

CHAPTER XII

The Prayer of Our Savior in the Garden and Its Mysteries; His Most Holy Mother Understands All of Them.

493. By the wonders and mysteries which our Savior Jesus worked in the Cenacle He left prepared and well-ordered the reign which the eternal Father by his will had given Him. The Thursday night of his Last Supper having already advanced some hours, He chose to go forth to that dreadful battle of his suffering and death by which the Redemption was to be accomplished. The Lord then rose to depart from the hall of the miraculous feast, and most holy Mary also left her retreat in order to meet Him on the way. At this face to face meeting of the Prince of eternity and the Queen a sword of sorrow pierced the Hearts of both Son and Mother, inflicting a pang of grief beyond all human and angelic thought. The sorrowful Mother prostrated Herself upon the ground, adoring Him as her true God and Redeemer. His Divine Majesty, looking upon Her with a most majestic countenance, yet at the same time with overflowing love as her Son, spoke to Her only these words: "My Mother, I shall be with thee in tribulation. Let us accomplish the will of my eternal Father and the salvation of men." The great Queen offered Herself as a sacrifice with her whole Heart and asked his blessing. Having received this She returned to her retirement where, by a special favor of the Lord, She was enabled to see all that passed in connection with her divine Son. Thus She was enabled to accompany Him and cooperate with Him in his activity as far as pertained to Her. The owner of the house, who was present at this meeting, moved by a divine impulse, offered his house and all it contained to the Lady of heaven, asking Her to make use of all that was his during her stay in Jerusalem, and the Queen accepted his offer with humble gratitude. With Her Highness remained the thousand Guardian Angels, who during the Passion always assisted Her in forms visible to Her, together with some of the pious women whom She brought with Her.

494. Our Redeemer and Master left the house of the Cenacle with all the men who had been present at the Last Supper and the celebration of its mysteries, and soon many of them dispersed in the different streets in order to attend to their own affairs. Followed by his twelve Apostles the Lord directed his steps toward mount Olivet, outside and close to the eastern walls of Jerusalem. Judas, alert in his treacherous solicitude for the betrayal of his divine Master, conjectured that the Lord intended to pass the night in prayer as was his custom. This appeared to him a most opportune occasion for delivering his Master into the hands of his accomplices the scribes and Pharisees. Having taken this dire resolve, he lagged behind and permitted the Master and his Apostles to proceed. Unnoticed by the latter he lost them from view and departed in all haste to his own ruin and destruction. Within him was the turmoil of sudden fear and anxiety, interior witnesses of the wicked deed he was about to commit. Driven on in the turbulent hurricane of thoughts raised by his bad conscience, he arrived breathless at the house of the high priests. On the way it happened that Lucifer, perceiving the haste of Judas in procuring the death of Christ our Good, and as I have related in chapter X (462) fearing that after all He was the true Messiah, came toward him in the shape of a very wicked man, a friend of Judas acquainted with the intended betrayal. In this shape Lucifer could speak to Judas without being recognized. He tried to persuade him this project of selling his Master did at first seem advisable because of the wicked deeds attributed to Him, but having more maturely considered the matter he did not now deem it advisable to deliver Him over to the priests and Pharisees, for He was not so bad as Judas

might imagine, nor did He deserve death, and besides He might free Himself by some miracles, and great difficulty could happen to him later on.

495. Thus did Lucifer scheme, retracting with new fear the suggestions which he had previously sent into the heart of the traitorous disciple against the Author of life. Yet his new malice was in vain, since Judas, who had voluntarily lost the faith, and not fearing the violent suspicions of the demon, desired instead to risk the death of his Master than await the anger of the Pharisees if he left Him alive. Due to this fear and his abominable avarice he ignored the counsel of Lucifer, though he had no suspicion of his not being the friend whose shape the demon had assumed. Being stripped of grace he neither desired to turn back in his malice, nor could he be persuaded by anyone to do so. And since the Author of life was in Jerusalem, and the priests were gathered in consultation, Judas went to them to fulfill his promise to deliver Christ into their hands. Judas entered and told them he had left his Master with the other disciples on their way to mount Olivet, and this seemed to be the most favorable occasion for his arrest, since on this night they had already made sufficient preparation and taken enough precaution to prevent his escaping their hands by what they called his artifices and tricks. The sacrilegious priests were much rejoiced and began to busy themselves to procure an armed force for the arrest of the most innocent Lamb.

496. In the meanwhile His Divine Majesty with the eleven Apostles was attending to our eternal salvation and that of the very ones who were scheming his death. Unheard-of and wonderful contest between the deepest malice of man and the immeasurable goodness and charity of God! If this stupendous struggle between good and evil began with the first man, it certainly reached its highest point in the death of our Repairer, for then good and evil stood face to face and exerted their highest powers: Human malice in taking away the life and honor of their Creator and Redeemer himself, and the immense charity of His Majesty freely sacrificing both for men. On this occasion it was as it were necessary (according to our way of understanding) for the most holy soul of Christ our Good, yea even his divinity, to advert to his most pure Mother in order

to find someone entirely pleasing to Him among creatures, in whom his love could repose and who could withhold his justice, for only in that pure creature could He see the full fruit of the Passion and Death He would suffer for men attained most worthily. His justice found in her immeasurable sanctity some compensation for human malice, and in the humility and constant charity of this great Lady could be deposited the treasures of his merits so afterwards as from the rekindled ashes his Church, like a new phoenix, could be reborn in virtue of the same merits of Christ our Lord and of his death. This consolation which the humanity of our Redeemer received from the vision of the sanctity of his worthy Mother gave Him strength and as it were encouragement to conquer the malice of mortals, and He deemed Himself well recompensed for suffering such atrocious pains by the fact that to mankind belonged also his most beloved Mother.

497. The great Lady observed all that happened from her retreat. She perceived the sinister thoughts of the obstinate Judas, the manner in which he strayed from the Apostolic College, how Lucifer spoke to him in the shape of his acquaintance, and all the rest that passed when he reached the priests and helped them arrange with so much haste the capture of the Lord. The sorrow which then penetrated the most chaste Heart of the Virgin Mother, the acts of virtue which She elicited at the sight of such wickedness, and what else She then did cannot be properly explained by us; we can only say that She always acted with the plenitude of wisdom and sanctity, and to the pleasure of the most holy Trinity. She pitied Judas and wept over the loss of

that perfidious disciple; She sought to make recompense for his malice by adoring, confessing, praising and loving the Lord whom he delivered by such affronting and faithless treachery. She offered Herself with eagerness to die in place of her Son if necessary. She prayed for those who were plotting the capture and death of her divine Lamb, for She regarded them as prizes to be estimated according to the infinite value of his precious blood and life for which this most prudent Lady foresaw they would be bought.

498. Our Savior pursued his way across the torrent of Cedron (Jn. 18:1) to mount Olivet and entered the garden of Gethsemane. Then He said to all the Apostles: “Wait for Me, and *sit ye here while I go yonder and pray* (Mt. 26:36); do thou also *pray, lest ye enter into temptation*” (Lk. 22:40). The divine Master gave them this advice so they might be firm in the temptations of which He had spoken to them at the Last Supper, namely that all of them would be scandalized because of what they would see Him suffer that night (Mt. 26:31), and that Satan would assail them to sift and stir them up by his false suggestions (Lk. 22:31), for the Pastor (as prophesied) was to be abused and wounded and the sheep were to be dispersed (Zach. 13:7). Then the Master of life, leaving the band of eight Apostles at that place and taking with Him St. Peter, St. John, and St. James (Mk. 14:33), retired to another place where they could neither be seen nor heard by the rest. Being with the three Apostles He raised his eyes to the eternal Father, confessing and praising Him as was his custom, while interiorly He prayed in fulfillment of the prophecy of Zacharias (13:7), giving permission for death to approach the most innocent and sinless One, commanding the sword of divine justice to be unsheathed over the Shepherd, upon the Man united with God himself, executing upon Him all its rigor and striking Him unto death. In this prayer Christ our Lord offered Himself anew to the eternal Father in satisfaction of his justice for the rescue of the human race, and He gave consent for all the torments of his Passion and Death to be let loose over his most holy and passible humanity. From that moment He suspended and restrained the consolation and alleviation which could flow from the impassible to the passible part of his being, so in this dereliction his Passion and sufferings could reach the highest degree possible. The eternal Father granted these petitions and approved this total sacrifice of the sacred humanity.

499. This prayer was as it were a license and permission by which were opened the floodgates of the ocean of his Passion and bitter sufferings, so its impetuous waves would enter even unto the soul of Christ, as foretold by David (Ps. 68:2). And immediately He began to be sorrowful and feel the anguish of his soul, and therefore He said to the Apostles: *My soul is sorrowful unto death* (Mk. 14:34). Since these words and the sorrow of Christ our Lord contain such great mysteries for our instruction, I shall say something of what has been shown to me and insofar as I understand it. The Lord permitted this sorrow to reach the highest degree both naturally and miraculously possible in his sacred humanity. This sorrow penetrated not only all the lower faculties of his humanity insofar as his natural appetites were concerned, but also all the highest faculties of his body and soul by which He perceived the inscrutable judgments and decrees of divine justice and the reprobation of so many for whom He was to die. This was the cause of his greatest sorrow, as we shall see farther on (684). He did not say He was sorrowful because of his death but *unto* death, for the sorrow arising from the natural desire for life was minor, for the death which threatened Him was near. Besides being necessary for the Redemption, his most holy will, for our instruction, was ready for death in order to vanquish our natural appetite for life;* for having as a viator enjoyed the glory of the body in his Transfiguration, He judged

* cf. Mt. 16: 24-25 [Ed.]

Himself as it were obligated to suffer in order to render a return for that glory, so there would be correspondence in what He received and what He gave as recompense. We have been taught this doctrine in the three Apostles who were witnesses of both that glory and this sorrow and anguish; for this reason they were chosen as witnesses of both mysteries, and on this occasion they understood this by a particular enlightenment given to them.

500. In order to satisfy the immense love with which our Savior Jesus loved us, it was also as it were necessary to give full sway to this mysterious sorrow, so by such profound suffering He could satiate his love; for if He had not suffered this sorrow to the very summit to which it could take Him his charity would not have been satiated, nor would it have become so clearly known that his charity could not be extinguished by the many waters of tribulations (Cant. 8:7). At the same time He showed thereby his charity toward the Apostles who were with Him and were now much disturbed by perceiving that his hour of suffering and death, which He had so often and in so many ways foretold to them, was now at hand. This disturbance and cowardice caused them confusion and shame which they did not dare manifest. Yet the most loving Savior encouraged them by manifesting to them his own sorrow which He would endure unto death. By seeing Him afflicted and in anguish they would not be confused in feeling the sorrows and fears they were experiencing. There was still another mystery contained in this sorrow of the Lord which referred especially to the three Apostles, Sts. Peter, John and James; for more than all the rest they were imbued with an exalted conception of the greatness and divinity of their Master, especially regarding the excellence of his doctrine, the holiness of his works, and the power of his miracles. They realized more completely and wondered more deeply at his dominion over all creation. In order to confirm them in their faith that He was a true man capable of suffering, it was appropriate that in his presence they recognize and see his truly human sorrow and affliction. By the testimony of these three Apostles, who were distinguished by such favors, the holy Church was afterwards to be well fortified against the errors which the demon would try to spread against the truth of the humanity of Christ our Savior, and thus the rest of the faithful would have this consolation when we are afflicted by labors and sorrow possesses us.

501. Interiorly enlightened in this truth the three Apostles were exhorted by the Author of life, who said to them: *Stay you here, and watch and pray with Me* (Mt. 26:38, 41). He desired to inculcate the practice of all He had taught them and make them constant in their belief, and therefore reminded them of the danger of backsliding and the duty of watchfulness and prayer in order to recognize and resist the enemy, remaining always firm in the hope of seeing his Name exalted after the ignominy of his Passion. With this exhortation the Lord separated Himself a short distance from the three Apostles. He prostrated Himself with his divine face upon the ground and prayed to the eternal Father: *My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me* (Ib. 39). This prayer Christ our Lord uttered after He had come down from heaven with the express purpose of truly suffering and dying for men; after He had despised the shame of his Passion (Heb. 12:2), had willingly embraced it, and rejected all human consolation; after He had hastened with most ardent love into the jaws of death,* to affronts, sorrows and afflictions; and after He had set such a high price upon men that He determined to redeem them with the price of his blood. And since by his divine and human wisdom and his inextinguishable love He had shown Himself so superior to the natural fear of death, it seems He could not make this petition for any motive solely concerning Himself. That this was so in fact was made known to me in the light which was vouchsafed me concerning the mysteries contained in this prayer of the Savior.

* cf. Lk. 12:50 [Ed.]

502. In order to explain what I mean, I must state that on this occasion Jesus our Redeemer conferred with the eternal Father about the most arduous affair between them, namely how human Redemption and the fruit of his Passion and Death of the cross would affect the hidden predestination of the saints. In this prayer Christ offered on his part to the eternal Father his torments, his precious blood, and his death for all men as an abundant price for all mortals and for each one of the human race until that time and yet to be born to the end of the world; and on the part of the human race He presented the sins, infidelities, ingratitude and contempt which the wicked, for whom He suffered, were to commit in wasting his frightful Passion and Death, the effect of which would be their condemnation to eternal punishment for not having availed themselves of his clemency. Though to die for his friends and for the predestined was agreeable and as it were appealing to our Savior, yet to suffer and die for the reprobate was very bitter and painful, for regarding them the ultimate reason for suffering death was lacking. This sorrow was what the Lord called a chalice, for the Hebrews were accustomed to use this word to signify anything that implied great labor and pain. The Savior himself had already used this word on another occasion when, in speaking to the sons of Zebedee, He asked them whether they could drink the chalice which the Son of man was to drink (Mt. 20:22). Hence this chalice was so bitter for Christ our Lord because He knew that his drinking it would not only be without fruit for the reprobate, but would be a scandal to them and cause their greater chastisement and pain because they would despise it (I Cor. 1:23).

503. Therefore I understood that in this prayer Christ our Lord besought his Father to let this most bitter chalice of dying for the reprobate pass from Him. Since now his death was inevitable He asked that no one, if possible, would be lost. He pleaded that as his Redemption would be superabundant for all it thus be applied to all in such a way as to make all, if possible, profit by it in an efficacious manner, yet if this was not possible, He would resign Himself to the will of his eternal Father. Our Savior repeated this prayer three times at different intervals (Mt. 26:44), pleading the longer in his agony (Lk. 22:43) due to the importance and immensity of the object in question. According to our way of understanding, in this mediation there was as it were a contention or altercation between the most holy humanity of Christ and the Divinity; for the humanity, with personal love for men who were of his own nature, desired all to attain eternal salvation* through his Passion, while the Divinity represented that by his most exalted judgments the number of the predestined was fixed, and in accordance with the equity of his justice He could not concede this benefit to those who despised it so much, and who of their own free will made themselves unworthy of the Life of souls, resisting Him who procured and offered it to them. From this conflict resulted the agony of Christ and his prolonged prayer, pleading the power of his eternal Father, and that all things were possible to his infinite majesty and grandeur (Mk. 14:36).

504. This agony of Christ our Savior grew in proportion to the greatness of his charity and the certainty of his knowledge that men would persist in neglecting to profit by his Passion and Death. His agony increased to such an extent that great drops of bloody sweat were pressed from Him which flowed to the very earth (Lk. 22:44). Although this prayer was uttered subject to a condition and failed in regard to the reprobate who fell under this condition, yet He gained by it greater and more frequent helps for all mortals, and their multiplication for those who would accept them and place no obstacle to them. Through his prayer the just and the saints would participate in the fruit of the Redemption with greater abundance, and many gifts and graces of

* cf. I Tim. 2:4 [Ed.]

which the reprobate made themselves unworthy were applied to the elect. The human will of Christ, conforming itself to the divine will, then accepted the Passion for each one respectively: For the reprobate as sufficient, since they would be given sufficient helps if they desired to avail themselves of them, and for the predestined as efficacious, since they would cooperate with grace. Thus was set in order and as it were realized the salvation of the Mystical Body of the holy Church, under its Head and Architect, Christ our Good (Col. 1:18).

505. As a ratification of this divine decree, while yet His Majesty was in his agony, the third time Christ uttered this prayer the eternal Father sent St. Michael the Archangel to the earth in order to comfort Him by a sensible message (Lk. 22:43) and confirmation of what He already knew by the infused science of his most holy soul, for the Archangel could not tell our Lord anything He did not know, nor could he produce any additional effect on his interior consciousness for this purpose; however, as I related above (498), Christ had suspended the alleviation which He could have derived from his human nature from this knowledge and love, leaving it to its full capacity for suffering as He afterwards expressed on the Cross (684). In lieu of this alleviation and consolation which He had denied Himself, He was recompensed to a certain extent, as far as his human senses were concerned, by this embassy of the Archangel. He received an experimental knowledge of what He had known before by interior consciousness, for the actual experience is something superadded and new, and is calculated to move the sensible and bodily faculties. St. Michael, in the name of the eternal Father, intimated and represented to Him in audible words what He already knew: That it was not possible for those to be saved who were unwilling; that in the divine acceptation the number of the predestined was highly valued,* though smaller than the number of the reprobate; that among the former was his most holy Mother, a worthy fruit of his Redemption; and that his Redemption would also attain its fruits in the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Virgins and Confessors, who would signalize themselves in his love and perform admirable works for the exaltation of the Name of the Most High; and among them the Archangel named some who would come after the Apostles, such as the founders of religious orders, and the conditions of each one. Other great and hidden sacraments were manifested or referred to by St. Michael; however, it is not necessary to declare them, nor have I any command to do so, and I have said enough to continue the discourse of this History.

506. During the intervals of this prayer of our Savior, the Evangelists say, He returned to visit the Apostles and exhort them to watch and pray lest they enter into temptation (Mt. 26:41; Mk. 14:38; Lk. 22:42). This the most vigilant Pastor did in order to show the prelates of his Church what care and supervision they were to exercise over their flocks; for if Christ our Lord left his prayer, which was so important, in order to attend to his Apostles, it was to teach prelates how they must postpone other enterprises and interests in order to attend to the salvation of their subjects. In order to understand the need of the Apostles I must mention that the infernal dragon, after having been routed from the Cenacle and forced into the infernal caverns (478-9), was permitted by the Savior to come forth again so his malice would serve for the execution of the decrees of the Lord. Suddenly many demons rushed upon Judas, in the form already described (494), in order to impede the sale of his Master. Since they could not dissuade him, they turned against the other Apostles, suspecting they had received some great favor at the hands of the Lord in the Cenacle. What this favor was Lucifer sought to find out in order to counteract it. Our Savior saw this cruelty and wrath of the prince of darkness and his ministers, and as a most

* cf. Jn. 10:29 [Ed.]

loving Father and vigilant Superior He hastened to the assistance of his little children* and neophytes, his Apostles. He roused them and exhorted them to watch and pray against their enemies so they might not enter into the temptations which secretly threatened them and which they were not anticipating or noticing.

507. He returned therefore to the three Apostles, who having been more favored also had more reasons for watchfulness in imitation of their Master. But He found them asleep, for they had permitted themselves to be overcome by the dejection and sadness they were suffering, and with it they came to fall into that negligence and lukewarmness of spirit in which they were overcome by sloth and slumber. Before speaking to them or waking them the Lord looked at them for a moment and wept a little over them, seeing them by their negligence and lukewarmness buried and oppressed in that shadow of death† at a time when Lucifer was so vigilant against them. He spoke to Peter and said to him (Mk. 14:37): *Simon, sleepest thou? Couldst thou not watch one hour?* And immediately He gave him and the others the answer: “*Watch ye, and pray that you enter not into temptation* (Ib. 38); for my enemies and your enemies sleep not as you do.” The reason He reprimanded St. Peter was not only because he was the head and chosen prelate of the Apostles, and had signaled himself in his forceful protestation that he would not deny Him and was ready to die for Him, though all the others be scandalized in Him and leave Him, but also because he had declared those intentions and offerings sincerely from his heart, and hence among all the Apostles merited to be corrected and admonished; for without doubt the Lord chastises those whom He loves,△ and is always pleased by our good intentions, even when we afterwards fall short in their execution as happened with the most fervent of all the Apostles, St. Peter. When the Lord came the third time and woke up all the Apostles, Judas was already approaching in order to deliver Him into the hands of his enemies, as I shall relate in the next chapter.

508. Let us now return to the Cenacle where the Queen of heaven had retired with the holy women of her company. From her retreat by divine enlightenment She saw most clearly all the works and mysteries of her most holy Son in the garden, without anything being hidden from Her. At the moment when the Savior separated Himself with the three Apostles Peter, John and James, the heavenly Queen separated Herself from the other women and went into another room. Upon leaving them She exhorted them to watch and pray lest they enter into temptation. She took with Her the three Marys, treating Mary Magdalen as the superior of the rest. Secluding Herself with these three as her more intimate companions, She begged the eternal Father to suspend in Her all human alleviation and consolation, both in the sensitive and the spiritual part of her being, so nothing would hinder Her from suffering to the highest degree in union with her divine Son. She prayed to be permitted to feel and experience in her virginal body all the pains of the wounds and tortures which Jesus himself was to suffer. This petition was granted by the blessed Trinity, and thus the Mother felt the pains of her most holy Son in the order He suffered them, as I shall relate farther on (525). Although they were such that if the right hand of the Almighty had not preserved Her life by a miracle they would have caused her death many times over, yet on the other hand these pains granted by the hand of the Lord were like pledges and a new lease on life, for in her most ardent love She would have considered it incomparably more painful to see her divine Son suffer and die without being allowed to share in his sufferings.

* cf. Mt. 18:3 [Ed.]

† cf. Lk. 1:79 and Ps. 106:10; also *O Antiphon* of Vespers for Dec. 20 and 21 [Ed.]

△ cf. Apoc. 3:19 [Ed.]

509. The three Marys were chosen by the Queen to accompany and assist Her in her affliction, and for this purpose they were endowed with greater light and grace than the other women. In retiring with them the most pure Mother began to feel new sorrow and anguish, and She said to them: “My soul is sorrowful because my beloved Son and Lord is about to suffer and die, and I shall not die with Him of his torments. Pray, my friends, that you enter not into temptation.” Having said this She went apart a short distance from them, and accompanying the prayer of our Savior in the Garden She on her part made the same supplications as far as She knew it to be conformable to the human will of her Son. Returning at the same intervals to exhort the three women, since She also knew of the wrath of the dragon against them, She continued the prayer and petition and felt agony like the Savior. She wept over the perdition of the foreknown, for She was highly enlightened in the mysteries of eternal predestination and reprobation. In order to imitate and cooperate in all things with the Redeemer of the world, the great Lady also suffered a bloody sweat similar to that of Christ our Lord, and by divine intervention She was visited by the archangel St. Gabriel, as our Savior Jesus was visited by St. Michael. The holy prince expounded to Her the will of the Most High in the same manner as St. Michael to her most holy Son. In both Son and Mother the prayer offered and the cause of sorrow was the same, and therefore they were also proportionally similar to one another in their actions and their knowledge. I understood that the most prudent Lady had prepared some cloths for what was to happen in the Passion of her most beloved Son, and on this occasion She sent some of her Angels with a towel to the garden, in which her Son was then perspiring blood, in order to wipe off and dry his venerable countenance. The Lord, for love of his Mother and for her greater merit, permitted these ministers of the Most High to fulfill her pious and tender desires. When the moment for the capture of our Savior arrived it was announced to the three Marys by the sorrowful Mother; all of them lamented with most bitter weeping, especially Magdalen, who signalized herself as more inflamed in love and fervent piety.

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

510. My daughter, all thou hast understood and written in this chapter shall serve as a most potent incentive to thee and to all mortals who shall consider it carefully. Estimate then and weigh within thy soul how important is the eternal predestination or reprobation of souls, since my most holy Son looked upon it with such consideration that the difficulty or impossibility of saving all men added such immense bitterness to the death which He was about to suffer for all. In this conflict He manifested the importance and gravity of this matter, and for this reason He multiplied his petitions and prayers to his eternal Father. His love for men caused Him to sweat most copiously his blood of inestimable price, since his death could not save all, given the malice by which the foreknown and reprobate would make themselves unworthy of participation in the merits of his death. My Son and my Lord has indeed justified his cause in having sought the salvation of all, lavishing his love and merits without limit or measure; and likewise the eternal Father has justified Himself in presenting to the world such a remedy, thus making it possible for each one freely to reach out for such widely different lots as death and life, fire and water (Ecclus. 15:17-18).

511. Yet what pretense or excuse shall men advance for having forgotten their own eternal salvation when my divine Son and I have desired and sought to procure it for them with such sacrifices and untiring watchfulness? No mortal shall have any excuse for such foolish

negligence, and much less shall the children of the holy Church have an excuse, since they have received the faith of these admirable sacraments and yet show in their lives little difference from that of infidels and pagans. Do not think, my daughter, it is written in vain: *Many are called, but few chosen* (Mt. 20:16). Fear this sentence and renew in thy heart the care and zeal for thy salvation according to the sense of obligation arising from the knowledge of such high mysteries. Even if it were not for thee a question of eternal salvation thou must correspond to the endearment with which I manifest to thee such great and divine secrets. That I call thee my daughter and a spouse of my Lord should cause thee to pay no attention to any visible thing, and embrace only love and suffering for his sake; this I have shown thee by my example, since I applied all my faculties continually to these two things with the highest perfection. In order for thee to attain this I desire thy prayer to be without intermission, * and that thou watch one hour with me, † that is, during the whole of thy life; for compared with eternity life is less than an hour, yea less than a moment. With such sentiments I desire thee to follow up the mysteries of the Passion, writing them, feeling them, and imprinting them upon thy heart.

* cf. I Thes. 5:17 [Ed.]

† cf. Mt. 26:40 [Ed.]