

CHAPTER XIII

The Delivery and Capture of Our Savior by the Treason of Judas; what Most Holy Mary Did on This Occasion, and some Mysteries of This Event.

512. At the same time our Savior Jesus was on mount Olivet praying to his eternal Father and soliciting the spiritual salvation of the entire human race, the perfidious disciple Judas sought to hasten the delivery of Christ into the hands of the priests and Pharisees; and since Lucifer and his demons could not dissuade the perverse will of Judas and of the others from their intention to take the life of their Creator and Master, he changed the tactics of his ancient pride, and adding new malice administered impious suggestions to the Jews so they would torment Christ with greater cruelty and most infamous insults.* As I have already said before (288, 418), the infernal dragon was already full of suspicion that this unprecedented man was the Messiah and the true God. He now resolved to ascertain whether his misgivings were well founded or not by instigating the Jews and their ministers to heap the most atrocious injuries upon the Savior. He imparted to them his own dreadful envy and pride, and thus literally fulfilled the prophecy of Solomon (Wis. 2:17). It seemed to the demon that if Christ was not God and only a man, He certainly must weaken and be conquered in these persecutions and torments; if on the other hand He was God, He would manifest it by freeing Himself and performing new miracles.

513. Similar motives urged on the priests and Pharisees. At the instigation of Judas they hastily gathered together a large band of people composed of pagan soldiers, a tribune, and many Jews. Having consigned to them Judas as a hostage, they sent this band on its way to apprehend the most innocent Lamb, who was awaiting them and was aware of all the thoughts and schemes of the sacrilegious priests, as foretold expressly by Jeremias (Jer. 11:19). All these ministers of evil issued from the city toward mount Olivet, armed and prepared with ropes and chains, with torches and lanterns, as the author of this treason, Judas, had forewarned them to do, for in his perfidy and treachery he feared that the most meek Master, whom he believed to be a magician and sorcerer, would perform some miracle for his escape. As if arms and human precautions could ever have availed against his divine power if He desired to make use of it! As if He had not done so on so many other occasions[†] before He came to this predetermined hour in which He delivered Himself over by his own free will to his Passion, affronts, and death of the cross!

514. While they were approaching His Majesty returned the third time to his disciples, and finding them asleep spoke to them: *Sleep ye now, and take your rest. It is enough; the hour is come; behold the Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go. Behold, he that will betray Me is at hand* (Mk. 14:41-2). Such were the words of the Master of sanctity to the three most privileged Apostles, without reprehending them with greater rigor, but with highest patience, meekness and sweetness. Being oppressed they did not know what to answer their Lord, as Scripture says (Ib. 40). Then they arose, and Christ our Savior went with them to join the other eight Apostles. He found them likewise overcome and oppressed by their great sorrow and fallen asleep. The divine Master then ordered all of them together to unite under Him as their Head, in the form of a congregation and a mystical body, so they could go forth and encounter the enemies, thereby teaching them the power of mutual and perfect unity for

* cf. Ps. 68:27; Wis. 2:19 [Ed.]

† cf. Lk. 4:29-30; Jn. 8:59 [Ed.]

overcoming the demons and their followers, and for avoiding defeat by them; for a triple cord is hard to tear, as says Ecclesiastes (4:12), and he that is mighty against one may be overcome by two, that being the effect of union (Ib. 9). The Lord again exhorted all the Apostles and forewarned them of what was to happen. Then the din of the soldiers and ministers of evil who came to apprehend Him began to be heard. Our Savior went forth in order to encounter them, and with incomparable affection, magnanimous courage, and divine supremacy, He spoke and said: "Passion desired from my soul, ye pains, wounds, affronts, punishments, afflictions, and ignominious death, come, come quickly, for the fire of love which I have for the salvation of mortals awaits thee; come to the Innocent among creatures, who knows thy value, who has sought, desired and solicited thee, and who shall receive thee of his own will with joy. I have purchased thee by my anxieties of possessing thee, and I esteem thee for thy merits. I desire to remedy the contempt men have for thee and accredit thee, raising thee to a most eminent position and dignity. Let death come, so by my accepting it without having deserved it I shall triumph over it, and merit life for those who have suffered it as a punishment of sin (Osee 13:14). I permit my friends to abandon Me, since I alone desire and am able to enter into this battle in order to gain for them triumph and victory" (Is. 53:4).*

515. During these and other reasonings spoken by the Author of life, Judas advanced in order to give the signal upon which he had agreed with his ministers of evil (Mt. 26:48), that his Master would be the one whom he would approach and greet, giving Him the customary but now feigned kiss of peace so they could immediately seize Him and not another by mistake. These precautions the unhappy disciple had taken not only out of avarice for the money and the hatred he had conceived against his divine Master, but also due to his fear; for it seemed to the wretched man that if Christ our Good was not put to death on this occasion he must inevitably meet and encounter Him in the future. Fearing this confusion more than the death of his soul or the death of his divine Master, and in order not to be seen in that shame, he desired to hasten the accomplishment of his treason and for the Author of life to die at the hands of his enemies. The traitor then ran up to the most meek Lord, and as a consummate hypocrite, hiding his hatred, he imprinted on his countenance the kiss of peace, saying: "God save Thee, Master." By this so treacherous act the perdition of Judas was matured, and God was justified in withholding his grace and help. On the part of the unfaithful disciple malice and temerity reached their highest degree, for interiorly denying or disbelieving the uncreated and created wisdom by which Christ must know of his treason, and ignoring his power to destroy him, he sought to hide his malice under the cloak of the friendship of a true disciple, and all this for the purpose of delivering over to such a frightful and cruel death his Creator and Master, to whom he was bound by so many obligations. In this one act of treason were enclosed so many and such formidable sins that it is impossible to weigh his unequalled malice, for he was unfaithful, murderous, sacrilegious, ungrateful, inhuman, disobedient, insincere, lying, avaricious, impious, and the master of all hypocrites, all of this executed against the Person of God made man.

516. On the part of the Lord shone forth his ineffable mercy and equity, since those words of David were fulfilled in an eminent manner: *With them that hated peace I was peaceable; when I spoke to them they fought against Me without cause* (Ps. 119:7). So highly did the Lord fulfill this prophecy that upon contact with Judas, and at that most sweet answer when He said to him *friend, whereto art thou come?* (Mt. 26:50), through the intercession of his most holy Mother He sent into the heart of the traitorous disciple a new and most clear light by which Judas saw the

* cf. *Coronation* 426 [Ed.]

atrocious malice of his treason and the punishment to follow if he would not retract it by true penance, and the merciful pardon still to be obtained from the divine clemency. What Judas clearly read in those few words of Christ was: Friend, take heed lest thou cause thy perdition and abuse my meekness by this treason. If thou dost desire my friendship I shall not refuse it to thee because of this if thou shalt grieve for thy sin. Consider well thy temerity in delivering Me by false friendship and under the cover of a false peace and a kiss of reverence and love. Remember the benefits thou hast received from my charity, and that I am the Son of the Virgin by whom thou hast been so often favored and rejoiced with motherly advice and counsel during thy apostolate. For her sake alone thou must not commit such treason as to sell and deliver her Son, since She has never disobliged thee, nor in her most sweet charity and meekness merited such a boundless offense as thou dost now commit. Yet although thou hast now committed it do not despise her intercession, for She alone shall be powerful with Me, and for her sake I offer thee pardon and life, since She has many times besought Me to do so. I assure thee that we love thee, for thou art yet in life where there is hope, and where we will not deny thee our friendship if thou wilt seek it;* but if thou dost refuse it thou shalt merit our abhorrence and eternal chastisement and pain. This seed so divine took no root in the heart of this wretched and unhappy disciple, for it was harder than a diamond and more inhuman than that of a wild beast. Resisting the divine clemency, he finally fell into despair as I shall relate in the next chapter.

517. The signal of the kiss having been given by Judas, the Author of life with his disciples and the soldiers who had come to capture Him came face to face, forming two squadrons the most opposed and hostile the world ever saw. For on the one side was Christ our Lord, true God and man, as the Captain and Head of all the just, supported by his eleven Apostles, the chieftains and champions of his Church, with innumerable hosts of angelic spirits full of adoring wonder at this spectacle. On the other side was Judas, the originator of the treason, armed with hypocrisy and all wickedness, and many Jews and gentiles determined to vent their malice with the greatest cruelty. Surrounding these were Lucifer and a multitude of demons, inciting and assisting Judas and his helpers boldly to lay their sacrilegious hands on their Creator. With unfathomable love for suffering and great force and authority the Lord then spoke to the soldiers, saying (Jn. 18:4-5): *Whom seek ye?* They answered: *Jesus of Nazareth.* Jesus said to them: *I am He.* By these inestimably precious and blessed words Christ declared Himself as our Redeemer and Savior, for only by his offering Himself freely to redeem us by his Passion and Death could our hope of eternal life ever rest on a firm foundation.

518. His enemies could not understand or fathom the true meaning of these words: *I am He.* But his Blessed Mother and the Angels understood them, as did also, to a great extent, the Apostles. It was as if He had said: *I am who am* (Ex. 3:14), as I have said to my prophet Moses; for I am of Myself, and all creatures have their being and existence from Me. I am eternal, immense, infinite, one in substance and attributes; and I have become man, hiding my glory, so by means of my Passion and Death, to which you wish to condemn Me, I can redeem the world. Since the Lord spoke with divine power his enemies could not resist, and when his words struck their ears they all fell backwards to the ground (Jn. 18:6). This happened not only to the soldiers, but to the dogs which they had brought with them and the horses upon which some of them rode; all of them fell to the ground and remained motionless like stones. Lucifer and his demons were hurled down with them, deprived of motion and suffering new confusion and torture. Thus they remained for some seven or eight minutes, showing no more signs of life than if they had died. O

* cf. Is. 55:6; Epistle, Tuesday of the First Week of Lent [Ed.]

word so mysterious in meaning and more than invincible in power! Let not the wise glory before Thee in their wisdom and astuteness, nor the powerful in their valor (Jer. 9:23). Let the vanity and arrogance of the children of Babylon be humbled, since one word from the mouth of the Lord, spoken with so much meekness and humility, confounds, destroys and annihilates all the pride and power of man and hell. Let us children of the Church also learn that the victories of Christ are gained by confessing the truth, by giving place unto wrath (Rom. 12:19), by showing meekness and humility of heart (Mt. 11:29), by overcoming and being overcome with dovelike simplicity, by the peacefulness and resignation of sheep free of resistance from furious and ravenous wolves.

519. Thus did our Savior with the eleven Apostles gaze upon the effect of his divine word in the ruin of those ministers of evil. His Divine Majesty, with a sorrowful countenance, contemplated in them the portrait of the chastisement of the reprobate, and listened to the intercession of his most holy Mother to let them rise, for upon her intercession his divine will had made that dependent. When it was time for them to come to themselves, He prayed to the eternal Father, saying: "My Father and eternal God, into my hands Thou hast placed all things (Jn. 13:3), and hast entrusted to my will the human Redemption required by thy justice. I desire with the plenitude of my entire will to satisfy it and deliver Myself to death, in order to merit for my brethren participation in thy treasures and eternal happiness prepared for them." By this expression of his efficacious will the Lord gave permission to that whole miserable band of men, demons and animals to arise and be restored to the same condition as before their falling down. A second time the Savior said to them: *Whom seek ye?* And they again answered: *Jesus of Nazareth.* The Lord answered most meekly: *I have told you that I am He. If therefore you seek Me, let these go their way* (Jn. 18:7-8). With these words He gave permission to the servants and soldiers to take Him prisoner and execute their designs upon Him, which without their understanding it meant nothing else than to draw upon his divine Person all our sorrows and infirmities (Is. 53:4).

520. The first one who hastened to audaciously lay hands upon the Master of life was a servant of the high priests named Malchus. Though all the Apostles were disturbed and afflicted with fear, among them all St. Peter was more inflamed than the others with zeal for the honor and defense of his divine Master. Drawing a small sword which he had with him, he made a pass at Malchus and cut off one of his ears, severing it entirely from the head (Jn. 18:10). The stroke would have resulted in a much more serious wound if the divine Providence of the Master of patience and meekness had not diverted it. His Majesty would not permit any other death than his own to occur on that occasion, when by his wounds, his blood, and his pains He had come to rescue the human race and give eternal life to all (if all would accept it). Nor was it his will or according to his teaching that his Person be defended by the use of arms, and He did not desire to leave such an example in his Church as one to be principally imitated for her defense. In order to confirm this doctrine which He had always inculcated, He picked up the severed ear and restored it to its place, perfectly healing the wound and making Malchus more sound and whole than he was before. But He first turned to St. Peter and reprehended him, saying (Jn. 18:11; Mt. 26:52-54): *Put up thy sword into the scabbard, for all that shall take the sword to kill with it shall perish with the sword. Dost thou not wish that I drink the chalice which my Father hath given Me? Thinkest thou that I cannot ask my Father, and He will give me presently more than twelve legions of angels for my defense? But how then shall the Scriptures and the Prophets be fulfilled?*

521. Thus St. Peter as the head of the Church by this loving exhortation was taught and enlightened that his arms for the establishment and defense of the Church were to be spiritual; that the law of the Gospel does not inculcate battles and conquests with material weapons, but conquests of humility, patience, meekness, and perfect charity, conquering the demon, the world, and the flesh; that by means of these victories divine virtue would triumph over their enemies and over the power and guile of this world; that weapons for offensive attack and defense of one's possessions* are not for the followers of Christ our Savior, but for the princes of the earth to safeguard their earthly possessions, while the sword of the Church was to be spiritual, reaching rather the soul than the body. Then Christ our Lord, turning toward his enemies and the servants of the Jews, spoke to them with great majesty and grandeur: *You are come out as it were to a robber with swords and clubs to apprehend Me. I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you laid not hands on Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness* (Mt. 26:55; Lk. 22:53). All the words of our Savior contained the most profound mysteries, and it is impossible to comprehend them all or explain them, especially those which He spoke at his Passion and Death.

522. Well should those ministers have been softened and made ashamed of their wickedness by this reproach of the divine Master, but they were far from it, because they were of the cursed and sterile earth, drained of the dew of virtue and human kindness; nevertheless, the Author of life desired to reprehend them and teach them the truth to that extent. Thus their malice would be so much the more inexcusable, and this sin and all the others, committed in the very presence of the highest sanctity and justice, would have its due correction, and they themselves a powerful help for conversion if they desired it. Moreover, it would thereby become evident He knew all that was to happen, and delivered Himself into their hands and over to this death of his own free will. For these and other most high ends His Majesty said those words, speaking them to the heart, since He knew and fully understood the cause of their malice, hatred and envy, namely because He had publicly reprehended the vices of the priests and Pharisees, because He had taught the truth and the way of life to the people, and because He had by his example and miracles captured the good will of the humble and the pious and brought many sinners to his friendship and grace. He reminded them that one who had power to bring about all these results in public, and who could not be apprehended in the temple or in the city in which He taught, could certainly not be captured in the open field without his consent. He clearly made them sensible that the reason for their failing to do so before was because He himself had not given his permission to men or demons until the hour chosen by Himself. In order to signify to them the hour of his being cast down, afflicted, abused and imprisoned had come, He said: *This is your hour, and the power of darkness*. As if He had said to them: Until now it was necessary for Me to be with you as your Master for your instruction, and therefore I did not permit you to take my life. But I desire to consummate by my death the work of the Redemption consigned to Me by my eternal Father, and hence I now permit you to take Me prisoner and execute your will upon my Person. Thereupon they fell upon the most meek Lamb like inhuman tigers, binding Him securely with ropes and chains in order thus to lead Him to the house of the high priest, as I shall relate farther on (546).

523. The most pure Mother of Christ our Lord was most attentive to all that passed at his capture, and by means of her clear vision saw it more clearly than if She had been present in person, for by means of her supernatural visions She penetrated into all the mysteries of his

* cf. Mt. 5:40; II Cor. 11:20 [Ed.]

words and actions. When She beheld the band of soldiers and servants issuing from the house of the high priest, the most prudent Lady foresaw the irreverence and insults with which they would treat their Creator and Redeemer, and in order to do what was within her power She invited her holy Angels and many others in union with Her to render adoration and praise to the Lord of creation as reparation for the injuries and affronts He would sustain at the hands of those ministers of darkness. The same request She made to the holy women who were praying with Her. She told them her most holy Son had now given permission to his enemies to take Him prisoner and abuse Him, and they were going to make use of this permission with the lamentable impiety and cruelty of sinners. Assisted by the holy Angels and the pious women the faithful Queen engaged in interior and exterior acts of devoted faith and love, confessing, adoring, praising and magnifying the infinite divinity and the most holy humanity of her Son and her Creator. The holy women imitated Her in her genuflections and prostrations, and the angelic princes responded to the canticles with which She magnified and confessed the divine and human being of her most beloved Son. In the measure in which the children of malice increased their irreverence and injuries, She sought to compensate for them by praises and veneration. Thus She continued to placate the divine justice lest it be roused against the persecutors of Christ and destroy them, for only most holy Mary was capable of staying the punishment of such great offenses.

524. The great Lady not only placated the just Judge, but even obtained favors and blessings from the divine clemency for the very persons who molested Him, and thus secured a return of good for those who were heaping injuries upon Christ our Lord for his doctrine and benefits. This mercy attained its highest point in the disloyal and obstinate Judas, for the tender Mother, seeing him deliver Jesus her Son by the kiss of feigned friendship, and considering how shortly before his mouth had contained the sacramental body of this same Lord with whose sacred countenance so soon after those same foul lips were permitted to come in contact, was transfixed with sorrow and entranced by charity. She asked the Lord to grant new graces whereby this man, who had enjoyed the privilege of touching the face whereupon the Angels desire to look, could save himself from perdition if he chose to use them. In response to this prayer of most holy Mary, her Son and Lord granted Judas powerful graces in the very consummation of his treacherous delivery (516). If the wretched man had given heed and begun to respond to them, this Mother of Mercy would have obtained for him many others, and finally the pardon of his wickedness, as She has done with other great sinners who desired to give Her that glory and obtain eternal glory for themselves. But Judas failed to realize this fact and hence lost everything, as I shall relate in the next chapter.

525. Likewise when the great Lady saw all the servants and soldiers who had come to take Him fall to the ground at his divine word, She in company with the Angels broke out in a song of praise of his infinite power and of the virtue of his humanity which thereby renewed the victory of the Most High over Pharaoh and his troops in the Red Sea (Ex. 15:4). She exalted the Lord of hosts because He was about to deliver Himself in an admirable manner to suffering and death in order to rescue the human race from the captivity of Lucifer. Then She besought the Lord to permit all these dumbfounded and vanquished enemies to regain their senses and arise. She was moved to this petition by her most generous kindness and deep compassion for these men created by the Lord according to his own image and likeness; on the other hand, She desired to fulfill in an eminent degree the law of loving our enemies and doing good to those who persecute us, inculcated and practiced by her own Son and Master (Mt. 5:44); and finally, because She knew that the prophecies of Holy Scripture were to be fulfilled in the Redemption of man. Though all

of these were infallible, this did not hinder most holy Mary from giving voice to her prayer, thereby moving the Most High to grant these favors, for in the infinite wisdom and decrees of his eternal will all these means were foreseen as producing these effects in the manner most conformable to the foreknowledge and foresight of the Lord. But it is not necessary to enter into further explanation of such mysteries at present. When the servants of the high priest laid hands on and bound the Savior, the Blessed Mother felt on her own hands the pains caused by the ropes and chains as if She herself was being bound and fettered. In the same manner She felt in her body the blows and torments further inflicted upon the Lord, for as I have already said this favor was granted to his Mother (508) as we shall see in the course of the Passion (553, 563, 576, 630). This sensible pain was a certain alleviation of the pain of her soul which her love would have caused Her if She had not suffered with her most holy Son in this manner.

*INSTRUCTION GIVEN TO ME BY THE QUEEN
OF HEAVEN, MOST HOLY MARY.*

526. My daughter, in all thou art made to understand and write concerning these mysteries thou dost draw upon thyself (and upon mortals) a severe judgment if thou dost not overcome thy cowardliness, ingratitude and baseness by meditating day and night on the Passion and Death of Jesus crucified. This is the great science of the saints, so little heeded by the worldly; it is the bread of life and the spiritual food of the little ones which gives wisdom to them (Ecclus. 15:3), the lack of which starves the lovers of this proud world. In this science I desire thee to be studious and wise, for with it thou canst buy for thyself all good things (Wis. 7:11). My Son and Lord taught us this science when He said: *I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one cometh to my Father, but by Me* (Jn. 14:6). Tell me then, my daughter: If my Lord and Master has made Himself the way and the life for men through his Passion and Death, is it not evident that in order to go that way and live up to this truth they must follow Christ crucified, afflicted, scourged and affronted? Consider the ignorance of men who wish to come to the Father without going through Christ, since without suffering or having compassion for Him they expect to reign with His Majesty without any remembrance of his Passion and Death, or even tasting of it or thanking Him for it. They want it to earn for them the delights of this present life as well as the enjoyment of the glory of eternal life, their Creator having suffered the most bitter pains and Passion in order to enter heaven (Lk. 24:26), leaving them this example and opening for them the way of light.

527. Eternal rest is incompatible with the shame of not having duly labored for its attainment. He is not a true son of his father who does not imitate him, nor he a good servant who does not accompany his lord, nor he a good disciple who does not follow his master, nor do I count him a devoted child who does not suffer with me and my divine Son. But our love for the eternal salvation of men obliges us, who see them forgetful of this truth and so averse to suffering, to send them labors and punishments, so if they do not freely welcome them they may at least be forced to undergo them and so be enabled to enter upon the way of salvation. And yet even all this is insufficient, since their inclinations and their blind love of visible things detains them and makes them heavy and hard of heart, robbing them of remembrance and affection toward these higher things which would raise them above themselves and above created things. Hence it comes that men find no joy in their tribulations, nor rest in their labors, nor consolation in their sorrows, nor any peace in adversities; for altogether different from the saints who glory in tribulation (Rom. 5:3) as the fulfillment of their most earnest desires, they desire none of it and

abhor all that is painful. In many of the faithful this ignorance goes still farther, for some of them pray to be embraced by the love of God, others to be pardoned many sins, others to have great blessings conceded to them; yet nothing shall be given them, because they do not pray in the name of Christ my Lord, imitating Him and following Him in his Passion.

528. Therefore, my daughter, embrace the cross, and do not admit any consolation outside of it in this mortal life. By contemplating and feeling within thyself the sacred Passion thou shalt attain the summit of perfection and the love of a spouse. Bless and magnify my most holy Son for the love with which He delivered Himself up for human salvation. Little do mortals heed this mystery, but I as an eyewitness assure thee that next to ascending to the right hand of his eternal Father nothing was more estimable or desired with all his Heart than to offer Himself for suffering and death and deliver Himself for this purpose to his enemies. I desire thee also to lament with great sorrow the fact that Judas in his malice and treachery has many more followers than Christ. Many are the infidels, many the bad Catholics, many the hypocrites, who under the name of a Christian sell and deliver Him and wish to crucify Him anew. Bewail all these evils which thou dost understand and know so thou mayest imitate and follow me in this matter.