perfect works, and teach (men) love of God and of men. Without these two (loves) no man can come to eternal life. He said, ‘Go into the village that stands before you.’ Why did the Lord mention the royal city with a contemptuous name? because villages in many places have often a mean situation. Yet this city was high and princely, but, nevertheless, Christ so contemptuously mentioned the great city and the holy Jerusalem, because the citizens were to him, on account of their unbelief and wickedness, very despicable and reprobate, and also because he was aware of the punishment that should hereafter come upon them and that the city should be broken down and spoiled, as he told his apostles when they spake to Christ concerning the glory and the beauty of the temple and of the city, and said that it was a magnificent and beautiful work. The Lord then answered them, and said: ‘Lo! ye now see all the beauties of these buildings; verily, I say unto you, that it shall come to pass for this people’s sins and transgressions, that all these buildings shall be cast to the ground, and here shall not be left stone upon stone that shall not be cast down from each other.’ So it afterwards happened, forty years after they hanged Christ on the Rood and he suffered bodily death for men’s

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salvation. For forty winters he ever awaited, through his great forbearance, that they would yet turn, or show some sorrow and amendment for the great sin and wickedness that they had committed against their Lord, and also against many of his saints. But when he saw that they would not show any amendment nor sorrow, but continued nevertheless in their sins, then the Lord sent upon them more vengeance than any other that ever before happened, except upon the people of Sodom alone. And that was when Titus came with the Roman army, and took vengeance upon them because they had crucified their king. Then the people fled when they knew the army was about to come into the city of Jerusalem. Then the emperor Titus surrounded the city without with his army, and long encamped there, till they who were in the city died of hunger; and on account of the famine they were not able to defend the city. But the emperor then destroyed the city, and slew the most part of the people. Of all those who were slain there, and died of hunger, with women and men, the number was eleven hundred thousand, and then they also took, of those of the people that remained and best pleased them, a hundred thousand, and led them with them into captivity. And eighteen hundred thousand they sent away, and sold them for money into distant regions. The number of all the people which the emperor Titus encompassed in Jerusalem was thirty hundred thousand, and on account of the vengeance of God he brought all to ruin, and disposed of the land as they (the Romans) themselves would. The punishment was as great as God's forbearance had previously been. The Lord said to his disciples, 'Ye shall find an ass and her foal bound, bring it to me.' What denoteth the ass upon which the Lord Christ would sit but the believing Jewish folk, and also many others who are subjected to God in good will, and therefore are worthy to bear the King of heaven in their hearts, and he will direct them to all good things and will bring them into the 'sight of peace;' for the name of the city which is called Jerusalem signifies 'sight of peace,' because the holy souls rest there. He said that his disciples did as he bade them. Truly that denoteth that the instructors must not take away from nor add to God's laws, but keep them as God himself has appointed. The teachers must mortify their own bodies by abstinence, and set an example of good life to those that succeed them, and prepare the

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way of the Lord for their minds. What betokeneth the crowd that went before Jesus but the Jewish people, among whom were the holy host of patriarchs and prophets that knew and prophesied of Christ's advent, of the marvels that he wrought, of his passion, resurrection, and ascension. They all cried out, and said, with one voice, 'Jesus, Son of David, blessed art thou who didst come in the name of the Lord. Save us in the highest!' The multitude that followed after betokeneth all those who, after Christ's coming, were converted to God. Now, then, all believers who love and believe in him, ought to cry with pure hearts and with sincere prayers, and in the teaching of holy writ. They said, 'Salvation to us in the highest,' even as if they had plainly said, 'Save us on earth, thou that hast Divine power in heaven.' We must also understand that they said, 'Save us on earth; we who are living in the body, and also those who are in hell, beseech of thee deliverance and salvation, and have done so from the beginning of the world.' And very proper was it both that the people, who went before, and who followed after, should say, 'Blessed art thou that comest in the name of the Lord,' because there was one belief and one hope in the Holy Trinity before Christ's advent; and accordingly we rightly ring in his praise, 'Save us in the highest.' All the arrangement was completed in the true incarnation for the perfection of the heavenly kingdom. The holy men, before Christ's coming, believed in him, and loved him, and spake of his coming; and by his passion they were redeemed from hell-torment, and were saved through his resurrection. We, then, are those who come after, and we know all this that has thus come to pass, wherefore we must believe on him, and love him, and we also know that he will come to judge and put an end to this world. Now it is very needful for us that he find us ready; and we know full well that we must in this brief time earn eternal rest, then may we in angelic bliss rejoice with our Lord, where he liveth and reigneth without end, everlastingly. Amen.

VII. Easter Day

Dearest men, this paschal festival presents to us a manifest token of the eternal life, as we may now hear related, so that none may need doubt that the event shall happen at this present season, when the same Creator will sit upon his judgment seat, and before him shall be present all angel-kind and mankind, and also accursed spirits; and there shall be investigated each man's deeds. And he who is now humble, and with all his mind mindful of Christ's passion and of his resurrection, shall receive a heavenly reward. And he who neglects to observe God's behests, or to bear at all in mind our Lord's meekness, shall hear a severe sentence and afterwards shall dwell in eternal torments, of which there shall be never any end. Then is this time of all times, the highest and most sacred: and at this time we should have divine and worldly bliss, because for our example the Lord arose from the dead after his passion, after the bonds of his death, and after the bonds of hell's darkness; and he laid upon the prince of devils eternal torment and vengeance, and delivered mankind, as the prophet David prophesied of this period, thus saying, 'Our Lord delivered us' and hath fulfilled what he had long threatened the accursed spirits; and he hath made known to men at this present time all the things that were ever before prophesied by the prophets concerning his passion, his resurrection, and his harrowing of hell, and concerning his many miracles which were previously foretold. All that he hath fulfilled. Let us now hear and consider what he did, and by what means he made us free. He was not by any necessity compelled, but of his own will descended upon earth, and here suffered many ambushes and plots from the Jews and the wicked scribes; and then at last he permitted his body to be fastened with nails to the cross,

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and suffered death for us, because he would give us everlasting life; and then he sent his glorious spirit into the abyss of hell and there bound and humbled the prince of all darkness and of eternal death, and exceedingly troubled all his confederates, and brake in pieces hell-gates and their brazen bolts, and from thence brought out all his elect; and he overcame the darkness of the devil's with his shining light. They then exceedingly afraid and terrified, thus said, Whence is this man thus strong, thus glorious, and thus terrible? The world was long previously subject to us, and death yielded to us much tribute. Never before has it happened to us that death has thus been put an end to, nor ever before has such terror befallen to us and to hell. Oh, now, who is this that fearless enters our confines, and not only does not dread punishment from us but will also release others from our bonds? Think we this be he whom we thought that through his death all the world should be subject to us? Hearst thou, our chief! This is the same for whose death thou hast long striven. And thou didst promise us much spoil at last. But how wilt thou now do with respect to him? and how mayest thou now overthrow him? Now he hath put all thy darkness to flight through his brightness, and hath broken all thy prison in pieces; and all those whom thou previously heldest captive he hath set free, and their life he hath turned to joy; and those now mock us who previously sighed under our bonds. Why bringest thou hither this man who by his coming hath turned all his chosen to their ancient bliss? Though they were previously despairing of eternal life, they are now very joyful. There is now no weeping nor lamentation heard here, as was previously wont to be, in this place of torment. Oh, now, our chief, those riches that thou obtainedst in the beginning through the boldness and the disobedience of the first man and the forfeiture of Paradise—all those he hath now seized, and through Christ's cross all thy bliss is turned to grief. When thou didst wish that thou mightest know that Christ was crucified, thou didst not know how many troubles at his death should come upon us all. Thou wouldst ever defile him, in whom thou didst know there was no sin. Wherefore broughtest thou hither this free and innocent man? Now by his coming hither he hath condemned and humiliated all the guilty. Then immediately after, the impious voice of hell's host was heard, and their

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lamentation. Then it happened without any delay that, on account of the coming of the Lord's kingdom, that all the iron bolts of hell's locks were broken; and forthwith the innumerable host of sanctified souls who previously were held captive did obeisance to the Saviour, and with weeping supplication prayed to him, thus saying: 'Thou didst come to us as the redeemer of the world. Thou didst come to us the hope of heaven and earth's hosts, and also our hope—for of yore the prophets foretold thy coming, and we hoped and trusted in thy coming hither; thou didst give on earth forgiveness of sins to men. Set us free from hell's power and from hell's bondage. Now, since for us thou didst descend into hell's abyss, leave us not now to dwell in torment when thou turnest to thy kingdom on high. Thou didst set the sign of thy glory in the world, set now the token of thy glory in hell.' Without delay this prayer was at once heard, and immediately the innumerable host of holy souls, at the Lord's bidding, were raised out of the torment, and He felled down the old devil and cast him bound into hell's abyss. Then the holy souls with ineffable joy cried to the Lord, thus saying: 'Ascend up now, Lord Jesus Christ, now thou hast spoiled hell, and hast bound the prince of death in these torments; manifest now bliss to the world that all thy chosen may rejoice and trust in thy ascension.' Adam and Eve, as yet, had not been set free, but were held in bonds; Adam then with weeping and with piteous voice cried to the Lord, and said, 'Have mercy upon me, O Lord, have mercy upon me, for thy great mercy, and blot out my unrighteousness, because I have sinned against thee alone and have done great sin before thee. I have erred as the sheep that perishes. Visit now thy servant, O Lord, for thy hands have made and fashioned me; leave not my soul with hell's hosts, but show thy mercy upon me, and bring me out of these bonds, and from this prison house, and from the shadow of death.' The Lord Jesus then had mercy upon Adam, and at once his bonds were unloosed, and having embraced the Saviour's knees he said, 'My soul shall bless the Lord, and all that is within me shall bless his holy name. Thou thyself hast become merciful to all my unrighteousness, thou thyself didst heal my infirmities, and didst deliver my soul from eternal perdition, and didst satisfy my longing with good things.' Eve as yet continued in bonds and in weeping. She said

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'Thou, O Lord, art just and thy judgments are right, therefore deservedly I suffer these torments. In Paradise I was in honour and I did not perceive it; I became perverse and like to foolish brutes. But thou Lord, shield of my youth and of me, be not mindful of my folly, nor turn from me thy presence nor thy mercy, and turn not in anger from thy servant. Hear, O gracious God, my voice with which I, poor one, cry unto thee, for my life and my years have been consumed in sorrow and lamentation. Thou knowest my fashioning, that I am dust and ashes, if thou beholdest my unrighteousness. I entreat thee now, Lord, for the sake of thy servant Saint Mary, whom thou hast honoured with heavenly glory. Thou didst fill her womb for nine months with the prize of all the world. Thou knowest that thou, O Lord, didst spring from my daughter, and that her flesh is of my flesh, and her bone of my bones. Have mercy now upon me, Lord, for the honour of her glory. My Creator have mercy upon me, most wretched of all women, and pity me and deliver me from the bonds of this death.' The Lord Jesus then had mercy upon Eve, and immediately her bonds were unloosed. She then cried out, thus saying, 'Let thy name, O Lord, be blessed in the world, because thy mercy is great towards me. Now thou hast delivered my soul from the nether hell.' Then the patriarch Abraham, with all the holy souls that from the beginning of the world had been held captive, cried out with joyful voice and said, 'We confess thee, O Lord, and we praise thee because thou hast delivered us from the author of death, and hast made us joyful through thy coming.' Then the Lord, with the spoil that he had taken from hell, immediately went living from the tomb, raised by his own power, and afterwards clothed himself with his unspotted body, and showed himself to his followers, because he wished to put away every doubt from their hearts. And he also showed the wounds and the scars of the nails to unbelieving men, because he would not that any should be distrustful of his resurrection. And afterwards in the sight of many men he ascended into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God the Father; from whence he was never absent by reason of his divine nature, but was ever there established. Let all believing folk therefore now rejoice and be glad, because Christ's blood was shed for us. Let us all rejoice in the Lord, who celebrate his resurrection, because he diminished nought of his

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divinity when he took upon him a human body and delivered us out of the devil's power. Now, we hear, dearest men, how manifold things the Lord suffered for us, when he with his blood redeemed us from hell's bondage. Let us therefore consider what recompense we have to offer to him, when he shall recount and say all this at this same time that he shall sit on his judgment seat; when we must with our souls alone make recompense and amends for all things that we have previously done against his commands, or have left undone what we ought to have done. Let us now consider how much awe shall come upon all creatures at this present time, when the Doom draws near; and the manifestation of the day shall be very terrible to all creatures. On that day heaven, earth, and sea, and all things that are therein, shall pass away. So also on account of the same event the sun and moon shall pass away, and all the light of the stars shall fail. And the Rood of our Lord, which now puts to flight accursed spirits on the earth, shall be raised in the course of the stars; and on that day heaven shall be rolled up like a book; and on that day earth shall be consumed to ashes, and on that day the sea shall dry up and all the powers of heaven shall be turned and moved. And six days before this day various marvellous tokens shall befall each day. On the first day, at mid-day, a great lamentation of all creatures shall take place, and men shall hear a great noise in heaven as of an army being gathered together and set in array there. Then shall ascend a great bloody cloud from the North and cover all this heaven; and after the cloud shall come lightning and thunder all the day. And in the evening there shall rain a bloody rain. On the following day there shall be heard in the heavens a great sound of the arraying of armies; and earth shall be moved out of her place, and heaven shall be open at one quarter – on the East; and at evening a great host shall come forth from the open end and obscure and cover over the heavens; and a bloody and fiery rain shall endeavour to devour and consume this earth, and the heaven shall fall to the four ends of the earth; and all the earth shall be overwhelmed with darkness at the eleventh hour of the day. Then all folk shall say, 'The Lord have mercy upon us and pity us, who was praised by means of angels when he was born in Bethlehem: – then they cried and thus spake – "Glory be to God in heaven and to men on earth who are of goodwill."' On the third day the

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earth on the North and East parts will speak to one another, and the deep will rage and will devour the earth; and all the powers of the earth shall be changed, and a great earthquake shall happen on that day. After the third hour on the fourth day there shall be mighty thunders in the heavens; and then shall all idols fall down; and then it shall be at sunset, and yet no light shall appear; and the moon shall be quenched and darkness shall come upon all the world, and the stars all day shall run across our sight. And men may see them (the stars) as plainly as at night when it freezes hard. And then on that day they will hate this world's weal and the things that they now love. On the fifth day at nine the heaven will burst asunder from the East unto the West quarter; and then all angel-kind shall look through the aperture on mankind. Then shall all men see what it will be at this world's end. They shall flee then to the mountains and hide themselves, on account of the presence of the angels, and then shall they speak to the earth, and beseech it to swallow them up and hide them; and they will wish that they never were born of father nor mother. So was it of yore prophesied concerning this time in Christ's books, thus saying, 'Blessed are those that were barren, and blessed are the wombs that have never brought forth, and the breasts which have never given suck.' And then shall they say to the hills and to the mountains: 'Fall upon us, and cover and hide us, that we may no longer endure this horror from these angels. Now is all manifested that we previously had kept secret.' On the sixth day before the third hour from the four ends of the earth all the world shall then be filled with accursed spirits, who will endeavour to take great spoil of men's souls, as Antichrist previously did. And when he cometh then will he threaten to send those souls into eternal punishments who will not obey him. And then at last he himself shall be driven into everlasting woe. So then on that day shall come Saint Michael with a heavenly host of holy spirits, and shall then slay all those accursed folk, and drive them into hell's abyss for their disobeying of God's behests and for their wickednesses. Then shall all creatures see our Lord's power, though mankind now will not acknowledge or recognise it. Then after these things the seventh day will be nigh at hand. And then Saint Michael the Archangel will command the four trumpets to be blown at these four

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quarters of the earth and will raise up all bodies from the dead, though they were previously hidden by the earth, or drowned in the water, or devoured by wild animals, or carried off by birds, or torn to pieces by fishes, or in any wise departed from this world. All must rise again then, and go forth to the Doom in such form as they previously adorned themselves; but not with gold nor with sumptuous-woven (purple) garments, but with good and holy deeds we must be adorned if we desire then to be on the right hand of the Lord Jesus Christ, along with faithful and chosen souls whom he will send into everlasting light. Wherefore we must now consider, the while we may and can, our soul's need, lest we lose this opportune time and desire to repent when we are no longer able. Let us be humble and merciful and charitable, and let us put away and banish from our hearts deceit, leasings, and envy, and let us have a right mind towards other men. For God himself shall then take no heed of any man's penitence, and no intercession shall avail us there; but he will then be more relentless and remorseless than any wild beast, or than any anger might ever be. And as much as man's might was the greater and he was the richer in this world, so much the more then shall the supreme Judge require from him, since he himself shall merit and obtain relentless and harsh justice, as it is written concerning such, 'The man who now judgeth the poor without mercy shall hereafter be doomed to stern justice.' Let us now, dearest men very prudently and wisely think upon these things, so that we, through just deeds and through works of mercy, may find our Judge mild (merciful), and so through meekness and through true love to God and to man, we may earn for ourselves everlasting bliss with our Lord, who liveth and reigneth ever without end everlastingly. Amen.

VIII. Soul's Need

... to God and increaseth his own sins. And there is much need for us to bear in mind how the Lord delivered us, by his passion, from the devil's power, when he ascended the rood tree and shed his precious blood for our salvation. Wherefore we ought to honour the holy victory-sign of Christ's cross and follow after it and pray for the forgiveness of our sins, all together; since he suffered for us all on the cross, and endured at the hands of the wicked Jewish people all those sore reproaches and hard sufferings, all of which he suffered because he would save us from eternal torments, and bring us into eternal bliss. But what is more needful for a man to think of than about his soul's need; and of the day that cometh when he must separate himself from the body, and what guides he shall then have, and whither he shall be led, either to misery or to glory? Thus may we clearly convince ourselves that those things are familiar which we are unable to see. So also this world's wealth abounds to many a man at his death, nevertheless he shall be harassed and solicitous when the day comes when he must depart empty-handed of it all, except he has done aught for God with a good will. Then in this respect it is unlike the eternal life that each man will obtain who will here, with goodwill, observe God's behests; and to him who obtains it shall be given everlasting bliss. It is then needful for us to seek the medicine for our souls, because the Lord is very merciful who hath assured and informed us, saying, 'I desire not the death of a sinner, but I will that he live and turn to God.' Wherefore we must with all mind and might turn to God and truly repent of our evil deeds, then will the Lord give us forgiveness of our sins and eternal life after this world. Humble yourselves under the power of God's hands, then will he deliver

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you out of all the devil's temptations, for the Lord never despises the humble nor the tenderest heart. Dearest men, consider that ye are frequently toiling and always solicitous about the things wherewith we should fill and adorn our body; but it shall happen, after a few days or a few years, that the same body shall be in the tomb, eaten and devoured by worms. Wherefore we have much more need to trouble ourselves about the need of our soul, which shall be present in heaven before God and his angels. 'I entreat you,' said Saint Augustine, 'that ye go to the tomb of rich men, and then may you see a plain example [of the vanity of riches].' They were wealthy in this world, and their riches were very many in lands and in vineyards; and their store-houses were filled with manifold riches, and their bliss and their amusements were very abundant. Behold now diligently that all is gone from their eyes. They had many adornments of precious garments. They had also wives and concubines, and their lustful indulgences, and feasts, and sports, and excessive drinkings, and foolish and thoughtless embraces. And diverse blisses they had in their drinkings, and their morning and evening feasts they mingled together. But whither have gone the wealth, and the adornments, or the vain pleasures? or whither have gone the great throngs that encompassed and surrounded them? And where are those who praised them, and spake to them flattering words? And where have gone the adorning of their houses, and the collection of precious gems, or the vast acquisition of gold and of silver, or all the wealth which they daily, more and more, amassed, and knew not nor took heed of the time when they should leave all? Or where have gone their wisdom and their ingenious skill? And [where is] he who hath given false judgments? And where is the splendour of their beds and their couches, or the manifold dissembling of their friends, and the great multitude of their servants, and the fretwork of their lamps which burned before them, and all the great crowds that went with and thronged about them? All those are now gone from their eyes. And above all this be mindful that never again shall they come hither, but their bodies shall lie in the earth and turn to dust; and the flesh shall become corrupt, and with worms shall swarm, and down shall pour, and they shall issue from all their joints; and there nought else shall continue, save only he who is

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happy may teach himself by this example, and also, what is more, [perceive] that they must after these riches suffer eternal torment, except true penitence succour them. Wherefore, dearest men, let us truly repent and amend our sins, the while we are in this life; let us redeem our souls the while we have life and price at our command, lest that death come and we lose at once life and price, and be then led with our enemies into eternal perdition. No man need think that another man may release him from eternal torments, if he himself will not turn to repentance of his sins before the end of his life. Wherefore we must be now mindful of our soul's need the while we may, for each man must, in this world, merit that the good that his friends do for him afterwards may conduce to eternal rewards. The true man must give his goods at the time that it best pleases him to enjoy them; and that which a man does for God must be done, then, with very good will, then shall those good things be pleasing to God which are done for him afterwards; and the Lord will very joyfully requite the man for all those good things with the twofold reward of eternal life. We may also consider, what is more important, that a man may earn disgrace for himself by means of his sins and wickedness, while with good and just deeds he may obtain eternal rest after this world. Then must we ever be mindful of the awful Doomsday, which now cometh unexpectedly; and we shall then stand before the throne of God, and each man shall produce both the good and the evil that he previously did, and shall then receive reward according to his own deserts. Therefore ought we now to bear in mind our necessity and think sufficiently of our soul's need, lest our death become a cause of rejoicing to our enemies. Let us, [dearest] men, now merit it, that our last day may be angel's joy, and that the heavenly bliss may receive us. Let us turn now to the Lord's will, because he very mercifully hath invited us, thus saying, 'Turn to me, then will I turn to you.' He turned to us when he came hither from his father's realm and divested himself of the divine majesty and invested himself humbly with human frailty. When he saw that all mankind had forsaken their Creator through diverse errors, he did not despise them, he knew that they were liable to death. Then he invited them to come to eternal life, and gave us an example of all humility in the manifold miracles that he wrought; and he showed us the greatest love and

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mercy, when he suffered bodily death and redeemed all mankind, both those who were previously God's chosen ones, of yore in hell, and who ever trusted in him, and wished and longed for his coming, that he should release them from the confined darkness; and also at his passion he delivered us from the devil's power. No man then need visit the deep abyss of the hot and the severe flame except those, who of their own accord, heedlessly forsake God's behests. Lo we now have heard related a little concerning the humility and mercy (of God), and, nevertheless, no man may relate the mercies and the love that he hath shown to mankind; and he asks of us no other recompense but that we should return our bodies and our souls to him on Doomsday, as undefiled as he previously formed them and entrusted them to us. Wherefore we must now, the while we are abiding in this world, be very mindful of God's biddings and of our soul's need, and at all times thank him for all his mercies and his humility and his gifts that he hath given us, and we must honour his name with words and with deeds, and serve him with all our might; then will he allow us to behold for ever in peace his glorious countenance, as He Himself hath said, 'I am the life of this world, he who follows me shall not go into darkness, but he shall have the light of everlasting life;' that is, the glorious life, wherein angels, and archangels, and patriarchs, and prophets, and all the sanctified abide in the presence of the Lord, where is eternal joy without sadness, and youth without age; where is no grief nor toil, nor any uneasiness, nor sorrow, nor weeping, nor hunger, nor thirst, nor ache nor ill; – where no man will meet his enemy, nor leave his friend, but there may he, who shall visit that place, dwell peacefully with angels in eternal glory before our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with God the Father, and with the Holy Ghost without end. Amen.

IX. Christ the Golden-Blossom

Dearest men, we have often heard tell of the noble advent of our Lord, how he himself in this world undertook to make intercession [for us], which patriarchs said and made known, which prophets foretold and extolled, which psalmists sang and declared that he would come from the throne of his glorious realm hither into this world, and would possess for himself all these kingdoms as his own possession. All that was fulfilled after that the heavens opened and the supreme power descended upon this earth, and the Holy Ghost dwelt in the noble womb, and in the best bosom, and in the choice treasury; and in the holy bosom he abode nine months. Then the queen of all virgins gave birth to the true Creator and Comforter of all people, the Saviour of all the world, the Preserver of all spirits, and the Helper of all souls, when the 'golden-blossom' came into this world, and received a human body from the immaculate virgin St. Mary. Through that issue we were saved, and through that birth we were redeemed, and through that union we were freed from devils' tribute, and through that advent we were honoured and enriched and endowed. And afterwards the Lord Christ dwelt here in the world along with men, and showed them many miracles which he wrought before them; and he would kindly heal them and teach them mercy. Their hearts were stony and blind so that they could not comprehend what they heard there, nor were they able to understand what they saw there; but then the Almighty God removed for them that hurtful covering from their hearts and illumined them with enlightened understanding, so that they might understand and know him who descended into this world for their salvation and succour and for an asylum (refuge). Afterwards he opened for them the ears of mercy, and

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stirred them up to belief, and manifested his mercy and made known his kinship to them. Before that we had become orphans, because we were deprived of the heavenly kingdom and were put out of the primeval... Christ liveth and reigneth with all holy souls, ever without end, for ever and ever. Amen.

X. The End of This World is Near

Dearest men, lo! I now admonish and exhort every man, both men and women, both young and old, both wise and unwise, both rich and poor,—everyone to behold and understand himself and, whatsoever he hath committed in great sins or in venial ones, forthwith to turn to the better and to the true medicine, then may we have God Almighty merciful (to us), because the Lord desires all men to be whole and sound, and to turn to the true knowledge, as David said, ‘The humble and fearing and trembling and quaking hearts and those fearing their Creator, God will never despise nor disregard, but will hear their prayers when they cry to him and pray to him for mercy.’ May we then now see and know and very readily understand that the end of this world is very nigh; and many calamities have appeared and men’s crimes and woes are greatly multiplied; and we from day to day hear of monstrous plagues and strange deaths throughout the country, that have come upon men, and we often perceive that nation riseth against nation, and we see unfortunate wars caused by iniquitous deeds.; and we hear very frequently of the death of men of rank whose life was dear to men, and whose life appeared fair and beautiful and pleasant; so we are also informed of various diseases in many places of the world, and of increasing famines. And many evils, we learn, are here in this life become general, and flourish, and no good is abiding here, and all worldly things are very sinful, and very greatly coolth the love that we ought to have to our Lord; and those good works that we should observe for our soul’s health, we forsake. These tokens, that I have just related concerning this world’s tribulations and calamities, are such as Christ himself mentioned to his disciples, that all these things should

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happen before the end of this world. Let us now strive with all the might of good works and be desirous of God's mercy. Now we may perceive that this world's destruction approacheth, wherefore I admonish and warn every man to contemplate diligently his own deeds, so that he may live here in the world rightly, before God and in the sight of the highest King. Let us be liberal to the needy and charitable to the poor, as God himself hath bidden us, so that we observe true peace and have concord among us; and let those that have children instruct them in right discipline and teach them the way of life, and the right way to heaven; and if they in any way live their life amiss let them then at once be converted from their wickednesses and turned from their unrighteousness; that we thereby may all please God, as is bidden to all believing people, and not to those alone that are in exalted positions subject to God, as bishops, kings, mass-priests, archdeacons, but is also indeed enjoined upon subdeacons and monks; and to all men it is needful and profitable to observe well their baptismal vows. Let no man be very highminded on account of his worldly wealth, nor too confident in his bodily powers, nor too disposed to malice, nor too bold in wickedness, nor too full of crafts, nor too fond of guile, neither given to contriving false accusations, nor to laying snares [for the unwary]. No man need think that his body may or can amend the sin-burden in the grave; but therein he shall rot to dust and there await the great event [the Doom], when the Almighty will bring this world to an end, and when he will draw out his fiery sword and smite all this world through and pierce the bodies, and cleave asunder this earth; and the dead shall stand up, then shall the body (flesh-garb) be as transparent as glass, nought of its nakedness may be concealed. Wherefore it is needful for us that we follow not too long foolish works, but we must make our peace with God and men, and establish firmly the right belief in our hearts, that it may there dwell and there grow and bloom; and we must confess the true belief in [God and in] our Lord Jesus Christ, his begotten Son, and in the Holy Ghost, who is co-eternal with the Father and Son. And we must trust in God's holy Church, and in those that have right belief; and we must believe in the forgiveness of sins and the resurrection of the body on Doomsday, and we must believe in the everlasting life, and in the heavenly kingdom that is promised to all

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that are now workers of what is good. This is the right faith, which it behoveth that each man should well hold and perform, for no worker may perform good works before God without love and belief. And it is very needful for us to consider and bear this in mind, and most diligently when we hear God's books explained and read to us, and the gospel declared, and his glories made known to men. Let us then diligently strive to be afterwards the better and the happier for the teaching that we have often heard. Oh! dearest men, we must remember not to love too much that which we ought to give up, nor yet to give up too easily what we ought to hold everlastingly. Let us consider too very attentively that no man in the world hath so much weal, or such magnificent riches here in the world, but that he shall in a brief interval come to an end; and he shall give up all that here, previously, in the world was pleasant and dear to him to possess and to hold; and be the man ever so dear to his kinsmen and world's friends, and let any of them love him ever so much, nevertheless he shall soon afterwards shun him when that the body and the spirit shall be separated, and he shall esteem his fellowship loathsome and foul. That is no marvel; for, behold! what else is the flesh after the eternal portion, that is the soul, goes away, — Lo! what else is the remnant, but the food of worms? Where shall be then his riches and his feasts? Where shall be then his pride and his arrogance? Where shall be then his vain garments? Where shall be then the ornaments and the expensive attire with which he previously decked his body? Where shall be then his will and his lusts that he followed here in the world? Behold, then must he with his soul alone atone to God Almighty for all that he here in this world wickedly committed. We may now hear related a story of a certain rich and influential man, who possessed in this world great wealth and very splendid and manifold treasures, and lived a pleasant life. Then it happened that he died, and there came to him a sudden end of this transitory life. There was then one of his kinsmen and earthly friends that loved him more than any other man; and on account of the longing (grief) and the sorrow caused by the other's death he could no longer stay in the country, but with a sorrowful mind departed from his native land and from his dwelling-place, and in that [foreign] land dwelt many years; and this longing of his never

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diminished, but much oppressed and afflicted him. Then after a time he began to long for his native land again, for he wished to behold again the tomb and to see what he were like whom formerly he had often seen beautiful in face and stature..... Then the bones of the dead man called to him, and thus said, 'Why hast thou come hither to see us? Now mayest thou see here a portion of dust, and the relict of worms, where thou previously didst see a purple garment interwoven with gold. Behold now dust and dry bones, where thou before didst see limbs, after flesh's kind, fair to look upon. O my friend and kinsman, be mindful of this, and convince thyself that thou art now what I was formerly, and after a time thou shalt be what I now am. Remember this, and know that my riches that I had of yore are all vanished and come to nought, and my dwellings are decayed and perished. But turn thee to thyself and incline thy heart to counsel [i. e. listen to good advice], and merit that thy prayers be acceptable to God Almighty.' He then, so sad and sorrowful, departed from the 'dust-spectacle' (contemplation of the dust), and turned himself away from all the affairs of this world; and he began to learn and to teach the praise of God, and to love spiritual virtues, and thereby earned for himself the grace of the Holy Spirit; and he delivered also the other's soul from punishment and released him from torments. May we then, dearest men, have this for our mementoes and set fast this example in our hearts, so that we love not worldly splendour, nor this world itself, too much; for this world is altogether decrepit, troublous, corruptible, and unstable. And this world is altogether transitory. Let us, then, diligently consider and know in regard to this world's commencement, that when it was first formed it was full of all beauty, and was blooming in itself with manifold pleasures; and in that time it was pleasant and healthful to men upon earth, and there was upon the earth entire serenity, unbounded concord, and splendid progeny; and this world was so fair and so delightful that it drew men to it, by its beauty and pleasantness, from Almighty God. And when it (world) was thus fair and thus winsome, it withered away in the hearts of Christ's holy people, and is now blooming in our hearts, as is fit. Now there is lamentation and weeping on all sides; now is mourning everywhere, and breach of peace; now is everywhere evil, and slaughter;

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and everywhere this world fleeth from us with great bitterness, and we follow it, as it flies from us, and love it although it is passing away. Lo! we may hereby perceive that this world is illusory and transitory. Let us then be mindful of this the while we may, so that we may diligently press on to what is good; let us obey our Lord diligently, and for all his gifts and for all his mercies, and for all his kindness and benefits that he hath ever showed to us let us give thanks to Him – the heavenly King that liveth and reigneth everlastingly, for ever without end, in eternity. Amen.

XI. Holy Thursday

Dearest men, we may now, in some few words, tell you of the honour of this holy season, and of this holy day, that we at this present time are now celebrating. It was on this day that our Lord and Saviour Christ exalted the humanity that he united to his divine nature above the heavens and above all the hosts of angels, when he went to the abode of his Father, from which, by reason of his eternal Godhead he has never departed. We have also, previously, at this holy season heard tell of our Lord's holy passion, and also of his marvellous resurrection, which took place afterwards on the third day. We must now in a few words tell you of this holy ascension of the Lord, which we now at this present time are celebrating. St. Luke the Evangelist speaks concerning it, and in these words thus saith, *'Igitur qui convenerant, interrogabant eum, dicentes: Domine, si in tempore hoc restitues regnum Israël?'* The holy and believing men, who came to our Lord when he was about to ascend to heaven, questioned and asked him, thus saying, 'Lord, wilt thou now at this time establish the kingdom of the people of Israel?' The Lord Christ previously appeared to his holy people after his resurrection, and spake to them and said things concerning God's kingdom, and gave them the promise of the Holy Ghost's future coming; but as yet the holy men were not so confirmed with the divine spirit, as they were ten days afterwards, but they supposed that soon after Christ's passion the kingdom of Israel should become established here on earth, great, lasting, and blessed. Wherefore they asked him then whether he would establish that kingdom here upon earth now, or at the world's end on Doomsday. They asked concerning a greater matter than it might be in any man's power here on earth to be able to

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know. Then answered the Lord, and declared it unto them, thus saying, '*Non est vestrum nosse tempora vel momenta, quæ Pater posuit in sua potestate.*' 'It is not yours to know the times and the seasons that the Father hath put in his own power.' We learn that the time is so secret that no man in this world, be he ever so holy, nor even any in heaven, has ever known when our Lord shall decree this world's end on Doomsday, except our Lord alone. Nevertheless we know that it is not far off, because all the signs and fore-tokens that our Lord previously said would come before Doomsday, are all gone by, except one alone, that is, the accursed stranger, Antichrist, who, as yet, has not come hither upon earth. Yet the time is not far distant when that shall also come to pass; because this earth must of necessity come to an end in this age which is now present, for five of the [fore-tokens] have come to pass in this age; wherefore this world must come to an end, and of this the greatest portion [already] has elapsed, even nine hundred and seventy-one years, in this (very) year. These [ages] were not all alike long, but in these were three thousand years, in some less in others more. Since there is no man who may know in how long a time our Lord will complete this [age], Whether this thousand shall be shorter or longer than that, therefore is it wholly unknown to every one except our Lord alone. When that our Lord said to his holy people that it was beyond their power to know when he would ordain the end of this world, then he said unto them, '*Sed accipietis virtutem supervenientis Spiritus Sancti in vos.*' 'But ye shall receive the power of the Holy Spirit which shall come upon you.' Lo we know and learn that he on the tenth day sent them the Holy Spirit from heaven, with which they were afterwards confirmed, in this holy season which will be (celebrated) a week hence this next Sunday. And, afterwards, they disregarded all worldly sorrows and all threatenings, and were not afraid of them; because that they were inwardly so greatly animated with the fear and love of the Almighty Lord through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that they disregarded all worldly torments and all bodily pain. No earthly kings were able to overcome or break down their loftiness of mind. Then said he, '*Et eritis mihi testes in Jerusalem, et in omni Judæa, et Samaria, et usque ad ultimam terræ.*' He said, 'And ye shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and Samaria, and in the

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uttermost confines of the earth.' Of what should those holy ones be witnesses for our Lord? except that they should make known to mankind and declare throughout this world – first, that our Lord performed what he promised and declared, on account of his holy future coming, for the comfort of mankind – that he himself would visit us here in the world with love and with humility, in a human body; and then also to relate to men his teaching and his words that they had heard from his own mouth; and to make known to mankind the examples they had witnessed in his works; and also his holy passion and his glorious resurrection afterwards on the Lord's Day, and the holy ascension into heaven, which took place at this holy season. What they had all seen with their own eyes, and heard with their own ears, of all this they were to be witnesses for our Lord, and were to proclaim and declare it throughout the world, as it became known that they subsequently did unremittingly. So we learn that soon after the Lord ascended into heaven, and they were confirmed with the Holy Spirit, thereupon they divided this world by lot into twelve portions, and each of them went to the quarter allotted him, so that he through God's grace gained many a nation for our Lord by his teaching. *'Et cum hæc dixisset, videntibus illis, elevatus est: et nubes suscepit eum ab oculis eorum.'* The cloud did not make its appearance there, because our Lord had need of the cloud's aid at the Ascension; nor did the cloud raise him up, but he took the cloud before him, since he hath all creatures in his hand, and by his divine power and by his eternal wisdom, according to his purpose (will), he orders and disposes all things. And he, in the cloud, disappeared from their sight and ascended into Heaven, as a sign that from thence in like manner he will on Doomsday again come upon this earth in a cloud, with hosts of angels; and then for all creatures constant in wisdom, he will provide an everlasting kingdom. *Cumque intuerentur... in albis.* As they looked after him unto heaven and saw the Lord ascending, there stood by them two men in white garments, who were the Lord's angels. The white garments of the angels denote the joy of angels and men that then occurred; because those that were ever angels in heaven had greater joy and bliss than they ever before had had, since at this holy season it happened that they saw their Creator (and the true King, Almighty God, of

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all creatures) exalted to the paternal abode, along with his human nature, from thence by reason of his eternal divinity he has never departed. And their joy and bliss was moreover increased when they became aware that their home in heaven should thereafter be inhabited and peopled by holy souls; and that the holy seat, from which the devil had previously been cast out for his pride, should be occupied by mankind. Forsooth we know that every man prefers to have a greater number of faithful friends [than he has]. And since this holy season became so especially to angels an occasion for joy and bliss, then indeed may the human race, wholly on account of that, rightly praise and glorify their Creator for the favours and honours which the Almighty Lord at this time bestowed on mankind; and because the ruin and the grievous doom of mankind was abolished, and the sorrowful sentence reversed which our Lord, in his wrath had previously pronounced upon the first man: *'Terra es et in terram ibis.'* 'Thou art earth,' he said, 'and thou shall return to earth and again become earth.' The same human nature that he previously in his wrath had so denounced – the same our Lord raised, in himself, above heaven, and above all the company of angels, at this holy season. How was it ever possible for more joy and grace and bliss to happen to angels, or greater honour to men, than happened to them on this day? For that we ought ever unceasingly, with all our heart's might, to give thanks to our Lord. When they were looking up into heaven after our Lord, as I before said, the angels who appeared to them in white raiment said to them, *'Viri Galilæi, quid statis aspicientes in cœlum? hic Jesus, qui assumptus est a vobis in cœlum, sic veniet, quemadmodum vidistis eum euntem in cœlum.'* 'Ye Galilean men,' they said, (because they were of the land of Galilee), 'why stand ye here marvelling upon this, and looking toward heaven? This Jesus who has now gone up from you (or been exalted) into heaven shall come again on Doomsday in like manner as ye have now seen him ascending into heaven.' So our Lord shall hereafter come on Doomsday, in a cloud and in the same body with which he has now ascended into heaven. But nevertheless he will then come with much greater awe. For the same Lord that aforetime visited us here in the world with all humility, in a human body, and exhibited to mankind all humility, patience and mercy, the same will hereafter, at the final term of this world,

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on Doomsday, visit us with all terrors, and will then requite and reward every man according to his own works and deeds; and he will bring his saints and elect with him into his heavenly realm; so also all the devil's men who are now in the world and have committed wicked deeds—all of them he will send, for their works, along with devils into eternal fire. But let us diligently reflect upon that, the while we may and can, and let us amend the sins that we have wrought, and earnestly beseech the Almighty Lord to shield us from those approaching events; and let us fix in our minds the fear and horror of that day; let us remember how the term of this life is unknown to each individual man, both to rich and poor, both to young and old, as also the time which the Lord will grant him here in the world. We see that very frequently to many a man it suddenly befalleth that He cuts him off from this world; wherefore it is very needful for us ever to strive at all times to be prepared, when our Lord will visit each of us. We also learn (dearest) men, that those men say, who have gone thither and returned, that the spot whereon our Lord last stood in the body here in the world, before he ascended into the heavens in his human nature—that it is still at this present day very highly honoured with many divine glories before the eyes of men. We learn too that the place is on the top of Mount Olivet. Moreover there is a large and magnificent church built round about the spot; and its circuit is wrought basket-wise, in the most beautiful and sumptuous manner that men could devise it. Then there are three porches built round the church, and all those very handsomely wrought above and roofed over. But the great church which stands there in the midst is open above and unroofed, because our Lord would that to the eyes of those men who believingly came thither and visited the holy place, the way might always become familiar to look up to heaven, whither they knew that the Lord had bodily ascended. And though the house itself is open overhead and not covered in, as I before said, yet it is ever, by the grace of God, protected above from all bad weathers, so that no rain or tempest is able to enter in. And ever since this house (or the place) was built there no one has ever been able to overlay the footsteps themselves, neither with gold nor silver, nor with any worldly ornaments, but whatsoever any man may lay thereon, the earth itself immediately casts it from her, back into his face,

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and not for any interval would she have it upon her; nor would she accept any worldly decoration, since the holy feet of our Lord stood upon her. Wherefore there is built in the large church there, round about the footsteps [an enclosure] somewhat wider than a bushel-basket as high as a man's breast; it was first made of green copper, now it is ornamented with gold and silver. On the western side there is a moderate-sized door, through which a man's head and shoulders may enter, so that one may do obeisance to the footsteps, and kiss them; and many men, those who may obtain leave to do it, take the mould from the footsteps, that they may have it for a relic, and thereby many diseases and ailments are cured, when the mould is applied. And then is that also the most wonderful of all, that the earth is daily removed from the footsteps and taken as a relic widely throughout the earth, as I previously said, and never does a man take so much or so often of the mould, as to be able thereby to make the portion on the footsteps ever the greater [? less], or the footsteps to change into another form; but they ever remain as entire, and of the same appearance as that in which they were first impressed upon the earth. Our Lord let his holy feet sink into the earth there for a perpetual remembrance to men, when that he after his holy passion would take his human nature into heaven, from whence, by reason of his eternal Godhead he has never departed; and so now those footsteps are still imprinted upon the earth until this present day, as is plainly manifested by their entirety, and by the manifold marvels of the Creator. Moreover there hangeth, also, placed over the footsteps, a large lamp, that is always filled with oil, as often as is needful, and is ever burning day and night for the honouring of those footprints. There are also in the great church built about this spot, eight windows, very large, made of glass, and at each one there hangs a lamp, ever filled with oil and burning all the night; and very light and bright do these lamps shine each night through the windows, as it is the nature of oil to shine brighter than a wax taper. And not only does the light shine over (illumine) the hill whereupon the church is built, but also the city of Jerusalem which is a mile westward from that spot, so that every night from every quarter of the city the light may be seen shining from the holy place. And it often still happens to many persons, when they see the light

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shining so brightly at night, that their hearts are thereby, and by God's grace, inwardly admonished; and the more accurately they understand their own lives, and immediately afterwards have greater sorrow for their sins, when they recollect his great humility, and how willingly he first visited us here in the world, in a human body, and came from his exalted heavenly seat, and how humble he was in the body before men; and, what was most of all, that of his own will he suffered death for the salvation of all mankind (though no one was able to injure his eternal Godhead), when he was just thirty-three years old.; and during the fourth part of the time that he was here in the world he, by his teaching proclaimed and made known to mankind the ways of eternal life; and how he afterwards, on the third day, arose from the dead and how he last stood bodily, here upon earth, on this holy place, ere he took his human nature into heaven – then they call to mind all this and are admonished by the light they see shining from the holy place. And often, through that, many men are turned to true amendment, and in the sight of God appear good and meet. And also indeed many heathen unbelieving men often thereby turn to belief in God, when they see how God honoureth the place. And so we may plainly perceive that, since God so inwardly admonisheth their hearts, he desireth to be merciful to them, and to give them, remission of their sins, and to hear their prayers. And now, dearest men, although we are not now at the holy place that I have just spoken of, nevertheless we may in these places in which we now are, become good and meet before our Lord if we now in our lifetime do what is true and right; because every man, in whatever part of the earth he may be, shall through good deeds please God; and each man shall exalt his good deeds if he shall become good and meet. But let us now strive that this season pass not away from us to no purpose, which our Lord has given us for amendment and for the cleansing of our deeds. Let us be charitable and merciful to poor men, and humble towards one another, and hold firmly in our hearts the fear and love of God, and the love of our neighbours; and let us take care that when this holy season shall return, twelve months hence, that he who is alive may be better than he is now, through God's assistance, who liveth and reigneth ever without end. Amen.

XII. Whit-Sunday

Dearest men, we have, now not long ago, commemorated and celebrated the great and renowned festival of the Lord's Ascension, ten days before this present day. Let us now commemorate to-day the coming of the Holy Spirit, which was sent from heaven and was promised to the apostles for their consolation, on account of their great longing (grief) at the Lord's departure, and as a pledge of the heavenly kingdom, as we have learned in God's book that the Lord himself said to his disciples, ere he ascended into heaven from whence he has never departed, through the power of his Godhead; but the exalted majesty of the Godhead was ever present with the angelic hosts, though he dwelt with us for a season; for the Lord promised his disciples, thus saying, 'I will not leave you without a leader, but I will send you the Paraclete.' And so it was meet that he, who was the Comforter of all just men, should send consolation to his disciples, as we may understand by ourselves when it happeneth to any one that his dearly loved father dies; are not the children then the sadder, and do not they grieve for those friends? So did the heavenly Father bear in mind and perceive that his beloved and treasured children were troubled and in great anxiety about him; then would the Lord comfort them. The Holy Spirit taught them every good thing and prohibited every wicked thing, as the Lord spake to the disciples, in their presence, when he was in the body, thus saying, 'To you shall come the Holy Paraclete, whom the Father will send you in my name, who shall teach you to do all those things that I have foretold you that ye should do after my Ascension.' The Holy Spirit dictated all those things that holy men wrote either under the old or new dispensation. But this day is distinguished by many divine graces – of no

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less favours than the Lord's Resurrection, and also the gift of the Holy Spirit which was this day sent upon the Apostles; this day also commences and ends every week. Wherefore it is very needful for us, at this present season, my brethren, to urge ourselves on very diligently and meekly to our relics and to our holy prayers, for we know that the day was the beginning of this transitory light, and it shall be the commencement of the everlasting light that shall succeed it. Luke the Evangelist spake in the book entitled 'Acts of the Apostles' concerning this day's celebration. He said when that the day was fully come which is called Pentecost (about fifty days after the announcement of the Resurrection or Easter), all the apostles were abiding in one place, and there came to them a sound that was sent from heaven in the likeness of a wind; that was the sound of the Holy Ghost coming to them; and they were all filled with the gift of the Holy Spirit where they were [assembled] together in their place of prayer. They received the Holy Ghost in their hearts in the form of flames of fire, for it was said that the house was filled with the Holy Spirit. The sound filled the house, and the Holy Ghost filled the holy apostles; and through the Holy Spirit they, with their whole hearts, were burning perpetually with the love of God, so that it was meet that they who in their heart and in their will, were turned to God should be together in one place. It is also said that they were all continuing in an upper room, thence awaiting the Holy Spirit, which at undern time, and in the likeness of a wind, descended upon them. Of that flame (or burning), prophesied David, thus saying, 'He who is the Ruler of wind and of wealth (gold) sendeth forth the wind from his treasure-houses.' That sound of the Holy Ghost was compared to the wind, and was prophesied of by the prophet [David]. Wherefore the holy apostles were filled with 'gospel-lore', and then was their doctrine sown and strewn among the four quarters of the world, as is mentioned in the same treatise. 'Their sound shall go throughout all the world, and their precepts and their words unto the uttermost confines.' We have learned, and it is mentioned in the gospel, that the Holy Spirit descended upon each in the likeness of a dove, because that he was void of all crimes whom fire should cleanse, therefore the Holy Ghost came upon the disciples of God in the form of flames of fire, and thereby were they set free from all sins, and brought to

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everlasting life, and that they might also, through that gift, blot out other men's sins, and through the gift of the Holy Spirit's burden encourage them the more easily and pleasantly to bear the great and heavy burden of the excessive longing for their beloved Lord. And, moreover, he would also that they might, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, the more easily and the more firmly withstand and overcome the accursed spirits, and overcome those men whom they should perceive were rebellious against God's commands and the spiritual director's. For he himself said to his disciples, thus saying, 'As my Father hath loved me, so love I you.' The Saviour knew that his disciples would be sad on account of his departure, because he was the beloved teacher and creator of all the world; and they also saw that the holy heaven-dwellers were obedient to him. Therefore Christ's ministers had such manifold sorrow in their hearts, for they had seen him bodily and in earthly fashion (or after the manner of men) had humbly obeyed him. And they had great longing and sorrow in their hearts when they understood that he would no longer abide bodily with them. He then consoled them with spiritual words on account of the intense sorrow of which they had such great plenitude, and he spake thus [unto them]: 'Ye need not be sad nor troubled in your hearts, for I will intercede for you with the Father, that he may preserve you through his heavenly power.' As soon as they received the heavenly promise and the exceeding great hope of spiritual strength, they abandoned all earthly sorrows and fixed their hearts' intent most firmly upon the heavenly hope; and that bodily separation [from Christ] was not any trouble to them in their new state. After these words the Saviour said to his disciples I will send the Paraclete; the meaning of this word is, as is interpreted, Advocate or Comforter. After these words they then received the greatest strength of the heavenly help; through the reception of the Holy Spirit they were, moreover, so firm and strong that they could accomplish with God's assistance anything they wished; their paths also were then shining through their lore, and through the gift of the Holy Spirit. And as soon as this gift was put in their hearts, they were so firm and so steadfast that they despised the fear of all earthly kings. Therefore they received the Holy Spirit in their minds, and disregarded the earthly fear, and he gave them

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the hope of everlasting life. My brethren, we have now heard tell of the celebration of this present day, and also of the gift which was bestowed upon the holy apostles on this present day. Not alone to the apostles was this gift bestowed, but also, indeed, to all mankind was given forgiveness of all sins, and also to all good-doers deliverance from the intolerable thralldom, that is, of the devil's power. To us also is permitted a way of return to everlasting life, and to occupy heaven's kingdom along with all saints and with the Lord himself, to which Lord be praise and glory everlastingly, ever without end, in eternity. Amen.

XIII. Assumption of the Virgin Mary

Dearest men, hear now what is here related in these books concerning the holy virgin St. Mary—how it happened unto her at this time. She was watching, and praying day and night, after our Lord's ascension; then an angel of the Lord came to her and said, 'Arise, Mary, and receive this palm-twig which I have now brought thee; for assuredly, ere three days [have elapsed] thou shalt be taken from thy body, and all the Lord's apostles shall be sent to bury thee.' Then Mary said to the Angel, 'What is thy name?' Then said the angel unto her, 'Wherefore seekest thou my name, for it is great and wonderful?' When St. Mary heard this, she ascended the hill called Olivet. And that was of a truth a very shining palm-branch (and it was then as bright as the morning-star) that she had received of the Angel's hand; and then did she greatly rejoice and with great joy was glorified. And all those who were there saw that the angel, that had previously come to her, ascended to heaven, with a great light. Then Mary again returned to her house and put aside, with all humility, the palm-twig that she had previously received at the angel's hand, and she also laid aside her garment with which she was clothed, and washed her body, and invested herself with the finest garment; and then she rejoiced and exulted exceedingly and blessed God, thus saying, '*Benedico nomen tuum [quoniam magnum] et laudabile in secula seculorum.*' 'I will bless thy holy name, because it is great and laudable, world without end. I beseech thee, my Lord, that thou send thy blessing upon me.' Then Mary said, 'when that thou shalt bid me leave my body, do thou then receive my soul.' Then the Angel said, 'Be not sorrowful Mary.' When that she heard this, she invited and called all her kinsfolk who were then near at hand,

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and thus spake unto them: 'Hear me, now, all; and believe ye all in God the Father Almighty, for to-morrow I am going from my body, and am going to my God; and I pray you all that ye with one accord watch with me until that time, in which day there shall be an end of my toil. And when she had spoken this, forthwith there came the blessed [Peter and Paul] to the door of the holy Mary, and they saw that she was glorified among them; whereupon they greeted her, and said, 'Thanks be to God that we were to-day all in unity and in humbleness. For verily is the prophecy of the prophet David fulfilled which he said, "*Ecce quam bonum, et quam jucundum, habitare fratres in unum!*" "How good and how pleasant a thing is it for a man to dwell in the unity of the brethren.'" And then spake each of them to the other, saying, 'Let us pray to our Lord that he make known to us that for which he wished us to assemble to-day at this time. Then said Peter to Paul 'Brother Paul, arise and pray first for thou art a pillar of light;' and [he replied], All those that stand around me are better than I am. And thou art a preceptor (or leader) in the prayers of the apostles, and thou art quite full of the grace of the Lord.' Then all the Apostles rejoiced on account of St. Paul's humility; and as St. Peter himself had enjoined upon mankind, he then stretched forth his hands to God, and said thus, '*Domine, Deus omnipotens qui sedes super cherubin &c.*' 'Lord God Almighty, that sittest above the Cherubim and above the depths of all abysses, to thee we raise our hands in the likeness of thy cross, and in thy friendship we shall have rest; for thou wilt give rest to our members, for they have laboured in thy name; and thou to all haughty ones givest humility and overpowerest death. Thou art, indeed, our rest, and thou Lord art our protector, and we cry to thee, who dwellest in the Son (i.e. the Father) and the Father in thee (i.e. the Son) and thou art one with the Holy Ghost, world without end.' Then all the apostles answered him and said. 'Amen!' Then ran the blessed St. John to all the apostles, and said unto them, '*Benedicite fratres,*' 'Bless our Lord, dearest brethren;' *et dixerunt Petrus, &c....* Then said St. Peter and Andrew to John, 'Thou, dear Sir, show us in what way thou camest to us to-day.' Then said John, 'Bless the Lord, dearest brethren, and hear ye all... that he was passing to-day through this city, and he was informed that ye would be praying to God at the ninth hour of the day. And then suddenly a

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great cloud came upon the same place wherein we were assembled and where we heard the word of God, and then suddenly all the apostles surrounded the holy Mary and seized her by the waist. And all who were there saw that the blessed Michael came and knocked at the door of the house, and it did not refuse him admittance, but it opened of itself. And he there found a great many people who were standing there; and there also stood the sister of the holy Mary and she spake to the crowd and said, 'To-morrow she will go from the body.' And then each of them who heard this began to weep; and then Mary said, '*Nunc fratres audite,*' 'Dearest brethren, all of you now hear that to-morrow I shall depart from the body.' Then said the Apostles to her, 'Be not sorrowful, Mary, nor weep, so that thy people be not troubled, for of this spake our Lord and the teacher of our behests, when he was crossing the sea's flood, when he was at his evening meal; wherefore I remind you all of it and also this people that here stand weeping around me.' Then the people began to doubt in their hearts, and said, 'Why dreadeth this holy Mary her death, and God's apostles are with her and others who shall bear her to her resurrection?' Then said the Apostles to the people, 'She shall be much more strengthened among us by God's promise; and let not this people have doubt of her weakness or of her faith.' And when that they had said this, then there came the blessed St. John and entered therein from the house of the holy Mary, and greeted her with a loud voice, thus saying, '*Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum.*' 'Hail Mary, full of grace! thou art blessed among all womankind, and among all holy spirits.' And she then answered and said, 'Dearest brethren, I pray you all, tell me how came ye all together to-day, or who told you that I must to-morrow go to heaven?' And so each of the apostles is appointed to his separate place, that he should proclaim His divinity and her conception. And the Apostles drew her up and placed her in the beautiful paradise. Then did Mary rejoice in her spirit, and thus said, '*Benedico te qui dominaris super omnem benedictionem.*' — I bless thee, my Lord, thou that art the giver of all blessings; and I bless all thy promises that thou didst promise me. Thou hast, without my entreaty, appointed all the Apostles to be present at my burial; and I bless thy holy name, who dwelleth in eternity, Amen.' *Et post hæc vocavit Sancta Maria omnes apostolos*

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in cubiculo suo, et ostendit illis omne indumentum. And after that the holy Mary called all the apostles into her closet, and showed them all her garments, which she desired to have on at her burial; and [he? Peter] said this, that the third day was come, in which she would depart from the body [and] from us. And then said the blessed Peter to all the apostles and to all the people, 'Dearest brethren, I entreat you all who are in this place to watch with me, and to burn spiritual lamps, until the Lord come hither.' And then after these words our Lord came there, and found them all unanimously watching, and he illumined them with the gift of the Holy Ghost, and thus said unto them, 'Dearest brethren, have no sorrow because ye see that this blessed Mary is called unto death; for she is not called to earthly death, but she shall be favoured by God, wherefore great glory is prepared for her.' And when he had said this, then there shone suddenly a great light upon her house, so that all the fiends who were there, and those who saw the light, were overpowered, and were unable to speak out, on account of the greatness of the light. And then came a loud voice from heaven to Peter, thus saying, I am with you always unto the end of this world.' And then Peter lifted up his voice, and said, 'We bless thy name with (all) our souls, and we beseech thee never to depart from us; and we bless thee and beseech thee to illumine our world, for thou hast mercy upon all those that believe in thee.' And the blessed Peter said this to all the apostles, and he strengthened their hearts with God's belief. After he had finished these words, then Mary arose and went out of her house, and she prayed the prayer that the angel who came to her had enjoined upon her. When this prayer was finished, she returned to her house and rested upon her bed, and at her head sat the blessed Peter, and about the bed other disciples of Christ. And before the sixth hour of the day there suddenly came a loud thundering, and there was a very sweet smell, so that all that were there slept; and the apostles and the three women, whom Christ had commanded to watch without intermission, took charge of the holy Mary, that they should declare the glory of the Lord with respect to her, and all his kindness to the blessed Mary. And while all who were there were sleeping, our Lord Christ suddenly came there in a cloud with a great company of angels, and entered the house of the holy Mary in which she

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was resting. The Archangel Michael, who was the prince of all angels, was singing hymns with all the angels, when the Lord entered; then he found all the apostles round the blessed Mary's bed, and he blessed the holy Mary, and thus said, '*Benedico te quia quæcumque promisisti.*' — 'I bless thee, my holy Mary! and all whatsoever I have promised thee, that will I perform.' And then answered him the holy Mary, and said, 'My Lord, I ever dispense thy favour, and I beseech thee for thy name that thou devolve upon me submission to thy commands, so that I may dispense thy favour.' 'Thou art for ever honoured.' And then the Lord received her soul, and gave it to Saint Michael the archangel, and he received her soul with the prostration of all his limbs. And she had nought upon her save only a human form, and she had a soul seven times brighter than snow. And then enquired Saint Peter of our Lord, saying, 'Who of us, Lord, is there that hath so white a soul as this Holy Mary?' Then said our Lord to Peter and to all those who were present, 'This holy Mary's soul shall be ever glorified by God; and she shall be washed with the holy absolution, and the other apostles shall be sent before her bier when she shall depart from her body.' And they found no soul so white as the holy Mary's was, because she loved darkness for her sins, and she was nevertheless ever preserved from her sins. And they all saw that the blessed Mary had a soul as white as snow. Then said our Lord to Peter and to the blessed Mary's body, 'To-morrow she shall go into this city, on the right side of my quarter, and ye shall find there a new tomb; then deposit the body in the tomb, and keep it there as I shall bid you.' When our Lord had spoken, this then suddenly the body of the blessed Mary cried out before them all, and said, 'Be thou mindful, thou glorified King, that I am thy handiwork; and be thou mindful of me, for I keep the treasure-house of thy decrees.' And then said our Lord to the blessed Mary's body, 'I will never leave thee, my pearl; I will never leave thee, my jewel: for thou art verily the temple of God.' And when he had said this, our Lord ascended into heaven. Then Peter and the other apostles took her (and the three women who were watching there with them, washed the body of the blessed Mary) and placed her upon her bier. And after that, all who were sleeping arose, and then Peter brought in the palm-branch which the blessed Mary had previously received at the angel's hand.

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And then the blessed Saint John said, '*Tu es virgo, tu debes procidere lectum*' – 'Thou art the purest virgin, and it is fitting for thee to depart on thy bier, and for us to bear this palm-twigg, and to declare God's praise.' Then again spake the holy John, 'Thou art a preceptor in the prayers of the apostles, and it is fitting that thou shouldest depart on thy bier, and that we should carry thee until we come to the place where the Lord has bidden us; and let none of us be sad, but let us bear thy bier triumphantly.' And then the apostles arose, and lifted up the bier, and supported it with their hands. And then indeed Peter lifted up his voice and said, '*In exitu Israël ex Egypto, Alleluia.*' – 'Israel went out of Egypt, and sang Hallelujah; and the Lord is truly supporting this bier.' And then the apostles went into the clouds, and they then carried the bier, and sang God's praise. When the people heard it, and the Jews saw the great company of angels – for their voice was very loud, and they were praising God, – then were they exceedingly enraged in their minds; and then they began to say to each other, 'What is this company and this people that thus loudly sing?' Then said one of the apostles, who was standing there, 'Mary is now, indeed, gone from the body, and we are singing praises about her.' And then immediately came Satan, the devil, and the rulers of the Jews, and began to say to each other, 'Let us now arise and kill the apostles, and seize the body of Mary and consume it with fire, because she did bear that deceiver.' And then the Jews arose and began to go thither with swords and with forces; they thought that they would slay the apostles. And at that same time the angels who were there present in the clouds became fiercer than the Jews, and began to smite them. And forthwith they became blind, and fell to the earth, and their heads struck against the walls; and they groped about with their hands on the ground, and knew not whither they were going. And then one who was the leader of the Jews drew near to the apostles, and he then saw that the bier was borne triumphant, and that the apostles were, indeed, singing hymns, saying, 'Now is completed the great wrath and anger of this ruler; and the Lord hath given us an abode in this place, and among all our kin; and he hath given us secure glory.' And forthwith the impious ruler cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'I will now turn me to this bier, and then will seize the palm-twigg and cast it to the ground, and, being

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dried up, I will break both parts in pieces and burn them up.' Then went he to the bier and, when close to the corpse on the bier, he was held fast by the right hand to the bier, so that he hung above the earth. Then he cried with a loud voice, and wept with tears in the sight of the apostles, thus saying '*Adjuro vos per Deum vivum.*' — 'I conjure you by the living God not to disregard me in this great time of need. And I expect thee most of all, my holy Peter, to be mindful of what my father did for thee when he was doorkeeper.' Then indeed Peter asked him, and said, 'Wast thou with thy father when he vindicated me, so that they did not apprehend me?' And again the chief said, 'I beseech you all not to disregard me.' And then Saint Peter said unto him, 'It is not, indeed, in my power, nor in that of any of us [to help thee], except thou wilt believe in Jesus Christ, that he is the Son of the living God, and arose from the dead. But if thou believest not that he is the Son of God, thou shalt not be set down upon the earth. But we know that the enemy of mankind hath blinded your hearts, lest you should believe that Christ were true God, and you should be saved by him. But go now, indeed, and kiss this bier, and say to this corpse that thou believest in God the Father, and in Mary, for she bore Jesus Christ.' Then the leader of the priests blessed Mary with his tongue, in the Hebrew language, glorifyingly. And none of them, in the meanwhile, raised the bier. And then, after a respite, he again blessed the body of Mary, by the witness of the books of Moses and by very numerous scriptures; and he declared, from them all, that Mary was the temple of the living God. Then the apostles were greatly astonished at him and said unto him, 'Whence came to him these wonderful speeches?' Then said Peter, 'Stretch forth thy hand, and say that thou believest on the name of our Saviour Christ, with all thy heart, then shall thy hands become restored and be as they were before.' And immediately it came to pass that he believed in his heart; and again Peter spake to him, 'Arise now and receive this palm-twigg which is before the bier of this holy Mary, and then go to the city of these Jews, to those who are there struck with blindness and speak to them and say, "Whosoever believeth not on Jesus Christ, that he is the Son of the living God, his eyes shall, therefore, be closed." And if any one will believe on God then touch thou their eyes with this palm-twigg, which thou receivedst

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here in thy hand, and they shall immediately receive their sight. But assuredly he who believeth not on God shall not see for ever.' And then the ruler of the Jews and of the priests went and spake to them as the blessed Peter had before commanded him. And he found very many among the people weeping; and they were saying, 'Woe to us, for it has now befallen us as it was in the city of Sodom; it came to pass that a great fear at first came over them and they were smitten with blindness and afterwards the Lord sent fire from heaven upon them and they were consumed withal.' And they then said, 'now indeed we are filled with all humility.' And then, indeed, to them, thus weeping, came the ruler of the priests whom Peter had sent to them, and he spake to them all in the same words that Peter had previously commanded him to speak. He heard their sufferings and he marvelled at the sight. And he said 'Whosoever believeth in God Almighty with his words he will undertake true confession for the name of Christ, the Son of the living God shall forthwith receive his sight; but, assuredly, he who believeth not in God shall continue in blindness for ever and ever.' And they immediately believed and Christ gave them sight. And verily the Apostles then carried the body of Mary until they came to the tomb where the Lord had commanded them, and there they buried Mary's body; and then they set themselves at the door of the tomb as the Lord Jesus Christ had bidden them. And suddenly while they were thus sitting our Lord came there with a great company of angels, and said to them, 'Peace be with you, brethren.' And then he commanded the archangel Michael to receive the soul of the blessed Mary in the clouds, and he did so. And then he spake to the Apostles until they all drew near to the Lord Jesus Christ. And then he received the soul into the clouds, and the Lord bade the clouds to go into Paradise and there to deposit the soul of the blessed Mary; and there truly in Paradise it shall be ever in glory with God and all his elect. And then indeed at the third hour of the day the Lord came with a great multitude and greeted the apostles and said 'Peace be with you brethren.' And then the apostles answered him, and said, 'Glory be to thee, O God, because thou alone hast done such glorious deeds.' Then said our Lord unto them, 'I was first sent by my Father to the intent that I should undergo my holy passion. And then [after my passion] I was again restored to my

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body, as I previously predicted to you, and [was restored] to all those that were following me among mankind. And I was [just lately] sitting above the children of men in my great majesty, and sat above you on my throne; and I judged the twelve nations, among the three peoples of Israel, and [those that had sprung] from the twelve tribes. And by my Father's command I was again restored to the body. And for the sake of their [?her] holiness I dedicated myself to that immaculate temple; and she is the purest virgin, and she was a virgin ere her childbearing and she will continue so afterwards.' And then said the Saviour to the apostles, 'What will ye now? What shall I do unto her?' And then Peter and all the apostles answered and said, 'Lord thou didst choose thee that vessel in which to dwell, and she is thy purest virgin before all worlds, and thou art able indeed visibly to manifest thy power on thy servant Mary; and thou didst overcome death and thou art ruling in thy glory, so art thou now able to raise again thy mother's body from the dead.' And immediately the Lord in heaven rejoiced, and said to his apostles, 'Be it now according to your decision.' And forthwith the Lord bade Gabriel the archangel to roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre. And then Michael went and presented the soul of the blessed Mary, before the Lord. And the Lord said to the body of Mary, 'Arise my kinswoman, my dove, and my habitation of glory; for thou art the vessel of life, and thou art the heavenly temple, and no vices were committed in thy heart; and thou shalt suffer no pain in thy body.' And the Lord said again to the body, 'Arise thou from thy tomb.' And immediately Mary arose from the tomb; and she embraced the Lord's feet and began to glorify God, thus saying, 'My Lord, I am unable to produce all the gifts that thou didst bestow upon me for thy name, nor yet are they able to exhaust all thy benedictions. And thou art the God of Israel, and thou art exalted with thy Father and with thy Holy Ghost for ever.' And then the Lord raised her up and kissed her and gave her to the archangel Michael; and then he lifted her up in the clouds before the presence of the Lord. And the Lord said to the apostles, 'Come now to me into the clouds.' And when they went to Him, the Lord kissed them and said, *Pacem meam do vobis. Alleluia.* 'My peace I leave with you through my Father's Holy Spirit, and my peace I give you through my highest praise (i.

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e. the Holy Ghost); and I will be with you always unto the end of this world.' And the Lord said to the angels, 'Sing now, and receive my mother into Paradise.' And the apostles with (all) their power raised the body of Mary up in the clouds, and placed it in the bliss of paradise; and now the apostles are appointed by lot ever to proclaim her abroad. And let us now confess the greatness of God, and sing in Mary's name, '*Magnificat anima mea;*' because she thus spake when she sang '*Magnificat:*' 'My Lord, magnify my soul: *et exultavit:* and cause my spirit to rejoice in thy salvation; for thou art true God. *Quia respexit:* Wherefore do thou now behold the meekness of thy maiden; and my Lord,' said Saint Mary, 'cause all people to say that I am the most blessed virgin. *Qui fecit:* For thou didst unto me great things, thou art mighty and thy name is holy. *Et misericordia:* And thy mercy is among all people that fear thee. *Fecit potentiam:* He hath done mighty things with his arms, and he hath scattered those who were proud in their heart, and would not trust in him. *Deposuit:* And he hath put down the mighty from their seat; and that was Satan with his devils, when he was in heaven's kingdom; and for his presumption, he and his devils with him, were cast down into hell's abyss; and the Lord hath exalted all the meek for ever. *Esurientes:* Then Saint Mary said that the Lord had filled with the beauty of heaven's glory all those who on earth suffered hunger and thirst for his name; but for all those who received riches, and trusted in overfulness more than in God, and gave themselves up to vanity, he hath prepared eternal perdition. *Suscepit Israël:* And he hath holpen all his servants, Israel, and was mindful of all his mercy; just as Saint Matthew hath said, that the Lord, on a time, ascended a hill with a great company of his holy people and then he sat upon the hill. *Sicut locutus est:* And his disciples went unto him; and then the Saviour opened his mouth, and spake to our fathers and to Abraham, and said that his seed should increase over all this world. And then he taught his apostles and told them through what things the soul might become most blessed, and thus said, 'Blessed are the spirits of the poor, for they shall rest in heaven's kingdom; and blessed are those who care not for this world's riches; and blessed are those that weep now for their sins, for they shall be hereafter comforted in heaven's kingdom.' But let us intreat the Virgin St. Mary to be a merciful

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advocate with our Lord Jesus Christ of present benefits and of eternal glory: and thereto may our Lord aid us. Amen.

Pious Ælfric had perhaps seen this unscriptural homily. 'Gif we máre secgað be ðisum symbol-dæge þonne we on ðam halgum bocum rædað, þe ðurh Godes dihte gesette wæron, þonne beo we ðam dwolmannum gelice, þe be heora ágenum dihte, oððe be swefnum, fela lease gesetnyssa awriton.... Sind swa-ðeah gýt ða dwollican béc, ægðer ge on Leden ge on Englisc, and hí rædað ungerade men.'

(Thorpe, ii. 444.)

XIV. The Birth of John the Baptist

Dearest men, we are here admonished and reminded in these books and in these Holy Scriptures of the observance of this holy season which we ought to-day to celebrate and observe, since it is the birthday of the illustrious John the Baptist: and by these works we may know and understand that he is greatly to be celebrated and honoured by us this day; for we heard when the holy gospel was read that the Churches celebrate the birth of none of God's saints, patriarchs, prophets, nor apostles, except of Christ himself, and of this John. There were many holy and worthy prophets before St. John, who were great and illustrious, and hallowed (consecrated) by God himself, and so illuminated and sanctified by the grace of the Holy Spirit, that they prophesied and revealed to men what was to come to pass; and were cognizant of all God's secret judgments, and were able to withstand kings and evil and great princes; and they had control over the heavens by their power; and in very many divine powers they shone forth very gloriously by miracles of all kinds; and they proclaimed the truth, and declared signs which the Lord himself had borne witness to; but nevertheless concerning none of these was or could it be said what the Lord Jesus Christ said concerning this John—that never among those born of woman was any born more illustrious or more excellent. And the Evangelist in the commencement of his gospel thus wrote and spake of the birth of John: In the days of King Herod there was a very great priest whose name was Zacharias, and his wife's name was Elizabeth, who was of the daughters of the patriarch Aaron. And the holy evangelist thus wrote and spake concerning them, 'They were both very worthy before God, and walked in all the commandments of the Lord

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blameless.' Behold how very blessed were the noble parents of Saint John, whom no guilt of this noxious world had injured; nor had any sin wounded them; nor had evil witness (testimony) calumniated them; nor any vice troubled them. But they were mindful of all God's behests, and in every wise they were ever very obedient to the divine law. And since their youth and their middle age remained without any sin, may we not believe that their old age and the termination of their life were not different from the commencement? Nevertheless, Elizabeth was [not] destitute of godly virtues though she was late in child-bearing: yet she was not at all late in child-bearing; for whether with respect to the holy Elizabeth ought not her condition in her old age ever to be borne in mind? For at that great time a house of holiness was first to be purified, and the hospitality of Christ's harbinger, and the liberality of God's messenger, was to be secured; and an abode of the Holy Spirit, a temple altogether fit for God, was to be found, in which the holy Spirit's wisdom should dwell. And so when every human fault was quiescent in the parents of the blessed John, and they in their whole life stood blameless, — then forthwith sterility fled from them, and their age was quickened and their belief and purity conceived. Then was born the man Saint John, who was greater and more excellent than all other men; and he was like the angels of God; and he was the trumpet, Christ's crier in this world, and the messenger of God's Son, the standard-bearer of the Supernal King, and the forgiveness of sins and setting right of heathen nations. And I say that the evangelist was the confirmation (or union) both of the old and new law, because he wrote first of the divine grace of the father and mother, that by the merits of the parents the child's dignity should be understood by all these other men, because by that birth alone she transcended all laws of human-kind; and now the birth of Christ [was] at his appearing, and the new day spring (or dawn) was John the Baptist. And now the gleam of the true Sun, God himself, shall come; let the crier give out his voice. And because that the Lord Christ is now the Judge, Saint John will be the trumpet, and will therefore come with God himself upon this earth; — let the messenger i. e. Saint John go before him. And therefore it is the duty of every man to declare the worthiness of Saint John's life; for he was praised and honoured by the voice of truth, and the

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Lord himself in his gospel spake [thus] concerning him: 'For what went ye to the wilderness? to seek a prophet? I declare him to be more renowned and more excellent than any prophet.' Wherefore no human tongue is sufficiently able to declare the divine virtue of this begotten messenger. Also the Archangel Gabriel spake and said to Zacharias, his father, 'Fear not, Zacharias, thy prayer is altogether heard by God, and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John; and to thee shall be joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth; and he shall be altogether very great before God, and shall not drink wine nor ale; but he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost in his mother's bosom, and he shall turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord, and he shall go before God, filled with the Holy Ghost, and with the power of Elias the prophet, to prepare a people meet for the Lord.' Let us then, dearest men, hear how gloriously Saint John was filled with the power of the Holy Ghost when he was abiding in his mother's bosom, and how he first attained to heaven before he reached the earth, and received there the Holy Spirit before he had a human one, and attained to divine gifts (or graces) ere he had the life of a man; and he began to live in the presence of God before he himself might live, just as Saint Paul the Apostle said, 'I live not, but Christ liveth in me.' And then on the sixth month that Saint John was received into his mother's bosom (i. e. was conceived), then the child of glory descended upon the earth, and the heavenly glory filled the maidenly bosom (or womb) of Saint Mary. And when she went unto her cousin, the holy Elizabeth, forthwith the child leaped and rejoiced in the presence of his Lord, and from his mother's womb saluted and greeted him [who was] in the Virgin's womb; and first strove to make him known and to proclaim him to men, before that he himself lived and saw the human (natural) light. O dearest men, what a zealous messenger and impatient leader was he, who would first proclaim the Lord coming on this earth before he attained to the mysterious formation of the natural birth; and he first became a king (or leader) and grasped a weapon to fight with before he was endowed with his bodily limbs; and he first sought to war before he saw the light; and so in his birth he overcame all the laws of natural birth. Let us consider the exalted deeds of St. John who arose in his mother's womb in the

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presence of God's Son, who himself again was not conceived after the manner of men. Though as yet he was delayed in this bodily birth, nevertheless he, in the Spirit alone, performed the ministration of the Evangelist; and immediately he was brought forth and born, he restored voice (speech) to his father and unloosed the tongue from the bond of silence, with which the archangel had bound the father, because he did not believe his words. Great then is the glory of the holy St. John's birth. And all right believing folk ought to rejoice at his advent and to bless him, because the Scripture so spake concerning him, that many should rejoice at his birth. Great is the holiness and worthiness of St. John, whose greatness the Lord and Saviour himself pointed out. And it is made known that among those born of women there shall not be a greater man than John the Baptist [excepting only Christ] himself, who was without a human father, conceived by an immaculate virgin. St. John then will take precedence of all other prophets, and he surpasses the power of all other patriarchs in the apostolical government, and he surpasses in the exaltedness of his power the glory of all God's other martyrs; and among all God's Saints he is more victorious and beloved. And all this natural race (or birth) is put out of view by St. John. Lo, we heard when Esaias the prophet was read, that the Holy Ghost thus spake concerning him, 'I will send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee.' Then that was a very exalted name by which St. John was called—'angel;' but his life was ordered like to his name because that he here on earth lived an angelic life. When sinned [he in his food, since he lived] on roots and wild honey? Or where trespassed he ever in his clothing who was furnished with only one garment, which was woven of camel's hair? Or how might any one be greater than he who always loved God all his life, and who never departed from the wilderness? Or how did the fault of much talkativeness defile him who was so far separated from all men? Or how did the sin of silence affect him who so strongly rebuked the Jews who came to him to hear his lore? And thus he spake, 'Ye race of vipers, who hath showed you to flee from the wrath of God to come?' And when the multitudes inquired of him what they might do to escape God's wrath, he taught and admonished them with these words, and thus spake to them, 'Let him that hath two tunics,

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give one to him that hath none; and let him that hath food give [to him that hath none. To the soldiers he said] 'Do [no violence] and be thankful to the Saviour for your food.' Let us then follow the lore of our exalted and illustrious protector [guardian], so that we may hear the gentle words of our Lord, which he shall say on the awful Doomsday to those men who now show pity to poor men, 'I say you sooth, as long as ye did this to one only who believed upon me, though he were the least and the poorest, it was as if ye had done it to myself.' What more then shall I say of St. John, saith he who made this book, except that he first went before Christ ere that he himself was able to go before him. And the hearts of the father, mother, and son the same Holy Spirit filled with his grace—to whom is ever glory and honour, world without end, ever in eternity. Amen.

XV. The Story of Peter and Paul.

Dearest men, let us celebrate on this present day the passion-tide of St. Peter, the chief of Christ's apostles, and [that of the apostle St. Paul.]... The first is the appointed shepherd of the Church at Christ's hand; the second is her instructor. The one is, I say, the first apostle; the other the last;—Peter before Christ's passion, and Paul after his ascension. Both alike in belief, both happily received a crown of glory from our Lord, because in all their holy sufferings they continued in true humility with an undoubting mind unto their lives' end in the confession of Christ; according as to them and to all true believers remaining so for his sake, and continuing undoubtingly in affliction, in true confession unto their lives' end, the Lord Christ promised and said, 'When ye shall stand before kings and high-reeves (rulers), and be in persecution for my sake, ye need not be anxious as to what ye shall speak. It shall be given you in that same time what ye shall speak. [Ye shall not speak of yourselves] but the Spirit of God your Father shall speak in you. Then the brother shall betray the brother to the heathen unto death, and the son shall betray his father, and the youngers shall rise against the elders, and shall torture them to death; and they shall all be at enmity for my sake. Then whoso truly in fortitude and in the confession of my name shall continue unto his life's end shall be safe and preserved for evermore.' Dearest men, they continued then, according to Christ's commands, firm in his love and belief unto their end; and they stood before the heathen emperor Nero and Agrippa his vassal. Then, in spite of the devil's malice and hell's torments, they ever came off whole and sound, and suffered a wonderful death for God's name, and now honoured, reign in glory; and their memory still continues in the [world for

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an example to all Christian] folk, as we may now hear, dearest men, of their sufferings, how they contended and strove against Simon the sorcerer. And for the confession of God's name Peter was fastened to the cross, and his head turned downwards and his feet up, and St. Paul was beheaded. And when they entered Rome together he (Paul) related to him (Peter) what great shipwreck he had endured when he was seeking them, and was brought thither [to Rome] as a captive. And St. Peter related to him what machination and reproaches Simon the sorcerer had contrived. Then they (Peter and Paul) gathered together their company against Simon the sorcerer. And one accused them (the apostles) to Nero, and then they were summoned to appear before him. And they greatly praised Simon the sorcerer... before the multitude of the people. And Livia, Nero's wife, and Agrippina, the wife of Agrippa, turned so steadfastly to Christ's love and faith that they would no longer seek marital intercourse; and many men of the king's servants turned to Christ's service through Paul's preaching, so that they would not return to his residence or household. Then was Simon the sorcerer wholly stirred up against the apostles, and instructed to say many evil things, and that Peter was a deceiver. And all those who had witnessed Simon's wonderful deeds believed him, for he had, through magical craft, made brazen serpents which moved of themselves, and stone and brazen images that moved of themselves, and appeared suddenly aloft in the air. And in opposition to them Peter, with a word, [enabled the halt to walk], and blind men he healed with his prayers, so that they received their sight: and he commanded the devils to depart from those possessed of them, and he raised the dead; and he told all the people that Simon was a magician, and advised them to flee from his crafts. And then it came to pass that pious men shunned Simon the sorcerer, and pronounced him guilty. Then the followers of Simon said that Peter was a sorcerer, the very thing that Simon himself was; and this by false testimony they spread abroad by means of the sorcerer. Then as soon as these tidings reached the Emperor Nero, then bade he Simon the sorcerer to be brought before him; and as he stood there he suddenly turned into a young child, and immediately afterwards to an old man... and through the devil's aid he turned himself into divers forms. And when Nero saw this he thought

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Simon was the Son of God; then Peter said that he was a false sorcerer and a shameful and guilty deceiver, and in all his works an enemy of the true God; and that there was need of nothing more than to render his wickedness manifest by God's power. Then went Simon to Nero and said to him, 'Hear me, worshipful emperor; I am the Son of God, who came down from heaven, but I have up to this time suffered great injury from Peter; my harm is now twofold, since Paul himself teacheth the same and striveth against me, and speaks the same and preaches with him (Peter). Wherefore, then thy kingdom may no longer stand, except thou do the more diligently take thought for their destruction.' And then he (Nero) became angry... gathered together; and commanded that on the following day all three should come in before him. Then said Simon the sorcerer, 'These are the disciples of the Nazarene Saviour. It repents them that they are of the Jewish race.' Nero said, 'Who is the Nazarene?' Simon replied, 'There is a city in the land of Judea, called Nazareth, from whence came their teacher.' Then said Nero, 'God instructeth and loveth every man; why persecutest thou these men?' Simon said, 'These are the persons who frustrate all my works with their words, so that folk should not believe in me.' Then said Nero, 'Why were ye two or your kin so faithless?' Then said Peter to the sorcerer, 'Thou wast able to teach thy false crafts to all other persons; but God, through me [convicted them of falsehood; and strife against me thou] hadst, and now thou thyself knowest assuredly of yore that thou couldest not overcome me. I marvel with what boldness thou shouldst boast before the king that thou, through thy sorcery, art able to overcome Christs disciples.' Nero said, 'Who is the Christ?' Peter answered, 'It is he whom this sorcerer declares himself to be [the Son of God]; yet it is not so, but he (Simon) is man's child, and his works are diabolical. Wherefore then, thou worshipful king, if thou wilt know what was done concerning Christ in the land of Judea, order Pilate's letter to be brought to thee, which he sent to the Emperor Claudius concerning Christ's passion. And he then commanded it to be brought and to be read before him. And it read thus: 'Pilate greeteth Claudius his lord. Now, it lately happened that I myself discovered that the Jews through envy among themselves... and were at enmity. Assuredly, according to God's

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promises, they and their fathers had their prophets, who prophesied that God would send them from heaven his holy Son, who should rightly be called their King; and that by means of a pure virgin he would send him into this world, to the inhabitants of the earth. And of this each ruler in Judea was a witness that the Hebrews' God came thither, and people saw him giving light to the blind, cleansing lepers, healing the lame, driving out devils from men, raising the dead, commanding the wind to be still, going dry-footed over the waves of the sea, and working many other marvels. Then all the people of Judea said that he was the Son of God, and perfectly recognised the fact. Then the chiefs of the priests became envious of him, and seized him, and to me continually [complained of him that he had broken their laws] and acted contrary to their folk-rights (customs). Then I believed them that it was as they said; then I scourged him, and delivered him unto their own jurisdiction. They then hanged him on the rood, and when he was afterwards buried, they set guards over him; and on the third day he truly showed himself whole and sound to my soldiers, and rose from the dead. And the Jews' malice burned so greatly that they gave money to the guards and thus said, "Say that his (Christ's) disciples took away his body and stole it from us." And afterwards those that had received the money were nevertheless unable to conceal what had happened; but they told me what they had first seen and also that they had received money from the Jews. And I resorted to these words, lest otherwise anyone should lie, and that thou shouldst not think it needful to believe the leasing of the Jews.' As soon as the letter was read, then said Nero, 'Tell me, Peter, did it all happen to Christ as the letter declares?' St. Peter replied, 'It is all exactly so, I lie not; but thou, good Emperor,... [Simon] is so deceived and overcome by leasing, that he even imagines that he is not man, but believes that he is that which God is. But in Christ alone is accomplished the fulness of all victory; and [that was done] through the manhood that he took upon himself—that is, the great and incomprehensible mystery which through his manhood was made finite [or was limited] for a help to men. But there are in this Simon two powers, man's and the devil's; and through this his human element he hinders men in regard to every good thing.' Then said Simon to St. Peter... 'I marvel on

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account of this reproach!' 'Thou, good Emperor, wherefore shouldst thou esteem for anything this unlettered and falsest fisherman, endowed with no ability – neither in word nor in manners? Wherefore I will no longer spare these enemies, but I will now bid my angels (messengers) to come and avenge me [on these men.]' Then said Peter, 'I fear not thy angels, but they may fear me, on account of the power of my Lord who is with me, and on account of the protection I know to be in him, with respect to whom thou, lying, sayest thou art that which he is.' Then said the Emperor, 'Peter, fearest thou not Simon, who truly manifests his divinity?' Then the blessed apostle St. Peter answered, and thus said, 'The presumption of divinity is in him who perceives and knows the intentions of men, and searches and lays bare all the secrets of their hearts. But let him tell me now, if he be God, what I think, or what I shall do. The same thought I have told to thee before he lie, that he may not dare to lie to thee, or say what I think.' Nero said, 'Come hither nearer to me, and tell me what thou thinkest.' Peter said, 'Let a barley-loaf be brought and given me secretly.' [And Nero bade men to bring it] and to give it St. Peter. Then said Peter, 'Let Simon now tell me, if he be God, what has here been thought or said or done.' Then said Nero, 'How wilt thou that I should believe that Simon does not know this, who previously raised to life a dead man, and being beheaded, after the third day he raised and manifested himself? And he did all that I said he should do.' Peter said, 'He did not so do before me.' Nero replied, 'Before me, standing here, he did all this; indeed, he bade angels come to him, and they came.' Peter said, 'But why doth he who did the greater act not now do the less? Let him say what I think and was doing.' Then said Nero, 'I cannot judge between you two.' Then Simon said, 'Let Peter say what I think.' 'When Simon shall perform what he hath thought of, then I will show that I know beforehand what he thinketh.' Simon said, 'Now know, O Emperor, that no man knows men's thoughts except God himself. Peter pretends that he knows them.' Peter said, 'What! thou sayest that thou art the Son of God; say then what I think, or declare what I do in secrecy. Declare it now, if thou art able to show it.' And Peter had then blessed the barley-loaf which he, too, had received, and brake it in two, and put it up his two sleeves. Then was Simon wroth, because he was not able to reveal the

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apostle's secret. Then spake he with a loud voice and thus said, 'Let great dogs now come forth and bite him before this Emperor.' And then suddenly there came forth hounds of a wonderful bigness, and rushed on the apostle; and Peter stood in prayer with outstretched hands, and showed to the hounds the loaf which he had previously blessed, and they forthwith vanished away, and were nowhere to be seen. 'Now I show thee by my deeds,' said Peter to Nero, 'and not by words only, that I knew beforehand what Simon thought, who indeed promised to send angels against me, but brought hounds against me; and he plainly showed that he never had any divine (*or* god-like) angels, but dog-like angels.' Then said Nero to Simon, 'How is it now, Simon? I ween that we two are vanquished;' and he turned himself to Paul, and addressed him, thus saying, 'What sayest thou, O Paul?' Then Paul answered him and thus said, 'Know thou, good Emperor, that a great evil shall come upon thy kingdom, if thou permittest this sorcerer to hold sway any longer, and thus much evil to work; and thy kingdom shall fall because of his lore.' Nero said to Simon, 'What sayest thou, Simon?' Then said Simon, 'Except I openly show that I am God himself, deem me worthy of no honour.' Nero said, 'Why delayest thou that which thou shouldst at once do, if thou be God — that is, cause these men to be tormented and killed?' Simon said, 'Order to be made for me a high tower of great timbers; then will I ascend to the top of it and summon my angels and command them, while you are looking on, to bear me up to heaven unto my father. And if they do this then mayest thou perceive that they (the apostles) are false and unlettered men.' Then said Nero to Peter, 'Peter, hearest thou what Simon says? Now it shall be full soon made known how much power thy God hath.' Peter replied, 'Hearest thou, best of emperors? If thou wilt, thou mayest perceive that Simon is possessed of the devil.' Then said Nero, 'How does the consideration of or attention to these words compel us? (or how does it affect us?) we shall determine to-morrow.' Then said Simon, 'Thou knowest that I was dead and on the third day arose from the dead;' for Simon had previously by his sorcery said to Nero, 'Order my head to be cut off in darkness, and if I do not arise from death the third day, know then that I am a sorcerer. But if I should arise, know thou by that token that

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I am the Son of God.' And subsequently Nero commanded all this to be done, in the dark, when he (Simon) was to be beheaded; and the man brought it (the head) forth to the light, as was bidden him that should behead him, then was it discovered to be a sheep's head; but he would not tell it to the king, lest he should accuse him of having too negligently taken heed to that which he did in the dark. He put away the limbs and the head of the sheep, and [the traces] where the blood had [in a mass] extended around; and then he [Simon] showed himself to Nero on the third day, and said unto him, 'Order my blood to be cleansed (or wiped) away and to be dried up from thence, because I was beheaded, and now on this third day arose, as I previously said and promised before thee that I would do.' And after that Nero believed in him. And he then turned to Paul and said, 'Wherefore, Paul, speakest thou not?' Then St. Paul replied to him and said 'Weenest thou that I shall speak to this faithless man and to this unbelieving sorcerer, who hath encompassed the death of his own soul, whereby ruin, leasing, and deception very quickly cometh upon him, because he makes himself to be what he is not? And he deludes people with his sorcery, so that they believe his words. If thou wilt hear his words and fulfil his behests, thou shalt lose thy kingdom and thy own soul. This is the worst of men, who through the devil's wisdom deceiveth many unwary men with his temptations. Wherefore thou shouldst pray the Holy Spirit that what he is may be soon manifested and revealed. Verily, as quickly as he himself thinketh that he shall be raised to heaven, so quickly shall he be drowned in the lowest torments of hell, where shall be ever weeping and lamentation, and gnashing of teeth. Then concerning the lore of my Teacher, of which thou questionest me, there may no others receive it save those alone who prepare themselves for it with pure belief. I ever taught peace and God's love through Jerusalem and many nations. First I taught that men should love one another, and that each should show respect to another. I taught rich and illustrious men that they should not be exalted in pride, nor trust too much in transitory riches, but that they should put their trust in God alone. I taught also the moderate men that they should be frugal in their living, and moderate in their dress; and the poor I taught to have joy of their poverty and to be thankful to God. I

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taught the fathers that they should teach their sons the law of the Lord's fear; and I taught the sons to be obedient to their elders and parents. And I taught landowners to pay their taxes carefully. I taught wives to love their husbands, and regard them with fear. And I taught husbands that they should remain faithful to them alone, as they would that one should do to them; because God taketh vengeance on the husband if he committeth adultery with other women, and just so the husband taketh vengeance if his wife defiles herself. And because God is the Creator and Ruler of all his creatures, I taught lords that they should faithfully be obedient to God as to their Lords, and should minister to God's churches. And I taught all men that they should serve one almighty, incomprehensible, and invisible God. And this lore was given me not by men, but by God himself. Jesus Christ, and the Father of Glory sent me forth for preaching, and thus said, "Go thou, I shall be the spirit of life within thee, and in all who rightly believe in me and in Christ the Saviour; and I will justify all that thou sayest." Then was Nero affrighted on account of those words, and turned himself to Peter and said to him, 'What sayest thou, Peter?' And then he replied, 'All these words that Paul speaks are true. Many years have now elapsed since our bishops through all the Roman empire sent me a letter, and bore testimony to his purity of life and to his lore. He was aforetime a persecutor of Christ's law. Then a voice from heaven called to him and taught him the truth.' After this were many contentions until Peter said, 'One Almighty God, God the Father, with Jesus Christ, and with the Holy Ghost, the Creator of all creatures whom I preach, who made heaven and earth and sea and all things which are therein—He is the true King, and of his kingdom there is no end.' And after that Nero commanded a great tower to be made of wood and of large timbers, and ordered that all the people and all the honorable ones of the Roman people should come to see this spectacle. Then on the following day Nero bade Peter and Paul to be brought to this spectacle, and said to them, 'Now may the truth itself be made manifest.' Peter and Paul replied, 'God himself will yet make manifest [the truth] though we two are unable to reveal it.' 'M mode of action is,' said St. Paul, 'to bow my knees. Thou mayest beseech of God whatever thou wilt against this sorcerer's attempts, because thou wert

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earlier chosen by God.' And then Paul did so, and bowed his knees and prayed. Peter beheld Simon and said, 'Begin what you intend to begin, because there approaches both the revelation of thyself, and the testimony (or clearing) of us two; for I see my Christ summoning me and Paul.' Nero said, 'Whither may ye two go from My will?' Peter said, 'Whither our Lord inviteth and calleth us (two).' Then before all the people Simon, crowned with laurel, ascended the tower and, with outspread arms, began to fly in the air. As soon as Nero saw that he said, 'This man Simon is true, and speaks the truth, but however ye two, Peter and Paul, are deceivers.' Then said Peter unto him, 'Without delay thou shalt know that we two are the true servants of Christ, and that this man is not Christ, but a sorcerer.' Nero said, 'Will ye two still continue in your obstinacy? and yet ye now see him going through the heavens.' Then Peter looked to Paul and said, 'Raise up thy head and see this that Simon does.' Then Paul raised up his head, and his eyes became filled with tears, and he saw Simon flying. Then said he to Peter, 'Why ceasest thou, Peter? Accomplish what thou didst begin; surely our Lord Jesus Christ will manifest to us his power.' When Nero heard that, he smiled, and said, 'Now these men see that they are overcome. They are mistaken now.' Peter said, 'Now it will be very soon shown to thee that we two are not in error.' He then looked up towards Simon and said, 'In the name of God Almighty, the Creator of all, and of Jesus Christ, who arose from the dead on the third day, I conjure you, ye devil's angels, who bear him in the air in order to deceive unbelieving men's hearts, that from this time forth ye no longer bear him, but leave him.' And immediately they left him, and he fell upon the scaffolding by the paved street which is called *Sacra via*, and burst asunder in four parts. Then afterwards men took the scaffolding away, and laid down four stupendous stones in the same place, for a memorial and a witness of the apostles' victory, unto this present day. Then Nero commanded Peter and Paul to be kept in fetters, for he thought that Simon would arise on the third day. Peter said, 'This Simon will never arise, because he is truly dead, and condemned to eternal torments.' Then Nero bade them to keep Simon's body three days. He expected that he would rise again on the third day. He inquired of Peter, 'Who gave thee permission to commit such a crime!' Peter replied, 'If thou

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wilt understand and consider how much he lied, [you will see] that he perished lest he should blaspheme me towards God.' Nero answered, 'Ye two have acted hostilely towards me, and I will requite you with an evil recompense.' Peter said, 'Thou sayest now wholly what thou wilt, but what is not promised shall be finished.' Then said Nero to Agrippa his provost, 'These are malicious men; there is much need that they should be destroyed, and that they should be slain with iron poles and swords in a certain place, and be caused to perish with tortures.' Agrippa said, 'Thou biddest them to be punished in a shameful manner, but it appears to me a more unguilty (excusable) mode to cut off his (Paul's) head without any other torments. And Peter, since he is guilty of murder, and also malicious, order him to be bound to the cross.' Then said Nero, 'You decide in the best manner.' Then Peter and Paul were led from Nero's presence, and Paul was beheaded in the Ostensian Way. When Peter came to the cross he said, 'Turn my head downwards, for my Lord and Saviour Christ came down from heaven to earth, [and] he was upraised on an upright cross. Then because he inviteth me from earth to heaven, therefore shall my rood be inverted; my head shall be turned to the earth, and my feet stretched towards heaven. I am not worthy that I should be so fastened [as Christ was] on the Cross.' Then turned they at once the cross, and fastened his feet up and his head downwards. Then came there together an innumerable multitude, and cursed the Emperor Nero and reviled him; and they were so hot-heartedly wrath that they wished to burn the Emperor alive. Then Peter rebuked them and said, 'Now, a few days ago the Romans intreated and advised me to depart hence away, then came Christ unto me in the way, when I prayed to him, and inquired, "Whither wilt thou go?" "My Lord, I will go (return) to Rome!" Then he said that I should subsequently at another time there be hanged on the cross. Then turned I hither afterwards to Rome. Then said Christ to me, "Thou hast no need to be afraid, for I am with thee until I lead thee into my father's house!" Then, dearest men, hinder not my departure, now my feet go the heavenly way; be not sad but rejoice with me, for now to-day, ye see accomplished the results (fruits) of my toils.' And when this was spoken, then he said, 'I give thanks to thee, Christ, thou good Shepherd, because these sheep that thou

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hast committed to me, compassionate me. I pray thee that they may be participators of thy graces with me. I commit to thee the flock thou didst give me that they may not perceive that they who have thee are without me. Through thee I [was able] to control and to direct this flock, [but] now am unable to do so.' As soon as he had spoken these words he sent onwards his spirit. And forthwith there appeared two men whom no man had ever before seen, or afterwards might see, who said that they came from Jerusalem, and had followed on his (Peter's) account. And they secretly took his body and deposited it in the tomb by Naumachia, and put it in the place called the Vatican. And then said they to all the people, 'Rejoice and be glad, because ye have supplied [to you] great protectors.' And know ye also, ye who are God's friends, that Nero, this worst of kings, after the murder of the apostles, became hated by his army, and at enmity with the Roman people, so that they openly decreed that he, in the place of torture, should be scourged until he died, as was his desert.... As soon as that decision reached him, great fear fell upon him so that he nowhere afterwards appeared to men. There were some men who said that wolves tore and devoured him in the woods, where he, having gone astray, lay stiff with cold and hunger. Then Greeks took the bodies of the holy apostles, and would take them into the East. Then there happened a great earthquake; and all the Roman people deposited the bodies in the place of the Catacombs by the Appian Way, three miles from the city of Rome; and there their bodies were kept for a year and seven months, until they had built the places in which their bodies now rest. And their bodies were then with befitting hymns deposited therein—first, Peter's body in the place called the Vatican, and St. Paul's in the Ostensian Way, two miles from Rome; where the mercies of God are prepared for those who visit those bodies by their prayers, [and] for those men who determinedly (or steadfastly) cease from their sins and iniquities, and make full confession to God and to their confessors, and by their [the shrivers'] decision amend, and never afterwards turn to iniquity. Then receive they forgiveness of all their sins from our Lord, who liveth in the eternal glory, with the Father and Son and Holy Ghost, eternally, world without end. Amen.

XVI. A Fragment

For it often happens that his property cometh into the power of those whom he previously worst liked in this life, sometimes into the wife's power, sometimes into the husband's. And then one will not do anything profitable for his soul, of his gold, silver, or earthly riches, if he previously will not distribute the best portion to God for himself whilst he is alive here. When this man's soul goeth out of his body, who preferred to have his possessions rather than the love of God, then neither the adornment of those gems, nor any of those gold ornaments with which previously his body was superfluously adorned, will help the soul of him who loved earthly acquisitions more than he did his spirit or our Lord who created him. Then shall all earthly joys, the great speeches, excessive drunkenness, the laughters and the impious boasts, which he once loved, all turn to mourning with him, because that he would not previously perceive his future death and the great awe and the horrible Doomsday. 'My brother,' said St. Paul, 'consider now this saying, "Whatever of thy possessions here in the world seem sweetest and dearest, of them shalt thou give God his portion, who previously gave it to thee." If thou wilt not do that, after thy death it shall be very bitterly requited thee.' For he is a very foolish and unwise man in his lifetime who loveth this earthly wealth, and loveth not God who gave it him. All man's friendship is very transitory and very illusory; for our parents die and very often go from us, but he who getteth God's friendship never need think that it shall become changed towards him, but [it] shall for evermore eternally endure.

XVII. Dedication of St. Michael's Church

Dearest men, the honour and the blessedness of the festival of the high and holy archangel, admonisheth and remindeth us that we should say somewhat concerning the blessed memory of him who is to be honoured and glorified throughout the world in his church, consecrated both by his own work and by his own name. And thus it first appeared and was made known to men. She [the church] then shineth not in the beauty of gold and silver, but in especial privileges, through divine power, standeth glorified. She is also in outward appearance of a bad hue, but within she is honoured with everlasting virtue. It may easily be that the holy archangel should come from heaven and should be mindful of men's infirmity, so that he condescended himself to found and to make her (church) with his own hands, so that mortal men might there yearn for the citizenship on high and for the everlasting fellowship. The holy Church of St. Michael is situate upon the high summit of a mountain, and appeared in the form of a cave (or cell). The church (stands) upon the borders of the land of Campania. Then in the neighbourhood towards the sea named Adriatic, there is a very famous city (situate on the hill Garganus), called Sepontus. Then measured from the city's walls up to the high summit of the high archangel's church, of which I previously spoke, there are twelve miles; and she (the church) stands flourishing in bliss and in joy. The same holy book, that was found and discovered in the church, first showed and made known this church. It is recorded therein that there was in the city a certain noble man called Garganus, prosperous in wealth before the world, who bestowed upon the bill the same name by which he was called. The man possessed great wealth; when that these endless hosts and

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innumerable multitude of neat and manifold cattle of the wealthy man increased and flourished to such an extent that he had with his flocks spread and extended as far as the mountain-plain; then it happened that a bull despised the company of the other cattle and abode solitary in the desert, and at last returned [not] to the herd and to the cattle and to their lair. The bull despised the drove of the herdsman and abode in the wilderness, at the door of a certain cavern. When the master was informed that the bull in such arrogance had gone as far as the desert, he was enraged because the bull, as it seemed to him, had insanely gone over the spacious mountain. Then he gathered together a great host of his men, and turned his course through the woods and sought for the proud bull; then at last he found it on the summit of the hill, and saw that it stood at the door of a cave. Then was he greatly moved with anger, because it had gone about so madly and had behaved so arrogantly. Then he took his bow and bent it and then with poisoned arrow began to shoot towards where he saw the bull stand. Then as soon as he let fly the arrow there came a very great gust of wind in his face so that the arrow was immediately turned back and shot that same wealthy man by whom the arrow was previously sent, so that he died forthwith. When the citizens saw that, they became greatly terrified because of the marvel, for such a wonderful thing they had never seen before. And they durst not then approach the place where they saw the bull stand. There was at that same time, in that city of theirs called Sepontus, a holy bishop. Then they visited him and told him of the marvel and asked his instructions as to what they were to do about it. Then he instructed them, and counselled them that they should fast for three days, and desire of St. Michael that God would make known what was concealed and kept secret from men. When they had done [as was bidden them] in fasting, psalm singing and in alms, then at night there appeared to that same bishop the high and the holy archangel Michael, and he meekly and kindly spoke to him, thus saying, 'Worldly and wisely ye acted when ye sought of God in heaven that which was hidden from men on earth. Know thou also that the man who was shot with his own arrow, was so by my will. And my name is Michael. I am the archangel of heaven's King, and I ever stand in his presence. I tell thee now that I especially love this place

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here on earth, and I have chosen it above all others, and will also show by all those tokens that befall there that I am especially the creator and guardian of that place.' When that was told and made known to the citizens, they, very glad and rejoicing, with their bishop visited the place; and after their manner they prayed earnestly to the living God and to the holy archangel Michael. And to God they humbly offered gifts. And they saw there two doors in the church, of which the south door was somewhat greater in form. And as yet they were not able to pass over the cave, as the path where they should go was precipitous, before they had enlarged and completed the ascent. But each day they were occupied earnestly in their prayers. At the same time the Neapolitans their neighbours as yet were erring in heathen customs and served devils. Then they began to challenge the citizens of Benevento and Sepontus, as these two provinces were named, to single combat, and despised scornfully their land and made them no amends for it, but arrogant hostility and threatening. Then their holy bishop instructed and advised them that they should perform a three days' fast and manifold alms and holy psalms; and that they should entreat protection and help from the archangel Michael, as the most faithful guardian, that they might frustrate and overcome the machination of their enemies. Then, at that same time, the heathens shamefully and wickedly invited their false gods with various idols to aid them. Then at the same time the blessed angel Michael appeared in a vision to their bishop, and promised them future victory, and said to them that their prayers were heard of God; and he instructed them that they in the morning, at the third hour, should prepare to set forward against their enemies. And he also promised them that he himself would be a spectator of their proceedings and would be there with them for their succour. They then, very glad and joyful in the morning, proceeded against the heathen. And they knew by the angel's promises both of their victory, and of the flight and destruction of the heathens. Then immediately at the beginning of the fight the mountain on which they should fight was overtaken with horror and dread; and a fierce storm arose from the mountain, and the summit of the mountain was all overhung with a dark mist. Then flew the lightning like fiery arrows against the heathens so thickly that they in no wise were able

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to look towards it because of the lightning's blaze. Then was fulfilled what the prophet had foretold. And he praised the Lord and thus said, '*Qui facit angelos suos spiritus et ministros suos ignem urentem.*' 'Sometimes the same God sendeth his angels' spirits as messengers, at other times he sendeth [them] by a flame of fire.' Then the heathen people fled, and in part the lightning killed them, and in part the Christians harassed them with their weapons, and overwhelmed them, until they had severely vanquished the Neapolitans, and the heathen folk who left their city half dead, and had destroyed those whom the dangers and distresses had spared. Then was it manifested to us Christian people that the angel of God had come for succour and for protection; and forthwith all meekly did obeisance to the King of kings, to Christ himself. Then all the heathen folk yielded to them, and lived according to the lore of Christians and received baptism; and they truly perceived that God's angel had come there for a help and protection to the Christian people. And while the Christian folk were well considering this, then saw they and reckoned that there were also six hundred men killed by the lightning and the fiery arrows alone, besides those whom they had killed and slain with their weapons. They then, thus triumphant and crowned with great bliss, went home and forthwith to Almighty God and to the archangel Michael, at the holy church, they meekly and joyfully gave thanks for the victory which they had obtained. Then found they also before the north-door of the church, in the marble-stone, as it were, a man's footsteps, just as if a man had stood there; and the footsteps were plain and visible in the stone as if they were impressed on wax. Then they perceived plainly that the blessed Michael was present there for a help to them, whilst they were at the battle; and that he himself had ordered the acknowledgment (sign) of the victory and made it known to them in the deep sleep. Upon the stone they at once built a church, and therein sumptuously made and set up an altar; and with great joy afterwards they honoured the place, and those who had great love and belief worshipped at the church. And a great fear also came upon the people; and they were in great anguish of mind and in much doubt as to what they durst do concerning it, whether they should consecrate the church, or what might be the will of God and of the holy artificer who

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made it (the church) with his own hands. They then at first found it advisable to raise a church to the east of the place and to consecrate it to St. Peter the holy disciple of Christ. And therein they put two altars and consecrated one of them to St. Mary, Christ's mother, and the other to St. John the Baptist, Christ's baptismal father (baptizer). Then their venerable bishop proposed a happy and successful plan to them and advised them to send to Rome forthwith to the pope, and that they should inquire and ask of the pope and the episcopal court what seemed advisable to them with regard to this matter, whether they durst consecrate the church in any other wise. The blessed pope then sent back this message and said these words: 'If it be man's duty that he should consecrate the church, then is it most fitting that it should take place on the day in which victory was given them; (but) if the sacred guardian were pleased with or preferred ought else concerning the holy place, then is it altogether best to find out what his will may be with respect to that day. And when the time approaches, then let both of us two with our citizens make a four day's fast, and earnestly entreat the holy Trinity that It (the Trinity) would produce and bring forward the favour—that It would indicate, for men to follow, that wondrous token which It first displayed to men through the holy archangel.' Then they all meekly performed their four days' fast, as the eminent bishop advised them. Then on the night in which they had completed their fast, St. Michael appeared in a vision to the bishop and said unto him, 'Ye need be under no anxiety to consecrate the church, for I have made it and I have consecrated it. Now enter ye therein and wait for me, and believe me indeed to be the guardian of the place, and visit it often in prayers. To-morrow you must sing masses therein, and this people according to custom must go to the Sacrament. I, on my part, will appear by a solemn token, and manifest it, that I myself have hallowed and consecrated it (the church). Then soon on the morrow, rejoicing greatly because of the answer, with much unity of prayers and with offerings of holy psalms, they came thither and all went into the church. On the threshold coming out of the porch door it was evident that the tracks (which I previously said were first found in the marble-stone,) had first commenced in an outward direction. This church with the portico might

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contain and hold some five hundred men. And then there was seen somewhat towards the middle of the south wall the venerable altar. It was covered and spread over with a crimson woven pall. That house was made corner-wise or oblong, not quite after the custom of men's work, so that the walls should be straight, but it appeared rather like a cavern; and frequently the stones as from a cliff steeply projected. The roof also was of various heights—in one place a man might hardly reach it with his hand, and in another easily touch it with his head. I therefore believe that the Archangel of our Lord much more required and loved purity of heart than the adornment of the stones. The knoll was then known as it now is—the hill is large on the outside; and here and there it is overgrown with rimy wood; other parts are covered with green pasture. And after that the holy psalms and masses were finished, they then with great joy and bliss, and with the angel's blessing, returned to their houses. The bishop then appointed them good singers and mass priests, and manifold church ministers, who ever afterwards should daily in proper order carry on the worship. There was no man, however, who durst ever come into the church at night time. But at daybreak, after it had dawned, they assembled therein for psalmody. There was also from the same stone of the church-roof at the north-side of the altar a very pleasant and clear stream issuing, used by those who still dwelt in that place. By this piece of water was a glass vessel, hung on a silver chain, which received this pleasant fluid. And it was the custom of this people, when they had gone to the Sacrament, that they by steps should ascend to the glass vessel and there take and taste the heavenly fluid. It was very pleasant in taste and wholesome to the inside. This was also marvellous, that many men with fever sickness and with various other infirmities through taste of this fluid should at once be made whole. Also in other ways innumerable ailments of men were often and frequently healed; and manifold miracles similar to these there were, and still are seen and manifested, but most frequently on that day which is his (St. Michael's) festival and commemoration. Then from the surrounding provinces come the people, and we must believe and know assuredly that manifold and various diseases are healed there, and the (arch)angel's power and miracles are there revered, and most often shown on that

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day (i.e. St. Michael's); according as St. Paul said, '*Qui ad ministrum summis.*' Angels are as ministering spirits, sent hither into the world by God, to those who with might and main merit from God the eternal kingdom; so that they (the angels) should be a help to those who shall constantly contend against the accursed spirits. But let us now intreat the archangel St. Michael, and the nine orders of the holy angels, that they be our aid against hell-fiends. They (the angels) were the holy ones ready to receive men's souls. As St. Paul was looking towards the northern region of the earth, from whence all waters pass down, he saw above the water a hoary stone; and north of the stone had grown woods very rimy. And there were dark mists; and under the stone was the dwelling place of monsters and execrable creatures. And he saw hanging on the cliff on the icy woods many black souls with their hands bound; and the devils in likeness of monsters were seizing them like greedy wolves; and the water under the cliff beneath was black. And between the cliff and the water there were about twelve miles, and when the twigs brake, then down went the souls who hung on the twigs and the monsters seized them. These were the souls of those who in this world wickedly sinned and would not cease from it before their life's end. But let us now bid St. Michael earnestly to bring our souls into bliss, where they may rejoice without end in eternity. Amen.

XVIII. Festival of St. Martin.

Dearest men, we may in some few words speak to you of the honorable birth and the holy life and death of the blessed man St. Martin, which we now at this present time are celebrating. He was very dear to God on account of his works. He first came into the world in the land of Pannonia, in the town of Sabaria. He was, nevertheless, brought up in the city of Ticino in Italy. In the sight of the world he was of very noble and good birth, but yet his parents, father and mother, were both heathens. His father was first a king's servant (thane), and at last rose to be chief of the king's servants (thanes). Then of necessity was St. Martin in his youth associated with the king's thanes, first in the days of Constantine, and afterwards in those of the emperor Julius. He was not willingly engaged in a worldly occupation; but he soon in his youth much more loved the service of God than the idle vanities of this world. When he was ten years old, and his parents put him to, and taught him, a temporal occupation, then he fled to the church of God, and entreated to be christened, that the first part or his endeavours and of his life might be turned towards belief and baptism. And he was during his whole life wonderfully busy about God's service. When he was fifteen years old, his parents compelled him to take to arms and to be associated with the king's thanes. It was four years before his baptism that he bore arms, and nevertheless he abstained from all those important weapons which benefit worldly men in human affairs. He had great love and all respect to every man, and he was very patient, humble, and moderate in all his life. And though as yet he was compelled to lead the life of a layman, nevertheless he had such circumspection in all things that he even lived more the life of a monk than that of a layman. On

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account of his pious deeds he was loved, honoured, and respected by his companions; and they all severally honoured him with love. And though as yet he was not fully, according to subsequent ordinances, baptized, but was [only] christened, as I before said, nevertheless the sacrament of holy baptism he kept and fulfilled by good deeds. He would aid the struggling, comfort the poor, give meat to the hungry, and clothe the naked, and he gave for God's sake to the poor, all that he acquired in his occupation, except only the daily bread by which he must of necessity live. He was mindful of what the Lord commanded in the Gospel, *de crastino non cogitare*, that the man of God should not take thought of the morrow, lest it happened that he thereby should put off any of the good things that he might do on that present day, and nevertheless must afterwards await the expectation of the morrow. We may now hear related some of the pious deeds which this blessed man St. Martin did early in his military career; though of those good deeds there were more than any one may relate. It happened on a time in midwinter that he went with other servants (thanes) of the king to the city called Ambinensus. The winter was very severe that year, so that many a man on account of the cold lost his life. Then there sat naked at the gate of the town a certain beggar, who demanded for God's sake a garment and alms. Then they all went past him and none of them would turn towards him, nor do him any kindness. Then the man of God, St. Martin, perceived that the Lord had reserved the poor man for him, that he should have pity upon him since none of the other men would act kindly towards him. Nevertheless he knew not what he should do for him, because he [had] nothing else but a single garment, but what he had more he had previously, in a like work, disposed of it all, and had given it away for God's sake. He nevertheless drew his knife, and took his cloak which he had on, and cut it in two and gave half of it to the poor man, and wrapped himself up in the other half. There were many men who saw that and insulted and mocked him for cutting in two his single garment. But others again, who were of a better disposition and had some love to God, chided themselves for not doing so, and knew that they had more, both wherewith to give raiment to the poor and to have enough for themselves. Soon after on the following night it was, when the blessed man slept, that he saw

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Christ himself clad in the same garment which he before had given to the poor man. Then was he commanded more earnestly to observe our Lord and the garment that he had previously given to the poor man. *Mox angelorum circumstantium multitudinem.* Then he saw a great many angels about him, [and] the Lord himself, who, with as familiar a voice as to the angels, said, 'Martin, though thou art christened before thy baptism, [yet] with this garment thou didst clothe me.' By this deed it was very evident that our Lord is mindful of that saying of his which he formerly uttered, '*quamdiu fecisti,*' 'Whatsoever ye should say that ye do to any poor man for good, for my name, even that ye do to me myself.' And he would confirm the saying by that divine action; and he then so humbled himself as to appear to the blessed man, St. Martin, in the poor man's garment. *Quo visu vir non in gloriam elatus est.* When the blessed man, St. Martin, saw that sight, he nevertheless was not greatly exalted in the pride of human glory, but he perceived in that deed of his the goodness of God. When he had completed his eighteenth year, he was baptized according to the ordinances of the church. But he was christened three years previously, as I said before. Then he forsook his occupation, and went away to St. Hilary, the Bishop of Poitiers, who was a very illustrious man in the sight of God; and his goodness was very famous. And he perfectly instructed and taught this blessed man, St. Martin, in God's law and God's service. Moreover, God himself admonished him inwardly, [so that] he was very religious in his conduct, steadfast in his words, and pure and clean in his life; and he was honest, modest, and merciful in his deeds, and diligent in his works concerning the Lord's lore, and in all good things before God very perfect. Then it subsequently happened that this blessed man, St. Martin, built a monastery, and he therein became the spiritual father of many servants of God. Then it happened on a time that there came to him a christened man, who desired to be instructed by his lore and his manner of life. And he was there many days; then he became sick of a fever. It happened then at that time that St. Martin was on a journey fully three days. When he returned home he found the man dead who was previously sick; and behold, death took him off so suddenly that he died unbaptized. When St. Martin saw that, and all the other brothers, all so sorrowful, standing about the body,

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then he wept and went unto him; and he was very much pained that he should thus die unbaptized. He trusted, nevertheless, with all his mind in the power and mercy of Almighty God. And he went into the cell wherein the body was, and commanded the other men to go out, and the doors to be locked after them. And he then prayed and stretched himself over the limbs of the dead man. When he had been a long time in prayer, then he perceived that there was a divine power present, and he joyfully awaited the mercy [of God]. In a little while he perceived that the dead man moved all his limbs, and lifted up his eyes and looked about. When the holy St. Martin saw that, then he rejoiced exceedingly, and cried loudly with a strong voice, and gave thanks to Almighty God for that grace. When the other brethren who were outside heard that, then went they unto him; and they then saw the wonderful event—the man living whom they had previously left dead. And they forthwith baptized him, and he lived many years afterwards. This was the first of wonders that this blessed man openly did before other men. And after this deed his name became ever after honoured and renowned. And all the people perceived that he was holy, mighty, and apostolic in his works. Likewise also there befell afterwards another marvel like to this. On a time this blessed man proceeded to a certain man's town called Lupicinius. Then he heard in that town a great mourning and lamentation, and many cried with a loud voice. Then he stood and asked what the crying might be. Then they told him that a certain man had died by a miserable death, inasmuch as he had destroyed himself. When St. Martin heard of this man's miserable death he was forthwith greatly pained and much grieved, and went into the cell wherein the dead man's body lay; and then he commanded all the other men to go out and to close the doors; and he prostrated himself in prayer. And whilst he was in prayer, suddenly the dead man came to life again, and looked about, and endeavoured to rise. Then St. Martin took him by the hand, and raised him aloft, and led him forth to the hall of the house, and afterwards restored him whole and sound to those men who previously had left him for dead. These wonders and many others Almighty God performed through this blessed man before ever he became a bishop. But after that he received the episcopal office in the city of Tours,

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there is no one that could recount all the marvels which God wrought through him. And though he held a more important office, and should also in the sight of the world be nobler than he was before, nevertheless he had the same humility in his heart, and the same abstinence in regard to his body, both in meat and drink, and also in everything, even as he previously had. And he as fitly held his episcopal office as if he had never abandoned the virtue and prudence of his monastic life. *Omnes namque unanimiter cupiebant.* And almost all men who knew or heard of this blessed man's life, all unanimously desired that they might hear his words and follow his lore, because they plainly perceived the grace and joy of God in him. He was, moreover, very famous through all the earth, and he broke and felled many temples and idols, where heathen men previously made offerings to devils. And then wherever he cast down idols, there he set up God's churches or built completely a monastery. Once upon a time it happened that he began to burn an idol which was held by the heathen in much esteem and distinction. Near the idol which he began to burn a useful house stood; then the wind drove the flame on to the house, and it appeared that it would be quite consumed. When St. Martin saw that, he at once ran up to the house and stood in front of the flame. Then befell a marvellous circumstance—the flame struck and contended against the wind, and behold, even as the wind struck the more violently upon the flame so it the more vehemently strove against the wind, exactly as if it were two creatures fighting one against another. And so the wind was restrained by St. Martin's prayers from hurting any other dwelling, except the idol alone which was burnt there. There also happened afterwards another marvel like to this. He came to a town which was called Librassa, in which was an idol much honoured by the heathen. Then St. Martin determined, at all events, to break and cast down the idol. The heathen opposed him, and angrily drove him away. Then he went straightway to a certain place, and clothed himself with a hair-cloth very hard and unpleasant; and he fasted three days and prayed Almighty God that he, by his divine might, should break and cast down that idol. When he was not able, on account of men's anger, to break it, then there came suddenly to him two angels with shields and spears and furnished with provisions, just

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as if they would proceed to war. And they said that God himself had sent them to put to flight the heathen host, and to help St. Martin, that he might destroy that idol. Then went they afterwards to the town and broke down the idol, and cast it all to the ground. And then the heathen men looked on, but yet were by divine might so greatly terrified, that none of them durst oppose them—but all of them turned to belief in the Lord, and they said unto him that he alone was the true God whom Martin followed, and that their heathen idols were all vain and unprofitable, and were unable to help themselves, or any of those who desired a favour from them. Likewise also it happened on a time when he was destroying an idol, that there ran upon him a great many of the heathen men, and they were all much enraged. And one of them was fiercer and more inflamed than the rest. He drew his sword and intended to slay him. When St. Martin saw that, he forthwith put off his garment from his neck, and stooped forth to the man who purposed to slay him. When the heathen man held up (his sword), with the right hand purposing to slay him, then suddenly he fell backwards, and had no power over his body, but was afflicted by divine power. And then he begged forgiveness of the blessed man (St. Martin). Subsequently also another marvel like to this happened; upon a time when he was breaking and casting down an idol, one of the heathen men drew his sword, purposing to stab him, when suddenly he knew not what had become of the sword he had in his hand. Frequently, when he was breaking vain idols and the heathen were opposing him, through his teaching and through the Lord's grace he turned their hearts to belief in God, so that they at last with their own hands destroyed their vain idols. He was so mighty in healing every sickness, and had received such great grace of God, that there was no one that sought him, be he ever so sick, but was at once restored to health. It also often happened that they brought a part of his garment to a sick man, whereby he at once become whole. And most of all is he to be praised for this—that he would never condescend to any powerful man, nor even to any king through false flattery, more than it were right; but always to every one he spake and did what was true and just. *Vere beatus vir in quo dolus &c.* He was truly a blessed man, never was deceit or guile within his heart. Nor did he condemn any man unjustly, nor returned to any evil for

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evil; nor did any one find him angry or cruel, but he was ever of one mind; and truly one might always see in his disposition and in his countenance heavenly bliss and joy. No one heard from his mouth aught else than the mention of Christ's praise and edifying talk; nor in his heart [was there aught] except piety and pity and peace. So also, long before the day, the blessed man knew of his death, and the Lord had shewed it him – and he told the brethren the time exactly when he should depart from this world. When he learnt that a certain household in his see were at variance and hostile to one another, then would he go thither with his disciples, though he knew that the end of his days was approaching; nevertheless he desired that they all should be at peace before he went from the world. When he had reconciled the household to which he had gone, and was there many days, then he purposed with his disciples to go back to his monastery. But he became suddenly ill and called all his disciples to him, and told them that he should die. And immediately they were very sad, and took on sorrowfully. And they said to him '*Cur nos, pater, deseris aut cui nos desolatos relinquis?*' 'Wherefore, father, leavest thou us now; or if thou departest, to whom dost thou commit us? There will come and rise up wolves that will scatter thy flock; who shall stand against them if thou dost not shield them? We know that it is thy mind's desire to leave this world, and to see Christ, but yet pity us, and be mindful of our necessities.' When they had spoken these words, and he (Martin) saw them all weeping, then he wept himself, and his soul was moved by their words, for he was the kindest of men; and he with weeping voice thus spake unto the Lord, '*Si adhuc populo tuo sum necessarius,*' 'Lord,' he said, 'if I be now still needful for thy people to have here in the world, I refuse not the toil, but let it be according to thy will.' He was so pious that he was both in pain the longer he was from Christ's presence until he should see him. He also even sought the Lord's will and thus said, 'My Lord, long have I now been in hard warfare here in the world, but yet refuse I not longer to be in that warfare, if it rather be thy will; but I, strengthened with thy weapons, will stand fast in thy army and for thy warfare, the while it is thy will.' Not only was the love of God very fervent and bright in the heart of this blessed man, but he also was not afraid of death, but longed very greatly for it when he might depart from

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this world. And so great was his love of men that no labour here in the world appeared too long or too hard, provided that he might win their souls to salvation and counsel. He was attacked by the fever for very many days, but he nevertheless never ceased from God's work, but he sometimes all night kept a vigil in holy prayers; and though his body was so much afflicted by his sickness, nevertheless his mind was firm and joyful in the Lord. And when he rested himself, his noblest bed was on his chest, or else on the naked earth. When his disciples asked that they might put under him some paltry litter on account of his sickness, then he replied, 'Children, do not ask that. It is not befitting a Christian man to do otherwise, except to lie upon ashes and upon dust. If I give you example of aught else, I should then be guilty.' And ever where he lay he had his hands upward, and with his eyes looked up to heaven, whither his mind's thought was ever set. And the servants of God that came to him begged that they might turn him on the other side; and then he said to them, '*Sinite, fratres, sinite, cœlum potius respice.*' 'Cease brothers, cease,' he said, 'let me rather see heaven than earth, that there may be for my Spirit the way to the Lord whither it shall go.' When he had thus spoken, then he saw the accursed spirit, the devil, standing near him. Then said he unto him, '*Quid adstas, cruenda bestia? nihil in me reperies.*' 'Why standest thou, blood-thirsty [beast, thus at hand? Thou wilt not find in me aught that is punishable; but me will the patriarch Abraham receive into his dwelling in eternity.' After these words, the soul forthwith departed from its afflicted body to God].

XIX. St. Andrew

It is here said that after the Lord Jesus Christ ascended up to heaven, the Apostles were together, and they cast lots among them whither each of them should go to teach. It is said that the blessed Matthew was allotted to the city of Marmadonia; it is said moreover that the men of that city ate not bread, neither drank water, but ate men's flesh and drank their blood; and whatsoever stranger came to the city, it is said that they straightway took him and thrust out his eyes; and they gave them to drink poison mingled by powerful magic, and when they had drunk it, forthwith their heart was dissolved and their mind changed. The blessed Matthew went therefore to that city, and straightway they took him and thrust out his eyes, and they gave him poison to drink, and they sent him to prison and bade him swallow the poison, but he would not; wherefore his heart was not dissolved nor his mind changed; but he prayed continually to the Lord with much weeping, and said, 'My Lord Jesus Christ, forasmuch as 'we all left our kin, and followed thee, and thou art the support of us all who believe on thee, behold now and see how these men act towards thy servant. And I pray thee, Lord, that thou grant me the light of mine eyes, that I may see those who prepare for me in this city the worst torments; and forsake me not, Lord Jesus Christ, and give me not up to this most bitter death.' When the blessed Matthew had uttered this prayer, a great and very bright light illumined the prison, and the Lord's voice was in the light, saying, 'Matthew, my beloved one, look on me.' Then Matthew looking, beheld the Lord Christ; and again the Lord's voice said, 'Matthew, be thou strengthened, and be not afraid, for I will never forsake thee; but I will deliver thee from all danger, and all thy brethren, and all those who

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believe on me in all times for ever. But abide here seven and twenty nights, and after that I will send to thee Andrew thy brother, and he shall bring thee out of this prison, and all those that are with thee.' After this was said, the Lord again addressed him, 'Peace be with thee, Matthew.' Then he continued in prayers, and sang the Lord's praises in the prison. And the wicked people came into the prison, that they might bring out the men and eat them. Then the blessed Matthew shut his eyes lest the murderers should see that his eyes had been opened; and they said one to another, 'Three days yet remain, then will we kill him and eat him.' When the blessed Matthew had fulfilled twenty days, then spake the Lord Jesus Christ to Andrew his apostle, when that he was in the land of Achaia and taught his disciples there, saying, 'Go to the city of Marmadonia, and bring Matthew thy brother from out of the prison; for three days yet remain, and then they will slay and eat him.' The holy Andrew answered and said, 'My Lord Jesus Christ, how can I go thither in three days? it were better I think that thou shouldst send thine angel, who may perform the journey more speedily; for thou knowest, my Lord, that I am but a man of flesh, and I cannot perform this journey very quickly, for the way thither is too long, and I know not the road.' The Lord said to him, 'Andrew, hearken to me, for it is I that made thee, and I have fixed and determined this journey for thee; go now therefore to the sea shore with thy disciples, and thou shalt find there a boat on the strand; embark in it with thy disciples.' And when he had said this the Lord Jesus continued to speak, saying, 'Peace be with thee and with all thy disciples;' and he ascended into heaven. *Tunc Sanctus Andreas surgens mane abiit ad mare cum discipulis suis, et vidit naviculam in litore et intra nave sedentes tres viros.* Then the holy Andrew arose in the morning, and went to the sea with his disciples, and he saw a boat on the shore and three men sitting therein, and he rejoiced with great joy, and said to them, 'Brethren, whither sail ye with this small boat?' The Lord Jesus was in the boat as the steersman, and his two angels with him, who were changed into human form. The Lord Christ replied, '[We go] to the city of Marmadonia.' The holy Andrew answered and said, 'Brother, take us with you into the boat, and bring us to that city.' The Lord said to him, 'All men flee from that city; wherefore will ye go thither?' The holy Andrew

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answered him and said, 'We have an unimportant errand thither, and yet it is needful that we fulfil it.' The Lord Jesus said to him, 'Come into the ship to us, and give us your passage money.' The holy Andrew answered him, 'Listen, brothers; we have no passage money, but we are disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom he chose: and he gave us this commandment, saying, When ye go to preach the gospel take with you neither bread nor money, nor twofold raiment. If thou therefore wilt, do us kindness, tell us so quickly, but if thou wilt not, at least make known to us the way.' The Lord Jesus said to him, 'Seeing this commandment was given to you by your Lord, ascend therefore hither joyfully into my boat.' The holy Andrew ascended into the boat, and he sat before the steersman, who was the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus said to him, 'I see that these brethren are wearied of the roughness of the sea: ask them whether they will get out to land, and await thee there until thou fulfil thy business at the place whither thou art sent, and shalt return again to them.' The holy Andrew said to them, 'My children, will ye go to land, and await me there?' His disciples answered and said, 'If we depart from thee, then be we cut off from all the good things that thou hast prepared for us; but we will remain with thee whithersoever thou goest.' The Lord Jesus said to the holy Andrew, 'If thou beest truly the disciple of him who is called Christ, speak to thy disciples concerning the miracles which thy teacher wrought, that their hearts may be cheered, and they may forget the terror of the sea.' The holy Andrew said to his disciples; 'Once upon a time when we were with our Lord, we ascended with him on board ship, and he appeared to us as though he were asleep, to prove us, and he caused the sea to become rough with the wind, so that the waves mounted over the ship. But we were then greatly afraid, and cried to him, our Lord Jesus Christ; and then he arose and commanded the wind that it should be still, and a great calmness came over the sea; and all those who saw his work were afraid. Now, therefore, my children, fear not ye, for our God will not forsake us.' And thus saying, the holy Andrew laid his head upon one of his disciples, and slept. The Lord Jesus perceived that the holy Andrew slept, and said to his angels, 'Take Andrew and his disciples, and set them before the city of Marmadonia, and when ye have placed them there, return to me.' And

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then the angels did as it was commanded them, and the Lord ascended up to heaven. When the morning was come, the holy Andrew lay before the city of Marmadonia, and his disciples asleep with him. And he awoke them and said, 'Arise, my children, and learn the mercy of God, which has now been shown towards us; for we know that it was our Lord who was with us in the boat, and we knew him not; he humbled himself to be a steersman and showed himself to us as a man, to prove us.' Then the holy Andrew looked towards heaven, and said, 'My Lord Jesus Christ, I know that thou art not far from thy servants; and I beheld thee in the boat and spake with thee as with a man. Now therefore, Lord, I pray thee that thou appear to me in this place.' When this was said, the Lord appeared unto him, his face like that of a fair child, and said to him, 'Andrew, rejoice, with thy disciples.' Then the holy Andrew prayed and said, 'Forgive me, my Lord, that I spake to thee as to a man, and perhaps I have sinned in that I knew thee not.' The Lord said to him, 'Andrew, thou didst no whit sin; but for this cause I did it, for that thou saidst that thou couldst not journey to this place in three days. Therefore I so appeared to thee, for I am mighty with a word to do all things, and to appear to every man as it pleaseth me. Now therefore arise, and go into the city to Matthew thy brother, and bring him out of the city, and all those who are with him. Only I make known unto thee, Andrew, that they shall bring many torments upon thee, and shall scatter thy body through the streets of the city, so that thy blood shall flow upon the earth like water, and they will lead thee forth to death, but they shall not be able to kill thee, but many pains they may bring upon thee. But do thou notwithstanding endure all these things, Andrew, and do not thou after their unbelief. [Remember how many afflictions] I suffered of the Jews, who scourged me and spat upon my face. But all this I endured, that I might show you in what manner ye ought to suffer. [Hearken to me, Andrew, and endure these torments, for many are they in this city who shall believe on my name.]' When that the Lord Jesus Christ had said this, he ascended into heaven. Then went the holy Andrew into the city with his disciples, and no man might see him. When they came to the prison door, there found they seven guards standing. The holy Andrew then prayed in his heart, and straightway they became dead men. Then went the holy

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Andrew to the door of the prison, and he made the sign of Christ's cross, and immediately the doors were opened, and he entered into the prison with his disciples, and saw the blessed Matthew sitting alone singing. Then the blessed Matthew and the holy Andrew kissed one another, and the holy Andrew said to him, 'How is it, brother, that thou art found here? There are now yet three days, and then they will slay thee and eat thee.' The holy Matthew answered him and said, 'Brother Andrew, didst thou not hear the Lord say, Lo, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves? It came to pass therefore, when they sent me to this prison, that I prayed our Lord that he would appear, and straightway he showed himself to me, and said to me, Abide here twenty-seven days, and after that I will send Andrew thy brother to thee, and he shall bring thee out of this prison, and all those that are with thee. As the Lord said to me, I now behold it done: and now, brother, what shall we do?' Then the holy Andrew and the holy Matthew prayed to the Lord, and after the prayer the holy Andrew put his hand upon the men's eyes who had been blinded, and they received their sight; and afterwards he set his hand upon their hearts, and their understanding returned to them again. The holy Andrew said to them, 'Go to the lower part of this city, and there ye shall find a great fig tree; sit under it, and eat of its fruit until I come to you.' They said to the holy Andrew, 'Come now with us, for thou art our ruler, lest haply they catch us again and put us to the worst torments.' The holy Andrew said to them, 'Go ye thither, for nothing shall hurt you nor trouble you.' And straightway they all went as the holy Andrew bade them; and there were in the prison two hundred and eight and forty men, and nine and forty women, whom the holy Andrew sent forth therefrom; and he (the holy Andrew) caused the blessed Matthew to go eastward with his disciples, and they settled upon the hill where the blessed apostle Peter was. And he dwelt there with him. Then went the holy Andrew out of the prison, and he began to go out through the midst of the city, and came to a certain place where he saw a column standing, and upon the column a brazen image. And he sat down by the column waiting what should happen to him. Then went out those wicked people that they might bring forth the men and eat them, and they found the prison door open, and the seven

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guards lying dead. When they saw that, they returned again to their rulers and said, 'We found your prison open, and entering in we found no man there.' When the chiefs of the priests heard that, they said among themselves, 'What may this be? Perhaps some miracle has come into the prison, and slain the keepers and suddenly released those who were shut up there.' After these things the devil appeared in the likeness of a youth and said to them, 'Hearken to me and seek out here a certain stranger whose name is Andrew, and kill him: he it is that brought out of the prison those who lay bound there, and he is now in this city: if ye now know him, hasten, my children, and slay him.' The holy Andrew said to the devil, 'O thou shaft hardened to all wickedness, thou that dost ever fight against mankind! My Lord Jesus Christ hath trodden thee down in hell.' When the devil heard this he said to him, 'I hear thy voice but I know not where thou art.' The holy Andrew said to him, 'Inasmuch as thou art blind thou seest not any of God's holy ones.' Then said the devil to the people, 'Behold ye and see him, for he it is that spake to me.' The townspeople ran and shut the gates of the city, and they sought the holy Andrew that they might take him. The Lord Jesus appeared then to the holy Andrew and said to him, 'Arise, Andrew, and show yourself to them, that they may perceive my power to be in thee.' Then the holy Andrew arose in the sight of the people and said, 'I am Andrew whom ye seek.' Then the people ran and took him and said, 'Inasmuch as thou diddest thus to us, we will repay thee again.' And they took counsel how they might slay him. Then went the devil among them and said to the people, 'If it so please you, let us put a rope about his neck, and drag him through the streets of the city, and let us do this until he die, and when he is dead, let us divide his body among our townsfolk.' And when all the people heard that, it pleased them, and straightway they put a rope about his neck, and they dragged him through the streets of the city. And while the blessed Andrew was thus dragged along, his flesh was mingled with the ground so that his blood flowed upon the earth like water. And when evening was come they put him into the prison, and bound his hands behind him and left him; and all his body was crushed. So also on the next day they did the same to him. Then cried the holy Andrew and said, 'My Lord Jesus Christ, come and see what they

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do to me thy servant; and I endure it all for thy commandment which thou gavest me, saying, Do not thou after their unbelief. Behold, Lord, and see what they do to me.' While he thus spake the devil said to the people, 'Smite him on the mouth, that he speak not thus.' Then it came to pass that they shut him up again in the prison. Then took the devil with him seven other devils, which the holy Andrew had put to flight from the place, and they entering into the prison stood in the sight of the blessed Andrew, and reviling him with great reproaches they said, 'What is it thou hast found here? Who shall deliver thee now from our power? Where is thy boasting and thy trust?' Then said the devil to the other devils, 'My children, slay him, for he hath shamed us and our deeds.' Then the devils blew upon the holy Andrew, and they saw the sign of Christ's cross upon his countenance and durst not approach him, but they quickly fled away. The devil said to them, 'My children, wherefore did ye not kill him?' They answered him and said, 'We could not, for we saw the sign of Christ's cross upon his countenance, and we were afraid: we know that before he came into this affliction he was our master; kill thou him if thou canst; we will not obey thee in this, lest haply God deliver him and send us into worse torments.' The holy Andrew said to them, 'Though ye kill me, yet will I not do your will, but I will do the will of my Lord Jesus Christ.' And when they heard this they flew away. On the morrow it came to pass again that they dragged forth the holy Andrew, and he cried with a loud voice to the Lord, and said, 'My Lord Jesus Christ, these torments are sufficient for me, for I am worn out. My Lord Jesus Christ, once thou didst suffer on the cross and thou saidest, Father, wherefore hast thou forsaken me? Now it is three days since I was dragged through the streets of this city; thou knowest, Lord, the weakness of man; receive thou my spirit. Where are thy words, Lord, wherewith thou didst encourage us, saying, If ye obey me and follow me, not one hair of your head shall perish? Behold, Lord, and see how that my flesh and the hairs of my head are mingled with the earth. It is but three days since I was dragged to the fearfulest torments, and thou didst not appear to me. My Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen thou mine heart.' While he prayed thus, the Lord's voice was heard speaking to the holy Andrew in Hebrew, 'My Andrew, heaven and earth may pass away; my words shall

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never pass away. Look behind thee and see thy flesh and the hairs of thy head, what is become of them.' The holy Andrew looked and saw a full-blown tree bearing fruit, and he said, 'Now I know, Lord, that thou hast not forsaken me.' It came to pass in the evening they shut him up in the prison, and they said among themselves, 'For on this night he dieth.' The Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him in the prison, and stretched out his hand and took him and said, 'Andrew, arise.' When he heard that, straightway he arose whole, and he prayed and said, 'I give thee thanks, my Lord Jesus Christ.' Then the holy Andrew looked and saw a column standing in the midst of the prison, and upon the column a stone image; and he stretched out his hand and said to it, 'Fear thou the Lord and the sign of his cross, before which heaven and earth tremble. Now therefore, O image, do that I bid thee in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ. Send a great stream through thy mouth, so that all the men may be destroyed who are in this city.' When the blessed Andrew had thus spoken, straightway the stone image sent forth a great stream through its mouth like brine, and it consumed the men's bodies and killed their children and their cattle. And they all strove to flee from the city. Then said the holy Andrew, 'My Lord Jesus Christ, forsake me not, but send me thine angel from heaven in a fiery cloud that he may compass all this city, that men may not approach it for the fire.' And as he thus spake, a fiery cloud descended from heaven, and it surrounded all the city. When the blessed Andrew perceived that, he blessed the Lord. And the water increased up to the height of a man's neck and fiercely consumed their bodies. And they all cried and said, 'Woe to us, for all these things have come upon us on account of this stranger whom we shut up in the prison. What shall we now do?' Some of them said, 'If it so please you, let us go to the prison and bring him out therefrom, lest perhaps we perish miserably; and let us all cry, and say that we believe on the Lord of this stranger; then will he remove these afflictions from us.' When the blessed Andrew perceived that they were turned to the Lord he said to the stone image, 'Cease now, through the might of our Lord, and send forth no more water out of thy mouth.' And this said, the water ceased and came forth no more out of its mouth. Then went the holy Andrew out of the prison, and the water itself did him

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reverence before his feet. And they who remained came to the prison door and said, 'Pity us, O God, and do not to us as we did to this stranger.' Then prayed the holy Andrew in the sight of the people, and the earth opened and swallowed up the water with the dead men. The people who saw that were greatly afraid and said, Woe to us, for this death is from God, and he will kill us for the afflictions which we wrought upon this man. Truly he is sent from God, and he is God's servant.' The holy Andrew said to them, 'My children, be not afraid, for those who are now in this water shall live again. And for this cause has this thing happened, that ye may believe on my Lord Jesus Christ.' Then prayed the holy Andrew to the Lord and said, 'My Lord Jesus Christ, send thine Holy Spirit, that he may awaken all those who are in this water, that they may believe on thy name.' Then the Lord bid all those who were in the water to arise. And after this the holy Andrew caused a church to be built on the spot where the column stood. And he gave them the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ, and said, 'Love him, for great is his power.' And he set one of their chief men as bishop over them, and baptized them and said, 'Now then I am ready to go to my disciples.' Then they all besought him and said, Stay with us yet a little time, that thou mayest establish tranquillity amongst us, because we are newly turned to this faith.' But the holy Andrew would not hearken to them, but he bade them farewell and so left them. And a great multitude of the people followed him weeping and crying. And there shone a light over their heads, while the holy Andrew was journeying thence, and the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to him on the way in the form of a fair child, and said to him, 'Andrew, wherefore departest thou thus without fruit of thy labour, and hast forsaken those who besought thee, and pitiedst not the children of those who followed thee weeping? Their clamor and cry have ascended up to me in heaven. Now therefore return again to the city, and remain there seven days, that thou mayest confirm their minds in my faith. Go then to the city [and abide there] with thy disciples, and with those also who believe in my faith.' When he had said this, the Lord Jesus Christ ascended up to heaven, and the blessed Andrew returned to the city Marmadonia and said, 'I bless thee, my Lord Jesus Christ, thou that turnest all souls to thee, that thou didst not let me depart in my anger from this

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city.' And the people rejoiced with great joy. And he abode with them there seven days, teaching and confirming their hearts in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. When the seven days were, fulfilled, as the Lord had commanded him, he departed from the city Marmadonia and hastened to his disciples; and all the people conducted him forth with joy and said, 'There is one Lord God, he is Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, to whom is glory and power, in the holy Trinity, everlastingly, world without end, for ever.'