

sin. And the comeliness of the members is lost, because this sin results also in the marring of other fair virtues. Indeed, the whole body, as it were, is befouled, since the mind is overthrown by all vices, as St. Paul testified in saying: *Covetousness is the root of all evil.*<sup>52</sup>

The ruptured man is he who, though not actually given to baseness, is yet weighed down by it beyond measure by the constant thought of it; though he is not carried away by evil deeds, his mind is ravished with the pleasure of lechery, without any stings of repugnance. As to the blemish of rupture, it is due to the descent of the internal fluids to the genitals, which in consequence produces a troublesome and unseemly swelling. A person, then, is ruptured when he allows all his thoughts to run on lascivious matters, and thus carries in his heart a load of turpitude; and though he does not actually engage in deeds of shame, his mind cannot disengage itself from them. At the same time he lacks the strength to raise himself to the overt exercise of good deeds, because a shameful hidden burden weighs him down.

Whosoever, then, is subject to any of the aforesaid defects, is forbidden to offer loaves of bread to the Lord. The reason is obvious: a man who is still ravaged by his own sins, cannot expiate the sins of others.

And now, since we have briefly shown how one who is worthy should undertake pastoral ruling, and how the unworthy should fear to undertake it, we shall explain how he who has worthily undertaken the office ought to live in the exercise of it.

## PART TWO

### THE LIFE OF THE PASTOR

#### CHAPTER I

*The conduct required of one who has in due order reached the position of ruler.*

The conduct of a prelate should so far surpass the conduct of the people, as the life of a pastor sets him apart from his flock. For one who is so regarded that the people are called his flock, must carefully consider how necessary it is for him to maintain a life of rectitude. It is necessary, therefore, that he should be pure in thought, exemplary in conduct, discreet in keeping silence, profitable in speech, in sympathy a near neighbour to everyone, in contemplation exalted above all others, a humble companion to those who lead good lives, erect in his zeal for righteousness against the vices of sinners. He must not be remiss in his care for the inner life by preoccupation with the external; nor must he in his solicitude for what is internal, fail to give attention to the external.

Let us now take up the things which we have touched upon in this brief enumeration, and treat them at somewhat greater length.

## CHAPTER 2

*The ruler should be pure in thought.*

The ruler should ever be pure in thought. No impurity should stain one who has undertaken the duty of cleansing the stains of defilement from the hearts of others as well as from his own. For it is necessary that the hand that aims at cleansing filth should itself be clean, lest, sordid with clinging dirt, it fouls for the worse everything it touches. Wherefore, it is said by the Prophet: *Be ye clean, you that carry the vessels of the Lord.*<sup>1</sup> Those who carry the vessels of the Lord are those who undertake, in reliance on their way of living, to draw the souls of their neighbours to the everlasting holy places.

Let these, therefore, realise in their hearts how purified those ought to be, who carry in the bosom of their own personal responsibility living vessels to the eternal temple. For this reason the voice of God enjoined that on the breast of Aaron the breastplate of judgment<sup>2</sup> should be set, bound with fillets. The import of this was that the heart of the priest should in no way harbour dissolute thoughts, but only right reason should rule and restrain it, nor should he entertain any indiscreet or unprofitable thought. One who is set up for a model to others should ever, by the strictness of his way of life, display what a wealth of reason he carries in his breast.

It was also strictly enjoined that on the breastplate the names of the twelve Patriarchs should be inscribed. To bear the names of the fathers registered on the breast, is to meditate unceasingly on the lives of those elders. The

priest then walks blamelessly, when he is ever contemplating the examples of the fathers who preceded him, when without interruption he regards the footsteps of the Saints, and when he checks forbidden thoughts, lest, as he goes forward, he set his steps beyond the bounds of right order. Further, the breastplate of judgment is fittingly so styled, because the ruler should always discern good from evil, and carefully consider and scrutinise what is suitable in itself, for whom, when, and how, it is suitable; and because he is not to seek anything for himself, but to regard the good of his neighbours as his own advantage. Therefore, it is written in that place: *And thou shalt put on the rational of judgment, doctrine and truth, which shall be on Aaron's breast, when he shall go in before the Lord; and he shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel on his breast in the sight of the Lord always.*<sup>3</sup> The priest bearing the judgment of the children of Israel on his breast in the sight of the Lord, means that he examines the causes of his subjects in accordance only with the mind of the Judge within, so that he allows no admixture of human reason in what he dispenses in the place of God, lest personal displeasure embitter him in his zeal for correction. Whilst showing himself zealous against the transgressions of others, he should punish his own, lest his latent ill will stain the calmness of his judgment, or hasty anger distort it.

And when he considers the dread inspired by Him who rules all things, that is, the Judge within, it is not without great trepidation that he will rule his subjects. This dread, while keeping the mind of the ruler humble, purifies it also, lest it be either lifted up by spiritual presumption, or tainted with the delight of the flesh, or obscured by the im-

portunity of unclean thought through cupidity for earthly things. These things cannot, however, fail to smite the mind of the ruler, but he must hasten to overcome them by repulsing them. He must prevent the sin which tempts him, from overcoming him by its voluptuous delight and from inflicting a fatal blow because of his too tardy rejection of it.

## CHAPTER 3

*The ruler should always be exemplary in conduct.*

The ruler should be exemplary in his conduct, that by his manner of life he may show the way of life to his subjects, and that the flock, following the teaching and conduct of its shepherd, may proceed the better through example rather than words. For one who by the exigency of his position must propose the highest ideals, is bound by that same exigency to give a demonstration of those ideals. His voice penetrates the hearts of his hearers the more readily, if his way of life commends what he says. What he enjoins in words, he will help to execution by example. Wherefore, it is said by the Prophet: *Get thee up upon a high mountain, thou that bringest good tidings to Sion;*<sup>4</sup> that is to say, he who employs heavenly preaching must already have abandoned the low levels of earthly deeds, and he must be seen standing on an eminence. He will the more readily draw his subjects to better things, as by his meritorious way of life his voice calls from the supernal heights.

Wherefore, by divine ordinance the priest receives a shoulder for sacrifice, and that, too, the right one and sep-

arate.<sup>5</sup> His conduct should be not only profitable, but outstanding. He should not only do what is upright in the midst of the wicked, but also surpass the well-doers among his subjects, and as he surpasses them in the dignity of his rank, so should he in the virtue of his conduct.

Again, the breast of the victim together with the shoulder are assigned to him for eating,<sup>6</sup> so that he may learn to immolate to the Giver of all things, those parts of himself which correspond to the parts of the sacrifice which he is ordered to take. Not only in his heart must he have right thoughts, but he must invite those who behold him, by the shoulder<sup>7</sup> of his deeds to sublime heights. He may not covet the good things of this present life, nor fear any adversity. He must despise the blandishments of the world by heeding the fear they inspire in his conscience, yet despise all fears in view of the sweet delights which his conscience holds out to him.

And for this reason, too, by command of the supernal voice the priest is bound with the humeral veil on each shoulder,<sup>8</sup> that he may be ever guarded by the adornment of virtue against both adversity and prosperity; that is to say, according to the words of Paul: *walking by the armour of justice on the right hand and on the left,*<sup>9</sup> striving after those things only which are interior, he should not be deflected on either side to base pleasure. Let him not be elated by prosperity, nor disconcerted by adversity. Let not the smooth enervate his will, nor the rough cast him down to despair; and thus, not lowering the determination of his mind in passions, he will display the great beauty of the humeral veil covering both his shoulders.

Further, it is rightly enjoined that the humeral veil be made of gold, hyacinth, purple, scarlet twice-dyed, and fine

twisted linen,<sup>10</sup> so that it may be evident with what variety of virtues the priest should be conspicuous. Thus, in the vesture of the priest the gold is resplendent beyond all else; so should he especially shine beyond all others in the understanding of wisdom. Hyacinth is added, brilliant with the colour of the skies, that by every matter which he penetrates with his understanding, he may not stoop to the base favours of earth, but rise up to the love of heavenly things. He must beware of being incautiously snared by praise, thus despoiling himself of even the appreciation of truth.

With the gold and blue of the vesture there is also a mingling of purple. That is to say, the heart of the priest, while hoping for those high matters about which he preaches, should repress in itself the remotest suggestions of vice. He should, as it were, with kingly power reject them, ever setting his gaze on the nobility of his interior regeneration and safeguarding by his way of living his right to the heavenly kingdom. It is this nobility of spirit that Peter mentions: *But you are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood.*<sup>11</sup> In regard also to the power with which we subdue vices, we are fortified by the words of John, who says: *But as many as have received Him, He gave them power to be made the sons of God.*<sup>12</sup> This dignity of fortitude the Psalmist has in view when he says: *But to me Thy friends, O God, are made exceedingly honourable, their principality is exceedingly strengthened;*<sup>13</sup> for, indeed, the mind of the Saints is exalted to princely eminence, when in the eyes of the world they suffer abasement.

Now, to gold, blue, and purple is added twice-dyed scarlet, to signify that in the eyes of the Judge of the heart all that is good in virtues must be adorned with charity, and

that everything that is resplendent in human eyes must in the sight of the Judge within be lit up with the flame of love coming from the heart. Moreover, because this charity embraces both God and neighbour, its radiance is, as it were, of a double hue. He, therefore, that sighs for the beauty of his Maker, but neglects the care of his neighbour, or who so compasses the care of the neighbour as to grow listless in divine love, in neglecting either of these, does not know what it means to have twice-dyed scarlet in the adornment of the humeral.

But while the mind is intent on the precepts of charity, it remains, beyond doubt, that the flesh must be mortified by abstinence. Consequently, fine-twisted linen is joined with the twice-dyed scarlet. Now, fine linen comes from the earth with radiant hue. And what else is designated by linen but chastity, radiant in the comeliness of bodily cleanness? The twisted linen is also woven into the beauty of the humeral, for then chastity issues into the perfect radiance of purity, when the flesh is spent with abstinence; and while thus, in company with the other virtues, the merit of mortified flesh is revealed, as it were, the twisted linen is resplendent in the variegated beauty of the humeral.

#### CHAPTER 4

*The ruler should be discreet in keeping silence  
and profitable in speech.*

The ruler should be discreet in keeping silence and profitable in speech, lest he utter what should be kept secret, or keep secret what should be uttered. For just as incautious speech leads men into error, so, too, unseasonable silence

leaves in error those who might have been instructed. Often, indeed, incautious rulers, being afraid of losing human favour, fear to speak freely of what is right, and, in the words of the Truth, do not exercise the zeal of shepherds caring for the flock, but serve the role of mercenaries;<sup>14</sup> for when the wolf appears, they flee and hide themselves in silence. Wherefore, the Lord reproves them through the Prophet, saying: *They are dumb dogs, not able to bark.*<sup>15</sup>

Again, He complains of them, saying: *You have not gone up to face the enemy, nor have you set up a wall for the house of Israel, to stand in battle in the day of the Lord.*<sup>16</sup> Now, to rise up against the enemy is to oppose worldly powers with candid speech in defence of the flock. To stand in battle in the day of the Lord is to resist from love of justice evil men who contend against us. For if a shepherd feared to say what is right, what else is that but to have turned his back by not speaking? But when one places himself in front of the flock to defend them, he obviously is opposing a wall for the house of Israel against the enemy.

Hence again, it is said to the sinful people: *Thy Prophets have seen false and foolish things for thee, and they have not laid open thy iniquity to excite thee to penance.*<sup>17</sup> Now, teachers are sometimes called Prophets in Sacred Scripture, in that they point out the fleeting nature of the present and disclose the future. Here they are accused by the divine utterance of seeing what is false, because, by fearing to reprove faults, they vainly flatter evil-doers by promising them immunity. They fail to disclose the wickedness of sinners by refraining from words of reproof.

Indeed, the word of reproof is the key of detection, since

reproof discloses the sin of which frequently even the doer is unaware. Wherefore, Paul says: . . . *that he may be able to exhort in sound doctrine and to convince the gain-sayers.*<sup>18</sup> So, by Malachias it is said: *The lips of the priest keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth, because he is the Angel of the Lord of Hosts.*<sup>19</sup>

Wherefore, through Isaias the Lord admonishes, saying: *Cry, cease not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet.*<sup>20</sup> He who enters on the priesthood undertakes the office of a herald, so that he cries out and precedes the coming of the Judge, who follows with terrible mien. If, then, the priest does not know how to preach, what vocal sound is this mute herald likely to give?

For this reason, then, the Holy Spirit settled on the first Pastors in the form of tongues;<sup>21</sup> for to those whom He fills, He instantly gives His own eloquence. Therefore, Moses is enjoined to see that when the priest enters the Tabernacle, he should be encompassed with little bells,<sup>22</sup> a sign that he must be endowed with utterance for preaching, lest by silence he provoke the judgment of Him who sees from on high. For it is written: . . . *that the sound may be heard when he goeth in and cometh out of the sanctuary in the sight of the Lord, and that he may not die.*<sup>23</sup> The priest going in or coming out dies if no sound is heard from him: that is to say, he arouses the wrath of the hidden Judge against him if he goes without the utterance of preaching.

The little bells are fittingly described as fixed to the vesture; and indeed, what else is to be understood by the priest's vestments but his righteous works? The Prophet witnesses to this when he says: *Let thy priests be clothed with justice.*<sup>24</sup> Therefore, little bells are fixed to the ves-

ture, that even the works of the priest should loudly proclaim his way of life in the sound of his speech.

But when the ruler prepares to speak, he must bear in mind to exercise a studious caution in his speech, for if his discourse, hastily given, be ill-ordered, the hearts of his hearers may be stricken with the wound of error, and when, perhaps, he wishes to appear wise, he will by his lack of wisdom sever the bond of unity. For this reason the Truth says: *Have salt in you, and have peace among you.*<sup>25</sup> By salt the wisdom of speech is indicated. He, then, who strives to speak wisely, should greatly fear lest by his words the unity of his hearers be confounded. Wherefore, Paul says: *Not to be more wise than it behoveth to be wise, but to be wise unto sobriety.*<sup>26</sup>

Hence in the vesture of the priest, in accordance with the divine word, pomegranates are added to the little bells.<sup>27</sup> What else is symbolised by pomegranates but the unity of faith? For as in the pomegranate many seeds within are protected by one outer rind, so, unity in faith comprehends numberless people of Holy Church, who, though varying in merits, are retained within her. Therefore, lest the ruler rush into careless speech, what we have said is proclaimed by the Truth to His disciples: *Have salt in you, and have peace among you*—as though He should say in employing the symbol of the vesture of the priest: “Join pomegranates to the little bells, so that in all that you say you may guardedly and cautiously maintain the unity of the faith.”

Rulers must also see to it with careful concern that not only should nothing evil proceed from their lips, but that not even what is proper be said in excess or in a slovenly manner. Often the force of what is said is wasted, when it

is enfeebled in the hearts of the hearers by a careless and offensive torrent of words. Indeed, this sort of loquacity defiles the speaker himself, inasmuch as it takes no notice of the practical needs of the audience. Wherefore, Moses aptly said: *The man that hath an issue of seed shall be unclean.*<sup>28</sup> For in the mind of the hearers the seed of their subsequent thought depends on the nature of what they have heard, since with the reception of speech through the medium of hearing the thought is begotten in the mind. Hence the great preacher was called by the philosophers of this world a “word-sower.”<sup>29</sup> He, then, who suffers an issue of seed is said to be unclean, because, given as he is to much speaking, he defiles himself by the fact that if he had been orderly in his speech, he could have produced a progeny of righteous thought in the hearts of his hearers; as it is, by spreading himself out in immoderate wordiness, he has an issue of seed not for the purpose of progeny, but to serve defilement.

Wherefore, Paul also, admonishing his disciple to be instant in preaching, said: *I charge thee before God and Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead, by His coming and His Kingdom: preach the word, be instant in season, out of season.*<sup>30</sup> When he was about to say “out of season,” he premised “in season,” for if being in season is not combined with being out of season, the preaching destroys itself in the mind of the hearer by its worthlessness.

## CHAPTER 5

*The ruler should be a neighbour in compassion to everyone and exalted above all in thought.*

Let the ruler be neighbour in compassion to everyone and exalted above all in thought, so that by the love of his heart he may transfer to himself the infirmities of others, and by the loftiness of his contemplation transcend even himself in his aspirations for the invisible things. Otherwise, while he has lofty aspirations, he will be disregarding the infirmities of his neighbours, or in accommodating himself to the weak, will cease to seek that which is above. Thus it was that Paul was led into paradise and searched into the secrets of the third heaven,<sup>81</sup> and yet, though raised aloft in that contemplation of invisible things, he recalled his mind's vision to the bed of carnal men, and set up norms for their secret relations, saying: *For fear of fornication, let every man have his own wife and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render the debt to his wife and the wife also in like manner to her husband.*<sup>82</sup> And a little farther on: *Defraud not one another, except perhaps, by consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to prayer, and return together again, lest Satan tempt you.*<sup>83</sup>

Note that he is already introduced to the secrets of Heaven, yet by condescending love he gives thought to the bed of carnal men; and though he raises the vision of his heart to invisible things, being himself elevated, yet he turns in compassion to the secrets of those who are weak. He reaches the heavens in contemplation, yet in his solici-

tude he does not ignore the couch of the carnal, for being united by the bond of charity to the highest and the lowest alike, though in person mightily caught up to the high places by the power of the Spirit, he is content in his loving-kindness to be weak with others in their weakness. Therefore, he said: *Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalised, and I am not on fire?*<sup>84</sup>

Hence, too, he says: *And I became to the Jews, a Jew.*<sup>85</sup> He did this, not by abandoning his faith, but by extending his loving-kindness. Thus, by transfiguring the person of the unbeliever into himself, he purposed to learn personally how he ought to compassionate others, how he should bestow on them what he would rightly wish them to bestow on himself, if their places were interchanged. Therefore, he says again: *Whether we be transported in mind, it is to God, or whether we be sober, it is for you.*<sup>86</sup> For he knew how to transcend himself by contemplation and how to employ restraint by his condescension for his hearers.

Thus Jacob, as the Lord leaned on the ladder above and the anointed stone was below, saw angels ascending and descending,<sup>87</sup> which was a sign that true preachers do not only aspire by contemplation to the Holy Head of the Church above, namely, the Lord, but also descend to its members in pity for them.

Thus Moses frequently goes in and out of the Tabernacle; and while within he is caught up in contemplation, outside he devotes himself to the affairs of the weak. Inwardly he considers the hidden things of God, outwardly he bears the burdens of carnal men. In doubtful matters, too, he always returns to the Tabernacle to consult the Lord in front of the Ark of the Covenant. He thus, no doubt, sets an example to rulers, that when they are un-

certain what dispositions to make in secular matters, they should always return to reflection, as though to the Tabernacle, and there, as it were, standing before the Ark of the Covenant, should consult the Lord, whether they should seek a solution of their problems in the pages of the Sacred Word.

Thus the Truth Itself, manifested to us by assuming our human nature, engaged in prayer on the mountain and worked miracles in the towns.<sup>38</sup> He thus showed the way to be followed by good rulers, who, though they strive after the highest things by contemplation, should nevertheless by their compassion share in the needs of the weak. Then, indeed, charity rises to sublime heights, when in pity it is drawn by the lowly things of the neighbour, and the more kindly it stoops to infirmity, the mightier is its reach to the highest.

But those who rule others should show themselves such that their subjects are unafraid to reveal their hidden secrets to them.<sup>38a</sup> Thus, when these little ones are enduring the waves of temptation, they will have recourse to the pastor's understanding as to a mother's bosom; and in the solace of his comforting words and in their prayerful tears they will cleanse themselves when they see themselves defiled by the sin that buffets them.

Hence also it is that in front of the doors of the Temple there is a sea of brass for washing the hands of those who enter the Temple, that is to say, a laver, supported by twelve oxen, whose faces are plainly visible, but whose hinder parts are not visible.<sup>39</sup> What else is symbolised by the twelve oxen but the whole order of pastors? Of these the Law says, as Paul reports: *Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.*<sup>40</sup> We see the

work they do openly, but do not see the rest that later awaits them in the secret requital of the strict Judge. Those, however, who make ready in their patient condescension to cleanse the confessed sins of the neighbour, support the laver, as it were, in front of the door of the Temple. Whosoever, then, is striving to enter the gate of eternity, may reveal his temptations to the mind of the pastor, and cleanse the hands of thought or deed, as it were, in the laver of the oxen.

Now, it happens frequently that, while the ruler's mind in his condescension learns of the trials of others, he also is assailed by the temptations which he gives ear to; for in the case of the laver, too, that was mentioned as serving the cleansing of the multitude, it is certainly defiled. In receiving the filth of those who wash in it, it loses its limpid clearness. But the pastor need not fear these things at all, for when God weighs all things exactly, the pastor is the more easily delivered from temptation, as he is the more compassionately afflicted by the temptations of others.

#### CHAPTER 6

*The ruler should in humility be the comrade of those who live the good life; but in his zeal for righteousness he should be stern with the vices of evil-doers.*

The ruler should in humility be the comrade of those who lead good lives, but stern with the vices of evil-doers. He must not set himself over the good in any way, and when the sins of the wicked demand it, he must assert the power of his supremacy at once. Thus, waiving aside his rank,



he regards himself the equal of his subjects who lead good lives, but does not shrink from exercising the laws of rectitude against the perverse. For, as I remember to have said in the *Books of Morals*,<sup>41</sup> it is clear that nature brought forth all men in equality, while guilt has placed some below others, in accordance with the order of their varying demerits. This diversity, which results from vice, is a dispensation of the divine judgment, much as one man must be ruled by another, since all men cannot be on an equal footing.

Wherefore, all who are superiors should not regard in themselves the power of their rank, but the equality of their nature; and they should find their joy not in ruling over men, but in helping them.<sup>42</sup> For our ancient fathers are recorded to have been not kings of men, but shepherds of flocks. And when the Lord said to Noe and his sons: *Increase and multiply and fill the earth*, He at once added: *And let the fear and dread of you be upon all the beasts of the earth.*<sup>43</sup> Fear and dread were prescribed for all the beasts of the earth, but forbidden to be exercised over men. By nature a man is made superior to the beasts, but not to other men; it is, therefore, said to him that he is to be feared by beasts, but not by men. Evidently, to wish to be feared by an equal is to lord it over others, contrary to the natural order.

Yet it is necessary that rulers should be feared by subjects, when they see that the latter do not fear God. Lacking fear of God's judgments, these must at least fear sin out of human respect. It is not at all a case of exhibiting pride when superiors seek to inspire fear, whereby they do not seek personal glory, but the righteousness of their subjects. In fact, in inspiring fear in those who lead evil

lives, superiors lord it, as it were, over beasts, not over men, because, in so far as their subjects are beasts, they ought also to be subjugated by fear.

Often, however, a ruler by the very fact of his pre-eminence over others becomes conceited, and because everything is at his service, because his orders are quickly executed to suit his wishes, because all his subjects praise him for what he has done well, but have no authority to criticise what he has done amiss and because they usually praise even what they ought to blame, his mind, led astray by those below him, is lifted above itself. While he is outwardly surrounded by abounding favours, the truth within him is made void. Forgetful of what he is, he is diverted by the commendations of others, and believes himself to be such as he hears himself outwardly proclaimed to be, not such as he should inwardly judge himself. He despises his subjects and does not acknowledge them to be his equals in the order of nature; and those whom he has excelled by the fortuity of power, he believes he has also surpassed by the merits of his life. He esteems himself to be wiser than any of those whom he sees he exceeds in power. For he puts himself on an eminence in his own estimation, and though he has his own limitations by reason of the equality of nature with others, he disdains to regard others as being on his level. He thus brings himself to be the like of him of whom Scripture says: *He beholdeth every high thing, and he is king over all the children of pride.*<sup>44</sup> He who aspired to singular eminence and disdained life in common with the angels, said: *I will place my seat in the North, I will be like the Most High.*<sup>45</sup> By a wonderful decree, therefore, he finds within himself the pit of his downfall, while outwardly exalting himself

on the pinnacle of power. Man is made like the apostate angel when he disdains, though a man, to be like other men.

✓ In this way Saul, after having distinguished himself for his humility, was swollen with pride in the eminence of his power; by his humility he was advanced, by his pride, rejected, as the Lord attested, saying: *When thou wast a little one in thy own eyes, did I not make thee the head of the tribes of Israel?*<sup>40</sup> He had previously seen himself a little one in his own eyes, but relying on temporal power, he no longer saw himself to be a little one. Preferring himself to others, he regarded himself great above all others, because he had greater power than they. And in a wonderful way, while a little one in his own esteem, he was great with God, but when he thought himself to be great, he was little with God.

✓ Usually, then, when the mind of a man is inflated with a multitude of subjects under him, he becomes corrupted and moved to pride by the eminence of his power which panders to the mind. But such power is truly well-controlled by one who knows how both to assert and oppose it. He controls it well who knows how through it to obtain the mastery over sin, and knows how with it to associate with others on terms of equality. For the human mind is prone to pride even when not supported by power; how much more, then, does it exalt itself when it has that support! But he disposes his power aright, who knows how, with great care, both to derive from it what is profitable, and to subdue the temptations which it creates, and how, though in possession of it, to realise his equality with others, and at the same time set himself above sinners in his zeal for retribution.

This is a distinction which will be more fully understood when we consider the examples given by the first Pastor. Peter, who held from God the primacy in Holy Church, refused to accept excessive veneration from Cornelius though he acted rightly in humbly prostrating himself; but Peter acknowledged in him his equal, when he said: *Arise, do not act so; I myself also am a man.*<sup>47</sup> But when the guilt of Ananias and Sapphira were discovered by him, he at once showed with what great authority he had been made pre-eminent over others.<sup>48</sup> By his word he smote their life when he laid it bare by his penetrating spirit. He recalled to his mind that in the question of opposition to sin he was supreme in the Church, but such distinction was not present to his mind when among upright brethren honour was eagerly exhibited to him. In the one instance holy conduct was met by the assertion of common equality; in the other, zeal for retributive justice revealed the right of authority.

Paul showed no consciousness of his pre-eminence over his deserving brethren when he said: *Not because we exercise dominion over your faith, but we are helpers of your joy; and he presently added: For in faith you stand,*<sup>49</sup> as if to explain what he had said, namely: "We do not lord it over your faith, for in faith you stand, and we are equals with you wherein we know you stand." It was as if he was not aware of his pre-eminence over his brethren, when he said: *We became little ones in the midst of you;*<sup>50</sup> and again: . . . *and ourselves your servants through Christ.*<sup>51</sup> But when he discovered a fault which required correction, he at once remembered that he was master, saying: *What will you? Shall I come to you with a rod?*<sup>52</sup>

Supreme rank is, therefore, well-administered, when the

superior lords it over vices rather than over brethren. When rulers correct their delinquent subjects, it is incumbent on them to observe carefully that, while they smite faults with due discipline in virtue of their authority, they acknowledge, by observing humility, that they are only the equals of the brethren whom they correct. But we should as a regular practice in thoughtful silence prefer to ourselves those whom we correct, for it is through us that their vices are smitten with rigorous discipline, whereas in the case of our own vices we are not chastised even by verbal censure of anyone. Therefore, we are the more bounden before the Lord, inasmuch as we sin with impunity before men. On the other hand, our discipline renders our subjects the more exempt from the divine judgment, as it does not exempt them here from punishment for their faults.

Consequently, humility must be preserved in the heart, and discipline in action. Between these two, we must diligently beware not to relax the rights of government by immoderate adherence to the virtue of humility, for if the superior depreciates himself unduly, he may be unable to restrain the lives of subjects under the bond of discipline. Let rulers, therefore, uphold externally what they undertake for the service of others, and internally retain their fear in their estimate of themselves. Nevertheless, let the subjects themselves perceive, by signs becomingly manifested, that their rulers are humble in their own estimation. They should thus apprehend both what they ought to fear from authority, and what to imitate in the sphere of humility.

Superiors, then, should ceaselessly take care that the greater the external manifestation of power, the more is

it to be kept in subjection internally. It must not subdue their thought, it must not so carry the mind away as to captivate it for itself; otherwise the mind will be unable to control that to which it subjects itself in its lust for domination. That the mind of the ruler may not be carried away and elated in the enjoyment of power, it is rightly said by a man of wisdom: *Have they made thee a ruler? Be not lifted up, but be among them as one of them.*<sup>53</sup> So, too, Peter says: . . . *not as lording it over the clergy, but being made a pattern of the flock.*<sup>54</sup> So, the Truth in person, inviting us to the more sublime merits of virtue, says: *You know that the princes of the Gentiles lord it over them, and they that are the greater exercise power upon them. It shall not be so among you, but whosoever will be the greater among you, let him be your minister; and he that will be first among you, shall be your servant. Even as the Son of man is not come to be ministered unto, but to minister.*<sup>55</sup>

Wherefore it is that He indicates the punishment in store for the servant who becomes proud on his assumption of rule, saying: *But if that evil servant shall say in his heart: My lord is long a-coming, and shall begin to strike his fellow servants, and shall eat and drink with drunkards, the lord of that servant shall come in a day that he hopeth not, and at an hour that he knoweth not; and shall separate him, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites.*<sup>56</sup> That man is rightly accounted a hypocrite, who diverts the ministry of government to purposes of domination.

Sometimes, though, greater evil ensues when in the case of wicked persons a policy of equality is adhered to rather than of discipline. Heli, for example, overcome by

misguided affection, and unwilling to chastise his delinquent sons, struck both himself and his sons before the strict Judge with a cruel sentence, for the divine utterance was: *Thou hast honoured thy sons rather than me.*<sup>57</sup> So, too, he chides the shepherds by the Prophet, saying: *That which was broken you have not bound up, and that which was driven away you have not brought back.*<sup>58</sup> One who has been cast away is brought back when, after having fallen into sin, he is recalled to the state of righteousness by the influence of pastoral care; and the ligature binds a fracture when discipline subdues sin, lest the wound's continued flow lead to death if a tight compress does not bind it up. Often, however, the fracture is made worse by an unskillful ligature, so that the lesion causes even greater pain from being bound up too tightly.

Wherefore, it is necessary that when the wound of sin in the subject is repressed by correction, even the restraint must be most carefully moderated, lest the feeling of kindness be extinguished by the manner in which the principles of discipline are exercised against the sinner. For care must be taken that loving-kindness, like that of a mother, be displayed by the ruler towards his subjects, and correction given as by a father. In all such cases treatment must be bestowed with care and circumspection, lest discipline be too rigid, or loving-kindness too lax.

We have said in the *Books on Morals* that either discipline or compassion is greatly wanting, if one is exercised independently of the other.<sup>59</sup> But rulers in their relations with subjects should be animated by compassion duly considerate and by discipline affectionately severe.<sup>60</sup> This is what the Truth teaches<sup>61</sup> concerning the man who was half-dead and was taken to an inn by the care of a Samari-

tan, wine and oil being applied to his wounds, the wine to cauterize them, and the oil to soothe them. Thus it is necessary that he who sees to the healing of wounds should apply in wine biting pain and in oil soothing tenderness, for wine cleanses suppuration and oil promotes the course of healing. In other words, gentleness is to be mingled with severity; a compound is to be made of both, so that subjects may not be exasperated by too great harshness, nor enervated by excessive tenderness.

This, as St. Paul says,<sup>62</sup> is well symbolised by that Ark of the Tabernacle, in which, together with the Tables, were the rod and the manna; because if with the knowledge of the Sacred Scriptures in the breast of the good ruler there is the restraining rod, there should also be the manna of sweetness. Wherefore, David says: *Thy rod and Thy staff, they have comforted me.*<sup>63</sup> It is with a rod that we are smitten, but we are supported by a staff. If, then, there is the correction of the rod in striking, let there be the comfort of the staff in supporting.

There should, then, be love that does not enervate, vigour that does not exasperate, zeal not too immoderate and uncontrolled, loving-kindness that spares, yet not more than is befitting. Thus, while justice and clemency are blended in supreme rule, the ruler will soothe the hearts of his subjects even when he inspires fear, and yet in soothing them, hold them to reverential awe for him.

## CHAPTER 7

*In his preoccupation with external matters the ruler should not relax his care for the inner life, nor should his solicitude for the inner life cause neglect of the external.*

Let the ruler not relax the care of the inner life by pre-occupying himself with external matters, nor should his solicitude for the inner life bring neglect of the external, lest, being engrossed with what is external, he be ruined inwardly, or being preoccupied with what concerns only his inner self, he does not bestow on his neighbours the necessary external care. For often some persons, forgetting that they are superiors of their brethren for the sake of their souls, devote themselves with all concentration of heart to secular cares. These they gladly attend to when the occasion offers, but when the occasion is not present, hanker after them day and night with the surge of a disordered mind. When they find a respite from these occupations, because the occasion for them has gone by, they are the more wearied by the respite itself. For they take it as a pleasure to be weighed down by such activities, and regard it laborious not to be labouring in earthly concerns. And so it happens that, while they rejoice in being weighed down with tumultuous worldly business, they disregard those interior matters which they ought to be teaching others. Consequently, the life of their subjects undoubtedly grows languid, because, though these wish to make spiritual progress, they are confronted with the stumbling-block, as it were, of the example of their superior.

For when the head languishes, the members have no vigour. It is in vain that an army, seeking contact with the enemy, hurries behind its leader, if he has lost the way. No exhortation then uplifts the minds of subjects, no reproof castigates their faults, for when one who is a spiritual guardian fulfils the office of a judge of the world, the shepherd's care of the flock is lacking; and subjects cannot see the light of the truth, for when earthly cares occupy the pastor's mind, dust, driven by the winds of temptation, blinds the eyes of the Church.

When to counteract this state of things, the Redeemer of the human race, wishing to restrain us from gluttony, appositely said: *But take heed to yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness*, He promptly added: *or the cares of this life*. On the same occasion He designedly added the element of fear, for He said: *Lest perchance that day come upon you suddenly*. The character of that day, too, He proclaimed, saying: *For as a snare shall it come upon all that sit upon the face of the whole earth.*<sup>64</sup> For the same reason He says again: *No one can serve two masters.*<sup>65</sup>

Wherefore, Paul withdraws the minds of religious persons from consorting with the world, by summoning, nay, rather by enlisting them, when he says: *No man, being a soldier to God, entangleth himself with secular businesses, that he may please him to whom he hath engaged himself.*<sup>66</sup> He, therefore, orders the rulers of the Church to aim at being free from these things, and by his counsel points to the remedy, saying: *If, therefore, you have judgments of things pertaining to this world, set them to judge who are the most despised in the Church,*<sup>67</sup> that is, those persons should engage in earthly affairs who are

not adorned with spiritual gifts. Speaking more plainly, he might say: "Since these are incapable of penetrating interior matters, let them at least busy themselves with the necessary external things." Hence Moses, who speaks with God, is judged by the reproof of Jethro, a man of alien race, on the ground that he devotes himself by his ill-advised labour to the earthly affairs of the people.<sup>68</sup> At the same time counsel is given him to appoint others in his stead for the composing of strifes, so that he himself may be more free to learn the secrets of spiritual matters for teaching the people.

Subjects, then, are to transact inferior matters, rulers to attend to the highest, so that the eye, which is set above for guiding the steps, may not be dimmed by annoying dust. For all rulers are the heads of their subjects, and surely the head ought to look forward from above, that the feet may be able to go onward on a straight path. Otherwise, if the body's upright posture becomes bent and if the head stoops toward the earth, the feet will drag in the way of progress. But with what conscience can the ruler of souls use his pastoral rank among others, if he himself is engaged in those earthly occupations which he should reprehend in others? This is, indeed, what the Lord in the anger of His just retribution threatened through the Prophet when He said: *And there shall be like people like priest.*<sup>69</sup> Priest is, indeed, like people, when a man performing a spiritual office does what they do who are still adjudged in terms of carnal pursuits. This is contemplated and deplored by the Prophet Jeremias in the great grief of his charity, under the symbol of the destruction of the Temple, when he says: *How is the gold become dim, the finest colour is changed, the stones of the*

*sanctuary are scattered in the top of every street!*<sup>70</sup> And indeed, what is meant by gold which surpasses all other metals, but surpassing holiness? What is meant by the finest colour, but the reverence paid to religion, beloved by all men? What, by the stones of the sanctuary, but persons in Sacred Orders? What is signified by the term streets, but the expanse of this life? Since in the Greek language width is expressed by *platos*,<sup>71</sup> obviously streets (*plateae*) are so termed for their expanse. The Truth Himself says: *Wide and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction.*<sup>72</sup>

Now, gold is dimmed when a holy life is corrupted by earthly deeds. The finest colour is changed when the former esteem of those who were credited with living religiously is diminished. For when anyone resigns himself to earthly activities after a life of constant holiness, reverence for him is ignored and grows dim, as though his lustre had faded in the eyes of men.

Further, the stones of the sanctuary are scattered in the streets when those who should have occupied themselves in the interior mysteries for the adornment of the Church, as it were in the secrets of the Tabernacle, wander outside in the broad ways of secular affairs. Evidently, they were made the stones of the sanctuary, that they might appear in the vesture of the High Priest within the Holy of Holies. But when the ministers of religion do not demand the Redeemer's honour from their subjects by their meritorious way of living, the stones of the sanctuary are not in the vesture of the High Priest. Indeed, the stones of the sanctuary lie scattered through the streets, when persons in Sacred Orders, given over to the laxity of their pleasures, cling to earthly affairs.

We should observe, too, that these are said to be scattered, not merely through the streets, but at the top of the streets; that is to say, even when they are engaged in earthly matters, they wish to appear at the top, so as to both occupy the broad ways in the enjoyment of their delights, and yet to be at the top of the street in the external repute of holiness.

Furthermore, we are not prevented from understanding these stones to be the stones from which the sanctuary had been constructed. They lie scattered at the top of the streets, when men in Sacred Orders, in whose office of holiness the glory of sanctity was previously seen to exist, devote themselves to the preference of earthly affairs. Secular employments, then, are sometimes to be sympathetically put up with, but never sought after out of affection for them. Otherwise, when they oppress the mind of him who is attached to them, he becomes submerged by the weight and sinks down from the concerns of Heaven even to the very depths.

Some, on the contrary, undertake the charge of the flock, but wish to be so free for spiritual occupations, as not to give any time at all to external matters. Now, when such people wholly neglect to attend to what pertains to the body, they afford no help to their subjects. It is no wonder that their preaching is disregarded for the most part, for while chiding the deeds of sinners, and not giving them the necessities of the present life, their words certainly do not find sympathetic listeners. Doctrine taught does not penetrate the minds of the needy, if a compassionate heart does not commend it to the hearts of hearers; but the seed of the word does germinate promptly, when the kindness of a preacher waters it in the hearer's heart.

Therefore, that the ruler may be able to plant within, he must also, with irreproachable intention, make provision for what is external. Let pastors, then, give their entire devotion to the inner life of their subjects, yet not neglect to provide for the exterior life also.

As I have said, the mind of the flock is, as it were, justified in being averse to accepting the words of the preacher, if the pastor neglects the duty of affording external help. Wherefore, too, the first Pastor gave this earnest admonition, saying: *The ancients that are among you, I beseech, who am myself also an ancient, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as also a partaker of that glory which is to be revealed in time to come, feed the flock of God which is among you.*<sup>73</sup> In this place he makes it clear whether it was the feeding of the heart or of the body that he was urging, when he presently added: *taking care of it, not by constraint, but willingly, according to God, not for filthy lucre's sake, but voluntarily.*<sup>74</sup>

In these words obviously a kindly forewarning is given to pastors lest, while they satisfy the needs of those under them, they slay themselves with the dagger of ambition, and when the neighbours are refreshed with succour given to the body, the pastors themselves remain bereft of the bread of righteousness. Paul excites that pastoral solicitude when he says: *He who has not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.*<sup>75</sup> In these matters, therefore, they must always fear and watchfully take heed lest, while engaged in external cares, they be weaned away entirely from aspirations of their inner selves. For it commonly happens, as I have said, that when the hearts or rulers are incautiously occupied with temporal cares,

their interior love grows cold, and immersed in external affairs, they do not fear forgetting that they have undertaken the guidance of souls. Consequently, the care that is expended externally on their subjects is to be kept within defined limits.

For that reason, it was well said by Ezechiel: *The priests shall not shave their heads, nor wear long hair, but they shall only poll their heads.*<sup>76</sup> For they are rightly called priests, who preside over the faithful to afford them guidance in sacred matters.<sup>77</sup> The hairs on the head are the thoughts about exterior matters. When these grow insensibly above the brain, they denote the cares of this life, which, sometimes arising unseasonably for lack of advertence, issue forth, as it were, while we are unconscious of them. Since, then, all who are placed over others should, indeed, have a care of external matters, but without being excessively occupied with them, priests are rightly forbidden to shave the head, or let the hair grow long, that so they may not wholly discard all consideration for the flesh on behalf of the lives of their subjects, nor again, allow it to engross them too much. Wherefore, it is well said: *They shall only poll their heads*, that is, care for temporal concerns must be displayed as much as need be, yet promptly reduced, lest it increase beyond measure. While, then, bodily life is safeguarded by employing provident care for what is external, and again, is not impeded through a moderate vigilance of the heart, hairs on the head of the priest are kept to cover the skin, but are cut away, so as not to veil the eyes.

## CHAPTER 8

*The ruler should not be zealous to please men, yet should give heed to what ought to please them.*

At the same time it is also necessary that a ruler should be studiously vigilant that he be not actuated by the desire of pleasing men; that, while seriously penetrating the inner life, and with provident care supplying the things that are external, he does not seek to be loved by his subjects more than he seeks truth; or that while relying on his good actions and giving himself the appearance of a stranger to the world, his self-love does not render him a stranger to his Maker.

For that man is an enemy to his Redeemer who on the strength of the good works he performs, desires to be loved by the Church, rather than by Him. Indeed, a servant is guilty of adulterous thought, if he craves to please the eyes of the bride when the bridegroom sends gifts to her by him. In truth, when this self-love captures a ruler's mind, it sometimes rushes him into inordinate laxity, sometimes into asperity. For from love of himself, the ruler's mind is diverted into laxity, when he sees his subjects sinning and does not dare to correct them, lest their love of him grow weak; indeed, sometimes when he should have reproved their faults, he glosses them over with adulation. Wherefore, it is well said by the Prophet: *Woe to them that sew cushions under every elbow, and make pillows for the heads of persons of every age, to catch souls.*<sup>78</sup> To put cushions under every elbow is to cherish with smooth flattery souls that are falling away from



rectitude and are reclining in the pleasures of this world. It is as if a person reclined with a cushion under the elbow, or a pillow under his head, when severe reproof is withheld from him when he sins, and enervating favouritism is bestowed on him, that he may recline at ease in his error, the while no asperity of reproof assails him.

This attitude the rulers show to those, of course, from whom they fear they can be retarded in the pursuit of temporal glory. Indeed, persons who in their estimation can do nothing against them, they constantly hound with bitter and harsh reproof. They never admonish them gently, but, forgetful of pastoral meekness, terrify them in the exercise of their right to govern. The divine word rightly reproveth such rulers by the Prophet, saying: *But you ruled over them with rigour and with a high hand.*<sup>79</sup> These love themselves more than their Maker, and brag as they take measures against their subjects. They have no thought for what they should do, but only for the power that is theirs. They do not fear the judgment to come. They glory impiously in their temporal power, it pleases them to do freely what is wrong, and without any opposition from their subjects.

He, therefore, who sets himself to act evilly and yet wishes others to be silent, is a witness against himself, for he wishes himself to be loved more than the truth, which he does not wish to be defended against himself. There is, of course, no man who so lives as not sometimes to sin; but he wishes truth to be loved more than himself, who wills to be spared by no one against the truth. Wherefore, Peter willingly accepted the rebuke of Paul;<sup>80</sup> David willingly hearkened to the reproof of a subject.<sup>81</sup> For good rulers who pay no regard to self-love, take as a homage

to their humility the free and sincere words of subjects. But in this regard the office of ruling must be tempered with such great art of moderation, that the minds of subjects, when demonstrating themselves capable of taking right views in some matters, are given freedom of expression, but freedom that does not issue into pride; otherwise, when liberty of speech is granted too generously, the humility of their own lives will be lost.

It is also to be observed that good rulers should wish to please men, but so as to draw their neighbours to the love of truth by the fair esteem they have of their rulers, not that these long to be loved themselves, but wish that this love should be a road, as it were, whereby they lead the hearts of the hearers to the love of the Creator. It is difficult for one who is not loved, however well he preaches, to find a sympathetic hearing. Wherefore, he who rules ought to aim at being loved, that he may be listened to, and yet not seek to be loved on his own account, lest he be discovered to rebel in the tyranny of his thought against Him whom he ostensibly serves in his office.

This is well suggested by Paul, when he reveals to us the secrets of his endeavour, saying: . . . *as I also in all things please all men;*<sup>82</sup> though again he says: *If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.*<sup>83</sup> Thus Paul pleases and does not please, because, in wishing to please he sought not to please men, but that through him truth might please men.

## CHAPTER 9

*The ruler should realise well that vices often masquerade as virtues.*

The ruler should also understand that vices commonly masquerade as virtues. Often, for instance, a niggard passes himself off as frugal, while one who is prodigal conceals his character when he calls himself open-handed. Often inordinate laxity is believed to be kindness, and unbridled anger passes as the virtue of spiritual zeal. Precipitancy is frequently taken as efficient promptitude, and dilatoriness as grave deliberation.

Wherefore, it is necessary that the ruler of souls discern with care and vigilance virtues from vices, lest niggardliness take possession of his heart while he exults in appearing frugal in his outlays, or when prodigally wasteful, he boast of his liberality as if it were compassion, or by passing over what should be castigated, he drag his subjects to eternal punishment, or when he mercilessly smites offences, he himself offend more grievously, or when his action could have been performed with rectitude and gravity, it become spoiled by unseasonable anticipation, or by deferring a good and meritorious act, it become changed into an evil one.

## CHAPTER 10

*The prudence required of the ruler in applying correction and connivance, rigour and gentleness.*

It should also be observed that at times the faults of subjects must be prudently overlooked, but they should be given to understand that they are being overlooked. Sometimes even what is openly known should be judiciously tolerated, while in other cases even hidden faults must be subjected to a close scrutiny; and, as the case may be, they should be either gently reprovéd or sharply censured.

Some things are, as we have said, to be prudently connived at, but the connivance indicated, so that when the delinquent sees that he has been discovered and tolerated, he may be ashamed to augment the faults which he realises are tolerated in silence, and may punish himself in being his own judge, when the patience of the ruler mercifully excuses him. It was with such connivance that the Lord fitly reprovéd Judea, when He said through the Prophet: *Thou hast lied, and hast not been mindful of me, nor thought on me in thy heart. For I am silent and as one that seeth not.*<sup>84</sup> He, therefore, both connived at her faults and let her know that He was doing so. He said nothing against the sinner, and yet declared the fact that He had held His peace. For some things, even openly known, are to be judiciously tolerated, when, that is, the occasion is not suitable for public reprehension. For wounds are more inflamed by untimely incisions, and if

medicaments do not suit the occasion, it is certain that they do not serve their purpose of healing.

But while an opportunity is being sought for the correction of subjects, the patience of the ruler is tried under the burden of their faults, and so it is well said by the Psalmist: *The wicked have wrought upon my back;*<sup>85</sup> for it is on the back that we carry burdens. He complains, therefore, that sinners had wrought upon his back, as though he meant to say in plain words: "Those whom I cannot correct, I carry as a burden."

Some secret matters should, however, be closely investigated, so that from certain symptoms breaking out, the ruler may discover all that lurks hidden in the minds of his subjects, and by timely reproof come to know from insignificant things what is more serious. Hence it is rightly said to Ezechiel: *Son of man, dig in the wall;* and presently the same Prophet adds: *And when I had digged in the wall, behold, a door. And He said to me: Go in, and see the wicked abominations which they commit here. And I went in and saw, and behold, every form of creeping things, and the abomination of living creatures, and all the idols of the house of Israel were painted on the wall.*<sup>86</sup>

By Ezechiel is symbolised the persons of those in authority; by the wall, the obduracy of their subjects. And what else is it to dig in the wall, but to open out the obduracy of the heart by thoroughgoing questioning? And when he had dug into it, a door was discovered: that is to say, when the obduracy of the heart is penetrated by either searching inquisitions or judicious reproofs, a door, as it were, is revealed, through which every interior thought is seen. Wherefore, fitting words follow: *Go in,*

*and see the wicked abominations which they commit here.* He goes in, as it were, to see the abominations, and by examining certain external symptoms, he sees into the hearts of his subjects, so that all the evil thoughts therein are disclosed to him.

Wherefore, the Prophet adds: *And I went in and saw, and behold, every form of creeping things and the abomination of living things.* By creeping things thoughts that are wholly earthly are symbolised, whereas living things stand for thoughts which are, indeed, slightly lifted above the earth, but such as still look for the reward of earthly recompense. For creeping things cling with the whole body to the earth, while living things have their bodies to a great extent lifted above the earth, but are ever bent towards it with their gluttonous appetite. Wherefore, there are creeping things within the wall, when thoughts are revolved in the mind that never rise above earthly desires.

There are also living things within the wall, when, though some thoughts are right and good, yet they are subservient to the desire for temporal gains and honours, and though in themselves, as it were lifted above the earth, yet through their craving to ingratiate themselves—by their gluttonous desires, so to speak—they debase themselves to the lowest. Wherefore, the apposite addition: *And all the idols of the house of Israel were painted on the wall.* For it is written: . . . *and covetousness, which is the service of idols.*<sup>87</sup> Rightly, then, after the living things idols are adduced: some though lifting themselves, as it were, above the earth by upright deeds, yet lower themselves to earth by unrighteous ambition. It is also well said that they were painted, because, when the images of

external things are drawn into consciousness, what is revolved in the mind by thinking in pictured imagery, is, as it were, portrayed on the heart. It is, therefore, to be observed that an opening in the wall is first perceived, then a door, and only then is the hidden abomination revealed; for the signs of every sin first appear outwardly, then a door for the disclosure of open iniquity is shown, and then, at last, every evil that lurks within is manifested.

Some things are, however, to be reproved gently. Thus, when sin is committed, not through malice, but through sheer ignorance or frailty, it is then, indeed, necessary to temper reproof of the sin with great forbearance. For, in truth, all of us are subject to the frailties of our corrupt nature so long as we remain in this mortal flesh. Each one, therefore, ought to infer from his own case to what degree he should have mercy on the weakness of others, lest he seem forgetful of his own estate when he violently rushes into reproof of the frailty of his neighbour. Wherefore, Paul admonishes us, saying: *If a man be overtaken in any fault, you who are spiritual, instruct such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*<sup>88</sup> It is as though he meant to say in so many words, that when the sight of another's infirmity is displeasing, reflect on what you are, that the spirit may moderate itself in its zeal for reproof, in fearing in its own case that which it reproveth.

Nevertheless, there are some things which are to be reproved severely, so that when a fault is not recognised by the one committing it, he may appreciate its gravity by the verbal reproof, or when he glosses over to himself the evil he has done, he may have serious apprehension for himself owing to the asperity of the reproof given. It

is, surely, the duty of the ruler to reveal the glory of our homeland in Heaven by preaching, to show what great temptations of the ancient Enemy are lurking in this life's journey, and to correct with severe and zealous asperity those evils in his subjects which cannot be treated with forbearance, lest, being too little incensed against such faults, he himself be held guilty of all.

Wherefore, it is well said to Ezechiel: *Take thee a tile, and lay it before thee, and draw upon it the plan of the city of Jerusalem; and it is immediately added: . . . And lay siege against it, and build forts, and cast up a mound, and set a camp against it and place battering-rams round about it.* For his own defence, it is at once added: *And take unto thee an iron pan, and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city.*<sup>89</sup>

Now, of what is Ezechiel a type but of teachers when it is said to him: *Take thee a tile, and lay it before thee, and draw upon it the plan of the city of Jerusalem?* Holy teachers take to themselves a tile, when they undertake to teach the earthly heart of their hearers; and this tile they lay before themselves, in that they guard it with their entire devotion. They are also ordered to draw upon it a plan of the city of Jerusalem: that is, by preaching they are at great pains to reveal to mundane hearts the vision of supernal peace. But since the glory of the heavenly country is recognised to no purpose unless it is also learned what great temptations of the crafty Enemy rush upon us here, it is appositely added: *And lay siege against it, and build forts.* Holy preachers lay siege about the tile on which the city of Jerusalem is portrayed, when a mind that is mundane but already a seeker of the supernal country, is shown how violent is the attack of opposing

vices in this life. For when it is shown how every single sin lays siege to those who are making progress, it is as if the words of the preacher were describing a siege of Jerusalem.

But because it should be known not only how vices assail us, but how virtues which are cherished lend us strength, it is rightly added: *and build forts*. The holy preacher builds forts, when he shows us what virtues are to be opposed to the several vices. And since, as virtue grows strong, the wars of temptations commonly increase, it is again rightly added: *and cast up a mound, and set a camp against it, and place battering-rams round about it*. The preacher casts up a mound, when he discourses of the mass of increasing temptation; he sets up a camp against Jerusalem, when he forewarns those hearers who are rightly disposed, of the stealthy and almost incredible ambushes of the crafty Enemy; and he stations battering-rams all round, when he makes known the darts of temptations that encompass us on all sides in this life, and how they pierce through the walls of our virtues.

But, however minutely the ruler indicates these matters, he is not discharging his responsibility for eternity, unless his fervent spirit glows with zeal in opposing the delinquencies of each individual. Wherefore, again, it is rightly added: *And take unto thee an iron pan, and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city*. For by the pan is symbolised a scorching of the mind, and by iron, the hardness of reproof; and what scorches and excruciates the mind of the teacher more than burning zeal for God? Wherefore, Paul was burnt by the frying pan when he said: *Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalised, and I am not on fire?*<sup>90</sup> And since the man who is

inflamed with zeal for God is fortified by a strong, permanent defence, lest he be condemned for negligence, it is rightly said: *Set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city*. The iron pan is set as an iron wall between the Prophet and the city, when rulers in their office display a vigorous zeal and this zeal serves them as a strong fortification between themselves and their hearers; thus they do not become bereft of the power of punishing, which would be the case if they were remiss in administering reproof.

But in regard to all these matters, we must bear in mind that when the mind of the teacher is incited to reprove, it is very difficult not to break forth sometimes into expressions that should have been avoided. It commonly happens that when the fault of a subject is corrected with harsh invective, the master is driven to excess in words; and when reproof blazes forth immoderately, the hearts of the sinners fall into dejection and despair. Wherefore, it is necessary that an exasperated ruler, on reflecting that he has smitten the mind of subjects more than he should have done, must take stock of himself and perform penance, to obtain pardon in the sight of the Truth by his sorrow, and for the reason, too, that it was through the ardour of his zeal that he sinned.

This is what the Lord enjoins on Moses in a figure, saying: *If a man go guilelessly with his friend to the wood to hew timber, and the wood of the axe slipped out of his hand and the iron, slipping from the handle, struck his friend and killed him: he shall flee to one of the cities aforesaid and live, lest perhaps the next kinsman of him whose blood was shed, being under the impulse of his grief, should pursue and apprehend him . . . and take away*

*his life.*<sup>91</sup> Now, we go into a wood with a friend as often as we turn our attention to the sins of subjects; and guilelessly we hew wood when we cut away the faults of sinners with loving intention. But the axe flies from the hand when reproof oversteps itself and degenerates into asperity; and the iron flies from the handle, when the words of reproof are excessively harsh and the friend is struck and killed; that is to say, a contumelious utterance kills the spirit of love in the hearer.

The mind of one reproved breaks out suddenly into hatred, if reproof given taxes it more than is befitting. But he who so carelessly hews wood as to kill his neighbour, must needs flee to the three cities, that in one of them he may live protected; for if he betakes himself to penitential grief and hides himself under hope and charity in the unity of the Sacrament, he is not accounted guilty of the homicide which he perpetrated. And the next kinsman, even on finding him does not kill him; for when the strict Judge comes, He who has made Himself one of us by sharing our nature, He undoubtedly does not prefer a charge of guilt against one who is screened by faith, hope, and charity under the shelter of His forgiveness.

#### CHAPTER 11

*The ruler's devotion to meditating on the Sacred Law.*

Now, all this is duly fulfilled by the ruler if, being inspired by the supernal spirit of fear and love, he meditates diligently and every day on the precepts of the Sacred Word. The words of divine admonition should

restore in him the sense of responsibility and a provident circumspection in regard to the celestial life, which habitual intercourse with men constantly destroys. One who protracts length of years in secular society should, by aspiring after compunction, ever renew himself in the love of his spiritual homeland. Actually the heart greatly deteriorates in the midst of human converse, and since it is undoubtedly manifest that, driven by the tumults of exterior occupations, it goes to ruin, it should ceaselessly make it its aim to rise again by the pursuit of instruction. Hence it is that Paul admonishes the disciple who was appointed over the flock, saying: *Till I come, attend unto reading.*<sup>92</sup> Hence David says: *Oh, how have I loved Thy law, O Lord! It is my meditation all the day.*<sup>93</sup> It was for this reason that the Lord commanded Moses concerning the carrying of the Ark, saying: *Thou shalt make four golden rings which thou shalt put at the four corners of the Ark . . . Thou shalt make bars also of setim wood, and shalt overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put them in through the rings that are in the sides of the Ark, that it may be carried on them. And they shall always be in the rings, neither shall they at any time be drawn out of them.*<sup>94</sup>

What is symbolised by the Ark but Holy Church? The orders are that it is to be provided with four rings of gold in the four corners—obviously because, being extended to the four parts of the world, it is declared to be equipped with the four books of the Holy Gospels. And staves of setim wood are made and inserted into these rings for carrying, because strong and persevering teachers, like incorruptible timbers, are to be sought out, who, always adhering to the instructions of the sacred volumes,

proclaim the unity of Holy Church, and, as it were, carry the Ark, by their being let into the rings. Indeed, to carry the Ark with staves is to bring Holy Church through preaching to the untutored minds of unbelievers. Furthermore, they are ordered to be overlaid with gold, that when the sound of their preaching goes forth to others, they may themselves shine in the splendour of their way of life. Regarding them it is well added: *And they shall always be in the rings, neither shall they at any time be out of them*; for it is evidently necessary that they who devote themselves to the office of preaching should never depart from the occupation of sacred reading. It is to this purpose that the staves are ordered to be always in the rings, that when occasion demands the carrying of the Ark, there should be no delay in inserting them—that is to say, when subjects consult the pastor in any spiritual matter, it is most disgraceful if he should then seek to learn at a time when he ought to solve their problem. Let the staves remain in the rings: let the teachers, ever meditating in their hearts on the Sacred Word, at once raise the Ark of the Testament, let them teach forthwith when the occasion demands it.

Wherefore, the first Pastor of the Church well admonishes all other pastors, saying: *Being ready always to satisfy every one that asketh you a reason of that hope which is in you,*<sup>95</sup> as if he plainly said: “Let the staves never be withdrawn from the circles, so that no delay may hinder the carrying of the Ark.”

## PART THREE

HOW THE RULER SHOULD TEACH AND ADMONISH  
HIS SUBJECTS BY HIS HOLY LIFE

## PROLOGUE

We have shown, then, what the character of the pastor should be: let us now set forth his manner of teaching. Well, as long before us Gregory of Nazianzus of revered memory has taught,<sup>1</sup> one and the same exhortation is not suited to all, because they are not compassed by the same quality of character. Often, for instance, what is profitable to some, harms others. Thus, too, herbs which nourish some animals, kill others; gentle hissing that calms horses, excites young puppies; medicine that alleviates one disease, aggravates another; and bread such as strengthens the life of robust men, destroys that of little children.

Wherefore, the discourse of a teacher should be adapted to the character of the hearers, so as to be suited to the individual in his respective needs, and yet never deviate from the art of general edification. For what else are the minds of attentive hearers but, if I may say so, the taut strings of a harp, which the skilful harpist plays with a variety of strokes, that he may not produce a discordant melody? And it is for this reason that the strings give forth a harmonious melody, because they are not plucked with the same kind of stroke, though plucked