

**S**acrum  
**C**ommerciūm



Sacrum  
Commercium  
The  
Holy Exchange  
of  
Saint Francis  
and his Sons  
with  
Lady Poverty



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*Sacrum Commercium: The Holy Exchange of St. Francis and His Sons with Lady Poverty*, by an anonymous author.

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## Chapter I

Incipit Sacrum commercium  
beati Francisci cum domina  
Paupertate

**I**NTER cæteras præclaras et præcipuas virtutes quæ in homine locum et mansionem præparent Deo ac ad ipsum eundi perveniendique viam excellentiorem et expeditiorem ostendunt sancta Paupertas prærogativa omnibus eminet, et singulari gratia aliarum titulos antecellit, quoniam fundamentum omnium virtutum et custos ipsa est, et inter illas virtutes evangelicas loco merito et nomine principatur. Non est proinde quod cæteræ timeant descensum pluvix et adventum fluminum et ventorum flatum ruinam comminantem, si super hanc basem fuerint stabilitæ. Et merito quidem cum Filius Dei, dominus virtutum et rex gloriæ, speciali dilectione hanc adamaverit, quæsierit, inveniritque, operans salutem in medio terræ. Hanc in exordio prædicationis suæ velut lumen fidei portum intrantibus posuit et tanquam lapidem in fundamento domus primo jecit et regnum cœlorum quod aliæ virtutes in promissione capiunt ab ipso, hæc de ipso sine dilatione aliqua investitur. Beati, inquit, pauperes spiritu, quoniam vestrum est regnum cœlorum. Digne prorsus eorum est regnum cœlorum qui nihil possident de terrenis

## Chapter I

Here begins the holy converse of  
the blessed Francis with the  
Lady Poverty

**A**MONGST the other noble and chief virtues which prepare in man a dwelling-place for God, and show the more excellent and readier way of coming unto Him and entering into His presence, holy Poverty holds the first and chiefest place, and by her singular grace possesses a higher title than the rest, inasmuch as she herself is the foundation and guardian of every virtue, and amongst those virtues written in the Gospel, she rules rightly by place and name. Hence the other virtues can have no cause to fear the rains that descend, the floods that rise, the winds that blow and threaten destruction, if they be founded upon her, as upon a rock. And this deservedly indeed, seeing that the Son of God, the Lord of virtues and King of Glory, has loved her with a peculiar love, has sought her out and found her while He was working salvation in the midst of the earth. Her, in the beginning of His preaching, did He place as a light of faith for all who would enter harbor, laid her first as a stone in the foundations of His house, and that Kingdom of Heaven which the other virtues take of Him only by promise, He has granted to her direct from Himself without any off-putting. "Blessed," He saith, "are ye poor in spirit, for yours is the Kingdom of Heaven." Of a surety with right theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven, who of their own

voluntate, propria, speciali intentione et desiderio æternorum. Vivat necesse est de cœlestibus qui de terrenis non curat, et dulces micas quæ cadunt de mensa angelorum sanctorum in præsentis exilio felici palato deglutiat qui terrenis omnibus renuntians omnia velut stercorea reputat ut gustare mereatur quam dulcis et suavis est Dominus. Quæ vera regni cœlorum inventio est et æternæ possessionis in eodem regno securitas, ac futuræ beatitudinis quædam prælibatio sancta.

free will possess no things of earth in their special reaching after and longing desire for the things of Heaven. Of necessity he must live on Heavenly food who has no care for earthly, and sweet unto his mouth are the crumbs that fall from the table of the holy angels in his present exile, who, renouncing earthly things, counts them all as dung, if so he may deserve to taste how sweet and pleasant the Lord is. And this is indeed the very finding of the Kingdom of Heaven, an assurance of eternal possession in that same Kingdom, and a certain blessed foretaste of future bliss.



## Chapter III

### Beatus Franciscus a Pauperibus Consilium Accipitur

**P**ROPTEREA beatus Franciscus tanquam verus imitator et discipulus Salvatoris ex conversionis suæ principio ad sanctam paupertatem quærendam, inveniendam atque tenendam omni studio omni desiderio, omni deliberatione se dedit, nil dubitans adversi, nil sinistri timens, nullum subterfugiens laborem, nullam corporis declinans angustiam, si tandem sibi optio daretur ut posset pervenire ad eam cui Dominus tradidit claves regni cœlorum. Cœpit sedule velut curiosus explorator circuire vicos et plateas civitatis diligenter quærens quam diligit anima sua. Interrogabat stantes, percunctabatur advenientes sic dicens: Num quam diligit anima mea vidistis? Sed erat verbum istud absconditum eis, et velut barbarum, non intelligentes ipsum dicebant ei: O homo, nescimus quid loqueris. Loquere nobis in lingua nostra et respondebimus tibi. Non enim erat in lingua illa filiis Adam vox neque sensus, ut de paupertate vellent conferre ad invicem aut loqui. Oderant eam vehementer sicut et hodie faciunt, nec poterant de ipsa quærenti quidquam pacifice loqui. Propterea velud ignoto respondebant, et de quæsitis aliquid se nescire testantur. Ibo, inquit beatus

## Chapter III

### Blessed Francis Receives Counsel from the Poor Men

**W**HEREFORE the blessed Francis, as a true imitator and disciple of the Savior, from the beginning of his conversion gave himself to the seeking out of holy Poverty, to find her and to hold her, with all zeal, with all desire, with all determination, doubting nothing of the enemy, fearing nothing that was against him, shunning no toil, refusing no affliction of the body, so at the last his desire should be granted him to attain unto her to whom the Lord had given the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. He began sedulously, like a spy, to go round about the streets and squares of the city, diligently seeking her whom he so loved. He asked of those who stood there, he enquired of them that met him, saying thus: "Hast thou seen her whom my soul loveth?" But that word was hidden from them as though he spoke in a barbarous tongue. Not understanding what he said, they answered him, "O man, we know not what thou sayest. Speak to us in our own tongue, and we will answer thee." For there was not in that tongue, for the sons of Adam, voice nor meaning, that they should be willing to hold conference together with him or to speak concerning Poverty; they hated her vehemently, just as today they hate her. Nor were they able to speak peaceably to anyone who asked concerning her. Therefore they made answer as to a stranger, and took oath that they knew

Franciscus, ad optimates et sapientes, et loquar cum eis, ipsi enim cognoverunt viam Domini et iudicium Dei sui.

Quo factō ipsi durius responderunt ei dicentes: Quæ nova est hæc doctrina quam infers auribus nostris? Paupertas enim quam quæris semper tibi sit et filiis tuis et semini tuo post te. Nobis autem sedet deliciis perfrui et abundare divitiis, quoniam exiguum et cum tædio est tempus vitæ nostræ, et non est refugium in fine hominis. Nihil enim melius cognovimus quam lætari, manducare et bibere donec vivimus.

Beatus autem Franciscus hæc audiens mirabatur in corde suo, et gratias agens Deo dicebat: Benedictus tu Domine Deus, qui abscondisti hæc a sapientibus et prudentibus et revelasti ea parvulis. Ita pater quoniam sic placitum fuit ante te. Domine pater et dominator vitæ meæ ne derelinquas me in consilio eorum, nec sinas me cadere in illam exprobrationem, sed da mihi tua gratia invenire quod quæro, quia servus tuus sum et filius ancillæ tuæ. Egressus itaque de civitate beatus Franciscus concito gradu venit ad quemdam campum, in quo de longe prospiciens vidit duos senes sedentes gravi mœrore confectos, quorum unus sic loquebatur: Ad quem respiciam nisi ad pauperculum et contritum spiritu et trementem sermones meos? Et alius sic dicebat: Nihil intulimus in hunc mundum, haud dubium quia nec auferre quid possumus. Habentes au-

nothing concerning what he asked. "I shall go," said the blessed Francis, "to the great men and the wise, and shall speak unto them, for they know the way of the Lord and the judgment of their God."

This he did, and they answered yet more harshly unto him, "What new teaching is this with which thou troublest our ears? As for this Poverty whom thou seekest, let her always stay with thee, and with thy children, and with thy seed after thee, but for us, it is our pleasure to rejoice in all delicateness and to overflow with riches, since the days of our life are few and evil, and there is no escape from the enemy at the latter end, for we have known nothing better than to be glad, and to eat and to drink while we live."

Blessed Francis, hearing these things, wondered in his heart, and rendering thanks to God spoke and said, "Blessed art Thou, O Lord God, who hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in Thy sight. Lord, Father and Master of my life, deliver me from their evil counsels and suffer me not to fall into their condemnation, but grant me by Thy grace to find that which I am seeking, for I am Thy servant and the son of Thine handmaid"; and thus going forth from the city, blessed Francis came unto a certain plain, in which looking from afar he saw two old men sitting, worn out with heavy grieving, of whom one spoke as thus follows: "To whom shall I look save to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word." And the other thus spoke: "We have brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out, but having food and raiment let us therewith be

tem alimenta et quibus tegamur hiis contenti simus.

Cumque pervenisset beatus Franciscus ad eos dixit eis: Indicate mihi, obsecro, ubi domina Paupertas habitat, ubi paxat, ubi cubet in meridie, quoniam ejus amore languo.

At illi respondentes dixerunt: Bone frater nos hic consedimus per tempus et tempora et dimidium temporis, et recenter vidimus eam transire quoniam plures quærebant eam. Multi quandoque comitabantur eam, sed sæpe sola revertebatur et nuda, nullis ornata monilibus, nullis decorata comitibus, nullis vestibus circumdata. Flebat enim amarissime atque dicebat: Filii matris meæ pugnaverunt contra me. Et nos dicebamus ad eam: Patientiam habe quoniam recti diligunt te. Et nunc, o frater[,] ascende in montem magnum et altum ubi constituit ei Deus. Habitat enim in montibus sanctis quia diligit eam Deus super omnia tabernacula Jacob. Gigantes non potuerunt attingere vestigia pedum ejus, et aquilæ non volaverunt usque ad collum ejus. Paupertas res est singularis quam omnis homo contemnit, eo quod non invenitur in terra suaviter viventium. Propterea abscondita est ab oculis eorum. Volucras cœli latent, Deus intelligit viam ejus, et locum ejus ipse novit. Si tu ergo, o frater, vis pervenire ad eam exuere vestibus jucunditatis tuæ et depone omne pondus et circumstans te peccatum, quia nisi nudus fueris non poteris ad eam ascendere quæ in tantam se collegit altitudinem. Sed quia benigna est, facile

content.”

And when the blessed Francis came up to them he said to them, “Show me, I beseech you, where dwelleth the Lady Poverty? Where does she feed, where lieth she down at the noon, for I am sick for love of her?”

And they answered and said, “Good brother, we sit here for a time and times and half a time, and often we have seen her passing, since many sought her, many from time to time companied with her, but often she cometh back alone and naked, adorned with no necklace, and graced by no followers, clothed upon with no garments. Ofttimes she would be weeping bitterly, and would say, ‘The sons of my mother fought against me.’ And we would say to her, ‘Have patience, since the righteous love thee.’ And now, O brother, go up into the mountain great and high where God has appointed the place for her, for she dwelleth in the holy mountains, because God loveth her above all the tents of Jacob; the giants have not been able to reach unto the print marks of her feet, and eagles have not soared so high as unto her neck. Poverty is a thing separate, that every man despiseth, because she is not found in the land of those who live in pleasure; therefore she is hidden from their eyes. She is hidden from the birds of the air. God understandeth her way, and her place He Himself knoweth. If, then, brother, thou wouldst come unto her, put off the raiment of rejoicing and lay aside every weight and the sins that beset thee, because unless thou art naked thou shalt not be able to ascend unto her, who keeps herself close upon the heights; but because she is of liberal heart, she is easily seen by those who love, and

videtur ab hiis qui diligunt eam, et invenitur ab hiis qui quærunt illam. Cogitare de illa, frater, sensus est consummatus, et qui vigilaverit propter illam cito erit securus. Assume socios fideles, ut in montis ascensu utaris consilio ipsorum et auxilio fulciar, quia v̄æ soli si ceciderit non habebit sublevantem. Si unus ceciderit ab altero fulcietur.

found by those who seek her. Think of her, brother; the sense is complete, and he who watches for her sake shall soon be without fear. Take to thyself faithful companions, that in going up the mount thou mayst use their counsel and be supported by their aid; because woe to him that is alone; if he fall he shall not have one to lift him up. But if one fall, by another shall he be stayed.”

## Chapter III

### Beatus Franciscus Amicos Fideles a Sibi Congregat

**C**ANTORUM igitur habito consilio, venit beatus Franciscus et elegit quosdam socios sibi fideles cum quibus properans devenit ad montem. Et dixit fratribus suis: Venite ascendamus ad montem Domini et ad domum dominæ Paupertatis, ut doceat nos vias suas et ambulemus in semitis ejus.

Cumque ex omni parte considerarent montis ascensum propter nimiam altitudinem et asperitatem ejus, quidam eorum mutuo loquebantur dicentes: Quis ascendet in montem istum? et ad summitatem ejus quis perveniet?

Quod intelligens beatus Franciscus dixit eis: Arcta est via, fratres[,] et angusta porta quæ ducit ad vitam, et pauci sunt qui inveniant eam. Confortamini in Domino et in potentia virtutis ejus, quoniam facile erit nobis omne difficile. Deponite sarcinas propriæ voluntatis, et onera peccatorum abjicite et accingimini tanquam viri potentes. Posteriora obliti ad anteriora vos pro posse extendite. Dico vobis quod quemcumque locum calaverit pes vester vester erit. Etenim est spiritus ante faciem nostram Christus Dominus qui trahet nos ad montis cacumina in vinculis caritatis. Mirabilis est, fratres[,] desponsatio Paupertatis,

## Chapter III

### Blessed Francis Gathers Faithful Friends to Himself

**W**HEREFORE having taken counsel on so great matters, the blessed Francis came and chose certain friends faithful to himself, with whom he hastened and came to the mountain, and said to his brethren: “Come, let us go up unto the mount of the Lord, unto the abode of the Lady Poverty, that she may teach us her ways, and we may walk in her paths.”

And when from every part they were considering how to ascend the mountain, because of its great height and roughness, certain of them spoke one with another, saying, “Who may ascend to this mountain, and who may climb to the top of it?”

Now when the holy Francis understood this, he said to them: “Straight is the way, my brothers, and narrow is the gate that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Let us trust in the Lord and the power of His might, and thus everything that is difficult will be made easy to us. Lay down the burdens of your own will, cast away the weights of your sins, and gird yourselves as men of might. Forgetting the things that are behind, reach out to those things that are before with all your power. I say unto you that every place your feet tread shall be yours. Moreover, as a spirit before our face is Christ the Lord, who will lead us to the tops of the mountains in the bonds of charity. Wonderful, my brothers, is the espousal of Poverty, but easily shall

sed facile poterimus ipsius frui amplexibus, quia facta est quasi vidua domina gentium vilis et contemptibilis omnium regina virtutum. Nullus est qui e regione clamare audeat, nullus qui se nobis opponat, nullus qui jure hoc salutare commercium prohibere valeat. Omnes amici ejus spreverunt illam, et facti sunt ei inimici.

we be able to enjoy her embraces, since she who is the Lady of the Nations has become as it were a widow, and vile and contemptible, the Queen of all the virtues. There is none in all the country round about who dare cry out against us, none who will oppose us, none who with right may avail to forbid us this saving walk with her. All her friends have scorned her and are become her enemies.”

## Chapter IV

### Domina Paupertas Beato Francisco et Fratribus eius Obbiat

**E**T hiis omnibus dictis cœperunt omnes simul post sanctum Franciscum ambulare. Cumque facillimo grassu properarent ad summa, ecce domina Paupertas in ipsius montis vertice stans respexit per montis devexa. Et videns hos viros tam potenter ascendentes imo volantes, mirata est vehementer et dixit: Qui sunt isti qui ut nubes volant et quasi columbæ ad fenestras suas? Diu enim est quod tales non vidi, nec sic expeditos omnibus abjectis oneribus intuita sum. Loquar ergo ad eos quæ in corde meo versantur, ne sicut cæteri tantæ ascensionis pœniteant, circum adjacentes nunc intuentes abysosos. Scio illos apprehendere me non posse sine meo consensu, sed erit mihi merces coram patre meo cœlesti si salutis consilium dederò eis.

Et ecce vox facta est ad eum dicens: Noli timere filia Syon, quia isti sunt semen cui benedixit Dominus, et in caritate non ficta elegit.

Sicque in solio nuditatis suæ domina Paupertas se reclinans prævenit eos in benedictionibus dulcedinis, et dixit eis: Quæ sit causa adventus vestri dicite mihi, fratres, et quare tam festinanter venitis de valle miserorum ad

## Chapter IV

### The Lady Poverty Meets Blessed Francis and His Brethren

**A**ND all these things having been said, they all began at once to follow after the blessed Francis. And whilst with most easy steps they were hastening to the heights: behold, the Lady Poverty, standing on the top of that self-same mountain, looked down over the steeps of the hill, and seeing these men so stoutly climbing—nay, flying up, she wondered greatly and said: “Who are these who come flying like clouds and like doves to their windows? It is a long time since I have seen such, or have beheld any so free, with all their burdens cast away. I will speak, therefore, with them of the things that are in my heart, lest, as others, they repent them of so great a climb when they see the abysses round about them, for I know that they may not lay their hands on me without my consent, but mine shall be the reward in the face of my Father in Heaven if I give them counsel of salvation.”

And behold a voice came to her that said: “Be not afraid, O daughter of Zion, for these men are the seed whom the Lord hath blessed and chosen in love unfeigned.”

So lying back on the throne of her nakedness, the Lady Poverty came before them with blessings of sweetness, and said to them: “What is the cause of your coming?—tell me, my brothers. And why hasten ye so from the vale of tears to the mount of light? If, per-

montem claritatis. An forte me quæritis quæ ut videtis sum paupercula, tempestate convulsa, absque ulla consolatione. adventure, it is me ye seek, lo, I am as you behold, but a little poor one, stricken with storms and far from any consolation.”



## Chapter V

Beatus Franciscus Dominæ  
Paupertati Laudat, et ab Ea  
Societatem Eius Petit

**A**T ipsi responderunt dicentes: Ad te venimus domina nostra, obsecramus[,] suscipe nos in pace. Servi effici cupimus Domini virtutum, quia ipse est rex gloriæ. Audivimus te reginam fore virtutum et utcumque experimento didicimus. Propterea tuis pedibus provoluti supplicamus humiliter ut digneris esse nobiscum et sis nobis via perveniendi ad regem gloriæ, sicut fuisti via sibi quando dignatus est visitare sedentes in tenebris et umbra mortis, oriens ex alto. Scimus enim quia tua est potentia, tuum regnum, tu es super omnes virtutes a rege regum regina et domina constituta, tantum fac nobiscum pacem et salvi erimus, ut per te nos recipiat qui per te nos redemit. Si decreveris nos salvare continuo liberabimur. Nam ipse rex regum et dominus dominantium creator cœli et terræ concupivit speciem tuam et decorem tuum. Cum esset rex in accubitu suo dives et gloriosus in regno suo, reliquit domum suam, dimisit hæreditatem suam. Nam gloria et diriviæ in domo ejus. Sicque a regalibus sedibus veniens dignantissime te quæsivit. Magna ergo est dignitas tua, et altitudo tua incomparabilis, cum relictis om-

## Chapter V

The Blessed Francis Praises  
Lady Poverty and Begs from  
Her Her Companionship

**A**ND they answered and said: “We come to thee, our Lady; we beseech thee receive us unto thee in peace; we desire to become bondservants of the Lord of virtues, because He is the King of Glory. We have heard that thou art Queen of virtues, and in some wise have learned it by trial. Wherefore, fallen at thy feet, we entreat thee humbly to deign to be with us, and to be unto us a way of attaining unto the King of Glory, as thou wast a way for Him when He deigned to visit others that sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, the Savior from on high. For we know that thine is the power, thine the kingdom. Thou art appointed by the King of Kings Queen and Mistress above all virtues. Only admit us to thy peace and we shall be saved, that through thee He may receive us Who through thee has redeemed us. If thou determinest to save us, forthwith we shall be set free. For He Himself, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Creator of heaven and earth, has desired thy comeliness and thy beauty. When He was Lord in His banquet hall, rich and glorious in His kingdom, He left His home. He abandoned His heritage. For glory and riches are in His house. So, coming from His royal seat with all honor, He sought thee. Great then is thy dignity and incomparable is thy highness, since He left

nibus angelorum deliciis et immensis virtutibus de quibus magna erat copia in excelsis, venit te quærere in inferioribus partibus terræ, jacentem in luto fæcis, in tenebrosis et umbra mortis. Cunctis viventibus odiosa non modicum existiabas, et omnes te fugiebant, et prout poterant effugabant. Et licet aliqui te fugere omnino non possent, non ideo minus eras eis odibilis et exosa. At postquam dominator Dominus venit te suscipiens in se ipso, exaltavit caput tuum in tribus populorum, et quasi sponsam decoravit te corona, super altitudinem nubium te substollens. Quamvis certe ad huc te innumeri detestentur nescientes virtutem tuam et gloriam tuam, tibi tamen nihil deperit, quia libere habitas in montibus sanctis tuis in firmissimo habitaculo gloriæ Christi. Ita amator factus formæ tuæ filius summi patris tibi soli in mundo adhærens in omnibus felicissimam te probavit. Prius enim quam de luminosa patria veniret ad terras, præparasti locum sibi congruentem, thronum in quo sederet, et thalamum in quo quiesceret, pauperrimam scilicet virginem, de qua ortus huic mundo effulsit. Nato certe fideliter occurristi, ut in te non in deliciis locum sibi placitum inveniret. Posuit eum, inquit evangelista, in præsepio, quia non erat ei locus in diversorio. Et sic semper inseparabiliter comitata es ipsum, ut in omni vita sua quando in terris visus est et cum hominibus conversatus est cum vulpes foveas haberent et volucres cœli nidos, ipse non habuerit ubi caput suum reclinaret. Deinde cum

all the delights of the angels and the marvelous virtues of which there was great store on high, and came to seek thee in the lower parts of the earth, when thou wast lying on the dunghill in dark places and in the shadow of death. Thou wast exceeding hateful to all that lived, and all fled thee, and, as much as in them lay, drove thee from them. And although some could not flee thee altogether, thou wast not therefore less hateful to and hated by them. And after the Lord of lords came, taking thee up in Himself, He lifted up thy head amongst the tribes of the nations and adorned thee as a bride with a crown, raising thee above the loftiness of the clouds. Although, certainly, men without number still hate thee, not knowing thy virtue and thy glory, it does thee no harm, because thou dwellest free in thy holy mountains, in the most sure abiding-place of the glory of Christ. So the Son of the Father on high is become the lover of thy form, and cleaving to thee alone in the world, has approved thee happiest in all things. For before He came from His bright Fatherland to earth, thou hadst prepared a place fit for Him, a throne on which He should sit and a chamber in which He should rest—even that most poor maiden, from whom arisen, He shone as a sun upon this world. At His birth, indeed, thou didst faithfully come to meet Him, that in thee and not in earthly delights He might find the place of His pleasure. She laid Him, says the evangelist, in a manger, because there was no room for Him in the inn, and so ever inseparably thou didst attend Him, that in all His life, so long as He was seen on earth and walked with men, though the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, He Himself had

aperuerit os proprium ad docendum, qui ora olim aperuerat prophetarum, inter multa quæ locutus est, te primo laudavit, te primo extulit dicens: Beati pauperes spiritu quoniam ipsorum est regnum cœlorum. Jam vero cum sanctæ prædicationis suæ gloriosæque conversationis in salutem humani generis testes quosdam eligerat necessarios, elegit certe non divites mercatores, sed pauperes piscatores, ut tanta æstimatione ostenderet te fore ab omnibus diligendam. Tandem vero ut manifesta sit omnibus bonitas tua, magnificentia tua, fortitudo tua, quomodo omnibus virtutibus antecellis, quomodo sine te nulla potest esse virtus, quomodo regnum tuum non est de hoc mundo sed de cœlo, sola tunc regi gloriæ adhæsiisti cum omnes electi et dilecti ejus ipsum timide reliquerunt. Tu autem fidelissima sponsa, amatrix dulcissima nec ad momentum discessiisti ab eo. Imo tunc sibi magis adhærebas, cum magis eum ab omnibus contemni videbas. Nam si cum eo non fuisses nunquam sic ab omnibus despici potuisset. Secum eras in conviciis Judeorum, in insultationibus pharisæorum, in exprobrationibus principum sacerdotum. Secum in colaphis, secum in sputis, secum in flagellis. Reverendus ab omnibus subsannatus ab omnibus erat, et tu sola sociabaris ei. Non reliquisti eum usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis. Et in ipsa cruce, denudato jam corpore, extensis brachiis, manibus et pedibus confixis, secum patiebaris, ita ut nihil in eo te gloriosius appareret. Denique signaculum

not where to lay His head. Then, when He opened His own mouth to teach, He who of old had opened the mouth of the prophets, among the many things He said, He first praised thee, He first extolled thee, saying, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.' But now, when He would choose out the needful witnesses of His holy preaching and glorious work for the salvation of the human race, He chose indeed not rich merchants but poor fishermen, that by such judgment He might show thee worthy to be loved by all. And at length, that thy goodness might be manifest to all, thy magnificence and thy fortitude—how thou excellest all virtues—how without thee no virtue can be—how thy kingdom is not of this world but of Heaven—thou alone didst cleave to the King of glory then, when all the chosen and beloved of Him fearfully deserted Him. But thou, most faithful bride! most sweet lover! never for a moment leftest His side—nay, then thou didst cleave to Him more, the more thou sawest Him to be despised of all. For hadst thou not been with Him, He could never have been so despised by all. Thou wast with Him in the revilings of the Jews, in the mockings of the Pharisees, in the cursings of the Chief Priest, with Him in the buffets, with Him in the spittings, with Him in the scourging. He whom all should have revered was mocked by all, and thou alone didst bear Him company. Nor didst thou leave Him in the hour of death, the death of the Cross; and on the Cross itself, when His body was stripped, His arms stretched out, His hands and His feet pierced, thou didst suffer along with Him, so that nothing in Him appeared more glorious than thee. Then, at the last,

regni cœlorum ad signandum electos, quando in cœlum abiit, tibi reliquit ut quicumque ad regnum suspirat æternum ad te veniat, a te petat, per te introeat, quia nisi signatus sit signaculo tuo ad regnum quisquam intrare non potest. Ergo domina compatere nobis, signa nos signaculo gratiæ tuæ. *Quis* enim tam hebes est, tam insipiens ut te toto corde non diligat quæ sic ab altissimo es electa, et ab æterno præparata? *Quis* te non revereatur et honorat, quando ille quem adorant universæ cœlorum virtutes, tanto honore te decoravit? *Quis* enim vestigia pedum tuorum non libenter adoret cui se dominus majestatis tam humiliter inclinavit, tam sociabiliter junxit, tanta caritate adhæsit? Obsecramus ergo te, per ipsum et propter ipsum, domina, nostras deprecationes ne despicias in necessitatibus sed a periculis libera nos semper, gloriosa et in æternum benedicta.

when He went away into the Heavens, the seal of the Kingdom of Heaven for sealing the elect He left to thee, that whoever would seek after eternal riches should come to thee, should make request of thee, should enter in through thee, because unless he be sealed with thy seal here, he cannot enter the Kingdom. Therefore, Lady, have compassion on us. Seal us with the seal of thy grace. For who is so dull, so foolish, as not to love thee with his whole heart, seeing thou wast chosen thus by the Most High and appointed from everlasting? Who would not reverence and honor thee, when He whom all the virtues of the heavens adore has graced thee with so much honor? Who would not willingly adore the footprints of thy feet, to whom the Lord of Majesty so humbly bent Himself, to whom He was so companionably united, and to whom He cleaved with so much love? Therefore we entreat thee, by Him and for His sake, Lady, despise not our prayers in our need, but set us free for ever from danger, glorious and blessed one forever."

## Chapter VII

### Responsio dominæ paupertatis

**A**D hæc domina Paupertas corde lætabundo, exhilarata facie, voce dulci respondit dicens: Fateor vobis, fratres et amici carissimi, quod ex quo loqui cœpistis, repleta sum lætitia, superabundo gaudio, attendens fervorem vestrum, sciens jam sanctum propositum vestrum. Facta sunt mihi verba vestra desiderabilia super aurum et lapidem pretiosum multum et dulciora super mel et favum. Non enim vos estis qui loquimini, sed Spiritus sanctus qui loquitur in vobis, et ipsa unctio docet vos de omnibus quæ locuti estis de rege altissimo, qui sola sua gratia assumpsit me in dilectam sibi, auferens opprobrium meum de terra, et inter cœlorum proceres glorificavit me. Cupio propterea, si vos audire non gravat, longam sed non minus utilem mei status recensere vobis historiam, ut discatis quem admodum vos oporteat ambulare et placere Deo caventes retro aspiciendi notam qui manum ad aratrum mittere vultis. Non sum rudis, sicut multi putant, sed antiqua satias et dierum numero plena, sciens rerum dispositiones, creaturarum varietates, temporum mutabilitates. Novi fluctuationes cordis humani, partim experientia temporum, partim subtilitate naturæ, partim gratiæ dignitate.

## Chapter VII

### The Answer of the Lady Poverty

**T**O this the Lady Poverty, with a joyful heart and merry face and sweet voice, answered and said: "I confess to you, brothers and friends most dear, that from the moment ye began to speak I have been filled with delight, with overflowing gladness, perceiving your fervor and knowing now your holy purpose. Your words are to me more to be desired than gold and much precious stone, and sweeter than honey and the honeycomb, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit which speaketh in you, and this anointing teaches you about all the things which ye have spoken concerning the King Most High, who of His grace alone has taken me to Himself for His beloved, taking away my reproach from the earth, and has made me glorious among the High Ones of Heaven. I desire, therefore, if to hear is not burdensome, to tell over to you the long but not the less profitable story of my condition, so that ye may learn in what fashion it becomes you to walk and to please God, having a care that ye look not back at the fallow, who have willed to put your hand to the plow. I am not young and inexperienced as many think, but ancient enough and full of numbered days, knowing the disposition of things, the infinite variety of creatures, and the changes that come with time. I know the fluctuations of the human heart, partly taught by years, partly by the keenness of my soul, partly by the grace

Fui quandoque ipsa in paradiso Dei, ubi erat homo nudus, imo in homine et cum homine nudo, deambulans totam illam spatiosam paradisum, nihil timens, nihil dubitans, et nihil adversi suspicans. Putabem cum eo esse in sempiternum, quoniam justus, bonus, sapiens, ab altissimo est creatus, et positus in amœnissimo et pulcherrimo loco. Eram gaudens nimis et ludens coram eo omni tempore, quia nihil proprietatis habens totus de Deo erat. Sed, heu, subiit inopinatum malum, ab initio creaturæ penitus inauditum! Cum infelix ille, qui in decore suo olim perdidit sapientiam, serpentem ingressus, qui in cœlo stare non potuit, fraude aggressus est eum, ut sicut ipse prævaricator efficeretur divini mandati. Credidit miser male suadenti, acquievit, consensit, et, oblitus Dei creatoris sui, primum imitatus est prævaricatorem, imo transgressorem. Erat primo nudus, dicente scriptura de ipso, sed non erubescibat, quia innocentia erat plena in ipso. Peccante vero ipso, cognovit se nudum esse et præ erubescencia currens ad folia ficuum sibi perizomata fecit. Videns ergo socium meum transgressorem effectum et opertum foliis, quoniam aliud non habebat, elongata sum ab eo, et stans a longe lacrimabili vultu ipsum cœpi respicere. Expectabam eum qui salvam me faceret a pusillanimitate spiritus et tempestate tanta. Et factus est repente de cœlo sonus totam concutiens paradisum, et cum eo lux splendidissima de cœlo emissa est. Et respiciens vidi Dominum majestatis dæmbulantem

of which I have been held worthy. I myself was of old in the Paradise of God when man was naked, yea, walking about all that spacious Paradise in man and with man in his nakedness, fearing nothing, doubting nothing, in dread of no evil. I deemed I should be with him forever, since he was created by the Most High, just, good, and wise, and set in a place most pleasant and most fair. I was rejoicing overmuch, and sporting in his presence all the time, because possessing nothing of his own, he was all of God, but, alas! there crept in an unthought-of evil, from the beginning of the creature utterly unheard, when that Unhappy One—who in his own beauty of old had lost wisdom, entering into the serpent—he who could not abide in Heaven—by guile attacked him, that like himself he might become an apostate from the divine command. The wretched man believed his evil suasion, agreed, consented, and forgetting God his Maker, imitated the first apostate—yea, the transgressor. ‘He was at the first’ naked—the Scripture speaking concerning him—‘but was not ashamed,’ because innocence was fully in him, but he sinned and knew himself to be naked, and for shame running to the leaves of the fig-trees, he made himself aprons. Seeing then my companion turned a transgressor and hidden with leaves, since other covering he had not, I was removed from him, and standing afar off, with tearful countenance, I began to gaze upon him. I looked for Him who should make me safe from littleness of spirit and so great a hurricane. And suddenly there was heard from Heaven a sound which shook all Paradise, and with it a most glorious light shone forth from Heaven, and looking I saw the Lord of Majesty walking

in paradiso ad auram post meridiem, gloria inenarrabili et indicibili fulgentem. Comitabantur autem eum multitudines angelorum voce magna clamantium et dicentium: Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus Sabaoth, plena est omnis terra gloria tua. Millia millium ministrabant ei et decies centena millia assistebant ei. Cœpi ergo, fateor, pavens et tremens nimis tota stupore et horrore deficere, et corpore tepens, corde vero palpitans, de profundis clamavi dicens: Domine miserere, Domine miserere. Non intres in iudicium cum servo tuo, quia non iustificabatur in conspectu tuo omnis vivens.

Et dixit mihi: Vade, abscondere modicum ad momentum donec pertranseat indignatio mea. Statimque vocavit socium meum, dicens: Adam ubi es? At ipse: Vocem tuam audivi et timui eo quod nudus essem et abscondi me. Vere nudus, quia nudus de Jerusalem in Jericho descendens incidit in latrones, qui ante omnia expoliaverunt eum bona naturæ, amissa similitudine creatoris. Ipse autem rex altissimus, sed non minus benignissimus, expectavit poenitentiam ejus data sibi occasione revertendi ad eum. Verum miser declinavit cor suum in verba prorumpens malitiæ ad excusandas excusationes in peccatis. Sic et culpam auxit et accumulavit poenam, thesaurizans sibi iram in die iræ et indignationis iusti iudicii Dei. Non pepercit enim sibi nec semini suo post se, terribili maledictioni mortis omnes adiiciens. Judicantibus vero omnibus qui

in Paradise in the cool of the day, shining with glory not to be told nor spoken. And there attended him great companies of angels, crying with a loud voice, ‘Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth, the whole earth is full of Thy glory.’ Thousands of thousands ministered to Him, and ten times a hundred thousand stood in attendance upon Him. I began then, I confess, with fear and trembling overmuch, to faint utterly for amazement and dread, and with chilled body and with beating heart, I cried from the depths, saying, ‘Lord have mercy! Lord have mercy! Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, because in Thy sight shall no man living be justified.’

“And He spoke unto me, ‘Go hide thyself for a little moment, until my wrath be overpast.’ And forthwith He called my companion, ‘Adam, where art thou?’ And he said, ‘I heard Thy voice and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.’ Naked indeed, because going down naked from Jerusalem to Jericho, he fell among thieves who spoiled him of every natural good with loss of the likeness of his Creator. But He Himself, the King Most High, yet nevertheless most gracious, looked for his repentance and granted him opportunity to return unto Himself. But the wretched one turned aside in heart, breaking forth into evil words that he might find excuse for his sins. So he both made greater his fault and heaped up punishment, laying up for himself wrath in the day of wrath and of the indignation of the just judgment of God. For he spared not himself nor his seed after him, bringing all under the curse of death. But while all the angels who stood by condemned him, the Lord cast

assistebant, ejecit eum Dominus de paradiso voluptatis, iusto sed non minus misericordii iudicio. Et ut reverteretur in terram de qua sumptus erat dixit ei, temperans multum maledictionis sententiam. Fecit ei tunicas pelliceas, mortalitatem ejus in eis designans, vestibus innocentiae, exspoliavit.

Videns ergo socium meum indutum pellibus mortuorum, ex toto recessi ab eo, quia ad multiplicandos labores unde dives fieret projectus erat. Ibam proinde vaga et profuga super terram, plorans et ejulans nimis, et ab eo tempore non inveni ubi requiesceret pes meus. Abraham, Isaac et Jacob et cæteris accipientibus in promissione divitias et terram fluentem lac et mel. In omnibus istis requiem quæsi et non inveni, Cherub cum flammeo gladio atque versatili stante ante januam paradisi, quoadusque veniret altissimus de sinu patris, qui me dignentissime requisivit. Qui cum adimpletis omnibus quæ dixisti, redire vellet ad patrem suum qui miserat eum, fecit de me testamentum electis suis, et irrefragabili iudicio confirmavit dicens: Nolite possidere aurum, neque argentum, neque pecuniam. Nolite portare sacculum, neque peram, neque panem, neque virgam, neque calceamenta, neque duas tunicas habeatis. Qui vult tecum in iudicio contendere et tunicam tuam tolerare, dimitte ei et pallium. Et qui te angariaverit mille passus vade cum illo et alia duo.

Nolite thesaurizare vobis thesauros in terra ubi ærugo et tinea demolitur et ubi fures effodiunt et furan-

him forth from the Paradise of delight, by just but nevertheless pitiful judgment, and said to him that he must return to the earth from which he had been taken, softening much the sentence of the curse. He made him coats of skin, signifying in them his mortality, and that he was spoiled of his garments of innocence.

“Then, seeing my companion clad in the skins of dead things, I withdrew altogether from him, because he was cast forth to making his labors manifold whereby he should grow rich. I went thereafter a wanderer and an exile upon earth, wearily and crying exceedingly, and from that time found not where to rest my foot. Seeing that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the others received by promise riches and a land flowing with milk and honey, in all these things I sought rest and found none, since the cherub with the fiery sword that turned every way stood before the gate of Paradise even until the Most High should come from the bosom of the Father, who held me worthy and sought me. And He, when He had fulfilled all things according to His word, desired to return unto His Father who had sent Him, and made concerning me a Testament with His elect, and with sentence not to be broken, confirmed it, saying, ‘Get you no gold, nor silver, nor brass, carry no purse, no wallet for your journey, nor bread, nor a staff, nor sandals, neither have two coats. Whoever will strive with thee in the judgment and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also, and whoever shall compel thee to go with him a mile, go with him other two.

“‘Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon earth where rust and moth corrupteth and where thieves dig through and steal.’



tur. Nolite solliciti esse dicentes: quid manducabimus, aut quid bibemus, aut quo operiemur? Nollite solliciti esse in crastinum, crastinus enim dies sollicitus est sibi ipsi. Sufficit diei malitia sua. Nisi quis renuntiaverit omnibus quæ possidet, non potest meus esse discipulus, et cætera quæ in eodem libro scripta sunt.

Be not anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat or what shall we drink or wherewithal shall we be clothed. Be not anxious for the morrow, for the morrow shall be anxious for the things of itself; sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. Unless a man leaveth all which he possesseth he cannot be My disciple,' and the rest which is written in the same book.

## Chapter VII De apostolis

**H**æc omnia apostoli et omnes discipuli cum summa diligentia observaverunt, nec ad horam prætermiserunt aliquid de omnibus quæ a magistro suo audierunt. Impleverunt ipsi, fortissimi milites, iudices orbis terræ, salutare mandatum, illud idem prædicantes ubique, Domino cooperante et sermonem confirmante, sequentibus signis. Ardebant in caritate, affluentibus ubique pietatis affectu et omnium necessitatibus se impendebant, omni vigilantia curantes ne diceretur de ipsis: dicunt et non faciunt. Unde unus eorum fidentissime loquebatur sic dicens: Nihil audeo loqui aliquid eorum quæ per me non efficit Christus in factis et verbis, et virtute Spiritus sancti. Et alius quidem sic: Argentum et aurum non est mihi. Et sic omnes in vita et in morte me summis præconiis extulerunt. Auditores eorum omnia adimplere curabant quæ a magistris suis annuntiabantur eis, et vendentes possessiones et substantias suas, dividebant omnibus prout unicuique opus erat. Erant omnes pariter, et habebant omnia communia, collaudantes Deum et habentes gratiam ad omnem plebem.

## Chapter VII Concerning the Apostles

**A**LL these sayings the apostles and all the disciples most diligently kept, nor unto this day have they omitted any of all those things which they heard from their Master. Bravest of warriors, judges of the whole world, they fulfilled the saving command and preached it everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming their hearts with signs following. They were on fire with love, abounding everywhere with the desire of compassion, and gave themselves continually unto the needs of all, watching with all vigilance that it should not be said of them, ‘they say and do not.’ Whence one of them most confidently spoke, and said, ‘I dare to speak nothing but of those things which Christ, through me, did in deeds and words, and in the power of the Holy Spirit.’ And another spoke thus, ‘Silver and gold have I none,’ and so, all, in life and in death, extolled me with highest heralding. Their hearers diligently fulfilled all things, which by their Master were preached unto them, and selling their possessions and goods, they parted them to all, according as any man had need. They were all together, and had all things in common, praising God and having favor with all the people.

## Chapter VIIII De apostolorum sequacibus

**I**DEO Dominus augebat quotidie qui salvi fierent in idipsum. Tempore quidem longo horum dictorum veritas apud multos permansit, præcipue cum adhuc sanguis pauperis crucifixi in eorum memoria calidus esset, et calix passionis ejus præclarus inebriaret corda eorum. Nam si qui ad horam me pro nimia acerbitate relinquere tentarentur, vulnerum Domini recordantes per quæ patebant viscera pietatis, de tentatione se graviter puniebant, et mihi adhærebant fortius et amplexabantur ardentius. Ego vero cunctis ineram, eorum memoriæ æterni regis passionis dolores semper inculcans. Itaque verbis meis comfortati non parum ferrum lacerans corpus proprium libenter suscipiebant, et alacriter de carne sua sacrum cernebant manare cruorem. Durans duravit victoria ista usque ad tempora longa, ita ut singulis diebus signaculo summi regis mille millia signarentur.

## Chapter VIIII Concerning the Followers of the Apostles

“**N**ow the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved, and for a long time the truth of these things abode with many, and that the more for that the blood of the Poor One Who was crucified was warm in their memory; and the excellent cup of His Passion had made drunk their hearts, for if anyone as yet was tempted to leave me through my too great bitterness, remembering the wounds of the Lord, through which the bowels of mercy were laid open, they grievously punished themselves for the temptation, and clung to me more strongly, and embraced me more warmly now that I was in the hearts of all of them, ever stamping into their memory the woes of the Passion of the eternal King; and so by my words comforted, they gladly welcomed no little iron to the lacerating of their bodies, and gladly from their flesh perceived the flowing of the sacred blood. Long time lasted that victory, even to a great extent of time, so that day by day a thousand thousand were sealed with the seal of the King most high.

## Chapter III Pax contraria paupertati

**S**ED heu! post modicum facta est pax, et pax illa gravior omni bello. In cujus principio pauci sunt signati, in medio pauciores, in fine paucissimi. Et nunc certe ecce in pace mea amaritudo mea amarissima, in qua omnes me fugiunt, omnes me fugant, a nullis requiror, ab omnibus relinquer. Pax mihi est ab inimicis, sed non a domesticis, pax ab extraneis sed non a filiis. Et ego, quidem filios enutrivit et exaltavi, ipsi autem spreverunt me. Erat in tempore illo quando splendebat lucerna Domini super caput meum, et ad lumen ejus ambulabam in tenebris, diabolus in plurimis qui mecum erant saviens, erat mundus alliciens, erat et caro concupiscens, ita ut multi ex eis diligenter mundum et ea quæ in mundo sunt.

## Chapter III Peace the Enemy of Poverty

**B**UT alas! after a little, peace was made, and that peace heavier than any war. In the beginning of which few were sealed, in the middle fewer, and at the last hardly any. And now, of a surety, lo! in this peace my most bitter bitterness, in which all fly me, all put me to flight, by none am I sought after, by all am I left. Now peace was mine with mine enemies, but not with those of mine own house; peace with those outside, but not with my sons. And I, indeed, have brought up sons and set them on high, but they have held me in scorn. There was, in that time when the lamp of the Lord shone above my head, and I walked in darkness by the light of it, a devil raging in very many who were with me; there was the world alluring, there was the flesh also lusting, so that many of them loved the world and the things which are in the world.

## Chapter Ʒ Persecutio

**S**ED omnium virtutum consummatio, domina scilicet Persecutio, cui Dominus regnum cœlorum tradidit sicut et mihi, erat mecum in omnibus fidelis adiutrix, fortis auxiliatrix, consiliatrix prudens, quæ si quando videbat aliquos tepescere caritate cœlesti, vel ad paululum oblivisci, in terrenis utcumque cor ponere, statim intonabat, statim admovebat exercitum, statim filiorum meorum implebat facies ignominia ut quærent nomen Domini. Nunc autem reliquit me soror mea, et lumen oculorum meorum non est mecum, quia dum quies a persecutoribus facta est filiis, domestico et intestino bello crudelius lacerantur, invicem invidentes, invicem provocantes in acquisitione divitiarum et deliciarum effluxu.

Intervallo siquidem temporis cœperunt aliqui respirare et voluntate viam rectam ambulare cœperunt quam quidam tempore illo ambulaverunt necessitate compulsi. Venerunt hii omnes ad me multis precibus ac lacrimis assidue rogantes ut inirem cum eis fœdus perpetuæ pacis, essemque cum eis sicut olim fui in diebus adolescentiæ meæ, quando erat omnipotens mecum, et in circuitu meo pueri mei. Fuerunt hii viri virtutum, viri pacifici, sine querela ante Deum persistentes in amore fraternitatis, quous-

## Chapter Ʒ Persecution

**B**UT the consummation of all virtues—to wit, the Lady Persecution, to whom the Lord has granted the Kingdom of Heaven, as to me also, was of old in all things a faithful helper unto me, a strong assister, a wise counsellor; and if ever she saw some grow lukewarm in heavenly charity, or for a little while to be forgetful and to set their hearts in anywise on things of the earth, forthwith she thundered, forthwith she moved up her hosts, and thereon shame filled the faces of my sons, that they should seek the name of the Lord. But now my sister has left me, and the light of mine eyes is not with me, because, though my sons have rest from the persecutions, by a civil and intestine war they are more cruelly torn, envying one another, provoking one another, in the pursuit of riches and in a flood of pleasure.

“If, indeed, as time went on, certain of them began to breathe again, and of free will began to walk in the right way, in which in the old time they walked of necessity, they all came here to me, with many prayers and tears, constantly insisting that I should enter into a treaty of perpetual peace with them, and be with them as once I was in the days of my youth, when the Omnipotent was with me, and my children were round about me. These were men of virtues, men of peace without offence before God, continuing in love of the brethren so long as they abode in the flesh, poor in spirit, beggars in worldly

que steterunt in carne, spiritu pauperes, rebus inopes, sanctitate vitæ divites, cœlestium carismatum donis locupletes, spiritu ferventes, spe gaudentes, in tribulatione patientes, mites et humiles corde, servantes spiritus pacem, morum concordiam, cohærentiam animorum, conversationis unitatem jucundam. Viri denique devoti Deo, et angelis grati, amabiles hominibus, sibi rigidi, misericordes aliis, actu religiosi, incessu modeſti, vultu hilares, corde graves humiles in prosperis, magnanimes in adversis. In convivio sobrii, in veſtitu parcissimi, in somno rarissimi, verecundi et timorati omnium bonorum claritate conspicui. Erat cum hiis conglutinata anima mea, et unus spiritus et una fides erat in nobis.

goods, rich in holiness of life, abounding in the gifts of heavenly graces, fervent in spirit, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, meek and humble of heart, keeping peace of spirit, concord of life, harmony of soul, and unity of conversation that is sweet. In fine, men devoted to God, well-pleasing to the angels, lovable to men, harsh to themselves, pitiful to others, religious in deed, modeſt in walk, glad in countenance, grave in heart, humble in prosperity, high-souled in adversity, sober at the feast, moſt simple in dress, not given to slumber, shamefaced and reverent men, conspicuous in the brightness of all virtues. With them I was joined fast in soul, and one spirit and one faith was in us.

## Chapter Ʒ

### De falsis pauperibus

**S**URREXERUNT denique in nobis qui non erant ex nobis, qui dam filii Belial loquentes vana, operantes iniqua, dicentes se pauperes esse cum non essent et me, quam dilexerant toto corde gloriosi viri de quibus locuta sum, spreverunt et maculaverunt me, sequentes viam Balaam ex Bosor, qui mercedem iniquitatis amavit, homines corrupti mente, et a veritate privati existimantes *quæstum esse pietatem*, homines assumentes sanctæ religionis habitum, novum hominem non induerunt sed veterem palliaverunt.

Detrahebant senioribus suis, et eorum qui sanctæ conversationis institutores fuerunt vitam et mores in occulto mordebant, vocantes eos indiscretos, immisericordes, crudeles, et me quam assumpserant dicebant otiosam, insipidam, turpem, incultam, exsanguem, et mortuam, æmula mea summo studio id gerente, quæ ovis assumens habitum dolositate vulpis occultabat lupinam rabiem.

## Chapter Ʒ

### Of the Pretending Poor

**T**HERE arose after a time among us those who were not of us, certain sons of Belial speaking vain things, working unjust ones, saying that they were poor when they were not, and me, whom those good men of whom I have spoken had loved with a whole heart, they spurned, and cast dirt upon me, following the way of Balaam, son of Bozor, who loved the wages of iniquity—men corrupt of mind and turned aside from truth, thinking gain is godliness; men taking upon them the garment of holy religion who have not put on the new man, but are cloaked with the old.

“They spoke lightly of those who had gone before, and subtly slandered the manner of life of them who were the instructors of the holy walk, calling them indiscreet, pitiless, cruel; and me, whom they had taken to themselves, they called idle, tasteless, foul, rude, cold-blooded, and dead. For my jealous foe brought this about with all her might, who taking on her sheep’s clothing, under a fox’s cunning, hid the ravening of a wolf.

## Chapter XXX De avaritia

**H**æc est Avaritia quæ dicitur immoderata cupiditas acquirendi vel retinendi divitias. Et vocabant eam nomine sanctiori, ne omnino viderentur me derelinquere, cujus munere de pulvere surrexerant, et de stercore erant erecti, loquebantur de ea mihi pacifice, sed super iram dolose cogitabant. Et licet non possit civitatis supra montem positæ abscondi desolatio, tamen imposuerunt ei nomen discretionem vel providentiam, cum talis discretio potius dicenda esset confusio, et providentia bonorum omnium perniosa oblivio. Et dicebant ad me: Tua est potentia, tuum regnum, ne timeas. Bonum est insistere operibus pietatis, et vacare fructibus bonis, egenis tribuere, pauperibus aliquid dare. Et dicebam eis: Non contradico, fratres quod hoc bonum non sit, quod dicitis vos, sed videte, obsecro, vocationem vestram. Nolite aspicere retro. Nolite de tecto descendere, tollere aliquid de domo. Nolite de agro reverti retro, tollere vestimentum. Nolite involvi negotiis sæcularibus. Nolite implicari rursus coinquinationibus mundi, et corruptionibus quæ fugistis, per cognitionem salvatoris. Necesse est enim ut hiis rursus implicati superentur, fiantque posteriora eorum deteriora prioribus, specie pietatis retrorsum eundo ab eo quod illis

## Chapter XXX Concerning Avarice

**T**HAT, my foe, is Avarice, who is defined as being unmeasured lust to gain and hold riches. And they called her by a holier name, lest they should seem altogether to desert me, by whose gift they had been raised from the dust and lifted up from the dunghill. They talked of her to me in friendly wise, but in their guile they roused anger against me. And although the desolation of a city set upon a hill could not be hidden, yet they gave her the name of Discretion or of Prudence, though such Discretion is rather to be called Confusion, and such Prudence a deadly forgetfulness of all good things. And they said to me, ‘Thine is the power, thine the Kingdom, fear thou not; it is a good thing to persist in works of mercy and to be free to bring forth good fruits, to distribute to the needy, to give something to the poor.’ And I said to them, ‘I say not, brethren, that this is not a good thing which you speak, but, consider, I beseech you, your calling. Think not to look back, think not to come down from your roof that you may take aught out of your house. Think not to return back from the field to take your cloak. Be not entangled in the cares of this world. Be not caught again in the defilements of the world and in the foulnesses from which by knowledge of the Savior ye have escaped, for it is necessary that those again entangled in these things be overcome, and that the last end of them be worse than the first, since having a show of godli-



trahitum est sancto mandato.

Cumque omnibus ista proponerem, facta est dissentio inter eos. Alii dicebant quia bona est et bene dicit. Alii autem non, sed seducere nos vult, ut illam imitemur. Misera est, et omnes nos secum miseros esse desiderat.

ness they go back from the traditions of His holy command.'

"When I had set all this before them, there arose dissensions among them. Some averred that, 'She is good and speaketh good things', but others said, 'Nay, but she would deceive us that we may follow her fashion. She is wretched and would see us all wretched along with herself.'

## Chapter XXX

### Paupertas loquitur de bonis religiosis

**N**ON potuit æmula mea expellere me de finibus eorum tempore illo, quia multi adhuc inter eos magni fervoris et magnæ caritatis viri erant in principio conversionis eorum, cœlos pulsantes clamoribus, et penetrantes orationum instantia se ipsos excedentes in contemplatione, contemnentes omnia quæ terrena erant. Tunc præcepit mihi creator omnium et qui creavit me, dicens: In Jacob inhabita, et in Israel hæreditare et in electis meis mitte radices.

Ego vero hæc omnia diligentissime faciebam. Cumque sic essem cum eis et via regia incederemus pariter habebant propter me claritatem ad turbas, et in conspectu potentium admirabiles erant. Honorabantur ab hominibus, et sanctificabantur ab eis. Cœperunt ipsi moleste ferre sanctitatis nomen et recordantes quod dixit filius Dei: gloriam ab hominibus non recipio, oblatam gloriam penitus recusabant.

## Chapter XXX

### Poverty Speaks Concerning the Good Things of the Religious Life

**A**T that time my foe could not drive me from their borders, because many among them were yet men of great fervor and great charity when at the first they were turned unto me, beating the heavens with cries and piercing them with instant prayers, withdrawn in contemplation, despising all earthly things. Then the Creator of all things, and mine also, gave me command, saying, ‘Abide in Jacob, and in Israel have thine inheritance, and send down thy roots among my chosen.’

“Now I did all these things with utmost zeal, and so long as I was with them and we trod the King’s highway, lo! at the same time they were for my sake held in renown among the simple, and were wonderful in the eyes of the great. They were had in honor by men and esteemed holy. They began to take ill the title of holiness, and remembering what the Son of God said, ‘I receive not glory of men,’ they utterly refused the proffered glory.

## Chapter XXXV

### Avaritia nomen discretionis assumit

**A**MBULANTIBUS vero ipsis in tanto fervore dilectionis Christi, Avaritia nomen discretionis assumens coepit dicere ad illos: Nolite sic vos rigidos ostendere hominibus, nec honorem eorum sic contemnatis, sed ostendite vos affabiles eis, et oblatam gloriam nolite exterius respuere sed interius id summopere facite. Bonum est habere amicitias regum, notitias principum, familiaritates magnatorum, quia dum ipsi sic vos honorant et venerantur, dum sic vobis assurgunt et occurrunt, multi ad eorum exemplum, qui hoc viderint, ad Deum facilius convertuntur.

Ipsi vero videntes profectum, datum acceptaverunt consilium, sed non custodientes se a laqueoposito juxta viam, gloriam et honorem demum amplexati sunt toto corde. Tales se fore intus existimabant quales praedicabantur foris, ponentes gloriam suam in ore laudantium, sicut fatuae virgines in vendentibus oleum, et servientes in terra. Homines vero qui tales eos esse putabant interius, quales exterius videbantur, bona sua libenter offerebant in remissione peccatorum suorum. Quae in principio ipsi velut sterora omnia reputabant dicentes: Nos pauperes sumus et semper esse desideramus, non vestra desideramus sed vos.

## Chapter XXXV

### Avarice Takes unto Her the Name of Discretion

**N**ow while they walked in such fervid love of Christ, Avarice, taking to her the name of Discretion, began to say, ‘Set not your hearts to show yourselves so strict before men, and despise not so their honor, but show yourselves affable to them, and seek not to cast back their glory outwardly, but in your hearts reject it altogether. It is a good thing to be the friend of kings, the acquaintances of princes, the familiars of the great, because while they so hold you in honor and reverence, while they so rise up before you and come to greet you, by their example many who see this will more readily be turned to God.’

‘Now seeing what was to be gained, they took her proffered counsel, but because they did not take heed of the snare set by the way, they at the last embraced glory and honor with a whole heart. They imagined that they would be inwardly such as they were outwardly proclaimed, setting their pride in the mouth of these that praised as the foolish virgins did in those that sold oil, and becoming slaves upon earth. But men who held them to be such inwardly as they seemed to be outwardly, for the remission of their sins willingly offered them those goods which at the first they counted but dung, saying, ‘We are poor and would be so forever, we do not desire your possessions but your hearts; having food and raiment, with these we are content,

Habentes autem alimenta et quibus tegamur, hiis contenti sumus, quia vanitas vanitatum et omnia vanitas.

Propterea devotio hominum in eis quotidie crescebat magis, ita ut multi eorum munera sua omnia minus diligenter quia a sanctis sic videbant ea contemni.

because vanity of vanities, all is vanity.’

“For this cause the devotion of men unto them waxed daily, so that many of them loved less all their own possessions, because they saw them thus held of no account by those holy men.

## Chapter XV Avaritia se vocat providentiam

**I**NTEREA illa barbara inimica mea hoc videns cœpit vehementer irasci et frendere dentibus suis, et tacta dolore cordis intrinsecus dixit: Quid faciam? Ecce totus mundus post eam abiit. Assumam, inquit, mihi nomen providentiæ et loquar ad cor eorum si forte audiant et quiescant.

Et fecit sic, verbis humilibus dicens ad eos: Quid hic statis tota die otiosi, nihil in posterum providentes? Quid obsesset vobis habere necessaria vitæ, dum a superfluis parceretis? Cum omni enim pace et quiete possitis vestram et ipsorum operari salutem, si ad votum cuncta suppeterent, quæ vobis omnino expediunt[.] Dum tempus habetis vobis et posteris providete, quia homines retrahent manus a primis datis et a solitis donis. Bonum esset vobis semper sic esse, sed id penitus non valetis cum quotidie vos augeat Dominus in idipsum. Numquid non acceptaret Dominus, si haberetis quid conferre possetis egenis, et essetis memores pauperum, cum ipse dicat: Beatius est magis dare quam accipere? Cur non recipitis bona quæ offeruntur vobis, ut non fraudetis dantes æterna mercede? Non est jam quod vos timere oporteat a contubernio divitiarum, cum eas pro nihilo reputetis. Non est in rebus vitium sed in ani-

## Chapter XV Avarice Calls Herself Prudence

**M**EANWHILE, that cruel foe of mine, seeing that, began to be grievously angered and to gnash with her teeth, and inwardly filled with grief of heart, spoke: ‘What may I do? behold, the whole world is gone after her. Let me take,’ says she, ‘the name of Prudence, and speak unto their hearts if peradventure they may hear and cease troubling.’

“And she did so with meek words, saying unto them: ‘Why stand ye here all the day idle, taking no thought for the morrow? What will it harm you to possess things that are needful, so long as ye abstain from superfluity? For with all peace and quiet you would be able to work out your own and these men’s salvation, if all things needful were at hand to your will. While ye have time, provide for yourselves and those that come after, because men will draw back from what they gave at the first and from accustomed alms. It would be a good thing for you ever to be so, but for this ye are quite unable, since daily the Lord increaseth you unto this very thing. Would it not be acceptable to the Lord if ye had wherewith ye should be able to give unto the needy, and were mindful of the poor, since He Himself saith, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” Why receive ye not the good things which are offered unto you, that you may not defraud the givers of their eternal reward? There is no need for you to be afraid of accompanying with riches, since ye hold them as

mo, quia vidit Deus cuncta quæ fecerat et erant valde bona. Bonis ergo omnia bona sunt, omnia serviunt eis, et pro ipsis omnia facta sunt. O quanti bona habentes male ipsa expendunt, quæ si vos haberetis converteretis in bonum usum quia sanctum est propositum vestrum, sanctum desiderium vestrum. Non est vestra voluntas proprios ditare parentes, quia ipsi satis divites sunt, sed quia dum haberetis necessaria honestius atque ordinatius conversari possetis.

Hæc et hiis similia illa dicente, aliqui eorum quorum conscientia corrupta erat, statim præbuerunt assensum. Alii vero hæc omnia surda aures transibant, et rationes prolatas in medium acutis responsionibus refellebant, non minus isti quam illi suffulti testimoniis scripturarum.

nought. Evil is not in things, but in the mind, because God beheld all things which He had made, and behold, they were very good. To the good all things are good, all things serve them, and for them were all things made. O, how many who have good things make ill use of them! but if you should have them, you would turn them to good account, because your purpose is holy, your desire holy. It is not your wish to make your own kin rich, for they are rich enough, but that having needful things ye might live more seemly and in order.'

"These and words like these she spoke, and certain of them whose conscience was infected forthwith gave assent, but others passed all these words by with deaf ear, and with keen answers refuted all her uttered arguments, no less they than the others resting on the warrant of Scripture.

## Chapter XXV Avaritia auxilium Accidia petit

**S**ED videns Avaritia quod per se non posset suum adimplere desiderium ex ipsis, mutavit consilium ut impleret propositum. Vocavitque Accidiam, quæ bona negligit inchoare et inchoata perficere, et statuit fœdus cum ea et pactum pepigerunt contra istos.

Non erat ei nimis familiaris, nec striçte conjuncta, tamen in malum libenter convenerunt in unum, sicut olim Pilatus et Herodes adversus Salvatorem. Et inuito consilio infremuit Accidia, et factò impetu cum satellitibus suis fines eorum ingressa est, et totis viribus arma sua deducens caritatem eorum extinxit, et in teporem et torporem vertit eos. Sicque parum a pusillanimitate spiritus absorpti, facti sunt tanquam mortui a corde.

## Chapter XXVI Avarice Seeks the Aid of Sloth

**B**UT Avarice, seeing that of herself she could not satisfy her desire upon them, changed her design that she might fulfil her intent. She summoned Sloth—she who is careless to begin good works or to finish those that have been begun—and formed a treaty with her, and they two made a pact against those men.

“Sloth was no familiar friend of hers, nor were they closely bound; yet for ill they gladly came together, as once Pilate and Herod against the Savior. And entering into her design, Sloth gnashed her teeth, and making onslaught with her bodyguard invaded their borders; and carrying through her warfare with all her might, she quenched their love and turned them unto lukewarmness and torpor, so that in short time, swallowed up by littleness of spirit, they became as dead men to the core.

## Chapter **LVII** De religiosis per accidiam victis

**C**œperunt deinde ad quæque Egyptiaca quæ derelinquerant miserrime suspirare, et quæ corde magifico contempserant turpiter requirebant. Incedebant tristes viam mandatorum Dei et corde arido ad quæque injuncta currebant. Deficiebant sub onere et præ inopia spiritus vix poterant respirare. Rara compunctio erat eis, nulla contritio, obedientia plena murmure, cogitatio animalis, lætitia dissoluta, pusillanimis tristitia, sermo incautus, risus facilis. In vultu hilaritas, in incessu vanitas, vestis mollis et delicata, studiose incisa, et studiosius consuta, somnus multus, cibus superfluus, potus intemperatus. Nugas et truffas et verba proferebant in ventum[.] Recitabant fabulas, mutabant leges, disponebant provincias, et hominum facta diligenter tractabant. De exercitio spirituali nulla cura, nullum studium, de salute animæ rara collatio de cœlestibus et æternis tepens desiderium. Cœperunt sic obdurati alter alteri invidere, alter alterum provocare et unus alteri dominari, gestiens frater fratrem suum crimine pessimo accusabat. Devitabant tristia, appetentes in quo vane gauderent, quia vere non poterant. Retenta tamen utcumque specie sanctitatis ne omnino vilescerent, et loquentes

## Chapter **LVII** Concerning the Brothers Conquered by Sloth

**T**HEY began in most unhappy wise to sigh after the fleshpots of Egypt which they had left behind them, and they sought again shamefully what they had scorned with a high heart. They walked sadly in the paths of the commandments of God, and with a dry heart ran in the way of His bidding. They failed under the burden, and by reason of impoverishment of spirit could scarce breathe the breath of life. Seldom were they pricked at heart, they knew no self-abasement, their obedience was full of murmurings, their thoughts were carnal, their rejoicing was without restraint, their sadness was little-hearted, their speech rash, their merriment ever ready, gaiety was on their faces, vanity in their work, their garments were soft and delicate, cunningly cut and more cunningly sewn; they slept long, they ate overmuch, they drank without measure. They filled the air with jests and gibes and words, they told stories, changed laws, they gave away provincial charges and busied themselves in the discussion of human affairs. They had no care of spiritual exercises, no zeal, they seldom held talk of the soul's salvation, their desire after heavenly and eternal things was lukewarm. So they began in hardness of heart to envy one another, to provoke one another, and to lord it one over the other; vauntingly brother accused brother with the most horrible accusations. They avoided troublous



sancta miseram conversationem apud simplices occultabant. Sed tanta erat eorum interioris hominis dissolutio quod se cohibere non valens apertis iudiciis erumpebat foris. Cœperunt denique viris sæcularibus adulari, et cum eis jungere matrimonium ut excuterent bursas eorum, et amplificarent ædificia et multiplicarent ea quæ penitus recusaverant. Vendebant verba divitibus et matronis salutationes. Curias regum ac principum omni studio frequentabant ut jungerent domum ad domum, et agrum agro copularent. Et nunc magnificati sunt et ditati confortati sunt in terra quia de malo ad malum egressi sunt, et Dominum non cognoverunt. Ceciderunt dum allevantur, prolapsi sunt in terra ante natiuitatem, et tamen dicunt mihi: Sumus amici tui.

things, seeking that in which they might have idle joy, because they were unfit for true joy. Yet they kept up after a fashion an appearance of holiness, lest they should be held altogether of no account, and speaking holy words, hid their unhappy walk from the simple. But so great was the corruption of their inward man that it could not contain itself and broke out publicly in open signs. They began at last to fawn upon the men in the world and became wedded unto them, that they might shake out their purses, and make large their buildings, and multiply the very possessions which they had utterly cast aside. They sold words to the rich and salutations to the matrons. They haunted the courts of kings and princes with all zeal, that they might set house to house and join field to field. And now they are magnified and made rich and are grown mighty upon earth, because they have gone on from evil to evil and have not known the Lord. They fell whilst they were lifted up; they are cast upon the earth as an untimely birth, and yet they say unto me, 'We are thy friends!'

## Chapter **LVIIII** Nota de ingratis religiosis

**D**OLENS dolebam ego de quibusdam magis, quia cum in sæculo satis fuissent miseri et contemptibiles postquam ad me venerunt divites facti sunt. Et impinguati et incrassati fortius cæteris recalcitrant deridentes me, [.]. Ipsi certe vita ipsa putabantur indigni, egestate et fame steriles. Qui mandebant herbas et arborum cortices, squalentes calamitate et miseria, nunc non sunt contenti communi vita, sed segregant semetipsos sine timore, se ipsos pascentes, quorum conversatio superflua quæritando satis cæteris est molesta, affectantes honorem inter Christi discipulos, qui in sæculo etiam inter notos valde contemptibiles erant. Qui quum ordeaceo pane et aqua sæpe carebant et esse sub sentibus delicias reputabant, filii stultorum et ignobilium, et in terra penitus non parentes, ad meas misérias devoluti sunt. Abominantur me et fugiunt longe a me, et faciem meam conspuere non verentur. Contumelias et terrores passa sum ab eis, et qui erant pacifici mei et custodientes latus meum insultabant mihi. Verecundabantur de me et tanto magis abjiciabant me quanto meo beneficio ditatos se fore sciebant, ita ut nomen meum

## Chapter **LVIIII** The Words of the Lady Poverty Concerning the Thankless Brothers

**I**sorrowed with sorrow concerning certain of them who, when they were in the world, were wretched and contemned enough, but after they had come unto me, were made rich. And waxing fat and wanton, they kicked more fiercely than the rest, mocking me. Indeed, once they held themselves unworthy of life itself, fruitless in want and hunger. They ate grass and the bark of trees, squalid in their evil case and misery. Now they are not content with our common life, but separate themselves without fear, filling themselves with food, whose conversation as they seek after superfluities is troublous enough to others, striving after high place among the disciples of Christ, they who even in the world among persons of note were altogether despised. Who, when they often were in want even of barley bread and water and thought that to lie under a hedge was luxury, sons of fools and knaves, and on earth quite unregarded, flung themselves at the feet of my compassion. Now they loathe me and fly far from me and are not ashamed to spit upon my face. Reproaches and jeers I have suffered from them, and those who were my lovers and familiar friends mocked me. They were ashamed of me, and so much the more they lifted up the heel against me, as they knew they had been made rich by my kind-

dedignarentur audire. Dolens dolebam ego, et dicebam ad eos: Revertimini, filii, recedentes, et sanabo averisiones vestras. Cavete ab omni avaritia quæ est idolorum servitus, quoniam avarus non implebitur pecunia. Memoramini pristinos dies in quibus illuminati magnum certamen sustinistis passionum. Nolite fieri subtractionis filii in perditionem, sed fidei in acquisitionem animæ. Irritam quis faciens legem Moysis sine ulla miseratione duobus vel tribus testibus moritur. **Q**uanto magis putatis deteriora mereri supplicia qui filium Dei conculcaverit, et sanguinem testamenti pollutum dixerit in quo sanctificatus est, et spiritui gratiæ contumeliam fecerit? Redite ergo prevaricatores ad cor, quia non in abundantia cujusquam vita est, ex hiis quæ possidet. At ipsi indignantes dicebant: Vade, o misera, recede a nobis. Scientiam viarum tuarum nolumus. Et aio ad eos: Miseremini mei, miseremini mei, saltem vos amici mei. **Q**uare persequimini me sine causa[.] Numquid non dixi vobis quia mei ac vestri mores non convenirent? En poenitet me vidisse vos. Et factus est sermo Domini ad me dicens: Revertere, revertere Sunamitis, revertere, revertere ut intueamur te. Ipsi filii irritatores sunt et nolunt audire te quia nolunt audire me. Factum est eis cor lucredulum et exasperans; recesserunt et abierunt, non enim abjecerunt te sine me. Tu enim hos docuisti adversum te, et erudisti eos in caput tuum, quia nisi assumpsissent te numquam sic ditati fuissent. Simulabant diligere te, ut sic

ness, so that they thought scorn even to hear my name. I groaned with grief concerning them, and I said: 'Return every man, come ye back, and I will heal your backslidings. Take heed of covetousness, which is idolatry, for the covetous man shall not be satisfied with money. Remember the former days in which, when ye were enlightened, ye endured a great strife of sufferings. See that ye become not sons of a drawing away unto perdition, but of faith unto the saving of your souls. He that set at nought Moses's law died without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses; of how much sorer judgment, think ye, shall he be held worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, hath counted the blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace? Return then in heart, ye perverse ones, for life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which ye possess.' And they, taking it ill, answered: 'Go, wretched one; depart from us, we desire no knowledge of thy ways.' And I said to them. 'Have pity upon me, at least, ye, my friends. Why do ye persecute me without a cause? Have I not ever said to you that your ways are not as my ways? Lo! I repent that I have set eyes on you.' And the Lord spoke unto me, saying: 'Return, return, O Shulamite; return, return that I may look upon thee. Thy very sons are they who make void thy way and will not hear thee, because they will not hear Me. Their heart is become unbelieving and bitter, they have turned and gone backward; denying thee, they have denied Me also. For thou hast taught them against thyself, and hast nourished them against thine own head, because unless they had been clothed with thee,

beneficiati recederent. Propterea cum tentatione adversa aversi sunt et apprehendantes mendacium noluerunt reverti. Ne iterum credas eis cum locuti fuerint tibi bona, quia ipsi contempserunt te, et quærent animam tuam. Ne assumas laudem et orationem pro eis, quia non exaudiam te etenim abjeci eos quia ipsi spreverunt me.

they would never have thus been made rich. They made as though they loved thee, that so they might depart with endowments. Therefore, with the temptation of the enemy they are turned aside, and believing a lie have been unwilling to return. Believe not them again, though they should speak to thee fair things, because they have despised thee and seek thy life. Offer not up for them praise and prayer, for I will not hear thee, for I have cast them off because they have despised Me.'

## Chapter XXX

### Domina Paupertas monet beatum Franciscum de profectu et defectu conuersationis

**C**CCE, fratres, retexui vobis longi sermonis parabolam ut præcedant palpebræ gressus vestros et videatis quid agere debeatis. Periculosum est valde retro respicere et illudere Deo. Memores estote uxoris Loth, et nolite omni spiritui credere. Confido tamen de vobis, carissimi, quia magis in vobis quam in cæteris video meliora et viciniora saluti, quoniam videmini omnia penitus abjecisse, de omnibus penitus vos exonerasse. Et de hiis omnibus efficacissimum argumentum est mihi, montis hujus ascensio, ad quem pauci unquam attingere potuerunt. Sed dico vobis, amici mei, quod multorum malitia bonorum virtutem mihi facit esse suspectam, et sub vestimentis ovium lupos rapaces frequenter experta sum. Cupio certe unumquemque vestrum sanctorum imitatore[m] effici, qui fide et patientia hæreditaverunt me. Sed quia timeo ne vobis sicut et cæteris contingat, salutare do vobis consilium, ne videlicet velitis sic in principio altiora et secretiora contingere, sed paulatim proficientes, Christo duce, tandem perveniatis ad summa. Videte ne postquam stercora vilitatis ad radices vestras fuerint missa inveniimini ste-

## Chapter XXX

### The Lady Poverty Warns Saint Francis Concerning the Gain and the Loss of That Relationship

**B**EHOLD, brothers, I have woven for you from the beginning a parable in many words, that your eyes may go before your steps, and that ye may perceive what things ye ought to do. It is very perilous to look back and mock God. Remember Lot's wife, and trust not every spirit. I am confident, nevertheless, concerning you, beloved, because more in you than in other men do I see that which is good and nigh unto salvation, since ye appear utterly to have thrown away all things and to have cast aside every burden. And of all this a most sure proof to me is that you have come up into this mount, to which few have ever been able to attain. But I say unto you, my friends, that the unkindness of many makes the virtue of the good to be suspect of me, and under sheep's clothing I have oftentimes found ravening wolves. I desire with all my heart that each one of you should become an imitator of the saints, who through faith and patience have inherited me. But because I fear lest it happen to you as to the others, I give you saving counsel not to hope thus at the first ever to attain unto the higher and more secret things, but going forward by degrees, with Christ as leader, at length to attain unto the heights. See lest after the dung of worthless things has been put at your roots, ye should yet be found fruitless,

riles, quia nihil aliud præterquam securis apponitur. Nolite ex toto effectui vestro credere quem nunc habetis, quia procliviores sensus hominis sunt ad malum quam ad bonum agendum et facile ad consueta revertitur animus licet ab illis quandoque sit elongatus multum. Scio enim quod ex fervore nimio levissima omnia vobis videntur. Sed mementote quod dicitur quia ecce qui serviunt ei non sunt stables, et in angelis suis reperit pravitatem. Primum quidem ad portandum omnia dulcissima vobis existunt, sed paulo post securitate accepta de collatis beneficiis incuriam admittetis. Putabitis quia qua hora vultis in ipsum redire et primam reinvenire consolationem possitis. Sed negligentia semel admisa non de facili extirpatur. Declinabit deinde cor vestrum ad alia sed ratio reclamabit ut redeatis ad prima. Sic conversi in torporem et accidiam spiritus volatilia excusationum verba protendetis dicentes: Non possumus esse sicut in principio fuimus fortes, et nunc alia tempora currunt, nescientes quod dicitur: quia cum consummatus fuerit homo tunc incipiet. Erit tamen in animo vestro semper ista vox sic dicens: Cras, cras revertemur a virum priorem, quia melius nobis tunc erat quam nunc. Ecce prædixi vobis plura fratres, et multa habeo vobis dicere quæ non potestis portare modo. Veniet hora cum palam vobis exponam omnia supradicta.

because that henceforth the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Take heed lest ye altogether trust to the feelings which now stir within you, because the senses of men are more inclined to doing evil than to doing good, and the mind easily goes back to old habits, although for a time it be far removed from them. For I know that in your exceeding fervor all things appear to you most easy, but remember how it is written: 'He putteth no trust in His servants, and chargeth His angels with folly.' For, at the beginning, all things are most sweet to you for your endurance, but in a little while, as carelessness concerning the granted benefits grows upon you, ye will yield to heedlessness. Ye will think that whenever ye desire ye shall be able to return unto it, and to find again consolation as at the first. But negligence, once let in, is not easily cast out. Your heart then will turn aside to other things, but reason will call you back to return to the first things, so turned back into torpor and sloth of spirit, ye will shield yourselves under idle words of excuse, saying: 'We cannot be as at the first, we were strong but now the times are changed,' knowing not what ye say, because when a man is made perfect then he is at the beginning of things. There will yet ever be in your soul that voice speaking thus: 'Tomorrow we shall return unto the former man, because it was better for us then than now.' Lo! I have told you many things before they came to pass, brethren, and I have much to say unto you, but ye cannot bear it now. An hour cometh when I shall tell you plainly of all things that I have said unto you."

## Chapter   

### Beatus Franciscus respondet dominæ Paupertati

**A**D h c beatus Franciscus cum fratribus suis pronus in terram cecidit, gratias agens Deo et dixit: Placet, domina nostra, quod dicis, nec in omnibus qu  locuta es aliqua reprehensio esse potest. Verus est sermo quem audivimus in terra nostra super sermonibus tuis et super sapientia tua. Et multo major est sapientia tua quam rumar quem audivimus. Beati viri tui et beati servi tui, hii qui sunt coram te semper et audiunt sapientiam tuam. Sit dominus Deus tuus benedictus in s cula cui placuisti in sempiternum, et dilexit te, et constituit te reginam ut faceres misericordiam et iudicium in servis tuis. O quam bonus et suavis est spiritus tuus, corripiens errantes et peccantes admonens. Ecce domina per caritatem regis  terni qua dilexit te et per illam qua diligis eum, te obsecramus ut non fraudes nos a desiderio nostro, sed facias nobiscum juxta misericordiam et mansuetudinem tuam. Magna enim sunt opera tua et inenarrabilia, propter hoc indisciplinat  anim  errant a te, et sola incedis undique scopulosa ut castrorum acies ordinata et non posunt tecum morari insipientes. Sed ecce nos servi tui sumus et oves pascu  tu . In  ternum et in s culum s culi juravimus et statuimus custodire iudicia iustiti  tu .

## Chapter   

### The Blessed Francis Makes Answer to the Lady Poverty

**A**T these words the blessed Francis, with his brothers, fell on his face to the earth, thanking God and saying: "So be it, Lady, as thou hast said; not of all that thou hast spoken can there be any gainsaying. True is the word which we have heard in our own land concerning thy words and thy wisdom. And thy wisdom much exceedeth the fame which we have heard. Happy are thy men, happy are thy servants, these who stand continually before thee and hear thy wisdom. Blessed forever be the Lord thy God, Who delighteth in thee from everlasting, and loved thee and made thee Queen to work mercy and judgment among thy servants. Oh, how good and sweet is thy spirit, laying hold of those that are out of the way and warning them that sin. Behold, Lady, by the love of the King Eternal wherewith He has loved thee, and by that love wherewith thou lovest Him, we beseech thee that thou cheat us not of our desire, but deal with us according to thy compassion and loving-kindness. For great are thy works and above words; therefore unruly souls wander from thee, and thou walkest alone, on all sides terrible as an army in battle array, and the foolish cannot dwell with thee. But behold, we are thy servants and the sheep of thy pasture. We have sworn and are determined to keep the judgments of thy justice forever, world without end."

## Chapter XXX Consensus dominae Paupertatis

**C**OMMOTA sunt ad hæc viscera dominae Paupertatis, et sicut ei proprium est misereri semper et parcere, ultra se continere non valens cucurrit, et amplexata est eos, ac pacis osculum unicuique præbens dixit: Ecce jam venio, fratres et filii mei, vobiscum, sciens me de vobis lucraturam quam plures.

Beatus autem Franciscus, non se capiens præ lætitia, cœpit laudare alta voce Omnipotentem qui non derelinquit sperantes in se, dicens: Benedicite Dominum omnes electi ejus, agite dies lætitiæ et confitemini ei quoniam bonus, quoniam in sæculum misericordia ejus.

Et descendentes de monte duxerunt dominam Paupertatem ad locum in quo manebant, hora enim erat quasi sexta.

## Chapter XXX The Assent of the Lady Poverty

**A**T these words the bowels of the Lady Poverty were stirred, and as it belongeth unto her ever to have compassion, and to bestow food, she could not contain herself further, and ran and embraced them and gave to each the kiss of peace, saying: “Behold, I come, my brothers and sons, knowing that I, through your means, will gain many more.”

But blessed Francis could not restrain himself for joy, and began with a loud voice to praise the Omnipotent, Who forsakes not them that hope in Him, saying: “Bless the Lord, all ye His chosen. Keep a day of gladness, and confess unto Him that He is good, that His mercy endureth for ever.”

And going down from the mountain, they led the Lady Poverty to the place where they abode, for it was about the sixth hour.



## Chapter XXXI De convivio dominæ Paupertatis cum fratribus

**E**T præparatis omnibus cœgerunt illam comedere secum. At ipsa: Ostendite, inquit, mihi primo oratorium, claustrum capitulum, refectorium, coquinam, dormitorium et stabulum, pulcra sedilia, expolitas mensas et domos immensas. Nihil enim horum video, nisi quod cerno vos hilares et jucundos, superbundantes gaudio, repletos consolatione ac si expectetis omnia ad votum suppeti vobis. Ipsi quoque respondentes dixerunt: Domina et regina nostra, nos servi tui ex longo itinere fatigati sumus, et tu nobiscum veniens non modicum laborasti. Comedamus ergo prius, si jubes, et sic confortati ad nutum tuum omnia implebuntur.

Placet quod dicitis, ait. Sed jam afferte aquam ut manus nostras lavemus et sindones quibus tergamus eas.

Illi vero citissime obtulerunt medium quoddam terreum vasculum, quia perfectum non erat ibi plenum aqua. Et vergentes in manibus eius respiciebant huc atque illuc pro sindone. Cumque non invenissent eam unus obtulit ei tunicam qua indutus erat ut cum ea tergeret sibi manus. Ipsa vero cum gratiarum actione illam suscipiens magnificabat Deum in toto corde suo, qui talibus eam associavit hominibus[.] Deinde duxerunt eam ad

## Chapter XXXII Concerning the Banquet of the Lady Poverty with the Brothers

**A**ND having made all things ready, they constrained her to eat with them, but she said: "First show me your oratory, your chapter-house, your refectory, your kitchen, your dormitory and stable, your fair seats, your polished tables, and your great buildings. For none of these things do I see; only I see you merry and joyful, overflowing with gladness, fulfilled with consolation, as though you looked for all things to abound according to your desire." And they answered and said, "Lady, our Queen, we, thy servants, are weary with the length of the way, and thou coming unto us hast had no slight toil. Let us eat together first if it is thy will, and so strengthened, all things shall be fulfilled according to thy behest."

"Be it as ye speak," she says. "But now bring water, that we may wash our hands, and towels wherewith we may wipe them."

They made haste and offered her the half of a certain earthen dish full of water, because there was not there a whole one. And pouring the water upon her hands, they looked this way and that for a towel. And when they had not found one, one of them offered the tunic which he was wearing, that with it she might dry her hands. But she, taking it with thanks, magnified God in all her heart that He had given her the companionship of such men. Then they led her to the place where a table was prepared, and

locum in quo mensa parata erat. Quo cum fuisset perducta, respexit et nihil aliud videns quam tria vel quatuor frusta panis ordeacei et furfurei posita super gramina vehementer admirata est intra se dicens: Quis unquam vidit talia in generationibus sæculorum? Benedictus tu Domine Deus cui est cura de omnibus, subest tibi posse cum volueris, et docuisti populum tuum per talia opera placere tibi. Sicque considerunt pariter gratias agentes Deo super omnia dona sua. Jussit itaque domina Paupertas apportari cocta cibaria in scutellis. Et ecce allata est scutella una plena aqua frigida ut intingerent omnes in ea panem. Non enim erat ibi copia scutellamm aut coquorum pluralitas. Petiit aliquas saltem herbas odoriferas crudas sibi præberi, sed hortolanum non habentes et hortum nescientes, collegerunt in silva herbas agrestes et posuerunt coram ea. Quæ ait: Parum salis afferte ut saliam herbas quoniam amaræ sunt.

Expecta, inquit, domina quoadusque civitatem intremus et afferamus tibi, si fuerit qui præbeat nobis.

Præbete, inquit, mihi cultellum ut emundem superflua, et incidam panem qui valde durus et siccus est.

Dicunt ei: Domina non habemus fabrum ferrarium qui faciat nobis gladios. Nunc autem dentibus cultelli vice utere, et postea providebimus.

Et dixit: Et vinum apud vos est aliquantulum?

Responderunt illi dicentes: Domina nostra, vinum non habemus, quia initium vitæ hominis panis et

when she was brought thereto, she looked and saw nothing but three or four crusts of barley and bran bread laid upon the grass, and wondering greatly she said within herself: "Whoever saw the like in all the generations of men? Blessed be Thou, Lord God, who hast care for all; Thou art able to do that which Thou willest, and Thou hast taught Thy people by such works to please Thee." And so they sat down side by side, thanking God for all His gifts. And the Lady Poverty gave orders to bring cooked food on dishes. And behold, one dish was brought full of cold water, that they might all dip their bread in it. For there was no abundance of dishes there, nor many cooks. She asked that at least some fragrant uncooked herbs of sweet savor should be supplied to her, but as they had no gardener, and knew nothing of a garden, they gathered wild herbs in the wood and set them before her. And she said: "Bring a little salt, that I may salt the herbs since they are bitter."

"Wait a little, Lady," say they, "until we go into the town and bring it to thee, if haply, someone will give it us."

"Give me a knife," she says, "that I may trim off what is not wanted, and that I may cut the bread, for it is very hard and dry."

They say to her: "Lady, we have no blacksmith to make us swords; now just use thy teeth instead of a knife, and afterwards we shall look for one."

And she said. "And have you a little wine here?"

They answered and said: "Lady ours, we have no wine, because the first thing for the life of man is bread and water, and for thee

aqua, et tibi bibere vinum non est bonum, quoniam sponsa Christi vinum debet fugere pro veneno.

Postquam exsaturati sunt magis exultantes inopiæ gloria quam essent rerum omnium abundantia, benedixerunt Domino in cujus conspectu tantam invenerunt gratiam, et duxerunt eam ad locum in quo quiesceret, quia fatigata erat. Sicque super nudam humum nudam se projecit. Petiit quoque pulvinar ad caput suum. At illi statim portaverunt lapidem et supposuerunt ei. Ista vero quietissimo somno ac sobrio dormiens surrexit festinanter petens sibi claustrum ostendi. Et adducentes eam in quodam colle ostenderunt ei totum orbem quem respicere poterat dicentes: Hoc est claustrum nostrum domina.

Jussit ipsa pariter consedere et verba vitæ locuta est ad illos dicens.

it is not good to drink wine, since the bride of Christ should shun wine as poison.”

After they were filled, rejoicing more in the glory of their poverty than they would have in the abundance of all things, they blessed the Lord, in whose sight they found so great grace, and they led her to the place where she should repose, because she was weary. So upon the bare ground she flung herself down in her scant raiment. She asked also a cushion for her head, and they forthwith brought a stone, and set it under her; but she slept with most quiet and sober slumber, and rose up in a little while and asked to be shown the monastery. And they led her to a certain hill and showed her the whole world, as far as she could see, saying: “This is our monastery, Lady.”

She bade them sit down side by side and spoke unto them the words of life, saying:

**Chapter XXXIII**  
**Domina Paupertas benedicit**  
**fratribus monens eos**  
**perseverare in recepta gratia**

**B**ENEDICTI vos filii a Domino qui fecit coelum et terram, qui tanta caritatis plenitudine in domo vestra me suscepistis, ut visum sit mihi hodie esse vobiscum tanquam in paradiso Dei. Propterea repleta sum gaudio, superabundo consolatione. Et quia tantum venire tardavi veniam peto. Vere Dominus est vobiscum et ego nesciebam. Ecce quod concupivi jam video, quod desideravi jam teneo, quia illis sum juncta in terris qui mihi imaginem repræsentant eius cui sum desponsata in coelis. Benedicat Dominus fortitudini vestrae et opera manuum vestrarum suscipiat. Rogo et multum deprecor vos, tanquam filios carissimos, ut perseveretis in hiis quæ Spiritu sancto docente cœpistis. Non deserentes perfectionem vestram sicut est consuetudinis quibusdam, sed evasis cunctis laqueis tenebrarum semper ad perfectiora nitimini. Altissima est perfectio vestra supra hominem, supra virtutem, et antiquorum perfectionem illustrat lumine clariori. De regni cœlorum possessione nulla sit dubitatio, nulla sit cunctatio vobis, quoniam artham futurae hæreditatis jam tenetis

**Chapter XXXIII**  
**The Lady Poverty Blesses the**  
**Brothers, and Exhorts Them to**  
**Persevere in the Grace They**  
**Have Received**

**B**LESSED, my sons, be ye of God, Who made Heaven and earth, because ye have received me in your house with such plenitude of love, that it seemed to me that with you today I was, as it were, in the Paradise of God. Therefore I am filled with joy, with overflowing consolation. And I ask pardon that I have been so slow to come to you. Behold! the Lord is with you, and I knew it not. Lo! what I have desired now I see, what I have longed for I now behold, seeing that I am united on earth with them who present to me the likeness of Him to whom I am espoused in Heaven. The Lord bless your fortitude and prosper the works of your hands. I ask and much pray, as my most dear sons, that ye persevere in these things which by the teaching of the Holy Spirit ye have begun. Not forsaking your perfection as the manner of some is, but making your way safely through all the snares of darkness, ever strive after a higher perfection. Most high is your perfection above men, above virtue, and it illumines the perfection of them of old with a clearer light. About your possession of the Kingdom of Heaven have neither doubt nor hesitance, since ye already hold the earnest of your future inheritance, and have already received the pledge of the Spirit, sealed with

et pignus spiritus jam suscepistis, signati signaculo gloriæ Christi, respondentes per omnia, gratia sua, illi primæ suæ scolæ quam in mundo veniens congregavit. Quod enim illi fecerunt in præsentia ejus hoc vos totum in absentio operari cœpistis, et non est quod dicere vereamini: Ecce nos reliquimus omnia et secuti sumus te. Non deterreat vos magnitudo certaminis et laboris immensitas, quoniam magnam habetis remunerationem. Et aspicientes in auctorem et consummatorem omnium bonorum, Dominum Jesum Christum, qui proposito sibi gaudio sustinuit crucem, confusione contempta, tenete spei vestræ confessionem indeclinabilem. Currite ad propositum vobis certamen in caritate. Currite per patientiam, quæ maxime vobis necessaria est, ut voluntatem Dei facientes reportetis repromissionem. Potens est enim Deus quæ supra vires cœpistis gratia sua sancta consummare feliciter, quia fidelis est in promissionibus. Nihil inveniat in vobis gratum spiritus qui operatur in filios diffidentia, nihil inveniat dubium, nihil inveniat diffidens, ne suæ pravitatis contra vos exercendæ de vobis recipiat argumentum. Nam superbus est valde, et superbia ejus et arrogantia ejus plusquam fortitudo ejus. Magnam iram habet de vobis et universæ calliditatis suæ in vos arma convertet, et malitiæ venenum nitetur effundere, utpote qui jam reliquos debellando devicit et dejecit, vos supra se respiciens dolet.

In conversione vestra carissimi,

the seal of the glory of Christ, answering in all things by His grace to that first school of His, which He gathered together when He came into the world. For what they did in His presence, all this you in His absence have begun to put into practice, and there is no reason why ye may not boldly say: 'Behold, we have left all and we have followed Thee.' Be not afraid of the greatness of the strife and the vastness of the toil, since ye have a great reward. And looking unto the Author and Finisher of all good things, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who, for the joy set before Him, endured the Cross despising the shame, hold fast the confession of your hope without wavering. Hasten unto the contest set before you in love, hasten with long-suffering, which, above all things, is needful for you, that ye may do the will of God and receive the promises. For God is able to bring to happy consummation, by His holy grace, the things that ye have undertaken above your own strength, because He Who promised is faithful. Let the spirit who now worketh in the children of disobedience discover nothing pleasing unto himself in you, let him find nothing doubtful, let him find nothing disobedient, lest he discover in you a ground for exercising his evil mind against you. For he is very proud, and his pride and arrogance are greater than his strength. He has great wrath against you, and will turn against you the arms of all his cunning, and will strive to pour forth the venom of malice, for, indeed, he who has warred down, and overcome, and cast low the rest, grieves when he sees you above him.

"Concerning your conversion, well

cœli cives magna celebrant gaudia, et coram æterno rege nova cantica cantaverunt. Gaudent angeli in vobis et de vobis, quia dum per vos multi virginitatem servabunt et castitate fulgebunt, supernæ civitatis implebuntur ruinæ, ubi virgines sunt celebrius collocandi, quoniam, qui non nubent nec nubentur erunt sicut angeli Dei in cœlo. Exultant apostoli videntes suam renovari vitam, prædicari doctrinam, sanctitatis præcipuæ per vos ostendi exempla. Lætantur martyres expectantes sacri sanguinis effusione eorum repræsentari constantiam. Tripudiant confessores scientes frequenter eorum victoriam de inimico commemorari in vobis. Jubilant virgines sequentes agnum quocumque ierit, scientes suum numerum per vos augeri quotidie. Tota denique cœlestis curia exultatione repletur, quæ novorum concivium quotidianes celebrat solemnitates et ad odorem orationum sanctarum ascendentium de hac valle continue respurguntur.

Obsecro itaque vos fratres, per misericordiam Dei, pro qua vos tam miserabiles estis effecti, facite ad quod venistis, ad quod ascendistis de fluminibus Babilonis. Suscipite humiliter gratiam vobis oblatam digne utentes ea, per omnia semper ad laudem, gloriam et honorem ejus, qui mortuus est pro vobis, Jesus Christus Dominus noster, qui cum Patre et Spiritu sancto vivit et regnat, vincit et imperat, Deus æternaliter gloriosus, per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

Actum est hoc opus mense Julii

beloved, there is great joy in the Kingdom of Heaven, and they have sung new songs before the eternal King. The angels rejoice in you and for you, because since through you many will keep their virginity and will shine in chastity, the losses of the city above will be repaired, where virgins are placed in greater glory, since those who marry not nor are given in marriage shall be as the angels of God in Heaven. The apostles exult when they see their own life renewed, their own doctrine preached, and the example of highest holiness shown by you. The martyrs are glad, looking to see in the pouring forth of holy blood the type of their own endurance. The confessors dance for joy, knowing that remembrance of their own victory over the enemy is oftentimes made in you. The virgins sing, following the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, knowing that their number is daily increased through you; yea, all the celestial court is filled with exultation: with the banqueting of the new-comers they daily hold high festival, and with the fragrant dew of holy prayers going up from this vale they are continually sprinkled.

“I beseech you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, by which ye have been made merciful, do that for which ye are here present, for which ye have come up from the waters of Babylon. Receive humbly the grace offered to you and use it worthily in all things, ever to the praise and glory and honor of Him who died for you, Jesus Christ our Lord, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, Conqueror and Ruler, God glorious forever, world without end. Amen.”

This work was finished in the month of

poſt obitum beatiffimi Franciſci, anno Millesimo ducentesimo vigesimo septimo ab Incarnatione Domini Salvatoris noſtri Jeſu Chriſti.

July, after the death of the moſt bleſſed Francis, in the year one thouſand two hundred and twenty-seven from the incarnation of our Lord and Savior Jeſus Chriſt.





# Colophon

This text was electronically produced from scans of the original text, then carefully proofread for correctness. It has been updated to conform with modern punctuation standards, and some more archaic words and expressions have been substituted with modern equivalents. The detailed historical preface, interesting chiefly to scholars, was removed, along with translations into several other languages. It is set in EB Garamond 12/15 in the body, with headings and lettrines in Yannis Haralambous's Gothic fonts. The whole is processed by a variety of interlocking Unix scripts before being compiled with the Lua<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X document preparation system. All tools used are free software.