

## THE THREE GREATEST PRAYERS

*Commentaries on the Our Father, the  
Hail Mary and the Apostles' Creed*

by  
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## INTRODUCTION

THE Conferences here translated were preached in the evening to the students and townsfolk of Naples during the Lent of 1273.<sup>1</sup> It is probable that they were given in the local dialect and were reported in Latin by Reginald of Piperno.

St. Thomas died on the following 7th of March, at Fossanova near by, on his way north to attend the 14th Œcumenical Council at Lyons. On hearing of his death, the University of Paris on the 2nd of May wrote a letter of condolence to the General Chapter of the Dominicans which was held at Lyons that Whitsuntide, adding a request for copies of the Master's writings completed since his departure from Paris two years before. The Chapter commissioned Reginald of Piperno, who had been the secretary and companion of St. Thomas since 1259, to draw up an authentic list. The original manuscripts had been left to the Priory of St. Dominic at Naples, though the exemplars of some earlier works, notably the *Summa Theologica* and the *Contra Gentes*, were at Paris. Reginald, however, possessed all the writings of the saint.

The catalogue he made is the original and official one.<sup>2</sup> It ends with a list of works ascribed to St. Thomas, not written or edited by him, but reported from his lecturing and preaching, either by Reginald himself or by his colleague, Peter d'Andria. These include the Conferences on the Our Father and on the Apostles' Creed (*Collationes<sup>3</sup> De Pater Noster, et Credo in Deum*).

The Conferences on the *Hail Mary* do not appear in the list, yet a copy was sent to the University with the others, and the work

<sup>1</sup> Cf. P. Mandonnet, O.P., *Le Carême de saint Thomas d'Aquin à Naples. S. Tommaso d'Aquino: Miscellanea storico-artistico*, Rome, 1924.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. P. Mandonnet, O.P., *Les 'Opuscules' de saint Thomas d'Aquin*, Paris, 1927.

<sup>3</sup> MS. collectiones.

appears in a later catalogue, of which there is an early fourteenth-century (possibly late thirteenth century) manuscript in the Library of Saint-Geneviève at Paris and another at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. De Rubeis<sup>4</sup> calls it a little commentary, *commentariolus*, and refutes those who would attribute it either to the Augustinian Henry de Wrimaria or to Pope Innocent III. Some doubt as to its authenticity was felt owing also to a misunderstanding of St. Thomas's position with regard to the Immaculate Conception, for it is, in the words of Ptolemy of Lucca, a treatise to the effect that the Blessed Virgin surpassed the angels in fullness of glory and grace. It was even alleged that on this account the text was tampered with in the printed Antwerp edition of 1612. Yet it stands with the other works in the last of the classical catalogues made by Bernard Guidonis for the canonisation of St. Thomas in 1323,<sup>5</sup> and there is solid ground for supposing that it truly reports the words of St. Thomas to his fellow-countrymen.

THOMAS GILBY, O.P.

<sup>4</sup> *De Gestis et Scriptis ac Doctrina S. Thomae Aquinatis. Diss. VIII, cc. i & ii*, Venice, 1750.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. P. Mandonnet, O.P., *Des écrits authentiques de saint Thomas d'Aquin*, Fribourg, 1910.

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## EIGHTH ARTICLE

### I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY GHOST

As we have said above, the Word of God is the Son of God, even as man's word is a conception of man's intellect. Now man's word is sometimes a dead word; for instance, if he thinks of what he ought to do, whereas he has not the will to do it: such is faith without works, in which case faith is said to be dead (Jas. ii, 26). But God's is a living Word: *The word of God is living* (Heb. iv, 12), and therefore in God besides the Word there is will and love: hence Augustine (*De Trin.* ix, 10) says: *The Word of which we wish to speak is knowledge with love*. Now just as the Word of God is the Son of God; so is God's love the

Holy Ghost: and consequently a man has the Holy Ghost when he loves God: *The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given to us* (Rom. v, 5)

Now some through entertaining a false opinion about the Holy Ghost held Him to be a creature; that He is less than the Father and the Son; and that He is God's servant and minister. Wherefore in order to condemn these errors, the holy Fathers added to the second Creed five clauses about the Holy Ghost.

In the first place although there are other spirits, namely the angels, they are God's ministers: *Are thy not all ministering spirits?* (Heb. i, 14): whereas the Holy Ghost is the Lord: *God is a Spirit* (John iv, 24): *The Lord is a Spirit* (2 Cor. iii, 17): and consequently where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (ibid.): the reason being that He makes us love God and cease to love the world. Hence the words: *I believe in the Holy Ghost, Lord.*

Secondly, the soul's life is to be united to God, in as much as God is the life of the soul, as the soul is of the body. Now the Holy Ghost unites us to God by love, for He is Himself God's love, wherefore He gives life: *It is the Spirit that quickeneth* (John vi, 64): hence they added, *and Life-giver*. The third is that the Holy Ghost is one in substance with the Father and the Son: because just as the Son is God's Word, so the Holy Ghost is the love of the Father and Son. Consequently He proceeds from both: and just as God's Word is one in substance with the Father, even so God's Love is one in substance with the Father and the Son. Hence the addition, *Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son* whence it is evident that He is not a creature.

The fourth is that He is to be worshipped equally with the Father and the Son: *True adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth* (John iv, 23). *Teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost*. For this reason the following clause is added: *Who, together*

*with the Father and Son, is equally adored.*

The fifth, whereby He is declared to be equal to God, is that the holy prophets spoke on behalf of God. Now it is clear that if the Holy Ghost were not God, it could not be said that the prophets spoke on His behalf: and yet Peter states (2 Pet. i, 21) that: *The holy men of Gods spoke inspired by the Holy Ghost.—The Lord God hath sent me, and his Spirit* (Isa. xlviii, 16), and, therefore, we have this clause added: *Who spoke by the prophets.*

Hereby two errors stand condemned: the error of the Manicheans who said that the Old Testament did not come from God: and this is false since the Holy Ghost spoke by the prophets—and the error of Priscilla and Montanus who maintained that the prophets spoke not on behalf of the Holy Ghost, but as though they were out of their minds.

We derive many fruits from the Holy Ghost.

(a) The first is that He cleanses us from our sins. The reason for this is that a thing is repaired by the same one as made it. Now the soul is created by the Holy Ghost, since by Him God makes all things: in as much as it is through loving His own goodness that God is the cause of all: *Thou lovest all the things that are, and hatest none of the things that thou hast made* (Wisd. xi, 25), in which sense Dionysius (*Div. Nom.*, iv) says: *God's love did not allow him to be barren*. Consequently the human heart which is ruined by sin must needs be restored by the Holy Ghost: *Send forth thy Spirit and they shall be created, and thou shalt renew the face of the earth* (Ps: ciii, 30). Nor need we wonder that the Spirit cleanses, seeing that all sins are forgiven through love: *Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much* (Luke vii, 47). *Charity covereth all sins* (Prov. x, 12). *Charity covereth a multitude of sins* (1 Pet. iv, 8).

(b) Secondly, the Holy Ghost enlightens our mind, because whatsoever we know, it is

through the Holy Ghost that we know it: *But the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, whom the Father will send in my name, will himself teach you all things and will bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you* (John xiv, 26). *His unction teacheth you of all things* (1 John ii, 27)

(c) The Holy Ghost helps us, and to a certain extent compels us, to keep the commandments. Because none can keep the commandments unless he loves God: *If any man love me, he will keep my word* (John xiv, 23). Now the Holy Ghost makes us love God; therefore He helps us to keep the commandments: *I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit in the midst of you; and I will cause you to walk in my commandments and to keep my judgements and do them* (Ezech. xxxvi, 26, 27)

(d) He strengthens our hope of eternal life, in as much as He is a kind of surety that we shall inherit it; hence the Apostle says (Eph. i, 13): *You were signed with the Holy Spirit of promise who is the pledge of our inheritance: for He is, as it were, a token of eternal life.* The reason is that eternal life is due to a man, in as much as he is made a son of God: and this is effected through his becoming like unto Christ: and a man becomes like unto Christ through having the Spirit of Christ, and this is the Holy Ghost: *For you have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons whereby we cry: Abba (Father). For the Spirit himself giveth testimony to our spirit that we are the sons of God* (Rom. viii, 15, 16). *And because you are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts crying: Abba, Father* (Gal. iv. 6).

(e) He counsels us when we are in doubt, and teaches us what is God's will: *He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches* (Apoc. ii, 17). *That I may hear him as a master* (Isa. I, 4).

## NINTH ARTICLE

### I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH

As in one man there is one soul and one body, yet many members withal: even so the Catholic Church is one body, having many members. The soul that quickens this body is the Holy Ghost: and therefore after confessing our belief in the Holy Ghost, we are bid to believe in the Holy Catholic Church: hence the Creed continues—*The Holy Catholic Church.*

Here be it observed that the word *Ecclesia* (Church) signifies assembly: wherefore the Holy Church signifies the assembly of the faithful, and the individual Christian is as a member of the Church, of which it is said (Ecclus. li, 3 1): *Draw near to me, ye unlearned, and gather yourselves together into the house of discipline.* This Holy Church has four conditions in that she is one, holy, catholic, i.e. universal, and strong, i.e. firmly established.

(1) With regard to the first, it must be noted that although various heretics have formed themselves into various sects, they do not belong to the Church, since they are so many divisions, whereas the Church is one: *One is my dove: my perfect one is but one* (Cant. vi, 8). The unity of the Church arises from three sources.—Firstly, from the unity of faith, in as much as all Christians who belong to the body of the Church have the same belief: *I beseech You . . . that you all speak the same thing: and that there be no schisms among you* (1 Cor. i, 10). *One God, one faith, one baptism* (Eph. iv, 10). —Secondly, from the unity of hope, since all are confirmed in the hope of obtaining eternal life: wherefore the Apostle says (Eph. iv, 4): *One body, and one Spirit: as you are called in one hope of your calling.* —Thirdly, from the unity of charity, in as much as all are united in loving God, and bound to one another in mutual love: *The glory which thou hast given me, I have given to them: that they may be one as we also are one* (John xvii, 22). If this love

is true it is evinced in the mutual solicitude and sympathy of the members: *That we may in all things grow up in him who is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body being compacted and fitly joined together, by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in charity* (Eph. iv, 15, 16), because each one ought to be of service to his neighbour by making use of the grace that God has bestowed upon him. Therefore no man should think it of small account or allow himself to be cut off and expelled from this Church: for there is but one Church wherein men find salvation, even as outside the Ark of Noe it was not possible for anyone to be saved.

(2) With regard to the second, be it observed that there is also another assembly, that of the wicked: *I have hated the assembly of the malignant* (Ps. xxv, 5). But this is an evil assembly, whereas Christ's Church is holy: *The temple of God is holy, which ye are* (1 Cor. iii, 17); hence the words, *The holy . . . Church*. In this Church the faithful are sanctified by four things.

(a) In the first place, just as when a church is consecrated, it is cleansed materially, even so the faithful are washed with the blood of Christ: *He hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood* (Apoc. i, 5). *Jesus, that he might sanctify the people by his own blood, suffered outside the gate* (Heb. xiii, 12).

(b) Secondly, they are sanctified by being anointed because, just as a church is anointed, so also are the faithful anointed with a spiritual unction unto sanctification; otherwise they would not be Christians, since Christ is the same as Anointed. This unction is the grace of the Holy Ghost: *God who hath anointed us* (2 Cor. ii, 21). *Ye are sanctified . . . in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ* (1 Cor. vi, 11).

(c) Thirdly, by the indwelling Trinity, since wheresoever God dwells, that place is holy: *Verily, this place is holy* (Gen. xxviii, 16).

*Holiness becometh thy house, O Lord* (Ps. xcii, 5).

(d) Fourthly, because God is invoked over them: *But thou, O Lord, art among us, and thy name hath been called upon us* (Jer. xiv, 9).

We must, therefore, beware, seeing that we are thus sanctified, lest by sin we defile our soul which is God's temple: *If any man violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy* (1 Cor. iii, 17)

(3) With regard to the third, we must observe that the Church is catholic or universal—firstly, in point of place, in that it is spread throughout the whole world, contrary to the teaching of the Donatists: *Your faith is spoken of in the whole world* (Rom. i, 8). *Go ye into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature* (Mark xvi, 15). Formerly, God was known only in Judea, whereas now He is known throughout the whole world. In this sense the Church has three parts: one is on earth, another in Heaven, the third is in Purgatory. —Secondly, the Church is universal as regards the different conditions of humanity, in as much as no exceptions are made, for it includes master and servant, male and female: *There is neither male nor female* (Gal. iii, 28).—Thirdly, it is universal in point of time. For there have been those who said that the Church was to last until a certain time; but this is false, since this Church began from the time of Abel and will endure to the end of the world: *Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world* (Matt. xxviii, 20), and after the end of the world it will continue in Heaven.

(4) The fourth condition is that the Church is firmly established. A house is said to be firmly established when (a) it has good foundations. Now the Church's chief foundation is Christ: *Other foundation no man can lay but that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus* (1 Cor. iii, 11). The Apostles and their doctrine are the Church's secondary foundation, whence she derives her stability

which is described (Apoc. xxi, 14) where it is said that the city had *twelve foundations, wherein were inscribed the names of the twelve apostles*. Hence the Church is called Apostolic. Moreover, it was to indicate the stability of the Church that the Blessed Peter is called the head.

(b) Secondly, a house is proved to be firmly built if, however much it be shaken, it remains standing; and the Church has ever proved indestructible. Her persecutors have failed to destroy her; in fact, it was during times of persecution that the Church grew more and more; the persecutors themselves, and those whom the Church would destroy, these it was who came to naught: *Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind to powder* (Matt. xxi, 44).—Again, errors have assailed her; in fact, the greater the number of errors that have arisen, the more has the truth been made manifest: *Men corrupt in mind, reprobate in faith: but they shall proceed no further* (2 Tim. iii, 8).—Nor has the Church failed before the assaults of demons: for she is like a tower of refuge to all who fight against the devil: *The name of the Lord is a strong tower* (Prov. xviii, 10). Hence the devil does his utmost to destroy the Church: but he prevails not, for our Lord said (Matt. xvi, 18) that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*, as though to say: ‘They will war against thee, but they shall not overcome thee.’ The result is that alone the Church of Peter (to whom it befel to evangelize Italy when the disciples were sent to preach) was always strong in faith; and whereas outside that Church there is either no faith at all, or it is mingled with many errors, nevertheless the Church of Peter flourishes in faith and is immune from error. Nor need we wonder at this, since the Lord said to Peter (Luke xxii, 32): *I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith may not fail*.

## TENTH ARTICLE

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS,  
THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS

Just as in a physical body the operation of one member conduces to the good of the whole body, so is it in a spiritual body such as the Church. And since all the faithful are one body, the good of one member is communicated to another: every one, as the Apostle says (Rom. xii, 5), *members, one of another*. Wherefore among the points of faith handed down by the Apostles, is that there is a community of goods in the Church, and this is expressed in the words *Communion of saints*. Now of all the members of the Church Christ is the principal, for He is the head: *He . . . hath made him head over all the Church which is his body* (Eph. i, 22). Accordingly Christ’s good is communicated to all Christians, even as the power in the head is shared by all the members.

This communication is effected by the sacraments of the Church, wherein the power of Christ’s Passion operates, the effect of which is the bestowal of grace unto the remission of sins. These sacraments of the Church are seven in number. The first is *Baptism*, which is a spiritual regeneration: for just as a man cannot live in the flesh unless he is born in the flesh, even so a man cannot have the spiritual life of grace unless he be born again spiritually. This regeneration is effected by Baptism: *Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost he cannot enter into the kingdom of God* (John iii, 5). And it should be remarked that as a man can be born but once, so is he baptized but once. For this reason the holy Fathers<sup>6</sup> added the words: *I confess one Baptism*. The power of Baptism consists in cleansing a man from all his sins as regards both stain and punishment; for which reason no penance is enjoined to those who receive Baptism, no matter how great sinners they may have been. And if they were to die immediately after Baptism, they would rise at once to eternal life. Another result is that although none but a priest may baptize *ex officio*, in cases of necessity anyone may baptize, provided he observe the form of Baptism which is — *I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy*

<sup>6</sup> At the Council of Nicea.

*Ghost.* This sacrament derives its efficacy from Christ's Passion: *All we who are baptized in Christ Jesus, are baptized in his death* (Rom. vi, 3). For this reason it is that as Christ was three days in the tomb, so Baptism is conferred by a triple immersion.<sup>7</sup>—The second sacrament is that of *Confirmation*. For just as those who are born in the body need to be fortified in order that the body become operative, even so those who are reborn in the spirit need to be fortified by the Holy Ghost. Hence the Apostles, in order that they might become strong, received the Holy Ghost after Christ's ascension: *Stay you in the city till you be endued with power from on high* (Luke xxiv, 49). This power is conferred in the sacrament of Confirmation; and, therefore, those who have charge of children ought to be most careful to see that they be confirmed, because great grace is bestowed in Confirmation: besides, one who is confirmed receives, when he dies, greater glory than one who has not been confirmed, because he has received more grace.—The third sacrament is the *Eucharist*. As in the life of the body, after a man is born and become strong, he requires food that his life may be preserved and sustained; so also in the spiritual life, after being fortified, he requires spiritual food, which is Christ's body: *Unless you shall eat of the flesh of the Son of man, and drink of his blood, you shall not have life in you* (John vi, 54). For this reason the Church has ordained that every Christian once a year must receive the body of Christ; worthily, however, and with a clear conscience: since he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, i.e. being conscious of mortal sin which he has not confessed or from which he does not purpose to abstain, *eateth and drinketh judgement to himself* (1 Cor. xi, 29).—The fourth sacrament is *Penance*. In the life of the body a man is sometimes sick, and unless he take medicine, he will die: even so in the spiritual life a man is sick on account of sin; wherefore he needs medicine that he may be

<sup>7</sup> Baptism by immersion was still in vogue at the time of St. Thomas; the triple immersion was replaced by the present rite in which the water is poured three times.[Dr. Ford's comment: "How times have changed—again!"]

restored to health; and this grace is bestowed in the sacrament of Penance: *Who forgiveth all thy iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases* (Ps. cii, 3). Three conditions are necessary for Penance: contrition, which is sorrow for sin, together with a purpose of amendment; confession of sins without any omission; and satisfaction by means of good works.—The fifth sacrament is *Extreme Unction*. In this life man encounters many obstacles which prevent him from being perfectly cleansed from his sins. And since none can enter eternal life unless he be entirely cleansed from sin, another sacrament was needed whereby a man is cleansed from sin, delivered from his weakness, and prepared to enter the heavenly kingdom, and this is the sacrament of Extreme Unction. That this sacrament does not always restore the health of the body is because it may be that a man's life is not expedient for the salvation of his soul: *Is any man sick among you? let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man: and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he be in sins they shall be forgiven him* (Jas. v. 14, 15). Accordingly it is clear how by the five foregoing sacraments a man obtains perfection in the spiritual life. Since, however, these same sacraments need to be conferred by certain definite ministers, hence arose the necessity of the sacrament of *Orders* by means of which the above sacraments are dispensed. Nor need we consider the ministers' manner of life, if at times they fall into evil ways: the point to consider is the power of Christ, which gives efficacy to the sacraments whereof they are the dispensers: *Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God* (1 Cor. iv, 1). This then is the sixth sacrament, namely, Orders.—The seventh sacrament is *Matrimony*, wherein if men lead a pure life they are saved, since thereby they are enabled to live without mortal sin. Sometimes married people fall into venial sins, provided their concupiscence does not lead them to act against the blessings of matrimony: whereas if they go beyond this they fall into mortal sin.

**ELEVENTH ARTICLE**  
THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

By these seven sacraments we receive the remission of sins: wherefore there follows immediately, *The forgiveness of sins*, thus expressing our belief that the Apostles received the power to forgive sins: wherefore we must believe that the ministers of the Church, who derive this power from the Apostles, who received it from Christ, have power in the Church to bind and to loose, and that there is in the Church full power to forgive sins: which power, however, is possessed in various degrees, descending from the Pope to other prelates.

It must be observed also that not only is the efficacy of Christ's Passion communicated to us, but also the merits of His life; and besides this all the good deeds of holy men are communicated to those who are in a state of grace, because all are one: *I am a partaker with all them that fear thee* (Ps. cxviii, 63). Hence it is that a man who lives in the state of grace is a partaker of all the good that is done in the whole world; but in a special way those for whom specially a good deed is done: since one man can satisfy for another, as instanced in those benefits to which many societies admit certain persons.

Through this communion, then, we derive a twofold benefit. One is that Christ's merit is communicated to all; the other is that one man's good is communicated to another: wherefore those who are excommunicated, by the very fact that they are outside the Church, forfeit a share in all the good that is done: which is a greater loss than the loss of any temporal good. They incur besides another risk: for it is clear that by this mutual assistance the devil is balked in his temptations; so that when a man is deprived of these aids, the devil overcomes him with ease. For this reason in the early Church, when a person was excommunicated, it was not uncommon for him to experience in his body the assaults of the devil.

Not only does the Holy Ghost sanctify the Church as regards our souls, but also it is by His power that our bodies will rise again: *Who raised up Jesus Christ our Lord from the dead* (Rom. iv, 24). *For by a man came death, and by a man the resurrection of the dead* (1 Cor. xv, 21). Hence we believe, according to our faith, that there will be a resurrection of the dead.

Here four points arise for our consideration. **(1)** The first is the profit we are to derive from our faith in the resurrection: **(2)** the second is the condition of those who will rise again, as regards all in general: **(3)** the third is their condition as regards the good: **(4)** the fourth is their condition as regards the wicked.

**(1)** As regards the first point, it is well to observe that faith and hope in the resurrection are profitable to us in four ways: (a) By removing the sadness occasioned by the death of others, since it is impossible for a man not to grieve at the death of one who is dear to him, but in as much as he hopes that he will rise again, his sorrow for his death is much alleviated: *We will not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that you be not sorrowful, even as others who have no hope* (1 Thess. iv, 12).

**(b)** By removing the fear of death, because if man had no hope of another and a better life after death, without doubt death would be very dreadful, and man would be guilty of any wicked deed rather than taste death. But since we believe that there is another and a better life to which we shall come after death, it is evident that none should fear death or do anything wrong through fear of death: *That through death he might destroy him who had the empire of death, that is to say, the devil: and might deliver them who through the fear of death were all their lifetime subject to servitude* (Heb. ii, 14, 15).



(c) By making us bethink ourselves of and apply ourselves to the performance of good works. For if man could look forward to no other life beyond this present life, he would have no great motive to do good works, since whatever he did would count for little, seeing that his desire is not confined to any particular good at any particular time, but looks to eternity. But because we believe that in return for what we do now we shall receive eternal goods at the resurrection, therefore do we apply ourselves to doing good: *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable* (1 Cor. xv, 19).

(d) By drawing us away from evil. For just as the hope of a reward is a motive for good works, so fear of punishment which we believe to be reserved for the wicked is a motive for avoiding evil deeds: *And they that have done good things shall come forth unto the resurrection of life: but they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgement* (John v, 29).

(2) In connection with the second point it should be observed that four conditions will attach to all who will rise again.

(a) The first regards identity of body after resurrection seeing that the same body that now is with its flesh and bones will rise again — although some maintained that this very body which is corruptible here below will not rise again; which is contrary to the Apostle's statement (1 Cor. xv, 53), that *this corruptible must put on incorruption*, and because Holy Writ says that by God's power the same body will come back to life: *I shall be clothed again in my skin and in my flesh I shall see God* (Job xix, 26).

(b) The second condition regards the quality of the bodies in the resurrection, for they will be of a different quality from that which they have now. Thus both good and wicked will rise with incorruptible bodies, since the good will be for ever in glory, and the wicked in everlasting punishment: *this corruptible must*

*put on incorruption: and this mortal must put on immortality* (1 Cor. xv, 53). And since the body will be incorruptible and immortal there will be no use for food or ventry: *In the resurrection thy will neither marry nor be given in marriage, but will be as the angels in heaven* (Matt. xxii, 30). This is against the Jews and Mohammedans: *Nor shall he return any more into his house* (Job vii, 10).

(c) The third condition concerns the integrity of bodies in the resurrection, since all both good and wicked will arise with all that bodily integrity which appertains to the perfection of man: thus none will be blind or lame or suffering from any defect: *The dead shall rise again incorruptible* (1 Cor. xv, 52), i.e. impassible to the corruptions of the present life.

(d) The fourth condition regards age, in as much as all will rise again of a perfect age, namely that which corresponds to the age of thirty-two or thirty-three years. The reason for this is that those who have not reached that age are not of a perfect age, and the old have already passed this: so that young people and children will receive what they lack, and to the old will be restored what they have lost: *Until we all meet into the unity of faith . . . unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ* (Eph. iv, 13).

(3) Regarding the third point, the good will have a special glory, because the saints will have glorified bodies, which will be endowed with four gifts.

(a) The first is clarity: *The just shall shine as the sun in their Father's kingdom* (Matt. xiii, 43).

(b) The second is impassibility: *It is sown in dishonour it shall rise in glory* (1 Cor. xv, 43). *God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and death shall be no more. Neither mourning, nor cry, nor sorrow shall be any more; for the former things are passed away* (Apoc. xxi, 4).

(c) The third is agility: *The just shall shine*

and shall run to and fro like sparks among the reeds (Wisd. iii, 7).

(d) The fourth is subtilty: *It is sown a natural body: it shall rise a spiritual body* (1 Cor. xv, 44), not that it will be a spirit altogether, but because it will be wholly subject to the spirit.

(4) Concerning the fourth it must be observed that the state of the damned will be contrary to that of the blessed, since they will be in a state of eternal punishment, to which a fourfold evil condition attaches.

(a) Their bodies will be darksome: *Their countenances shall be as faces burnt* (Isa. xiii, 8).

(b) Their bodies will be passible, and yet never destroyed for they will burn for ever in the fire, and will never be consumed: *Their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched* (Isa. lxvi, 24).

(c) Their bodies will be weighed down, for the soul will be as it were enchained therein: *To bind their kings with fetters and their nobles with manacles of iron* (Ps. cxlix, 8).

(d) Both body and soul will be, so to speak, carnal: *The beasts have rotted in their dung* (Joel i, 17).

## TWELFTH ARTICLE LIFE EVERLASTING. AMEN

It is becoming that the last article of faith in the Creed should give expression to that which is the end of all our desires, namely eternal life, in the words, *life everlasting. Amen*: an article which is contradicted by those who pretend that the soul perishes with the body. If this were true man would be of the same condition as the beasts. To those who hold this opinion we may apply the words of the Psalmist (Ps. xlvi, 21): *Man whereas he was in honour, understood it not; he hath been compared to senseless*

*beasts, and made like to them.* Because the human soul is likened to God in point of immortality, whereas in point of sensuality he is like the beasts; so that when a man believes that his soul dies with his body, he abandons his likeness to God and becomes like a beast. Against these it is said (Wisd. ii, 22, 23): *They . . . hoped not for the wages of righteousness, nor esteemed the honour of holy souls. For God created man incorruptible, and to the image of his own likeness he made him.*

(1) In this article we must first consider what eternal life is, and in this connection the first thing to be noted is that in eternal life man is united to God: since God Himself is our reward and the end of all our labours: *I am thy protector and thy reward exceeding great* (Gen. xv, 1). This union with God consists (a) in seeing Him perfectly: *We see now through a glass in a dark manner, but then face to face* (1 Cor. xiii, 12). (b) It consists in perfect praise: *We shall behold, we shall love, and we shall praise*, as Augustine says (*De Civ. Dei*, xxii). *Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of praise* (Isa. li, 3). (c) Eternal life is the perfect fulfilment of desire; in as much as each of the blessed will have more than he desired or hoped for. The reason for this is because in this life no man can fulfil his desires, nor can any creature satisfy a man's craving; for God alone satisfies and infinitely surpasses man's desire which for that reason is never at rest save in God: *Thou hast made us, O Lord, for thyself and our heart is restless until it rests in thee* (Augustine, *Conf.* 1). And since in Heaven the Saints will possess God perfectly, it is evident that their desire will be satisfied and that their glory will surpass their expectation; hence our Lord said (Matt. xxv, 21): *Enter into the joy of the Lord*, which Augustine explains by saying: *Their whole joy will not enter into the joyful, but the joyful will enter into joy.—I shall be satisfied when thy glory shall appear* (Ps. xvi, 15). *Who filleth thy desire with good things* (Ps. cii, 5), because whatsoever is delightful will all be there superabundantly.—Thus if we desire pleasure, there will be supreme and most perfect delight,

in that its object will be God the sovereign good: *Then shalt thou abound in delights in the Almighty* (Job xxii, 26). *At thy right hand are delights even to the end* (Ps. xv, 11).—Again, if we desire honours, all honour will be there. The highest ambition of a man, if he be a layman, is to be a king; and if he be a cleric, is to be a bishop, and both these honours are there: *Thou hast made us to our God a kingdom and priests* (Apoc. v, 10). *Behold how thy are reckoned among the sons of God* (Wisd. v, 5).—Again, if we desire knowledge, there will be most perfect knowledge: because we shall know all natures of all things, and all truth, and whatsoever we wish, we shall know; and we shall possess whatsoever we desire to possess, together with eternal life itself: *All good things came to me together with her* (Wisd. vii, 11). *To the righteous their desire shall be given* (Prov. x, 24). **(d)** It consists in perfect security. In this world there is no perfect security, since the more one has, and the higher one's position, the more reasons one has to fear, and the more one wants; whereas in eternal life there is neither sorrow, nor toil, nor fear: *He shall enjoy abundance without fear of evils* (Prov. i, 33) — **(e)** It consists in the pleasant companionship of all the blessed, a companionship that is replete with delight: since each one will possess all good things together with the blessed, for they will all love one another as themselves, and, therefore, will rejoice in the happiness of others' goods as their own, and consequently the joy and gladness of one will be as great as the joy of all: *The dwelling in thee is as it were of all rejoicing* (Ps. lxxxvi, 7).

**(2)** The saints in Heaven will have all these things and many more that surpass description. The wicked, on the other hand, who will be in everlasting death, will have no less sorrow and pain than the good will have of joy and glory. Their punishment is aggravated—**(a)** through their separation from God and from all good things: this is the pain of loss, which corresponds to aversion, and surpasses the pain of sense: *Cast out the unprofitable servant into exterior darkness* (Matt. xxv, 30). In this life

the wicked have internal darkness, namely the darkness of sin, but then they will have exterior darkness besides.—**(b)** By the remorse of conscience: *I will reprove thee and set before thy face* (Ps. xlix, 21). *Groaning for anguish of spirit* (Wisd. v, 3). Nevertheless their regret and anguish will be useless, for it will not be on account of the hatred of evil, but on account of grief for their punishment, —**(c)** By the intensity of the pain of sense, which is inflicted by the fires of hell, which will torture both soul and body: a most painful punishment according to the saints. For they will be as though always dying and never dead and never going to die. For this reason it is described as everlasting death, seeing that just as a dying man is in extreme pain, even so are they that are in hell: *They are laid in hell like sheep, death shall feed upon them* (Ps. xlvi, 15). **(d)** By their despair of salvation, for if it were given them to hope for deliverance from their torture, their punishment would be alleviated; but since they have lost all hope, their pains are exceedingly aggravated: *Their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched* (Isa. lxvi, 24).

Thus we can realise the difference between doing good works and doing evil deeds: seeing that good works lead to life, while wicked deeds drag us to death. For this reason man should frequently call these things to mind, since thereby he is urged to good things and drawn away from evil. Thus significantly the Creed ends with these words: *Life everlasting*, that it may ever remain more and more impressed on the memory. To this life may we be brought by our Lord Jesus Christ who is God blessed for ever and ever. Amen.