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THE

Pastor in his Closet;

OR, A HELP TO THE

DEVOTIONS OF THE CLERGY.

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THE

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Pastor in his Closet;

OR, A HELP TO THE

DEVOTIONS OF THE CLERGY.

BY THE

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REV. JOHN ARMSTRONG, D.D.,

LATE LORD BISHOP OF GRAHAMSTOWN.

—
FIFTH EDITION.
—

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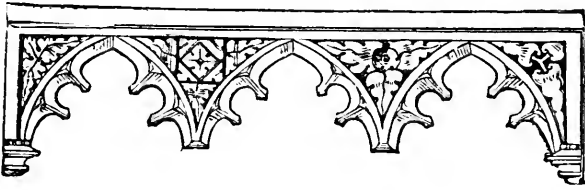
TO THE
VERY REVEREND
THE DEAN OF EXETER,
IN GRATEFUL RECOLLECTION OF MANY KINDNESSES
RECEIVED BOTH IN WORD AND DEED,

This little Work

IS
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

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GENERAL DEVOTION.

O LORD God, I am alone with Thee in my chamber ; I have shut the doors of my chamber and entered into my closet, that I might pray unto Thee in secret, for Thou hearest and lovest the secret prayer. No man seeth or heareth me ; no man knoweth that I have come to pray ; this is my “solitary place ;” it will not be known that I have now sought Thee in prayer till the last day, when all hidden things shall be brought to light.

When I pray in Thy house of prayer, when I pray with my household, I am seen to pray ; but here I pour out my soul, I lift up my soul, I seek Thy face, I bow myself to the ground before Thee, I hold communion with Thee, God Most High, through Thy Son’s name, and “Thou Lord only knowest it.”

O gracious Father, I do desire to be alone ; when I am occupied before men, I know not the power of the opinions of men over me ; I know not how much I do to be seen of men, or out of

regard to men ; I know not mine own self ; I am not sure of myself ; whatsoever I do in secret seems to be more entirely sincere, and done in singleness of heart to Thy glory. When I kneel down here in this my secret place, I can but be seeking Thee ; I can but desire Thy favour towards me.

Awful it is to be with Thee, O God, with my own solitary soul, with myself such as I am, with my single spirit, a most sinful creature, approaching Thee alone. Awful it is to feel Thy presence, to consider it, to believe in it, to know that I am alone with Thee, I a most sinful man, Thou the great God of heaven and earth. I might well desire to hide myself from Thy light, as did Adam, when he had sinned, among the trees of the garden. I might well desire to be joined by devout men in my prayers, to be mixed and incorporated with them, to escape standing alone before Thee and feeling my own solitariness, oneness, singleness of my own individual personal life. I might well desire to cast myself among a multitude, that I might be, as it were, a part of a multitude. But yet it is good for me to be alone, to feel that I am one, single, separate, responsible soul, who must in my own self live eternally.

Grant, O God, that I may draw nigh to Thee

in such sort as to be heard for Jesus Christ's sake. Give me a sense of the Majesty of Thy Presence, Thou whom I now seek, Thou whom I now confess, Thou whom I now adore in faith and worship with my flesh and with my spirit, Thou who art my God, God most glorious, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, blessed for evermore !

Though I cannot understand Thee, nor conceive Thee in Thine own nature, nor worthily praise Thee, though my thoughts concerning Thee fall infinitely short of Thee, though I scarce know what my words mean when I call Thee "God," yet have mercy on me, and accept me, who am but "a worm and no man," a mere speck in Thy creation, as a grain of sand upon the sea shore, "hardly to be accounted of" in Thy sight, sinful in flesh and spirit, "dust and ashes," like "grass," in sin conceived, and shapen in wickedness, unable to think or do anything that is good, beating upon my breast for the wickednesses that have gone over my head, the sins and offences of my youth and of my riper years, "a sore burden too heavy for me to bear."

O God the Father, visit me though I be nothing, and a miserable worm, and unclean in

Thine eyes, a sinner, "of sinners the chief," "less than the least of all saints." Thou hast created me ; I am a work of Thy hands, a vessel which Thou hast formed. When Thou didst will it, I was created ; and when I was created, Thou madest me to be immortal. I am a living soul which Thou hast made ; I am Thine ; I know that Thou hast respect unto man, though he is "like a thing of nought," and dost greatly regard the son of man.

O God the Son, Holy Jesus, Thou hast shewn what love Thou hast for the sons of men, for Thou didst become man Thyself, and knowest us by Thine own Manhood, and art "touched with a feeling of our infirmities," and hast had experience of our suffering estate, and hast been "tempted like as we are, yet without sin," and hast loved us, and given Thyself for us, and hast "carried our sorrows," and didst humble Thyself to death, even to the worst death of men, the death of the Cross.

O God the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, the Sanctifier, the Spirit of truth, the Guide unto truth, Thy love towards man has been made known, for Thou dwellest among men, and enterest into the hearts of men, and fillest believers with Thyself, and makest our mortal bodies to be the temples

and tabernacles of Thy Presence, sanctuaries where Thou dost dwell. Thou art with the Church, even unto the end of the world.

Therefore I am emboldened to draw near unto Thee, O God, Holy, Blessed, Glorious Trinity. I want to be Thine, not in part only, but altogether, to be Thine of a truth, to be saved from sin and from everlasting death, to serve Thee with all my heart all my days.

And whereunto hast Thou called me? To what office in Thy Church? Thou hast chosen me to be an Evangelist, a Priest, a preacher unto Thy people, a shepherd of Thy flock, a watcher of souls, an ambassador, a steward of Thy mysteries, and an ensample to the flock over which Thou hast made me overseer.

O what great duties are laid on me through this mine office! How great a charge, how difficult a work and how awful, how great a weight of holy honours and responsibilities! What a work is this to do among men! to teach—guide—feed—watch—nourish souls immortal! Who is sufficient for these things? Who can fulfil so great duties? Is it not enough to keep guard over myself? Must I, who need to be fed, feed others? Must I, who need to be ministered unto, be myself ministering? Must I, who can learn so much

of so many, be numbered among the teachers of men? Must I, who am full of sin, preach against sin? Must I walk first, who am last in many things? Must I lead souls to the throne of grace, when so many souls do outstrip me in the spiritual life through their greater zeal?

Lord help me; I cry unto Thee for help; I have no sufficiency as of myself, nothing to trust in but Thee only and Thy grace. I might well wish to unload me of this charge, and to occupy myself about my own soul only, when I consider my sinfulness, weakness, infirmities, fallings off, fallings short, negligences and other sins. I might well wish for a private place in the Church, where I might receive instruction, and hear counsel, and have help of spiritual men, and have pastors over me.

Yet Thou hast called me, O Lord, to this work; Thou hast chosen me out of my brethren; I believe that I was inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to the Order and Ministry of the Priesthood; I had the outward call of the Church; the holy hands of the Bishop and Presbytery were laid on me.

Thus was I set apart for this office; I cannot now go back; "a necessity is laid on me, woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel." I am Thine, O Christ, Thine for this great work, Thine for

Thy people's sake, Thine that I may be servant of all, and by all means save some. Having put my hand to the plough, may I never look back !

But as Thou hast called me, Lord Jesus, so help me according to my need. Without Thee I can do nothing ; with Thee I can do all things ; without Thee I am nothing, with Thee I am strong, and endued with much strength. If Thou guidest me, I can guide others ; if Thou teachest me, I can teach ; if Thou art my Shepherd, I can watch the sheep of Thy pasture. From Thee must I learn to know all my wants, and to obtain the supply of the wants known. Send to me the Holy Ghost the Comforter, to strengthen me with all gifts of grace necessary for my work, that I may have zeal with prudence, fervour with patience, love with boldness, earnestness with humility, aptness to teach, meekness in teaching, contempt of the world, and obedience to the law of the Cross. I look up to Thee for all things ; I cast myself upon Thee ; I cry aloud for help ; " Help me, and that right early ;" help me that I may be " an able minister of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit."

That I may truly serve Thee with a tender conscience, teach me, O Christ, to set before my soul what Thou requirest at my hands, to approve

myself before Thee as “a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.” I must give Thee all my self, all my soul, all my strength, all my faculties, all my understanding, all my thoughts, all my time, all my affections, all my powers of mind and body, that in all ways, and in all things, and at all times, I may preach the Gospel. My work is to preach the Gospel, in season, out of season, directly, indirectly, publicly, privately, at home, abroad, in sermons, in conversation, in the church, by the way-side, in schools, in sick-rooms. I must preach Thee to the young, to the middle-aged, to the old, to the sickly, to the strong, to those who are without faith that they may believe, to those who have faith that faith may be increased, to the careless that they may have care, to the lukewarm that they may glow with love, to the afflicted that they may seek their consolation in Thee.

I must preach Thee in a right spirit, earnestly, lovingly, with sincerity, weighing each man's state, “making a difference,” on “some having compassion,” coming to others “with the rod,” watching occasions, especially times of sickness or other affliction.

I must preach Thee also by my life and conversation, by my own personal holiness. I am set

as an ensample to the flock. O Christ, what a work of personal holiness must I seek to fulfil in myself through the power of the Holy Ghost! of all the souls committed to me, of all this multitude of souls, mine should be the most pure, unworldly, unselfish, mortified, gentle, spiritual. Even so; I must preach Thee through my own life and be myself a sermon unto my flock. My flock should feel that I am not a man of this world; while I invite them to heaven, I should be seen walking heaven-ward myself; I should have experience of the way; I should be nearer Thee than any; not behind any, but before all, a pattern of true devotion, godly ardour, unworldliness, charity in speech and action. If I am a lover of pleasure, or a seeker of great men, or greedy of filthy lucre, or ambitious and fond of advancement, or self-indulgent, or careless, I must needs most grievously offend my flock.

For personal holiness, for personal holiness I do pray, Lord Jesus. O if I should cause any single soul to err, if any fault in my example should weaken Thy blessed Gospel preached by me, or make my ministry of none effect to any single soul! if I err, it is not my own soul only that I harm; I can neither hurt myself by myself, nor save myself by myself, for I have the

charge of souls. What if any, even the weakest of the brethren, should be lost through any offence or fault of me, O Lord! Save me from the blood of all men by Thine own blood, "My Lord and my God."

That I faint not under so great a charge, teach me, Jesu, to remember the exceeding great reward which Thou offerest to the stewards of Thy mysteries, who shall be found faithful at Thy coming. Remind me of those holy texts wherein Thou dost speak of the recompense of reward. "Take heed," hast Thine Apostle said unto Timothy, "unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them, for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Thou hast said through St. James, "If any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." Thou hast said through Thy prophet Daniel, "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Even our endeavours to save, though unblest to others, bring a blessing unto ourselves. "If thou warn the wicked of his way, to turn from it, if he do

not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul."

Most gracious and most encouraging words of love! May they serve to stir up the gift that is in me. O if I should gain this prize, if I should ever tread the courts of the kingdom of heaven, if I should save any souls from death, and present them before Thee with great joy, what account shall I make of all my labours, self-denials, watchings, sacrifices of ease and worldly tastes? surely "the loss of all things" is "as dung," if I can but gain Thee and behold Thee for ever. Lead me forth, O Lord; I desire this prize; help me to contend for it, and to attain it; send Thy Holy Ghost to comfort and to strengthen me. I am Thine; I would be Thine in this life and for ever; keep me under the shadow of thy wings; draw up my soul towards Thee; increase my faith, my hope, my charity; knit my heart unto Thee, and make me a faithful shepherd of Thy sheep, that I may at last see Thy glory, and partake of it with all angels and saints, through Thine own most precious blood.





SUNDAY.

THIS is the day which the Lord hath made, I will rejoice and be glad in it. It has been consecrated by the glorious resurrection of the ever-blessed Son of God our Saviour, who made all things new.

All days are Thine, O Lord, and on all days shouldest Thou be served; but this is Thine in an especial manner, and with an especial service shouldest Thou be now worshipped. This is the soul's day, to be filled with prayer and praise. Now should our prayers and praises be the most and heartiest, that the spirit of prayer may descend through all the spaces of the week, that we may abound with thanksgiving, that the well of our souls being now filled with the Spirit, the whole week may be watered therefrom.

But if this, O God, is the day of prayer to all Thy sons in the Gospel, what should it be to the ministers of Thy Word and Sacraments, who ought at all times to be men of prayer, the foremost in praying?

I desire, therefore, good Lord, to prepare myself for this day's worship, that I may truly worship Thee, that my soul may have an appetite for this feast. I do rejoice in the gift of the Lord's day; I do confess my own needs and the needs of this people for such a season of prayer; but yet, Lord, I fear lest I should lose some portion of the richness of the feast through my own strayings of soul, or my coldness. Look now upon me that Satan may not overcome me, that I may begin worthily in a true spirit, that I may keep worthy thoughts, and offer pure worship, such as may be acceptable to Thee out of Thy great mercy. In all public offices of religion keep my soul pure, disentangled from the world, undistracted, and intent on Thee.

As I have many things to do, to pray—to read Thy Holy Word—to preach accordingly—to offer up supplications for the sick, and thanksgivings for those to whom Thou hast shewed mercy—to baptize—to receive the blessed Sacrament of Thy Body and Blood—to administer it—to lay in the grave those of our brethren whom it hath pleased Thee to take from us unto Thyself,—help me, Holy Jesus, in all these acts of devotion, that the spirit of devotion may be sustained throughout, that all my ministrations may be done with a

single mind, and may be blest unto myself and unto those to whom I minister.

Outward reverence at all times, O Lord, is easy ; but inward reverence, inward attentiveness and solemnity of spirit it is hard always to keep. I may not wound my flock by outward carelessness, indifference, haste, negligence, or any other visible fault ; but how much may I lose them, if I do not inwardly worship Thee and heartily pray for them, if my spirit is backward and remiss, or hurrying to many unprofitable thoughts, or thinking of the opinions of men !

It is right that I should outwardly honour Thee, for there cannot be inward worship beneath outward irreverence ; but what are things outward if I lack devotion within ! No man knoweth from outward appearance how much my thoughts wander in my prayers, but Thou knowest mine infirmities ; “ my faults are not hid from Thee,” and “ my secret sins are in the light of Thy countenance.” I fear being formal in my worship ; I am often formal ; I want perseverance in prayer, collectedness, abstraction, true fervent elevation of soul. As the shepherd I ought to go before the sheep and lead them unto Thee, but I doubt not many of the sheep do outrun me in fervent praying and in the heartiness of their praise.

O Lord, I could for hours pray Thee to give me the true spirit of prayer; I am so dull, so easily carried back to the world; so often dwelling upon worldly affairs, so grovelling in my thoughts; and when men think me devout, then oftentimes I most need that very thing which I am supposed to have.

Assist me, heavenly Father, for Thy dear Son's sake, especially in the more solemn parts of my ministrations. Assist me, most merciful Saviour, especially when I administer Thy blessed Sacraments, those mysteries whereby we are new-born, or renewed in the spirit of our minds.

When I administer Holy Baptism may I do it with a devout will, with faith, with sincere prayers. Though my unworthiness or absence of mind hinders not the reception of grace, yet it were a thing most sinful, most hurtful to my own soul, if, while the Holy Ghost was descending, I was wandering afar off; if, while He were present, I were absent in spirit. Let me consider how many thoughtless god-parents in these times speak solemn words lightly, and so may I be moved to pray as though none beside myself were praying; make me to look upon all children dedicated to Thee as mine for Thy sake. If the prayers of their kindred be lacking at that time,

make up what is lacking by the fervency of mine.

May I delight to bring little children unto Thee for Thy blessing. I know that sometimes I desire to escape labour or to lessen it, and that sometimes I shrink from any lengthening of Divine service; but grant, good Lord, that I may ever rejoice in beholding a fresh soul added to Thy Church. What better prayer can I now offer Thee in secret than that which at Holy Baptism I offer Thee publicly.

“Grant that whosoever is dedicated to Thee by our Office and Ministry, may also be endued with heavenly virtues, and everlastingly rewarded; through Thy mercy, O blessed Lord God, who dost live and govern all things, world without end.”

And also when I administer the unspeakable mystery of Thy Supper, then, O blessed Jesus, strengthen me with great gifts of the Holy Spirit; grant that my soul may be fitly prepared and dressed for that celestial feast, and that I may have truly repented of my sins, and may have purposed to lead a more spiritual life before I draw near to that mysterious banquet of love.

When I stand at Thine Altar, grant that I may have the profoundest sense of Thy Presence; take me, as it were, out of the world; shut the

gate of my heart against it ; lift up my spirit ; let the house of prayer be unto me as a heavenly place ; let the very rails of the altar remind me of my especial separation from the world ; may I feel myself to be on holy ground ; I cannot draw nearer unto Thee on the earth, may I feel Thy nearness. Fill me with a sense of my own sins and Thy great love, of my own unworthiness and Thy mercy ; for who can tell the love wherewith Thou hast loved us ; I altogether sink to the earth when I think of Thy wonderful condescension towards us and the awfulness of our sins, that could in no other way be atoned for except by the spilling of Thine own blood.

I have sometimes, yea, many times rejoiced with unspeakable joy, when I have been suffered to partake of Thy Body and Blood in the Sacrament of Thy Supper, and to minister it to the more mature members of my flock ; my soul has been filled with sensible consolations ; I have experienced overflowings of love and great peace. But must I not confess that at times when I have been called to minister at Thine Altar, if it had not been my office to serve thereat, I might have abstained from the Feast ! must I not confess that I have at times come coldly, with little heart ; that I have ministered coldly, and not with

a full soul; that I have said those great words, "Take and eat this," and "Drink this," without deeply considering that I was distributing a heavenly and life-giving meal! I have passed on from one communicant to another, without that devotion of spirit that was meet.

Grant, Lord, that henceforth I may always weigh those words, and speak them from my innermost soul, and be warmed with a most holy love for each single soul that receives the mystical elements from my hands. Grant that my intent may go with my ministrations, though, should my intent be wanting, I believe that they may still be blessed to my flock.

In these and all other acts of Divine service this day be present with me, most gracious Lord, that I may perform them holily, with a holy purpose. When I perform the rite of Holy Matrimony, or of the Churching of Women, or the most moving Service for the Burial of the Dead, preserve in me an attentive and earnest spirit. In all the order of Common Prayer, in all Litanies, and supplications, and confessions of faith, in all psalms and spiritual songs, fill me with the Spirit, lead me by the Spirit, to the throne of grace.

When I preach, may I preach faithfully accord-

ing to Thy Holy Word, delivering Thy Gospel "with meekness of wisdom." May I preach not only true words, but in a true spirit. May I seek not to please men's ears, nor to raise admiration of myself, but to turn their hearts and draw them unto Thee. May I preach holily, knowing that plain words from a holy and spiritual mind are more apt to minister grace to the hearers than most eloquent words that come not from a devout heart. If men should listen eagerly to my own fallible words, may I never be puffed up; may I strive against a self-seeking and vain-glorious mind; may I kneel down and meditate upon the multitude of my sins. Easily might my soul be lost through the sweetness and deceivableness of human praise. Or if through lack of eloquence, a gift now over-esteemed to the neglect of prayer, my flock come but ill to the house of prayer, may I by true seriousness seek to edify the more devout and stable souls. It is not a multitude of listeners that bespeaks the growth of piety. May I myself think more of prayer, that I may lead others to esteem it more.

Grant also, O Lord, that I may spend all little intervals between the parts of Divine service in inward prayer. When I enter the vestry, may I use it as my oratory, my place of secret prayer, of

preparation for common worship. May I waste not the time, but spend it either in praying, or meditating, or reading Thy Holy Word, that I may enter upon mine office with a prepared and collected mind. While I robe myself with the decent vestments appointed by the Church, may I offer up short ejaculations, praying for inward purity, that, as one of Thy Priests, I may "be clothed with righteousness;" may the white robe be unto me as a sign of the innocency of life required of me. When I pass from the vestry to the appointed place of prayer, or from the place of prayer to the altar, or from the altar to the place of preaching, may I lift up my soul secretly as I walk, and offer up secret prayers for the gift of the Holy Ghost, for power to pray, for grace, for the Divine blessing both upon myself and the congregation assembled in Thine house.

But not only at the time of public prayer and in the house of prayer give me a devout will, but in all other parts of the day and in all other acts help me, most blessed Lord, that whether I walk through the fields, or sit at home, or read, or meditate, or teach in schools, I may preserve a holy and thankful mind, and use the whole day holily, and consecrate all its portions.

Now, O Heavenly Father, give me now Thy blessing; direct my goings in Thy way; direct the thoughts of my heart throughout this day and always, for Jesus Christ's sake. AMEN.





MONDAY.

I MUST now go forth to my work and to my labour until the evening, even to Thy work, O Lord ; to watch the sheep of Thy pasture. I feasted yesterday ; Thou didst feed my soul, and I was filled ; Thou didst refresh my soul, and I was refreshed with " a multitude of peace ; " I prayed much ; I continued in prayer ; I meditated on heavenly things ; I heard holy words ; I nursed holy thoughts ; I read holy books. My heart burned within me ; I was drawn towards Thee with great desire, and I seemed to enjoy clearer perceptions of Thee and of Thy truth ; I offered myself unto Thee with fulness of heart ; I bowed myself down, and on my knees offered myself to Thee, soul and body, a living sacrifice, to be Thine for ever, to serve before Thee all the days of my short life. I dedicated myself anew, and, as it were, fastened myself afresh to Thy Cross.

Lo, then, I am Thine ! and now must I enter afresh upon Thy service. Yesterday was the day

of dedication, of prayer, of resolves, of devout thoughts. To-day I must be exercised in those things that I resolved upon through Thy Spirit; to-day is the day of action. Prayers, devout thoughts, raptures, resolves, holy exultations of heart, what are these, if in action I fail? What are these, if they are not the forerunners of holy living, if my faith fails in trial, and I turn back in the day of battle?

O Lord, as I now enter upon the work of faith, the labours of mine office, give me more strength of heart; go forth with me when I go forth into the world; renew my zeal of yesterday; add a fresh gift of grace to the grace then given; make me to go forth in Thy name. May I remember my vows of yesterday, and keep them this day and ever. Let not the world dazzle me, nor corrupt me, nor turn me aside, nor fill me with vain dreams; keep me from the world and separate me from it, for by my office am I already separated. I go forth with Thy Cross laid on me; I am indeed a soldier of the Cross. May I have grace to make this a day of unworldly labour and self-denial.

I do greatly fear and distrust myself. Preserve me, holy Jesu, from my own particular faults,—from indolence, from worldliness however secret,

from love of self, from love of men's opinions, from pride, from love of advancement, from cowardice in rebuking sinners, or from harshness in rebuke.

I know that I oftentimes yield to sloth; I am often indolent, a waster of time, an ill husbandman of time; I abide at home when I should be labouring among my people; I linger and hesitate to go forth, or I leave off too soon and do my work but partially, or I shrink from those who most need exhortation, from the most sinful and hardened of my people; I please myself with the conversation of the devout; I choose rather to sit with the righteous, than to go among sinners; I have often distaste for my toils; I want heart for them and patience; I often go to them unwillingly and end gladly; or when I have done little I think I have done enough. Indolence doth much possess me, and backwardness; I had rather read holy books than work holy works; I had rather sit meditating upon holy things than perform holy labours. I am often seeking excuses for easing my neck from the yoke.

And yet whensoever I have devoted myself to my flock and have spared not myself, I have returned home with a recompense in my heart, with a gift in my bosom, a treasure of inward satis-

faction, with a light conscience, with a rejoicing spirit, with great peace. I have tasted of the cup of peace for my obedience to Thy will; I have knelt down and been glad; I have had exceeding great refreshment in my evening prayers. Thus hast Thou rewarded me instantly for my service; thus hast Thou encouraged me diligently to do Thy will.

O that I should ever shrink from the pure pleasure of devout action, that I should ever be loath to repeat such peace-giving toils, that I should ever go coldly and give myself unwillingly to these godly labours, that so soon recompense with such and so much joy! O that I should ever be drawn from that part of active obedience which has the promise of peace, and is the path of peace!

Take from me, good Lord, this inertness, indolence, backwardness in pastoral action. Save me from the pursuit of my own pleasure, from frivolous cares and businesses, from frivolous friends and company.

Quicken me, O Lord; give me a persevering mind, that I may devote myself to my flock. Let me not glide into any easy ways of service. "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." This dost Thou require of the stewards

of Thy mysteries, not in word only, but in deed. Thou wantest not careless shepherds who sit at ease ; the sheep are many and need the shepherd's care. "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few ;" therefore the few must labour with the greater zeal.

It is said of the men of the world that they "rise up early and late take rest" in their carefulness for perishing things ; shall not the like be said of the men of God, Thy ministers, in their zeal for imperishable souls ? In the sweat of my brow ought I to labour, yea, in the sweat of my heart, for I am an husbandman of souls, and of this harvest Angels shall be the reapers. That I may throughly do this work, I must gather up the fragments of time, that nothing be lost. Ease must be unknown to me, for what has the preacher of the Cross to do with ease ! He who would effectually preach the Cross must wear it and be crucified himself.

And how many souls hast Thou given me, O Lord ! even (*here insert the number of parishioners*). This is my charge, this number of immortal souls ; and each one of all these souls has to be numbered among the Angels or the devils ! How can I abide at home, or rest, or take my pleasure, with such a burden and such a charge

laid on me! Is not each separate soul worth a life's work, all the labour I could give. What then must be the value of all this multitude of souls! How can I give sufficient labour?

O take from me, merciful Lord, all sleep and desire of sleep; souls may be lost even through the unwatchfulness of but a few days. Of how great a price is even one opportunity of speaking Thy word, if Thou art with me! Teach me after Thine own most perfect pattern to go about doing good and to be zealous in doing good, that I may be a faithful pastor, and that nothing be lost to this people through my unfaithfulness. Make me not only an evangelist, but a true pastor, going about from house to house. From house to house ought I to carry Thy Word, that the state of individual souls may be the better discerned, and that words in season may be the better spoken.

It is not enough to preach in the church, for that is but a general preaching; but I should teach privately, that particular states of men may be more closely touched. Give me a deeper sense of the value of pastoral visitation, that I may faithfully fulfil all the parts of mine office.

If it should please Thee to bless these my labours, and to give them increase in my time and before mine eyes, then, O Lord, increase in me

the grace of humility ; humble me so much the more. With all my heart, with great fervour, even with passionateness of spirit, I do beseech Thee to keep me humble in the day of success. Let me not say, " My persuasion or my pastoral activity hath done this." Grant that I may give Thee all the glory, heartily, with a sincere mind. Grant that I may take nothing to myself of all the good done, but thank Thee with humble joy for having used such an one as myself to promote Thy glory. Grant that my rejoicing may be in Thee ; so, in profiting others, shall mine own soul be profited.

I know, O blessed Lord, that my frail heart will then incline me to speak proud things, and to say to myself, " Lo ! thus and thus hast thou done, and thus and thus was it before thy time." Satan also will seek to whisper vain thoughts into mine ear. Save me, holy Jesus, from mine own pride of heart and from Satan's wiles. Teach me to dread praise as a serpent, self-praise and the praise of others, lest I become a self-worshipper.

Or if, Lord Jesus, I should seem to labour in vain, let not my heart fail ; move me by Thy Spirit to persevere. It may be that Thou hereby desirest to keep me humble, and to make me feel mine own insufficiency, and to trust more entirely

to Thy grace, and to seek Thine help more earnestly in prayer. It may be Thou makest trial of my patience, withholding a blessing, that I may seek it with more importunity and continue labouring in faith. Or it may be, Thou givest me no visible success, that I may the more undistractedly desire the final and most glorious recompense of faith. Thou canst give increase when Thou wilt; if not in my day, give it afterwards; make me content to labour without visible fruit of my labours in this life. O God the Father, bless me in my going out and coming in before Thee; bless all my labours this day and always, for Thy dear Son's sake Jesus Christ our Lord.
AMEN.





TUESDAY.

THOU hast brought me, O Lord, of Thy great mercy, to the light of another day. Thou hast lightened mine eyes, that I slept not in death. I beseech Thee, lighten also my soul with the true light, even with Thyself, who art "the Light of the world," that I sleep not in sin. With a refreshed body I do arise after Thy gift of sleep. Lift up my soul, waken it, refresh it with Thy Spirit, that I may offer myself willingly as a thank-offering for Thy great mercies, that I may live unto Thee this day, yea, and abound more and more in faith and well-doing.

Suffer me not, O Father, for Thy dear Son's sake, to fall back : nay, I do desire to advance, to go from strength to strength, to do more than I now do, and to do all with a better spirit. Lead me on to the higher stages of faith, to a fuller growth in grace, to a more mature and fruitful holiness, to a more intense and spiritual love of Thee and of my brethren. May I have strength to be a more complete conqueror of the world, of

the world within me, of all earthly loves and affections. "Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief;" help me from whatever of unbelief remains in me.

I am athirst for grace; "as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O Lord." What grace I have wasted through mine own fault, or through Satan's guiles, do Thou restore to me once again, that the second gift may be better esteemed than the first. I am but in the beginning and youth of holiness, when I should be of a goodly stature. I halt oftentimes, and walk weakly, and love languidly, and pray distractedly, and labour imperfectly, and have many worldly thoughts swelling like a flood within me, drowning my resolves and washing out my remembrances of Thee.

But do Thou, O God, this day "renew a right spirit within me," "establish me with Thy free Spirit," so shall I love with a sincere love both Thee, my Lord, and this flock which Thou hast given me.

It is a great mercy that my calling is religious, that spiritual concerns are pressed daily before my soul, that I must needs occupy myself therein and keep them in my thoughts, and pass into sick rooms, and see dying men; for thus have I

most moving sermons preached to me while I labour to teach. All the day long, while I warn others, I am warned myself; while I teach, I receive instruction; while I preach, I am preached unto; while I exhort others to watch against Thy coming, I have many visible persuasions to keep mine own light burning.

All these sick rooms, and great sorrows of men, and instances of uncertainty of life, and spectacles of bodily pain and terror, and hopes of good men, and hardness of the impenitent, and patience of the true believers—all these, the bleatings of my sheep in my ears, are like a great company of preachers teaching me in divers strains to prepare mine own soul, and the souls of my people, by Thy help, O Lord, for the day of Thy coming. Surely it is a great mercy that I am thus surrounded by these messages of God.

What should I become, if all such things were removed out of my sight, if I were occupied with worldly cares, and were mixed with men in the day of their health, or were engaged in places of buying and selling, in the businesses of the world! Other men follow worldly callings of great temptation, where the sounds of the world dwell in their ears, where all the speech is of bargains, markets, trade, disputes in law, vain

pleasures, and such like things, where it must needs be hard to keep an unworldly heart, to walk by faith, not to be entangled in spirit in the affairs of this world, to love Thee more than the world, to look up stedfastly to Thee when so many things serve to draw the eyes, yea, and the heart, down to the ground.

Happy am I that it is mine office, my business to pray, to read holy books, to give heed to souls, to minister to the sick, to go into the houses of mourning, "for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to his heart."

And yet, O Lord, Thou hast said in Thy Holy Word that to whom much is given of him will much be required. Having advantages beyond other men, ought I not to walk more carefully? With so holy an office, ought I not to be a holy person? In what a prepared and watchful state of soul ought I to live, if at any moment I may be called upon to kneel down and pray with the sick, if I must be so frequently offering up prayers, so frequently receiving the Holy Communion, and daily discoursing on heavenly things! It is a great matter to be always ready for prayer, to have a grave and prepared mind, so as not to sin against Thee by uttering any thing hastily before Thee. How entirely should I be possessed with

the spirit of devotion to be fit for so much praying, so much discoursing upon heavenly things!

I am in great fear, good Lord, lest I should sometimes kneel down without fervour of soul, lest my prayers should be but cold forms, offered as a part of mine office, but not heartily, lest also I should speak without feeling what I speak, without being real in my words.

I know, O Lord, that Thou art "not extreme to mark what is done amiss." O have mercy on me when I do thus offend through coldness or distractedness of mind! Let not these mine infirmities be any loss to those unto whom I minister, but make up to them through Thy grace what is lacking in my service towards them. What I should obtain for them through my prayers, do Thou bestow when I fail to possess the spirit of prayer.

But, most blessed Jesus, with so great a work laid on me, with so holy a frame of mind continually to sustain that I may fulfil my work, I feel the need of other prayers beside mine own, of a broader stream of prayer than can flow from my single soul. I need, I very greatly need, the prayers of my brethren in Christ, that I may myself incline to prayer and keep this ready

mind. If I had mine own self only to watch, I should need the prayers of others. How much more then when I have this Thy flock to watch over!

I pray then, O Lord, for the prayers of my flock; grant that they may have the mind to remember me daily in their prayers. I do earnestly beseech Thee, move them, through the power of God the Holy Ghost, to do this good work for me, that I may do my work for them. Make them to feel my need of their prayers. As I pray for them, so may they pray for me. This gift I desire at their hands, this great gift, this act of love, better than silver and gold, which the poor of this world can bestow on me, if they be rich in faith; "for the prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

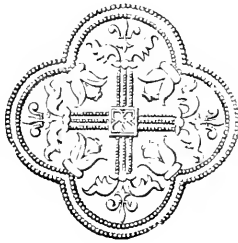
May my own flock ask a blessing upon me daily in my labours. Then I doubt not a blessing will descend upon me from the Spirit of grace, the dew of Thy blessing. O with what a refreshed spirit should I go forth, if I felt that my people had been pleading for me before the throne of grace in their morning sacrifice of prayer; if I thought that the children, and the aged, and the full-grown had besought Thee to make Thy Word fruitful in my mouth.

Much is expected of me ; all faults are quickly observed and much thought of ; though I am a man of like passions with my people, yet they do expect me thoroughly to have overcome all passions, to be a saint indeed. And yet I fear that but few prayers are offered to help me to become such as they expect me to be. I fear that throughout the land the ministers of Thy Word and Sacraments are but little prayed for. Heal this great fault, and grant that henceforth we may have more prayers of our people ; so will our ministry be more profitable to our people.

O what gifts can even the most destitute bestow, if they would but open their bosoms and draw them out ! How much assistance and comfort of the Spirit in our hours of weakness might be obtained through the intercessions of our flocks in Thy name, O Lord Christ ! How much grace may be withheld from us, because their prayers are so much withheld. It may be that many infirmities abide amongst us, divisions, coldness, secularity of mind, and other sins, because we are suffered to go forth with so little prayer.

And yet if we were blessed through our people's prayers, they would be blessed through us ; if they obtained greater strength for us, we should

have the more power to strengthen them in their fight. That which they laid out they would receive again with usury; that which they gave would be returned into their bosom. Teach then this my flock, O Father, to help me henceforth with their prayers, for Christ's sake.





WEDNESDAY.

IN the morning watch do I come unto Thee, O God, yea, in the morning watch; I remember Thee when I awake, and I remember the great charge which Thou hast given me, even all these souls, these living souls, this multitude of souls, all this people, "fearfully and wonderfully made," painfully redeemed, bought with blood, even with Thy blood, Thou "Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world."

On my knees, Lord Jesus, Thou great Shepherd of the sheep, Thou good Shepherd, that laidest down Thy life for the sheep and gavest it to the wolves, out of Thine unspeakable love, love past finding out, for the height and depth and breadth thereof, I do pray Thee remember these souls, this portion of Thy universal flock, this parish, my own dear flock, my care and my joy. Remember them and have mercy on them now, and always, in this life and in the day of judgment.

All these souls in this parish are mine; mine to present unto Thee at the last day; as the steward of them, they are mine, good and bad to-

gether, to be watched, nourished, carried in my bosom, in my innermost heart, to be worn next my heart, to be loved with heart-love, exceedingly, holily, "through good report and evil report," whether they hear, or whether they forbear. I should stretch out mine arms, yea, stretch out my soul and embrace them in my love, as mine own spiritual children, high and low together, rich and poor, one with another, for Thou hast died for all.

And all these souls must be judged at the last day by Thee, the Judge of all flesh, every one, each one, in his own order, singly, by himself, for his own deeds done in the body; they are now sowing to immortal life or immortal death, to true life or true death; to life immortal with Thee, if Thou acceptest them in Thy mercy, to death eternal, in the gulf of death, if Thou turnest Thy face away from them, and knowest them not in that day.

Every face that I behold must be changed by the mighty working of Thy power into an eternal fashion, fit for the eternal light of Thine own kingdom, or for the place of devils; yea, not face only must be changed, but the whole body; and not only the body, but body and soul together. O God, when I look upon this present

fashion of my people I am filled with a great awe, not knowing what their change will be, their eternal fashion, and seeing how great a work each soul has to perform in this short life to be ripe for Thy coming.

O holy Father, have mercy upon this flock, and rouse their souls to a true love of Thy will, and an earnest practice of Thy will. Save them, lest they perish, save them in this "acceptable day" from their sins. Thou hast sent me to preach Thy Word unto them that they may be saved; grant that I may so preach and so labour that many may be turned to righteousness for Thy dear Son's sake.

O holy Jesus, by Thy Cross and Passion help me that I may help this flock.

Come among us, O Holy Ghost, and help us, and with great might succour us; pity us, bear with us, enlighten us, renew in us "whatsoever has been decayed by the fraud and malice of the devil, or through our own carnal will and frailness."

And first, O Lord, do I pray for those who are the first in Thy love; for the babes and sucklings, infants and little ones; for those newly-born, that they may live to be born again of water and of the Spirit; for those newly baptized, that "they

may lead the rest of their lives according to that beginning.”

Thou hast told us in Thy Word what an exceeding love Thou bearest towards children, for Thou didst take them up in Thine arms and bless them; Thou didst stop in Thy path when Thy disciples were minded to pass them by; Thou didst set a child in the midst of Thy disciples as an example of meekness and teachableness; Thy first martyrs were the holy innocents. Behold, then, how Thou didst love them. Teach me this love, that I may be a lover of their souls, a spiritual father, that I may win them to Thy truth before the world has won them through the deceitfulness of sin. Make me to yearn over them as the choice of my flock, the most pure, the most heavenly, the most like angels, trustful, ready to love, guileless, ignorant of actual sin, without art, real, sincere.

When I behold children in their innocency I could weep to think of sin and passion working in them and distorting them; their innocence doth fill me with reverence for those little ones. I feel humbled before them when I consider their guilelessness. A few little angers and waywardnesses, these are all the stains wherewith they are soiled as yet. What am I, with all these years

of sin that have passed over my head, all this growth of sin in me, every day with its own burden of sin, and requiring its own act of repentance ! And yet, Lord, I am to teach these little ones. Humble me while I am teaching them ; help me to fill their souls with true godly knowledge, not with the letter, but with the spirit, with love of Thee and of Thy blessed Gospel. Preserve their innocency ; keep them from the evil world, that they may be Thine, even from their youth up, and grow in grace unto their lives' end. If there be among them any fatherless and orphans, on them bestow especial pity, and enable me, in the things belonging unto their souls, to be unto them in the stead of a father.

The young also, who have grown out of childhood, preserve from the sins and offences to which youth inclines ; guard them in that most difficult season when they rejoice in their strength, and the pleasures of the world dance before them, and their blood is warm, and life opens upon them, and length of life seems to be before them. In the hour of temptation, when they are enticed into youthful sins, do Thou succour them with gifts of the Holy Ghost : enable them to resist temptation ; give them boldness, the resolute mind, the fear of sin, the tenderness of con-

science, steadfastness, that no persuasion of evil companions, nor the voice of any charmer, nor ridicule, nor false shame, nor any pleasure which sin promises, may draw them away towards the paths of hell. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way, even by ruling himself after Thy Word." Give them an affection for Thy Word that they may cleanse their way and rule themselves according to Thy Word.

Preserve also, good Lord, the middle-aged, that they be not choked with the cares of the world, for upon such do the cares of the world most thickly fall; warn them lest they become cold, worldly, drowned in worldly businesses, lovers of self, greedy of riches. Shew them for their souls' sake the vanity and deceitfulness of the world, its ill returns for hard service, uncertain payments for great labours, perishableness of its riches, changeableness of its praise, insincerity of its love, its forgetfulness of its own children, its utter unprofitableness, failing in time of trial, unstable as water, unsatisfying to an immortal soul. There are many whose callings are dangerous, subject to especial snares, like slippery places, wherein it is difficult to stand upright: these, O Lord, either take from such callings, or enable them to walk unharmed.

Defend also the gray-headed, the hoary head, that it may be "a crown of glory." Give the aged above all men a watchful spirit; preserve their senses; let not their minds grow dim and fail; let not darkness fall on them, nor a second childhood, till they have finished their course and fought their fight. As they have but the fragment of a span left, grant that all their thoughts may be turned heavenwards, that heaven may be begun in them before they go hence out of the world, and that the world may be dead in them before they die. May their last days be the holiest of all. May their light be burning so much the more in the inner man as their outward house wastes and decays. Prepare their souls, most holy Father, for the last judgment, through Jesus Christ.

For the sinners of my flock, the great sinners, who live wilfully in sin, who harden their hearts against Thee, I have need most earnestly to pray. Move them to repentance, good Lord; melt their impenitent hearts, that they may open their eyes and behold the peril of their souls. Draw them out of the mire, that they sink not; turn Thou them, and they shall be turned; convert them, and they shall live; though they have sinned desperately, forgive their sins; I pray Thee

let not these poor souls, so blind, so dead in sin, perish in the everlasting fires. O shew forth Thy great mercy; those who are in such great need of repentance and forgiveness do Thou waken out of their most fearful sleep.

For the sick whom Thou chastenest in Thy love I offer up my prayers; heal their sickness if it be expedient for them. May it do Thy work in their souls, that they be not chastened in vain. May they look up to Thee, and turn to Thee with a new heart, and repent upon their beds, and in their patience shew forth the fruits of repentance. May their sickness be received as an angel into their house; may they entertain it as an angel and minister of grace; when it shall depart may they remember that they have had an angel, and consider the message wherewith it was sent unto their souls. I beseech Thee, O Saviour, restore unto them their health. Spare them a little, that they may recover their strength; that if they be moved to repentance, they may have time to perfect their resolves, and to walk in newness of life. Above all, save them from falling back; let not their sickness pass as a dream of the night, lest their "last state be worse than the first," and lest a worse thing happen unto them. How fearful a thing it must be to be chastened without bearing

any fruit of correction, to have Thy rod laid on us and yet to retain our sins ! What remains to be done unto a soul that after chastening returns to its sins !

And now not for the sick only, but for those whose sickness is unto death, for the dying, O most merciful Saviour, for the dying do I come before Thee with most anxious prayer. For them I pour out my soul with an intensity of desire. By Thine own feeling of the pains of death, by Thine own experience of the mystery of death, by Thine own former pangs, have mercy upon them, both now and in the actual hour of death.

O Thou most gracious and most pitiful Lord, send the Holy Ghost the Comforter to strengthen and support those who are at the point to die, whose spirits are about to be loosed from their earthly house. Prepare them for the act of death ; succour them in this their greatest need ; enable them to resign themselves into Thy hands with perfect faith in Thy great mercy. Ease their bodily pains, that their souls may have power to pray. Let not the torment of the flesh distract and engross their souls. Let not Satan have power over them, nor his angels. Now, O Lord, now they need Thy presence, Thy strength,

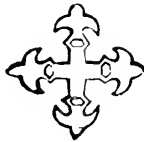
Thy grace, Thy divine succour, Thy consolation, to bear them up. They need Thy comfort to refresh their souls, Thy rod and Thy staff to comfort them.

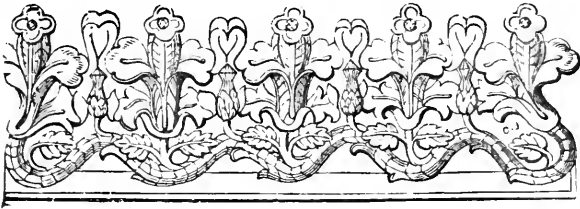
Take from them all excess of fear, that they be not overwhelmed with fear. Call them not till their full work is finished, their pardon sealed in heaven, their repentance of sins perfected, their faith triumphant. Thou knowest their pains of body, their distress of spirit, for Thou hast borne both in Thine own person on the Cross. Stretch out Thine hand to save. As Thou wast strengthened in Thine own agony by Thine Angels, so send Thine Angels to minister to them on their beds. As they are now fastened to their cross of death, accept their prayers, and consider the sorrows of their souls; blot out their sins, wash them in the fountain of Thine own blood, redeem them from the pains of eternal death, take them unto Thyself, that they may stand before Thee with great joy in Thine own kingdom for ever.

If, too, there are any afflicted among my flock, any in distress of mind, any widows, or desolate persons, grieving over departed friends, or any in great temporal distress, grant that I may be able, as sent by Thee, to console them with the conso-

lations of the Gospel. Do Thou visit them in their afflictions, give them "patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions;" that best issue, increase in godliness, a more perfect surrender of themselves to Thee, a more deep desire to be wholly Thine, a more thorough deadness to the world. For this end hast Thou afflicted them; let Thine end be fulfilled, even the purifying of their souls through these present fires.

Finally, most holy Father, for all the members of this my flock, for this my own parish, my own dear charge, children and old men, young men and maidens, the prosperous and the afflicted, the healthful and the sick, those in the midst of life, those at the point of death, yea, for all whom Thou hast given me, I implore Thy mercy with all my soul; though I be unworthy to be heard, yet hear me out of Thy holy heaven, through the power of the blood of Jesus Christ.





THURSDAY.

EARLY in the morning, O Lord, will I come unto Thee, and will look up; though I am not worthy to look up by reason of my sin, nor to lift up so much as my eyes unto heaven; but my trust is in Thy mercy, therefore will I lift up my soul. Blessed be Thy name, O God our Father. Blessed be Thy name, O God the eternal Son, our Saviour. Blessed be Thy name, O God the Holy Ghost, our Sanctifier.

And now, Lord God, though I be as a grain of sand upon the sea-shore, as a drop of water in the great and wide sea, though I be small and of no reputation, accept my prayers, when I pray for Thy creation; not for that old creation which Thou didst frame easily, in which all things obeyed Thy will, but I pray for that new creation, created anew, with great sorrow, framed painfully, with the sweat of thy brow, even with a bloody sweat, by the pains of Thy most painful death, by the humbling of Thyself to become man, and to die the death, even the death of the Cross. I

pray for the Holy Catholic Church, Thy new work, Thy "workmanship," Thy "building," Thou "the chief Corner-stone," Thou the "living Rock" whence it was hewn. I pray for the Universal Church, for all the branches and all the members thereof, wheresoever scattered throughout the world. Thou hast called it Thine own "Body," Thy "Bride," Thy "Household," Thy "Fold," Thy "Vineyard;" all these most loving, most honourable names hast Thou bestowed upon it in token of Thy exceeding great love.

I pray, holy Father, for this Thy Son's work, the fruit of His blood, this new-born world, living through His death. I pray for its increase, that all nations may be gathered into it, the utmost ends of the earth; that all the heathen may be converted, and brought to a knowledge of the truth, that the Church may do her work of evangelizing the world, that her borders may be enlarged, the fold widened.

I pray for its Unity, that all who are called by Thy name, Lord Jesus, may be one, even as Thou and the Father and the Holy Ghost are one, even as there is but "one faith, one Lord, one Baptism, one God and Father of all."

I pray for its Purity, that it may be "the salt of the earth," purifying the world, destroying the

power of Satan, manifesting holiness, preparing a holy people for the Lord.

I pray for its Order, that it may approve itself the work of Thy hand, for Thou art "not the Author of confusion, but of peace."

I pray for its Peace, that it may be the peacemaker of the world, and accomplish Thy work of peace, for Thou hast spoken peace to them that are afar off and to them that are near; Thy peace hast Thou left with us.

I pray for its Doctrine, that it may be sound, that it may keep the Spirit of truth.

I pray for all the branches of this Tree, all the members of this Body, all the sheep of this Fold, all the brethren of this Household of faith, for the whole company of faithful people, friends and strangers, mine own countrymen and foreigners, for all that are called by Thy name.

I pray for the healing of wounds, the reparation of breaches, the mending of rents, the destruction of heresies, the reformation of manners, the salvation of all men through the merits of Thy most precious blood.

But more especially am I bound to pray for that branch of the Catholic Church, into which by Thy unspeakable mercy I have been baptized; for this dear Church of England, my nurse in the

faith, my mother that has borne me all these years, and borne with me, that has fed me and nourished me, though a wayward and unworthy son, oftentimes dishonouring her with my misdeeds.

Continue forth Thy loving kindness, O Lord, to this branch of the vine: "Behold and visit this vine, and the place of the vineyard that Thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that Thou madest so strong for Thyself;" this branch, abundantly watered, saved, and spared, amid many neglects and divisions; quickened, made fruitful in saints, rich in doctors and holy men, with creeds agreeable to Thy Word, and forms of sound words delivered from ancient times.

Give us the great grace of unity, which we now lack; help us towards it by Thy Spirit, that, if we attain it not in our time, we may approach towards it. Help us first towards inward unity, unity amongst ourselves, in our own house, between the members of our own Church; heal our inward divisions, that they may pass away. Knit us together; remove prejudices, discords, misunderstandings of one another, harshness, the spirit of controversy. Give us forbearance and charity.

I know, O Lord, that we are much distracted separated from one another, vexed with debates. Cleanse us of these sins; restore true peace and

oneness, not by concession of the truth, but by agreement in the truth, by the casting out of all errors and unsound doctrine, by increase of true godliness and fervent charity. Let not this house be divided against itself, for we are brethren one of another,—“Behold, see, we beseech Thee, we are all Thy people.” “Thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by Thy Name ; leave us not.”

But not only unite us, Lord, amongst ourselves,—unite us also, in Thine own good time and in Thine own way, with the rest of Christendom, with all other branches of the Universal Church. No word is impossible with Thee, for Thou canst do all things. Though the way to this union seem not to be open to us, yet should we pray that in due time it may be opened by Thy grace. Though it be a great mystery that Thou sufferest such divisions among Christian people, such a rending of part from part, such alienation of brethren, such corruption of doctrine in one part, such want of discipline in another, such coldness between the branches of the Church, the members of Thy Body, yet do Thou bring peace out of this confusion caused by the sins of men and contrary to Thy will. I pray “for the peace of Jerusalem,” that peace and truth may

be in all her borders and within all her walls. Let not Satan, the author of confusion, have such an advantage over us. But, Lord, let us not seek for peace which is no peace, nor abandon our pure doctrine for peace' sake. I pray also for those who have committed schism, or are in schism, wilfully or through ignorance, that they may repent and return. Restore, most loving Saviour, those who have gone from us; restrain those who incline to depart. Give more light to those who from their birth have belonged to bodies schismatical, as they have the lesser sin. Grant that all occasions of schism may be done away, all such sins in us as may provoke to schism impatient and unstable souls.

Let me not forget our sins, while I remember these schisms, for should it not be confessed that we ourselves and our fathers have in part caused these offences to abound? Though we be now warmed with a rekindled fire of faith, we were once cold; though now through Thine undeserved grace we have manifest renewings of the Holy Ghost, we once slept, and our enemy sowed tares in our field. For these sins we are now punished. In our schisms we behold our sins; this is the rod wherewith a careless ministry and a careless people have been stricken. In our

condemnation of schisms, we must needs condemn ourselves first and be severe towards ourselves.

Spare, O Lord, all those who have ignorantly gone astray, especially those who have forsaken us through our forsaking and neglect of them. Bring them back, blessed Lord, into Thine own pasture. For these our sins, punished by our schisms, humble us to the earth, that, the sins being repented of, the punishment may be withdrawn, and our many bleeding wounds may be healed. Remove from us all scandals and want of discipline; give us all things needful for the edification of Thy people, that souls may find rest under the shadow of this vine, and whatsoever is wholesome for their spiritual life.

But, heavenly Father, as, after the pattern of Thy Son, I offer Thee my humble prayers for the unity of this branch of the Universal Church especially, so especially do I pray for an increase of its holiness; as a means thereunto, and for its own value in Thy sight. Let us contend with this sword against all who are not of us; let us argue with this manifest and so effectual argument. Not so much do I pray for the increase of the members of the Church, as for inward purity, for a real, true, spiritualizing of the Church;

“Increase in us true religion,” vital faith, “pure religion and undefiled.” Make those who seem to be Thine, to be Thine of a truth, in heart and life. The Church is not for show, that we might boast ourselves of its size. I pray not so much that multitudes may be added to us, but first, that present members may be purified and filled with grace, and walk worthy of their vocation. It is not the work of the Church to be esteemed in the world, or to consider its outward appearance in the world, or to strive for a mastery in size, but really to prepare souls for judgment, to build them up for another world, that they may truly wait for the Lord as men of another world, pilgrims and strangers upon earth.

That this true holiness of the Gospel may abound, deepen, widen itself, and be confirmed amongst us, have mercy upon the Clergy, my brethren and true yokefellows, that by Thy merciful guiding they may be a faithful unworldly ministry, “rightly dividing the Word of truth,” duly administering the Sacraments, and living as patterns to their flocks. Make them devout in their daily life, zealous, grave, heavenly-minded; not secular, not frivolous, but true pastors, in feeding, in watching, in praying. Guide them, O Holy Ghost, into all truth, into true doctrine and true

evangelical life, that they may be "able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit," through Him who hath called them, and whom they preach, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Unite us together, that we may work together with true love for the Gospel. We are indeed as brethren; enable us to labour and to love as brethren. Teach us to pray for one another, and to bear "one another's burdens." A united Clergy, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, is as "a threefold cord" that cannot be broken. Give Thy grace to all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, that they may "shine as lights in the world," and "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things;" especially do I pray for the Bishop of this Diocese, that he may well govern the same, and for the Clergy thereof that they may edify their flocks, and for their flocks that they may be saved.

For this Church of England, for all members thereof, priests and people, in all times, through all changes and chances of times, I do pray most earnestly. O Lord, send Thy blessing upon this branch of the vine, Thy workmanship, Thine own branch, so long and wonderfully preserved, with so long a history of grace. Send Thy blessing, O Father, that we may be found an acceptable people in Thy sight, for Jesus Christ's sake.



FRIDAY.

LET my first thoughts this day, most holy Jesus, be of Thy Passion. When I wake up, before all things let me remember Thy Cross, that bitter tree of Thy death, that sweet tree of our life, the place of Thy shame and of our hope, where Thou wast delivered to death, and we freed from death, where Thou didst die, and whence we did begin to live, whereon Thou didst suffer, and wherein we glory.

Blessed be Thou, our Saviour, for Thy great love that brought Thee to so great suffering. Thanks be to Thee that Thou didst not send for Thy legions of angels to deliver Thee, and that Thou didst not come down from the Cross, but didst remain to deliver us, and to finish the mystery of the sacrifice of Thyself. Thanks be to Thee that Thou didst not put that cup from Thee, but didst drink it, even to its most bitter dregs; for no sorrow was like unto Thy sorrow, no shame like unto Thy shame, no death like unto Thy death, who didst descend from the fullness of the glory of Thy Father.

It was as on this day that Thou didst suffer ; this is the day of the Cross. Every week may I set apart this day for the memorial of the mystery of Thy Passion. Teach me to meditate on Thine agony, Thy bloody sweat, the shame and spitting, the violence of the people, the unjust sentence, the carrying of Thine own Cross, the sharp crown, Thy great thirst, Thy distress of spirit, Thy pain of body, Thy wonderful meekness, Thy words on the Cross, Thy last prayer, the bowing of Thy head, the giving up of the ghost, the piercing of the spear, the blood and water poured out of the fountain of Thy side.

O wonderful love that Thou shouldest have consented to die ! O wonderful patience and gentleness that Thou shouldest have so borne death, and such a death ! O great mystery of sin that required so great a sacrifice ! Truly Thou art the Son of God, Thou art our Saviour, " the Hope of all the ends of the earth," " the Desire of all nations." Blessed be Thy name above every name, among angels and archangels and men upon earth, for the overflowings of Thy immeasurable love. " There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

May my meditations upon Thy Cross stir up

my love towards Thee, that I may more entirely love Thee and serve Thee all the days of my life. How should I be ready to bestow myself upon Thee, who hast bestowed Thy life for me a sinner! And yet what can I do for Thee, without whom I can do nothing? What can I give unto Thee, whose I am, and whose are all things? How can I repay Thee for Thy love, who hast bought me with a price, for I am not mine own? I can but pray for Thy mercy, and strive to please Thee, and earnestly preach Thy Cross; I can but offer Thee myself, which is Thine already, nothing worth when it is offered, a mite indeed, and yet my all. I would serve Thee, most blessed Jesus, with all my soul.

And shall not I serve Thee by taking up my cross after Thee? While I this day meditate upon Thy Cross, should I not meditate upon my own wearing of the cross, which is my service? Thou hast charged Thy disciples that they should wear their cross. "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."

Herein dost Thou call me to follow Thee in the narrow way of daily self-denial. To please Thee I must learn to unlearn the love of my own will, to sacrifice self, my own tastes, inclinations,

humours, pleasures, appetites. I must seek to mortify my heart, to mortify my flesh also, that I may "walk after the Spirit" and be under the dominion of the spiritual mind.

How could I preach mortification, self-denial, deadness to the world, unless I have myself experience of the Cross. Thy servant John Baptist was one of a mortified life when he preached repentance, that his life also might preach his doctrine. Ought I not then to take up my cross, if I would effectually preach the Cross?

And how shall I wear this yoke? even in fasting—in almsgiving—in labouring among my people—in simplicity and plainness of living.

Teach me, Lord, on the days of abstinence appointed by the Church to begin to fast, for Thou hast commanded fasting. "The days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast." These are Thy own words, fulfilled by the Apostles and all saints of old. Alas! I scarcely know how to fast; I shrink from this cross; I behold so few fasting that I excuse myself through the general neglect, or soften the interpretation of Thy words. I desire to amend, to practise abstinence in things allowed, that from things not allowed I may the more easily abstain, that I may have a more

docile and obedient will, that in great matters I may the more easily resist the motions of the flesh.

As, according to the liberty of the Gospel, Thou hast not commanded us, O Lord, in the particulars of our fasts, teach me to choose such modes and degrees of abstinence as may best serve to godliness and the subjection of self. As I now fall short in this duty, so keep me from all excess to the hurt of bodily health or of my usefulness. Keep me both from formal fasting and from thinking much of it, and also from being ashamed to confess that I fast.

Enable me also, O Lord, to take up the cross of almsgiving and to rejoice therein. I should take from myself and bestow upon the poor; I should fast after this manner, I should deal my bread to the hungry and bring the poor that are cast out into my house; when I see the naked I should cover him, and hide not myself from my own flesh. I should set apart a given portion of my earthly means, that my alms may be according to my means. Not only should I give abundantly according to my means, but I should give lovingly, for Thou lovest "a cheerful giver." Move me by Thy Spirit to have a true love to the poor, that I may succour them out of a loving

heart. Teach mine eyes and my soul to behold Thee when I behold the poor, that I may give unto them as unto Thee. Teach me so to give unto the hungry, and the thirsty, and the stranger, and the naked, and the widow, and the fatherless, and the captive, as though I saw Thee an hungered, and thirsty, and naked, and sick, and in prison; for then shall I be a true giver of alms, and obtain Thy great blessing, and rightly esteem the poor, as the representatives of Thyself. Lord, Thou hast made it a privilege and an honour to give alms, when Thou didst speak those most gracious words, "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." Henceforth make me forward to bear this cross, to glory in denying myself for the poor's sake that I may have to give to the poor who cannot recompense me, for I believe I shall be "recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

Grant also, O Lord, that not on this day only, but always, I may keep myself from all self-indulgent ways, from all personal luxuriousness, from all superfluities in meat and drink and apparel, from all vain expenses, from all costly tastes, from all love of show and regard of appearances, from all worldliness in my style of

living, from frequent entertainment of my richer neighbours, from concessions to the luxurious spirit of these times, from frivolous pleasures, and much mixing in secular society.

Thy Priests should oppose softness by strictness, self-indulgence by self-denial, sumptuousness by simplicity in their living. Surely we are bound to give an example of strictness: strict preaching with easy living, Gospel doctrine with worldly conversation, much speaking of the mortified spirit with much intercourse with the worldly-minded, and fellowship with them in their pleasures and mode of life, will cause the world to misbelieve our words, and to accept our practices.

As one of Thy Priests, called and set apart for the awful work of winning souls, make me indeed to be and also to appear to be a man of God, no lover of the pleasures of the world, nor luxurious, but of a homely, grave, sober life. (*To be used where the clergyman is the master of a house or family.*) And not only ought I to live plainly in my own person and to be a keeper at home, but my whole house should be governed by the same rule. For what avails it, O Lord, if I die to the world and my household live to it; if I keep at home and they go abroad; if I am sober and they

frivolous, if I am a lover of God and they "lovers of pleasure." Give my household grace to live soberly and strictly, that the ministry be not blamed, and that mine may be a household fearing Thee. Make my wife, children, servants, all under me or given to my charge, self-denying and devout, that they may thus help me in the ministry, and so help the salvation of this flock. May we live as a house, that has renounced the world. "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Teach us to serve Thee more and more, and to deny ourselves, and to walk by faith, and to love the things of the Spirit, and to cast out hence the spirit of the world. Make this, through the in-dwelling of the Holy Ghost, a house of peace, and prayer, and love. Knit us together in most holy love, love most spiritual, love like unto Thine own, not worldly affection, but that which is eternal.

O God most merciful, I pray Thee fill this mine own household with Thy Spirit. Be present with us, assist us, guide us into Thine own ways, teach us Thy will, save us from sin, succour us in all time of temptation, comfort us in all time of need, so unite us together upon earth, that we may be raised up to the perfect joy of the kingdom of heaven, through Thine own most precious blood.



SATURDAY.

O GOD, I have trodden through the paths of another week ; I have come to the last day of the week ; Thy mercy has carried me to this hour. If I have done any good, it has been through the operation of Thy grace ; and for the evil that I have done I have not been visited with any great judgment, nor given over unto death. I am yet in the land of the living ; the living shall praise Thee, O Lord ; with a most thankful spirit do I kneel before Thee, O Father of spirits, for I have provoked Thee every day, and Thou hast had mercy upon me.

And now I desire to make this a day of recollection ; of remembrance of sins, of confession, and of repentance, that so I may be prepared for to-morrow's feast, that joy may come in the morning, the joy of worshipping Thee with a prepared spirit.

Make me to see my sins, O Lord, with clear eyes, without dissembling; take from me all self-deceit, ignorance of myself, blindness, self-love, partiality, unwise tenderness, all love of vain excuses, palliations, defences of myself. Make me to feel a true godly sorrow for what I have done amiss.

I have indeed done wickedly; many sins of this past week rise to remembrance, sins of omission, neglects of duty, or hurrying over of duty, formality in prayer, too little prayer, want of fervent love for my people's souls, lingering affection for the world, harsh uncharitable words, frivolous conversation, vain ambitious thoughts, much selfishness, unreality in speaking of religion, defects of temper, over-much thought of worldly affairs, thus have I transgressed before Thee; other sins are there besides these, which I myself am ignorant of, for who can tell all the courses of his thoughts, or note down, or know, or remember all his faults. The thoughts even of an hour cannot be numbered, neither the evil of all that multitude of imaginations known. "Who can tell how oft he offendeth? O cleanse Thou me from my secret faults."

Father of mercies, of all these my trespasses, known and unknown, wilful, or done through

ignorance, in thought, in word, in action, the lesser and the greater, of all kinds and of all degrees, I do repent, I do desire fully, thoroughly to repent. Deepen my repentance, if it be too slight; lengthen it, if it be too short and hurried; darken my own view of myself, if I incline too much to favour myself.

All that I can do is to repent; that which I have done I cannot undo; that which I have said I cannot unsay; but I can confess the sinfulness of the deed or of the word, I can pray for mercy; this is all; this will I do; I am Thy debtor; I fall down at Thy feet and worship Thee, and pray for the forgiveness of my debts.

Accept my repentance, O heavenly Father, for Thy dear Son's sake. Wipe out of Thy book of remembrance all my faults; blot them out, that they appear not against me on the day of judgment; drown them and cover them in the blood of the Lamb; let His blood hide them. O how my whole soul and spirit would blush with an overwhelming shame, if all that I have done in all my life, all the thoughts, motives, desires, passions, evil actions, were to be revealed even to a man like myself! How then can I bear the judgment, Thy penetrating light, the light of Thy countenance! How can I stand before Thee,

Thou great God, Thou most pure and most holy God! How can I, a wretched sinner, a most miserable sinner all my days, behold all the misdeeds of my life revealed before Thee and the great company of Thy angels, and before quick and dead! How could I bear my own self, when all this my most sinful life should be uncovered, even to the most secret and the most shameful parts.

O God, for Thy mercy's sake forgive me all my sins; "do away mine offences;" take away this multitude of witnesses that witness against me. I do very greatly, very justly dread the revelation of the last day, the revelation of myself, except Thou dost forgive me! My hope is in Thy mercy, yea, all my hope; else I shall not be able to look up, else I shall pray the mountains to fall on me and the hills to cover me; else I know not how I shall be able to bear my own soul; I shall be intolerable to myself.

But, Lord, I do hope in Thee; increase in me this good and blessed hope.

"The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." "Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief."

Lord, I repent; help Thou mine impenitence, and forgive the insufficiency of my grief.

This day indeed, the last of the week, ought to remind me of the last day of my life, of the day of my death, of the day of judgment. As this week ends, so must my life; these hurrying weeks bring it to an end; the end is at hand. I must soon come to the great mystery of death, and feel it, and know what it is. O great mystery of death, how can it be understood now! This house must be dissolved, this my very body, all this most wonderful frame in which only I have known life. I have known no other manner of life than this; I cannot understand life without this body, nor the change when body and soul shall be again joined for ever. And yet the last use and motions of these my present limbs, of tongue, eye, heart, hands, and other members, the last sight of this world, of all this scene where I have lived, the last dawn, and last sunset, and last aspect of men as they are now, the last of all these things is at hand. I cannot escape from death, nor shrink from it; but this I can do by Thy grace, O God, I can prepare myself for mine end. I can now think of the day of death, that I may learn to prepare.

I know not, Lord, the number of my days; I know not how I shall die, whether I shall have a great trial at the last, or a short sickness, or a

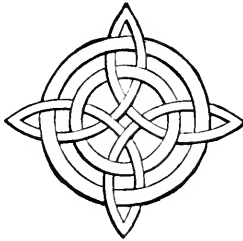
sudden death. I beseech Thee make this my ignorance stir me up to the more intense watchfulness. "Watch and pray," this is Thine own word. May I have strength to fulfil that word to the uttermost; let not that day come upon me unawares; let me be prepared for the coming of the thief, with my "loins girded" and my "lights burning." Grant that I may watch and pray to the end; the nearer draws the end, so much the more may I watch; as every day is a step towards death, so ought it to be a step towards the kingdom of heaven. As I may die any day, so every fresh day is a gain to my soul. It were a fearful thing after having preached to others to be myself "a castaway;" to have had Thy words so long in my mouth and yet to be cast out of Thy presence; to have spoken so much of the kingdom of heaven and yet not to enter it; to have warned men of hell and yet to be cast therein; to have been an ambassador of Christ with an embassy of peace, and yet not to go into my Lord's palace; to have spoken the word of peace and yet to lose peace; to have preached Christ and yet to lose Christ. O save me from perdition in the last day, "lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." O Christ have mercy on me.

O save me from perdition on the last day; O Christ have mercy on me, when Thou comest to judgment; in judgment remember mercy; remember me on the day of judgment. Thou desirest not that any should perish; save me from perishing. Grant that I may be finally numbered among the saints. "Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee." I desire to behold Thy glory, to obtain eternal redemption, to be received up into Thine own kingdom. Draw me towards Thyself, direct my goings in the way, lead me towards Thy kingdom; I commend myself to Thy mercy; cast me not out of Thy presence.

Remember also all this my flock on the day of judgment, for they are Thy people, the sheep of Thy pasture, bought, O holy Jesus, by Thy blood. Spare both the shepherd and the sheep, and have pity on us, have great pity on us. Enable us to go through all the mysteries that meet us when we pass out of this world with a firm trust in Thee. Enable us to stand before Thee on the day of judgment with a good hope. Thou hast loved us, O Father, with a great love. By all manifestations of divine love, all mercies, providences, instances of long-suffering, gifts of the

Spirit, blood of Christ, intercessions of Christ, guardianship of angels, by all this love past and present I pray Thee continue forth Thy loving-kindness. As Thou hast loved us in times past, as Thou art merciful unto us at this present time, so shew forth Thy love on the last day. On the last day look upon us, though we be sinners; strengthen us in that hour, when Thou raisest us from our graves, when we see Thee, most mighty God, in Thy own Majesty; when we are gathered together before Thy throne, all the multitudes of quick and dead, the whole earth, all the families of the earth, all the generations of men, that have ever been, then, O God, lift up Thy face upon us in such love that we may be able to bear the light of Thy countenance. In faith, in faith I now pray unto Thee. I believe in Thee, O Father, and Thee, O Son, and Thee, O Holy Ghost, One God, though Thou art a mystery unto me, though I am a mystery unto myself. I commend myself and all that are mine in most profound humility into Thy hands, kneeling upon the earth, bowing myself to the earth; "into Thy hands I commend my spirit," and the spirits of all those whom Thou hast given me. Do unto us what seemeth Thee good. We are Thine, O Father. Deliver us in the hour of death and in

the day of judgment; deliver us from the place of hell and from eternal death, through the precious blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen. Amen.





A PRAYER FOR GRACE.

O THOU who makest souls to shine
With light from lighter worlds above,
And droppest glistening dew divine
On all who seek a Saviour's love,—

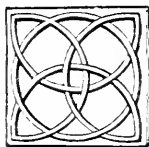
Do Thou Thy benediction give
On all who teach, on all who learn,
That all Thy Church may holier live,
And every lamp more brightly burn.

Give those that teach pure hearts and wise,
Faith, hope, and love, all warm'd by prayer ;
Themselves first training for the skies,
They best will raise their people there.

Give those that learn the willing ear,
Meek spirit, guileless mind ;
Such gifts will make the meanest here,
Far better than a kingdom find.

O bless the shepherd! bless the sheep!
That guide and guided both be one;
One in the faithful watch they keep,
Until this hurrying life be gone.

If thus, good Lord, Thy grace be given,
Our glory meets us ere we die;
Before we upward pass to heaven
We taste our immortality.



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