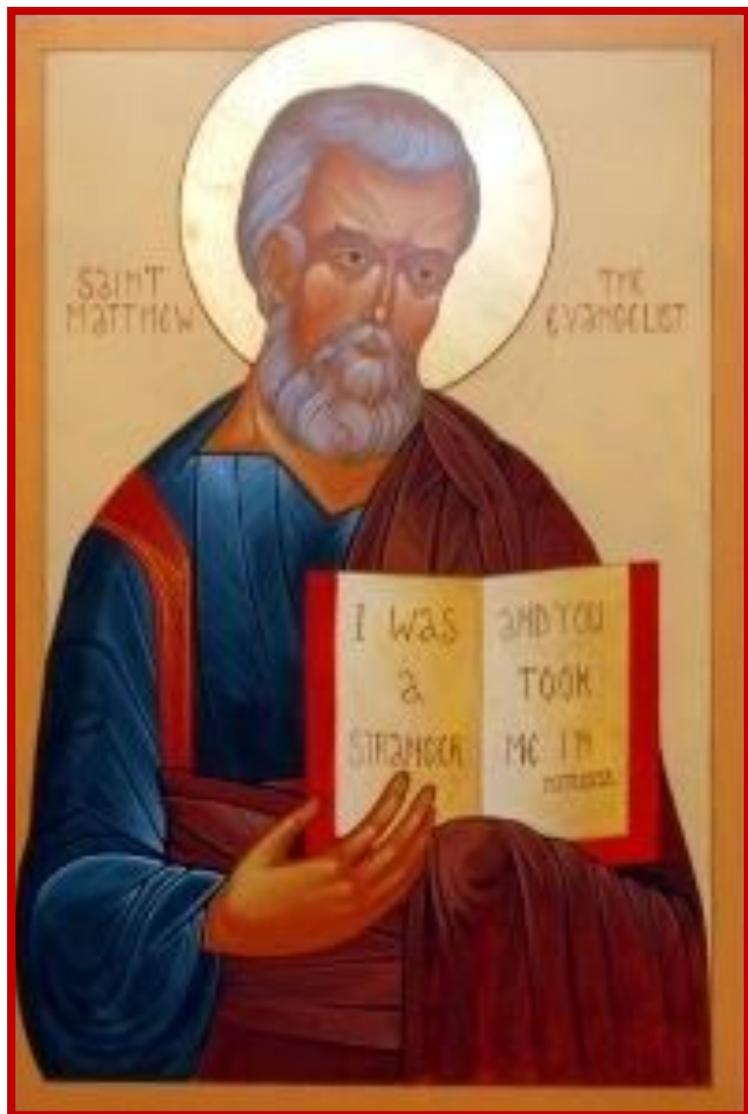


*Tropologically*, lilies are virgins, who, by increasing in virtues, grow in God, and are clothed with the garments of grace now and of glory hereafter. Whence it is said in Cant., "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters."



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For the Catholic Church, God's Revelation is found in Sacred Tradition, understood as God's Revealed Word handed down by the Living Teaching Authority established by Christ in the Church. That includes both Written Tradition (Scripture) and Unwritten Tradition received from Christ and handed down Orally by the Apostles and their Successors. The Church founded by Christ on Peter, and only that Church, has been Empowered by Christ to 'Interpret' His Teaching Authoritatively in His Name.

Scripture is *Inspired*; *Inspiration* really means that God Himself is the Chief Author of the Scriptures. He uses a Human Agent, in so marvelous a way that the Human writes what the Holy Spirit wants him to write, does so without Error, yet the Human Writer is Free, and keeps his own Style of Language. It is only because God is *Transcendent that He can do this - insure Freedom from Error, while leaving the Human Free. To say He is Transcendent means that He is above and beyond all our Human Classifications and Categories.*

Matthew writes his gospel account to give us the view of Jesus as the King. He records Jesus' authority in calling the disciples: "Follow me" (Matthew 4:19), and he also records more than any of the others about Jesus' teaching concerning God's kingdom and heavenly rule.

Considered one of the most important Catholic theologians and Bible commentators, Cornelius à Lapide's, S.J. writings on the Bible, created a Scripture Commentary so complete and scholarly that it was practically the universal commentary in use by Catholics for over 400 years. Fr. Lapide's most excellent commentaries have been widely known for successfully combining piety and practicality. Written during the time of the Counter Reformation, it includes plenty of apologetics. His vast knowledge is only equaled by his piety and holiness.

## Continuation of Matthew 6: 11-29

**Verse 11-** *Give us this day our supersubstantial (many MSS. Read daily) bread.* This is the fourth petition, in which we begin to ask for the things which concern ourselves. S. Chrysostom connects this petition with the one preceding—thus: "I, Christ, bid you ask that the will of God may be done by you, as it is done by the angels. I do not, however, equal you to the angels, for ye have need of bread; but they require it not, for they are immortal and impassible, ye are mortal and fragile." Hence Ruperti (lib. 17, *in Gen.* 25) concludes that all men, even princes and kings, are beggars from God. For as God fed the children of Israel for forty years in the wilderness, by raining down manna upon them from heaven, so every day, when we sit at table, God as it were rains food upon each of us from above. Hence David says, "I am a beggar and poor. The Lord careth for me." (Ps. xl. 17, Vulg.) "Let us all," says Ruperti, "say as mendicants before the doors of Divine grace, *Give us this day our daily bread.*" Hear S. Augustine: "A beggar asks of thee, and thou art God's beggar. For we all, when we pray, are God's beggars; we stand at the door of the great Father of the family, ya

found to be four-square, that is to say, as broad as he is long; to teach him to be four-sided and solid in constancy and virtue.

**Vers. 28, 29.**—*And why take ye thought for raiment?* &c. This is the fourth argument, drawn from the beauty of lilies. He intimates that as lilies grow, and are nourished, they are clothed in their petals as with raiment. The beauty, fragrance, grace, and elegance with which God adorns lilies are very wonderful. (See Pliny, lib. 21, c. 5.)

Christ makes mention of lilies in connection with Solomon's robe, or cloak, because it was of a shining white colour, and ornamented with flowers of lilies, worked or embroidered upon it with a needle, and vying with lilies in its beauty. Such was the nature of the robes worn by kings and princes. Hear Pausanias (*in Eliacis*, lib. 5); where he describes an image of Jupiter: "Besides other things, he had a pallium of cloth of gold, on which were embroidered animals of many kinds, but especially lilies." (See Pineda, lib. 6 *de rebus Salomonis*, c. 5.)

*Anagogically*, lilies and vestments embroidered with lilies represent the robe of glory and immortality with which Christ shall clothe His elect in heaven. Wherefore, Ps. xlv. is entitled, *For Lilies, or For those who shall be changed*, viz., from death to immortality, from misery to glory. Wherefore Hilary says that by the lilies which neither toll nor spin, the brightness of the heavenly angels is signified, upon whom, in a manner surpassing the erudition of human learning, the brightness of glory has been placed by God. And since, in the Resurrection, all the saints shall be like the angels, He desires us to hope for the robe of glory after the fashion of angelic splendour.

Moreover how lovely lilies are, and how they adorn princes at their nuptials, especially Solomon and Christ, and how greatly Solomon delighted in them is plain from his Song of Songs, where he often says of the bridegroom, "He feedeth among lilies." And again, "I am the flower of the field, and the lily of the valleys." (Vulg.)

Now Christ prefers the loveliness of lilies to the garments of Solomon, which were made of silver tissue, embroidered with lilies, because they being natural surpass all the elegance of art, which is nothing more than an imitation and adumbration of reality. For art is, as it were, the ape of nature, and as much as a shadow is surpassed by the reality which causes it, so much is nature superior to art. As S. Jerome says, "What silk, what regal purple, what figures of embroidery, can be compared to flowers? What is as red as a rose? What is as fair as a lily? And that the purple of the violet is surpassed by no marine shell-fish is the judgment of the eye rather than of speech."

to imitate the humility and innocence of boys, who hide their faces in their caps. 2. The lark is of an ashen colour, and the frock of the brethren is of an ashen grey, to put them in mind of the saying of God to the first-formed man, “Remember that thou art dust, or ashes, and unto ashes thou shalt return.” 3. Larks live in poverty without anxiety, they pluck the grains which the earth affords; so also the brethren profess poverty; they live by begging, without care, placing their hope of a harvest in the providence of God and the charity of the faithful. 4. Larks, as soon as they have found a grain and eaten it, are borne by a direct flight aloft towards heaven, that they may shun the eyes of beholders, singing as they fly, and returning thanks to God, the Parent and Nourisher of all creatures. The brethren do the same, “for man hath eaten angels’ food,” *i.e.*, bread asked of alms. And the angels incite those who are rich to give the brethren bread when they beg. Lastly, larks are called in Latin, *alaudæ*, from *laus*, praise, because they praise God by their constant songs. So also the brethren despise earthly things, and seek for heavenly, because they are strangers on earth, and citizens of heaven, and they know they have been called by God for this object, that they may praise Him perpetually with psalmody, by preaching and by a holy life. (See Luke Wadding, *in Annal. Minor. A. C. 1226, num. 39 et alii.*) Listen to S. Ambrose (*Serm. in c. 1. Malachi*): “The birds,” he says, “give thanks for worthless food, wilt thou banquet on the most precious feasts and be ungrateful? Who then that has the feeling of a man should not blush to close the day without the singing of psalms, when the birds themselves manifest their exceeding gladness by the melody of their hymns? And who would not sound His praises in spiritual songs, whose praises the birds pronounce with their modulated notes? Imitate, then, my brother, the tiny birds by giving thanks to thy Creator every morning and evening. And if thou hast greater devotion, then imitate the nightingale for whom the day is not long enough to sing praise, but makes sweet the night watches by her melody. So do thou, passing the day in giving thanks and praise, add to this employment the hours of the night.”

**Verse 27-** Which of you by taking thought, Gr. *μεριμνῶν, i.e., being solicitous, anxiously thoughtful, or careful.* This is Christ’s third argument against cares. “If the thought and solicitude and labour be utterly vain, by which a man would wish to devise some plan whereby he might add one cubit to his stature, so that he should be higher or taller, yea though he should cogitate for a thousand years, and torment himself by devising plans, he would never accomplish it; how much more vain is that anxious care by which men strive to prolong life by anxiety and their own pains. For as it is the office of God alone to increase the body which He has created, and make it attain its proper stature, so much more is it His by His fatherly providence, to preserve and lengthen out to its appointed end the life which he has given, and supply it with necessary food.”

Euthymius here takes notice that a cubit is spoken of because a cubit is the proper measurement for a man’s height. For every properly proportioned man is four cubits in height, and four in width; that is, when his arms are extended from his shoulders. This extension of the arms is the measure of every man’s stature. And thus man is

we prostrate ourselves, we groan as suppliants, wishing to receive something, and that very something is God Himself. What doth a beggar ask of thee? Bread. And what dost thou ask of God but Christ, who saith, ‘I am the living Bread which came down from heaven?’”

*Supersubstantial.* You ask what is *supersubstantial bread*? I reply the Greek is *ἐπιούσιον*, which is found only here and in S. Luke xi. 3. 1. Angelus Caninius (*lib. de Nom. Heb. N. Test.*) translates *to-morrow’s bread*, for *ἐπιουσια ημερα* is often put for *the following day*. He would paraphrase the petition thus, “As on the day of preparation, or Friday, the Hebrews in the wilderness collected manna for the Sabbath, on which day they were to rest, so do Thou, O Lord, give us this day bread for to-morrow, for we are not solicitous for anything beyond, but after to-morrow we await, and as it were prepare ourselves for the Lord’s Resurrection, and the eternal jubilee. Therefore, we collect our baggage, and only ask for bread for to-morrow. It is in favour of this that S. Jerome writes that the Hebrew Gospel of the Nazarenes reads *מחר machar, i.e. “for tomorrow.”* Whence S. Athanasius (*Tract. de Incarn. Verb.*) thinks that we here ask for the Holy Spirit, who is the Divine Bread, whom we hope to feed upon and enjoy in Heaven, and whose first-fruits we receive and taste in the Eucharist.

2. S. Jerome explains *ἐπιούσιον* by *περιούσιον*, that is *principal, glorious, excellent*. Symmachus translates *elect*, or that which is above all substances, and is superior to all creatures. So also Cassian (*Collat. 9. 20*), Cyril (*Cat. Mystag. 5*), and S. Ambrose (*lib. 5, de Sacrament. c. 4*), who by this *bread* understands the Eucharist which in Zech. ix. is called “the corn of the elect.” (Vulg.)

3. Literally, *ἐπιούσιος*, means *that which pertains to substance*, say *substantial, essential*, that which is for the preservation of man’s life and substance, as often as is necessary. So S. Chrysostom, Theophylact, and S. Basil, as well as many others, who with Suidas interpret *ἐπιούσιον*, as *ἐπὶ τὴν ἡμῶν οὐσίαν καὶ τροφήν ἐπαρκοῦται*, or that which is congruous to, and suffices for, our substance and nutrition, that which subserves, not pleasure but necessity, that which is not too delicate or abundant but frugal and moderate, *i.e. daily*. Hence the Syriac has *the bread of our need*; Arabic, *bread sufficient*. So, also the Egyptian, Ethiopic, and Persian versions. So also the Fathers who lived before S. Jerome’s version, such as SS. Cyprian, Ambrose, Augustine, translate *daily bread*. And the Church in the Breviary and Missal uses the same ancient translation, and teaches the faithful to pray, *Give us this day our daily bread*.

S. Jerome, who, at the bidding of Pope Damasus, corrected the Latin version of the New Testament, in accordance with the Greek, in this place substituted *supersubstantial* for *daily*, to bring the passage into accord with the Greek.

This *supersubstantial*, or *daily bread*, is a parallel expression to the Hebrew דבר יומי *davar yom*, “the thing, or matter of a day.” For Christ forbids us to be anxious about the morrow, in which it is uncertain whether or not we shall be alive. “He would,” says S. Chrysostom, “that we should be always girded, and provided, as it were, with wings of faith, by which we may fly heavenward, and give no greater indulgence to nature than necessary use demands.” Again, S. Jerome’s reason for translating *ἐπιούσιον* literally, by *supersubstantial*, was to indicate that in this petition we ask above all for heavenly bread, such as we receive in the Eucharist.

2. You ask what is this special *supersubstantial*, or *daily bread*. Calvin (lib. 3, *Instit.* c. 20, 44), and Philip Melancthon, in his *Commonplaces*, tit. *de Invocat.*, understand it of corporeal food only. Some Catholics understand it to mean only spiritual food. Certainly SS. Jerome, Cyril, Ambrose, Cassian, speak expressly of this alone, in the passages about to be cited. But I say that this bread is both material, for the sustenance of the body, and spiritual and heavenly bread, suitable for the nourishment of the soul, such as the word of God and the Eucharist. We have need of both, and therefore we ought to ask for both, and for the latter so much more earnestly than the former, as the soul is superior to the body. And this is denoted by the word *supersubstantial*, which S. Jerome explains to mean *superexcellent*, surpassing all created substances, because, as Cassian says, “the sublimity of its magnificence and its sanctity is superior to that of the whole creation.” And for this reason, in the Greek, the definite article is added, doubled in truth, τὸν ἄρτον τὸν ἐπιούσιον, *the bread the supersubstantial*. As though it were said, “Give us bread not common, but celestial and divine.” Christ alludes to the manna given to the Hebrews, which was a type of the Eucharist. For of manna, it is said in Ps. lxxviii. 24, “He gave them bread from heaven.” “Man did eat angels’ food.” Thus, therefore, manna was food *ἐπιούσιος*, *i.e.*, heavenly and angelic; but much more is the Eucharist. Whence in Wisd. xix. 20, both are called in Greek *Ambrosia*, which is said by the poets to be the food of the gods. S. Ambrose calls the Eucharist this *supersubstantial* bread. “If,” he says, “this be *daily* bread, why do you receive it only once a year? So live that you may be fit to receive it daily.” Thus the first Christians were accustomed to communicate daily, as is plain from Acts ii. 46. And S. Cyprian (*de Orat. Domin.*) says, “We ask that this bread may be daily given us, lest we, who are in Christ and daily receive the food of the Eucharist, by the intervention of some grave fault, by abstaining and not communicating, should be kept back from the heavenly Bread, and separated from the Body of Christ, when He Himself has admonished us saying, ‘I am the Bread of life, Who came down from Heaven. If any man shall eat of My Bread he shall live for ever.’” (S. John vi.)

Note that under the term *bread*, by a Hebraism, whatsoever is necessary for food, clothing, habitation, and the life both of the body and the soul, is sought for. “We ask for a sufficiency,” says S. Augustine (*Epist.* 121). “By the word *bread* we mean everything.”

**Verse 12-** *And forgive*, &c. Thus far in these petitions there has been supplication for good things; the last three petitions are deprecations against evil. *Debts*, S. Luke (xi. 4) interprets by *ἀμαρτία*, *i.e.*, *sins*; for sin is the greatest debt for the greatest injury,

for whom God cares and whom He feeds. The 3rd, in ver. 27, from the uselessness of all our care without God. The 4th, in ver. 28, from the lilies and the grass, which God clothes and adorns. 5th, in ver. 31, because such a care is fit only for pagans, not for Christians. 6th, in ver. 32, because God knows all things, and it pertains to His providence to provide us sustenance, that He should add food to those who seek the kingdom of God. The 7th, ver. 34, because sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. So many arguments does Christ use, because by far the greater part of mankind labour under this undue anxiety about providing food and raiment for themselves and their families, which is a great misery, and more than asinine toil.

*Is not the life*, &c. This is the first reason drawn from a minor to a major probability, as though He said, “God who gave us our souls and bodies, yea, created them out of nothing, and who continually, as it were, recreates them, He surely will give those things which are less, as food and clothes, without which the body cannot subsist. As S. Chrysostom says, “When God is our Feeder, there is no need to be anxious, for ‘the rich have wanted, and suffered hunger, but they that seek after the Lord shall want no manner of thing that is good.’” (Ps. xxxiv. Vulg.)

**Verse 26-** *Behold the fowls of the air*, &c. *Are ye not much better than they?* Gr. *μᾶλλον διαφέρετε αὐτῶν*. *Are ye not very different from them?* This is the second argument. If God feeds the irrational birds, who are not anxious about their living, and gives them corn and food which they have not laboured for, how much more will He feed you, who are reasoning men, created after His Image, you who are His sons and heirs, and redeemed with the Blood of Christ. He compares men not to the oxen of the earth, but to the birds of heaven, to teach them that they ought to be heavenly, and be like birds, and fly away in spirit from earth to heaven, and expect from God necessary food both for their souls and bodies. For the birds are contented with provision for the day, and are not anxious about tomorrow, but rest calmly on Gods providence, and give up their leisure time to flight and song. “Christ,” says S. Chrysostom, “might have brought forward the examples of Moses, Elias, John, who were not anxious about their food, but He preferred to take the irrational birds, that He might the more deeply impress His hearers.” For why cannot men do what birds do? Why should men be anxious when birds are not?

S. Francis had a wonderful delight in birds, especially in larks, and used to invite them to sing the praises of God. So a little after his death, some larks came and assisted at his funeral. In a vast multitude they flew to the roof of the house in which his body lay, and circling around it with gladness more than common, they celebrated the praise and glory of the Saint. He was accustomed to compare the brethren of his Order to larks, and to exhort them to imitate them. “For the lark,” he said, “has a crest like a cap. So also the Friars minor wear a cowl, or hood, to put them in mind that they ought

desire of wealth suggests to him. Verily this is a hard and miserable servitude. But “to serve God is to reign.” Well does S. Bernard say (*Ser. 21 in Cant.*), “The covetous man hungers after earthly things like a beggar—the believer despises them like a lord. The former in possessing them is a beggar, the latter, by despising them, keeps them.”

Hear S. Augustine (lib. 4 *de Civit.* c. 21)—“The heathen were wont to commend themselves to the goddess of money, that they might be rich—to the god. Æsculanus and his son, Argentinus, that they might have bronze and silver money. They made Æsculanus the father of Argentinus, because bronze money was first in use, afterwards silver. I really wonder why Argentinus did not beget Aurinus, because gold followed silver coin.” The reason why money was made a goddess was because of her power and empire; for, as it is said in Ecclus. x., “All things are obedient to money.” By money are procured dignities, wine, feasts, clothes, horses, chariots, and what not? Whence Hosea (xii. 8) says of such men, “Verily I am made rich; I have found my idol.” (Vulg.) Hence also Juvenal (*Satr.* 1) says, “With us the majesty of riches is the most sacred of all things.” And Petronius Arbiter makes them equal, or indeed superior to Jupiter.

“Be money there, ask what you please,  
’Twill come: your chest great Jove will sieze.”

Well does S. Jerome say (*Epist. 28 ad Lucinium*), “Ye cannot, saith the Lord, serve God and mammon. To put away gold is the work of beginners, not of the advanced Christian. Crates, the Theban, did that, so did Antisthenes. But to offer ourselves to God is the distinguishing mark of Christians and Apostles: for they, casting with the widow the two farthings of their poverty into the treasury, delivered to the Lord all the living that they had, and deserved to hear the words, ‘Ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.’”

**Ver. 25.**—*Wherefore I say unto you, &c. For your life, Vulg., anima, “for your soul.”* For it has need of food, not strictly speaking, but that it may be kept in the body, and animate the body. And again, in the soul resides all sense of food, all taste of and pleasure in it. *For the soul, i.e., for the life,* as S. Augustine says, because the soul is the cause of life.

*For, take no thought,* the Greek has *μη μεριμνατε*, take no anxious thought, lest, through care, ye be troubled with anxiety and distress; for the desire of gathering wealth divides the mind, and distracts it with various cogitations, cares, and anxieties, and as it were cuts it in twain. Christ, then, does not forbid provident diligence and labour in procuring the necessaries of life for ourselves and those who belong to us, as the Eucharist maintained, who wished to pray always without working, against whom S. Augustine wrote a book, *On the Work of Monks*. But Christ forbids anxious, untimely, fearful solicitude, care that distrusts God, a heart grovelling in the earth, and distracted from the service of God.

And in order that He may remove it from us, He gives us seven reasons or arguments against it. The 1st is in this verse in the words which immediately follow; this reason is from the care which God has of our bodies. The 2nd reason is drawn from the birds,

a debt which God exacts. And because this debt is infinite, neither man nor angel can make satisfaction to the rigour of justice, but only Christ, who is God and Man. These *debts* therefore are *sins*, which incur the punishment of hell. The sinful man pawns his soul to the demon, to death and hell; but to God he owes a hundred, yea an infinite number of souls, if he had them, and deaths in hell if he were able to bear them.

Hence the Fathers prove against the Pelagians that no one is without sin. The Pelagians asserted that the righteous pray, *Forgive us our debts*, not for themselves, but for others who have sinned; or if they do say it for themselves, they say it out of humility. S. Augustine confutes both these errors (lib. 2 *de Peccat. Meritis*, c. 10; and lib. 2 *contra Epistolam Parmen.*, c. 10.) “For we say not, *Forgive the debts of others*, but, *Forgive us our debts.*” In fine, the Council of Milev. (2. c. 1) pronounces an anathema upon those who pretend that *Forgive us our debts* is said by the saints not truly, but out of humility. “For who,” it asks, “could endure that in prayer a man should lie not to men, but to God; that he should ask with his lips that his own debts should be forgiven, and should mean in his heart that he has no debts to be forgiven?”

*As we forgive, &c. Debts*, that is, not of money, nor of restitution of fame, or honour, but of injuries done to us, that we should not follow them up with hatred, nor the wish for private vengeance, nor even for public punishment, unless the public welfare, or right reason require it. The word *as* does not denote the measure, or the rule which God follows in the forgiveness of sins: for we ought to pray that more may be forgiven us by God than others owe us—but the inductive cause which may move God to forgive, whence Luke says, *Forgive us our debts, since we also forgive those who are indebted to us*. This is the condition which God requires of us, and if it be fulfilled, He readily forgives, and if it be not fulfilled, He will not forgive, according to that which follows, *For if ye forgive men their offences, your Father which is in heaven will forgive you, but if, &c.* Wherefore S. Cyprian says, that to refuse to forgive is a sin so great that it cannot be blotted out by martyrdom. Thus we read that Sapritius fell from martyrdom, when he was all but holding his crown in his hands. For when he was about to be beheaded for his constancy in the faith, and was told to kneel down, he refused. This was because he would not forgive one Nicephorus, who had offended him, and who prayed him to pardon him. Nicephorus immediately put himself in the place of Sapritius, and thus obtained the palm which the other lost. Thus “the life of the saints is the interpretation of Scripture,” as S. Jerome says. Wherefore S. John the Almsgiver brought an angry prince to reconciliation by celebrating mass in his presence; and as he was saying, *Forgive us our debts*, straightway he was silent on purpose; but the prince proceeded, *as we forgive our debtors*. Then the patriarch turned to him, and said, “Take heed what you say to God in such an awful hour as this, *As I forgive, so do Thou forgive me*. At this admonition the prince was struck as by a thunderbolt, and

replied, "Whatsoever Thou, Lord, shalt bid, that will Thy servant do." And immediately he became reconciled to his enemy.

They therefore who are unwilling to forgive injuries, lie before God, and tacitly condemn themselves, and show that they are unworthy of His forgiveness. Let us add that these words have been laid down by Christ as a *formula* of prayer, that by them we should be admonished to forgive those who trespass against us. *We forgive, i.e.*, as we ought and wish to forgive, but as our infirmity is not sufficient for this, do Thou, O Lord, give strength, and change our heart that we may be able to do it.

**Verse 13-** *And lead us not, &c. Lead, not impel*, as Calvin would interpret. For "God cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man," saith S. James (i. 13). God only permits us to be led into temptation. So the Fathers and all Catholics. In a manner, God is said to do what He permits, since nothing can be done without His suffering it to be. The meaning then is—1. Permit us not to be led into temptation in such a manner, at least, that we are overcome by it, as fishes and birds are taken in a net. "Let us not," as S. Augustine says, "be bereft of Thy help, so that we should be deceived and consent to any temptation."

2. Suffer not temptation to befall us. And yet in the *Lives of the Fathers*, we read, that certain saints wished for temptations as a means of increasing virtues through fortitude of mind and trust in God. Whence S. James says, "My brethren count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." For by temptation we are proved and exercised, We fight and are perfected. Christ therefore puts us in mind of our infirmity, and that because of it, we ought not to expose ourselves to temptations; but should, as far as may be, ward them off, and pray against them. And we can only overcome temptation by the help of God's grace. Wherefore in temptation we must continually and ardently pray for God's help. As S. Peter Chrysologus says, (*Serm.* 44), "He goes into temptation, who goes not to prayer." And S. Gregory Nyssen says (*Orat. 1 de Orat. Domin.*), "if prayer precede business, sin findeth no way of access to the mind."

*But deliver us from evil.* That is, from *temptation*, for of temptation the preceding petition speaks. 2 *From the devil*, who is the president and artificer of temptation. Thus Tertullian and S. Chrysostom. He is called in Greek *ὁ πονηρὸς* the evil, or malignant one. As it is said (1 John v.), "That wicked one toucheth him not." And, "Ye have overcome the wicked one." For the devil tempts all by means of wicked men, the world, and the flesh. 3. More fully, S. Cyprian understands every evil to be intended here, everything which either incites to sin, or is a hindrance to virtue. And thus there is a clear distinction between this petition, the last and seventh, from the one which precedes it. Hear S. Cyprian: "When we say, *Deliver us from evil*, nothing remains, which we need ask for further: when once we ask for the protection of God against evil, and obtain it, we stand secure against everything which the devil or the world can do. For what dread of the world can there be to any one whose protector is God in heaven?" *Amen.*

**Verse 24-** *No man can serve two masters*, not only opposite but even different masters. It is a proverb, signifying that it is a rare and difficult thing to satisfy two masters of different dispositions and tempers, or to belong equally to both. Christ applies this proverb to avarice and the religion and worship of God. It is impossible to be the servant of God and also of money. Wherefore if you desire to serve God and give Him your heart, you must tear it away from gold and riches. This is Christ's third argument and the most powerful of all, by which He calls away the Scribes and all men from the love of riches, because it is indeed impossible to serve them and serve God.

*For either he will hate the one, &c.* Instead of *hold to*, Augustine reads *will suffer, endure (patientur)*, and explains it to refer to mammon, or riches, meaning that mammon is so imperious and hard a master, that the avaricious serve him with hard servitude, that they do not love him, but that they bear or suffer his harsh slavery. Vatablus translates, *will owe himself to one—i.e.*, will give him his heart, will render him a loving servitude. The meaning of this disjunctive sentence is: "The slave of two masters will not in reality serve two, but will either hate one and love the other, or *vice versa*, will love and sustain the one, will hate and despise the other."

*Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

Ye cannot give yourselves up to God and the desire of riches, so as to set your heart upon both, to expend your cares and works and labours upon both, especially since God so wills to be worshipped and loved above all things, that He will suffer no rival in the love of Himself.

Observe, the Heb. *מַמְמוֹן* *matmon*, the Chald. *mamon*, the Syriac *mamoma*, as S. Jerome says, mean riches and treasures which rich men hide in secret receptacles, from the root *מָטַן* *hide*. Or as Angelus Caninius says *from aman*, to *strengthen, establish*. For as it is said in Prov. x. 15, "The substance of a rich man is the city of his strength." (Vulg.) So, too, riches are called in Hebrew *charil*, from strength, because they make the rich strong and powerful. And for this reason *mamon* is more correctly spelt with one *m*, as it is in the Chald. and Syriac books. Also *gain* in the Punic language, which is akin to Hebrew, is called *mamma*, as S. Augustine tells us (*lib. de Ser. Dom. in Mont. c. 22*). Hence also the Persian version of this passage renders *mammon* by *transitory riches and possessions*.

Observe, Christ does not say, "Ye cannot possess riches and God," for Abraham, Isaac, David, Solomon, and many saints had both; but they did not set their hearts upon riches, but used them for pious purposes. But He said, "Ye cannot *serve* God and riches." For he who serves *mammon* is the slave of riches. He does not rule them as their master, but he is ruled by them as their slave, so as to undertake all labours and sufferings which the

things, then thy treasure is on earth. Like a mole, thou buriest thy heart in the earth.

**Verse 22-** *The light of the body*, &c. Those who have bad sight, says S. Jerome, see many lamps instead of one. A single and clear eye beholds things simply and purely as they are.

**Verse 23-** *But if thine eye be evil*, &c. A single eye is one that is sound, and free from humours which affect and disturb the sight. *Thy whole body will be luminous*, as though it be full of eyes; because the light of the eye going before will direct all thine actions in the right way. *But if thine eye be evil*, Gr. *πονηρὸν*, *i.e.*, badly affected, and full of vitiated humours, *thy whole body will be dark*, because it will lack light and a guide, *i.e.*, the illumination and guidance of thine eye. *If therefore the light* (of thine eye) *that is in thee be darkness, how great is the darkness!* For the rest of the body which is naturally dark, since it has no light except from the eyes, if it be deprived of them, how dark must it be! How will it go astray, and grope in blindness. “What blackness of darkness will there be in thee!” says S. Hilary.

These words are a parable, like several others of the sayings of Christ in this sermon. By the *eye* we may understand with SS. Jerome, Chrysostom, Jansen, Maldonatus, Toletus, and others, the *mind* or *understanding*. For what the eye is to the body the understanding is to the mind. As the eye directs the body, so does the practical understanding direct the mind. Whence the error and fault of the soul springs in action from the error and fault of the understanding, and this again frequently arises from depraved inclinations and covetous desires. For what the desire lusteth after, that the understanding affecteth, so that it judgeth it to be good and sought after. This has to do with what He has spoken a little before: *Where thy treasure is, there will thy heart be also*. He here explains what He means by the heart—calling it the eye of the mind—*i.e.*, the practical understanding, which goes before and directs all our actions by its light. Christ wishes to teach that the mind cannot be right and pure, nor consequently the actions which flow from it be pure where the heart is blinded by avarice and cupidity.

2. We may with S. Augustine and S. Gregory (lib. 28 *Moral.* c. 6), and Bede, understand by the *eye* the *intention* of the mind. For this moves, rules, and bends the mind and the understanding whithersoever it will. If it be directed purely to God and divine things as its end and aim, it will cause that the work originating in the mind shall be altogether pure and holy. But if the intention be depraved and impure, it will make the work flowing from it, even if it be a good work, become impure, evil, and vitiated. For in the whole chapter, from the first verse, Christ demands a good intention, and requires it in alms, in prayer, in fasting, indeed in every good work. S. Luke (xi. 36) adds some things to this parable, which will be expounded in the proper place.

This, says S. Jerome, is the seal of the Lord’s Prayer, approving and wishing that thus it may be.

Observe in the Greek MSS. is added, *For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory for ever. Amen*. Also read the Syriac, Chrysostom, Theophylact, Euthymius. But the Greeks seem to have added this by a pious custom, similar to that by which they add to the angelic salutation, *For thou hast brought forth our Saviour*, or to the Psalms the *Gloria Patri*. The *Codex Vaticanus* omits this doxology: and among the Latins, Tertullian, Cyprian, Jerome, Augustine, and Ambrose.

In the *Bibliotheca Patrum*, tom. 5, there is a paraphrase of the Lord’s Prayer composed by S. Francis, partly literal, partly mystical, which is so sublime, wise, and fervent, that I have thought it well to append it in this place.

“*Our Father*: O most holy Creator, our Redeemer, our Saviour, our Comforter. *Which art in Heaven*, in the angels, in the saints, illuminating them with the knowledge of Thyself, for Thou, O Lord, art Light, inflaming them with Thy Divine love; for Thou, Lord, art love, dwelling in them and filling them with blessing; for Thou, O Lord, art the chief and everlasting good, from whom are all, and without whom is no good. *Hallowed be Thy name*: that we may have a clear knowledge of Thee, that we may know the breadth of Thy kindness, the length of Thy promises, the height of Thy majesty, and the depth of Thy judgments. *Thy kingdom come*: that Thou mayest reign in us by Thy grace, and make us to come to Thy kingdom, where there is the open vision of Thee, and where Thy love is perfected and where Thy company and the fruition of Thee are everlasting; that we may love Thee with all our heart, by ever meditating upon Thee, by always desiring Thee with all our soul, by directing all our intentions to Thee, and by seeking Thy honour in all things, and by obediently corresponding to Thy love with all our strength, and with all the faculties of our souls and bodies, and by loving our neighbours as ourselves, by drawing all men unto Thy love with all our might, by rejoicing in others’ prosperity as though it were our own, and suffering with them in adversity, and by giving no offence to any one. *Give us this day our daily bread*: give us this day Thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in memory, in understanding, in reverence for the love which He had towards us, and of the things which He has done, spoken, and suffered for us. *And forgive us our debts*, through Thy mercy, and the unspeakable virtue of the Passion of Thy well-beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the merits and the intercessions of the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the elect. *As we forgive them that trespass against us*: and because we do not fully forgive, do Thou, O Lord, cause us perfectly to forgive, that we may love our enemies as ourselves, and devoutly intercede for them, that we may render evil for evil unto no man, but strive to be profitable unto all in Thee. *And lead us not into temptation*: either secret or open, sudden or habitual. *But deliver us from evil*: past, present and to

come. *Amen*, freely and spontaneously.” Thus was S. Francis accustomed to say, *Our Father*, at all the hours.

**Verse 14-** *For if ye forgive men their trespasses* (Gr. *ἀμαρτίας*, i.e., offences against you) . . . *will also forgive you*. If, that is, ye fulfil the other things which are required, viz., contrition and confession.

The *Gloss* has, “God has placed it in our power, either to provoke His judgment against us or to make His sentence merciful. This only does the judge require of us, that such as we would that He should be to us, we should show ourselves to our brethren.”

**Verse 16-** *Moreover, when ye fast*, &c. Christ has taught the way to pray, He now teaches how to fast, because prayer without fasting is weak, as S. Chrysostom says. He teaches that it should be in earnest, and in secret, not with the object of pleasing men but God. For *sad*, the Greek has *σκυθρωτοί*, i.e., *with a severe and lowering countenance*, which is in opposition to being *ίλαροι*, or *pleasant and joyful*; *σκυθρωτοί* is derived from *σκυθροί*, *sad, disagreeable*, and *ώπα*, *the face*.

*Disfigure*, Gr. *ἀφανίζουσι*, which S. Jerome translates by *demoliuntur*, S. Hilary by *conficiunt*, and S. Chrysostom by *corrupt*; others better, *obscure their faces*, i.e., by affecting, putting on severity, pallor, sadness of countenance. Others translate *labefaciant, obliterant, perdunt, and velut e medio tollunt: i.e., make their face as it were not to appear*, which the Vulgate represents by *exterminate*. For *ἀφάνιζειν* is, *to make to vanish, to take the face out of sight*, as those who use varnish; such are they who by a pretended emaciation and sorrowful pallor feign sanctity. Such are hypocrites, as the scribes were. Hear S. Jerome, “Exiles *exterminantur*, who are sent away *extra terminos*, beyond the boundaries of their country.” Then he explains *exterminate* by *demoliuntur*. “The hypocrite demolishes his countenance that he may feign sadness: and when perchance his mind is joyful he may carry grief in his face.”

**Verse 18-** *But thou . . . Father in secret*. Who hides His essence and His majesty, and who is as much in secret as in public places, and who sees as clearly the hidden things of the heart as the manifest things of our works.

It was a practice with the inhabitants of Palestine, in common with other Orientals, on holy days and other joyful occasions, especially at feasts, to anoint and wash the face, both for purposes of refreshment, for beauty, and for a sweet smell. Palestine being a very hot country the climate occasions profuse perspiration. They wash the face then to wipe away the perspiration, and anoint to banish unpleasant odours. This is clear from Ruth iii. 3, Judith x. 3, 2 Sam. xii. 20, Luke vii. 46. When the Magdalene anointed Christ the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. (John xii. 3.) Therefore in times of affliction and mourning they abstained from anointing and washing.

Observe here a catachresis, similar to that in chap. iii. 6, and elsewhere. For Christ does not here command any actual anointing, but joyfulness and the putting away all outward signs of fasting. *Anoint thine head*, i.e., be joyful, and present the

appearance of hilarity, as though thou wert anointed with oil, which is the symbol and the cause of gladness, according to the words “That he may make his face joyful with oil.” (Ps. civ. 15) Yea, that thou shouldst so conceal thy fasting, as to put on the symbol of feasting, namely, anointing and washing. Thus S. Jerome. With this agrees that golden saying of S. Syncletica, preserved in the *Lives of the Fathers*, “As a treasure manifested is quickly spent, so virtue which is made known, or becomes public, is destroyed. For as wax melted at the face of the fire so does a soul become worthless by praise, and lose the vigour of its virtues.”

**Verse 19-** *Lay not up*, &c. Gr. *Treasure not for yourselves treasures*. Christ here shows which are the true riches, and which the false—the true, heavenly; the false, earthly. Note the three modes of corruption. The moth corrupts garments; rust, gold and silver; thieves steal all other things. Christ here calls men away from the desire of riches by three considerations.

1. Because they are fleeting and corruptible.
2. Because they darken the mind.
3. Because they draw the whole mind to themselves, so that it cannot serve God, for no one is able to serve two masters such as God and mammon.

**Verse 20-** *But lay up for yourselves*, not for children or grandchildren, not for ungrateful heirs, but for *yourselves*, i.e., *for your soul*. “What folly,” says S. Chrysostom, “to leave your treasures in the place from whence ye are going away, instead of sending them before you whither ye are going.” Further on he says, “If you should wish to behold the heart of a man who loveth gold, you will find it like a garment that is being eaten away by ten thousand worms, for you will find it perforated by cares on every side, putrefying with sins, full of corruption. But not like this is the soul of the man who is voluntarily poor. Rather, it doth shine like gold, it is resplendent like jewels, it blossoms like the rose. There is no moth there, no thief, no anxiety about the things of this life, but like the angels, so it liveth. It is not subject to the devils, it doth not stand beside the king, but it standeth near to God. Its warfare is not with men, but with angels. It hath no need of servants, rather doth it subject the passions unto it as its servants. What can be more noble than such a poor man as this? Be it that he hath not horses and a chariot. But what need hath he of them, who shall be borne above the clouds to be with Christ?”

**Verse 21-** *For where*, &c. *Your treasure*, i.e., what thou valuest, what thou lovest and delightest in, what is the dearest to thee of all things, on which thou spendest thy time and thoughts.

Dost thou wish to know what is thy treasure, what thou lovest and valuest? Consider what thou most often hast in thy mind. If thou thinkest most frequently of heavenly things, then thou lovest heaven; but if of earthly