

HELL IN THE MIND'S EYE

This book endeavors to give the reader the tools needed to conquer every temptation of our adversary the devil. It should be used both by the individual as well as the preacher in the pulpit, as the topics of hell, death and judgment are without a doubt the most effective topics to help the sinner come back to his senses and repent in perfect contrition.

Our main purpose in presenting such a variety of different revelations, sermons and texts about hell and death is that they should be visualized and remembered often, as the mind often forgets things unless it is constantly reminded about it. Thus, when one reads and thinks about hell and death often, one can incorporate the meditation on hell and death more easily into one's daily life, and the mind can more easily contemplate or meditate on the different things that terrify the mind concerning the final end of all mortal sinners.

In order to teach the reader the manifold pains, tortures and evils that will befall all mortal sinners, this text presents a compilation of many texts and revelations of saints and other holy people that describe the horrifying fact of what hell really is.

Just like in the case of the physical body who needs daily food in order to survive, so too the soul needs spiritual food to be able to stand firm against the daily attack of the devil. Eating a few times a year is not enough to help a body keep healthy, and so too, the soul needs the thoughts about hell and death in order to be reminded of its final end.

In order to alleviate the hunger of the soul for righteousness, this compilation of articles will give the soul seeking for truth a yearly supply of spiritual food until his or her death so that not a too long time will elapse for a person without thinking about their final end.

The most common reason for a person's relapse into sin is undoubtedly a relaxation of his or her consideration, meditation and reading about the topics of hell, death and eternal judgment. That is why this book is of a considerable length with many different topics about hell and death, so that one can read about new things yet stay on the main topics of hell and damnation.

For most people, the repetition of the same topic makes most things seem boring or tedious, and that is why this text presents more thrilling revelations of

damned souls that spur the imagination to see the different events that are depicted to them. The imagination and the power to imagine things that we have been given by Our Lord is a powerful tool to use to attack the devil and his minions with, but sadly, most people use this meditative gift of Our Lord for evil and sensual purposes instead, choosing eternal damnation for a single, brief moment of worthless, sensual delights.

There can be no doubt that the daily meditation, remembrance of or thought on hell, death and judgment, serves as the best answer to every temptation that the devil gives us, as no sane person would ever choose sin as long as they remembered what the final end was of this sin.

Our Lord Himself used common events in our lives to describe hell, judgment and damnation in order to show us that the meditation on hell could be adapted to different settings, places and living conditions. Thus, a woman standing by the stove could look down into the boiling pot and imagine and see a picture of hell in it, while another person could look into a fire, and imagine seeing the flames encircling the souls of all wretched sinners who choose death before life, while a third who harvested the field could meditate on how the harvest symbolized the final judgment where the good wheat would be harvested but the chaff would be thrown into the eternal fire, and so on. In truth, the meditations on death and hell that one can conceive are literally endless.

The devil knows very well the might of the meditation on hell and death, and that is why he labors mightily to get a soul to forget about these topics, but the soul who really fears damnation, will never forget this truth about hell, and will constantly feed and nourish his soul with it, building his spiritual armor every single day in order to not fall prey to the devil again.

Not even the greatest saints left of the meditation on hell, which shows us that we who are infinitely inferior to them need to consider this topic far more often than they did. While the topics of hell and death are many times distressing and sad to consider, in order to be saved, it is better to be a little sad in this life in order to rejoice forever in heaven rather than to be happy for a moment, and then burn forever.

The preacher who uses this book in the pulpit or when preaching should try to speak about as many topics as possible, (although not too briefly about any single topic as each topic must be dealt with some time in order to be firmly planted in the mind) as the soul can more easily follow a sermon when one visits many topics, since most people are very easily bored. Thus, the preacher should use the most effective topics and parts of this text, rather than just directly reading the text from beginning to end. The preacher should also always use descriptive language that paints a picture for the mind to easily understand, such as describing the thoughts, feelings and torments of the

damned.

The meditation on hell, death and judgment can be made in four good ways.

First, by reading texts, sermons or stories concerning the topic of hell, judgment and death.

Second, by hearing sermons or seeing videos about this topic.

Third, by simply thinking about the topic of hell, which as we have said, is more effective after one have read about it. A person's own life experiences are highly effective and make a much greater effect on one's own mind than the sayings, words or experiences of other people, and so, if a person have been near death, or have been in a situation where death could have happened, or have suffered much either physically or emotionally, such as by illnesses or other troubles, these situations will undoubtedly be highly effective in making a good meditation concerning death, judgment and hell.

And fourth, by making penances like fasting or other things that chastise the body, in order to help one's body and mind to know what hell will be like in some measure. If we think that the small penances we do on this earth are bothersome or painful, how much more will the pain in hell be unendurable? The fourth way to contemplate hell should of course also be added to the reading of this subject in order to help make the meditation more powerful and effective.

THE LITTLE NUMBER OF THOSE WHO ARE SAVED BY ST. LEONARD OF PORT MAURICE

Saint Leonard of Port Maurice was a most holy Franciscan friar who lived at the monastery of Saint Bonaventure in Rome. He was one of the greatest missionaries in the history of the Church. He used to preach to thousands in the open square of every city and town where the churches could not hold his listeners. So brilliant and holy was his eloquence that once when he gave a two weeks' mission in Rome, the Pope and College of Cardinals came to hear him. The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and the veneration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus were his crusades. He was in no small way responsible for the definition of the Immaculate Conception made a little more than a hundred years after his death. He also gave us the Divine Praises, which are said at the end of Benediction. But Saint Leonard's most famous work was his devotion to the Stations of the Cross. He died a most holy death in his seventy-fifth year, after twenty-four years of uninterrupted preaching.

One of Saint Leonard of Port Maurice's most famous sermons was "The Little Number of Those Who Are Saved." It was the one he relied on for the

conversion of great sinners. This sermon, like his other writings, was submitted to canonical examination during the process of canonization. In it he reviews the various states of life of Christians and concludes with the little number of those who are saved, in relation to the totality of men.

The reader who meditates on this remarkable text will grasp the soundness of its argumentation, which has earned it the approbation of the Church. Here is the great missionary's vibrant and moving sermon.

Introduction

Thanks be to God, the number of the Redeemer's disciples is not so small that the wickedness of the Scribes and Pharisees is able to triumph over them. Although they strove to calumniate innocence and to deceive the crowd with their treacherous sophistries by discrediting the doctrine and character of Our Lord, finding spots even in the sun, many still recognized Him as the true Messiah, and, unafraid of either chastisements or threats, openly joined His cause. Did all those who followed Christ follow Him even unto glory? Oh, this is where I revere the profound mystery and silently adore the abysses of the divine decrees, rather than rashly deciding on such a great point! The subject I will be treating today is a very grave one; it has caused even the pillars of the Church to tremble, filled the greatest Saints with terror and populated the deserts with anchorites. The point of this instruction is to decide whether the number of Christians who are saved is greater or less than the number of Christians who are damned; it will, I hope, produce in you a salutary fear of the judgments of God.

Brothers, because of the love I have for you, I wish I were able to reassure you with the prospect of eternal happiness by saying to each of you: You are certain to go to paradise; the greater number of Christians is saved, so you also will be saved. But how can I give you this sweet assurance if you revolt against God's decrees as though you were your own worst enemies? I observe in God a sincere desire to save you, but I find in you a decided inclination to be damned. So what will I be doing today if I speak clearly? I will be displeasing to you. But if I do not speak, I will be displeasing to God.

Therefore, I will divide this subject into two points. In the first one, to fill you with dread, I will let the theologians and Fathers of the Church decide on the matter and declare that the greater number of Christian adults are damned; and, in silent adoration of that terrible mystery, I will keep my own sentiments to myself. In the second point I will attempt to defend the goodness of God versus the godless, by proving to you that those who are damned are damned by their own malice, because they wanted to be damned. So then, here are two very important truths. If the first truth frightens you, do not hold it against me, as though I wanted to make the road of heaven narrower for you... the theologians

and Fathers of the Church... will engrave this truth in your heart by the force of reason. If you are disillusioned by the second truth, give thanks to God over it, for He wants only one thing: that you give your hearts totally to Him. Finally, if you oblige me to tell you clearly what I think, I will do so for your consolation.

The Teaching of the Fathers of the Church

It is not vain curiosity but salutary precaution to proclaim from the height of the pulpit certain truths which serve wonderfully to contain the indolence of libertines, who are always talking about the mercy of God and about how easy it is to convert, who live plunged in all sorts of sins and are soundly sleeping on the road to hell. To disillusion them and waken them from their torpor, today let us examine this great question: Is the number of Christians who are saved greater than the number of Christians who are damned?

... [This sermon's] sole purpose is to contain the pride of libertines who cast the holy fear of God out of their heart and join forces with the devil who, according to the sentiment of Eusebius, damns souls by reassuring them. To resolve this doubt, let us put the Fathers of the Church, both Greek and Latin, on one side; on the other, the most learned theologians and erudite historians; and let us put the Bible in the middle for all to see. Now listen not to what I will say to you – for I have already told you that I do not want to speak for myself or decide on the matter – but listen to what these great minds have to tell you, they who are beacons in the Church of God to give light to others so that they will not miss the road to heaven. In this manner, guided by the triple light of faith, authority and reason, we will be able to resolve this grave matter with certainty.

Note well that there is no question here of the human race taken as a whole, nor of all Catholics taken without distinction, but only of Catholic adults, who have free choice and are thus capable of cooperating in the great matter of their salvation. First let us consult the theologians recognized as examining things most carefully and as not exaggerating in their teaching: let us listen to two learned cardinals, Cajetan and Bellarmine. They teach that the greater number of Christian adults are damned, and if I had the time to point out the reasons upon which they base themselves, you would be convinced of it yourselves. But I will limit myself here to quoting Suarez. After consulting all the theologians and making a diligent study of the matter, he wrote, "*The most common sentiment which is held is that, among Christians, there are more damned souls than predestined souls.*"

Add the authority of the Greek and Latin Fathers to that of the theologians, and you will find that almost all of them say the same thing. This is the sentiment of Saint Theodore, Saint Basil, Saint Ephrem, and Saint John Chrysostom. What is more, according to Baronius it was a common opinion among the Greek Fathers

that this truth was expressly revealed to Saint Simeon Stylites and that after this revelation, it was to secure his salvation that he decided to live standing on top of a pillar for forty years, exposed to the weather, a model of penance and holiness for everyone. Now let us consult the Latin Fathers. You will hear Saint Gregory saying clearly, "Many attain to faith, but few to the heavenly kingdom." Saint Anselm declares, "*There are few who are saved.*" Saint Augustine states even more clearly, "*Therefore, few are saved in comparison to those who are damned.*" The most terrifying, however, is Saint Jerome. At the end of his life, in the presence of his disciples, he spoke these dreadful words: "*Out of one hundred thousand **people whose lives have always been bad**, you will find barely one who is worthy of indulgence.*"

The Words of Holy Scripture

But why seek out the opinions of the Fathers and theologians, when Holy Scripture settles the question so clearly? Look in to the Old and New Testaments, and you will find a multitude of figures, symbols and words that clearly point out this truth: very few are saved. In the time of Noah, the entire human race was submerged by the Deluge, and only eight people were saved in the Ark. Saint Peter says, "*This ark was the figure of the Church,*" while Saint Augustine adds, "*And these eight people who were saved signify that very few Christians are saved, **because there are very few who sincerely renounce the world**, and those who renounce it only in words do not belong to the mystery represented by that ark.*" The Bible also tells us that only two Hebrews out of two million entered the Promised Land after going out of Egypt, and that only four escaped the fire of Sodom and the other burning cities that perished with it. All of this means that the number of the damned who will be cast into fire like straw is far greater than that of the saved, whom the heavenly Father will one day gather into His barns like precious wheat.

I would not finish if I had to point out all the figures by which Holy Scripture confirms this truth; let us content ourselves with listening to the living oracle of Incarnate Wisdom. What did Our Lord answer the curious man in the Gospel who asked Him, "*Lord, is it only a few to be saved?*" Did He keep silence? Did He answer haltingly? Did He conceal His thought for fear of frightening the crowd? No. Questioned by only one, He addresses all of those present. He says to them: "You ask Me if there are only few who are saved?" Here is My answer: "*Strive to enter by the narrow gate; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.*" Who is speaking here? It is the Son of God, Eternal Truth, who on another occasion says even more clearly, "*Many are called, but few are chosen.*" He does not say that all are called and that out of all men, few are chosen, but that many are called; which means, as Saint Gregory explains, that out of all men, many are called to the True Faith, but out of them few are saved.

Brothers, these are the words of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Are they clear? They are true. Tell me now if it is possible for you to have faith in your heart and not tremble.

Salvation in the Various States of Life

But oh, I see that by speaking in this manner of all in general, I am missing my point. So let us apply this truth to various states, and you will understand that you must either throw away reason, experience and the common sense of the faithful, or confess that the greater number of Catholics is damned. Is there any state in the world more favorable to innocence in which salvation seems easier and of which people have a higher idea than that of priests, the lieutenants of God? At first glance, who would not think that most of them are not only good but even perfect; yet I am horror-struck when I hear Saint Jerome declaring that although the world is full of priests, barely one in a hundred is living in a manner in conformity with state; when I hear a servant of God attesting that he has learned by revelation that the number of priests who fall into hell each day is so great that it seemed impossible to him that there be any left on earth; when I hear Saint Chrysostom exclaiming with tears in his eyes, "*I do not believe that many priests are saved; I believe the contrary, that the number of those who are damned is greater.*"

Look higher still, and see the prelates of the Holy Church, pastors who have the charge of souls. Is the number of those who are saved among them greater than the number of those who are damned? Listen to Cantimpre; he will relate an event to you, and you may draw the conclusions. There was a synod being held in Paris, and a great number of prelates and pastors who had the charge of souls were in attendance; the king and princes also came to add luster to that assembly by their presence. A famous preacher was invited to preach. While he was preparing his sermon, a horrible demon appeared to him and said, "*Lay your books aside. If you want to give a sermon that will be useful to these princes and prelates, content yourself with telling them on our part, 'We the princes of darkness thank you, princes, prelates, and pastors of souls, that due to your negligence, the greater number of the faithful are damned; also, we are saving a reward for you for this favor, when you shall be with us in Hell.'*"

Woe to you who command others! If so many are damned by your fault, what will happen to you? If few out of those who are first in the Church of God are saved, what will happen to you? Take all states, both sexes, every condition: husbands, wives, widows, young women, young men, soldiers, merchants, craftsmen, rich and poor, noble and plebian. What are we to say about all these people who are living so badly? The following narrative from Saint Vincent Ferrer will show you what you may think about it. He relates that an

archdeacon in Lyons gave up his charge and retreated into a desert place to do penance, and that he died the same day and hour as Saint Bernard. After his death, he appeared to his bishop and said to him, "*Know, Monsignor, that at the very hour I passed away, **thirty-three thousand** people also died. Out of this number, **Bernard and myself** went up to heaven without delay, **three** went to purgatory, and **all the others fell into Hell.***"

Our chronicles relate an even more dreadful happening. One of our brothers, well-known for his doctrine and holiness, was preaching in Germany. He represented the ugliness of the sin of impurity so forceful that a woman fell dead of sorrow in front of everyone. Then, coming back to life, she said, "*When I was presented before the Tribunal of God, **sixty thousand** people arrived at the same time from all parts of the world; out of that number, **three** were saved by going to Purgatory, and **all the rest were damned.***"

O abyss of the judgments of God! Out of thirty thousand, only five were saved! And out of sixty thousand, only three went to heaven! You sinners who are listening to me, in what category will you be numbered?... What do you say?... What do you think?...

I see almost all of you lowering your heads, filled with astonishment and horror. But let us lay our stupor aside, and instead of flattering ourselves, let us try to draw some profit from our fear. Is it not true that there are two roads which lead to heaven: innocence and repentance? Now, if I show you that very few take either one of these two roads, as rational people you will conclude that very few are saved. And to mention proofs: in what age, employment or condition will you find that the number of the wicked is not a hundred times greater than that of the good, and about which one might say, "*The good are so rare and the wicked are so great in number*"? We could say of our times what Salvianus said of his: it is easier to find a countless multitude of sinners immersed in all sorts of iniquities than a few innocent men. How many servants are totally honest and faithful in their duties? How many merchants are fair and equitable in their commerce; how many craftsmen exact and truthful; how many salesmen disinterested and sincere? How many men of law do not forsake equity? How many soldiers do not tread upon innocence; how many masters do not unjustly withhold the salary of those who serve them, or do not seek to dominate their inferiors? Everywhere, the good are rare and the wicked great in number. Who does not know that today there is so much libertinage among mature men, liberty among young girls, vanity among women, licentiousness in the nobility, corruption in the middle class, dissolution in the people, impudence among the poor, that one could say what David said of his times: "*All alike have gone astray... there is not even one who does good, not even one.*"

Go into street and square, into palace and house, into city and countryside, into

tribunal and court of law, and even into the temple of God. Where will you find virtue? "*Alas!*" cries Salvianus, "*except for a very little number who flee evil, what is the assembly of Christians if not a sink of vice?*" All that we can find everywhere is selfishness, ambition, gluttony, and luxury. Is not the greater portion of men defiled by the vice of impurity, and is not Saint John right in saying, "*The whole world – if something so foul may be called – is seated in wickedness?*" I am not the one who is telling you; reason obliges you to believe that out of those who are living so badly, very few are saved.

But you will say: Can penance not profitably repair the loss of innocence? That is true, I admit. But I also know that penance is so difficult in practice, we have lost the habit so completely, and it is so badly abused by sinners, that this alone should suffice to convince you that very few are saved by that path. Oh, how steep, narrow, thorny, horrible to behold and hard to climb it is! Everywhere we look, we see traces of blood and things that recall sad memories. Many weaken at the very sight of it. Many retreat at the very start. Many fall from weariness in the middle, and many give up wretchedly at the end. And how few are they who persevere in it till death! Saint Ambrose says it is easier to find men who have kept their innocence than to find any who have done fitting penance.

If you consider the sacrament of penance, there are so many distorted confessions, so many studied excuses, so many deceitful repentances, so many false promises, so many ineffective resolutions, so many invalid absolutions! Would you regard as valid the confession of someone who accuses himself of sins of impurity and still holds to the occasion of them? Or someone who accuses himself of obvious injustices with no intention of making any reparation whatsoever for them? Or someone who falls again into the same iniquities right after going to confession? Oh, horrible abuses of such a great sacrament! One confesses to avoid excommunication, another to make a reputation as a penitent. One rids himself of his sins to calm his remorse, another conceals them out of shame. One accuses them imperfectly out of malice, another discloses them out of habit. One does not have the true end of the sacrament in mind, another is lacking the necessary sorrow, and still another firm purpose. Poor confessors, what efforts you make to bring the greater number of penitents to these resolutions and acts, without which confession is a sacrilege, absolution a condemnation and penance an illusion?

Where are they now, those who believe that the number of the saved among Christians is greater than that of the damned and who, to authorize their opinion, reason thus: the greater portion of Catholic adults die in their beds armed with the sacraments of the Church, therefore most adult Catholics are saved? Oh, what fine reasoning! You must say exactly the opposite. Most Catholic adults confess badly at death, therefore most of them are damned. I say "all the more certain," because a dying person who has not confessed well when

he was in good health will have an even harder time doing so when he is in bed with a heavy heart, an unsteady head, a muddled mind; when he is opposed in many ways by still-living objects, by still-fresh occasions, by adopted habits, and above all by devils who are seeking every means to cast him into hell. Now, if you add to all these false penitents all the other sinners who die unexpectedly in sin, due to the doctors' ignorance or by their relatives' fault, who die from poisoning or from being buried in earthquakes, or from a stroke, or from a fall, or on the battlefield, in a fight, caught in a trap, struck by lightning, burned or drowned, are you not obliged to conclude that most Christian adults are damned? That is the reasoning of Saint Chrysostom. This Saint says that most Christians are walking on the road to hell throughout their life. Why, then, are you so surprised that the greater number goes to hell? To come to a door, you must take the road that leads there. What have you to answer such a powerful reason?

The answer, you will tell me, is that the mercy of God is great. Yes, for those who fear Him, says the Prophet; but great is His justice for the one who does not fear Him, and it condemns all obstinate sinners.

So you will say to me: Well then, who is Paradise for, if not for Christians? It is for Christians, of course, but for those who do not dishonor their character and who live as Christians. Moreover, if to the number of Christian adults who die in the grace of God, you add the countless host of children who die after baptism and before reaching the age of reason, you will not be surprised that Saint John the Apostle, speaking of those who are saved, says, "*I saw a great multitude which no man could number.*"

And this is what deceives those who pretend that the number of the saved among Catholics is greater than that of the damned... If to that number, you add the adults who have kept the robe of innocence, or who after having defiled it, have washed it in the tears of penance, it is certain that the greater number is saved; and that explains the words of Saint John, "*I saw a great multitude,*" and these other words of Our Lord, "*Many will come from the east and from the west, and will feast with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven,*" and the other figures usually cited in favor of that opinion. But if you are talking about Christian adults, experience, reason, authority, propriety and Scripture all agree in proving that the greater number is damned. Do not believe that because of this, paradise is empty; on the contrary, it is a very populous kingdom. And if the damned are "*as numerous as the sand in the sea,*" the saved are "*as numerous as the stars of heaven,*" that is, both the one and the other are countless, although in very different proportions.

One day Saint John Chrysostom, preaching in the cathedral in Constantinople and considering these proportions, could not help but shudder in horror and ask,

"*Out of this great number of people, how many do you think will be saved?*" And, not waiting for an answer, he added, "*Among so many thousands of people, we would not find a hundred who are saved, and I even doubt for the one hundred.*" What a dreadful thing! The great Saint believed that out of so many people, barely one hundred would be saved; and even then, he was not sure of that number. What will happen to you who are listening to me? Great God, I cannot think of it without shuddering! Brothers, the problem of salvation is a very difficult thing; for according to the maxims of the theologians, when an end demands great efforts, few only attain it.

That is why Saint Thomas, the Angelic Doctor, after weighing all the reasons pro and con in his immense erudition, finally concludes that the greater number of Catholic adults are damned. He says, "*Because eternal beatitude surpasses the natural state, especially since it has been deprived of original grace, it is the little number that are saved.*"

So then, remove the blindfold from your eyes that is blinding you with self-love, that is keeping you from believing such an obvious truth by giving you very false ideas concerning the justice of God, "*Just Father, the world has not known Thee,*" said Our Lord Jesus Christ. He does not say "*Almighty Father, most good and merciful Father.*" He says "***just Father,***" so we may understand that out of all the attributes of God, none is less known than His justice, because men refuse to believe what they are afraid to undergo. Therefore, remove the blindfold that is covering your eyes and say tearfully: Alas! The greater number of Catholics, the greater number of those who live here, perhaps even those who are in this assembly, will be damned! What subject could be more deserving of your tears?

King Xerxes, standing on a hill looking at his army of one hundred thousand soldiers in battle array, and considering that out of all of them there would be not one man alive in a hundred years, was unable to hold back his tears. Have we not more reason to weep upon thinking that out of so many Catholics, the greater number will be damned? Should this thought not make our eyes pour forth rivers of tears, or at least produce in our heart the sentiment of compassion felt by an Augustinian Brother, Ven. Marcellus of St. Dominic? One day as he was meditating on the eternal pains, the Lord showed him how many souls were going to hell at that moment and had him see a very broad road on which twenty-two thousand reprobates were running toward the abyss, colliding into one another. The servant of God was stupefied at the sight and exclaimed, "*Oh, what a number! What a number! And still more are coming. O Jesus! O Jesus! What madness!*" Let me repeat with Jeremiah, "*Who will give water to my head, and a fountain of tears to my eyes? And I will weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people.*"

Poor souls! How can you run so hastily toward hell? For mercy's sake, stop and listen to me for a moment! Either you understand what it means to be saved and to be damned for all eternity, or you do not. If you understand and in spite of that, you do not decide to change your life today, make a good confession and trample upon the world, in a word, make your every effort to be counted among the littler number of those who are saved, I say that you do not have the faith. You are more excusable if you do not understand it, for then one must say that you are out of your mind. *To be saved for all eternity, to be damned for all eternity, and to not make your every effort to avoid the one and make sure of the other, is something inconceivable.*

The Goodness of God

Perhaps you do not yet believe the terrible truths I have just taught you. But it is the most highly-considered theologians, the most illustrious Fathers who have spoken to you through me. So then, how can you resist reasons supported by so many examples and words of Scripture? If you still hesitate in spite of that, and if your mind is inclined to the opposite opinion, does that very consideration not suffice to make you tremble? Oh, it shows that you do not care very much for your salvation! In this important matter, a sensible man is struck more strongly by the slightest doubt of the risk he runs than by the evidence of total ruin in other affairs in which the soul is not involved. One of our brothers, Blessed Giles, was in the habit of saying that if only one man were going to be damned, he would do all he could to make sure he was not that man.

So what must we do, we who know that the greater number is going to be damned, and not only out of all Catholics? What must we do? Take the resolution to belong to the little number of those who are saved. You say: If Christ wanted to damn me, then why did He create me? Silence, rash tongue! God did not create anyone to damn him; but whoever is damned, is damned because he wants to be. Therefore, I will now strive to defend the goodness of my God and acquit it of all blame: that will be the subject of the second point.

Before going on, let us gather on one side all the books and all the heresies of Luther and Calvin, and on the other side the books and heresies of the Pelagians and Semi-Pelagians, and let us burn them. Some destroy grace, others freedom, and all are filled with errors; so let us cast them into the fire. All the damned bear upon their brow the oracle of the Prophet Osee, "*Thy damnation comes from thee,*" so that they may understand that whoever is damned, is damned by his own malice and because he wants to be damned.

First let us take these two undeniable truths as a basis: "**God wants all men to be saved,**" "**All are in need of the grace of God.**" Now, if I show you that God wants to save all men, and that for this purpose He gives all of them His grace

and all the other necessary means of obtaining that sublime end, you will be obliged to agree that whoever is damned must impute it to his own malice, and that if the greater number of Christians are damned, it is because they want to be. "*Thy damnation comes from thee; thy help is only in Me.*"

God Desires All Men to be Saved

In a hundred places in Holy Scripture, God tells us that it is truly His desire to save all men. "*Is it My will that a sinner should die, and not that he should be converted from his ways and live?... I live, saith the Lord God. I desire not the death of the sinner. Be converted and live.*" When someone wants something very much, it is said that he is dying with desire; it is a hyperbole. But God has wanted and still wants our salvation so much that He died of desire, and He suffered death to give us life. This will to save all men is therefore not an affected, superficial and apparent will in God; it is a real, effective, and beneficial will; for He provides us with all the means most proper for us to be saved. He does not give them to us so they will not obtain it; He gives them to us with a sincere will, with the intention that they may obtain their effect. And if they do not obtain it, He shows Himself afflicted and offended over it. He commands even the damned to use them in order to be saved; He exhorts them to it; He obliges them to it; and if they do not do it, they sin. Therefore, they may do it and thus be saved.

Far more, because God sees that we could not even make use of His grace without His help, He gives us other aids; and if they sometimes remain ineffective, it is our fault; for with these same aids, one may abuse them and be damned with them, and another may do right and be saved; he might even be saved with less powerful aids. Yes, it can happen that we abuse a greater grace and are damned, whereas another cooperates with a lesser grace and is saved.

Saint Augustine exclaims, "*If, therefore, someone turns aside from justice, he is carried by his free will, led by his concupiscence, deceived by his own persuasion.*" But for those who do not understand theology, here is what I have to say to them: God is so good that when He sees a sinner running to his ruin, He runs after him, calls him, entreats and accompanies him even to the gates of hell; what will He not do to convert him? He sends him good inspirations and holy thoughts, and if he does not profit from them, He becomes angry and indignant, He pursues him. Will He strike him? No. He beats at the air and forgives him. But the sinner is not converted yet. God sends him a mortal illness. It is certainly all over for him. No, brothers, God heals him; the sinner becomes obstinate in evil, and God in His mercy looks for another way; He gives him another year, and when that year is over, He grants him yet another. But if the sinner still wants to cast himself into hell in spite of all that, what

does God do? Does He abandon him? No. He takes him by the hand; and while he has one foot in hell and the other outside, He still preaches to him, He implored him not to abuse His graces. Now I ask you, if that man is damned, is it not true that he is damned against the Will of God and because he wants to be damned? Come and ask me now: If God wanted to damn me, then why did He create me?

Ungrateful sinner, learn today that if you are damned, it is not God who is to blame, but you and your self-will. To persuade yourself of this, go down even to the depths of the abyss, and there I will bring you one of those wretched damned souls burning in hell, so that he may explain this truth to you. Here is one now: *"Tell me, who are you?" "I am a poor idolater, born in an unknown land; I never heard of heaven or hell, nor of what I am suffering now." "Poor wretch! Go away, you are not the one I am looking for." Another one is coming; there he is. "Who are you?" "I am a schismatic from the ends of Tartary; I always lived in an uncivilized state, barely knowing that there is a God." "You are not the one I want; return to hell." Here is another. "And who are you?" "I am a poor heretic from the North. I was born under the Pole and never saw either the light of the sun or the light of faith." "It is not you that I am looking for either; return to Hell."* Brothers, my heart is broken upon seeing these wretches who never even knew the True Faith among the damned. Even so, know that the sentence of condemnation was pronounced against them and they were told, *"Thy damnation comes from thee."* They were damned because they wanted to be. They received so many aids from God to be saved! We do not know what they were, but they know them well, and now they cry out, *"O Lord, Thou art just... and Thy judgments are equitable."*

Brothers, you must know that **the most ancient belief is the Law of God**, and that **we all bear it written in our hearts**; that **it can be learned without any teacher**, and that **it suffices to have the light of reason in order to know all the precepts of that Law**. That is why even the barbarians hid when they committed sin, because they knew they were doing wrong; and they are damned for not having observed the natural law written in their heart: for had they observed it, God would have made a miracle rather than let them be damned; He would have sent them someone to teach them and would have given them other aids, of which they made themselves unworthy by not living in conformity with the inspirations of their own conscience, which never failed to warn them of the good they should do and the evil they should avoid. So it is their conscience that accused them at the Tribunal of God, and it tells them constantly in hell, *"Thy damnation comes from thee."* They do not know what to answer and are obliged to confess that they are deserving of their fate. Now if these infidels have no excuse, will there be any for a Catholic who had so many sacraments, so many sermons, so many aids at his disposal? How will he dare

to say, "*If God was going to damn me, then why did He create me?*" How will he dare to speak in this manner, when God gives him so many aids to be saved? So let us finish confounding him.

You who are suffering in the abyss, answer me! Are there any Catholics among you? "*There certainly are!*" How many? Let one of them come here! "*That is impossible, they are too far down, and to have them come up would turn all of hell upside down; it would be easier to stop one of them as he is falling in.*" So then, I am speaking to you who live in the habit of mortal sin, in hatred, in the mire of the vice of impurity, and who are getting closer to hell each day. Stop, and turn around; it is Jesus who calls you and who, with His wounds, as with so many eloquent voices, cries to you, "My son, if you are damned, you have only yourself to blame: '*Thy damnation comes from thee.*'" Lift up your eyes and see all the graces with which I have enriched you to insure your eternal salvation. I could have had you born in a forest in Barbary; that is what I did to many others, but I had you born in the Catholic Faith; I had you raised by such a good father, such an excellent mother, with the purest instructions and teachings. If you are damned in spite of that, whose fault will it be? Your own, My son, your own: '*Thy damnation comes from thee.*'"

"I could have cast you into hell after the first mortal sin you committed, without waiting for the second: I did it to so many others, but I was patient with you, I waited for you for many long years. I am still waiting for you today in penance. If you are damned in spite of all that, whose fault is it? Your own, My son, your own: "*Thy damnation comes from thee.*" You know how many have died before your very eyes and were damned: that was a warning for you. You know how many others I set back on the right path to give you the good example. Do you remember what that excellent confessor told you? I am the one who had him say it. Did he not enjoin you to change your life, to make a good confession? I am the One who inspired him. Remember that sermon that touched your heart? I am the One who led you there. And what has happened between you and Me in the secret of your heart, ...*that* you can never forget.

"Those interior inspirations, that clear knowledge, that constant remorse of conscience, would you dare to deny them? All of these were so many aids of My grace, because I wanted to save you. I refused to give them to many others, and I gave them to you because I loved you tenderly. My son, My son, if I spoke to them as tenderly as I am speaking to you today, how many others souls return to the right path! And you... you turn your back on Me. Listen to what I am going to tell you, for these are My last words: You have cost Me My blood; if you want to be damned in spite of the blood I shed for you, do not blame Me, you have only yourself to accuse; and throughout all eternity, do not forget that if you are damned in spite of Me, you are damned because you want to be damned: '*Thy damnation comes from thee.*' "

O my good Jesus, the very stones would split on hearing such sweet words, such tender expressions. Is there anyone here who wants to be damned, with so many graces and aids? If there is one, let him listen to me, and then let him resist if he can.

Baronius relates that after Julian the Apostate's infamous apostasy, he conceived such great hatred against Holy Baptism that day and night, he sought a way in which he might erase his own. To that purpose he had a bath of goat's blood prepared and placed himself in it, wanting this impure blood of a victim consecrated to Venus to erase the sacred character of Baptism from his soul. Such behavior seems abominable to you, but if Julian's plan had been able to succeed, it is certain that he would be suffering much less in hell.

Sinners, the advice I want to give you will no doubt seem strange to you; but if you understand it well, it is, on the contrary, inspired by tender compassion toward you. I implore you on my knees, by the blood of Christ and by the Heart of Mary, change your life, come back to the road that leads to heaven, and do all you can to belong to the little number of those who are saved....

You are horror-struck at such a thought? Well then, cast yourself at the feet of Jesus Christ and say to Him, with tearful eyes and contrite heart: **"Lord, I confess that up till now I have not lived as a Christian. I am not worthy to be numbered among Your elect. I recognize that I deserve to be damned; but Your mercy is great and, full of confidence in Your grace, I say to You that I want to save my soul, even if I have to sacrifice my fortune, my honor, my very life, as long as I am saved. If I have been unfaithful up to now, I repent, I deplore, I detest my infidelity, I ask You humbly to forgive me for it. Forgive me, good Jesus, and strengthen me also, that I may be saved. I ask You not for wealth, honor or prosperity; I ask you for one thing only, to save my soul."**

And You, O Jesus! What do You say? O Good Shepherd, see the stray sheep who returns to You; embrace this repentant sinner, bless his sighs and tears, or rather bless these people who are so well disposed and who want nothing but their salvation. Brothers, at the feet of Our Lord, let us protest that we want to save our soul, cost what it may. Let us all say to Him with tearful eyes, "Good Jesus, I want to save my soul," O blessed tears, O blessed sighs!"

The doctrine of Saint Leonard of Port Maurice has saved and will save countless souls till the end of time. Here is what the Church says in the prayer of the Divine Office, Sixth Lesson, speaking of Saint Leonard's heavenly eloquence: *Upon hearing him, even hearts of iron and brass were powerfully inclined to penance, by reason of the astonishing effectiveness of the sermon and the preacher's burning zeal.* And in the liturgical prayer we ask of the Lord,

Give the power to bend the hearts of hardened sinners by the works of preaching.

This sermon by Saint Leonard of Port Maurice was preached during the reign of Pope Benedict XIV, who so loved the great missionary.

Fr. Martin Von Cochem's masterpiece book "*The Four Last Things*" (that deals specifically with the topics of Hell, the fear of God, death and judgment), explains the frightful truth of Our Lord's words in the Gospel **of how few people there actually are on this earth that even find the path to Heaven even once while living on this earth**, and much less persevere on it until their death:

"Let me ask thee, O reader, what proportion thinkest thou of all who live upon this earth will be saved? Half? or a third part? or perhaps a quarter? Alas, I fear, and not without good reason, that the number will not be nearly so large. Jesus Christ, who is eternal Truth, His holy apostles, and the Fathers of the Church, all tell us that so it will be.

"What does Christ say about the number of the elect? His words are these: "Many are called, but few are chosen." He repeats these words when He speaks of the guest who had not on a wedding garment: "Bind his hands and his feet, and cast him into the exterior darkness. For many are called, but few chosen." Were nothing more to be found to this intent in the whole of the Scriptures, this passage could not fail to alarm us. But there are many other similar ones, of which I will quote one or two. In the Gospel of St. Matthew we read that Our Lord said: "Enter ye in at the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth unto destruction, and many there are that go in thereat. How narrow is the gate and strait is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there are that find it." (Matt. 7:13) Are not these words calculated to inspire us with anxiety and apprehension? May not we be amongst those who go in at the wide gate, who walk on the broad road that ends in everlasting perdition? In order that thou mayst better appreciate the meaning of Our Lord's words, and perceive more clearly how few are the elect, observe that Christ did not say that those were few in number who walked in the path to heaven, but that there were but few who found that narrow way. "How strait is the gate that leadeth unto life, and few there are that find it." It is as if the Savior intended to say: The path leading to heaven is so narrow and so rough, it is so overgrown, so dark and difficult to discern, that there are many who, their whole life long, never find it. And those who do find it are exposed constantly to the danger of deviating from it, of mistaking their way and unwittingly wandering away from it, because it is so

irregular and overgrown. This St. Jerome says, in his commentary on the passage in question. Again, there are some who when they are on the right road, hasten to leave it, because it is so steep and toilsome. There are also many who are enticed to leave the narrow way by the wiles and deceits of the devil, and thus, almost imperceptibly to themselves, are led downwards to hell.” (Fr. Martin Von Cochem, *The Four Last Things*, pp. 212-213)

If people could only open their fleshly eyes and start seeing with their spiritual eyes how short this life and the lust of the flesh is, everyone would immediately become chaste and pure, but no one today wants to contemplate or meditate on the end of all flesh, which is death and decay in the grave. They behave as mentally ill people who willfully forgets that they must die and be judged by our Lord Jesus Christ. The thought of death is indeed powerful to conquer every sin and sinful occasion, but while people know that they must die, they willfully choose to forget this fact, since the very thought of death and change is repugnant to their fleshly beings, and directly associated with the thought of being judged by God for their sins. And so, they choose to forget that they must die and be judged by God in order to not have to feel any distress, fear or remorse from their evil conscience every time they sin.

But the time will come when they – standing in shame and ignominy in front of the whole world at the day of judgment – will be forced against their will to remember and confess every single sinful and lustful act that they have ever committed from the moment they reached the age of reason to their very last breath, and then, after their just condemnation, their eternal punishment will begin. Their soul shall be separated from their sinful and fleshly rotting body for the sake of their vile and shameful affections and lusts and be cast into the eternal fire “*in the pool burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.*” (Apocalypse 21:8)

THE REALITY OF HELL: STORIES OF PERSONS WHO VISITED HELL AND APPARITIONS OF THE DAMNED

The Reality of Hell

One of the great dangers of this century, and thus one of the great triumphs of Satan, has been the growing disbelief in the existence of Hell. For many, Hell has become a fable, a myth, an outdated holdover from "the Old Testament God of fire, brimstone and judgment." Urged on by false doctrines and a want to believe that there can be no such thing as eternal punishment for serious

wrongs "when Jesus is a God of love and kindness," many have thrown Hell out the window – along with concern for sin. After all, if there is no Hell, then why need there be concern for sin? Unfortunately, they forget that "I am the Lord and I change not" (Malachi 3:6). Hell has not suddenly evaporated because we would prefer it so. How subtle Satan is in these times. He increasingly tricks people into his web by disguising its very existence. He wants you to let your guard down. Please do not be deceived. Hell, eternal punishment for serious sins, exists. Scripture, the Church and reports of modern-day visionaries all confirm that Hell is a reality – never-ending reality for those souls who must reside there with Satan and all the other damned forever, because by their own free will and choice they rejected God while on earth and excluded themselves from communion with Him.

The Bible and Hell

There are over thirty repeated references to the existence of Hell in the Old Testament alone. For instance: "The sorrows of death have compassed me: and the perils of hell have found me" (Psalms [D-R] 114:3). "For the Lord Almighty will take revenge on them. In the day of judgment he will visit them: for he will give fire and worms into their flesh, that they may burn, and may feel for ever" (Judith 16:20 -21). "Depart from me, come not near me, because thou art unclean: these shall be smoke in my anger, a fire burning all the day" (Isaias 65:5). "A fire is kindled in my wrath, and shall burn even to the lowest hell...I will heap evils upon the transgressors of my law, and will spend my arrows among them" (Deut.32:22-23). "The congregation of sinners is like tow heaped together, and the end of them is a flame of fire" (Ecclesiasticus 21:10). "He shall be punished for all he did, and yet shall not be consumed:...he shall burn, and every sorrow shall fall upon him...All darkness is hid in his secret places: a fire that is not kindled shall devour him" (Job 20:18,22,26).

In the Gospels, Jesus speaks of Hell more than of Heaven. In St. Matthew's Gospel, Jesus says "But I say to you, that whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment....And whosoever shall say, you fool, shall be in danger of hell fire" (St. Matt. 5:22). "The Son of Man shall send his angels and they will collect out of his kingdom all who cause others to sin and all evildoers. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth" (St. Matt. 13:41-42). In St. Mark's Gospel, Jesus warns: "And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to

enter into life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, into the unquenchable fire..." (St. Mark 9:42).

A description of the last judgment in the Book of Apocalypse clearly makes the point: "And I saw the dead, great and small, standing in presence of the throne, and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which was the book of life; and the dead were judged by those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and hell gave up their dead that were in them; and they were judged every one according to their works. And hell and death were cast into the pool of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the pool of fire" (Apoc. 20:12-15).

Jesus describes in St. Matthew's Gospel the last judgment as His separation of the sheep (those who loved God and neighbor) from the goats (those who did not). To the goats, Jesus says His indictment will be: "Depart from Me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ...And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life" (St. Matt. 25:41,46). Jesus Christ could not have been more clear that each of us, by our choices and conduct, risks eternal punishment after death – Hell.

Apparitions of the Damned from Hell

In Chapter 16 of the Gospel of St. Luke, Jesus tells a parable on Hell. A rich man who has died and is in Hell pleads with God to send the poor man Lazarus, who has gone to Heaven, back from the dead to warn his five brothers that Hell really exists. God replies: "If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone should rise from the dead." However, God is so merciful that He has reportedly allowed certain of the damned in Hell as well as some saints and holy persons to return to earth to witness to others that there truly is a place of eternal suffering – Hell – for those who disobey God and His commandments. The following are a few examples of many such occurrences – documented in the annals of private revelation.

The catholic nun Sister Faustina visited Hell in 1936. Here is her awesome account of this horrifying and dreadful place: "Today, I was led by an angel to the chasms of hell. It is a place of great torture; how awesomely large and extensive it is! The kinds of tortures I saw: the first torture that constitutes

hell is the loss of God; the second is perpetual remorse of conscience; the third is that one's condition will never change; the fourth is the fire that will penetrate the soul without destroying it – a terrible suffering, since it is a purely spiritual fire, lit by God's anger; the fifth torture is continual darkness and a terrible suffocating smell, and, despite the darkness, the devils and the souls of the damned see each other and all the evil, both of others and their own; the sixth torture is the constant company of Satan; the seventh torture is the horrible despair, hatred of God, vile words, curses and blasphemies. These are the tortures suffered by all the damned together, but that is not the end of the sufferings. There are special tortures destined for particular souls. These are the torments of the senses. Each soul undergoes terrible and indescribable sufferings, related to the manner in which it has sinned. There are caverns and pits of torture where one form of agony differs from another. I would have died at the very sight of these tortures if the omnipotence of God had not supported me. Let the sinner know that he will be tortured throughout all eternity, in those senses which he made use of to sin. I am writing this at the command of God, so that no soul may find an excuse by saying there is no hell, or that nobody has ever been there, and so no one can say what it is like. I, Sister Faustina, by the order of God, have visited the abysses of hell so that I might tell souls about it and testify to its existence. I cannot speak about it now; but I have received a command from God to leave it in writing. The devils were full of hatred for me, but they had to obey me at the command of God. What I have written is but a pale shadow of the things I saw. But I noticed one thing: that most of the souls there are those who disbelieved that there is a hell. When I came to, I could hardly recover from the fright. How terribly souls suffer there! Consequently, I pray even more fervently for the conversion of sinners. I incessantly plead God's mercy upon them. O my Jesus, I would rather be in agony until the end of the world, amidst the greatest sufferings, than offend You by the least sin."

Sister Josefa Menendez' Description of Hell (1890-1923)

This young Spanish sister, who had a short religious life of great suffering. More than once, she was taken to Hell to witness and feel the suffering first-hand. She records the accusations made against themselves by these unhappy souls: "Some yell because of the martyrdom of their hands. Perhaps they were thieves, for they say: 'Where is our loot now?' ...Cursed hands... Others curse their tongues, their eyes...whatever was the occasion of sin... 'Now, O body, you are paying the price of the delights you granted yourself!...and you did it of your own free will...' " (April 2, 1922).

"I saw several souls fall into Hell, and among them was a child of fifteen, cursing her parents for not having taught her to fear God nor that there was a Hell. Her life had been a short one, she said, but full of sin, for she had given in to all that her body and passions demanded in the way of satisfaction..." (March 22, 1923).

"My soul fell into abysmal depths, the bottom of which cannot be seen, for it is immense. . . ; Then I was pushed into one of those fiery cavities and pressed, as it were, between burning planks, and sharp nails and red-hot irons seemed to be piercing my flesh. I felt as if they were endeavoring to pull out my tongue, but could not. This torture reduced me to such agony that my very eyes seemed to be starting out of their sockets. I think this was because of the fire which burns, burns. . . not a finger nail escapes terrifying torments, and all the time one cannot move even a finger to gain some relief, not change posture, for the body seems flattened out and [yet] doubled in two. Sounds of confusion and blasphemy cease not for an instant. A sickening stench asphyxiates and corrupts everything, it is like the burning of putrefied flesh, mingled with tar and sulfur. . . a mixture to which nothing on earth can be compared. . . although these tortures were terrific, they would be bearable if the soul were at peace. But it suffers indescribably. . . All I have written," she concluded, "is but a shadow of what the soul suffers, for no words can express such dire torment." (September 4, 1922).

"Others curse their tongues, their eyes... whatever was the occasion of their sin... 'Now, O body, you are paying the price of the delights you granted yourself!.. and you did it of your own free will...' " (April 2, 1922). (That is, illegitimate delights).

"It seemed to me that the majority accused themselves of sins of impurity, of stealing, of unjust trading; and that most of the damned are in Hell for these sins." (April 6, 1922).

"I saw many worldly people fall into Hell, and no words can render their

horrible and terrifying cries: 'Damned forever... I deceived myself; I am lost... I am here forever... There is no remedy possible... a curse on me...'

"Some accused people, others circumstances, and all execrated the occasions of their damnation." (September 1922).

"Today, I saw a vast number of people fall into the fiery pit . . . they seemed to be worldlings and a demon cried vociferously: 'The world is ripe for me . . . I know that the best way to get hold of souls is to rouse their desire for enjoyment . . . Put me first . . . me before the rest . . . no humility for me! but let me enjoy myself . . . This sort of thing assures victory to me . . . and they tumble headlong into hell.' " (October 4, 1923)

"I heard a demon, from whom a soul had escaped, forced to confess his powerlessness. 'Confound it all... how do so many manage to escape me? They were mine' (and he rattled off their sins)... 'I work hard enough, yet they slip through my fingers... Someone must be suffering and repairing for them.'" (January 15, 1923). ("Repairing," that is, "making reparation" for them).

"Tonight," wrote Josefa, "I did not go down into Hell, but was transported to a place where all was obscure, but in the center was a red smoldering fire. They had laid me flat and so bound me that I could not make the slightest movement. Around me were seven or eight people; [which represented demons] their black bodies were unclothed, and I could see them only by the reflections of the fire. They were seated and were talking together. "One said: 'We'll have to be very careful not to be found out, for we might easily be discovered.'

"The devil answered: 'Insinuate yourselves by inducing carelessness in them... but keep in the background, so that you are not found out... by degrees they will become callous, and you will be able to incline them to evil. Tempt these others to ambition, to self-interest, to acquiring wealth without working, whether it be lawful or not. Excite some to sensuality and love of pleasure. Let vice blind them...' (Here they used obscene words).

"As to the remainder... get in through the heart... you know the inclinations of their hearts... make them love... love passionately... work thoroughly.. take no rest... have no pity; the world must go to damnation.. and these souls must not be allowed to escape me.'

"From time to time Satan's satellites answered: 'We are your slaves... we shall labor unceasingly, and in spite of the many who war against us, we shall work night and day. We know your power!'

"They all spoke together, and he whom I took to be Satan used words full of horror. In the distance I could hear a clamor as of feasting, the clinking of glasses... and he cried: 'Let them cram themselves with food! It will make it all

the easier for us... Let them get on with their banqueting. Love of pleasure is the door through which you will reach them...'

"He added such horrible things that they can neither be written nor said. Then, as if engulfed in a whirl of smoke, they vanished." (February 3, 1923).

"The evil one was bewailing the escape of a soul: 'Fill her soul with fear, drive her to despair. All will be lost if she puts her trust in the mercy of that...' (here they used blasphemous words about Our Lord). 'I am lost; but no, drive her to despair; do not leave her for an instant, above all, make her despair.'

"Then Hell re-echoed with frenzied cries, and when finally the devil cast me out of the abyss, he went on threatening me. Among other things he said: 'Is it possible that such weaklings have more power than I, who am mighty... I must conceal my presence, work in the dark; any corner will do from which to tempt them... close to an ear.. in the leaves of a book... under a bed... some pay no attention to me, but I shall talk and talk... and by dint of suggestion, something will remain.. Yes, I must hide in unsuspected places.'" (February 7, 8, 1923).

Again, she wrote: "Souls were cursing the vocation they had received, but not followed... the vocation they had lost, because they were unwilling to live a hidden and mortified life..." (March 18, 1922).

"On one occasion when I was in Hell, I saw a great many priests, religious and nuns, cursing their vows, their order, their Superiors and everything that could have given them the light and the grace they had lost...

"I saw, too, some prelates. One accused himself of having used the goods belonging to the Church illicitly..." (September 28, 1922).

"Priests were calling down maledictions on their tongues which had consecrated, on their fingers that had held Our Lord's Sacred Body, on the absolution they had given while they were losing their own souls, and on the occasion through which they had fallen into Hell." (April 6, 1922).

"One priest said: 'I ate poison, for I used money that was not my own... the money given me for Masses which I did not offer.'

"Another said he belonged to a secret society which had betrayed the Church and religion, and he had been bribed to connive at terrible profanations and sacrileges.

"Yet another said that he was damned for assisting at profane plays, after which he ought not to have said Mass... and that he had spent about seven years thus."

Josefa noted that the greater number of religious plunged into hell-fire were there for abominable sins against chastity... and for sins against the vow of poverty... for the unauthorized use of the goods of the community... for passions against charity (jealousy, antipathies, hatred, etc.), for tepidity and relaxation;

also for comforts they had allowed themselves and which had led to graver sins... for bad confessions through human respect and want of sincerity and courage, etc.

"The meditation of the day was on the Particular Judgment of religious souls. I could not free my mind of the thought of it, in spite of the oppression which I felt. Suddenly, I felt myself bound and overwhelmed by a crushing weight, so that in an instant I saw more clearly than ever before how stupendous is the sanctity of God and His detestation of sin.

"I saw in a flash my whole life since my first confession to this day. All was vividly present to me: my sins, the graces I had received, the day I entered religion, my clothing as a novice, my first vows, my spiritual readings, and times of prayer, the advice given me, and all the helps of religious life. Impossible to describe the confusion and shame a soul feels at that moment, when it realizes: 'All is lost, and I am damned forever.'"

As in her former descents into Hell, Josefa never accused herself of any specific sin that might have led to such a calamity. Our Lord meant her only to feel what the consequences would have been, if she had merited such a punishment. She wrote:

"Instantly I found myself in Hell, but not dragged there as before. The soul precipitates itself there, as if to hide from God in order to be free to hate and curse Him.

"My soul fell into abysmal depths, the bottom of which cannot be seen, for it is immense... at once, I heard other souls jeering and rejoicing at seeing me share their torments. It was martyrdom enough to hear the terrible imprecations on all sides, but what can be compared to the thirst to curse that seizes on a soul, and the more one curses, the more one wants to. Never had I felt the like before. Formerly my soul had been oppressed with grief at hearing these horrible blasphemies, though unable to produce even one act of love. But today it was otherwise.

"I saw Hell as always before, the long dark corridors, the cavities, the flames... I heard the same execrations and imprecations, for--and of this I have already written before--although no corporeal forms are visible, the torments are felt as if they were present, and souls recognize each other. Some called out, 'Hullo, you here? And are you like us? We were free to take those vows or not... but no!...' and they cursed their vows.

"Then I was pushed into one of those fiery cavities and pressed, as it were, between burning planks, and sharp nails and red-hot irons seemed to be piercing my flesh."

Here Josefa repeated the multiple tortures from which no single member of the

body is excluded:

"I felt as if they were endeavoring to pull out my tongue, but could not. This torture reduced me to such agony that my very eyes seemed to be starting out of their sockets. I think this was because of the fire which burns, burns... not a finger-nail escapes terrifying torments, and all the time one cannot move even a finger to gain some relief, nor change posture, for the body seems flattened out and yet doubled in two.

"All this I felt as before, and although those tortures were terrific, they would be bearable if the soul were at peace. But it suffers indescribably. Until now, when I went down into Hell, I thought that I had been damned for abandoning religious life. But this time it was different. I bore a special mark, a sign that I was a religious, a soul who had known and loved God, and there were others who bore the same sign. I cannot say how I recognized it, perhaps because of the specially insulting manner in which the evil spirits and other damned souls treated them. There were many priests there, too. This particular suffering I am unable to explain. It was quite different from what I had experienced at other times, for if the souls of those who lived in the world suffer terribly, infinitely worse are the torments of religious. Unceasingly the three words, Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, are imprinted on the soul with poignant remorse.

"Poverty: You were free and you promised! Why, then, did you seek that comfort? Why hold on to that object which did not belong to you? Why did you give that pleasure to your body? Why allow yourself to dispose of the property of the Community? Did you not know that you no longer had the right to possess anything whatsoever, that you had freely renounced the use of those things?... Why did you murmur when anything was wanting to you, or when you fancied yourself less well treated than others? Why?

"Chastity: You yourself vowed it freely and with full knowledge of its implications... you bound yourself.. you willed it... and how have you observed it? That being so, why did you not remain where it would have been lawful for you to grant yourself pleasures and enjoyment?

"And the tortured soul responds: 'Yes, I vowed it; I was free... I could have not taken the vow, but I took it and I was free...' What words can express the martyrdom of such remorse," wrote Josefa, "and all the time the jibes and insults of other damned souls continue.

"Obedience: Did you not fully engage yourself to obey your Rule and your Superiors? Why, then, did you pass judgment on the orders that were given you? Why did you disobey the Rule? Why did you dispense yourself from common life? Remember how sweet was the Rule... and you would not keep it... and now," vociferate satanic voices, "you will have to obey us not for a day or a year, or a century, but forever and ever; for all eternity... It is your own

doing... you were free.

"The soul constantly recalls how she had chosen her God for her Spouse, and that once she loved Him above all things... that for Him she had renounced the most legitimate pleasures and all she held dearest on earth, that in the beginning of her religious life she had felt all the purity, sweetness and strength of this divine love, and that for an inordinate passion... now she must eternally hate the God who had chosen her to love Him.

"This forced hatred is a thirst that consumes her... no past joys can afford her the slightest relief.

"One of her greatest torments is shame," added Josefa. "It seems to her that all the damned surrounding her continually taunt her by saying: 'That we should be lost who never had the helps that you enjoyed is not surprising... but you... what did you lack? You who lived in the palace of the King... who feasted at the board of the elect.'

"All I have written," she concluded, "is but a shadow of what the soul suffers, for no words can express such dire torments." (September 4, 1922).

St. Francis Jerome and the Obstinate Sinner

In the year 1707, St. Francis. Jerome was preaching, as was his wont, in the neighborhood of the City of Naples. He was speaking of Hell and the awful chastisements that await obstinate sinners. A brazen courtesan (prostitute), who lived there, troubled by a discourse which aroused her remorse, sought to hinder it by jests and shouts, accompanied by noisy instruments. As she was standing close to the window, the Saint cried out: "Beware, my daughter, of resisting grace; before eight days God will punish you." The unhappy creature grew only more boisterous. Eight days elapsed, and the holy preacher happened to be again before the same house. This time she was silent; the windows were shut. The hearers, with dismay on their faces, told the Saint that Catherine (that was the name of the bad woman) had a few hours before died suddenly. "Died!" he repeated. "Well, let her tell us now what she has gained by laughing at Hell. Let us ask her." He uttered these words in an inspired tone, and everyone expected a miracle. Followed by an immense crowd, he went up to the death chamber, and there, after having prayed for an instant he uncovered the face of the corpse, and said in a loud voice, "Catherine, tell us where art thou now." At this summons, the dead woman

lifted her head, while opening her wild eyes; her face borrowed color, her features assumed an expression of horrible despair, and in a mournful voice, she pronounced these words: "In Hell; I am in Hell." And immediately, she fell back again into the condition of a corpse.

"I was present at that event," says one of the witnesses, "but I could never convey the impression it produced on me and the bystanders, nor that which I still feel every time I pass that house and look at that window. At the sight of that ill-fated abode, I still hear the pitiful cry resounding: 'In Hell, I am in Hell.'" With fear and trembling work out your salvation (Philip. 2:12).

The Fatima Children Are Shown Hell

In 1917, during World War I and that "hell on earth," the Virgin Mary appeared to three children at Fatima, Portugal, on the 13th of the month from May through October. During her appearance on July 13th, 1917, she showed these three young children, ages 7 to 10, a vision of Hell. Lucia, the oldest of the three children, relates that the Blessed Virgin Mary opened her hands, and "rays of light seemed to penetrate the earth, and we saw, as it were, a sea of fire. Plunged in this fire were demons and souls in human form, like transparent burning embers, all blackened or burnished bronze, floating about in the conflagration, now raised into the air by the flames that issued from within themselves together with great clouds of smoke, now falling back on every side like sparks in huge fires, without weight or equilibrium, amid shrieks and groans of pain and despair, which horrified us and made us tremble with fear. (It must have been this sight which caused me to cry out, as people say they heard me.) The demons could be distinguished by their terrifying and repellent likeness to frightful and unknown animals, black and transparent like burning coals. Terrified and as if to plead for help, we looked up at Our Lady, who said to us so sadly: "You have seen Hell where the souls of poor sinners go. Thus, when you say the rosary, say after each mystery: O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of Hell and lead all souls to Heaven, especially those most in need of Thy Mercy." After this vision, the children lived dramatic lives of sacrifice and penance so that sinners might be converted and saved from the fires of Hell that God had shown them through His heavenly Prophetess.

Boy Raised from the Dead by St. John Bosco

A fifteen-year-old boy in Turin was about to die. He called for Don Bosco, but the saint was not able to make it in time. Another priest heard the boy's confession and the boy died. When Don Bosco returned to Turin, he set out at once to see the boy. When told that the boy was dead, he insisted that it was "just a misunderstanding." After a moment of prayer in the room of the dead child, Don Bosco suddenly cried out: "Charles! Rise!" To the utter amazement of all present, the boy stirred, opened his eyes, and sat up. Seeing Don Bosco, his eyes lit up.

"Father, I should now be in Hell!" gasped the boy. "Two weeks ago I was with a bad companion who led me into sin and at my last confession, I was afraid to tell everything . . . Oh, I've just come out of a horrible dream! I dreamt I was standing on the edge of a huge furnace surrounded by a horde of devils. They were about to throw me into the flames when a beautiful Lady appeared and stopped them. 'There's still hope for you, Charles,' she told me. 'You have not yet been judged!' At that moment I heard you calling me. Oh, Don Bosco! What a joy to see you again! Will you please hear my confession?"

After hearing the boy's confession, Don Bosco said to the boy, "Charles, now that the gates of Heaven lie wide open for you, would you rather go there or stay here with us?" The boy looked away for a moment and his eyes grew moist with tears. An expectant hush fell over the room. "Don Bosco", he said at last, "I'd rather go to Heaven." The mourners watched in amazement as Charles leaned back on the pillows, closed his eyes, and settled once more into the stillness of death.

The Old General and The Count

In Russia shortly before the horrible military campaign between Napoleon and Russia in 1812, two high-ranking military men, one a Count and the Military Governor of Moscow and the other a General, were scoffing over drinks about the existence of God, life after death and Hell. They made a mocking "pledge of honor": if there were a Hell, the first there would come to inform the other of it. A few weeks later, the General departed for the front. One morning, while the Count was lying in bed, the General suddenly appeared before him, pale, with his right hand on his breast, declaring: "What do we do now? There is a Hell and I am there! What do we do now?" He then disappeared. The Count ran to friends, eyes wild, hair on end, and exclaimed what had just happened. Two

weeks later, word was received in Moscow that the General had died in battle – on the same day and at the very hour he appeared to the Count. He had kept his word of honor: Hell exists.

The Young Lord and His Mistress

In London during the winter of 1847-1848, a wealthy young widow in her late 20's suddenly found herself in an illicit relationship with a young lord. Late one night as she was falling asleep, a glimmer of light started to grow and expand at her door. To her astonishment the door started to slowly open, and there was the young lord. He approached, grabbed her left wrist, and hissed: "There is a Hell." The pain in her wrist was so great she lost consciousness. When she came to, she had a terrible burn into her wrist down to the bone. The carpet also was scorched where his footsteps had come and gone. The next day she learned that the night before, her lord had been found drunk and had died in his servants' arms. She apparently lived the rest of her life with her charred scar as a reminder.

A Soul From Hell

A widow who was a sleazy slumlord and porno dealer for 30 years became a God-fearing pillar of society overnight – after her husband paid her a visit from Hell! "I'm a changed woman," trembling Sophia Neri, 53, told reporters in Rome, Italy. "I've had a glimpse of Hell through my husband's eyes, and I'll do anything to keep from joining him there."

Before her eerie encounter, the widow operated a small empire of rat-infested slum apartments outside Rome and ran an underworld porno ring that produced magazines for sale overseas. "My husband Sal and I ran the business together before he died last year," Sophia recalled. "We lived in style, but we were living off the misery and appetites of others. After Sal died, I took over the entire operation myself and was pleased with the life I was leading."

But all that changed the day Sal appeared in Sophia's bedroom. His eyes burning like coals. "He stood before me a shrunken, broken soul, so different from the cocky, confident man I knew for 30 years," the reformed porno queen told reporters. "He told me he had been condemned to a life in Hell. He said it was far worse than anything he had imagined – and he warned me I would be joining him there if I didn't mend my ways. 'To live in Hell is to have a body that is constantly on fire,' he said. Then he pressed the palm of his hand

against a heavy wooden door and his palm burned into the wood like a branding iron. A moment later he vanished leaving his handprint behind as a reminder of his warning. But believe me, that terrifying message burned itself into my mind as clearly as his handprint had burned into the door. I wasn't about to forget."

That night, Sophia visited a priest to confess her sins and beg for forgiveness. "She took me to her home and showed me the handprint on the door" [now at the Purgatorial Museum in Rome], said Father Angelo Macchi. "After seeing that and hearing her story, I have no doubt her husband paid her a visit from Hell." The next day, the shaken lady disbanded her illegal pornography operation and began turning her run-down tenement into luxury apartments, which she gave to the city to be used as low-rent housing for the poor.

"Sophia made a full confession of her activities to the police," Father Macchi said. "But so far nothing has come of it because she is living the life of a model citizen. She has given her money to charity and lives in a tiny apartment right next door to my church. She is a woman who truly has found God – and probably just in the nick of time."

Revelations of St. Teresa of Avila, Mystic

"While I was at prayer one day, I found myself in a moment, without knowing how, plunged apparently into Hell. I understood that it was Our Lord's Will that I should see the place which the devils kept in readiness for me, and which I had deserved by my sins. It lasted but for a moment, but it seems to me impossible that I should ever forget it even if I were to live many years.

"The entrance seemed to be by a long narrow pass, like a furnace, very low, dark, and close. The ground seemed to be saturated with water, mere mud, exceedingly foul, sending forth pestilential odors, and covered with loathsome vermin. At the end was a hollow place in the wall like a closet, and in that I saw myself confined. All this was ever pleasant to behold in comparison with what I felt there. There is no exaggeration in what I am saying.

"But as to what I then felt, I do not know where to begin if I were to describe it; it is utterly inexplicable. I felt a fire in my soul but such that I am still unable to describe it. My bodily sufferings were unendurable. I have undergone most painful sufferings in this life, and, as the physicians say, the greatest that can be borne, such as the contraction of my sinews when I was paralyzed, without speaking of other ills of different types – yet, even those of which I

have spoken, inflicted on me by Satan; yet all these were as nothing in comparison with what I then felt, especially when I saw that there would be no intermission nor any end to them.

"These sufferings were nothing in comparison with the anguish of my soul, a sense of oppression, of stifling, and of pain so acute, accompanied by so hopeless and cruel an infliction, that I know not how to speak of it. If I say that the soul is continually being torn from the body it would be nothing – for that implies the destruction of life by the hands of another – but here it is the soul itself that is tearing itself in pieces. I cannot describe that inward fire or that despair, surpassing all torments and all pain. I did not see who it was that tormented me, but I felt myself on fire, and torn to pieces, as it seemed to me; and I repeat it, this inward fire and despair are the greatest torments of all.

"Left in that pestilential place, and utterly without the power to hope for comfort, I could neither sit nor lie down; there was no room. I was placed as it were in a hole in the wall; and those walls, terrible to look on of themselves, hemmed me in on every side. I could not breathe. There was no light, but all was thick darkness. I do not understand how it is; though there was no light, yet everything that can give pain by being seen was visible.

"Our Lord at that time would not let me see more of Hell. Afterwards I had another most fearful vision, in which I saw the punishment of certain sins. They were the most horrible to look at, but because I felt none of the pain, my terror was not so great. In the former vision Our Lord made me really feel those torments and that anguish of spirit, just as if I had been suffering them in the body there. I know not how it was, but I understood distinctly that it was a great mercy that Our Lord would have me see with my own eyes the very place from which His compassion saved me. I have listened to people speaking of these things and I have at other times dwelt on the various torments of Hell, though not often, because my soul made no progress by the way of fear; and I have read of the diverse tortures, and how the devils tear the flesh with red-hot pincers. But all is as nothing before this. It is a wholly different matter. In short, the one is a reality, the other a description; and all burning here in this life is as nothing compared with the fire that is there.

"I was so terrified by that vision – and that terror is on me even now as I write – that though it took place nearly six years ago, the natural warmth of my body is chilled by fear even now when I think of it. And so, amid all the pain

and suffering which I may have had to bear, I remember no time in which I do not think that all we have to suffer in this world is as nothing. It seems to me that we complain without reason. I repeat it: this vision was one of the grandest mercies of God. It has been to me of the greatest service, because it has destroyed my fear of trouble and of the contradictions of the world, and because it has made me strong enough to bear up against them, and to give thanks to Our Lord who has been my Deliverer, as it now seems to me, from such fearful and everlasting pains.

"Ever since that time, as I was saying, everything seems endurable in comparison with one instant of suffering such as those I had then to bear in Hell. I am filled with fear when I see that, after frequently reading books which describe in some manner the pains of Hell, I was not afraid of them, nor made any account of them. Where was I? How could I possibly take any pleasure in those things which led me directly to so dreadful a place? Blessed forever be Thou, O my God! And oh, how manifest is it that Thou didst love me much more than I did love Thee! How often, O Lord, didst Thou save me from that fearful prison! And how I used to get back to it contrary to Thy Will.

"It was that vision which filled me with very great distress which I felt at the sight of so many lost souls, especially of the Lutherans – for they were once members of the Church by Baptism – and also gave me the most vehement desires for the salvation of souls; for certainly I believe that to save even one from those overwhelming torments, I would willingly endure many deaths. If here on earth we see one whom we specially love in great trouble or pain, our very nature seems to bid us compassionate him; and if those pains be great, we are troubled ourselves. What, then, must it be to see a soul in danger of pain, the most grievous of all pains, forever? It is a thought no heart can bear without great anguish. Here we know that pain at last ends with life, and that there are limits to it, yet the sight of it moves us so greatly to compassion; that other pain has no ending, and I know not how we can be calm when we see Satan carry so many souls daily away.

"This also makes me wish that, in a matter which concerns us so much, we did not rest satisfied with doing less than we can do on our part – that we left nothing undone. May Our Lord vouchsafe to give us His Grace for that end."

Dear fellow Christians, Father Lombardi, in his public debate with Italian

Communist leader Velio Spano in Cagliari on December 4, 1948, stated, "I am horror-struck at the thought that if you continue in this manner, you will be condemned to hell." Spano replied, "I do not believe in hell." Father Lombardi replied, "Precisely, and if you continue, you will be condemned; for to avoid being condemned, one must believe in hell." Hell is a grave reality that is easily forgotten in today's Godless and apathetic society. This is all the more reason why we should fear for our salvation and do all that we can to make sure that we are one of the elect. St. Leonard of Port Maurice said, **"To be saved for all eternity, to be damned for all eternity, and to not make your every effort to avoid the one and make sure of the other, is something inconceivable."** Do not let your life pass before it is too late; focus on saving your soul to the exclusion of all other things, lest you find yourself forever in the eternal fires after your judgment. O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of Hell, lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Thy Mercy. Amen.

CRY OF A LOST SOUL AND THE LESSON THAT IT TEACHES

Clara and Annette, both single Catholics in their early twenties, worked adjacent to each other as employees of a commercial firm in Germany. Although they were never very close friends, they shared a courteous mutual regard which led to an exchange of ideas and, eventually, of confidences. Clara professed herself openly religious, and felt it her duty to instruct and admonish Annette when the latter appeared excessively casual or superficial in religious matters.

In due course, Annette married and left the firm. The year was 1937. Clara spent the autumn of that year on holiday at Lake Garda. About the middle of September she received a letter from her mother. "Annette . . . is dead. She was the victim of an auto accident and was buried yesterday at Wald-Friedhof."

Clara was frightened since she knew her friend was not very religious. Was she prepared to appear before God? Dying suddenly, what had happened to her?

The next day she attended Mass, received Holy Communion, and prayed fervently for her friend. The following night, at ten minutes after midnight, the vision took place. . .

"Clara, do not pray for me! I am in hell. If I tell you this and speak at length about it, do not think it is because of our friendship. We here do not love anyone. I do this as under constraint. In truth, I should like to see you to come to this state where I must remain forever."

"Perhaps that angers you, but here we all think that way. Our wills are hardened

in evil - in what you call evil. Even when we do something 'good', as I do now, opening your eyes about hell, it is not because of a good intention."

"Do you still remember our first meeting four years ago at. . .? You were then 23 and had been there already half a year. Because I was a beginner, you gave me some helpful advice. Then I praised your love of your neighbor. Ridiculous! Your help was mere coquetry. Here we do not acknowledge any good - in anybody."

"Do you remember what I told you about my youth? Now I am painfully compelled to fill in some of the gaps."

"According to the plan of my parents, I should not have existed. A misfortune brought about my conception. My two sisters were 14 and 15 when I was born."

"Would that I had never existed! Would that I could now annihilate myself! Escape these tortures! No pleasure would equal that with which I would abandon my existence, as a garment of ashes which is lost in nothingness. But I must continue to exist as I chose to make myself - as a ruined person."

"When father and mother, still young, left the country for the city, they had lost touch with the Church and were keeping company with irreligious people. They had met at a dance and after a year and a half of companionship they 'had' to get married."

"As a result of the nuptial ceremony, so much holy water remained on them that my mother attended Sunday Mass a couple of times a year. But she never taught me to pray. Instead, she was completely taken up with the daily cares of life, although our situation was not bad."

"I refer to prayer, Mass, religious instruction, holy water, church with a very strong repugnance. I hate all that, as I hate those who go to church, and in general every human being and everything."

"From a great many things do we receive torture. Every knowledge received at the hour of death, every remembrance of things lived or known is for us, a piercing flame. In each remembrance, good and bad, we see the way in which was present - the grace we despised or ignored. What a torture is this! We do not eat, we do not sleep, we do not walk. Chained, with howling and gnashing of teeth, we look appalled at our ruined life, hating and suffering. Do you hear? We here drink hatred like water. Above all we hate God. With reluctance do I force myself to make you understand."

"The blessed in heaven must love God because they see Him without veil, in all His dazzling beauty. That makes their bliss indescribable. We know this and the knowledge makes us furious. Men on earth, who know God from nature and from revelation, can love Him, but they are not compelled to do so. The believer - I say this with gnashing of teeth - who contemplates Christ on the

cross, with arms extended, will end by loving Him."

"But he whom God approaches only in the final storm, as punisher, as just avenger, because he was rejected by Him, such a person cannot but hate Him with all the strength of his wicked will. We died with willful resolve to be separated from God. Do you now understand why hell lasts forever! It is because our wills were fixed for eternity at the moment of death. We had made our final choice. Our obstinacy will never leave us. Under compulsion, I must add that God is merciful even towards us. I affirm many things against my will and must choke the torrent of abuses I should like to vomit out."

"God was merciful to us by not allowing our wicked wills to exhaust themselves on earth, as we should have been prepared to do. This would have increased our faults and our pains. He caused us to die before our time, as in my case, or had other mitigating circumstances intervene. Now He shows Himself merciful towards us by not compelling a closer approach than that afforded in this remote inferno. Every step bringing us closer to God would cause us a greater pain than that which a step closer to a burning furnace would cause you."

"You were scared when once, during a walk, I told you that my father, a few days before my first Communion, had told me: 'My little Annette, the main thing is your beautiful white dress, all the rest is just make-believe.' Because of your concern, I was almost ashamed. Now I sneer at it."

"The important thing is that we were not allowed to receive Communion until the age of 12. By then I was already absorbed in worldly amusements and found it easy to set aside, without scruple, the things of religion. Thus, I attached no great importance to my first Communion. We are furious that many children go to Communion at the age of seven. We do all we can to make people believe that children have insufficient knowledge at that age. They must first commit some mortal sins. Then the white Particle will not do so much damage to our cause as when faith, hope, and charity - oh, these things! - received in Baptism, are still alive in their hearts."

"Marta K - and you induced me to enter 'The Association of the Young Ladies.' The games were amusing. As you know, I immediately took a directive part. I liked it. I also like the picnics. I even let myself be induced to go to confession and communion sometimes."

"Once you warned me, 'Anne, if you do not pray, you go to perdition.' I used to pray very little indeed, and even this unwillingly. You were then only too right. All those who burn in hell did not pray or did not pray enough."

"Prayer is the first step towards God. And it is the decisive step. Especially prayer to her who is the Mother of Christ, whose name we never

pronounce. Devotion to her rescues from the devil numberless souls whom sin would infallibly give to him."

"I continue my story, consumed with rage and only because I have to. To pray is the easiest thing man can do on earth. And God has tied up the salvation of each one exactly to this very easy thing."

"To him who prays with perseverance little by little God gives so much light, so much strength, that even the most debased sinner will at the end come back to salvation. During the last years of my life I did not pray any more, so I lacked those graces without which nobody can be saved. Here we no longer receive graces. Moreover, should we receive them we would cynically refuse them. All the fluctuations of earthly existence have ceased in the other life. For years I was living far away from God. For, in the last call of grace I decided against God."

"I never believed in the influence of the devil. And now I affirm that he has strong influence on the persons who are in the condition in which I was then. Only many prayers, others and mine own, united with sacrifices and penances, could have snatched me from his grip. And even this only little by little. If there are only few externally obsessed, there are very many internally possessed. The devil cannot steal the free will from those who give themselves to his influence. But in punishment of their, so to speak, methodical apostasy from God, He allows the devil to nest in them."

"I hate the devil too. And yet I am pleased about him, because he tries to ruin all of you; he and his satellites, the fallen with him at the beginning of time. There are millions of them. They roam around the earth, as thick as a swarm of flies, and you do not even notice it. It is not reserved to us damned to tempt you; but to the fallen spirits. In truth every time they drag down here to hell a human soul their own torture is increased. But what does one not do for hatred?"

"Deep down I was rebelling against God. You did not understand it; you thought me still a Catholic. I wanted, in fact, to be called one; I even used to pay my ecclesiastical dues. Maybe your answers were right sometimes. On me they made no impression, since you must not be right. Because of these counterfeited relationships between the two of us, our separation on the occasion of my marriage was of no consequence to me. Before the wedding I went to confession and communion once more. It was a precept. My husband and I thought alike on this point. Why not comply with this formality? So we complied with this, as with the other formalities."

"Our married life, in general, was spent in great harmony. We were of the same idea in everything. In this too, that we did not want the burden of children. In truth, my husband would have like to have one; no more, of course. In the end I succeeded in dissuading him even from this desire. Dresses, luxurious furniture,

places of entertainment, picnics and trips by car and similar things were more important for me... It was a year of pleasure on earth, the one that passed from my marriage to my sudden death. Internally, of course, I was never happy, although externally at ease. There was always something indeterminate inside that gnawed at me."

"Unexpectedly I had an inheritance from my Aunt, Lotte. My husband succeeded in increasing his wages to a considerable figure. And so I was able to furnish our new home in an attractive way. Religion did not show its light but from afar off, pale, feeble and uncertain."

"I used to give free vent to my ill humor about some mediaeval representations of hell in cemeteries or elsewhere, in which the devil is roasting souls in red burning coals, while his companions with long tails drag new victims to him. Clara! One can be mistaken in depicting hell, but never can one exaggerate."

"I tell you: the fire of which the Bible speaks, does not mean the torment of the conscience. Fire is fire! What He said: 'Away from Me, you accursed one, into eternal fire', is to be understood literally. Literally! How can the spirit be touched by material fire, you will ask. How can your soul suffer on earth when you put your finger on the flame? In fact the soul does not burn; and yet what torture all the individual feels!"

"Our greatest torture consists in the certain knowledge that we shall never see God. How can this torture us so much, since on earth we are so indifferent? As long as the knife lies on the table, it leaves you cold. You see how keen it is, but you do not feel it. Plunge the knife into the flesh and you will start screaming for pain. Now we feel the loss of God. The lost Catholics suffer more than those of other religions, because they, mostly, received and despised more graces and more light. He who knew more suffers more cruelly than he who knew less. He who sinned out of malice suffers more keenly than he who sinned out of weakness. But nobody suffers more than he deserves. Oh, if that were not true, I should have a motive to hate!"

"My death happened this way . . ."

"A week ago - I am speaking according to your reckoning, because according to pain, I could very well say that it is already ten years that I am burning in hell - a week ago, then, my husband and I, on a Sunday went on a picnic, the last one for me. The day was glorious. I felt very well. A sinister sense of pleasure that was with me all the day long, invaded me. When lo, suddenly, during the return, my husband was dazzled by a car that was coming full speed. He lost control."

"Jesus, used frequently by some people of German language - escaped from my lips with a shivering. Not as a prayer, but as a shout. A lacerating pain took hold of the whole of me. (In comparison with the present only a trifle). Then I lost

consciousness. Strange! That morning this thought had come to me in an inexplicable way: 'You could go to Mass once more', It seemed like the last call of Love."

"Clear and resolute, my 'NO' cut off that train of thought. You will know already what happened after my death. The lot of my husband and that of my mother, what happened to my corpse and the proceedings of my funeral are known to me through some natural knowledge we have here. What happens on earth we know only obscurely. But we know what touches us closely. I see also where you are living."

"I myself awoke from the darkness suddenly, in the instant of my passing. I saw myself as flooded by a dazzling light. It was in the same place where my dead body was lying. It was like a theater, when suddenly the lights in the hall are put out, the curtains are rent aside and an unexpected scene, horrible illuminated, appears. The scene of my life."

"My soul showed herself to me as in a mirror; all the graces despised from my youth until my last NO to God. I felt myself like an assassin, to whom his dead victim is shown during his trial at court - Should I repent? Never! - Should I feel ashamed? Never!"

"However, I could not even stand before the eyes of God, rejected by me. There was only one thing for me: flight! As Cain fled from the dead body of Abel, so my soul rushed from the sight of horror."

"This was the particular judgment: the invisible Judge said: 'Away from Me'. Then my soul, as a yellow brimstone shadow, fell headlong into the place of eternal torture."

It is hoped that the above story will cause the reader to be most serious about the salvation of his soul. ("The greater part of men choose to be damned." St. Alphonsus Liguori) This is consistent with the teaching of the Holy Bible.

"Enter by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many there are who enter that way. How narrow the gate and close the way that leads to life! And few there are who find it." (Matt. 7:13, 14) The Catholic Church is the one true Church. The history of all nations; of all people bear testimony that the Catholic Church is the oldest, the first, the one established by Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Now if you are really serious about saving your soul, you must adopt the Catholic Faith as there is no salvation outside the Catholic Church. This has been defined dogmatically by three different popes, even before the Protestant church came into existence.

Promote the faith. Distribute this article. Pray and work for the salvation of

souls. If we are responsible for the salvation of one soul, we also insure the salvation of our own. (St. James 5: 19-20)

DEATH AND THE MOMENT OF TRUTH: HOW ATHEISTS, INFIDELS AND MORTAL SINNERS DIE

However much atheists and infidels want to protract their death and continue to live in defiance of God's laws, God have put a definite limit on all mankind's actions so that even those of the most despicable and lying kind of atheists and infidels should be helped by the fear of death to become honest and once again assess the evidence for God's existence. The frightful last word testimony below of different sorts of famous atheists, infidels and mortal sinners who changed their mind about God on their death beds should sober any mind, and help them to look at the evidence once more in true honesty and without any bias. This life is frightfully short, while eternity is frightfully long, and thus, any rational mind should seriously consider that however much they may act as if God does not exist, they shall die sooner or later. A man may live a lie, but his death bed tells the truth. The quotations before us show us how evil men (however famous or learned) willfully rejects and lies about God only until they know that they must meet Him. Aristotle wrote truly that: "Death is a dreadful thing, for it is the end!" John Donne, the English author, wrote: "Death is a bloody conflict and no victory at last; a tempestuous sea, and no harbor at last; a slippery height and no footing; a desperate fall and no bottom!" Rousseau cried, "No man dares to face death without fear."

Sir Francis Newport, the head of an English Atheist club to those gathered around his deathbed: "You need not tell me there is no God for I know there is one, and that I am in His presence! You need not tell me there is no hell. I feel myself already slipping. Wretches, cease your idle talk about there being hope for me! I know I am lost forever! Oh, that fire! Oh, the insufferable pangs of hell! ...Oh, that I could lie for a thousand years upon the fire that is never quenched, to purchase the favor of God and be united to Him again. But it is a fruitless wish. Millions and millions of years will bring me no nearer the end of my torments than one poor hour. Oh, eternity, eternity forever and forever!, Oh, the insufferable pangs of Hell!"

The awful and horrifying death of Sir Francis Newport shows us the clear difference between virtue and unrighteousness. Sir Francis Newport was trained in early life to understand the great truths of the gospel. He fell into company that corrupted his principles and his morals. He became an avowed

infidel, and a life of dissipation soon brought on a disease that was incurable. When he felt that he must die, he threw himself on the bed, and after a brief pause, he exclaimed as follows: "Whence this war in my heart? What argument is there now to assist me against matters of fact? Do I assert that there is no hell, while I feel one in my own bosom? Am I certain there is no after retribution, when I feel present judgment? Do I affirm my soul to be as mortal as my body, when this languishes, and that is vigorous as ever? O that any one would restore unto me that ancient gourd of piety and innocence! Wretch that I am, whither shall I flee from this breast? What will become of me?"

An infidel companion tried to dispel his thoughts, to whom he replied. "That there is a God, I know, because I continually feel the effects of His wrath; that there is a hell I am equally certain, having received an earnest of my inheritance there already in my breast; that there is a natural conscience I now feel with horror and amazement, being continually upbraided by it with my impieties, and all my iniquities, and all my sins brought to my remembrance. Why God has marked me out for an example of His vengeance, rather than you, or any one of my acquaintance, I presume is because I have been more religiously educated, and have done greater despite to the Spirit of grace. O that I was to lie upon the fire that never is quenched a thousand years, to purchase the favor of God and be reunited to Him again! But it is a fruitless wish. Millions of millions of years will bring me no nearer to the end of my torments than one poor hour. O, eternity, eternity! Who can discover the abyss of eternity? Who can paraphrase upon these words -- forever and ever?"

Lest his friends should think him insane, he said: "You imagine me melancholy, or distracted. I wish I were either; but it is part of my judgment that I am not. No; my apprehension of persons and things is more quick and vigorous than it was when I was in perfect health; and it is my curse, because I am thereby more sensible of the condition I am fallen into. Would you be informed why I am become a skeleton in three or four days? See now, then. I have despised my Maker, and denied my Redeemer. I have joined myself to the atheist and profane, and continued this course under many convictions, till my iniquity was ripe for vengeance, and the just judgment of God overtook me when my security was the greatest, and the checks of my conscience were the least."

As his mental distress and bodily disease were hurrying him into eternity, he was asked if he would have prayer offered in his behalf; he turned his face, and exclaimed, "Tigers and monsters! are ye also become devils to torment me? Would ye give me prospect of heaven to make my hell more intolerable?"

Soon after, his voice failing, and uttering a groan of inexpressible horror, he cried out, "OH, THE INSUFFERABLE PANGS OF HELL!" and died at once, dropping into the very hell of which God gave him such an awful earnest, to be

a constant warning to multitudes of careless sinners.

Voltaire, the most influential atheist of Europe in his day, who often stated that "by the time I'm buried, the Bible will be non-existent" cried out with his dying breath in horrifying desperation: "I am abandoned by God and man; I will give you half of what I am worth if you will give me six months' life." (He said this to Dr. Fochin, who told him it could not be done.) "Then I shall die and go to hell!" His nurse said: "For all the money in Europe I wouldn't want to see another unbeliever die! All night long he cried for forgiveness."

The Last Hours on Earth of The Noted French Infidel, Voltaire, should sober any mind up who still lives in sin and refuses to meditate on death, judgment and Hell. When Voltaire felt the stroke that he realized must terminate in death, he was overpowered with remorse. He at once sent for the priest, and wanted to be "reconciled with the church." His infidel flatterers hastened to his chamber to prevent his recantation; but it was only to witness his ignominy and their own. He cursed them to their faces; and, as his distress was increased by their presence, he repeatedly and loudly exclaimed:

"Begone! It is you that have brought me to my present condition. Leave me, I say; begone! What a wretched glory is this which you have produced to me!"

Hoping to allay his anguish by a written recantation, he had it prepared, signed it, and saw it witnessed. But it was all unavailing. For two months he was tortured with such an agony as led him at times to gnash his teeth in impotent rage against God and man. At other times, in plaintive accents, he would plead, "O Christ! O Lord Jesus!" Then, turning his face, he would cry out, "I must die -- abandoned of God and of men!"

As his end drew near, his condition became so frightful that his infidel associates were afraid to approach his bedside. Still they guarded the door, that others may not know how awfully an infidel was compelled to die. Even his nurse repeatedly said, "For all the wealth of Europe she would never see another infidel die." It was a scene of horror that lies beyond all exaggeration. Such is the well-attested end of the one who had a natural sovereignty of intellect, excellent education, great wealth, and much earthly honor.

Sir Thomas Scott, Chancellor of England: "Until this moment I thought there was neither a God nor a hell. Now I know and feel that there are both, and I am doomed to perdition by the just judgment of the Almighty."

In a Newsweek interview with Svetlana Stalin, the daughter of satanic mass murderer **Josef Stalin** who is estimated to have murdered over 50 million people, she told of her father's death: "My father died a difficult and terrible death... God grants an easy death only to the just... At what seemed the very last moment he suddenly opened his eyes and cast a glance over everyone in the room. It was a terrible glance, insane or perhaps angry and full of fear of death... His left hand was raised, as though he were pointing to something above and bringing down a curse on us all. The gesture was full of menace... The next moment he was dead."

Anton LaVey, author of the Satanic Bible and high priest of the religion dedicated to the worship of Satan. Some of his famous quotes are "There is a beast in man that needs to be exercised, not exorcised". His dying words were "Oh my, oh my, what have I done, there is something very wrong...there is something very wrong...."

Thomas Hobbes, the political philosopher and skeptic who corrupted many of England's men: "If I had the whole world, I would give anything to live one day. I shall be glad to find a hole to creep out of the world at. I am about to take a fearful leap in the dark!"

M.F. Rich: "Terrible horrors hang over my soul! I have given my immortality for gold; and its weight sinks me into a hopeless, helpless Hell!"

Thomas Payne the leading infidel writer in American colonies: "Stay with me, for God's sake; I cannot bear to be left alone, O Lord, help me! O God, what have I done to suffer so much? What will become of me hereafter? "I would give worlds if I had them, that The Age of Reason had never been published. O Lord, help me! Christ, help me! ...No, don't leave; stay with me! Send even a child to stay with me; for I am on the edge of Hell here alone. If ever the Devil had an agent, I have been that one."

David Hume, atheist philosopher famous for his philosophy of empiricism and skepticism of religion, he cried loud on his death bed "I am in flames!" It is said his "desperation was a horrible scene".

David Strauss, leading representative of German rationalism, after spending a lifetime erasing belief in God from the minds of others: "My philosophy leaves me utterly forlorn! I feel like one caught in the merciless jaws of an automatic machine, not knowing at what time one of its great hammers may crush me!"

Talleyrand (called the most brilliant mind in Europe of his dupes) when asked about his condition while on his deathbed replied: "I am suffering the pangs of the damned."

Sir Julian Huxley, English evolutionist, biologist and staunch atheist, on his deathbed: "So it is true after all, so it is true after all."

Adams, the infidel said: "I'm lost, lost, lost. I am damned forever." His agony was so great that as he died, he tore the hair from his head.

Christine Hewitt, Jamaican journalist and entertainer was quoted: "The Bible was the worst book ever written." Shortly thereafter, in June 2006, she was found, burned beyond recognition in her automobile.

Deathbed conversions are extremely rare

The Bible which ranges over a period of six thousand years records but one instance of a deathbed conversion (the penitent thief that died beside Jesus on the cross). "For what is your life? It is a vapour which appeareth for a little while, and afterwards shall vanish away." (James 4:15)

None of us knows how much time we have left in this life or what the circumstances of our death will be. We may die in a sudden, unexpected manner that will preclude even a possibility of a deathbed conversion. The only reasonable option is to repent and believe in Jesus Christ today. Many people die without having the experience of an extended amount of time on a death bed. Many people die instantly and unexpectedly, with no opportunity to repent and ask God to forgive their sins.

Below is an interesting quote from St. Alphonsus concerning the idea of conversion to the Catholic Faith at the end of one's life. Although these types of conversions are possible, they are extremely rare. St. Alphonsus states that these types of conversions proceed out of necessity, and that it would be very difficult for God to pardon such a person: "He that lives in sin till death shall die in sin. "You shall die in your sin." (John 8:21.) It is true that, in whatsoever hour the sinner is converted, God promises to pardon him; but to no sinner has God promised the grace of conversion at the hour of death. "Seek the Lord while he may be found." (Isaiah 55:6.) Then, there is for some sinners a time when they shall seek God and shall not find him. "You shall seek me, and shall not find me." (John 7:34.) The unhappy beings will go to confession at the hour of

death; they will promise and weep, and ask mercy of God, but without knowing what they do. A man who sees himself under the feet of a foe pointing a dagger to his throat, will shed tears, ask pardon, and promise to serve his enemy as a slave during the remainder of his life. But, will the enemy believe him? No; he will feel convinced that his words are not sincere—that his object is to escape from his hands, and that, should he be pardoned, he will become more hostile than ever. In like manner, how can God pardon the dying sinner, when he sees that all his acts of sorrow, and all his promises, proceed not from the heart, but from a dread of death and of approaching damnation.”

(Sermon 38: On the death of the sinner, par. 8)

The ultimate of statistics is this – that one out of every one; dies. “And it is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment.” (Hebrews 9:27) Death is a certainty for which we must make preparation, or else suffer the consequence. As we think upon these LAST WORDS OF ATHEISTS, INFIDELS AND SINNERS, it naturally brings us all to an important question. It is a sobering and for some even a frightening thought, but one which ought to be considered thoughtfully and at length by each of us. – WHAT WILL YOUR LAST WORD BE?

THE PAINS OF HELL BY ST. ANTHONY MARY CLARET

"The sensation of pain in Hell is essentially very dreadful. Picture yourself, my soul, on a dark night on the summit of a high mountain. Beneath you is a deep valley, and the earth opens so that with your gaze you can see Hell in the cavity of it. Picture it as a prison situated in the center of the earth, many leagues down, all full of fire, hemmed in so impenetrably that for all eternity not even the smoke can escape. In this prison the damned are packed so tightly one on the other like bricks in a kiln... Consider the quality of the fire in which they burn.

First, the fire is all-extensive and tortures the whole body and the whole soul. A damned person lies in Hell forever in the same spot, which he was assigned by divine justice, without being able to move, as a prisoner in stocks.

The fire, in which he is totally enveloped, as a fish in water, burns around him, on his left, his right, above and below. His head, his breast, his shoulders, his arms, his hands, and his feet are all penetrated with fire, so that he completely resembles a glowing hot piece of iron, which has just been withdrawn from an oven. The roof beneath which the damned person dwells is fire; the food he takes is fire; the drink he tastes is fire; the air he breathes is fire; whatever he sees and touches is all fire....

But this fire is not merely outside him; it also passes within the condemned

person. It penetrates his brain, his teeth, his tongue, his throat, his liver, his lungs, his bowels, his belly, his heart, his veins, his nerves, his bones, even to the marrow, and even his blood.

"In Hell," according to St. Gregory the Great, "there will be a fire that cannot be put out, a worm which cannot die, a stench one cannot bear, a darkness one can feel, a scourging by savage hands, with those present despairing of anything good."

A most dreadful fact is that by the divine power this fire goes so far as to work on the very faculties of the soul, burning them and tormenting them. Suppose I were to find myself placed at the oven of a smith so that my whole body was in the open air but for one arm placed in the fire, and that God were to preserve my life for a thousand years in this position. Would this not be an unbearable torture? What, then, would it be like to be completely penetrated and surrounded by fire, which would affect not just an arm, but even all the faculties of the soul?

More Dreadful than Man Can Imagine

Secondly, this fire is far more dreadful than man can imagine. The natural fire that we see during this life has great power to burn and torment. Yet this is not even a shadow of the fire of Hell. There are two reasons why the fire of Hell is more dreadful beyond all comparison than the fire of this life.

The first reason is the justice of God, which the fire serves as an instrument in order to punish the infinite wrong done to his supreme majesty, which has been despised by a creature. Therefore, justice supplies this element with a burning power, which almost reaches the infinite....

The second reason is the malice of sin. As God knows that the fire of this world is not enough to punish sin, as it deserves, He has given the fire of Hell a power so strong that it can never be comprehended by any human mind. Now, how powerfully does this fire burn?

It burns so powerfully, O my soul, that, according to the ascetical masters, if a mere spark of it fell on a millstone; it would reduce it in a moment to powder. If it fell on a ball of bronze, it would melt it in an instant as if it were wax. If it landed on a frozen lake, it would make it boil in an instant.

Pause here briefly, my soul, and answer a few questions I will put. First, I ask you: If a special furnace were fired up as was customarily done to torment the holy martyrs, and then men placed before you all kinds of good things that the human heart might want, and added the offer of a prosperous kingdom – if all this were promised you on condition that for just a half-hour you enclose yourself within the furnace, what would you choose?

A Hundred Kingdoms

"Ah!" you would say, "If you offered me a hundred kingdoms I would never be so foolish as to accept your brutal terms, regardless of how grand your offer might be, even if I were sure that God would preserve my life during those moments of suffering."

Second, I ask you: If you already had possession of a great kingdom and were swimming in a sea of wealth so that nothing was wanting to you, and then you were attacked by an enemy, were imprisoned and put in chains and obliged to either renounce your kingdom or else spend a half-hour in a hot furnace, what would you choose? "Ah!" you would say, "I would prefer to spend my whole life in extreme poverty and submit to any other hardship and misfortune, than suffer such a great torment!"

A Prison of Eternal Fire

Now turn your thoughts from the temporal to the eternal. To avoid the torment of a hot furnace, which would last but a half-hour, you would forgo all your property, even things you are most fond of; you would suffer any other temporal loss, however burdensome. Then why do you not think the same way when you are dealing of eternal torments? God threatens you not just with a half-hour in a furnace, but with a prison of eternal fire. To escape it, should you not forgo whatever He has forbidden, no matter how pleasant it can be for you, and gladly embrace whatever He commands, even if it be extremely unpleasant?

A most terrible thing about Hell is its duration. The condemned person loses God and loses Him for all eternity. Now, what is eternity? O my soul, up to now there has not been any angel who has been able to comprehend what eternity is. So how can you comprehend it? Yet, to form some idea of it, consider the following truths:

Eternity never ends. This is the truth that has made even the great saints tremble. The final judgment will come, the world will be destroyed, the earth will swallow up those who are damned, and they will be cast into Hell. Then, with His almighty hand, God will shut them up in that most unhappy prison.

From then on, as many years will pass as there are leaves on the trees and plants on all the earth, as many thousands of years as there are drops of water in all seas and rivers, as many thousands of years as there are atoms in the air, as there are grains of sand on all the shores of all seas. Then, after the passage of this countless number of years, what will eternity be? Up to then there will not even have been a hundredth part of it, nor a thousandth – nothing. It then begins again and will last as long again, even after this has been repeated a thousand times, and a thousand million times again. And then, after so long a period, not

even a half will have passed, not even a hundredth part nor a thousandth, not even any part of eternity. For all this time there is no interruption in the burnings of those who are damned, and it begins all over again.

Oh, a deep mystery indeed! A terror above all terrors! O eternity! Who can comprehend thee?

The Tears of Cain

Suppose that, in the case of unhappy Cain, weeping in Hell, he shed in every thousand years just one tear. Now, O my soul, recollect your thoughts and suppose this case: For six thousand years at least Cain has been in Hell and shed only six tears, which God miraculously preserves. How many years would pass for his tears to fill all the valleys of the earth and flood all the cities and towns and villages and cover all the mountains so as to flood the whole earth? We understand the distance from the earth to the sun is thirty-four million leagues. How many years would be necessary for Cain's tears to fill that immense space? From the earth to the firmament is, let us suppose, a distance of a hundred and sixty million leagues.

O God! What number of years might one imagine to be sufficient to fill with these tears this immense space? And yet – O truth so incomprehensible – be sure of it, as that God cannot lie – a time will arrive in which these tears of Cain would be sufficient to flood the world, to reach even the sun, to touch the firmament, and fill all the space between earth and the highest heaven. But that is not all.

If God dried up all these tears to the last drop and Cain began again to weep, he would again fill the same entire space with them and fill it a thousands times and a million times in succession, and after all those countless years, not even half of eternity would have passed, not even a fraction. After all that time burning in Hell, Cain's sufferings will be just beginning.

This eternity is also without relief. It would indeed be a small consolation and of little benefit for the condemned persons to be able to receive a brief respite once every thousand years.

No Relief

Picture in Hell a place where there are three reprobates. The first is plunged in a lake of sulfuric fire, the second is chained to a large rock and is being tormented by two devils, one of whom continually pours molten lead down his throat while the other spills it all over his body, covering him from head to foot. The third reprobate is being tortured by two serpents, one of which wraps around the man's body and cruelly gnaws on it, while the other enters within the body and attacks the heart. Suppose God is moved to pity and grants a short respite.

The first man, after the passage of a thousand years is drawn from the lake and receives the relief of a drink of cool water, and at the end of an hour is cast again into the lake. The second, after a thousand years, is released from his place and allowed to rest, but after an hour is again returned to the same torment. The third, after a thousand years, is delivered from the serpents; but after an hour of relief, is again abused and tormented by them. Ah, how little this consolation would be – to suffer a thousand years and to rest only one hour.

However, Hell does not even have that much relief. One burns always in those dreadful flames and never receives any relief for all eternity. He is forever gnawed and stricken with remorse, and will never have a rest for all eternity. He will suffer always a very ardent thirst and never receive the refreshment of a sip of water for all eternity. He will see himself always abhorred by God and will never enjoy a single tender glance from Him for all eternity. He will find himself forever cursed by heaven and Hell, and will never receive a single gesture of friendship.

It is an essential misfortune of Hell that everything will be without relief, without remedy, without interruption, without end, eternal.

The Kindness of His Mercy

Now I understand in part, O my God, what Hell is. It is a place of extreme pain, of extreme despair. It is where I deserve to be for my sins, where I would have been confined for some years already if your immense mercy had not delivered me. I will keep repeating a thousand times: The Heart of Jesus has loved me, or else I would now be in Hell! The mercy of Jesus has pitied me, for otherwise I would be in Hell! The Blood of Jesus has reconciled me with the heavenly Father, or my dwelling place would be Hell. This shall be the hymn that I want to sing to Thee, my God, for all eternity. Yes, from now on my intention is to repeat these words as many times as there are moments that have passed since that unhappy hour in which I first offended You.

What has been my gratitude to God for his kind mercy that He showed me? He delivered me from Hell. O, immense charity! O, infinite goodness! After a benefit so great, should I not have given Him my whole heart and loved Him with the love of the most ardent Seraphim? Should I not have directed all my actions to Him and in everything sought only His divine pleasure, accepting all contradictions with joy, in order to return to Him my love? Could I do less than that after a kindness that was so great? And yet, what is it that I have done? Oh, ingratitude worthy of another Hell! I cast You aside, O my God! I reacted to Your mercy by committing new sins and offenses. I know that I have done evil, O my God, and I repent with my whole heart. Ah, would that I could shed a sea of tears for such outrageous ingratitude! O Jesus, have mercy on me; for I now

resolve to rather suffer a thousand deaths than offend You again.

The Urgency of Hell

It is of faith that Heaven exists for the good and Hell for the wicked. Faith teaches that the pains of Hell are eternal, and it also warns us that one single mortal sin suffices to condemn a soul forever because of the infinite malice by which it offends an infinite God. With these most positive principles in mind, how can I remain indifferent when I see the ease with which sins are committed, sins that occur as frequently as one takes a glass of water, sins and offenses that are perpetrated out of levity or diversion? How can I rest when so many are to be seen living continually in mortal sin and rushing in this blind manner to their eternal destruction? No indeed, I cannot rest, but must needs run and shout a warning to them. If I saw anyone about to fall into a pit or a fire, would I not run up to him and warn him, and do all in my power to help him from falling in? Why should I not do this much to keep sinners from falling into the pit and fires of Hell?

Neither can I understand why other priests who believe the selfsame truths as I do, as we all must do, do not preach or exhort their flock so that they might avoid this unbearable eternity of Hell. It is still a source of wonder to me how the laity – those men and women blessed with the Faith – do not give warning to those who need it. If a house were to catch fire in the middle of the night, and if the inhabitants of the same house and the other townsfolk were asleep and did not see the danger, would not the one who first noticed it shout and run along the streets, exclaiming: "Fire! Fire! In that house over there!" Then why should there not be a warning of eternal fire to waken those who are drifting in the sleep of sin in such a way that when they open their eyes they will find themselves burning in the eternal flames of Hell?"

Zeal for the salvation of souls spurred St. Anthony Mary Claret to preach an estimated 25,000 sermons, write 144 books, found three religious orders, preach countless missions, and in six years as a bishop, confirm over 300,000 and validate more than 9,000 marriages. Starting as a missionary in Spain and the Canary Islands, he was later appointed Archbishop of Santiago, Cuba, and thereafter confessor to the Queen of Spain. But in all he did, he labored so ceaselessly, so tirelessly, and so fruitfully for the cause of Christ and His Church that he is simply called a "Modern Apostle."

Miracles surrounded his work, and he possessed the gifts of prophecy and the reading of hearts. He often saw Our Lord and Our Lady (to whom he was especially devoted), receiving from them instruction, encouragement, and

prophecies. Driven by the overwhelming motivation of saving immortal souls from eternal damnation, St. Anthony Mary Claret directed all his energies to this end, finding all other goals worthless in comparison.

ON THE NUMBER OF SINS BEYOND WHICH GOD PARDONS NO MORE

"Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" – Matt., 4:7

A sermon by St. Alphonsus Mary De Ligouri (1696-1787), Bishop and Doctor of the Church. St. Francis Jerome, when he visited the parents of St. Alphonsus shortly after his birth, made this prophecy: "This child will be blessed with length of days; he shall not see death before his ninetieth year; he will be a bishop and will do great things for Jesus Christ." This prophecy certainly came true. One of the most accomplished of all the saints is Alphonsus Liguori. He was a lawyer in both civil and Church law before he dedicated his whole life to serving God. He was founder of a religious order, author of more than a hundred books, originator of modern moral theology, renowned preacher and confessor, bishop, musical composer and painter. For all of his 91 years on earth, he was also a man of prayer and deep personal holiness. He gives an example of true Christian living that all of us would do well to follow. Now his sermon:

In this day's Gospel we read that having gone into the desert, Jesus Christ permitted the Devil to *set Him on the pinnacle of the temple* and say to Him: *"If Thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down"*; for the angels shall preserve Thee from all injury. But the Lord answered that in the Sacred Scriptures it is written: *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God*. The sinner who abandons himself to sin without striving to resist temptations, or without at least asking God's help to conquer them, and hopes that the Lord will one day draw him from the precipice, tempts God to work miracles, or rather to show to him an extraordinary mercy not extended to the generality of Christians.

God, as the Apostle says, "will have all men to be saved" – I Tim. 2:4; but He also wishes us all to labor for our own salvation, at least by adopting the means of overcoming our enemies, and of obeying Him when He calls us to repentance. Sinners hear the calls of God, but they forget them, and continue to offend Him. But God does not forget them. He numbers the graces which He dispenses, as well as the sins which we commit. Hence, when the time which He has fixed arrives, God deprives us of His graces, and begins to inflict chastisement. I intend to show in this discourse that when sins reach a certain number, God pardons no more. Be attentive.

1. St. Basil, St. Jerome, St. John Chrysostom, St. Augustine and other fathers, teach, that as God according to the words of Scripture, "Thou hast ordered all

things in measure, and number, and weight" – Wis. 11:21 has fixed for each person the number of the days of his life, and the degrees of health and talent which He will give him, so He has also determined for each the number of sins which He will pardon; and when this number is completed, He will pardon no more.

2. "The Lord hath sent me to heal the contrite of heart" – Isa. 61:1 God is ready to heal those who sincerely wish to amend their lives, but cannot take pity on the obstinate sinner. The Lord pardons sins, but He cannot pardon those who are determined to offend Him. Nor can we demand from God a reason why He pardons one a hundred sins, and takes others out of life and sends them to Hell, after three or four sins. By His Prophet Amos, God has said: "For three crimes of Damascus, and for four, I will not convert it" – 1:3. In this we must adore the judgments of God, and say with the Apostle: "O the depth of the riches, of the wisdom, and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are His judgments" – Rom. 11:33. He who receives pardon, says St. Augustine, is pardoned through the pure mercy of God; and they who are chastised, are justly punished. How many has God sent to Hell for the first offense? St. Gregory relates, that a child of five years, who had arrived at the use of reason, for having uttered a blasphemy, was seized by the Devil and carried to Hell. The divine Mother revealed to that great servant of God, Benedicta of Florence, that a boy of twelve years was damned after the first sin. Another boy of eight years died after his first sin, and was lost. You say: I am young; there are many who have committed more sins than I have. But is God on that account obliged to wait for your repentance if you offend Him? In the Gospel of St. Matthew (21:19), we read that the Savior cursed a fig tree the first time He saw it without fruit. "May no fruit grow on thee henceforward forever. And immediately the fig tree withered away." You must, then tremble at the thought of committing a single mortal sin, particularly if you have already been guilty of mortal sins.

3. "Be not without fear about sin forgiven, and add not sin to sin" – Eccl. 5:5. Say not then, O sinner: "As God has forgiven me other sins, so He will pardon me this one if I commit it." Say not this; for, if to the sin which has been forgiven you add another, you have reason to fear that this new sin shall be united to your former guilt, and that thus the number will be completed, and that you shall be abandoned. Behold how the Scripture unfolds this truth more clearly in another place. "The Lord patiently expecteth, that when the day of judgment shall come, He may punish them in the fullness of sins" – II. Mac. 6:14. God waits with patience until a certain number of sins is committed but, when the measure of guilt is filled up, He waits no longer, but chastises the sinner. "Thou hast sealed up my offenses as it were in a bag" – Job 14:17. Sinners multiply their sins without keeping any account of them; but God numbers them, that, when the harvest is ripe, that is, when the number of sins is

completed, He may take vengeance on them. "Put ye in the sickles, for the harvest is ripe" Joel 3:13.

4. Of this there are many examples in the Scriptures. Speaking of the Hebrews, the Lord in one place says: "All the men that have tempted Me now ten times. . . shall not see the land" – Num. 14:22, 23. In another place, He says, that He restrained His vengeance against the Amorrites, because the number of their sins was not completed. "For as yet the iniquities of the Amorrites are not at the full" – Gen. 15:16. We have again the example of Saul who, after having disobeyed God a second time, was abandoned. He entreated Samuel to interpose before the Lord in his behalf. "Bear, I beseech thee, my sin, and return with me, that I may adore the Lord" – I Kings 15:25. But, knowing that God had abandoned Saul, Samuel answered: "I will not return with thee, because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee," etc. – 5:26. Saul, you have abandoned God, and He has abandoned you. We have another example in Balthassar, who, after having profaned the vessels of the Temple, saw a hand writing on the wall, *Mane, Thecel, Phares*. Daniel was requested to expound the meaning of these words. In explaining the word Thecel, he said to the king: "Thou art weighed in the balance, and art found wanting" – Dan. 5:27. By this explanation, he gave the king to understand that the weight of his sins in the balance of divine justice, had made the scale descend." The same night Balthassar, the Chaldean king, was killed" – Dan. 5:30. Oh! how many sinners have met with a similar fate! Continuing to offend God till their sins amounted to a certain number, they have been struck dead and sent to Hell! "They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment they go down to Hell" – Job 21:13. Tremble, brethren, lest if you commit another mortal sin, God should cast you into Hell.

5. If God chastised sinners the moment they insult Him, we should not see Him so much despised. But, because He does not instantly punish their transgressions, and because through mercy He restrains His anger and waits for their return, they are encouraged to continue to offend Him. "For, because sentence is not speedily pronounced against the evil, the children of men commit evil without any fear" – Eccles. 8:11. But it is necessary to be persuaded, that though God bears with us, He does not wait, nor bear with us forever. Expecting, as on former occasions, to escape from the snares of the Philistines, Samson continued to allow himself to be deluded by Delilah. "I will go out as I did before, and shake myself" – Judges 16:20. But "the Lord departed from him." Samson was at length taken by his enemies, and lost his life. The Lord warns you not to say: I have committed so many sins, and God has not chastised me. "Say not: I have sinned, and what harm hath befallen me; for the Most High is a patient rewarder" – Eccl. 5:4. God has patience for a certain term, after which He punishes the first and last sins. And the greater has

been His patience, the more severe His vengeance.

6. Hence, according to St. Chrysostom, God is more to be feared when He bears with sinners, than when He instantly punishes their sin. And why? Because, says St. Gregory, they to whom God has shown most mercy shall, if they do not cease to offend Him, be chastised with the greatest rigor. The saint adds that God often punishes such sinners with a sudden death, and does not allow them time for repentance. And the greater the light which God gives to certain sinners for their correction, the greater is their blindness and obstinacy in sin. "For it had been better for them not to have known the way of justice, than, after they had known it, to turn back" – II Pet. 2:21. Miserable the sinners, who, after having been enlightened, return to the vomit. St. Paul says, that it is morally impossible for them to be again converted. "For it is impossible for those who were once illuminated-have tasted also the Heavenly gifts. . . and are fallen away, to be renewed again to penance" – Heb. 6:4, 6.

7. Listen, then, O sinner, to the admonition of the Lord: "My son, hast thou sinned? Do so no more, but for thy former sins pray that they may be forgiven thee" – Eccl. 21:1. Son, add not sins to those which you have already committed, but be careful to pray for the pardon of your past transgressions; otherwise, if you commit another mortal sin, the gates of divine mercy may be closed against you, and your soul may be lost forever. When then, beloved brethren, the devil tempts you again to yield to sin, say to yourself: If God pardons me no more, what shall become of me for all eternity? Should the Devil in reply, say: *fear not, God is merciful*; answer him by saying: What certainty or what probability have I that, if I return again to sin, God will show me mercy or grant me pardon? Behold the threat of the Lord against all who despise His calls: "Because I have called and you refused,...I *also* will laugh in your destruction, and will mock when that shall come to you which you feared" – Prov. 1:24, 26. Mark the words "I also"; they mean that, as you have mocked the Lord by betraying Him again after your confession and promises of amendment, so He will mock you at the hour of death. *I will laugh and will mock*. But, "God is not mocked" – Gal. 6:7. "As a dog," says the Wise Man, "that returneth to his vomit, so is the fool that repeateth his folly" – Prov. 26:11. Bl. Denis the Carthusian gives an excellent exposition of this text. He says that, as a dog that eats what he has just vomited, is an object of disgust and abomination, so the sinner who returns to the sins which he has detested and confessed, becomes hateful in the sight of God.

8. O folly of sinners! If you purchase a house, you spare no pains to get all the securities necessary to guard against the loss of your money; if you take medicine, you are careful to assure yourself that it cannot injure you; if you pass over a river, you cautiously avoid all danger of falling into it: and for a transitory enjoyment, for the gratification of revenge, for a beastly pleasure,

which lasts but a moment, you risk your eternal salvation, saying: *I will go to confession after I commit this sin*. And when, I ask, are you to go to confession? You say: *On tomorrow*. But who promises you tomorrow? Who assures you that you shall have time for confession, and that God will not deprive you of life as He has deprived so many others, in the act of sin? "*Diem tenes*" says St. Augustine, "*qui horam non tenes*." You cannot be certain of living for another hour, and you say: *I will go to confession tomorrow*. Listen to the words of St. Gregory: "He who has promised pardon to penitents, has not promised tomorrow to sinners" – Hom. 12 in Evan. God has promised pardon to all who repent; but He has not promised to wait until tomorrow for those who insult Him. Perhaps God will give you time for repentance, perhaps He will not. But, should He not give it, what shall become of your soul? In the meantime, for the sake of a miserable pleasure, you lose the grace of God and expose yourself to the danger of being lost forever.

9. Would you, for such transient enjoyments, risk your money, your honor, your possessions, your liberty, and your life? No, you would not. How then does it happen that, for a miserable gratification, you lose your soul, Heaven, and God? Tell me: do you believe that Heaven, Hell, eternity, are truths of faith? Do you believe that, if you die in sin, you are lost forever? Oh! what temerity, what folly is it, to condemn yourself voluntarily to an eternity of torments with the hope of afterwards reversing the sentence of your condemnation! "*Nemo*," says St. Augustine, "*sub spe salutis vult aegrotare*." No one can be found so foolish as to take poison with the hope of preventing its deadly effects by adopting the ordinary remedies. And you will condemn yourself to Hell, saying that you expect to be afterwards preserved from it. O folly! which, in conformity with the divine threats, has brought, and brings every day, so many to Hell. "Thou hast trusted in thy wickedness, and evil shall come upon thee, and thou shalt not know the rising thereof" – Isa. 47:10, 11. You have sinned, trusting rashly in the divine mercy: the punishment of your guilt shall fall suddenly upon you, and you shall not know from whence it comes. What do you say? What resolution do you make? If, after this sermon, you do not firmly resolve to give yourself to God, I weep over you and regard you as lost.

For the greater honor and glory of God and the salvation of souls, you are encouraged to distribute this sermon on as large a scale as God's graces permit. Go to the churches and hand them out or place them on vehicles parked for church services. You may reproduce this paper if the text is not changed.

Those who do not repent and convert, God shall surely punish eternally in hell,

and when, as a last resort, they finally call to God for help He will not hear them because they put their faith in the world, family, and friends instead of in Him, choosing them instead of Him.

“Then shall they cry to the Lord, and he will not hear them: and he will hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved wickedly in their devices.” (Micah 3:4)

“Seek the Lord while he may be found.” (Isaiah 4:6)

“You shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither you cannot come.” (John 7:34)

“You have despised all my counsel, and have neglected my rephensons. I also will laugh in your destruction, and will mock when that shall come to you which you feared. When sudden calamity shall fall on you, and destruction, as a tempest, shall be at hand: when tribulation and distress shall come upon you: **Then shall they call upon me, and I will not hear: they shall rise in the morning, and shall not find me: Because they have hated instruction, and received not the fear of the Lord, Nor consented to my counsel, but despised all my reproof.** Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, and shall be filled with their own devices.” (Proverbs 1:25-31)

When God allows them to be destroyed, on the brink of their destruction, they will know the utter worthlessness of their putting their faith in their families and the world over that of God, when their families will be destroyed before their face, just as God had allowed Babylon to destroy Egypt whom the unfaithful Israelites had put their trust instead of God. God destroyed both Egypt and the unfaithful Israelites. God does not change. He remains eternally the same. His justice as well as His mercy is perfect and HE WILL NOT BE MOCKED!

Many may not see His justice on earth, because they are blind and faithless, but they surely will upon their judgment day, for it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God, who kills or saves, both body and soul eternally. *“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”* (Heb. 10:31) Your family members will not judge you on judgment day. It is Almighty God, Jesus Christ the Second Person of the Divine, Holy, and Eternal Trinity who will judge you, as your soul stands naked before Him. Your family members and friends will not be able to console you in hell.

St. Catherine of Siena: “The will of the Blessed is so united with God that a father or mother seeing their son, or a son seeing his father or mother, in Hell, they do not trouble themselves, and they are even contented to see them punished as His enemies.”

St. John Eudes: “Think how many saints there are in Heaven who see

their fathers, mothers, brothers, or other relatives in the damnation of Hell, and, notwithstanding this, they adore, they love, they bless with joy and happiness that most just Will of God because they see that such is the decree of Divine Justice concerning these relatives... For the saints in Heaven, the accomplishment of the Will of God is so completely adequate to give them happiness and heavenly bliss that many of them, even beholding their dear loved ones, punished in Hell, must rejoice in the manifestation of God's eternal justice." (*Letters and Shorter Works*)

St. Theresa of Avila: "It is great folly to be willing to violate the friendship of God rather than the law of human friendship." (*Mary Help of Christians*, Fr. Bonaventure Hammer)

"... God spared not the angels that sinned, but delivered them, drawn down with infernal ropes into hell to be tormented, to be reserved unto judgment." (2 Peter 2:4)

Catholics must also understand that few are saved. Our Lord Jesus Christ revealed that the road to Heaven is straight and narrow and few find it, while the road to Hell is wide and taken by most (Mt. 7:13).

Matthew 7:13- "Enter ye in at the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat. How narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leadeth to life, and few there are that find it!"

Luke 13:24- "Strive to enter by the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, shall seek to enter, and shall not be able."

Scripture also teaches that almost the entire world lies in darkness, so much so that Satan is even called the "prince" (John 12:31) and "god" (2 Cor. 4:3) of this world.

1 John 5:19- "We know that we are of God, and the whole world is seated in wickedness."

It's the sad fact of history that most people in the world are of bad will and don't want the truth. That's why almost the whole world lies in darkness and on the road to perdition. This has been the case since the beginning. It was the case when only eight souls out of the world's entire population (Noah and his family) escaped God's wrath in the deluge that covered the entire earth, and when the Israelites rejected God's law and fell into idolatry over and over again. Only two men out of the whole population of Israelites (Joshua and Caleb) made it into the Promised Land since the people opposed God time upon time even though they had seen such miracles as the world had never seen!

Vision of Archdeacon of Lyons, who died the same day as St. Bernard (1153): "Know, Monsignor, that at the very hour I passed away, thirty-three thousand

people also died. Out of this number, Bernard and myself went up to heaven without delay, three went to purgatory, and all the others fell into Hell." (Told to St. Vincent Ferrer)

Think about how almost the whole of Europe was fully Catholic and how the kingdoms outlawed [false religions](#) at this time, making this moment of time much more spiritually beneficial for souls than we see today! If so few were saved at this moment of time, how many are saved now? One can only shudder and weep at this thought!

Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself also confirms this doctrine that the number of the saved is very small in comparison to the damned in *The Revelations of St. Bridget* where he explains that the monks of the world in the 14th century were slaves to sin and that not even one monk of a hundred of them were saved from hell: "They are in truth slaves, and there are very few who are different, yea so few that you hardly can find one in a hundred!" (Book 6, Chapter 35)

If Christ says that not even one in a hundred monks will be saved, how many do you think will be saved of normal people who do not even try to renounce the world and its pleasures! Sadly, only [death and hell](#) will serve to wake up the majority of the people hearing this! You will read this and then continue in your sloth and worldliness, or you will have a short lived spiritual fervor that will cool as times goes by! We pray with tears that you are not one of these Judases that will suffer for all eternity in hell!

"Hell is so hot inside that if the whole world and everything in it were on fire, it could not compare to that vast furnace. The various voices heard in the furnace all speak against God. They begin and end their speech with laments. The souls look like people whose limbs are forever being stretched without relief or pause."

(The Prophecies and Revelations of St. Bridget, Book 4 - Chapter 7)

"Nicholas of Nice, speaking of the fire of Hell, says that nothing on earth could give an idea of it. He adds that if all the trees of the forests were cut down, piled into a vast heap and set on fire, this terrible pile would not be a spark of Hell."

"For the smallest sin, lusted after, is enough to damn anyone from the kingdom of Heaven, who does not repent."

(The Prophecies & Revelations of St. Bridget, Book 1 - Chapter 32)

"Other Christians accepted Hell on faith, because Christ had said repeatedly and with solemn emphasis that there is a Hell, but Jacinta had seen it; and once she grasped the idea that God's justice is the counterpart of His mercy, and that there must be a Hell if there is to be a Heaven, nothing seemed so important to her except to save as many souls as possible from the horrors she had glimpsed under the radiant hands of the Queen of heaven. Nothing could be too hard,

nothing too small or too great to give up.”

(Our Lady of Fatima, p. 89)

Many people today do not care about helping other souls. They waste their time watching worldly tv, series, movies, playing video games and only searching for earthly pleasures rather than saving their own and other people's souls. They do not spend even an hour a day on trying to save their own selves and others from the eternal hellfire. These heartless sinners will not enter into heaven for they did not really care about other people's souls but only about what their next pleasure or enjoyment would be. (Mt. 12:30) Our Lord will surely cast them into an eternal hell fire for their lack of charity!

Imagine seeing your friend or family member being mercilessly tortured and you not being able to prevent this. Most people would do almost anything to prevent this situation from happening. Yet, this is exactly what will happen unless you make an effort to save your friend. (Mt. 7:13-14) So, if you really care about your family and friends, please tell them about the Word of God and the great Revelations of St. Bridget. A single soul has more worth than an infinite amount of universes, for the material universe will cease to exist, but your friend's soul will never cease to exist. Always remember: A true friend is the one who tells the truth. As a Catholic, one has an obligation to attempt to convert friends and family members. Thus, if one is completely unaware of what his or her friend believes, then that person is not evangelizing the way he or she must evangelize. Therefore, let us all invite people to the marriage feast of our Lord as we have been bidden to do by Him! If we are satisfied that we have the faith, and are not zealous to spread it to others, how can we ever expect to be saved?

While the horror or torment of hell can never be fully understood in this world, Christ gives us a glimpse of what awaits almost all people in this world in *The Revelations of St. Bridget*. In Book 4, Chapter 51, God reveals how horrifying purgatory is, and since purgatory is this horrifying, one can only shudder and weep at the thought of what hell will be like:

“The bride's admirable and terrible vision about a soul led before the judge, and about the arguments of God and the book's judgment against the soul and the soul's evidence against herself, and about the various astounding punishments inflicted on her in purgatory: “It seemed that I saw a soul being led to the judge by the soldier and the Ethiopian whom I had seen earlier. It was said to me: ”What you now see all took place in regard to that soul when she was released from the body.” Once the soul had been escorted into the presence of the judge, she stood there alone, no longer in the hands of either of her escorts. She stood there naked and sorrowful, not knowing to what place she would come. It seemed to me then that every word in the book gave its own answer to each and

every thing the soul was saying.

In the hearing of the judge and of the entire host, the armed soldier spoke first, saying: "It is not right to bring up as a reproach against this soul the sins for which she has made reparation in confession." I beheld all this but realized then quite well that the soldier who was speaking already had knowledge of everything in God but spoke so that I would understand. A reply then came from the book of justice: "Although this soul did perform penance, it was not accompanied by a contrition or true satisfaction proportionate to her great sins. She should therefore suffer now for those sins for which she did not make reparation when she was able."

When this was said, the soul began to weep so violently that it was as though she had broken down completely, and yet, though her tears could be seen, not a sound could be heard. Then the King said to the soul: "Let your conscience now declare those sins that were not accompanied by a proportionate satisfaction." Then the soul raised her voice with such force that it was as though it could be heard throughout the whole world. She said: "Woe is me that I did not act according to God's commands, which I heard and knew!" Then she added in self-accusation: "I did not fear God's judgment." The book replied to her: "You must therefore now fear the devil." Right away the soul began to fear and tremble, as if she were melting away completely, and she said: "I had almost no love for God: That is why I did so little good." An immediate reply was made to her from the book: "That is why it is just for you to approach closer to the devil than to God, because the devil lured and enticed you to himself with his temptations."

The soul replied: "I understand now that everything I did was done on the promptings of the devil." A reply was made from the book: "Justice dictates that it is the devil's right to repay your accomplishments with pain and punishment." The soul said: "From head to heel there was nothing I did not dress with pride. Some of my vain and proud manners I invented myself, others I just followed according to the custom of my native land. I washed my hands and face not only in order to be clean but also to be called beautiful by men." A reply was made from the book: "Justice says that it is the devil's right to repay you for what you have earned, since you dressed and adorned yourself as he inspired and told you to do."

The soul said again: "My mouth was often open for bawdy talk, because I wanted to please others, and my heart longed for all those things provided it did not result in worldly disgrace or disapproval." A reply was made from the book: "That is why your tongue must be drawn out and stretched and your teeth bent in. And all the things you most detest will be set before you, and all the things you like will be taken away from you." The soul said: "I enjoyed it immensely

when many people took after my example and noticed what I did and copied my manners." A reply was made from the book: "Hence, it is just that everyone caught in the sin for which you are about to be punished should also suffer the same punishment and be brought to you. Then your pain will be increased each time someone comes who copied your fashions."

After these words, it seemed to me as though a chain was wound about her head like a crown and then tightened so hard that the front and back of her head were joined together. Her eyes fell out of their sockets and dangled by their roots at her cheeks. Her hair looked like it had been scorched by flames, and her brains were shattered and flowed out through her nostrils and ears.

Her tongue was stretched out and her teeth pressed in. Her arms were twisted like ropes and their bones broke. Her hands, with their skin peeled off, were fastened to her throat. Her breast and belly were bound so hard with her back that her ribs were broken and her heart spilled out together with all her entrails; her thighs dangled at her flanks, and their broken bones were being pulled out just like a thin thread is used to thread a needle."

Indeed, since purgatory is this horrifying, how much more must not Hell be infinitely more horrifying?

The bride's terrible vision of a man and woman, and an angel's spiritual explanation to the bride concerning the amazing vision and containing many amazing points.

Chapter 52

There appeared to me a man whose eyes were dug out and hanging at his cheeks by their two muscles. He had the ears of a dog, the nostrils of a horse, the mouth of a ferocious wolf, hands like the feet of a big ox and feet like a vulture. I saw a woman standing at his side whose hair was like a bramble bush, whose eyes were at the back of her head, whose ears were cut off, whose nose was full of pus and gore, whose lips were like snake-fangs with a venomous barb on her tongue, whose hands were like the tail of a fox, whose feet like two scorpions.

I was awake and not sleeping while I saw all this, and I said: "O, what is this?" Immediately a sweet-sounding voice spoke to me so comfortingly that all my fear disappeared. It said: "You who are seeing this, what do you think it is?" I answered: "I do not know whether the beings I see are devils or beasts born with such a bestial nature or human beings formed that way by God." The voice then answered me: "They are not devils, since devils do not have bodies as you see these do, nor are they a kind of beast, for they are born from Adam's stock, although they were not created in such a form by God. Rather, they appear before God made ugly in their souls by the devil. It is this that you are seeing as

if in bodily fashion, but I will reveal to you the spiritual meaning of it all.

You see the eyes of that man that look as though they were dug out and hanging by their two muscles. You should understand two things by the two muscles. The first is that he believed God to live eternally. The second is that he believed that his own soul would live on eternally for good or evil after the death of the body. You should understand two things by the two eyes. The first is that he should have considered how he could have avoided sin, and the second is how he could have carried out good deeds. These two eyes have been dug out in the sense that he did not do good deeds out of a desire for heavenly glory and did not flee sin out of the fear of the punishment of Gehenna. He has dog ears, because, as a dog is not as interested in his master's name or in any other dog's name so much as its own name, If he should hear it, so too this man did not care as much about the honor of God's name as about the honor of his own name.

He has a horse's nostrils, too, for, just as when a horse has got rid of its dung, it likes to put its nose to it, so does this man. When he has committed a sin, which before God is as vile a thing as dung, it seems pleasant to him to think on its stench. He has a mouth like a ferocious wolf that, although it has filled its mouth and belly with the things it has already seen, still longs to gobble up any living creature its ears detect.

He also has hands like the feet of a strong ox. An angry ox destroys a weaker animal through the force of its wrath by trampling it down with its hooves indiscriminately, flesh and intestines and all, until the last bit of life is taken away. This man does likewise. When he is angry, he treats his enemy indiscriminately, without a thought about how the man's soul might end up in hell or how his body will suffer in death, provided that he can take the man's life away. He has feet like a vulture. When a vulture gets something it likes in its claws, it squeezes it so tightly that the strength in its feet fails due to the pain and it lets go of what it was holding without even knowing it. This man acts in the same way. He intends to keep his unjust possessions until death, but he will be forced to let go of them when his strength fails.

His wife's hair was like a bramble bush. The hair on the top of the head that adorns a person's face signifies a will that highly desires to please God the most high. That is what adorns a soul in God's sight. Because this woman's will was highly set on pleasing the world rather than God the most high, her hair looks like a bramble bush. Her eyes appear to be at the back of her head, because she turned her mind's eye away from what God's goodness had done for her in creating and redeeming her and in providing for her in her needs. Yet she gazes intently on that which is fleeting, though these things are departing from her day by day and will vanish entirely from her sight in the end. Her ears appear to be cut off in a spiritual sense, for she cares little about the doctrine of the Holy

Gospel or about hearing sermons.

Her nose is full of gore, because, just as a sweet odor is pleasantly transmitted to the brain through the nose so as to comfort it, so she, too, in her passions, is delighted to put into effect whatever delights her corruptible body in order to comfort it. Her lips are like snake-fangs, and there is a venomous barb on her tongue. Even when a snake holds its teeth together tightly so as to protect its barb from being accidentally broken, the filth of its mouth still flows out through the gaps between its teeth. In the same way, she shuts her lips to true confession so as not to break the pleasure of sin, which is like the venomous barb of her soul, but the filth of her sin can still be clearly seen in the sight of God and his saints.”

EXPLANATION

”I told you before about the judgment and rejection of a marriage that they had contracted against the statutes of the church. I shall now explain it to you more fully. You saw the woman's hands were like the tails of foxes and her feet like scorpions. **This is because, just as she was undisciplined in her whole body and all her passions, so too by the lightness of her hands and her way of walking she excited her husband's physical delight and stung his soul worse than any scorpion.**”

At that very moment an Ethiopian appeared with trident in hand and three sharp claws on his feet. He shouted and said: ”Judge, it is my hour now. I have waited and been silent. Now is the time for action!” Immediately, I beheld a naked man and woman before the judge as he sat there together with his innumerable host.

The judge said to them: ”Though I know all things, tell us what you have done!” The man answered: ”We heard and knew about the ecclesial bond, and we paid no attention but disdained it.” The judge answered: ”Because you refused to follow the Lord, justice says you must experience the malice of the executioner.” Right then the Ethiopian thrust his claws into their hearts and pressed them together so tightly that they looked like they were in a winepress. And the judge said: ”Look, daughter, this is what people deserve when they knowingly distance themselves from their creator for the sake of creation.”

The judge spoke again to the two of them: ”I gave you a sack to fill with the fruit of my delights. What, then, do you bring me?” The woman answered: ”O judge, we sought the delights of our belly and have nothing to bring but shame.” Then the judge said to the executioner: ”Let them have their just reward!” And he immediately thrust his second claw into both their bellies and wounded them so badly that all their intestines appeared to be pierced through and through. The judge said: ”Look, daughter, this is what people deserve when they transgress the law and thirst after poison as though it were medicine.”

The judge spoke again to the two of them: "Where is my treasure that I provided for your use?" Both of them answered: "We trampled it underfoot, for we sought an earthly treasure and not an eternal one." Then the judge said to the executioner: "Let them have what you must and can give to them!" He immediately thrust his third claw into their hearts and bellies and feet in such a way that everything seemed to be like one big ball. The Ethiopian said: "Lord, where shall I go with them?" The judge answered: "It is not for you to rise or rejoice." At that the man and woman disappeared with a wail from the face of the judge. The judge spoke again: "Rejoice, daughter, because you have been kept apart from such creatures."

Pope St. Gregory the Great (c. 600), on the fewness of the saved: "The more the wicked abound, so much the more must we suffer with them in patience; for on the threshing floor **few are the grains carried into the barns, but high are the piles of chaff burned with fire.**"

St. Alphonsus (c. 1760): "My brother, if you wish to live well, endeavor to live during the remainder of your life in the presence of death. 'O death, thy judgment is good' (Eccl. xli. 3). Oh, how truly does he judge of things, and how well does he regulate his actions, who judges and regulates them with death before his eyes! The remembrance of death makes us lose all affection for the things of this life."

The Vision of Hell, shown by The Blessed Virgin Mary to the Fatima Children, 1917: She "showed them a sea of fire; and plunged in this fire the demons and the souls, as if they were red-hot coals, transparent and black or bronze-colored, carried by the flames which issued from it with clouds of smoke, falling on all sides as sparks fall in great conflagrations – without weight or equilibrium, among shrieks and groans of sorrow and despair which horrify and cause to shudder with fear."

ON THE GENERAL JUDGMENT BY SAINT ALPHONSUS LIGUORI

"And they shall see the Son of Man coming in the Clouds of Heaven with much Power and Majesty" - Matthew 24:30.

At Present, **God** is not Known, and therefore **He** is as much **Despised** by **Sinners**, as if **He** could not **Avenge**, whenever **He** Pleases, the **Injuries** offered to **Him**. The **Wicked** "*Looketh upon the Almighty as if He could do Nothing*" - Job 22:17. But the **Lord** has Fixed a Day, called-in the Scriptures "*the Day of the Lord*", on which the **Eternal Judge** will make-known **His Power** and **Majesty**. "*The Lord*", says the Psalmist, "*shall be Known, when He Executeth Judgment*" - Psalm 9:17. On this Text, Saint Bernard writes: "*The Lord, Who is now Unknown while He seeks Mercy, shall be Known when He Executes Justice*". The Prophet Zephaniah calls the *Day of the Lord* - "*a Day of Wrath - a*

Day of Tribulation and Distress - a Day of Calamity and Misery" - Zephaniah 1:15.

Let us now consider, in the **First Point**, the Different Appearance-of the **Just** and the **Unjust**; in the **Second**, the Scrutiny-of **Consciences**; and in the **Third**, the Sentence, Pronounced-on the **Elect** and on the **Reprobate**.

First Point

On the Different Appearance of the Just and of Sinners in the Valley of Jehoshaphat - (Joel 4.2)

This Day shall commence-with **Fire**-from **Heaven**, which will **Burn** the Earth, all Men then-Living, and all Things upon the Earth. *"And the Earth and the Works which are in it, shall be Burnt up"* - 2Peter 3:10. All shall become, **One (1)** Heap-of-Ashes.

After the **Death** of all Men, *"the Trumpet shall Sound, and the Dead shall Rise again"* - 1Corinthians 15:52. Saint Jerome used to say: *"As often as I consider the Day-of-Judgment, I Tremble. Whether I Eat, or Drink, or whatever else I do, that Terrible Trumpet appears to Sound in my Ears, 'Arise, ye Dead, and Come to Judgment'"*; and Saint Augustine declared, that Nothing, Banished-from him, Earthly Thoughts so-Effectually, as the **Fear** of Judgment.

At the Sound-of that Trumpet, the **Souls**-of the **Blessed** shall Descend-from **Heaven**, to be United-to the **Bodies** with-which they Served **God** on-Earth; and the **Unhappy Souls** of the **Damned**, shall come-up from **Hell** to Take-possession again, of those **Bodies**, with-which they have **Offended God**. Oh! how different, the Appearance-of the **Former**, compared-with that of the **Latter**! The **Damned** shall appear 'Deformed' and 'Black', like so many **Firebrands** of-Hell; but *"the Just shall Shine as the Sun"* - Matthew 13:43. Oh! how Great shall then be the **Happiness**-of those who have **Mortified** their **Bodies**, by Works-of **Penance**! We may Estimate their **Felicity** from the Words addressed-by Saint Peter-of-Alcantara, after **Death**, to Saint Teresa: *"O Happy Penance! which Merited for me such Glory"*.

After their Resurrection, they shall be Summoned-by the Angels, to Appear-in the Valley-of-Jehoshaphat. *"Nations, Nations, in the Valley of Destruction, for the Day of the Lord is Near"* - Joel 4:2. Then the Angels shall Come, and Separate the **Reprobate** from the **Elect**, placing the Latter-on the Right, and the Former-on the Left. *"The Angels shall Go-out, and shall Separate the Wicked from among the Just"* - Matthew 13:49. Oh! how Great, will then-be the **Confusion** which the **Unhappy Damned** shall **Suffer**! *"What think you"*, says the Author-of the Imperfect-Work, *"must be the Confusion of the Impious, when, being Separated-from the Just, they shall be Abandoned?"*. This **Punishment** alone, says Saint Chrysostom, would be Sufficient-to Constitute a

Hell, for the **Wicked**. "*Et si nihil ulterius paterentur, ista sola verecundia sufficeret eis ad poenam*". The Brother shall be Separated-from the Brother, the Husband from his Wife, the Son from the Father, etc.

But, Behold, the **Heavens** are Opened - the Angels come-to Assist-at the General Judgment, carrying, as Saint Thomas says, the Sign-of the **Cross** and of the other Instruments-of the **Passion**-of the **Redeemer**. "*Veniente Domino ad judiciurn signum crucis, et alia passionis indicia demonstrabunt*". The same may be Inferred-from the **Twenty-fourth** Chapter-of Saint Matthew: "*And then shall Appear the Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven; and then shall all the Tribes-of the Earth, Mourn*" - Matthew 24:30. **Sinners** shall **Weep** at the Sign-of the **Cross**; for, as Saint Chrysostom says, the **Nails** will Complain-of them - the **Wounds** and the **Cross**-of **Jesus Christ** will Speak-against them. "*Clavi de te conquerentur, cicatrices contra te loquentur, crux Christi contra te perorabit*".

Most Holy Mary, the **Queen** of **Saints** and **Angels**, shall Come-to Assist-at the Last Judgment; and Lastly, the **Eternal Judge** shall Appear-in the Clouds, Full-of **Splendor** and **Majesty**. "*And they shall see the Son of Man coming-in the Clouds of Heaven, with much Power and Majesty*" - Matthew 24:30. Oh! how Great, shall be the **Agony**-of the **Reprobate**, at the Sight-of the **Judge**! "*At their Presence*", says the Prophet Joel, "*the People shall be in Grievous Pains*" - Joel 2:6. According-to Saint Jerome, the Presence-of **Jesus Christ**, will Give the **Reprobate**, more **Pain** than **Hell** itself. "*It would*", he says, "*be easier for the Damned to Bear the Torments of Hell, than the Presence of the Lord*". Hence, on that Day, the **Wicked** shall, according-to Saint John, call-on the Mountains, to Fall-on them and to Hide them from the Sight-of the **Judge**. "*And they shall Say-to the Mountains and the Rocks: Fall upon us, and Hide us from the Face of Him that Sitteth-on the Throne, and from the Wrath-of the Lamb*" - Revelation 6:16.

Second Point

The Scrutiny of Conscience

"*The Court was Convened, and the Books were Opened*" - Daniel 7:10. The Books-of **Conscience** are Opened, and the Judgment commences. The Apostle says, that the **Lord** "*will Bring-to Light, the Hidden Things of Darkness*" - 1Corinthians 4:5. And, by the Mouth-of **His** Prophet, **Jesus Christ** has said: "*I will search Jerusalem with Lamps*" - Zephaniah 1:12. The **Light-of-the-Lamp**, Reveals all that is Hidden.

"*A Judgment*", says Saint Chrysostom, "*Terrible to Sinners, but Desirable and Sweet-to the Just*". The Last Judgment shall Fill **Sinners** with **Terror**, but will

be a Source-of **Joy** and **Sweetness** to the **Elect**; for **God** will then Give Praise to each one, according-to his Works - 1Corinthians 4:5. The Apostle tells us that on that Day, the **Just** will be Raised-above the Clouds, to be United-to the **Angels**, and to Increase the Number-of those, who Pay Homage-to the **Lord**. *"We shall be Taken-up together, with them in the Clouds, to meet Christ, into the Air"* - 1Thessalonians 4:17.

Wordlings now regard as **Fools** the Saints who led **Mortified** and **Humble** Lives; but, then they shall Confess their own **Folly**, and say: *"We Fools, Esteemed their Life Madness, and their End, without Honor. Behold how they are Numbered among the Children of God, and their Lot is among the Saints"* - Wisdom 5:4, 5. In this World, the Rich and the Noble are called Happy; but **True Happiness** consists-in a Life-of **Sanctity**. Rejoice, ye **Souls** who Live-in **Tribulation**; *"your Sorrow shall be Turned into Joy"* - John 16:20. In the Valley-of-Jehoshaphat, you shall be Seated-on **Thrones-of-Glory**.

But the **Reprobate**, like Goats Destined-for the Slaughter, shall be Placed-on the Left, to Await their Last **Condemnation**. *"Judicii tempus"*, says Saint Chrysostom, *"misericordiam non recipit"*. On the Day-of Judgment, there is no **Hope of Mercy** for **Poor Sinners**. *"Magna"*, says Saint Augustine, *"jam est poena peccati, metum et memoriam divini perdidisse judicii"*. The Greatest **Punishment-of Sin**, in those who Live-in **Enmity**-with **God**, is to Lose the **Fear** and Remembrance-of the **Divine Judgment**. Continue, Continue, says the Apostle, to-Live **Obstinately**-in **Sin**; but, in Proportion-to your **Obstinacy**, you shall have Accumulated-for the Day-of Judgment, a Treasure-of the **Wrath-of God**. *"But, according to thy Hardness and Impenitent Heart, thou Treasurkest up to thyself, Wrath against the Day of Wrath"* - Romans 2:5.

Then, **Sinners** will not be able to Hide themselves; but, with **Insufferable Pain**, they shall be Compelled-to Appear-in Judgment. *"To lie Hid"*, says Saint Anselm, *"will be Impossible - to Appear, will be Intolerable"*. The **Devils** will Perform their Office-of **Accusers**, and, as Saint Augustine says, will Say-to the **Judge**: *"Most Just God, Declare him to be mine, who was Unwilling to be Yours"*. The **Witnesses** against the **Wicked** shall be, **First**, their own **Conscience** - *"Their Conscience, bearing Witness to them"* - Romans 2:15; **Secondly**, the very Walls-of the House, in which they **Sinned**, shall Cry-out against them - *"The Stone shall Cry-out of the Wall"* - Habakkuk 2:11; **Thirdly**, the **Judge Himself** will say - *"I am the Judge and the Witness, saith the Lord"* - Jeremiah 29:23. Hence, according-to Saint Augustine, *"He Who is now the Witness of your Life, shall be the Judge of your Cause"*. To **Christians** particularly, **He** will say: *"Woe to thee Chorazin; woe to thee Bethsaida; for if in Tyre and Sidon had been Wrought the Miracles that have been Wrought in you, they would Long ago have done Penance in Sackcloth and Ashes"* - Matthew 11:21. ... **He** shall then Manifest-to all Men, their most-hidden

Crimes. "*I will Discover thy Shame, to thy Face*" - Nahum 3:5. **He** will Expose-to View, all their **Secret Impurities, Injustices, and Cruelties.** "*I will Set, all thy Abominations, against thee*" - Ezekiel 7:3. Each-of the **Damned**, shall Carry his **Sins**, Written-on his Forehead.

What Excuses can **Save** the **Wicked**, on that Day? Ah! they can Offer no Excuses. "*All Iniquity shall Stop her Mouth*" - Psalm 107:42. Their very **Sins** shall Close the Mouth-of the **Reprobate**, so that they will have no-Courage to-Excuse themselves. They shall Pronounce their own **Condemnation.**

Third Point **Sentence of the Elect and of the Reprobate**

Saint Bernard says, that the Sentence-of the **Elect**, and their Destiny-to **Eternal Glory**, shall be **First**-declared, that the **Pains**-of the **Reprobate**, may be Increased-by the Sight-of what they **Lost.** "*Prius pronunciabitur sententia electis, ut acrius (reprobi) doleant videntes quid amiserint*". **Jesus Christ**, then shall **First** Turn-to the **Elect**, and with a Serene Countenance shall say: "*Come, ye Blessed of My Father, Possess the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Foundation of the World*" - Matthew 25:34. **He** will **Bless** all the **Tears** shed-through **Sorrow** for their **Sins**; and all their **Good Works**, their **Prayers**, **Mortifications**, and **Communions**; above all, **He** will **Bless** for them the **Pains**-of **His Passion**, and the **Blood** shed-for their **Salvation.** And after these **Benedictions**, the **Elect**, singing 'Alleluias', shall enter **Paradise** to **Praise** and **Love God**, for all **Eternity.**

The **Judge** shall then Turn-to the **Reprobate**, and shall Pronounce the Sentence-of their **Condemnation** in these Words: "*Depart from Me you Cursed, into the Everlasting Fire*" - Matthew 25:41. They shall then be **Ever Accursed**, Separated-from **God**, and sent-to **Burn Forever**, in the **Fire of Hell.** "*And these shall go into Everlasting Punishment; but the Just into Life Everlasting*" - Matthew 25:46.

After this Sentence, the **Wicked** shall, according-to Saint Ephrem, be Compelled-to take-leave **Forever** of their Relatives, of **Paradise**, of the **Saints**, and of **Mary**, the **Divine Mother.** "*Farewell, ye Just! Farewell, O Cross! Farewell, O Paradise! Farewell, Fathers and Brothers; we shall never see you again! Farewell, O Mary, Mother of God!*". Then a Great **Pit** shall be opened-in the Middle-of the Valley; the **Unhappy Damned** shall be Cast-into it, and shall see those Doors-shut, which shall never again be Opened. O Accursed **Sin!** to what a **Miserable End** will **Sin**, One day, Conduct so-Many **Souls**, **Redeemed**-by the **Blood-of Jesus Christ!** O **Unhappy Souls!** for whom is Prepared, such a **Melancholy End.** But Brethren, have Confidence. **Jesus Christ** is now a 'Father', not a 'Judge'. **He** is Ready-to **Pardon** all who **Repent.** Let us then, ask

Pardon-from **Him**.

- End of Liguori Sermon -

Prayer for the Graces Necessary for Salvation

Eternal Father, Your Son has Promised that You will Grant us all the Graces which we ask for in His Name. In the Name and Merits of Jesus Christ, I ask the following Graces for myself and for all Mankind. Please give me a Lively Faith in all that the Church Teaches. Enlighten me, that I may know the Vanity of the Goods of this World, and the Immensity of the Infinite Good that You are. Make me also see the Deformity of the Sins I have Committed, that I may Humble myself and Detest them as I should.

Give me a Firm Confidence of Receiving Pardon for my Sins, Holy Perseverance, and the Glory of Heaven, through the Merits of Jesus Christ, and the Intercession of Mary. Give me a Great Love for You, that will Detach me from the Love of this World, and of myself, so that I may Love none other, but You.

I Beg of You a Perfect Resignation to Your Will. I Offer myself entirely to You, that You might do with me, and all that belongs to me, as You Please.

I Beg of You a Great Sorrow for my Sins.

I ask You to give me the Spirit of True Humility and Meekness, that I may Accept with Peace, and even with Joy, all the Contempt, Ingratitude and Ill-treatment I may receive. At the same time, I also ask You to give me Perfect Charity, which shall make me wish well to those who have done Evil to me.

Give me Love for the Virtue of Mortification, by which I may Chastise my Rebellious Senses and oppose my Self-Love. Give me a Great Confidence in the Passion of Jesus Christ and in the Intercession of Mary Immaculate. Give me a Great Love for the Blessed Sacrament, and a Tender Devotion and Love to Your Holy Mother. Give me, above all, Holy Perseverance, and the Grace always to Pray for it, especially in Time-of Temptation, and at the Hour-of Death.

Finally, I recommend to You the Holy Souls of Purgatory, my Relatives and Benefactors, and in a special manner I recommend to

You all those who Hate me or who have in any way Offended me; I Beg You to Render them Good, for the Evil they have done or may wish to do me. Grant that, by Your Goodness, I may come One Day to sing Your Mercies in Heaven; for my Hope is in the Merits of Your Blood and in the Patronage of Mary. Mary, Mother of God, Pray to Jesus for me.

Amen

This page is a work in progress which will soon be updated, so please check back in a little while for new texts about Hell, Judgment and Death in order to help your spiritual growth!

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