CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

Dogmatic and Moral

in Compendium

by Fr. Daniele Concina, of the Order of Preachers

BOOK I

Apparatus to This Theology

Books I-III from the first of the four tomes printed at Venice in 1761;
Books IX-XIII from the second of the two volumes printed at Bologna in 1760.
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Title Page of Tome I (Venice, 1761)

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY, DOGMATIC AND MORAL, ABRIDGED IN FOUR TOMES
BY THE AUTHOR FR. DANIELE CONCINA OF THE ORDER OF PREACHERS
THE FIRST TOME, COMPRISING, BESIDES THE APPARATUS, THE FIRST THREE BOOKS
Venice, 1761. From the Press of St. Thomas Aquinas. With the permission of superiors.

The Printer to the Fair-Minded Reader, Hearty Greetings

The Concinian Compendium, so greatly approved by the wisest of men and by the cultivators of the safer doctrine, we set before you once again, friendly Reader. You have here a theologian who is assuredly grave, eloquent, vehement, wondrously inflamed with zeal for Truth and for Religion — one, namely, who devoted himself wholly to this: that he might weigh his opinions most rigorously in the evangelical balance, and strengthen them with the suffrage of the holy Fathers, above all of Augustine and of Thomas Aquinas. And how manfully the most illustrious Concina discharged this office, no one is so much a stranger to theological matters as to be able to be wholly ignorant of it. This indeed is the judgment, this the contention, of nearly all the most learned men.

But how humbly he thought of himself, though endowed with so great a light of judgment and of doctrine, is evident both from very many passages and above all from that Declaration which he himself, after his Christian Theology had been published at Rome, made public at the urging of Benedict XIV, Supreme Pontiff. The candor of the man, his probity, his moderation, his excellent good will were able sufficiently to wash away and wipe out every mark of censure, if any there was. This above all he wished the whole world to know and to be persuaded of: that he had always judged and pronounced concerning the men of every Institute with the respect and charity that was fitting, and that whatever he had written, he had written struck by no hatred, breathed upon by no envy, carried away by no party spirit. Since these things are so, what forbids us from prefixing the praiseworthy sentiments of this most pious Author to this posthumous Compendium of his Theology? Nothing, assuredly, do we judge that we shall do more pleasing to Concina himself than if we should in some manner make offering to his memory with this monument of his integrity, and should, after his death, expressly repeat what he declared while he lived.

Declaration and Sincere Protestation of Fr. Daniele Concina

Concerning certain objections made against the Tomes of his Christian Dogmatic-Moral Theology

Since I have learned with great distress that there are some who have believed and accused me of having, as it were, disparaged in my Christian Theology many pious, learned, and approved Writers, especially of the illustrious Society of Jesus, I am altogether bound by this declaration and justification to advise my readers and to render them certain that I never had it in mind to inflict any injury, even the least, upon the Society of Jesus, so worthy of praise, concerning which (as I signified in the first volume, page 124) I have always written and spoken with the reverence that is fitting; wherefore, if anyone should find in it a word, or a manner of speaking, or anything else whatsoever that should conflict with this my judgment, all of it I revoke and disavow. I did indeed refute, as a private theologian, certain opinions of some Authors, as well of the Society as of other Regular Orders; but nevertheless I wished nothing other than to refute the opinions themselves, not to defame the Authors, whose mind and intention I have always excused. And if anyone recognizes that I have erred in impugning them, I renew the protestation which I made in the proem of the first and of the ninth Volume, namely, that I would submit my judgment, whatever it be, to the judgment of another wiser than I. These things premised, I come to relate, so far as I know them, the heads of the objections.

I. The first head is that I attribute without foundation to some Writers of the Society certain opinions lax beyond measure: namely the following. In Tome I, page 65, book 2 of the Summa, chapter III, number 21, to Father Sánchez: *That in practice absolution is never, or most rarely, to be denied on account of ignorance of Christian doctrine; because ignorant rustics do not conveniently have a Teacher, nor can the Confessor instruct them* — whereas he in fact said: *and the Confessor can instruct them.* (a) In Tome II, page 4, to Father Moya: *that no one is obliged, out of the things necessary for preserving his own state, to give alms to the poor, even if they be in extreme necessity* — whereas this opinion is merely reported, not maintained, by Father Moya. So too in Tome III, page 117, concerning the vow of not gaming, to Father La Croix: (b) *If you have vowed to redeem the loss of time* — whereas he said, *if you have willed*: by which change of a word the sense of the doctrine reported by me as belonging to this Author in that place is altered. The error in these three opinions arose, as anyone can judge, either from a fault of the printer or from the weakness of my eyesight — in no way from malice of will.

Moreover, since I did not have so much leisure as always to consult the Casuists one by one, and after I had consulted some one principal among them — say Leander, or the Salmanticenses — I followed these in citing the rest, hence it came about that wrongly, yet not by my will, I numbered certain learned Writers of the Society among the Authors of certain opinions which are lax: namely, in Tome II, page 165, Father Sánchez, for the opinion which says that a duel is lawful for avoiding danger to life, honor, or fortune; in Tome IV, page 408, the same, for the opinion that the sight of the shameful members is not a grave sin; on page 444, Escobar and Lessius, for lightness of matter in the genus of lust. All these, and whatever other lax opinions anyone should find in my Theology not truly and undeservedly attributed to any Author whatsoever — as would have happened against my will — I thus protest, and publicly declare that I revoke.

Indeed, in Tome III, pages 390 and 436, I said that Father Tamburini had taught proposition 25 concerning Oaths, condemned by the Venerable Innocent XI: for so I judged could be inferred from his words. Nevertheless, if to anyone my argument shall seem of no weight, this assertion too I revoke. Let there also have the weight of which it is worthy the Writing found in the Biblioteca Angelica and published in Tome IX, page 586, by force of which I assert in the same place that Father Suárez considered probable the opinion concerning Confession between absent persons by letter, condemned by Clement VIII; in which matter I submit myself to the just criticism of others.

II. The second head regards the expressions which I use after relating lax opinions, and certain censures which I append, calling them, for example, *false, full of scandal, erroneous inventions, monsters, monstrous paradoxes, anti-evangelical*, etc. — against the decree, as it is objected to me, of Innocent XI.

The declamations and censures are to be referred only to those opinions upon which, unless I am mistaken, I judge them to fall — not likewise to the Authors. Wherefore if anyone should find in my Theology a censure unjustly attributed to any opinion, or an invective discourse, declamation, or expression which should offend any catholic Author, I wish it to be held as revoked.

I believed, moreover, that the decree of Innocent XI, comprehending those propositions which are still controverted on this side and that among Catholics, was to be understood of the propositions which are freely disputed in the catholic Schools, not however of those which this or that private Doctor might defend. But if the mind of the Venerable Pontiff be otherwise, I wish to be held as revoked whatever shall be judged contrary to the mind of the supreme Pastor. And to this point, I think, may be referred what Father La Croix says, Book I, number 199, page 16: *If anyone, however, should call some opinion improbable, or light, at least in the more common sense, it is not a censure ... nor if he should call it lax in the more common sense.*

III. The third head has its foundation in the Indices of words. It is objected to me that they were artfully composed, in that Writers of the Society are cited only as authors of the opinions which I reject, not likewise of those which I approve — though for the latter I had cited these same Writers in the body of the books; and contrariwise, that no place is given in the Indices to the Dominican Writers whom in the body of the books I sometimes cited as defenders of lax opinions.

I frankly confess that the Indices were not compiled by me; wherefore nothing can be imputed to me as a fault. I see, however, that there are cited in them, with the highest praise, Alberto de Albertis, Bellarmine, Cárdenas, Colombière, Comitoli, Cornelius a Lapide, Elizalde, Emerico de Bonis, Pallavicino, Suárez, Terill — Authors of the Society; and on the other hand, with little honor, Candido and López, Dominicans. Nevertheless I do not wish to defend the defects of the Indices, and therefore I confess and confirm that the Writers of the Society — among whom Sánchez, Lessius, Tamburini, Viva, etc. — are pious and learned, and defend many true opinions, as I related in the body of the work, and this ought to have been indicated in the Indices in their proper places; and in these, if it seems to anyone that any lax opinion is falsely attributed to any Writer, let him know that I consider it something to be expunged.

IV. The fourth head is that at the beginning of each treatise I prefix a List of propositions which I pronounce worthy of condemnation; in which it is objected against me that I have anticipated the judgment of the Church.

It was never in my mind to erect the tribunal of a Censor, but only, as a private Theologian, to offer my judgment, such as it is, since in doing so I was following in the footsteps of the gravest Doctors. Thus Francolini, in the little work entitled *Frangolinus Vindicatus*, in the second chapter, draws up a list of propositions from the works of Merbes, Juvenin, and Genet, upon which he fixes the mark of Rigorism. But if anyone should disapprove this method, or should find propositions undeservedly enrolled in the number of those which I call worthy of condemnation, I am prepared to revoke and expunge them.

V. The fifth head is that throughout the whole course or work of my Theology I have always striven with great zeal that the Writers of the Society should appear as the authors of condemned propositions.

I think, however, that the praises which I deservedly bestowed upon the Venerable Cardinal Bellarmine, upon Toledo, Pallavicino, etc., sufficiently defend me. I did indeed reject certain opinions of certain Casuists, but it was not my mind to vituperate those learned and pious Writers, whom I greatly venerate, and whom I have used in the Judgments and doctrines of my Theology, but — as Theologians are accustomed to do — to refute them; and if anyone shall demonstrate that I have been in the wrong in impugning them, I will freely confess my error.

VI. The sixth and gravest head is that there are contained in my Theology things which are gravely injurious to approved Writers. Three examples are adduced. The first is that, speaking in Tome II, page 139, of the secret correction commanded in the Gospel, I subjoin: *Those who contend that evangelical discipline stands whole in a better or more efficacious manner if, the order of fraternal correction being neglected, the delinquent is straightway denounced to the Prelate — these assuredly presume to correct the Gospel.*

The second example is in Tome II, page 101, where, defending the position that Beneficed clerics are prohibited by divine law from making a testament in favor of their blood-relations, and objecting to myself the dispensations which they sometimes obtain from the supreme Pontiffs, I answer with St. Bernard: *Many things the supreme Pontiffs grant either deceived by falsehood or overcome by importunity.* In which answer there is objected against me a want of reverence toward the supreme Pontiffs. Far be from me this impiety. I brought forward this answer because — it being supposed that Beneficed clerics are prohibited by divine law, and not by ecclesiastical law only, from making a testament in favor of their blood-relations — I did not know how to find a better answer; and if anyone shall judge that it accords ill with reverence toward the supreme Pontiffs, I reject and abominate it.

The third example is in Tome VIII, page 390, where I assert that Nuns, in exacting the dowry and the life-pension of those whom they receive, sometimes commit the sin of simony. It is objected against me that by this doctrine I condemn even the sacred Congregation, which grants the faculty and imposes the payment of the dowry. The practice of the sacred Congregation is most just, for it supposes that the Monastery labors under poverty and cannot bear all its burdens; under which title, as the Council of Trent prescribes, it imposes the payment of a dowry — which, if the contrary were evidently established, it would not impose. And within these limits is to be understood whatever I have there discoursed concerning the simony of Nuns; in which if anyone shall find an error, I am prepared to revoke it.

VII. In the seventh head it is objected that I have related whatever Pascal, Wendrock, Henry of St. Ignatius, and Vincent Baron have written falsely and slanderously against the illustrious Society — of

all which Writers certain works have been condemned.

Yet I can testify with certainty that I have copied out no opinion from these Authors; and if anyone should find one, let him know that I revoke it. This I wish to observe: that neither Montalte nor Wendrock resolves cases of conscience; that I have impugned certain opinions of Henry of St. Ignatius; and that Vincent Baron I have scarcely, if at all, read.

For the rest, if I have sinned in anything, if any reproach, imposture, contumely, or injury of any other kind whatsoever has fallen from my pen — assuredly against my intention — I frankly retract it all, I delete it, I disavow it, I detest it.

Fr. Daniele Concina, of the Order of Preachers.

For what remains, benevolent Reader, take this golden Compendium, maturely wrought from the choicer doctrine, and devour it, digest it, and convert it into your own juice and blood. And take, moreover, in fair and good part our diligence, which we have applied in the very highest degree. For first, so far as it could be done, care has been taken that the typographical errors with which the earlier edition swarmed should not appear again and give you trouble. And since we understood that a book so exceedingly useful would be handled by nearly all who are devoted to the Church, we have reduced it to a more convenient form, and have adorned this our edition with larger type and more elegant paper. Finally, that nothing may be wanting to the completeness and perfection of this Compendium, there will be added a fifth volume, comprising a synopsis of the things done by the Author and various eulogies of so great a Man, exhibiting a most abundant index of matters, and filled with certain small theological gifts which agree excellently with Concinian principles and may be of incredible profit to all Confessors. Farewell, and enjoy.

Book One — Apparatus to This Theology

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY, DOGMATIC AND MORAL

Chapter I — On the things which, first of all, a Director of souls ought to know

I. Question I. *Ought the physician of souls to know, first of all, the wounds of human nature?* The answer is affirmative. Human nature is here taken for free will — namely, for the intellect and the will, not excluding the imagination, the sensitive appetite, and the other affections which man employs for the exercise of his operations. It is taken also for the body itself, from whose diverse temperament and varying disposition, and from the difference of age and of sex, both the affections of the mind and its diverse motions flow.

II. First of all, then, it is necessary that the curator of souls be thoroughly versed in the powers, the infirmities, the wounds, the depraved inclinations of the nature just described. This is evident in the physician, who, in order to apply the fitting remedies for the healing of the sick man, labors seriously to explore his strength, his temperament, and the gravity of his disease.

III. Question II. *What was the first sin of Adam?* Answer: The first sin of Adam was pride, whence the rest of his crimes proceeded as from a root, as is found in Ecclesiasticus x: *The beginning of the pride of man is to fall away from God: because his heart is departed from him that made him: for pride is the beginning of all sin.* St. Thomas proves, in the II-II, q. 163, art. 1, that the first sin of Adam could not have been anything but pride: *The first inordinateness of the human appetite could not have been from this, that he desired some sensible good, toward which the concupiscence of the flesh tends beyond the order of reason. It remains, therefore, that the first inordinateness of the human appetite was from this, that he inordinately desired some spiritual good... Whence it is manifest that the first sin of the first man was pride.* The object of this pride was a certain likeness to God, the rule which God had prescribed being despised; or it was the appetite of his own excellence, subjection to God being cast off. For he sinned at that time by an excessive complacency and indulgence toward his wife Eve, and by disobedience to the divine command, and by an inordinate appetite for eating the fruit, most beautiful to the sight and sweet to the taste.

IV. Question III. *Does the sin of Adam pertain in some manner to his posterity?* Answer: It is of faith that all men sinned in Adam, and that the first sin was transfused into Adam's posterity — which sin is on that account called original sin. Wherefore Pelagius with his disciples was condemned as guilty of heresy, because he had denied that original sin is contracted by the children of Adam. Into the opposite extreme fell Luther and Calvin, who, confessing original sin against the Pelagians, blurted out that by such sin the free will of man is utterly extinguished in the moral order. This error the Council of Trent transfixed with anathema, Session 6, canon 5. The free will of man, therefore, is not extinguished, but wounded by original sin with many and indeed grave diseases.

V. Question IV. *What are the effects of original sin?* Answer: The first effect, or penalty, of original sin is the privation of original justice, adorned with which the soul obeyed God and held dominion over all

the inferior faculties. This harmony being disturbed and the yoke shaken off, the soul remained besieged by an intestine tumult of appetites.

VI. The second effect, or wound, is the ignorance of the mind: which most grievous wound St. Augustine, in order to explain it, distributes into four parts. And first, our mind is overspread with ignorance of those very things which are necessary for the preservation of life, says the holy Doctor in Book I of *On the Merits and Remission of Sins*, chapter 38. The second wound of ignorance is dullness and fatuity of mind, which so clings to some from their birth that they are scarcely able to discern what profits them and what harms them. That very great difficulty of acquiring the sciences torments our mind in the third place. How many lie torpid and wallow in the darkness of ignorance, lest they should bear the trouble and tedium of acquiring the sciences! And what of the fact that those very men who excel in acuteness of talent are blind in very many things which regard either the honesty or the turpitude of actions? On every side our mind is overspread with darkness. Hence that multitude and variety of opinions; hence so great a battle of disputations: things which seem true to me seem false to you — although truth alone is the way which leads to life.

VII. The third effect of original sin is the inordinate love of the will, by which it perversely desires its own good. From this perverse love all evils proceed, as St. Augustine expounds at length in Book 22 of *The City of God*, chapter 22.

VIII. The fourth effect is the disorder in the sensitive part. This is the deep wound left by original sin, which inverts and disturbs the whole order of nature, and penetrates the inmost recesses of the human heart. The order established for nature demands that the inferior obey the superior — the senses and appetites, reason; and reason, God. Reason having been cast down from her throne by the first sin of Adam, the faction of the senses and appetites usurped a tyranny. This sensitive part is divided into the concupiscible and the irascible. These are the two intimate and domestic enemies whose ambushes, molestations, insults, rebellions, deceits, and machinations we are compelled to endure so long as we are pilgrims away from the Lord. We are by no means able to drive them out of the house of our heart; but against their machinations and assaults we must keep watch, do battle, and conquer, if we would obtain the prize. For our life is a perpetual warfare in this wretched valley of tears. This struggle and intestine war all the Saints have experienced, apart from a special privilege. Of these two enemies the concupiscible prevails, and is more hostile to us than the irascible. Innumerable, finally, are the other calamities which follow upon original sin. This must now be seriously weighed: that actual mortal sin slays the soul of the delinquent, and inflicts upon the mind and the will wounds similar to those with which original sin wounded universal nature: for it inflames rebellious concupiscence, weakens the powers of the will, and binds the captivity of liberty with new chains.

IX. First Corollary. Luther, Calvin, and Jansenius would have the freedom of the will utterly extinguished in the moral order. All Catholics confess that it is wounded with most grievous blows, but deny that it is extinguished. All defend that the human will can by its own powers perform some moral work good in its kind, or from its object. But they dispute whether there presses a precept of always referring this work to God as to a supernatural end. Not a few affirm it; the more common opinion, and to me the more probable, denies it. There presses indeed the divine precept declared by the Apostle, of referring all things to the glory of God; but since that precept is an affirmative one, it does not bind always and for always: wherefore when an Infidel bestows an alms, resting in the

honesty of the action without twisting it to his own glory, he performs a good work, which of its own nature tends to an honest end. Yet all confess that this rarely happens. This proposition of Baius — *All the works of Infidels are sins, and the virtues of the Philosophers are vices* — St. Pius V condemned. Some works of Infidels, therefore, are not sins. This disagreement, however, is of light moment. For it is agreed among all that Infidels commonly sin, in that they direct all their works to a depraved end.

X. Second Corollary. The director of souls must have before his eyes this tragic picture of human infirmity, that he may be able to prescribe for the sick man under his care what dangers he must avoid and what remedies he must apply. He recognizes that the man burns with the thirst both of lust and of money: he will therefore interdict to him the familiar conversation of women, the frequenting of dances and comedies, and contracts suspect of usury. The man is enveloped in the darkness of ignorance, and cannot by his own powers vanquish the grave temptations of the demon, the flesh, and the world: he will therefore prescribe to him the reading of the sacred books, and fervent and assiduous prayers, by which he may implore the divine light, that he may see the truth, and the divine helps, by which the will, raised up, may be able to shun evil and accomplish good.[1]

[1] See Tome I, Apparatus, Book 1, Dissertation I.

Chapter II — On Sacred Scripture

I. For the human infirmity just described, God has provided two kinds of remedies by which it may be healed: one internal, the other external. The former is called divine grace, which by its own power dissipates the darkness of the mind, raises up the will, moves it, applies it, and out of one unwilling makes one willing; blots out the stains of the soul and heals its wounds; and is infused by God alone. The latter is external, namely the doctrine divinely revealed, which illumines the mind from without, directs it, forms morals, and opens the way by which we must proceed to our Fatherland. This doctrine is enclosed in the divine Books of which sacred Scripture consists.

II. Question I. *What is sacred Scripture?* Answer: It is the written word of God, or the letter of God to men, as the Fathers teach. In manifold ways has God spoken to men. First, he published the book of nature, as the Apostle Paul says in Romans, chapter 1, where he states: *For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.* Second, he himself wrote his law on the tablets of hearts, imbuing men inwardly. Third, he consigned to Moses the two tablets of the Decalogue written with his own finger, as is found in Exodus. Fourth, he wrote not only by himself, but also through his Prophets, Apostles, and the other sacred writers, to whom he dictated the whole of sacred Scripture. This sacred Scripture is sometimes called the *word of God*, because dictated by God; sometimes the *Testament of God*, because in it he pledges to us an infinite inheritance and declares his will; sometimes *divine Scripture*, because it was inspired by the Spirit of God; sometimes *holy Scripture*, because all things contained in it are ordered to sanctification. It is called also the *divine Law*, because it sets forth the law given to the Jews and to Christians; and finally it is named the *Bible* — that is, the books par excellence, from the Greek word Βιβλίον.

III. This divine Scripture consists, by the definition of the Church, of seventy-four books, of which forty-seven constitute the old Testament, and the remaining twenty-seven compose the new Covenant. The former are distributed into legal, historical, sapiential, and prophetical books. In the first class is placed the Pentateuch of Moses. To the second belong the books of Josue, Judges, Ruth,

the four books of Kings, the two of Paralipomenon, the two of Esdras, the one of Tobias, Judith, Esther, Job, and the two of the Machabees. To the third pertain the Psalter, Proverbs, the Canticle of Canticles, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus. In the fourth are placed Isaias, Jeremias, Baruch, Ezechiel, Daniel, and the twelve minor Prophets. By a similar partition the new Testament is divided: for to the legal books are referred the four Gospels; to the historical, the Acts of the Apostles; to the sapiential, the fourteen epistles of St. Paul, the two of St. Peter, the three of St. John, the one of St. James the Apostle, and the one of St. Jude the Apostle; to the prophetical, the Apocalypse of St. John the Apostle. That these books are canonical was defined in the Council of Trent, Session IV — entire, with all their parts, as they have been accustomed to be read in the Church, and as they are contained in the old Latin Vulgate edition.

IV. Question II. *How manifold is the sense of divine Scripture?* Answer: Twofold — the literal, and the spiritual or mystical. The spiritual is divided into the allegorical, the tropological or moral, and the anagogical. The literal sense is that which is signified immediately by the words themselves. The spiritual or mystical is that which the things signified by the words convey. The allegorical is that according to which certain deeds of the old Testament signify something to be done in the new — as the lifting up of the serpent in the desert portended Christ to be lifted up upon the cross. The tropological, or moral, regards integrity of morals. The anagogical signifies those things which look to eternal glory. Of the literal sense, one kind is the grammatical, as in this text, *The letter killeth*, which is sometimes false, because not intended by the Holy Spirit; the other is the theological, which Theologians consider as intended by the Holy Spirit, and which can never be false. The metaphorical or figurative sense is contained under the improper literal sense. The proper literal sense is that which the words, strictly taken, signify — such as these: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God.* The improper, or metaphorical, is that whose words are transferred from their proper to an improper signification — such as these: *My sheep hear my voice*; the sheep metaphorically represent the faithful people. Again, one allegory is of words, another of things. The four senses recounted are comprehended in these two verses:

> *The letter teaches deeds; allegory, what you are to believe; > the moral sense, what you are to do; anagogy, what you are to hope.*

The word *Jerusalem* expresses the aforesaid fourfold sense: literally it expresses the city of Palestine; allegorically, the Church; tropologically, the Soul; anagogically, the eternal Fatherland.

V. Question III. *Which Scripture is authentic?* Answer: No autographs of the sacred Scriptures are found today, but all are apographs, published in diverse languages — Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and the Vernacular. The Vulgate alone has been declared authentic by the Church, and from it the Theologian ought to draw his conclusions; although he is by no means forbidden to approach and weigh the original text as well, both for the sake of easier understanding and for the sake of refuting those who do not admit the authority of the Vulgate.

VI. Question IV. *Is the understanding of holy Scripture open to all?* Answer: The Lutherans and Calvinists contend that the understanding of holy Scripture is evident and perspicuous to each and every private person, even to mere women, in those things which regard the dogmas of faith and the precepts of morals. This is a delirium at war with the manifest experience of all ages. Has not every one of the innumerable Christian sects boasted that the holy Scriptures stand on its side? For God willed that

many things in the divine Scriptures should be obscure and profound, that in searching and meditating upon them he might exercise human talents and repress the audacity and pride of men, and that he might procure veneration and majesty for the divine Scriptures. This first extreme being avoided, the other must be shunned — that of those who, under the pretext of obscurity, neglect the study of the divine Scriptures to the loss of their own salvation. Although some oracles of the Scriptures are obscure, nevertheless in those things which pertain to the rules of morals and of faith the divine Scriptures are commonly plain and perspicuous. Do not even human lawgivers themselves take pains to express their laws in perspicuous words and lucid phrase, that they may remove, so far as can be done, disagreements of interpretation? Do they not to this end select the more erudite and learned men, to consign the Laws to writing in such discourse and choice of words that they can be understood even by the very people for whose government they are enacted? Now to this end God gave his laws: that they might be grasped by the Faithful, who are bound to execute them. Why did the Apostle Paul, with the other sacred Writers, write his Epistles to the Romans, to the Corinthians, and to the other peoples, except to instruct them? He wrote, therefore, with that perspicuity which was suited to the understanding of the peoples, although some things are loftier.

VII. The contrariety of interpretations and opinions frequently declares, not the obscurity of the Scriptures, but the contrary desires and affections of those who opine and interpret, which twist minds into contrary senses. And indeed, what do you think is the reason why the books which they call spiritual agree so much among themselves? Run through Granada, Tauler, Scupoli, à Kempis, Rodríguez, and all the rest, whether Italians, or French, or Spaniards, or Germans: you will find in all absolutely the same doctrine; in these books no disagreement, no battle, but the same maxims, the same rules, precepts, exhortations; the same pronouncements, commands, and counsels. The reason is one alone: that their authors, with a mind empty of passions, sought out the truths, and by fervent prayer begged the knowledge of them, and delivered them with a certain heavenly unction. Hence so great an agreement among them: for they all explain the doctrine that is truly evangelical; they all interpret the Gospels sincerely, and with disputations set aside. Wherefore their doctrine is suited to all Christians. For they err who think that it serves only those souls which aspire to singular and sublime perfection and sanctity. Does not the Gospel comprehend all Christians — does it not bind them? Since, then, the doctrine of such books is evangelical, it obliges all in some measure. And indeed, that all Christians are bound by a most grave precept to yearn for evangelical perfection, I shall expound more fully below.

VIII. But whence, then, come the disagreements, battles, and interminable disputations, so frequent in the volumes of the Casuists? Because very many of them, the doctrine of the Scriptures being set aside, consult human reason, obscured by the fog of its diverse passions. They commonly search out, not what the Gospels teach, but what the earlier Casuists teach. This is the true cause why those books swarm with quarrels, entanglements, battles, and vain little distinctions, and teach not how to live morally, but how to cavil acutely. I except always those who in very deed teach the evangelical doctrine.

IX. Question V. *What way is to be followed, that we may attain the genuine sense of holy Scripture?* Answer: A profound abasement of soul, fervent prayers, and petitions for the divine light ought to precede the reading of the Scriptures. Prejudices and anticipations must be cast away, and the glory of God alone kept before the eyes, the applause of the world being spurned and every human respect cut off. For a

false interpretation depraves the sincerity of Scripture no less than the style or pen with which one either takes words away from the divine Scriptures or adds them, says Tertullian in the book *On Prescription*, chapter 17: *An adulterous sense obstructs the truth and the divine Scripture as much as a corrupting pen.* You will object that it is heretics who are the corrupters of holy Scripture, not Catholics. Heretics, I answer, are obstinate depravers of the Scriptures, because they despise the definitions of the catholic Church; Catholics, however, submit their interpretations to the definition of the Church. For the rest, these too, taken singly, can be deceived in their private interpretations. Amid so great a contrariety of opinions in the moral order, more than one cannot be true. The Church tolerates many contrary interpretations. But this tolerance in no way prevents adulteration from being adulteration, and falsity from being falsity. Whether those who are deceived and interpret falsely are free from the crime either of negligence or of a most hidden pride, is known to God alone. When doubts occur, there must be consulted the Fathers of the Church, the definitions of the Councils and of the Roman Church, and the Bishops, whom God has placed to rule his Church.

X. St. Paul, in 2 Corinthians, chapter 2, says: *Let us not be as very many, adulterating the word of God, but with sincerity.* Not a few, but very many, even in the very time of the Apostles, were adulterating the word of God. If then very many, will they today be few? On this passage, lecture 3, St. Thomas has these words: *Adulterating the word of God — that is, preaching either for gain or for the favor of praise ... If therefore your end is gain, if your intention is favor and your own glory, you adulterate the word of God.* Both Preachers and Theologians who, in order to promote their own prejudged opinions, to catch the applause of the peoples, and to shine forth more eminently, study to draw the divine Scriptures to themselves by an artifice of distinctions, turn out adulterators of the word of God. Such men are called by the Apostle James, chapter 4, judges of the law, not doers of it, when he says: *But if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.* No one boasts himself a judge of the divine law, though very many subject the holy law to their own judgment. Let us hear St. Augustine, who in the book *On True Religion*, chapter 31, wisely distinguishes these two things — to know the law, and to judge it: *It is lawful, then, for clean souls to know the eternal law, but not lawful to judge it. And the difference is this: that for knowing, it is enough that we see that something is so, or is not so; but for judging, we add something whereby we signify that it could also be otherwise — as when we say: it ought to be so, or it ought to have been so, or it will have to be so, as craftsmen do in their works... But manifold is human delectation.* Few, therefore, are they who, with clean souls, endowed with humility and a docile spirit, and stripped of self-love, strive to acknowledge the truth of the Scriptures; very many, on the contrary, who, their own passions leading the way, judge the law. For they judge the law as often, says Augustine, as they perversely decide that these opinions are, or ought to be, probable; that this is not, or ought not to be, a sin: and in order to confirm these preconceived opinions, they hunt after testimonies of the Scriptures and bend them to their own senses. The most illustrious Jesuit, Father Miguel de Elizalde, in Book 6, question 14, section 7, sets up this thesis as the title of a paragraph: *But the Probabilists most of all become judges, and break asunder all the laws of rightly interpreting the holy Scriptures.* This testimony is true, and he proves it by many weighty reasons,[1] and confirms it both by reason and by the authority of the Fathers. For the way of the Scriptures is narrow, and of truth alone; the way of Probabilism is broad and spacious, since it is the way both of falsity and of truth — concerning which St. John Chrysostom says, in Homily 18 on chapter 7 of Matthew: *Their will is a law unto them; and they are not under the law, but the law is under them. But the way of life is all justice. And it is said to be narrow, because it is enclosed within the rule of*

truth and of discipline. The way of truth alone is the way of the Lord; and only they who walk this way are called blessed by David: *Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.* Psalm 118.

[1] See Tome I, Apparatus, Book I, Disputation 2, chapter 4.

Chapter III — The supreme necessity by which all Theologians, but especially those who direct the consciences of Christians, are bound to the study of holy Scripture

I. Words fail me with which to lay open, as its dignity deserves, the extreme necessity of the study here proposed. If I could impress this single truth more deeply upon your soul, O director of souls, and fully persuade you of it, I should attain the fruit which I have proposed to myself in the labor I have undertaken. Words do not reform the morals of men; but the law of the Lord alone converts souls. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and innumerable others delivered for the most part excellent institutions of morals; yet they recalled no one to a better way of life. Gather from this what fruit so many books, whether old or new, which swarm with the mere opinions of men, are apt to bring forth. Such is the disposition and nature of man, that he refuses to submit to the authority of other men's judgments. It is divine authority that takes the minds of men captive into its obedience, and confines their morals within the paths of virtue. Hence it is that that Theology which does not draw its conclusions from the holy Scriptures deserves to be called not Theology but Battology — vain babbling — utterly unfit for making morals honest.

II. The divine Scripture itself commands the meditation of itself in six hundred places. In Deuteronomy, chapter 6, these words are found: *Hear, O Israel, and observe to do the things which the Lord hath commanded thee, that it may be well with thee... Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength. And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart: and thou shalt tell them to thy children, and thou shalt meditate upon them sitting in thy house, and walking on thy journey, sleeping and rising: and thou shalt bind them as a sign on thy hand: and they shall be and shall move before thy eyes: and thou shalt write them in the entry, and on the doors of thy house... Take heed diligently lest thou forget the Lord.*

III. I beg and adjure you, O director of souls, to bend your serious meditations for a little while upon this divine testimony. Two things are here prescribed: one, the exercise of divine love; the other, the study of the divine law. Could the commandment of divine love be expressed in clearer words and more lucid phrase? Tell me, pray: could it ever have entered your mind that Theologians would be found who would attempt to reduce so most grave a commandment almost to nothing? And yet, as is plain to all, very many have striven to attenuate this first and most grave precept with vain inventions. For some cavil that this precept never of itself binds and presses in the whole course of life; others, only at the point of death; others, incidentally at some time; others, once within five years; and others, once within two years. Gather from this: if a commandment so lucid and expressed with such perspicuity — a commandment which is the basis and foundation of the whole law and the bond of the Christian law, which Christ renewed in his Gospel and imposed more strongly upon Christians — if, I say, many authors have dared to cavil at and elude this precept, with what inventions will they not obscure the other precepts, which are not so perspicuous, but ambiguous, and as it were remote conclusions? What Christian, the prejudices of certain Casuists being removed, reading the law just transcribed, would call into question its morally continuous obligation? You have

now comprehended how necessary is the meditation of the divine law; since according to it, and not according to the pleasures of the Casuists, you shall be judged. And the burden by which Theologians — above all the curators and directors of souls — are bound to devote their labor to the study of the Scriptures is the graver, inasmuch as unlettered Christians, ignorant of the Latin tongue, cannot read holy Scripture. The Church has therefore wisely forbidden them this reading, in order that the Pastors may hold out to them this heavenly and divine food pure and refined from every noxious error. Nor may you rejoin that all the Casuists too study the divine Scriptures. Be it so. But from their commentaries upon the law transcribed above it is clearly evident that they read the holy Scriptures loaded with prejudices and anticipations, and distracted by various affections — if indeed they really read them at all, and do not rather transcribe what the earlier Casuists have taught.

IV. Passing over the innumerable Scriptures of the old Testament which inculcate the reading and serious meditation of the holy Law, I shall relate some testimonies of the new Covenant. Christ the Lord reproved the Pharisees for being ignorant of the holy Scriptures, saying in Matthew 22: *And Jesus answering, said to them: You err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.* Again, questioned by the Pharisees on another matter, he sends them back, not to the Jewish Casuists and the Rabbis, but to the Scriptures: *Search the Scriptures: for you think in them to have life everlasting: and the same are they that give testimony of me* (John 6). St. Paul, in Romans 15, commands the unwearied study of the Scriptures: *For what things soever were written, were written for our learning: that through patience and the comfort of the Scriptures, we might have hope.* Again, writing to Timothy, he first sets before his eyes, in chapter 3, the evils and calamities of the time to come, and then, that he may guard himself against such great evils, he strongly enjoins upon him the reading of the Scriptures: *But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, patience... But continue thou in those things which thou hast learned, and which have been committed to thee: knowing of whom thou hast learned them. And because from thy infancy thou hast known the holy scriptures, which can instruct thee to salvation, by the faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture, inspired of God, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice, that the man of God may be perfect, furnished to every good work.* But what the Apostle immediately subjoins in chapter 4 must be impressed more deeply upon the soul and seriously meditated: *Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine. For there shall be a time, when they will not endure sound doctrine; but, according to their own desires, they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears: and will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned unto fables. But be thou vigilant, labour in all things, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil thy ministry.* A time will come, says Paul, when they will not endure sound doctrine. What is sound doctrine? That which consists of truth alone, say all the Fathers. Doctrine is corrupted by the admixture of falsity. That doctrine, therefore, is certainly corrupt which teaches the use of contrary opinions, of which, if one is true, the other must needs be false. The most tremendous of all the punishments with which God threatens is the neglect of the Scriptures, and a reading of them that is burdensome and full of disgust. The time seems already to have come which Amos foretold in chapter 8: *I will send forth a famine into the land: not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the word of the Lord... They shall go about seeking the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.* The Lord withdraws both the reading and the understanding of the Scriptures from those who either neglect them or strive to elude them with arbitrary inventions. Turn over the innumerable books of the many Casuists which are read by Parish priests and Confessors as masters in the government of souls: scarcely any exhortations of divine Scripture in them, most rare any argumentations drawn from it. If some testimony is alleged, it is frequently twisted to confirm lax

opinions, as is evident in this text: *My yoke is sweet* — which the Probabilists commonly use in order to accommodate Christian Morals to human appetites. Scarcely one of them expounds the evangelical oracle in its genuine sense: namely, that the yoke of Christ is sweet because it is the yoke of divine love, because it is anointed with the unction of charity, because the Christian law is the law of divine love. But divine love wars with the love of the flesh and of the world.

V. The Councils and all the Fathers most deeply inculcate the reading of the Scriptures upon Priests. The Council of Trent, Session 5, chapter 1, commands that Bishops, Archbishops, and Primates, either by themselves — as they are bound by divine law, when they are able — or through a substitute, interpret sacred Scripture to the people. It prescribes that revenues be established from which the men destined for this office are to be supported. Then, many things being passed over, it subjoins: *In the Monasteries of Monks also, where it can conveniently be done, let there likewise be a lecture on sacred Scripture... And in the Convents of the others, in which studies can conveniently flourish, let a lecture on sacred Scripture likewise be held.* The Fourth Council of Toledo established the following, which is found in the Decretum, distinction 37, chapter 1: *Ignorance, the mother of all vices, is to be shunned most of all in the Priests of God, who have undertaken the office of teaching among the peoples: for the Apostle Paul frequently admonishes Priests to read the holy Scriptures, saying to Timothy: Attend* etc. *Let Priests therefore know the holy Scriptures and the canons, that all their work may consist in preaching*. The chief, therefore, and almost the sole occupation of Priests, and above all of Pastors, is the study of holy Scripture. What if Pastors should occupy the greater part of their life in business affairs, in reckoning up revenues, in settling lawsuits, in domestic and economic cares, and should hand over to certain Religious the administering of the food of holy Scripture to the flock committed to themselves, not to others? Such men, assuredly, would be not Pastors, but hirelings and betrayers of their own ministry. Pastors are bound to feed the flock out of their own selves: they may employ ministers and helpers in those things which they cannot themselves perform. They are exceedingly deceived, and shamefully mock themselves, when they believe that they can fulfill their ministry by the labor of others. They must expend all their strength, their studies, their vigils, and their cares in discharging their own ministry; and when they cannot alone fulfill all its parts, then let them take ministers to their aid. Let them commit the government of temporal things to others, that they themselves may be able to devote themselves wholly to God and to the guarding and forming of their flock. Those Pastors run the road of damnation who commit spiritual things to ministers, reserving to themselves the cares of earthly business.

VI. What are the chief sacred books which holy Pastors and directors of souls ought to read and meditate? They are the books of the Psalms, of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, and the Prophets, from the old Testament. More abundant still will be the fruit which you will gather from the mature reading of the new Testament. You will not stumble there upon petty questions, cases, and disputations; because the Gospels teach how to live holily, not how to dispute subtly. No lawgiver has inserted into his laws the controversies and petty questions which the wits of men are able to devise. The holy Fathers of the Church, who are our Masters — Justin Martyr, Cyprian, Athanasius, Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Chrysostom, Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory the Great, and innumerable others — settled questions of morals by the holy Scriptures and the divine traditions, and thus governed the peoples committed to them. These men had engraved deep in their soul the oracle of Christ the Lord, who says in John 14: *But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind.* On this text St. Thomas

writes as follows, lecture 6: *He will teach you all things: because whatever a man may teach from without, unless the Holy Spirit give understanding within, he labors in vain: for unless he be first present to the heart of the hearer, the discourse of the Teacher will be idle.*

VII. I hear many clamoring that these things are theoretical, not practical. Those who do not hear confessions, who write in their chamber and do not handle the business of human society, most easily publish specious rules which serve nothing for practical execution and direction. There is need of good and solid practice. Explain to us where in the holy Scriptures are found the doctrines by which can be resolved those immense volumes of questions which Caramuel, Diana, Sánchez, Escobar, Castropalao, Candido, Zanardi, Sporer, Tamburini, Gobat, and the other recent Doctors have published?

VIII. I answer that by a few oracles of holy Scripture the greatest part of the questions which luxuriant wits have stirred up is struck down and reduced to nothing; concerning which St. Augustine writes as follows in Sermon 143 *de tempore*: *These, my brethren, are the great deliriums of great Doctors.* Nor am I one to disapprove all the controversies which the new Casuists agitate; but I say that many are of no moment, and that more can be resolved by the divine Scriptures alone, by the traditions, and by the doctrine of the Fathers. And because not a few appeal to practice, I am willing to obey them. The controversies which the new Casuists have brought in against the first commandment of charity toward God and the Neighbor — are they not dissolved by the mere words in which God expressed it? Those innumerable questions which they discuss concerning impure touches, concerning conjugal matters, concerning sodomy and other most shameful acts, concerning dances, concerning comedies, concerning the promiscuous conversation of men and women, are overthrown by these divine oracles alone: *He that loveth danger shall perish in it* (Ecclesiasticus 3). *Turn away thy face from a woman dressed up* (Ecclesiasticus 10 [recte 9]). *If thy eye scandalize thee, pluck it out... If thy hand scandalize thee, cut it off,* etc. (Matthew 5). *From all appearance of evil refrain yourselves* (1 Thessalonians 5). If these and six hundred other similar divine oracles were consulted with prejudices laid aside, and without the zeal of twisting such commandments to the desires and appetites of men, those most empty little questions and petty distinctions, agitated in our age with such contention for the obscuring of evangelical truth, would go up in smoke. The disputations which the most recent authors have stirred up concerning homicide, concerning the duel as vindicator of honor, concerning the material lie, concerning amphibologies, concerning thefts, concerning compensations, concerning usury, and other matters, and which fill those immense volumes of the Casuists, can be settled by the most lucid testimonies of divine Scripture, if evangelical truth alone be regarded, and that zeal for pleasing men and hunting after human favor be utterly rooted out.

IX. In like manner the commandments of the Church are clear and manifest, and the examples of holy men lie open to all. It is pleasing to hear what St. Augustine writes in Epistle 119: *But this I grieve at exceedingly: that many things which are most wholesomely commanded in the divine books are less cared for, and all things are so full of so many presumptions, that he is more gravely rebuked who during his octave has touched the earth with bare foot, than he who has buried his mind in wine. All such things, therefore, as are neither contained in the authorities of the holy Scriptures, nor found decreed in the Councils of the Bishops, nor strengthened by the custom of the universal Church, but are varied innumerably by the diverse customs of diverse places — so that scarcely, or never at all, can the causes be found which men followed in instituting them — I judge, where the liberty*

is granted, are to be cut away without any hesitation. I pass over many things which the holy Doctor writes in the same place, and I exhibit a few of those which he adds toward the end of the epistle: *And I marvel that this escapes you: that not only in innumerable other matters many things escape me, but even in the holy Scriptures themselves I am ignorant of far more things than I know. And therefore I bear a hope, not unfruitful, in the name of Christ; because I have not only believed my God that on those two commandments dependeth the whole Law and the Prophets, but I have also experienced it, and experience it daily. For no mystery, no discourse however obscure, is opened to me out of the sacred writings, where I do not find these same precepts: The end of the commandment is charity, from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and an unfeigned faith; and, The fulness of the law is charity. Therefore, O Christian, whether these things or others, so read, so learn, as to remember that it was most truly said: Knowledge puffeth up, charity edifieth. But charity envieth not, is not puffed up. Let knowledge, then, be so employed, as a kind of scaffolding by which may rise the structure of charity, which abideth for ever, even when knowledge shall be destroyed.*

X. Not only, says Augustine, have I believed my God revealing it, but I have also daily experienced that the whole law and the Prophets are contained in those two precepts of charity. If Christians would seriously meditate these two commandments alone, they would laugh at and despise the innumerable questions and most vain entanglements of certain Casuists. But so far are many of these from referring the questions that arise back to these two precepts, that on the contrary they attenuate these two commandments, restrict and limit the force of their obligation, in order to be able to soften the other laws.

Chapter IV — Pastors and Directors of Christians ought, first of all, to be exactly versed in the spirit of the Christian profession, and in its chief rules and most lucid principles

I. The spirit of the Christian profession transforms the earthly man into a heavenly one, as the Apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15: *As we have borne the image of the earthly, let us bear also the image of the heavenly.* The Christian puts off the image of the earthly man in the very profession of Baptism, by which he renounces Satan, his pomps, and his works. This renunciation precedes the profession of faith, says Salvian in Book 6 of *The Government of God*: *For what is the first confession of Christians in saving Baptism? What, indeed, but that they protest that they renounce the Devil, and his pomps, and his spectacles, and his works? ... And what more? I believe, sayest thou, in God the Father almighty, and in Jesus Christ his Son. First, therefore, the Devil is renounced, that God may be believed. For he who does not renounce the Devil does not believe God.* The genuine and precise sense of this profession I shall explain when we come to speak of Baptism; and I shall make plain that Pastors frequently sin because they neglect to lay open to baptized youths the burdens of this profession which they have made.

II. Question I. *What rules ought Pastors of souls to observe in healing the sick?* Answer: These spiritual physicians must first of all have thoroughly examined the gravity of the infirmity, as has been said; then they must know what the rules of health are. If the physicians of bodies did not know when the pulse of the arteries is ordered and regular, how could they distinguish the sick man from the healthy? What a healthy Christian is, therefore, must be well known to the directors of souls. Now those Christians are held to be healthy who are conformed to Christ Jesus, as St. Paul testifies in Romans 8: *For whom he foreknew, he also predestinated to be made conformable to the image of his Son; that he might be the firstborn amongst many brethren.* The physicians of souls, therefore, must set before their

eyes the image of the life which Christ Jesus led on earth, that they may be able to cure souls and restore them to firm health.

III. These, moreover, are the lineaments of that divine image, says St. Peter in his first Epistle, chapter 2: *But you are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people.* This image pours forth rays of sanctity in every direction, as the Apostle Paul adds in 1 Thessalonians 4: *This is the will of God, your sanctification*; and in 2 Corinthians 7 [recte 13]: *Salute all the Saints*; and elsewhere: *For you are bought with a great price: glorify and bear God in your body.* Nay more, that our bodies are members of Christ he testifies again in 1 Corinthians 6: *Your bodies are the members of Christ.* And finally, Ephesians 4: *Let us grow up in him in all things, who is the head, Christ.* But how can it come to pass that a Christian man should become like to God? I shall show in few words.

IV. Question II. *In what does the spirit of Christian perfection chiefly consist?* Answer: In charity and humility. Of the first now; of the latter, below. The fire of divine love, when the pitch of worldly and carnal affections has been consumed, kindles a heavenly flame, and makes us like to God and observers of his whole law, as Christ himself teaches in Matthew 22: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,* etc. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets.* Him whom you love, you do not injure, you do not visit with wrongs; you do not steal what is his; you do not blaspheme his name; you do not circumvent him with deceits or frauds; you carry out what pleases him; you do not rashly bring lawsuits against him; you abstain from the things that displease him. Behold how true is the saying of the Apostle: *love is the fulfilling of the law.*

V. This is the man of God adorned with the eight beatitudes, says the Evangelist Matthew in chapter 5, who imitates God and fulfills his following commandments: *Love your enemies: do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you... Go first to be reconciled to thy brother.* He commands these things to be done, not that we may please men, but that we may please God. He warns that it cannot come to pass that we should serve God and the World; for we must needs hold one or the other in hatred. That we must refrain from the greedy heaping up of riches and from solicitude about things, the Gospels frequently inculcate: *Take heed that you do not your justice before men... Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth... No man can serve two masters... Be not solicitous... For if you will forgive men their offences, your heavenly Father will forgive you also your offences.* We must read what the same Matthew prescribes in chapter 7, where he cries out that our foot must be restrained from the broad way, and that we must enter by the strait and narrow way: *Enter ye in at the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat. How narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leadeth to life: and few there are that find it!* By this narrow gate and strait way Christ our exemplar entered into the kingdom of heaven, and the same way have walked all his true disciples, whom we know with certainty to have entered the kingdom of God. He wishes us to be prompt and prepared for the renunciation of all things that we possess in this world: *He that doth not renounce all that he possesseth, cannot be my disciple.*

VI. St. Paul the Apostle, taught by Christ Jesus, paints in vivid colors the character which Christians must sustain upon the theater of this world. And first, we are compared, in 1 Corinthians 9, to those who run in the race to obtain the prize: *And every one that striveth for the mastery, refraineth himself from all things: and they indeed that they may receive a corruptible crown.* Meditate this truth more deeply. Those who run in the race restrain their senses, and aim all their powers and endeavors at this one thing alone, to obtain the prize. Do those runners, while they run, turn aside their eyes to look at games,

comedies, dances, spectacles, and the other illusions of the raving World? Far from it. They have absolutely nothing else in mind and soul but the attainment of the crown — and that a corruptible one. We all run in the race to obtain an incorruptible, infinite, and eternal crown. And do we labor under such fatuity that, this eternal crown being spurned, like boys devoid of reason we bend our soul to catching the breeze of the world, to vain spectacles, to fables, to fooleries? With our mouth we boast that we wish to obtain this crown; but meanwhile in very deed we spend our time and our whole life in games, in colloquies with women, in banquets, in consolations, which war as enemies against the attainment of the crown. If you consult the volumes of certain Casuists, they report this battle to you as light, not deadly; and many affirm, with various little distinctions added, that you can both attain the crown and enjoy the aforesaid blandishments and delights of the World. Against them cries the Apostle, 1 Corinthians 7: *This therefore I say, brethren; the time is short; it remaineth, that they also who have wives, be as if they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as if they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as if they used it not: for the fashion of this world passeth away.* Behold the state of this mortal life depicted for you. But there remain more shining lineaments still. What are they? To battle with the senses, to torment the flesh, to restrain the appetites, and daily to carry the cross of Christ, our exemplary master: *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. And they that are Christ's, have crucified their flesh, with the vices and concupiscences.*

VII. To this is added that all who would sustain the image and character of Christ in this valley of tears must bear patiently and with a constant soul the hatred of the world, its mockeries, contempts, and persecutions. The Disciples lamented that the world held them in hatred. Christ the Lord replied, John 15: *If the world hate you, know ye, that it hath hated me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own: but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* And again he thunders by the mouth of Paul: *If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ*; and again: *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.*

VIII. These are the ornaments, the definitions, the pronouncements, the axioms, and the principles of the Christian profession, which the Pastors of souls ought always to have both engraved in their soul and sounding on their lips. It is necessary that they ponder these things with themselves in serious and humble meditation, that they may be able to hold them out with profit to their flock, as food excellently disposed and prepared.

IX. Question III. *Is humility the chief virtue of Christian perfection?* Answer: One of the chief effects of original sin, with which men are born stained and wounded, is pride, whose antidote is called humility. The sages of the Heathen were ignorant both of original sin and of true humility. Most admirably, after the Fathers, St. Thomas, in the II-II, q. 161, art. 5, ad 2, declares that the sublime and lofty edifice which the Son of God raised up consists chiefly of two things: namely, of humility, which occupies the place of the foundation, and of charity, which is the form of the whole edifice, and which, bestowing value, beauty, and firmness, couples and consolidates all the parts of the fabric in a wondrous bond. These are the words of the Angelic Doctor: *As the ordered assemblage of the virtues is by a certain similitude compared to an edifice, so also that which is first in the acquisition of the virtues is compared to the foundation, which is first laid in a building. But the virtues are truly infused by God. Whence what is first in the acquisition of the virtues can be taken in two ways: in one way, by way of removing an obstacle; and thus humility holds the first place, inasmuch as it expels pride, which God resisteth, and renders man submissive and open to*

receive the influx of divine grace, inasmuch as it empties out the inflation of pride. Whence it is said in James 4 that God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble: and in this respect humility is called the foundation of the spiritual edifice. Wherefore, as no fabric can stand without a foundation, so no virtue can shine forth without humility.

X. The more necessary is this antidote of humility for expelling pride, the more difficult is its execution and practice. Unless the Son of God had taught this virtue both by word and by example, it would scarcely shine forth among men, swollen, puffed up, and supercilious with the poison of pride. The divine Word emptied himself, putting on the form of a servant and of a sinner, that he might induce men to the study and exercise of so great a virtue. Wisely does St. Augustine expound, in the book *On Holy Virginity*, chapter 45 [recte 35], these words — *Learn of me, because I am meek, and humble of heart* — which he interprets thus: *He to whom the Father hath delivered all things, and whom no one knoweth but the Father, and who alone knoweth the Father, and he to whom he willeth to reveal him, saith not: Learn of me to frame the world, or to raise the dead; but: because I am meek, and humble of heart. O wholesome doctrine! O Master and Lord of mortals, to whom death was ministered and poured out in the cup of pride! He would not teach what he himself was not; he would not command what he himself did not.* But, passing over the very many things which he here writes in commendation of humility, I shall recall before your eyes a few of those which he has in Epistle 56 [recte 118], to Dioscorus: *To this,* he says, *my Dioscorus, I would have you submit with entire piety, and construct for yourself no other way for grasping and holding the truth than that which has been constructed by him who, as God, sees the infirmity of our steps. And that way is, first, humility; second, humility; third, humility; and as often as you should ask, so often would I say this — not that there are not other precepts to be spoken of, but unless humility precede, accompany, and follow whatever good we do, unless it be set before us to look upon, and beside us to lean upon, and over us to restrain us, while we are rejoicing over some good deed, pride wrests the whole from our hand. The other vices, indeed, are to be feared in sins; but pride is to be feared even in deeds rightly done, lest those things which have been laudably done be lost through the very desire of praise. Therefore, as that most renowned Rhetorician, when he was asked what seemed to him the first thing to be observed in the precepts of eloquence, is said to have answered, Delivery; when it was asked what second, the same Delivery; what third, to have said nothing else but Delivery: so if you should ask, and as often as you should ask, concerning the precepts of the Christian Religion, I would answer nothing else but humility, even though necessity should perhaps compel me to speak of other things,* etc.

Sole Paragraph — A Corollary to be meditated

I. Two things I have thus far touched upon: the infirmity and the deadly wounds of human nature, which is the first; the other, the remedies suited for healing that nature. I now desire you as judges, O Pastors of souls: is not an assured knowledge, both of human infirmity and of the remedies by which it must be cured, supremely necessary — and that in advance? Let us now converse together, prejudices laid aside. For how few are there who approach the curing of souls imbued with this instruction! Who first of all expounds original sin, pride, and the evils that proceed thence? Who inculcates the force and necessity of the most grave precept of humility, which is the antidote of pride? Scarcely do very many of those whose books are worn by handling for the government of souls make any mention of this virtue, which is the basis and foundation of the whole evangelical edifice. Who among them brings forward the axioms and rules of Christian sanctity — namely, the daily carrying of the cross, the battling with the flesh, the soul prepared to sustain the hatred of the world, persecutions, derisions, contumelies, calumnies — and cries out that these are as it were the preludes

of the Christian life, and that charity is that form which animates and vivifies the spirit of the evangelical profession? If a Physician should approach to cure a sick man without having thoroughly examined the rules of health, and without taking care to explore the nature of the sick man and the gravity of his disease, would he not be convicted of manifest folly? And yet how many are the physicians of souls who have ascertained the force of the baptismal profession, and the rules which Christ himself prescribed for the ordering of the Christian life and which we have indicated, and who impose the observance of them upon sinners?

II. When worldly men behold Christians, Priests, and religious Men fallen into lust, avarice, gluttony, and similar disgraces, they murmur, they are amazed, they wonder; on the contrary, those who are free from these vices they extol. That very many are damned on account of lust and avarice, holy Scripture teaches. But few are they who bend their soul toward pride, the root of these and of the other crimes. And yet it is certain that men for the greater part perish eternally on account of the most hidden crime of pride. By pride Lucifer fell with the third part of the Angels; by pride fell Adam, the head of the human race. The disease infecting the whole human race is pride: this is the prevailing and dominant fever, the most malignant of all diseases, which penetrates all the hiding-places and recesses of the human heart; this is the pestilential plague which, from ambush and as it were by underground passages, brings forth the slaughter of souls. From the carnal vices, which strike the senses of men and beget infamy, we abstain, if not from love of virtue, at least from dread of undergoing ignominy. Frequently we cover vice with vice; and in order to catch the favor, applause, esteem, and deference of the world, we detest the sordid and vile sins. But dazzling is the crime of pride, which bewitched the mind of the supreme Angel and of the first man. It often either steals away or gnaws at the very merit of good works, or lays snares for it. On every side it besieges and surrounds us, so that we glory even in sanctity itself. At that very time when we are extolling the virtue of humility and magnifying its necessity, pride, clothed in a splendid garment, transforms itself into an Angel of light, and works its machinations within us, and stirs up a breeze of sweet and insensible complacency. *Pride,* says Augustine, *lies in wait even for good works.* More of this I shall make manifest when we come to speak of pride and humility.

III. From these things which I have touched upon in passing, gather, O Pastors of souls, how much it is to be feared and dreaded at that very time when we flatter ourselves about chastity, about poverty, about equity. Most cunning self-love creeps within us, gnaws, excites elation without our noticing, and makes our souls swell. Against these most hidden rocks we dash souls — we ourselves, Theologians, ministers of God, Confessors — who, in order to be eminent and to shine above others, in order to conciliate to ourselves the worldly Powers, often speak pleasing things, and most pugnaciously defend opinions smeared with the paint of a new benignity, which indulge flesh and blood, and which procure for us the patronage of the Rich and of Magnates.

IV. All those books, therefore, which neglect the aforesaid evangelical doctrine and the rules which Christ our Savior himself established for the curing of our diseases, which do not inculcate them, which swarm with definitions, petty distinctions, petty questions, and disputations devised by the wit of men, are unfit for instructing Pastors in the government of souls. You, therefore, Ministers of Christ, if the salvation of others and your own is dear to your heart, first of all bend your soul, your powers, and your studies upon the Gospels of Jesus Christ and the Pauline Epistles. Unless the doctrine of Christ is thoroughly known to you, how can you detect the falsity of human opinions?

The evangelical doctrine is simple: it teaches not to cavil, nor to wrangle, nor to dispute, but to execute the divine law with a humble and docile soul; it inflames the heart and kindles the fire of divine love; it begets contempt of the world and of earthly things.

V. "What has been said thus far serves Preachers and mystical Men, not the cultivators of moral Theology." So chatter those who, prepossessed by the art of caviling, have introduced new and unheard-of rules of morals. But, to reduce them to straits, I ask: are the things we have thus far gathered from the Gospels true, or false? If they blurt out that they are false, they themselves are not Christians. If true: then these things above all are to be expounded, inculcated, and urged. Then those books which are empty of the aforesaid precepts, which set up the mere petty opinions of men as rules of morals, are unfit for curing the infirmities of Christians. The most holy Fathers of all ages observed this method which we have described. Consult your own self, excellent Reader. Do you not, while you read and meditate the evangelical sayings recited, find yourself moved? Do you not feel the futility of many human opinions, with which not a few casuistical volumes swarm? Sit as judge yourself. When, from the reading of certain Casuists, have you experienced yourself inflamed toward God? When animated and impelled to cultivate humility; to trample upon riches, the applause of men, and worldly glory; to bear the cross daily; to crucify the flesh and the appetites with their concupiscences by the severity of fasts and vigils? When have you read in books of that kind that the observance of this evangelical oracle is forcefully inculcated: *Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect*? Of the precept of humility, which is, as we have said and as must continually be repeated, the first foundation of the Christian edifice, and of the other most grave commandment of yearning after evangelical perfection seated in charity, either no discourse at all, or a dry one, is found in not a few casuistical books. If, then, the first and chief rules of the Christian profession and of the reformation of morals are neglected, what wonder if Christians for the greater part profane the Sacraments of Christ, and lead a life corrupted with perpetual vices? But of this more in its place. You meanwhile, Pastor of souls, have always before your eyes that Christians who are to be saved must be conformed to the divine exemplar, Christ Jesus. This single most certain rule will teach you more than the volumes of many of certain authors.

Chapter V — On the fewness of the Elect, and the multitude of the Reprobate

I. If those alone are saved who are conformed to Christ the Lord, and who crucify the flesh with its concupiscences, it is plain to the eye that their number is small. Be not therefore disturbed if, of the many who come to you imploring absolution from their sins, few are truly contrite; for few are the elect.

II. The discourse is of adult Catholics. That the multitude of the elect, considered absolutely, is innumerable, all confess. The dispute is about the number of the elect in comparison with the reprobate. This comparison being made, the Scriptures and all the Fathers, both the ancient ones and those nearest to us, affirm that the former are few, the latter very many.

III. The oracles of Christ in Matthew 7 are lucid: *Enter ye in at the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat*. And immediately, moved as it were to wonder, he exclaims: *How narrow is the gate, and strait is the way that leadeth to life: and few there are that enter by it!* What then follows? *Beware of false prophets* — namely, of false masters, who speak

soft and pleasing things, who under the mask of benignity adulterate the testimony of Christ: for some wrongly blurt out that in this saying only Infidels and Heretics are comprehended — the whole tradition of the Fathers crying out against them.

IV. Christ the Lord confirms this his truth in Luke, chapter 13, where, to one asking whether they are few that are saved, he answered: *Strive to enter by the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, shall seek to enter, and shall not be able.* Who does not shudder at these words, says St. Augustine: *They shall seek to enter, and shall not be able?* Worldly men, given over to dissolutions and to the spacious way, seek once, twice, thrice every year to enter the narrow way of chastity, of justice, of penance — but in vain. Today they confess, and after a few days they relapse into the spacious and broad way of the vices. All these seek to enter, but in very truth they do not enter. But the parable which the Evangelist immediately subjoins in the same place explains this truth more lucidly; for St. Luke continues thus: *But when the master of the house shall be gone in, and shall shut the door, you shall begin to stand without, and knock at the door, saying: Lord, open to us. And he answering, shall say to you: I know you not, whence you are. Then you shall begin to say: We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. And he shall say to you: I know you not, whence you are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.*

V. Who are they that eat and drink the most holy Body and Blood of the Lord, if not Priests and Christians? The discourse, then, is not of Infidels and Heretics, but of domestic Catholics, workers of iniquity. Another parable, in Matthew 13, comes to the same point: *Behold the sower went forth to sow. And whilst he soweth some fell by the way side... And other some fell upon stony ground... And others fell among thorns... And others fell upon good ground... He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.* The seed is the word of God. Only a fourth part fell upon good ground; the remaining three, by the wayside, among the stones, and among the thorns. This is the explanation of Christ the Lord himself, saying in Luke 8: *The seed is the word of God. And they by the way side are they that hear: then the devil cometh, and taketh the word out of their heart, lest believing they should be saved.* The faith here spoken of is not that by which we become faithful, but that by which we attain salvation. When Preachers and Directors of souls interpret the said parables to the faithful of Christ, and persuade them to abstain from dances, from games, from comedies, and from the other illusions of the raving world, how many do they find who believe? How many give them credence? Either they deride them, hiss at them, and traduce them as Rigorists, Jansenists, and Fanatics; or, despising them, they go to the benign Casuists, from whom they may receive soft liniments, and run the more swiftly along the broad and spacious way. But let us transcribe the other part of the parable: *Now they upon the rock, are they who when they hear, receive the word with joy: and these have no roots; for they believe for a while, and in time of temptation, they fall away. And that which fell among thorns, are they who have heard, and going their way, are choked with the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and yield no fruit. But that on the good ground, are they who in a good and perfect heart, hearing the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit in patience.* Thus far Christ the Lord. Could Christians be more lucidly described — who, often coming both to sermons and to the sacraments, seduced by the thorns of riches, by the solicitudes of the present life, and by the illusions of pleasures, render the word of God sterile? Is it not evident by manifest experience that these are very many, and that they are few who, in a good and perfect heart hearing the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit in patience? These last words must be weighed with the utmost attention, for they declare that it is by no means enough to abstain from vices, as many do, either from fear and worldly respect, or from natural disposition; but that there must moreover be brought forth the fruit of good works, in patience and humility. Not only is that ground reprobate and accursed which puts forth thorns, thistles, and

cockle, but also that which does not bear the wheat answering to the seed that was sown, as Christ the Lord expounds more evidently in another parable, Matthew 25.

VI. The ten Virgins, of whom five were foolish, manifest more clearly what has been said. The five reprobate ones were not harlots, not unchaste women, but virgins. They are not accused of harlotry, nor of theft, nor of trafficking. Their crime, according to St. Gregory, was interior elation; and according to Chrysostom, negligence and a certain species of avarice. They wanted oil from their companions for nothing, and only then went to the sellers when the time for buying had passed. Who now, with benign probability, would not excuse them from crime and place them among the elect? Yet at the tribunal of Christ, elation, pride, and the omission of good works are crimes for which the foolish Virgins and foolish Christians are reprobated. No less tremendous is that other parable, Luke 18, where God depicts the reprobate in these words: *O God, I give thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, as also is this publican. I fast twice in a week: I give tithes of all that I possess*. He does not ascribe his good works to his own powers, since he gives thanks to God. The works were good, if they be regarded in themselves as they really were, for he is not convicted of lying. What then was his crime? A most hidden self-love, elation, and complacency in his own good works, and contempt of other men as sinners. In the books of many Casuists these vices are scarcely to be found; but in the books of the Gospels these are the crimes for which very many men are damned.

VII. Let St. Paul the Apostle set the seal upon these sacred oracles, who says in 1 Corinthians, chapter 9: *All run indeed, but one receiveth the prize*. Then in chapter 10 he adds these words: *For I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea. And all in Moses were baptized, in the cloud, and in the sea: and did all eat the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink; (and they drank of the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.) But with most of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the desert. Now these things were done in a figure of us, that we should not covet evil things as they also coveted... Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed fornication, and there fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ: as some of them tempted, and perished by the serpents. Neither do you murmur: as some of them murmured, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now all these things happened to them in figure: and they are written for our correction, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore he that thinketh himself to stand, let him take heed lest he fall.*

VIII. All were baptized, all ate the same food, all drank the same drink. *But with most of them God was not well pleased.* Will anyone chatter that Paul speaks of Infidels? All Catholics are baptized; all eat the same most holy food and drink the same drink; all in common frequent the same sacraments. But *with most of them,* says the Apostle, *God was not well pleased* — as their morals make plain. St. Thomas writes many things on this testimony of Paul, lectures 1 and 2: *With most of them God was not well pleased — with those, namely, who offended God; but only with two, namely Caleb and Josue, to whom alone it was granted to obtain the land of promise... And it is to be noted that, as in good things that which is figured is far better than the figure itself — as the kingdom of heaven than the land of promise — so in evil things that which is figured is far worse than the figure which signifies it. And according to Augustine, those punishments which they endured were a figure of gehenna, which is greater than every punishment.*

IX. All the Fathers of every age defend the fewness of the elect in comparison with the reprobate. I shall touch upon a few testimonies. St. Augustine, on Psalm 47, writes as follows: *Now all who partake of his sacraments are counted the people of God; but not all pertain to the mercy of God. All, indeed, who receive the*

Sacrament of Baptism are called Christians; but not all live worthily of that sacrament. For there are some of whom the Apostle says: Having an appearance of godliness, but denying the power thereof; yet on account of that very appearance of godliness they are numbered among the people of God — just as to the threshing-floor, so long as the threshing lasts, pertains not only the grain but also the chaff; but will it also pertain to the barn? (It is evident that Augustine here speaks of Catholics.) *For the thorns themselves do not pertain to the people of God. Will you hear? Thus is the similitude itself set down. As the lily, he says, among thorns, so is my beloved among the daughters. He did not say, among strangers, but among the daughters... There are, then, evil daughters: and among them is the lily in the midst of thorns. Therefore those who have the Sacraments and have not good morals are both called God's and not God's, both called his and aliens: his, on account of his own sacrament; aliens, on account of their own vice. Thus daughters, and aliens: daughters, on account of the form of godliness; aliens, on account of the loss of virtue. Let the lily be there: let it receive the mercy of God: let it hold the root of the good flower: let it not be ungrateful to the rain that cometh from heaven. Let the thorns be ungrateful: let them grow from the showers — they grow for the fire, not for the barn... Now here it occurs to everyone who reflects: And what? this people which in the midst of the people of God receives the mercy of God — how great a number has it? How few they are! Scarcely are any found. Will God be content with them, and will he destroy so great a multitude? They say this who promise you what they have not heard from God promising. And truly, if we live ill, if we thoroughly enjoy the delights of this world, if we serve our lusts, God will destroy us. For how many are they who seem to keep the precepts of God? Scarcely is one found, or two, or a very few. Will God deliver these alone, and damn the rest? Far be it, say they. When he shall come and shall see so great a multitude at his left hand, he will have mercy, and will grant indulgence. This, in truth, is what that serpent also promised the first man. For God had threatened death, if he should taste; but the serpent said: Far be it — you shall not die the death. They believed the serpent; they found true what God had threatened, false what the Devil had promised. So also now, brethren: set the Church before your eyes after the pattern and similitude of Paradise. The serpent does not cease to suggest what he then suggested. But the fall of the first man ought to avail us as a warning for caution, not as a model for sinning. He fell for this, that we might rise. Let us answer such suggestions as he answered [who conquered]. For him too the tempter assailed through a woman, as through Eve — and he who conquered in Paradise was conquered on the dunghill. Let us not, then, listen to such voices; nor let us think the just are few. They are many, but they lie hidden among the more numerous. Nor can we deny that the wicked are more — so many more, that among them the good do not appear at all, just as the grains do not appear on the threshing-floor. For whoever sees the threshing-floor may think that there is only chaff. Take a man without experience, and he thinks it is done in vain that the oxen are sent in, that men sweat there under the heat in order to thresh; but there is the mass to be purged by winnowing. Then comes forth the abundance of wheat, which lay hidden in the abundance of chaff.*

X. They who dare to champion the petty opinion, born with the laxer Ethics, of the plurality of the elect and the fewness of the reprobate, set themselves against the Gospel, against Augustine, and against the whole tradition of the Fathers. St. Augustine holds his discourse concerning Catholics dwelling in the bosom of the Church. Of these he teaches that the elect are few and the reprobate more numerous. He compares the Church with the threshing-floor, the elect with the wheat, the reprobate with the chaff. The grains of wheat are many; but the chaff so exceeds them that the grains scarcely appear. He objects to himself the greatness of the divine mercy: *We have received thy mercy, O God, in the midst of thy temple.* Upon this text of David he builds his sermon, and proves that the mercy of God is infinite, but that Christians for the greater part abuse it. Those who multiply the elect — not because these lead a well-ordered life, but because the mercy of God is great — he likens to the serpent persuading our first parents: *You shall not die the death.* They believed him, and met their death.

Very many Christians believe the Benignists who pledge them entrance into Paradise, and they experience the damnation which God threatens, and find false what the Benignists pledge. As it happened then, so also now, brethren — concludes Augustine. The holy Doctor writes similar things in Sermon 18 on the words of the Lord, chapter 19; likewise in Book 10 against Faustus, chapter 16; and again on Psalm 25; Sermon 32 on the words of the Lord; Book 1 against the Donatists, chapter 2; and elsewhere. The doctrine of Augustine is defended by the other Fathers: St. Gregory Nazianzen, Oration 33; St. Ambrose, in the book on Noe, chapter 2; St. John Chrysostom, Homily 11 to the people of Antioch; St. Gregory the Great, Homily 29 on the Gospels; St. Jerome, or the Author of the Epistle to Celantia; St. Thomas, I, q. 23, art. 7. Read the illustrious Foggini, in the work published not long ago on this matter.[1]

[1] See Tome I, Apparatus, Book 1, Dissertation 2, chapter 7.

XI. The smooth-spoken and benign men press on, exaggerating the divine mercy and crying aloud that Christ the Lord died for all. What follows thence? This quibble proves either nothing, or that no one perishes. They din our ears with the claim that the Fathers, when they assert the number of the elect to be small, comprehend the whole human race. They who prate such things have not read the Fathers. Augustine has already, above, demolished their invention. But, to stop their mouths altogether, let Augustine come forward once more, who on Psalm 73 in this fashion rebukes and refutes these Benignists, who sew cushions under every elbow: *There was as yet no example of human fall when it was said to Adam: Thou shalt die the death, if thou touch it. And the serpent came athwart and said: Thou shalt not die the death. The serpent was believed; God was despised. The forbidden thing was done; man died. Was not that rather fulfilled which God threatened, than what the Enemy had promised? So it is, assuredly: we acknowledge this: therefore we are all now born either into death or experiencing it. For even now the serpent does not cease to whisper and to say: Will God really damn such great Crowds? will he deliver only a few? What else is this but: Do against the commandment — you shall not die the death? But as it was then, so also now. If you do what the devil suggests, and despise what God commands, the day of judgment will come, and you will find true what God threatened, and false what the Devil promised. Arise, O Lord, judge my cause: thou hast died, and thou hast been despised.*

XII. I shall touch upon a few weighty reasons. The way is narrow. It is trodden either by the innocent or by the penitent. Rare is innocence; rare is penance. The kingdom of heaven suffers violence. A state that does violence to flesh and blood belongs to few. For things that are difficult have place in the fewer, as is known by experience. But most difficult is the attainment of the eternal kingdom. Therefore few arrive there. The elect must needs be conformed to Christ: *Whom he foreknew, he also predestinated to be made conformable to the image of his Son.* But few are they who display this conformity and likeness. For, as the Apostle says to the Philippians, chapter 2, *all seek the things that are their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's.*

XIII. The Fathers teach that a great part of Priests also perish eternally. Chrysostom, in Homily 3 on the Acts of the Apostles, says: *I do not think that among Priests there are many who are saved, but that far more are they who perish.* St. Jerome, in the epistle to Damasus, writes these words: *Behold, the world everywhere teems with Priests; yet good Priests are most rare, so that out of a hundred scarcely one good one is found.* The weighty reasons are plain. Few are initiated into the priesthood at God's calling, but very many with the hope of gain and dignity enticing them. Holy Scripture more frequently reproves and chides Priests than the people. God refutes the Priests in Ezechiel, chapter 13: *They have deceived my*

people, saying: Peace, and there is no peace. Against the Priests he inveighs: *Woe to them that sew cushions under every elbow: and make pillows for the heads of persons of every age, to catch souls. And when they caught the souls of my people, they gave life to their souls. And they violated me among my people, for a handful of barley, and a piece of bread, to kill souls which should not die.* Finally, Christ the Lord most severely refutes the Doctors, Priests, and Theologians, saying in Matthew 15: *Let them alone: they are blind, and leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both fall into the pit.*

XIV. If we look at the company of cloistered Religious, perhaps no greater number of elect appears. The parables of the slothful and drowsy servant, and of the sterile tree bearing no fruit, display the drowsiness and damnation of Religious. The cloisters are the training-grounds of evangelical perfection; they are choice vineyards of a most abundant harvest, flowering gardens of select fruits. Do you bend your eyes upon those who dwell in the cloisters, that you may yourself gather whether those vineyards flourish or wither. Be of good heart if you discover a fervent zeal for monastic perfection, an exact separation from the allurements of the world, a splendid cultivation of evangelical poverty. Meanwhile let us hear St. Bernard, Epistle 254: *Where, then, are they who are accustomed to say: It is enough for us; we do not wish to be better than our fathers? O Monk, do you not wish to advance? No. Do you wish, then, to fall back? By no means. What then? Thus, you say, I wish to live, and to remain where I have arrived; I neither suffer myself to become worse, nor desire to become better. You wish, then, what cannot be. For what stands still in this world? And assuredly it was said of man: He fleeth as a shadow, and never continueth in the same state. Finally, the very author of man and of the world, so long as he was seen on earth and conversed with men, did he stand still? Nay, as the Scripture witnesses, he passed through, doing good and healing all. He passed through, then, as not unfruitfully, so not remissly, not slothfully, not with slow step; but, as it is likewise written of him: He hath rejoiced as a giant to run the way. Now he who does not himself likewise run does not lay hold of him who runs. And what does it profit to follow Christ, if one does not succeed in overtaking him? Therefore Paul said: So run that you may obtain. There, O Christian, fix the goal of your course and your progress, where Christ placed his. He became, it is said, obedient unto death. However far, then, you shall have run, if you have not arrived even unto death, you will not lay hold of the prize. The prize is Christ. But if, while he runs, you halt your step, you do not draw near to Christ, but rather remove yourself farther; and you must fear what David says: Behold, they that go far from thee, O Lord, shall perish. Therefore, if to advance is to run, where you cease to advance, there you cease also to run; but where you cease to run, there you begin also to fall back. Hence it is plainly gathered that to refuse to advance is nothing else than to fall back.* Meditate these things, and immediately there will vanish those vain and most inept petty distinctions and petty opinions of certain men, devised for excusing excuses in sins.

Chapter VI — Bishops ought to examine those to be initiated into sacred Orders above all upon their knowledge of the Gospels

I. One of the chief offices of Priests is the study of the holy Scriptures, as the divine Scripture itself declares in 2 Paralipomenon, chapter 19: *And in Jerusalem also Josaphat appointed Levites, and Priests... and he charged them, saying... Every question that shall come to you concerning the law, concerning the commandment, concerning ceremonies, concerning justifications: shew it them, that they sin not against the Lord.* The Church has established that Clerics are not to be admitted to sacred Orders unless they have a title, or a patrimony, whence they can live. To what end this? That, freed from the business of the world, they may be able to devote themselves more intently to the study of divine Scripture and to sacred things,

as in the place cited, chapter 31, the divine Scripture itself prescribes: *He commanded also the people that dwelt in Jerusalem, to give to the Priests, and the Levites their portion, that they might be able to attend to the law of the Lord.*

II. What more? Before Bishops promote Clerics to the Priesthood, they pronounce this prayer, and beseech God, that *meditating on thy law day and night, they may believe what they shall read, and teach what they shall believe.* All craftsmen are examined upon the rules of their own art. The profession of Priests has annexed to it the study of holy Scripture: therefore trial must be made whether they are versed in this study. For how can they meditate the holy Scriptures day and night, if they are ignorant of them? In this our age Priests are more urgently bound to the study of the divine Scriptures: since, vernacular versions being forbidden to the Laity, it belongs to the Priests to explain the divine Scriptures to the people. For at the same time at which the Church took away vernacular readings from the unlettered, she decreed that Priests should devote their labor more intently to the holy Scriptures, that they might be the more apt for interpreting and expounding them.

III. Some Priests, when they must undergo the examination for hearing confessions, turn over and over the immense volumes of Diana, Bonacina, Tamburini, La Croix, and the Salmanticenses; they strive to commit to memory a medley of cases, distinctions, and disputations. With the whole searching of their mind they scrutinize the recent and the ancient *Medullae*, the Alphabets, the Promptuaries, the examinations of ordinands. What then? Will you disapprove their study? I do not disapprove it. But I say that Priests, and Pastors and directors of souls, ought first to be versed in the divine Scriptures, to meditate them, and to commit them more deeply to their mind. Grant me this: is not the life of Christians to be instituted and formed according to the norm of the divine Law? If those laws are unknown, how is the life of Christians to be recalled to their rule?

IV. The aforesaid Casuists, you will say, interpret the holy Law and the divine Scriptures. Is it indeed so? Scarcely does any divine text recur in their pages; and if some sacred testimonies are at times alleged, they are not rarely eluded by petty distinctions, by arbitrary interpretations, and by opinions more benign than is just. Now if the Priests themselves do not have an ascertained knowledge of the precepts and rules of the evangelical Law, by what way can they discover whether the aforesaid authors interpret them rightly or otherwise? Books of that kind, you rejoin, are approved. True enough. Are they on that account free from errors? From approved books have been culled the condemned theses. What of the fact that the Church herself has decreed that a doctrine is not therefore true and approved because it belongs to some approved author? Greatly are the Pastors of souls deceived if they believe that they can be excused by the authority of this or that Casuist, when they teach doctrines contrary to the divine Scriptures. Or are the Priests ignorant that Christ the Lord, the supreme Judge, will judge souls not at the tribunal of the Casuists, but at that of the Gospels?

V. It is not for all, you will rejoin, to interpret the Gospels. And further: must Parish priests, Confessors, and Theologians learn the Gospels by heart? There is no need that they commit all things to memory; but it is enough that they have the spirit of the Law and its commandments thoroughly examined, and, when difficulties occur, that they consult the sacred books and employ the graver interpreters, and first of all the holy Fathers of the Church. Parish priests and Confessors turn over the thick and immense volumes of Diana, Bonacina, Tamburini, Laymann, La Croix, the Salmanticenses, and Castropalao; with prodigious labor they commit to memory controversies,

wranglings, distinctions, subdistinctions, definitions, divisions. Assuredly the divine precepts which are contained in the holy book of the new Testament, of Proverbs, of Wisdom, of Ecclesiasticus, are more easily learned than the interminable disputations of the said volumes. What of the fact that the quarrelsome disputations of these men are not rarely entangled, obscure, full of circumlocutions, hedged about with entanglements and cavils, which often excite anything rather than the fervor of divine love and the zeal of evangelical perfection? On the contrary, the evangelical precepts are splendid, perspicuous, easy; and they teach how to live rightly, not how to wrangle futilely. To this is added that God infuses the light for understanding the holy Scriptures into those who approach the meditation of them with a humble and docile heart. Those divine teachings of Proverbs and of Ecclesiasticus, the evangelical parables, and the epistles of Paul and of the other Apostles, and the single verses of holy Scripture, illuminate more than the innumerable disputations of men. Priests imbued with this knowledge of the holy Scriptures can also read the moral Theologians; because then they are excellently able to discern whether the opinions and judgments of these men are conformed to the evangelical doctrine.

VI. What? Do you dare to disapprove the custom, introduced so many years since, of examining Confessors and Parish priests upon the opinions which the Casuists dispute on both sides? Far be it from me to wish to disapprove customs which are good. With humble deference only do I suggest what seems to me best, and indeed necessary. But this very counsel of mine I submit to the judgment of Superiors and of the Wise. If, the usage which now obtains being abandoned, a new custom had to be introduced, a prodigious labor would have to be undergone, and great disturbance and confusion would ensue. All this is false. Does the reading and meditation of the holy Scriptures beget confusion? Nay rather, it takes away quarrels and intestine disagreements, and in place of disputations introduces the observance of the laws. But, to press the argument more strongly, I ask again: is the study of the Scriptures necessary for Priests, Pastors, and Directors of souls, or not? If you deny it, you gainsay the divine Scriptures. If you affirm it: then the custom must be corrected, and the competence of Pastors and Confessors must be explored in the holy Scriptures as well. The mere knowledge that this examination must be undergone would urge all who desire either to be initiated into the Priesthood, or to undertake the care of souls, or the burden of hearing confessions, to bend all their powers to the study of the Scriptures. Who would deny that Priests would turn out wiser and better-mannered if they spent the good part of that time which they wear away in reading and thoroughly learning the books of Diana, Bonacina, Tamburini, La Croix, and the Salmanticenses, in meditating the holy books? And if, in place of the *Medullae*, whether ancient or recent, they continually turned the pages of the Pauline epistles?

VII. And in what manner, you ask, ought this examination to be conducted? With the highest moderation and prudence. Let Clerics be asked how many are the books of the old Testament, how many of the new covenant, how many the epistles of Paul; some upon some parable of the Gospel, others upon the epistle to Timothy. Priests ought to be asked what is the spirit of the evangelical Law; what is the image of the Christian life; whether Christians are pressed by a precept of yearning after evangelical perfection; what these words signify: *Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect*; what these others: *If thy eye... if thy hand scandalize thee, pluck it out, cut it off,* etc.; *He that doth not renounce all that he possesseth, cannot be my disciple*; *Lend, hoping for nothing thereby*; *It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Let them be asked

how Saints Augustine and Chrysostom and the other Fathers interpret the testimonies praised and others like them: for these are the masters and the true interpreters of the Scriptures.

VIII. As to those things which regard ecclesiastical institutions, the Catechism of Trent, or the Roman Catechism, must be read; and upon it and upon the Council of Trent they must be examined more severely. When they have been instructed in such doctrine, they can also read the moral authors, especially concerning the ecclesiastical precepts and the other things which regard ceremonies and discipline.

Corollary

To thee now, Christ Jesus, I turn my humble prayer. Fearful and confounded, I look up at thy most tremendous vengeance upon the sons of men. Trembling, I shudder at the spirit of slumber and of blindness, seized by which men walk the way of perdition; for I know this to be the most deadly of all punishments, which so many ages ago the Prophet Amos foretold in chapter 8: *Behold the days come, saith the Lord, and I will send forth a famine into the land: not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the word of the Lord... They shall go about seeking the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.* To such a pass of evils has the matter now come, that many neither seek nor find thy word, O Lord. They seek the word of men in the books of men; but they do not seek the word of God in the books of God. If Princes, Kings, Emperors were to write to us, and that in a familiar style; if they were to propose rewards; if they were to invite us to their royal palaces, to their thrones, there to reign with them — with what diligence, with what attention would such letters be read by us! And thy divine Scriptures, which are letters sent to us, and delivered to us — above all to us Priests — to be guarded, read, and explained, we neglect, we treat with disgust; nay, casting them aside, we delight in the acorns and refuse of men? The blindness is darker, and the punishment more deadly, than can be expressed by me in fitting speech. Awake, I beseech you, Priests of God, Pastors and Directors of souls, and in the spirit of contrition and humility seek the word of God in the books of God.

Chapter VII — On Traditions

I. Tradition, taken generally, is doctrine which is communicated to another either by voice or by writing, as St. Paul says in 2 Thessalonians 2: *Hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word, or by our epistle.* Taken more strictly, tradition is doctrine communicated by the living voice. If we regard the author, one is divine, another human. If the matter, one comprehends faith and morals, another discipline, rites, and ceremonies. Again, one is necessary, another free; one immutable and perpetual, another mutable and temporary; one, finally, universal, another particular.

II. Divine tradition is the doctrine of God, not written, but revealed by God to our forefathers, and communicated to their successors from ear to ear. This tradition is wont to be called Dominical, because it was communicated by Christ the Lord to the Apostles, and by these to their successors. Of this kind is the tradition concerning the number of the Sacraments, and concerning the perpetual Virginity of Blessed Mary. Another is the apostolic, which the Apostles, at the dictation of the Holy Spirit, received and communicated to the Church without writing, as the Council of Trent teaches, Session 4.

III. The Heretics of every age have almost all denied the divine and apostolic traditions, that they might the more freely publish their errors. The Heretics of the latest age, the Lutherans and

Calvinists, have raged against the traditions beyond the rest, inasmuch as these cut their throats. All Catholics teach that besides the written word there are apostolic-divine traditions, and they prove it by the testimonies both of the divine Scriptures and of the Fathers. The divine Scriptures are ready to hand: *Ask thy father, and he will declare to thee* (Deuteronomy 32). Again, Ecclesiasticus, chapter 8: *Let not the discourse of the ancients escape thee, for they have learned of their fathers.* St. Paul says to the Thessalonians, chapter 2: *Therefore, brethren, stand fast; and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word, or by our epistle.*

IV. In every state of the Church the divine traditions have obtained. From Adam to Moses there was no written law. Whence did the holy Patriarchs — Adam, Abel, Seth, Enos, Noe, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the others — learn the worship of God, the rites of the sacrifices, and the mysteries of Religion? Whence did they draw their doctrine concerning the creation of the world, the coming of the Messias, the remedy of original sin, and the future state? From the written word? There was then none. Therefore from the word delivered from mouth to mouth, from ear to ear. After the Mosaic law the divine traditions likewise obtained, as is evident from the testimonies adduced. Did not the Jews believe by divine tradition that the holy books were enrolled in the canon? Christ the Lord sent his Apostles, instructed by his voice alone, to preach his divine law through the whole world. For the space of many years they promulgated this new law without a written word. Matthew consigned his Gospel to letters when he had resolved to go to preach to the gentiles, and after the preaching he had made to the Hebrews. Let the Lutherans and Calvinists explain to us by what doctrine the Church of Christ was governed before the Evangelists delivered the Gospels in writing, and Paul with the other Apostles wrote his epistles. Not, assuredly, by written doctrine. Therefore by doctrine handed down.[1] The testimonies of the Fathers I pass over for brevity's sake.

[1] See Tome 1, Apparatus, Book 3, Dissertation 3.

Chapter VIII — On the Church

I. *Ecclesia* is a Greek word, which in Latin signifies a convocation; under the state of grace it is wont to be described thus: It is a society of men called to the faith of Christ, which is inwardly vivified by faith, hope, and charity; but outwardly is governed by the profession of the same Christian faith, by the communion of the Sacraments, and by the preaching of the divine word by legitimate Pastors under its visible head on earth, the Vicar of Christ and successor of St. Peter. The Church is also taken for the material house itself dedicated to God, where the Faithful assemble, of which Matthew 21 says: *My house shall be called the house of prayer.* But it is commonly taken for the society of the Faithful; and in this sense Paul speaks to the Galatians, chapter 1: *Beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God.*

II. Just as in the physical human body certain members are vivified by the soul, while certain others adhere to the body yet are not informed by the soul, so it happens in the moral body of the Church. Some Christians communicate with the society both in the external participation of the sacraments and in the other rites, and also in faith, hope, and charity; and these are vivified by the soul, and are living members of the Church. Others only outwardly profess the faith with the other Faithful, and frequent the Sacraments. These are said to be of the body of the Church, but they are outside her soul. That the Church comprehends both good and bad is evident from Matthew 3 [recte 13], where she is compared with the threshing-floor containing wheat and chaff, and with the net gathering

together every kind of fish. Wherefore shamefully erred the Cathari and the Donatists, who excluded from the Church all those stained with fault.

III. Heretics, schismatics, and the excommunicated are outside the Church. Children of Heretics who have been baptized are within the Church until the use of reason; and when they have attained it, if they criminally adhere to the synagogue of the Heretics, they become Heretics outside the Church; if they withdraw from it and betake themselves into the bosom of the catholic Church, they become Catholics and members of the true Church.

IV. The marks of the Church are four: One, holy, catholic, and apostolic. She is one by unity of body, because the faithful compose one moral body or society. One body: therefore one head. She is one by unity of spirit, which animates the whole body. She is one by unity of faith and doctrine, by unity of hope, by unity of charity, by unity of the invisible Lord God and of Jesus Christ, and of his visible Vicar the Roman Pontiff. Not even the Heretics themselves dare to deny her unity. One body, one spirit, one faith, one hope, one baptism, one charity, one head they freely admit. But they contend that this head is invisible only — namely, Christ Jesus. But they err shamefully. The body of the Church is visible: therefore the head is visible. In very deed Christ the Lord instituted Peter as the head of his Church, and the successors of Peter. For as he willed the body of the Church to be perpetual, so also its head. Which truth the perennial tradition of the Church confirms.[1]

[1] See Tome I, Apparatus, Book 1, Dissertation 3, chapter 4.

V. The second mark of the Church is Sanctity, in that she is consecrated to God, both on account of the sanctity which shines forth in her chief members and on account of the purity of doctrine which she professes. She is named Catholic, or universal, under a threefold title: first, by reason of doctrine, which excludes and execrates all errors; second, by reason of time, because she will endure in unbroken series even to the end of the world; third, by reason of place: *Going into the whole world, preach the gospel to every creature* (Mark 16). Nor is it required that she extend herself at the same time to all places; nay, Christ himself foretold that his Religion, on account of the crimes of the Faithful, would pass from kingdom to kingdom. From the East it has migrated into the West, and from the West into other parts of the world.

VI. The Donatists objected many things against this universality, and exaggerated the spread of the Arian heresy. The Donatists have been imitated by the Lutherans and Calvinists. The mouths of all these St. Augustine stops, *On the Unity of the Church*, chapters 13 and 19, and again in Epistle 103. This single epistle grinds to pieces the audacity of the Lutherans and Calvinists.[2]

[2] See Tome I, Apparatus, Book 1, Dissertation 3, chapter 4.

VII. The Church is called Apostolic, both because she was founded and propagated by Christ through the Apostles; and because in her there is a perennial and never interrupted succession of Bishops derived from the Apostles; and finally because by the ministry of these the doctrine of the Apostles is kept immaculate.

VIII. That the Church is visible even Calvin himself confesses, Book 4 of the Institutes, chapter 1, section 2; to which subscribes the Lutheran Melanchthon, under the title On the Church. The disciples of Luther and Calvin, more demented than their masters, pressed by the arguments of the Catholics, invented an invisible Church. And in very truth their Church is invisible and fictitious — instituted not by Christ, not by the Apostles, but by Luther, by Calvin, by Zwingli, and by other men

of the same bran. Therefore their Churches are named Lutheran, Calvinist, Protestant — not Catholic, not Apostolic, not Christian. So well ascertained are the testimonies of divine Scripture which demonstrate the Church to be visible, that it is superfluous to transcribe them.

IX. That the Holy Spirit assists his Church, lest she err in matters of faith and morals, is an ineluctable dogma. Innumerable most illustrious Theologians — Melchior Cano, Pedro de Soto, Bellarmine, Bossuet, to whom are added Arnauld and Nicole — have confirmed it with every kind of argument, the deliriums of the Protestants being utterly overthrown. So lucid is the promise by which Christ the Lord testifies, Matthew 28, that he will preserve his Church from all error, that it can be eluded by no tergiversation: *All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.*

X. So invincible have the disciples of Calvin found the arguments of the Catholics, by which it is proved that the Church cannot be deceived and is directed by the Holy Spirit lest she err, and so inept the sophisms formerly devised for obscuring this truth, that they have been compelled to fabricate a new chimerical system. They blurt out, with the minister Jurieu, that the Church is visible, perpetual, indefectible, comprehending all the schismatic and heretical Sects which admit the fundamental articles; and this Jurieu explains at length in his book entitled *The True System of the Church*, where on page 51 he refutes Augustine, and prates that he was deceived because he excluded from the catholic Church the Schismatic communions which do not destroy the foundation. This grossest of errors collapses of itself. For the catholic Church has always cut off from her bosom the schismatic and heretical communions. Let the Calvinist minister explain to us: who defined that these articles are fundamental, and not others? Where is this Church to be found, composed of various Sects which tear one another to pieces with mutual censures? This Church is Lutheran and Calvinist, Protestant — not Catholic and Apostolic. The divine Scripture, the Fathers, the Councils have always cut off the schismatic and heretical Sects from communion and from the apostolic succession, as rotten members. The Church pronounced anathema against the Origenists, the Novatians, the Donatists, the Quartodecimans, the Sabbatians: were the errors of these fundamental? Not even Jurieu himself will dare to assert it. His new system, therefore, collapses of itself — a system devised precisely because he saw and knew that the other systems of the Lutheran, Calvinist, and Protestant synagogue were utterly inept.

XI. Controversies concerning Religion cannot be settled by divine Scripture alone, but the definition of the Church is necessary. This is the fundamental truth on which all the controversies between Heretics and Catholics depend. With a full pen I have treated this controversy elsewhere;[3] now I compress it into few words. Scripture has a twofold sense: one literal, the other spiritual. *The letter killeth, but the spirit quickeneth,* says the Apostle Paul. The letter killed the Jews, who explained the oracles of the Scriptures concerning the coming of Christ in an alien sense. The letter kills all Heretics. The Sabellians admitted one single divine person, whom they called by three names — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — on account of the diverse offices. The Arians blasphemed that Christ was absolutely inferior to God. The Manicheans blurted out that the old Testament wars with the new. The Pelagians denied original sin. All these, and very many other Heretics, perished by the

killing letter. All of them contended that the holy Scriptures stood on their side; and they fought one against another with the weapons of the divine Scriptures.

[3] Tome I, Apparatus, Book I, Dissertation 3.

XII. I do not so much wonder that the Protestants, Lutherans, and Calvinists disagree with the Catholics in the articles concerning the real presence of Christ, concerning Justification, concerning the veneration of images, concerning the Sacrifice, and other points: for those who excel in acumen and erudition in discussing points of this kind can color even errors with certain paints. But in this capital controversy, on which all the rest depend, they betray that they lack sanity of mind and labor under manifest fatuity. The Lutherans and Calvinists contend that Scripture alone is the judge of controversies; and at the same time they dispute most fiercely about the sense of these words: *This is my body*. The Lutherans defend that these words are to be taken in the literal sense; the Calvinists, in the spiritual sense. The Lutherans maintain that when these words have been pronounced, the body of Christ exists truly and really under the sacred symbols; the Calvinists, on the contrary, teach that the body of Christ is found there only in figure. The Lutherans assert that the body of Christ is really found there, that the substance of the bread remains, and that the body of Christ is there only in the use, and deny that it remains when the use is over. The Catholics, on the contrary, maintain that the very substance of the bread is converted into the body of Christ, and that this remains under the sacred symbols even apart from the use. The Calvinists utterly deny all this. That article is fundamental, as is evident. For if the body of Christ does not exist there, the Catholics are idolaters, because they adore bread; if it really exists, the Calvinists are impious, who despise it. If holy Scripture is of itself, no otherwise than the Sun, as Calvin says, splendid and perspicuous, then blind are the Lutherans and Calvinists, who for two centuries have been disputing over the aforesaid sense of the words and do not see the most splendid light. If the sense can be pulled apart into various directions by the wits of men, then utterly fatuous in this controversy are the Lutherans and Calvinists who deny the necessity of a judge to define this controversy and six hundred others. From the founding of the Christian Church heresies, and those very many, have always stalked abroad, and stalk abroad daily. Every Sect boasts the holy Scriptures for itself. And nonetheless the Protestants are not ashamed to prate that no judge is required to settle these controversies. Read what I have adduced from John Locke in Tome I, Apparatus, Book I, Dissertation 3, chapter 5, section 4.

XIII. The vicious circle which the Protestants object is a childish rattle, and the offspring of a most rotten calumny. They calumniate the Catholics as teaching that the Church bestows upon the divine Scriptures their authority and, as they say, their infallibility, and that at the same time the Church receives her authority from those very Scriptures. The Catholics teach that holy Scripture has its authority and infallibility from God. But because, on account of the vain wits of men, this divine Scripture can receive various senses, God instituted the Church as judge, to declare which is the genuine sense intended by God; which sense has its authority from God, and from the Church only the declaration that such a sense is from God. And lest the Church err in this, God promised his help; and this promise he consigned to his divine Scriptures. The Church herself is subject to the divine Scriptures, and is bound to embrace the sense which she judges to have been intended by God. Where here is even the shadow of a vicious circle? See more in the place cited.

Chapter IX — On Councils

I. The common description of Councils is this: An assembly of the Prelates of the Church, convoked by a legitimate Superior for the settling of controversies of faith and morals. One kind of Council is general, to which come the Bishops of the whole catholic world, the Roman Pontiff presiding either in person or through his Legates; another is national, in which the Bishops of a kingdom or nation assemble under the direction of a Patriarch or Primate. A provincial Council is composed of the Bishops over whom an Archbishop or Metropolitan presides. A diocesan Synod consists of the Priests, or Parish priests, of a single diocese, the Bishop presiding, who alone has the right of suffrage; wherefore it is not a Council properly so called.

II. The origin of Councils flows from divine law: for in the old Testament itself God ordained Councils, as is found in Numbers, chapter 11: *Gather unto me seventy men of the ancients of Israel,* etc.; and again Deuteronomy, chapter 17: *If thou perceive that there be among you a hard and doubtful matter in judgment... thou shalt come to the Priests,* etc. And Matthew, chapter 18: *Where there are two or three gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*

III. General Councils which have been neither convoked nor confirmed by the Roman Pontiff are endowed with no firm authority, as is evident in the Council of Rimini in the cause of Arius, and in the Conciliabulum of Ephesus in the cause of Dioscorus. But those which have been confirmed by the authority of the Roman Pontiff, and received with the accession of the Church's consent, are, according to all Catholics, of infallible authority in controversies of faith and morals. This infallibility of Councils flows not from the multitude of the Bishops, but from the protection of the Holy Spirit; which protection and inspiration Christ himself lucidly pledges in the holy Scriptures. These Councils do not constitute new articles of faith or new truths of morals; but they declare the articles and truths revealed by God, and lest they err in such definitions, the Holy Spirit assists them.

IV. National, provincial, and diocesan Councils, although they are not endowed with the privilege of infallibility, are nevertheless of such authority that they would be guilty of the gravest temerity who should not acquiesce in their canons. For although Councils of this kind can absolutely be deceived, yet in very fact they are most rarely deceived. Scarcely one or another occurs — besides the Councils of Carthage under St. Cyprian concerning the rebaptizing of Heretics — which has erred in articles of faith and morals. Wherefore the Seventh general Synod established the following concerning diocesan Synods, in Action 3, in the synodal letters of Theodore, Patriarch of Jerusalem: *Local Synods, moreover, we do not turn away from, but rather we love, embrace, and receive them; and their divinely inspired canonical constitutions, their corrections, and their useful legislations we honor with the highest observance.*

V. Hence it follows that Theologians ought to consult these sacred Synods, and to receive their decrees with great deference in those things which regard the rules of faith and morals. Those things which pertain to the peculiar discipline and ceremonies of the nations, let them be observed according to the approved customs of the regions and nations. Wherefore who can sufficiently deplore the not few Moralists who, when they hear the decrees of the Synods objected against them, immediately rejoin that the Synods are either national, or provincial, or diocesan, destitute of the privilege of infallibility? What of the fact that the decrees of the whole Gallican Church assembled in her general Assemblies are derided and lashed with insults by the new Casuists, or by certain partisans of the Casuists? Nor do we maintain that those Synods are immune from the danger of erring — as neither were Augustine, nor Chrysostom, nor Thomas, nor any of the Doctors of the

Church. Are the Fathers on that account to be held cheap? Moreover, are Caramuel, Bonacina, Machado, Escobar, Castropalao, Tamburini, Gobat, La Croix, and the other Casuists endowed with the gift of infallibility? The assertors of the new benignity make more of a certain roll — and that not very numerous — of Casuists, whose volumes swarm both with proscribed and with lax opinions, than of the decrees of a diocesan, or provincial, or even national Synod. These men ought to reflect that the Holy Spirit has appointed Bishops, not Casuists, to rule his Church. Bishops and Parish priests are the pastors of the Christian people, not the Casuists. The sheep must hear the voices of the Pastors. The Holy Spirit assists Synods in a peculiar manner, inasmuch as they are assembled for the profit and instruction of the Faithful. Let all the Synods held during the last two centuries be read: scarcely one will occur which contains any lax opinion; all display most wholesome decrees and the best rules of Christian discipline. Whence it is evident how gravely those Confessors hallucinate who make nothing of reading Genet, Pontas, Natalis Alexander, Merbes, and other similar authors who resolve moral controversies by the decrees of the Synods, saying: What are the Gallican, Spanish, Italian Synods to us? They do not decide practical cases; they do not bring forward weighty reasons; they do not distinguish materially and formally, as our Moralists do. By these illusions not a few are bewitched. So far has the custom prevailed of quarreling, caviling, wrangling, distinguishing, and subdistinguishing in the handing down of the most simple and most holy evangelical Morals, that they who are prepossessed by this inveterate custom can scarcely be recalled to a better way. We nevertheless do not omit to beg these men, and earnestly to adjure them, to read the holy word of God at its divine fountain; and if doubts occur, to go to the sacred Councils and the holy Fathers for the legitimate interpretation.

Chapter X — On the authority of the Supreme Pontiffs, of the holy Fathers, and of the Theologians, both Scholastic and Moralist

I. The authority of the Supreme Pontiffs in settling controversies of morals and of faith wise theologians have illustrated in entire volumes. All Catholics receive and venerate it alike. In this compendium it is not permitted, for brevity's sake, to illustrate this argument at greater length.

II. The Doctors and Fathers *of* the Church must be distinguished from doctors who are *in* the Church. The Probabilists and Casuists call one another by the title of Doctor. Nothing is more frequent in their books than this phrase: *So the Doctors; so the Doctors commonly.* And who are these Doctors? Caramuel, Diana, Gobat, Escobar, Tamburini, La Cruz, Vera Cruz, Sporer, Candidus, La-Croix, and six hundred of the same sort. If these men have received the laurel of the Doctorate in some University — as it is wont to be received very easily — they may be called doctors dwelling *in* the Church, but not Doctors and Fathers *of* the Church. Three endowments are required that anyone be numbered among the Fathers and Doctors of the Church: 1. eminent doctrine; 2. signal sanctity; 3. the testimony of the Church. The Doctors of the Church are called, in the fifth chapter of Matthew, the salt of the earth and the light of the world: *You are the salt of the earth ... You are the light of the world ... so let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works.* Wisdom dissipates darkness and illuminates minds; sanctity of morals inflames others to the pursuit of virtue; the testimony of the Church approves both the wisdom and the sanctity.

III. As the first Fathers of the Church, and at the same time as divine writers, the Evangelists and Apostles stand eminent, and after them follow the disciples of the Lord, all of whom by degrees are

Fathers of Fathers; as St. Augustine says, explaining the versicle of Psalm 44, *Instead of thy fathers, sons are born to thee*: that is, he says, *the Apostles were sent as Fathers. In the place of the Apostles, sons have been born to thee: bishops have been established.* The episcopal grade is a singular prerogative, which, joined with eminent doctrine and signal sanctity, constitutes a more excellent Father of the Church; since the episcopate is the chief channel of tradition, through which the uncorrupted doctrine of the Apostles has come down to us.

IV. The Fathers are commonly distributed into three ages. The first age comprehends the first three centuries; the second, the following three; the third extends from the beginning of the seventh century to the thirteenth. The Fathers of the first age are worthy of the greater veneration, the nearer they stood to the primeval origin and fountain of the apostolic traditions. Yet the Fathers of the second age do not for that reason excel with lesser authority, if they have illustrated the Church more copiously with the splendor of a richer doctrine and of heroic virtues. The Fathers of the third age, although inferior to their predecessors in antiquity, erudition, and eloquence, nevertheless, since they have taught the same doctrine as the first, and at times hand it down more compactly and more distinctly, are themselves also to be held in the highest esteem.

V. The chief among the Latin Fathers are Cyprian, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, Hilary, Leo the Great, Prosper, Fulgentius, Gregory the Great. The more celebrated among the Greeks are Ignatius, Justin, Irenaeus, Clement, Basil, Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory of Nyssa, Epiphanius, Chrysostom, Cyril of Jerusalem, Cyril of Alexandria, Theodoret, Damascene.

VI. St. Bernard, St. Thomas, and St. Bonaventure are Doctors and Fathers of the Church on account of their eminent knowledge, their signal sanctity, and the testimony of the Church. Among the ancient Fathers of the Church are not reckoned Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea, and Rufinus: for although their erudition and knowledge be eminent, the Church nevertheless has not adopted them as her Doctors. Great, notwithstanding, is their authority in those things in which they do not depart from the doctrine of the Church. I shall touch in few words upon what is commonly held concerning the authority of the Fathers.

VII. Rule I. Many things are disputed in theology which pertain neither to faith nor to morals, and hence have been neither revealed nor handed down. In such minor questions no one is bound to embrace the authority of the Fathers. Rule II. In those things which pertain to faith and morals, the unanimous consent of the holy Fathers produces a most certain judgment, which no Catholic can call into question. For if all the holy Fathers by unanimous consent were to fall into some error, the Church herself would err — which, as was shown above, cannot happen; and this rule is common, and is confirmed by the authority of the Council of Trent. Rule III. When, in matters of faith, a few of the holy Fathers dissent, that is to be embraced which the rest teach by unanimous consent. Rule IV. The authority of one or another Doctor of the Church is to be held in the greater esteem, the more clearly it is established that they were given by God, by a peculiar providence, in this or that grave controversy for the defense of the Church's doctrine, and were endowed with a more excellent sanctity. With these gifts there shines forth among the ancients St. Augustine, who after St. Paul was given by God to champion the doctrine of grace and predestination against the Pelagians and Semipelagians, and to assert the sincerity of Christian speech against lies and mental restrictions. And what shall I say of that stupendous portent of Christian fortitude, unheard of through the ages,

the great Athanasius, who for nearly half a century fought fearlessly and strenuously against the Arians? The doctrine of Aquinas the Pontiffs rightly call the shield and antidote against all heresies.

VIII. Of scholastic theology and the authority of theologians I have discoursed at greater length in Tome I of the Apparatus, book I, dissertation 3, chapters 12 and 13. A few things I shall now touch upon. The office of scholastic theology is to gather into one the doctrine dispersed in the Scriptures, in the Councils, and in the Fathers; to distribute it into treatises; and, once distributed, to explain it by way and reason and right method, and to strengthen the dogmas of faith and morals with the weight of arguments. The first of all to gather the dispersed theology into one body and digest it was St. John Damascene, a Greek by nation, who lived in the eighth century. St. Anselm, in the West, published a body of scholastic theology in the eleventh century. In the footsteps of Damascene and Anselm followed, in the twelfth century, Peter Lombard, bishop of Paris, called the Master of the Sentences, who from holy Scripture, the Councils, and the Fathers, and above all from St. Augustine, published the chief treatises of theology. In the thirteenth century many scholastic theologians flourished, among whom stand eminent Alexander of Hales, Blessed Albert the Great, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Bonaventure, and not a few others.

IX. To resist the concordant judgment of all the Scholastics in matters of faith and morals, if it is not heresy, is next door to heresy, says Melchior Cano. He adds that the multitude of the Scholastics ought not to overwhelm the theologian. Yet the diversity of the theologians must be regarded: for to withstand the common doctrine of the graver theologians is not free of temerity. But against theologians who are eminent neither in sanctity nor in doctrine, however many they be, it is lawful for anyone to contend, provided that both solid reasons and graver theologians, though fewer in number, bring him support.

X. With the sixteenth century waning and the seventeenth beginning, scholastic theology suffered its greatest detriment. And that you may perceive this clearly, you must know that Christian theology is one, embracing these two things: what is to be believed, and what is to be done. It receives various appellations according to different respects. It is called Dogmatic and Positive when it interprets the articles of faith; Polemical, when it vindicates such articles from the cunning inventions of heretics; Scholastic, when it digests all things by way and reason and reduces them to a fixed form of reasoning; Moral theology comprehends both what is to be believed and what is to be done. It explains the articles of faith, and briefly indeed and soberly points out the chief heresies against which Christians must be on their guard. A moral theologian cannot be complete unless he be at once dogmatic, polemical, and scholastic. A theologian of this kind now sits before the tribunal and pronounces judgments — not about the dripping of eaves, not about the boundaries of fields, but about eternal beatitude or eternal misery; now, as master and orator, he teaches, persuades, rebukes; now he draws the sword against enemies both domestic and foreign. The theologian, whether dogmatic or polemical, once his argument has been established, runs his course in his dissertations by an unobstructed way. The moral theologian, on the contrary, continually strikes upon rocks, sandbars, and obstacles: now one circumstance opposes him, now another; on every side lie snares and frauds. Wherefore in the moral theologian, besides polemical, dogmatic, and moral science, there are required an exquisite judgment and a keen mind, a mature and abundant prudence, purity of soul, the government of the appetites, and contempt of earthly things.

XI. Now this most noble nation of theologians was, at the time indicated, divided into two parties: that of the Scholastics, and that of the Moralists. The former, established as it were upon a more eminent bench, claiming for themselves acumen of mind and the art of disputation, look down as from a lofty watchtower upon the Moralists lying in the lowest station, and despise them almost as blockheads and dullards. This is the truth of the matter. In any community whatsoever, those who excel in acumen of mind are deputed to preside over the chairs of the Scholastics and are honored with laurels and degrees; while to the cultivation of the science of morals, to the hearing of confessions, and to the delivery of sermons are sometimes destined those who are unfit for the sublimer scholastic science. And just as many scholastic theologians procured for themselves the greater fame, the subtler and the more futile the questions they stirred up, so very many moral theologians, emulating the glory of the Scholastics, intruded the vainest subtleties and the most inept petty distinctions into Christian theology, and stitched together, like patchwork, an ill-digested heap and arbitrary decisions.

XII. Hence it came about that the illustrious theologians of the age, prejudiced by these abuses, judged that their own glory and their own learning would be ill served if they conferred study and labor upon illustrating the theology called Casuistry. Upon this first absurdity there followed another. For to the adorning of this province there came not a few who were sufficiently strong neither in talent, nor in erudition, nor in prudence. Wherefore it is no marvel if the queen of the sciences lies daily more despised, daily more squalid; if she teems and overflows with quibbles, with captious arguments, with the vainest inventions, alien to evangelical simplicity. *This, nowadays, the garrulous old woman, this the doting old man, this the wordy sophist take upon themselves; this they all presume upon, mangle, and teach before they have learned it*, says St. Jerome of the handlers of another similar subject.

XIII. Who could sufficiently lament that Christian discipline has in many places come to such a pass of evils, that that supreme and most holy apostolic office of explaining the divine word and of ruling souls is committed to men less vigilant, less learned, less furnished with talent, erudition, dexterity, and therefore with prudence; while to the chairs of disputing, of wrangling, of caviling over matters of almost no moment are raised men perspicacious, erudite, acute, and learned? Ill indeed would the Christian commonwealth be provided for, if the more excellent, the sublimer, the holier ministries — which Christ himself performed, which the Doctors of the Church discharged through so many centuries — were now consigned for their exercise to men less skilled, less learned (what if also less holy?).

XIV. The authority of those who, neglecting the Scriptures, the Councils, and the Fathers, go after others *like sheep and birds*, as Navarrus and Cardenas say, has no more force than the weight of the reasons they bring forward — if indeed they bring any. That long census of citations is of no weight whatever, when the testimonies of holy Scripture, of the Fathers, of the Councils, and of the graver theologians are wanting.

XV. The knowledge of Canon Law is necessary to the theologian. Exceedingly useful, moreover, are skill in ecclesiastical history — which narrates above all the acts of the Martyrs and Confessors — and the frequent reading of it. For, as the common proverb has it, examples move more than words. That profane history also is of no small assistance to the theologian, Melchior Cano teaches at length. The use of natural reason, moreover, is necessary not only to the theologian, but to every man of sound mind. In theology, however, it must serve divine authority. For in those things which concern

faith and morals, human reason has been greatly darkened, and is twisted into error by the tyranny of the appetites, unless it be aided by interior grace and directed by exterior law.

Chapter XI — Certain objections are dissolved, and certain admonitions are assigned

I. In few words I have touched upon what I discussed at greater length concerning the theological *loci* in Tome I of the Apparatus. There will not be wanting, however, those who will carp even at these few things. What, they will say, have there been thrust even into this very Compendium of Theology things that pertain more to sermons than to moral theology? For moral theology consists of concise questions and answers: it exhibits the resolutions of the cases that occur, or can occur. For in this way confessors straightway find opportune resolutions for solving the difficulties by which they are wont to be tormented while they hear confessions. These men loathe an oratorical and preacherly style, sprinkled with witticisms. They wish to be instructed in few words, since they lack the time in which they might devote their labor to the Scriptures, to the Fathers, or to theological books themselves written out in continuous discourse. Add to this that neither the divine Scriptures nor the holy Fathers of the Church contain the decisions of cases which are found in the Casuists. These, more or less, are the petty objections which are wont to be obtruded by not a few. That I may dispel the objections recounted, and at the same time instruct my Reader, I shall give certain admonitions.

II. Admonition I. Those who, in the correction of morals and the refutation of depraved opinions, condemn a vehement style, seem to depart from the institute of the divine Scriptures. For the divine Writers, both of the old covenant and of the new, pursued depraved opinions with a strong, a forceful, and — as the time required — a sharp style. Thus God addresses Isaias in chapter 48: *Cry, cease not: lift up thy voice like a trumpet.* He urges Jeremias in chapter 2: *Go, and cry in the ears of Jerusalem.* The divine Seer laments, in the second chapter of the Lamentations, that false Doctors were softening the severity of the divine law by the favor of benignity: *Thy prophets have seen false and foolish things for thee: and they have not laid open thy iniquity, to excite thee to penance. But they have seen for thee false burdens.* A few of the things which St. Jerome writes upon this text I recall before your eyes. *Hardly*, he says, *can anyone be free of this curse, since we both frequently flatter the wicked on account of their power, and despise the good on account of their poverty.* More deeply still does God, through Ezechiel in chapter 3, rebuke the benign and smooth-spoken Doctors: *Thy prophets, O Israel, were like foxes in the deserts. You have not gone up to face the enemy, nor have you set up a wall for the house of Israel.* He threatens scourges to those Doctors who with soothing petty opinions foster the crimes of the people: *And my hand shall be upon the prophets that see vain things, and that divine lies ... because they have deceived my people ... Woe to them that sew cushions under every elbow.* With what force of speech, with what a sharp and vehement style, did not Christ the Lord inveigh against the hypocrite Pharisees, the adulterators of the Decalogue, in Matthew chapter 15? *Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ... Woe to you, blind guides ... Ye fools and blind ... Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ... Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel. Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you make clean the outside of the cup ... Thou blind Pharisee, first make clean the inside of the cup ... You serpents, generation of vipers ... a wicked and adulterous generation ... you are of your father the devil.* Christ the Lord embraced sinners with infinite meekness and clemency. Against the pseudo-prophets, against the fawning masters and flatterers of the peoples, he most frequently hurled the most tremendous maledictions. It is almost always against such men that God

has thundered those terrible *Woes* — Woe, Woe, Woe — both in the old Testament and in the new. The holy Apostle Paul rebuked Elymas, who was perverting the Proconsul, with these words in Acts 13: *O full of all guile and of all deceit, child of the devil, enemy of all justice, thou ceasest not to pervert the right ways of the Lord. And now behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun.* Again the same Apostle cries out to the Galatians, chapter 3: *O senseless Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth? Are you so foolish, that whereas you began in the Spirit, you would now be made perfect by the flesh?*

III. This is to be weighed well: that God never reprehended the Prophets and Doctors for having interpreted his law with too great severity. Once he reproved the Pharisees, because, neglecting the divine Law, they burdened the people with their arbitrary ceremonies, petty devotions, and petty prayers. Those he always rebukes who flatter, who trim their sails, and who indulge the desires of the peoples. *O my people, they that call thee blessed, the same deceive thee, and destroy the way of thy steps*: Isaias chapter 3. Hence the holy Fathers gather that no clearer sign occurs for distinguishing and knowing false Doctors and inept directors of consciences, than the blandishments of their discourses, and opinions that titillate the senses and the ears. *It is a singular mark of the pseudo-prophets* (says Chrysostom) *if they be blessed by all men. For pseudo-prophets always promise sweet things*. I pass over the testimonies of the other Fathers, which attest this same thing.

IV. Admonition II. Those who object that our method is preacherly rather than theological are not sufficiently touched by the corruptions that have been brought into Christian theology. The diction of orators and preachers is indeed broader and more polished; the style of theologians, the matter being considered absolutely, is more compact and more exact. But our censors must needs distinguish the dogmatic, polemical, and theoretical theologian, who only propounds and explains what is to be believed, from the moral theologian, who besides what is to be believed chiefly enjoins, and persuades to, what is to be done. It belongs to this latter theologian not only to teach, but also to reprehend, to rebuke, to move, to press — though more sparingly and more soberly than the orators. But, that those who are wont to say that the minds of men are not conquered by exclamations may not persist in opposing us, let them explain to us: to what end did Christ the Lord so frequently sprinkle his law with parables, rebukes, and persuasions? Why did he so frequently rebuke and adjure? Let them know that in moral theology it is not the mind only that must be subdued, but the senses also that must be vanquished, the appetites that must be restrained, the flesh that must be crucified with its concupiscences. This victory is by no means obtained by argumentations alone and metaphysical speculations; there is need of the study of that art which is most suited to this end. The execution of works, and of difficult works, wars as an enemy against the flesh and the appetite. Therefore the powers must be raised up, the spirit must be stirred and inflamed, that the obstacles may be removed. This method the Evangelists, the Apostles, and all the Fathers observed through ten centuries and more.

V. It is my pleasure to confirm all this by the authority of Fr. Michael Elizalde, a most learned Jesuit, who suffered many adversities because he endeavored to overthrow the corrupted Ethics, and to purge the evangelical doctrine of morals from the new manner of opining and from its pernicious benignity. "For neither" (says he, part 2, question 6, § 6, page 188) "in the time of the Apostles above all, did they deliver one set of things in their preaching, while there survived other theologians thereafter from whose sayings men were to live; nor did they announce one set of things as ministers

of the discourses and of the word of God, and teach other things thereafter, as theologians, by their epistles or by word of mouth. Neither in the time of the Martyrs, nor in the age of the Doctors, was there that division of sacred Orators and Theologians, such that some indeed should be theologians, and others thereafter announcers of the word of God, and that each should teach different things; and that it should belong to the theologians to hand down doctrine, and to the Preachers I know not what else; and that these latter should discourse from the Scriptures, while the former should discourse from other sources and settle causes, and appeal should be made from these to those. For, to speak plainly, and that all, if they will, may understand: it was by no means so, that Augustine, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Gregory, and like men of God spoke indeed from on high and in the churches, while there survived thereafter certain others, as it were theologians, to whom appeal might be made, and by whose theology life should be regulated. Nowhere was there any such class of men. Nor again did those greatest men deliver their homilies and sermons and discourses as though they were one faculty, and then set down, as though it were an entirely different matter, the discipline of morals and the moral theology by which men should live: but sermons, homilies, discourses, and moral theology and the discipline of morals were one and the same thing — not one set of men, and then others altogether different, who should be called moral theologians; and even those works which are not sermons are such as could be delivered from the pulpit, being plainly of the same nature, of one single doctrine, compacted from the same books and filled with the same words of God. But now each of those two faculties differs and stands apart from the other so far, that scarcely any others disagree more. And the preachers seem to judge that they have no need of doctrine, and they do I know not what else; and when they play the theologian, they pass over all the rest — even, as though it were no concern of theirs, the Prima Secundae and the Secunda Secundae, which treat so copiously of vices and virtues in general and in particular. Which sheer thoughtlessness Augustine repels from chapter 16 of book 4 of On Christian Doctrine: and he who is not able to exhort in sound doctrine, and to reprove the gainsayers and convict them of false speech, falsely assumes in the Church of God the person of a Doctor, and undertakes the office without the necessary doctrine. Would therefore that we had such sermons as would avail also in the schools; would that we had such a theology as would edify also in the churches: that each of these two faculties, conspiring into one, might mutually aid the other, lest the one scatter what the other has planted and watered. Assuredly, to close this rather lengthy digression, I will say it without fear: the Christian life is nowhere to be learned, whether in the churches or in the tribunals, where the head of all is not Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Him the Apostle Paul, with the other Apostles and Doctors, continually preached.

VI. Admonition III. The last objection — that in the divine Scriptures there do not occur the decisions of cases which are found in the Casuists — is the most inept of all. Wherefore it is of the highest moment to admonish all pastors and directors of souls to beware of a most grave and most pernicious hallucination; otherwise they will destroy eternally both themselves and their flock. What is this hallucination? Give attentive ears. If volumes of cases were published and resolved every day, they would be most inept for the best and evangelical instruction of Pastors and Confessors. For, granted whatever multiplication of innumerable cases you please, they always vary by reason of circumstance — whether of persons, or of time, or of events, or of other accidents. Wherefore such ill-stitched patchworks of cases often beget nothing else than confusion of mind and neglect of the Laws.

VII. The professors of any arts whatsoever, that they may be able rightly to exercise the works of their art, must be thoroughly versed in the principles and fixed rules of that same art. It is required, besides, that the artificers so excel in talent and prudence, that they know how to apply the rules according to the diversity of the works. The rules of consciences and of morals are the divine Scriptures; they are the precepts which God prescribes to be kept. If the directors of souls have these clearly in view, they are forthwith apt for the performance of their ministry. This is the key of the heavenly gate; this is the norm of consciences. Again, therefore, I recall to memory, I inculcate, and I press what I have already indicated above, and what must be repeated again and again, though it can never be repeated enough: namely, that the pastors and directors of souls must first of all know what is the spirit of the Christian life, what is its end, and what means are suited to the attainment of such an end. The end of the Christian life is this: *Be you perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect*; it is the conformation of our life to the life of Christ Jesus. *Whom he foreknew, he also predestinated to be made conformable to the image of his Son.* The way that leads thither is strait and narrow, and suffers violence. The means are humility, as the basis of the whole edifice, and charity, as the vivifying form. They are fasts, the buffetings of the flesh, the government of the senses, chastity, equity, justice, candor of soul, sincerity of tongue, and the contempt and renunciation of pomps, of luxury, of haughtiness, of ambition. I set the matter forth more clearly. There are, as it were, three ways which lead men to perdition: the concupiscence of the flesh, the cupidity of riches, the pride of life. Carnal love extinguishes the heavenly love of charity. The cupidity of riches opens the way to the violation of justice, glues the human heart to this world, and separates it from God. The pride of life makes war upon God, and destroys the foundation of the first Christian profession.

VIII. Give me a Christian who is humble, chaste, just, and endowed with divine charity; and I pledge myself that he shall be a possessor of Paradise. You too assent, do you not? Now I question you. Who expounds the rules of keeping charity more wisely, who more distinctly, than St. Paul, saying: *Charity is patient, is kind, seeketh not her own*, and so forth? Who more learnedly than Christ Jesus himself, in his Gospels, prescribes the precepts both for stirring up humility and for guarding chastity? Who teaches more efficaciously, by word and by example, the contempt of riches, of luxury, of pomps, of pleasures? Tell me: do all the Casuists together teach more clearly, more efficaciously, more eloquently the cultivation and exercise of the said virtues, in which the spirit of the Christian life is placed? You would be ashamed even to suspect it. Why then do you neglect the reading of the holy Gospels, in which, as you yourself confess, these things are more wisely taught, and wear away all your time, and torture your mind, in the continual reading of the Casuists?

IX. Open to me that secret. You cannot? Then I shall open it. The spirit of Christian sanctity is depicted in the Gospel in vivid colors. The precepts of the virtues are clear, perspicuous, luminous, simple; the rules for declining from vices, and for cultivating and guarding the virtues, are most evident, and lie open to no tergiversation or escape. But that discourse, so clear and so manifest, is hard to you. What then? You betake yourself to the volumes of the Casuists, that you may find there the liniments and blandishments with which to soothe and temper the rigor of the most evident divine Law. And in very deed, in not a few of them you find granted to you the faculty of tasting the cup of half-unchaste pleasure, and of keeping chastity; you find the power of celebrating funereal contracts, and of observing justice; of lying, and of speaking the truth; of calumniating, and of loving your Neighbor; of serving God and the World, and of composing darkness with light. In fine, by the reading of these books you become, not an observer of the Law, but a caviler at it and a judge over it.

Hear the prudent judgment which the most learned and most upright Jesuit, Fr. Michael Elizalde, pronounced upon books of this kind, part 3, book 8, question 7, § 2, page 137, where he writes as follows: *Lately I ran through a moral Summa of many volumes ... I sought Christ, and he was not there. I sought the sum of the Prophets and of the Law, namely charity, the love of God and of the Neighbor, and it was not there. I sought the Gospel, and it was not there. I sought humility, without which no man is saved, and it was not there. And yet, if you run through Paul, or another Apostle, or a Saint, you will find the complete contrary — everything crammed full of Christ, of charity, of humility, and of sanctity. Therefore these doctrines seem to have between themselves no degree of succession, none of consanguinity or of affinity ... The Gospel, then, is simple, and abhors all duplicity, and has its "It is, it is; it is not, it is not." The modern Moralism, on the contrary, is double, and makes use of that two-tongued probability, and has its "It is," and at the same time its "It is not"; since its rule is the probability of contrary and of contradictory propositions.*

X. Again you insist that rules are contained in the Gospels — general rules of the virtues, but not particular and practical ones, as in the Casuists. Confessors and Pastors, moreover, commonly do not know how to apply the universal evangelical rules to practical and particular cases. This the Casuists supply; therefore the reading of them is the more necessary. Excellently argued! Ineptly, then, did Christ Jesus teach his disciples; ignorantly did the Evangelists — Peter, Paul, James, and the rest of the divine Writers — inform Christians. Are the Gospels superfluous, as containing only rules that are abstract, universal, and too far removed from execution? O wretched Christians of eight centuries and more, who went without casuistic books! Unhappy and ignorant holy Fathers of the Church, who bent their endeavors and their studies to this alone: to persuade, to inculcate, to press the execution and observance of the evangelical Law — rejecting the disputations, the controversies, the petty distinctions, and the patchworks of cases and opinions which the Casuists of this latest age have devised! For the rest, I freely concede that very many Confessors and Pastors do not know how to apply the evangelical rules to practical cases and to the reformation of morals. But why is this? Because, answer the Venerable Master Avila and St. Francis de Sales, scarcely ten out of a thousand are found equal to the discharge of so great an office: since few take up so great a burden at God's call, but rather at the impulse of ambition or of cupidity. But such men abuse alike the Gospel, the Fathers, and the Casuists.

XI. What then, you will say, is to be done with so great a multitude of moral volumes? If I were to disclose to you what I myself think, I should bring upon myself an immense odium. So inveterate have prejudged opinions become, that we cannot make the truth manifest without stirring up against ourselves the wrath and indignation of those who fight and wage war for the new manner of opining as though for their altars and their hearths. But by divine providence it has been brought about and disposed that the most wise Jesuit, Fr. Michael Elizalde, furnished the answer now almost a century ago, part 3, book 8, question 8, § 8, page 150, in these words: "Let this be our briefest, and surely most equitable, answer: namely, that with these books that should be done which, through them and through their authors, has been done with the holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church; which likewise has been done with the Prophets, with the Gospel, with the Apostles: and as all these have been well-nigh forsaken, let those books be forsaken for just so long, and let sacred doctrine, and that of the Saints, be restored to use and practice; and thus we repay them their turn most justly. Doubtless in this place many can be offended and stirred up, whether rightly or wrongly — rightly they cannot. Augustine has long lain idle in the forum where consciences are ruled. Who, I ask, is so far removed from Christian principles as not to judge it the wiser course, that Diana at least should

lie idle just as long, and that Augustine should return to the forum in his place? If either Ambrose or Caramuel must live, who would not prefer Ambrose? If the peoples are to be ruled either out of Chrysostom and Gregory, or out of Tamburini and Escobar; if the life of the Faithful is to be formed upon the one or upon the other: who would not prefer those whom the holy Church, our mother and our mistress, has held out to us as the Doctors of our life? These things are clear; we do injury to no man; and if we shall suffer persecution for justice' sake, we shall be counted blessed by the Lord. But you say that both can live and reign together. I answer. First: by the pontifical oracle (of Alexander VII) so often recalled, it is established for us — for us, that is (mark it well), for whom the Apostolic See stands in its proper place — that a manner of opining about matters of conscience has crept in which is wholly alien to evangelical simplicity and to the doctrine of the holy Fathers. Now this manner, and these opinions, assuredly exist somewhere; and they exist in certain books. These books, therefore, cannot live and reign together with the Gospel and the doctrine of the Saints. And if there shall be any who make the most of the pontifical oracles issued in their favor, but count as nothing (mark it well) those issued against them, this surely is not good. Secondly: from what has been established in this work ... it is clear that sacred doctrine, and that of the Saints, cannot be reconciled with the opinions of many — not only in certain particulars and quasi-conclusions, but in the very universal principles of their philosophizing. Both, therefore, cannot live and reign together. Thirdly: from the opening of many books of the Moralists it is notoriously evident that there is in them almost no use of sacred doctrine and of the Saints. Let just so much, then, be done with them for a while. Fourthly: these books are full of contrariety and contradiction; whence at least half of them must be false: but no falsity can be reconciled with sacred doctrine, and rarely any, or none, with the doctrine of the holy Fathers on faith and morals. These books, therefore — at least until all these falsities be expunged — cannot live together with the doctrine of the Scriptures and of the Saints. You will say again that in the book of God, and in the doctrine of the Saints, there is wanting the doctrine necessary to salvation for the ruling of peoples and the directing of consciences. But it has been shown that this doctrine was never wanting in the Church, any more than faith was; and that it is a monster of monsters, if they think that they have now come to give knowledge of salvation to his people. For to this end he came who enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world; who built the Church as the ground and pillar of truth, and to whom he entrusted the deposit to be guarded — which she has, beyond doubt, preserved. Here there is need, not of doctrine, but of consideration, and of at least the lowest degree of humility. This, therefore, we unhesitatingly assert must be done with these books: that which, through them, was done with the holy books of God and of the Saints — that these may live and reign; and to the opiners we can say that word of the Apostle: Now you reign without us: and I would to God you did reign, that we also might reign with you. Would, I say, that you reigned — you, namely, who are able to reign together with them. If not — if one or the other party must go into exile — I call upon every Christian judge to say which of them he judges ought to reign."

XII. What this man of God, this servant and companion of Jesus Christ, has here touched in few words, he proves with full pen in his work — a work worthy of gold and of cedar. I shall subjoin an example in confirmation of the things that have been said in passing. Fr. Thomas Tamburini frees from grave fault children who marry — and marry even unworthy persons — without consulting their parents. To the divine Scriptures, and to the Fathers of the Church who teach the opposite, what answer does he furnish? Hear him speaking thus in book 5 on the Decalogue, chapter 2, § 3, number

6: *If Pope Evaristus decreed that a girl whom her father himself does not give in espousal is by no means to be held for a wife; if Pope Leo, if Ambrose say that it belongs not to virginal modesty to choose a husband, but that the judgment of the parents is to be awaited; if in the sacred letters this office is entrusted to the parents — Give thy daughter to a prudent man; if St. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 7, expressly teaches that daughters are to be given in marriage by their parents; if many examples of the sacred letters, which Bellarmine adduces, manifestly demonstrate it: what then is to be done?* Hear, and be aghast. *I answer with Sanchez: these things, and the like, prove indeed that it is very honorable to seek counsel of this kind from one's father; they do not prove the dire necessity of mortal sin.*

XIII. A marvelous and truly prodigious force do these three words contain — *I answer with Sanchez* — against the sacred letters, against Paul the Apostle, against Pope Evaristus, against Leo, Ambrose, Bellarmine, and all the rest! Yet the reason for wonder ceases, if the system of Fr. Sanchez be considered. The first and gravest commandment of the first Table, concerning the love of God, he reduced almost to nothing, restricting it, of itself, to the article of death. What wonder, then, if he reduces the first precept of the second Table, concerning the honoring of parents, to a mere counsel of propriety — and that in the gravest matter of all, namely the contracting of marriage? In the course of this work I shall bring forward examples by the hundred, in which not a few Casuists elude the doctrine of divine Scripture and of the holy Fathers.

XIV. Admonition IV. I therefore inculcate, and with all zeal and with the whole endeavor of my powers I urge, the reading and humble meditation of holy Scripture, for this reason: that men will not subject themselves to the judgments and opinions of other men. Hence proceeds that endless multitude of the Casuists' volumes: for while men read citations of this kind — *thus teach Diana, Bonacina, Caramuel, Tamburini, Sanchez, Vasquez, Escobar, Zanardi, Candidus, Leander, Gobat, La-Croix, Pichler, Sporer*, and so forth — they straightway infer: if these authors teach thus, others defend the opposite; nay, in the very Moralists cited they find other Casuists cited who teach the opposite. Behold Christian ethics reduced to Scepticism and Pyrrhonism! They are men, they say, and therefore liable to error. Hence it is that, although the pagan philosophers taught excellent lessons of morals, they did not reform morals: because those lessons were regarded as given by men, and the rest of men would not obey them. Only the supreme authority of God subjects to itself the minds and wills of men. When I, reading holy Scripture, reflect that it is God who speaks to me, that it is God who commands me, straightway, trembling and fearful, dismissing all argumentations and cavils, I conclude that God is to be obeyed, not disputed with. When, after the divine Scriptures, I turn over the volumes of the holy Fathers, I reason in like manner: these are they whom holy Mother Church has given me for masters; their interpretations of the Scriptures, therefore, I ought to embrace; upon their method I must insist in expounding Christian theology. Now they are wholly intent upon persuading — with what abundant eloquence, with what vivid figures, with what invincible argumentations! — the observance of the Law. If I am bound to follow them, as men given to me by the Church for masters, then those authors are not altogether to be trusted who fill their volumes with quibbles, disputations, and evasions; who bring all things into doubt, and scarcely ever inflame the souls of their Readers to the execution of the Law. So arid, so thorny, and so sterile is the discourse of most of them, that it extinguishes rather than kindles the spirit of the Christian profession. I do not doubt that all Readers have experienced this very fruit. Far be it from me, however, to condemn the reading of the graver theologians, and especially when the ecclesiastical Laws are to be explained.