

CHAPTER V

The Favors Bestowed upon the Apostles by Christ our Redeemer because of Their Devotion to His Most Holy Mother, and the Sad Perdition of Judas due to the Neglect of This Devotion.

368. Miracle of miracles of divine omnipotence and a wonder of wonders was the behavior of our Lady, Mary most prudent, toward the sacred college of the holy Apostles and disciples of her most holy Son, Christ our Lord. Although this rare wisdom is indescribable, if I were to attempt to manifest all I have been given to understand concerning it I would be obliged to write a large volume on just this matter. I will touch upon it in this chapter and as occasion requires in the rest of this History. All I can say is very little, yet from it the faithful can infer enough for their instruction. The Lord infused into the hearts of all the disciples He received into his divine school a special devotion and reverence for his most holy Mother, very appropriate since they were to see and converse with Her so familiarly in her company. But though this infused reverence was common to all it was not equal in all the disciples, for the Lord distributed his gifts according to his free will and their dispositions, and in accordance with the duties and offices for which each one was destined. And afterward, by the most sweet and admirable treatment and conversation of the great Queen and Lady, they were to grow in their reverential love and veneration for Her, for She spoke to all, loved them, consoled them, attended upon them, instructed them, and relieved all their necessities without ever permitting them to leave her conversation and presence without the plenitude of interior rejoicing, of joy and consolation greater than they had asked for. Yet the good or the better fruit yielded by these blessings was dependent upon the disposition of heart of those who received this heavenly seed.*

369. They all began their treatment with this great Lady full of admiration for Her, and they formed most exalted concepts of her prudence and wisdom, her holiness, purity, and magnificent majesty, together with a sweetness so amiable and humble that none of them could find terms to explain it. This was so ordained by the Most High because as I said above in Book Five, chapter XXIX (315), it was not yet time to reveal this mystical Ark of the New Testament to the world. Thus, just as the Lord, however much He desired to break forth in her praise, would not manifest it in words and concentrated it within his Heart, so also the holy Apostles, sweetly constrained into silence, found a vent for their fervent feelings in so much the more intense love of most holy Mary and praise of her Maker. Since the great Lady, due to her peerless insight, knew the natural disposition of each one, his measure of grace, present condition, and future office, She proceeded according to this knowledge in her petitions to the Lord, in her instructions and conversations with them, and in the favors She obtained for each in support of his vocation. Such a loving zeal in the conduct of a mere creature, so entirely pleasing to the desires of her Lord, excited a new and boundless admiration in the holy Angels. No less admirable was the hidden providence of the Almighty by which the Apostles also corresponded to the blessings and favors received by them from their Mother. All this caused a divine harmony of action, hidden to men and made clear only to the celestial spirits.

370. Especially signaled for the reception of these sacramental favors were St. Peter and St. John; the first because he was to be the vicar of Christ and head of the Church Militant, and the Lord prepared him for this excellence by the love of his most holy Mother toward St. Peter, and

* cf. Mt. 13:23 [Ed.]

that She reverence him with special respect; and the second because he was to take the place of the Lord himself as her son in accompanying and assisting the most pure Lady upon earth. Since therefore the government and custody of the mystical Church, namely of Mary Immaculate, and of the visible Church Militant, namely the faithful on earth, was to be divided between these two Apostles, it was no wonder they would be singularly favored by the great Queen of the world. Yet as St. John was chosen to serve Her and attain to the singular dignity of her adopted son, he at once began to experience special urgings of grace and signalize himself in the service of most holy Mary. Although all the Apostles excelled in devotion to the Queen beyond our power of understanding or conception, St. John the Evangelist penetrated deeper into the mysteries of this City of God and received through Her such light regarding the Divinity as to excel all the other Apostles, and to this his Gospel testifies. All the divine insight therein manifested he received through the Queen of heaven, and the distinction this Evangelist had among all the Apostles of being called the *Beloved of Jesus* (Jn. 21:20) he gained by his love for the most holy Mother of Jesus. Since this love was reciprocated by the heavenly Lady he became the most beloved disciple both of Jesus and Mary.

371. The Evangelist, besides chastity and virginal purity, possessed some other virtues which were especially pleasing to the Queen. Among them were a dovelike sincerity (as is known from his writings) and a great gentleness and humility which made him most meek and docile; and all the peaceful and humble of heart the heavenly Mother called portraits of her most holy Son. Due to these qualities the Queen was inclined to signalize St. John more among all the Apostles, and he was greater disposed to have imprinted in his heart reverential love and affection in serving Her. From the very first moment of his vocation St. John began to excel all the rest in piety toward most holy Mary (317) and fulfill the least of her desires as her most humble slave. He attended upon Her more assiduously than the rest, and whenever it was possible he sought to be in her company and take upon himself some of the bodily labors connected with her present life. Sometimes it happened that the fortunate Apostle competed with the holy Angels in his zeal for thus assisting the great Queen, while She still more eagerly sought to perform these works of humility Herself, for in this virtue She triumphed over all other creatures, and none of them could ever hope in the least to surpass or equal Her in acts of humility. The beloved disciple was very diligent in reporting to the heavenly Lady the works and miracles wrought by the Savior whenever She herself could not be present, and in informing Her of the new disciples converted by his teaching. He was constantly alert and studious to serve Her in the least of her desires, fulfilling each one of them with a loving eagerness.

372. St. John also distinguished himself by the reverence with which he spoke to Mary most holy, for in her presence he always called Her “Lady” or “my Lady” (*Cor.* 175), and in her absence he used the title “Mother of our Master Jesus.” After the Ascension of the Lord when speaking of Her he was the first to call Her “Mother of God and of the Redeemer of the world,” and when speaking to Her he addressed Her as “Mother” and “Lady.” In her honor he invented also other titles, calling Her “the Reparatrix of sin” and “the Mistress of nations.” In particular St. John invented the title “Mary of Jesus” as She was often called in the primitive Church, and he gave Her that name because he knew the sound of these words awoke the sweetest memories in the Heart of the Blessed Virgin. I also desire to give joyful thanks to the Lord that without my merits He has called me to the light of the holy faith and to the religious life which I profess under this very name of Mary of Jesus. The other Apostles were well aware of the favor in which he stood with most holy Mary, and they often asked him to be their messenger on their behalf for what they desired to say or ask of their Queen. The gentle intercession of this holy Apostle often

procured for them tokens of the loving kindness of the sweetest Mother. Concerning this communication of St. John with the Mother of Grace I shall say more in the third part, and it would be easy to write an extensive history in merely mentioning the favors and blessings obtained by St. John from this Lady and Queen of the world.

373. Next to the Apostles St. Peter and St. John, the most beloved by the Blessed Mother was the Apostle St. James the Greater. He was the brother of St. John, and as we shall see from some instances to be related in the third Part of this History he obtained admirable favors at the hands of the great Lady (*Cor.* 325, 352, 384, 399). Also St. Andrew was among those especially favored by the Queen because She knew of his great devotion to the Passion and Cross of his Master and of his being destined to die upon it like Him. I will not stop to speak of her love toward the other Apostles, for She regarded them all with great affection, some due to one virtue, some due to another, and all of them because of their connection with her most holy Son. This affection toward them She showed with rarest prudence, humility and charity. St. Mary Magdalen also had a share in her special love, for our Queen knew the love of this woman for her Son was most ardent, and this great penitent was eminently chosen for the manifestation of the magnificence of the mercy of God toward men. Among all the holy women most holy Mary treated her most familiarly, and enlightened her in regard to the highest mysteries by which She inflamed still more the love of Magdalen toward her Master and toward Herself. The Saint consulted the heavenly Lady in regard to her desire of retreating into solitude in order to live in continual contemplation and penance, and the sweetest Mother gave her a magnificent instruction in the deep mysteries of solitary life. This life she afterwards embraced with her consent and blessing. Later on the Queen visited her in her retreat once in person, and communicated with her many times by means of the Angels, often encouraging and consoling her in the horrors of the desert. The other women who were in the company of the Master were also much favored by their most holy Mother; all of them, and all the disciples of the Lord, experienced her incomparable kindness, and they were filled with an intense devotion and affection toward this great Lady and Mother of Grace. They drew from Her the treasures of grace as from a storehouse where God had laid up his gifts for the whole human race. I shall not dwell longer on this doctrine, for besides its being unnecessary since it is expounded by our holy Church it would consume much time to do it justice.

374. I shall, however, say something of that which has been made known to me concerning the wicked Apostle Judas, for it belongs to this History and less is known of him. It will at the same time be a warning to the obstinate and an admonition for those little devoted to most holy Mary, if indeed there is anyone little devoted to a creature so lovable, whom the infinite God himself loves without bound or measure, the Angels love with all their heavenly powers, the Apostles and Saints from their inmost souls, whom all creatures should eagerly strive to love, and who never can be loved according to her merits. Yet this unhappy Apostle began to wander from the royal road of attaining divine love and his gifts. The understanding of this defection which has been given me in order to record it with the rest of this History is as follows.

375. Judas was attracted to the school of Christ our Teacher by his forceful doctrines, and was filled with the same good intentions which moved the others. Powerfully drawn by these motives, he asked the Savior to admit him among his disciples, and the Savior received him with the Heart of a loving Father, who rejects none who come to Him in search of truth. In the beginning Judas merited special favors and forged ahead of some of the other disciples, deserving to be numbered among the twelve Apostles, for the Savior loved his soul according to its present state of grace and his good works just as He did the others. The Mother of grace and

mercy observed the same course with him, though by her infused knowledge She immediately became aware of the perfidious treachery with which he was to end his apostolate; however, She did not because of this deny him her intercession and maternal love, but rather applied Herself even more zealously to justify as far as possible the cause of her divine Son against this perfidious and unfortunate man, so his wickedness, as soon as it would be put into action, would not have the shadow of an excuse before men. Well knowing that such a character as his could not be overcome by rigor, but would only be driven by it to so much the greater obstinacy, the most prudent Lady took care that none of the wants or comforts of Judas were ignored, and She began to speak, listen to, and treat him more gently and lovingly than all the rest. This She carried so far that when the disciples once disputed among themselves concerning their standing with the Queen (as, according to the Evangelist [Lk. 22:24], happened also concerning the Redeemer), Judas never experienced the least jealousy or doubt in this matter, for this Lady in the beginning always distinguished him by tokens of special love, and he at that time also showed himself thankful for these favors.

376. But since Judas found little support in his natural disposition, and as the disciples, not being as yet confirmed in virtue and not as yet even in grace, were guilty of some human failings, the imprudent man began to compliment himself on his perfection and take more notice of the faults of his brethren than of his own. He permitted himself thus to be deceived; making no effort to amend or repent, he allowed the beam in his own eyes to grow while watching the splinters in the eyes of others (Lk. 6:41). Complaining of their little faults, and seeking with more presumption than zeal to correct the weaknesses of his brethren, he committed greater sins himself. Among the other Apostles he singled out St. John, looking upon him as an intermeddler and accusing him in his heart of ingratiating himself with the Master and his Blessed Mother. The fact that he received so many special favors from them was of no avail to deter him from this false assumption. Yet so far Judas had committed only venial sins and had not lost sanctifying grace; however, they evidenced a very bad disposition in which he willfully persevered. He had freely entertained a certain vain complacency in himself; this at once called into existence a certain amount of envy, which brought on a calumnious spirit and harshness in judging the faults of his brethren. These sins opened the way for greater sins, for immediately the fervor of his devotion decreased, his charity toward God and men grew cold, and his interior light was lost and extinguished. He began to look upon the Apostles and the most holy Mother with a certain disgust, and found little pleasure in their conversation and most holy works.

377. The most prudent Lady perceived the growth of this defection in Judas. Eagerly seeking his recovery and salvation before he cast himself entirely into the death of sin, She spoke to him and exhorted him as her beloved child with extreme sweetness and force of reasoning. Although at times the storm of tormenting thoughts which had begun to arise in the breast of Judas was allayed, yet it was only for a short time, and soon it arose and disturbed him anew. Giving greater entrance to the demon he became infuriated against the most meek Dove. With insidious hypocrisy he sought to deny his sins or palliate them by alleging other reasons for his conduct, as if he could ever deceive Jesus and Mary and hide from them the secrets of his heart. Thereby he lost his interior reverence for the Mother of Mercy, despising her exhortations and openly reproaching Her for her gentle words and reasoning. This ungrateful presumption threw him from the state of grace, and the Lord was highly incensed and deservedly left him to his own evil counsels. By thus purposefully rejecting the kindness and intercession of most holy Mary he closed the gates of mercy and of his remedy. His disgust with the sweetest Mother soon

engendered in him an abhorrence of his Master. He grew dissatisfied with his doctrines and began to look upon the life of an Apostle and dealings with the disciples as too burdensome.

378. Nevertheless divine Providence did not abandon him immediately, but continued to send him interior assistance, although in comparison with the former helps they were of a more common and ordinary kind. They were, however, in themselves sufficient for his salvation if he would have made use of them. To these graces were added the most sweet exhortations of the most clement Lady urging him to restrain himself, humble himself, and ask pardon of his divine Master and true God. On behalf of the Lord himself She offered him mercy, and on her own part She would accompany him and pray for him, and Herself do works of penance for his sins; all She desired from him was to be sorry for his sins and amend his life. All these advances did the Mother of Grace make in order to prevent the fall of Judas. She was well aware that not seeking to arise from a fall and to persevere in sin was a much greater evil than to have fallen. The conscience of this proud disciple reproached him with his wickedness, but becoming hardened in his heart he began to dread the humiliation which would have been to his credit, and he fell into still greater sins. In his pride he rejected the salutary counsels of the Mother of Christ and chose rather to deny his guilt, protesting with a lying tongue that he loved his Master and all the rest, and hence there was no occasion for amending his conduct in this regard.

379. It was indeed an admirable example of patience and charity which Christ our Savior and his Blessed Mother gave us in their conduct toward Judas after his fall into sin, for as long as he remained in their company they never showed exteriorly any change or irritation in their behavior toward him, nor did they cease to treat him with the same kindness and gentleness as all the rest. This was the reason why the wickedness of Judas, who necessarily showed signs of his evil state in his daily conversation and interaction, remained so long concealed to the Apostles, for it is not easy, and perhaps not possible, to continually cover up or hide the tendencies of one's mind. In matters not depending upon deliberation we always act according to our character and habits, and thus we disclose them at least to the watchful eyes of those with whom we have much communication. But since all the disciples witnessed the constant affability and love of Christ our Redeemer and his most holy Mother toward Judas, they suppressed their suspicions and ignored the exterior proofs of his wickedness. Hence all of them were much disturbed and agitated when at the Last Supper the Lord told them that one of them was about to betray Him (Mt. 26:21), and each one searched his soul to ascertain whether the accusation could refer to his own self. St. John, due to his greater familiarity, had some suspicion of the wicked doings of Judas, and he was made more restless by his love; therefore the Lord himself pointed out the traitor, but only by a sign as is related in the Gospel (Jn. 13:26). Before that time the Lord had not given the least intimation of what was passing in the heart of Judas; and in most holy Mary this patience was yet more admirable, who being the Mother of our Savior and a mere creature saw his perfidious betrayal close at hand and about to cause the death of her own Son, whom She loved so tenderly as a Mother and a Handmaid.

380. O our ignorance and stupidity! How differently do the children of men proceed if we are slightly affronted, though we deserve it so much! How unwillingly do we bear with the weaknesses of others, though expecting all men to bear with ours! How grudgingly we pardon an offense, though daily and hourly asking the Lord to pardon us our own (Mt. 6:12)! How prompt and cruel are we in making known the faults of our brethren, yet how resentful and angry at any word of criticism against us! None do we measure with the same measure with which we desire to be measured, and we do not wish to be judged by the same standard as we judge others (Mt. 7:1-2). All this is perversity and darkness, a breath from the mouth of the hellish dragon who

wishes to stem the flow of the most precious virtue of charity and disconcert the order of human and divine reason; for whereas God is charity, and he who exercises it perfectly is in God and God is in him (I Jn. 4:16), Lucifer is wrath and vengeance, and all those who carry out these vices are in him, and he governs them in all the vices opposed to the good of one's neighbor. Though the beauty of this virtue of charity has always filled my heart with the desire of possessing it fully, nevertheless I see as in a clear mirror that I have not arrived at even a beginning of this most noble virtue as exhibited in these wonders of divine charity toward the most ungrateful disciple Judas.

381. So I may not incur the blame of concealing what belongs to this chapter, I shall mention another cause of the ruin of Judas. When the number of the Apostles and disciples increased the Lord resolved to appoint one of them to take charge of the alms received in order to supply the common needs and pay the imperial tribute. Without choosing anyone Christ our Lord made his proposal to all. This office Judas craved in his avarice, while all the rest feared it and interiorly sought to evade it. In order to gain it the avaricious disciple humiliated himself so far as to ask St. John to speak to the most holy Queen and induce Her to arrange this matter for him with her Son. St. John yielded to the request of Judas and spoke to the most prudent Mother, but She, knowing that this request of Judas was not proper or just but proceeded from ambition and avarice, did not want to propose it to the divine Master. The same kind of influence Judas sought to bring into play through St. Peter and other Apostles but without success, for the Lord in his goodness desired to stay his ruin and justify his cause before men if He would grant the request. At this resistance the heart of Judas (possessed already by avarice) instead of quietly yielding was consumed with unhappy desires for the office. Satan instigated within him thoughts of vile ambition such as would have been most improper even for one in a different state of life than Judas; and if in others these thoughts would be wretched and render one culpable for admitting them, it was much more so for Judas, who had been a disciple in the school of highest perfection, and who had lived within sight of the light of Christ, the Sun of justice, and Mary the moon. Neither in the day of abundant graces when his divine Master, the sun, illumined him, nor in the night of temptation when Mary the moon influenced him with that which was appropriate for liberating himself from the venom of the serpent, could he have failed to know the crime of admitting such suggestions. But as he fled from the light and cast himself willfully into darkness, he presumed to ask most holy Mary in a direct manner for her influence in obtaining his object. He had lost all fear and hid his avarice in the cloak of virtue. Approaching Her he said he had made his request through St. Peter and St. John with the sole desire of diligently serving Her and his divine Master, since not all would attend to the duties of this office with proper solicitude, and therefore he now asked Her to obtain the position of purser for him from the Master.

382. The great Lady answered him with extreme gentleness: "Consider well, my dearest, what thou dost ask, and examine whether thy intentions are upright. Ponder well whether it is good for thee to seek that which all thy brethren fear and refuse to accept unless they shall be compelled thereto by the command of their Lord and Master. He loves thee more than thou lovest thyself, and without doubt He knows what will benefit thee; resign thyself to his most holy will, change thy purpose, and seek to grow rich in humility and poverty. Rise from thy fall, for I shall extend thee a helpful hand, and my Son will show thee his loving mercy." Who would not have yielded to these sweetest words and such urgent advice, spoken by such an amiable and heavenly creature as most holy Mary? But this fierce and adamant heart was not softened or moved; on the contrary, the soul of Judas was offended and enraged against the heavenly Lady for thus offering him a means of escaping from his dreadful danger. Since She seemed to hinder him in

his projects, boundless ambition and avarice roused his fury against Her, and he considered her sound advice as an insult. But the most meek and loving Dove pretended not to notice his obstinacy and said nothing more to him at that time.

383. After his interview with most holy Mary, the avarice of Judas would not allow him to rest. Casting off all modesty and natural shame (and the least spark of faith), Judas now resolved to apply to his divine Master and Savior. Clothing himself like a consummate hypocrite in the garb of a sheep, he went to his Master and said: "Master, I wish to fulfill thy desires and serve Thee as thy purser and as the dispenser of the alms which we receive. I will look to the interests of the poor, fulfilling thy doctrine that we do unto others as we wish them to do unto us, and I will try to dispense them with order and reason, and according to thy will better than has been done until now." Such reasoning the specious hypocrite boldly used, committing many enormous sins in one and the same act; for first of all he lied, concealing his real intention; then, being ambitious of an honor which he did not merit, he neither wished to appear in his true light, nor did he wish to be in truth what he merely pretended to be; and he also blamed his brethren, discrediting them and praising himself, the ordinary course of those who are ambitious. What is specially to be noticed in this conduct of Judas is he showed his loss of infused faith, for he attempted to deceive Christ, his divine Master, by wearing the cloak of hypocrisy; for if he had firmly believed Christ was true God and man, who penetrated into the secrets of the heart, he could not have hoped to be able to deceive Him, nor would he have attempted such double dealing, not only because he would have known Christ as the omniscient God, but because he would not have hoped to impose upon the infused and beatific science of Christ as man (Jn. 6:65). Hence Judas had lost belief in all these prerogatives, and to his other sins added the sin of heresy.

384. What the Apostle says in his first letter to Timothy (6:9-10) was literally fulfilled in this treacherous disciple: *For they that will become rich, fall into temptation and into the snare of the devil, and into many unprofitable and hurtful desires, which drown men into destruction and perdition. For the desire of money is the root of all evils; which some coveting have erred from the faith, and have entangled themselves in many sorrows.* All this happened to the perfidious and avaricious disciple, and his avarice was so much the more blamable since he had before his eyes the striking and admirable example of Christ and his Mother, and that of the whole Apostolic company, and they all accepted only very moderate alms. But the wicked disciple imagined that because of the great miracles of his Master, and the multitudes which followed and gathered around Him, the alms and offerings would increase and he could have at his disposal large amounts. Seeing that his expectations were not realized he was much disappointed, as he plainly showed when St. Mary Magdalen expended the precious fragrances in anointing the Savior (Mk. 14:4). His desire of gathering in alms induced him to estimate the value of the ointment at three hundred pence and complain that this money was withheld from the poor, among whom it could have been distributed. He was moved to say this because he regretted very much not to lay hands on it himself, for little did he care for the poor (Jn. 12:4-6). He was highly incensed against the Mother of Mercy because She distributed such generous alms among the poor; against the Lord because He would not accept large donations; and against the Apostles and disciples because they did not ask for them. All this vexed him sorely because his purse was thereby kept empty. Some months before the death of the Savior he began frequently to avoid the other Apostles, absenting himself from their company and from the Redeemer, for they were getting irksome to him, and he joined them only in order to collect what donations he could. During these times of absence the demon inspired him with the thought of breaking entirely with his Master and delivering Him over to the Jews.

385. But let us return to the answer given to Judas by the Master, whom he asked to make him purser, and we shall see how hidden and terrible are the judgments of the Most High. The Savior of the world desired to ward off from him the danger which He recognized in this request and which threatened the avaricious Apostle with final perdition. So Judas could not excuse himself under the plea of ignorance the Lord answered him: "Dost thou know, Judas, what thou dost seek and what thou askest? Be not so cruel toward thy own self as to solicit and seek to obtain the poison and the weapons which may cause thy death." Judas replied: "Master, I desire to serve Thee by employing my strength in the service of thy faithful followers, and in this way I can do it better than in any other, for I offer to fulfill all the duties of this office without fail." This daring presumption of Judas in seeking and coveting danger* justified the cause of God in allowing him to enter and perish in the danger thus sought and coveted. He resisted the light and hardened himself against it. Water and fire were shown him, life and death; he stretched forth his hand and chose perdition (Ecclus. 15:17-18). The justice of the Most High was made clear and his mercy was exalted, since He had so often presented Himself at the portals of this hardened heart from whence He had been cast out and entrance given to the demon. Later on I shall mention further particulars of the wickedness of Judas as a warning to mortals, for I do not wish to prolong this chapter too much and they shall fit better into other parts of this History. Who among men subject to sin would not fear with great dread upon seeing one of his same nature, who in the school of Christ and his most holy Mother was raised at the bosom of his doctrines and miracles, and who had worked the same miracles and wonders as the rest, in such a short time pass from the state of a just and holy Apostle into the state of a demon? Transform himself from a simple sheep into a ravening and bloodthirsty wolf? From venial sins Judas proceeded to most grievous and horrible crimes. He delivered himself to the demon, who already suspected that Christ our Lord was God, and who began to exercise the wrath he had against the Lord upon this unfortunate disciple who strayed from the little flock. Hence if the fury of Lucifer is just as great and much greater after having learned to his detriment that Christ is the true God and Redeemer, what hope has the soul who delivers himself up to such an inhuman and cruel enemy, who so anxiously and vehemently seeks our eternal damnation?

TEACHING OF THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN, MARY MOST HOLY.

386. My daughter, all thou hast written in this chapter is a most important warning for all those who live in the flesh and in the imminent danger of losing their eternal happiness. It must teach them to seek my most kind and powerful intercession and fear the judgments of the Most High (Ps. 118:120), for this is an efficacious means of salvation and of meriting higher reward from the Lord. I desire thee anew to understand that among the divine secrets which my most holy Son revealed to John, his beloved and mine, in the night of the Last Supper, one was that he had acquired this love of Christ because of his love for me, and that Judas fell because he despised the mercy and kindness which I had shown him. At that time also the Evangelist understood other great mysteries communicated and wrought in me, that I would take part in the labor and suffering of the Passion, and that he would have special charge of me. My dearest, the purity which I require of thee must be greater than that of an angel, and if thou dost strive after it thou shalt become my dearest child like St. John, and a most beloved and favored spouse of my Son and Lord. His example and the ruin of Judas should continually serve thee as a stimulus and

* cf. Ecclus. 3:27 [Ed.]

warning to seek my love and be grateful for that which has been manifested to thee without thy merit.

387. I desire thee also to understand another secret hidden from the world, namely that one of the most vile and horrible sins before the Lord is the little esteem in which the just and the friends of the Church are held, and especially toward me, who was chosen for his Mother and the universal remedy of all men. If the failure to love one's enemies and the contempt of them is so displeasing to the Lord and to the saints of heaven (Mt. 18:35), how shall He bear with such treatment of his most dear friends, whom He holds as the apple of his eye and in deepest affection (Ps. 33:16)? This counsel thou canst never bear in mind too much in this mortal life, and it is one of the signs of reprobation to hold in abhorrence the just. Beware of this danger and judge no one (Mt. 7:1), especially those who reprehend and admonish thee. Do not allow thyself to incline toward any earthly thing, least of all the offices of governing, wherein that which is sensitive and human is wont to carry away those who attend only to it, disturbing judgment and obscuring reason. Envy no one his honor, nor the possession of any earthly thing, nor seek to obtain from the Lord anything else than his holy love and friendship. Man is full of the most blind inclinations, and if he does not restrain them he will begin to ask for that which will cause his eternal perdition. Sometimes the Lord, according to hidden judgments, grants these petitions in punishment for wicked desires and other sins as happened with Judas. Such souls receive earthly reward for any good actions which they may have performed during mortal life. If thou shalt look into the deceptive course of the lovers of this world thou shalt see they consider themselves fortunate whenever they obtain all they desire according to their earthly inclinations, yet this is to their greater unhappiness, for they cannot expect to receive an eternal reward like the just who despise the world and many times meet with adversities; moreover, the Lord at times denies them their desires in temporal things in order to prevent and remove them from this danger. So thou mayest not fall into such danger I exhort and command thee never to yearn after or seek earthly possessions; separate thyself from all, preserve thy will free and independent, and never desire anything beyond that which is according to the will of God, for His Majesty has care of all those who resign themselves to his divine Providence (Mt. 6:30).