

CHAPTER XXVII

Some Apparitions of Christ our Savior, Risen from the Dead, to the Marys and the Apostles; the Report which All of Them Gave to the Queen, and the Prudence with which She Heard Them.

766. After Jesus our Savior, risen and glorified, had visited and filled with glory most holy Mary, He resolved as a loving Father and Shepherd to gather the sheep of his flock which the scandal of his Passion had disturbed and scattered.* The holy Patriarchs and all whom He had rescued from limbo continually remained in his company, although they did not manifest themselves and remained invisible during his apparitions; only our great Queen was privileged to see them, know them, and speak to them during the time which passed until the Ascension of her divine Son. Whenever the Lord did not appear to others He remained with his beloved Mother in the Cenacle, nor did She ever leave this place during the entire forty days. There She enjoyed the presence of the Redeemer of the world and the choir of Prophets and Saints by whom the King and Queen were attended. For the purpose of making his Resurrection known to his Apostles He began by showing Himself to the women, not however because of their weakness but because they were stronger in their faith and hope of the Resurrection, for this is the reason why they merited the privilege of being the first to see Him risen.

767. The Evangelist St. Mark (15:47) mentions the special notice which Mary Magdalen and Mary Joseph took of the place where they had seen the body of Jesus deposited; hence they with other holy women went forth in the evening of the sabbath from the Cenacle to the city and bought additional ointments and spices in order to return early the following morning to the sepulchre and show their veneration by visiting and anointing the holy body once more. On Sunday morning, entirely ignorant that the grave had been sealed and placed under guard by order of Pilate (Mt. 27:65), they arose before dawn in order to execute their pious design. On their way they thought only of the difficulty of removing the large stone which they now remembered had been rolled to cover the opening of the sepulchre; yet their love made light of this hindrance, though they did not know how to remove it. When they came forth from the house of the Cenacle it was yet dark, but before they arrived at the sepulchre the sun had already dawned and risen, for on that day the three hours of darkness which had intervened at the death of the Savior were compensated by an earlier sunrise. This miracle harmonizes the statements of St. Mark and St. John, for the one says the Marys came after sunrise, and the other that it was yet dark (Mk. 16:2; Jn. 20:1), because all of this was true, since they went forth very early and before dawn, and by the haste and speed of the sun they had been overtaken by it when they arrived at the grave, although they did not stop on the way. The sepulchre was in an arched vault, as in a cave, the entrance to which was covered by a large stone slab. Within, to one side and somewhat raised from the ground, was the tomb, and in it the body of the Savior.

768. A short time before the Marys thought and spoke of the difficulty of removing the stone, a violent and wonderful quaking or trembling of the earth took place; at the same time an Angel of the Lord opened the sepulchre and cast aside the stone which covered and closed the entrance (Mt. 28:2). The guards of the monument, by this great commotion and movement of the stone,†

* cf. Zach. 13:7; Mk. 14:27 [Ed.]

† and for fear of the Angel (Mt. 28:4) [Ed.]

were struck with terror and fell to the ground, and became as dead men (Ib. 4), though they did not see the Lord, for the body of the Lord was no more in the grave; He had already risen and gone forth from the sepulchre before the Angel cast aside the stone. The Marys, though in some fear, took heart and were encouraged by God to approach and enter the vault. Near the entrance they saw the Angel who had cast aside the stone seated upon it, refulgent in countenance and in garments white as snow (Mk. 16:5). He spoke to them saying: *Be not affrighted; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified: He is risen, He is not here; behold the place where they laid Him* (Ib. 6). The holy women entered, and seeing the sepulchre vacant they were filled with grief, for they were more deeply affected at seeing the Lord absent than by the words of the Angel. Then they saw two other Angels seated at each end of the tomb, who said to them: *Why seek you the living with the dead? Remember how He spoke unto you, when He was yet in Galilee, that He was to rise on the third day* (Lk. 24:5-7). *But go, tell his disciples and Peter that He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall you see Him* (Mk. 16:7).

769. By this admonition of the Angels the Marys remembered what their divine Master had said. Assured of his Resurrection they hastened away from the sepulchre and gave an account to the eleven Apostles and others who had followed the Lord, many of whom judged as delirium what the Marys said (Lk. 24:11), so disturbed was their faith and so forgetful were they of the words of their Master and Redeemer. While the holy women, full of trembling and joy, related to the Apostles what they had seen, the sentinels at the grave awoke from their stupor and regained the use of their senses. Since they saw the sepulchre open and emptied of the sacred body, they fled to give notice of the event to the princes and priests (Mt. 28:11-14). When they found this out they became confused and called a meeting in order to determine what they could do in order to palliate the miracle which was so evident that it could not remain hidden. They decided to offer to the soldiers much money to induce them to say that during their sleep the disciples of Jesus had come and stolen the body from the grave. The priests, having assured the guards of immunity and protection, spread this lie among the Jews. Many were so nonsensical that they gave it credence; and some even more obstinate and blind in our own day do likewise, and prefer to accept the testimony of witnesses who acknowledged they were asleep during the time of which they testify.*

770. Although the Apostles and disciples took as ravings what the Marys related, nevertheless St. Peter and St. John, desirous of convincing themselves with their own eyes, departed in all haste to the sepulchre, closely followed by the holy women (Jn. 20:3). St. John arrived first, and without entering he saw the winding sheets laid to one side (Ib. 4-5). He waited for the arrival of St. Peter, who passing the other Apostle entered first. Both of them saw the sacred body was not in the tomb (Ib. 6-8). St. John was then assured of what he had begun to believe when he had seen the great change in the Queen of heaven, as I related in the preceding chapter (758), and he then professed his belief. The two Apostles returned to give an account of the wonder they had seen in the sepulchre. The Marys remained in a place apart from the sepulchre and wonderingly commented on the events. Mary Magdalen, in great excitement and tears, reentered the sepulchre to reconnoiter. Although the Apostles had not seen the Angels she saw them, and they asked her (Jn. 20:13): *Woman, why weepest thou?* She answered: *Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him.* With this answer she left the garden where the sepulchre was and met the Lord; she did not know Him, but thought he was a gardener. And the Lord also asked her (Ib. 15): *Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?* Magdalen,

* cf. St. Augustine's commentary on the Psalms, Lesson VI for Tenebrae of Holy Saturday [Ed.]

ignorant of his being the Lord, answered Him as if He was the gardener, and without further reflection said: *Sir, if thou hast taken Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away.* Then the loving Master said *Mary* (Ib. 16), and in pronouncing her name He permitted Himself to be recognized by the tone of his voice.

771. As soon as Magdalen knew it was Jesus she was inflamed with love and joy, and answered saying *my Master* (Ib.). Throwing herself at his feet she was about to touch and kiss them as being used to that favor, but the Lord prevented her and said: "*Do not touch Me, for I am not yet ascended to my Father to whom I am going; but return and tell my brethren the Apostles that I ascend to my Father and to your Father*" (Ib. 17). Then Magdalen left, filled with consolation and jubilation. Shortly she met the other Marys. Scarcely had they heard what had happened to her and how she had seen Jesus risen from the grave, and while they were yet standing together conferring with each other in wonder and tears of joy, He appeared to them and said: "God save you." They all recognized Him, and as St. Matthew tells us they worshipped his sacred feet (Mt. 28:9). The Lord again commanded them to go to the Apostles and tell them they had seen Him and should go to Galilee where they would see Him risen (Ib. 10). The Lord then disappeared and the holy women hastened to the Cenacle to tell the Apostles all that had happened to them, but they were still slow in believing them (Lk. 24:11). Then the women sought the Queen of heaven in order to tell Her of the events. Although She knew all that had happened by intellectual vision, She listened to them with admirable tenderness and prudence. While listening to the Marys She took occasion to confirm their faith in the mysteries and high sacraments of the Incarnation and Redemption, and in the pertinent passages of Holy Scriptures. But the heavenly Queen did not tell them what had happened to Her, though She was the Teacher of these faithful and devout disciples, just as the Lord was the Teacher of the Apostles in holy faith.

772. The Evangelists do not state when the Lord appeared to St. Peter, although St. Luke implies it (24:34), but it was after He had appeared to the women. He appeared to him in private as the head of the Church and before He appeared to all of the Apostles together or to any one of them. This happened on that same day, after the Marys had informed him of having seen the Lord. Later happened the apparition of the Lord to the two disciples going that afternoon to Emmaus, related at length by St. Luke (Lk. 24:13ff.). This town is sixty stadia from Jerusalem, four Palestinian miles and about two Spanish leagues. One of them was called Cleophas, and the other was St. Luke himself. It took place in the following manner: The two disciples left Jerusalem after they had heard the reports of the women. On the way they continued to converse about the events of the Passion, the holiness of their Master, and the cruelty of the Jews. They wondered that the Almighty permitted so holy and innocent a man to suffer such wrongs and torments. The one said: "When was such meekness and gentleness ever seen?" The other coincided, saying: "Who ever saw or heard of such patience, without a word of complaint or change in his countenance, so peaceful and majestic?" His doctrine was holy, his life blameless, his words those of eternal life, and his works for the benefit of all; what then did the priests see in Him to warrant such hatred?" The other answered: "Truly He was admirable in all respects, and no one can deny He was a great Prophet. He worked many miracles: He gave sight to the blind, He cured the sick, raised the dead, and conferred admirable benefits upon all. But He said He would rise on the third day after his death, which is today, and this we do not see fulfilled."

* cf. par. 801 below [Ed.]

The other one replied: "He also said He would be crucified, and it was fulfilled as He said" (Mt. 20:19).

773. In the midst of this and other conversation Jesus appeared to them in the habit of a pilgrim and as one who happened to meet them on the way (Lk. 24:15ff.). He saluted them and said: "Of what do you speak, for it seems to Me you are sad?" Cleophas answered: *Art Thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that have been done there in these days?* The Lord said: "Then what has happened?" The disciple replied: "Dost thou not know what the chief priests and princes have done to Jesus of Nazareth, a man holy and powerful in words and works, how they condemned and crucified Him? We hoped He would redeem Israel, rising from the dead; and now it is the third day of his death, and we do not know what has happened. And beyond this, some of the women of our company have frightened us, since they went very early this morning to the sepulchre and did not find the body. They assert they saw some Angels who told them He had risen. Then some of our companions went to the sepulchre and saw what the women had said was true. But we are going to Emmaus in order to await there the outcome of these events." Then the Lord answered: "*O foolish and slow of heart to believe*, since you do not understand it was thus proper for Christ to suffer all these pains and such a frightful death in order to enter into his glory."

774. Following up these mysteries the divine Master then explained to them his life and death for the Redemption of the human race. He interpreted for them different types of Holy Scripture: The lamb which Moses commanded to be slain and eaten after the thresholds had been marked with its blood (Ex. 12:7); the death of the high priest Aaron (Num. 20:29); the death of Samson for the love of his spouse Dalila (Judges 16:30); many psalms of David pointing out the wicked council, the crucifixion (Ps. 21:17), the division of his garments (Ib. 19), and that his body would not see corruption (Ps. 15:10); what is said in Wisdom (Wis. 2:20) and more clearly in Isaias (53:2) and Jeremias (11:19) concerning his Passion, namely that He would appear as a leper and a man of sorrows, that He would be borne to slaughter like a lamb without opening his mouth; and in Zacharias (13:6) who saw Him pierced with many wounds; and many other passages of the holy Prophets which clearly manifest the mysteries of his life and death. By the fervor of these arguments the disciples were gradually enkindled with love and enlightened in the faith which they had permitted to be obscured. And when they were already near the castle of Emmaus the divine Master gave them to understand that He was to pass on in his journey, but they eagerly begged Him to stay with them since it was getting late in the evening. The Lord yielded, and invited by the disciples He sat down to supper with them according to the manner of the Jews. The Lord took the bread and blessing and breaking it as usual He imparted it to them, and with it the certainty that He was their Redeemer and Master.

775. They knew Him because He opened the eyes of their souls; in the same instant He disappeared from their bodily eyes and they saw Him no more. But they were left in a state of wonder and full of joy, conferring with each other about the ardors of charity they felt on the way when He conversed with them and explained to them the Scriptures. Without delay they returned to Jerusalem (Lk. 24:33) though it was already night. They went to the house where the rest of the Apostles had secluded themselves for fear of the Jews, and they found them discussing the news of the risen Savior and how He had already appeared to St. Peter. To this the two disciples added all that had happened to them on their journey, and how they had recognized Him in the breaking of the bread in the castle of Emmaus. At this meeting St. Thomas was also present, who though hearing the arguments of the Apostles and the testimony of St. Peter asserting he had seen the Master risen, refused to believe the three disciples and the women,

persevering in doubt and unbelief. In a somewhat hasty manner, caused by his incredulity, he left their company. Shortly after, when Thomas had left and the doors had been locked, the Lord entered and appeared to the rest. In their midst He saluted them, saying: *Peace be to you; it is I, fear not* (Ib. 36).

776. At this sudden appearance the Apostles feared lest what they saw was a ghost or phantasm, so the Lord added: *Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? See my hands and feet, that it is I myself; handle, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see Me to have* (Ib. 38-9). The Apostles were so excited and confused that although they saw Him and touched the wounded hands of the Savior they could not realize that it was He to whom they spoke and whom they touched. The loving Master, in order to assure them still more, said to them: "Give Me something to eat if you have anything." Joyfully they offered Him some fried fish and a comb of honey (Ib. 41-2). He ate part of these, and divided the rest among them, saying: "Do you not know that all that has happened with Me is the same that has been written by Moses and the Prophets, in the Psalms and Holy Scriptures, and that everything had to be fulfilled as it was prophesied?" And with these words He opened their understanding and they knew Him, and understood the Scriptures concerning his Passion, Death, and Resurrection on the third day. Having thus instructed them He said again: "*Peace be to you. As the Father has sent me, I also send you* (Jn. 20:21), so you may teach the world the truth and the knowledge of God and of eternal life, preaching repentance for sins and remission of them in my Name." And spreading upon them his divine breath, He added and said: "*Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained* (Ib. 22-23). Preach ye to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem" (Lk. 24:47). Having thus consoled and confirmed them in the faith, and given them and all priests the power to forgive sins, the Savior disappeared from their midst.

777. All this took place in the absence of St. Thomas. But soon after, the Lord so disposing, he returned to the assembly and the Apostles told him what had happened during his absence. Though he found them so changed in joyful exultation, yet he remained incredulous and obstinate, maintaining he would not believe what all of them asserted unless he would first see himself with his own eyes the wounds, and touch the wound in the side and the other wounds with his hand and fingers (Jn. 20:25). In this obstinacy the unbelieving Thomas persevered for eight days, after which the Savior again returned through locked doors and appeared in the midst of the Apostles, including the incredulous Thomas. He saluted them as usual, saying: *Peace be to you* (Ib. 26); and then calling Thomas, He reprimanded him with loving sweetness and said: "Come, Thomas, and with your hands touch the holes in my hands and in my side, and be not so incredulous, but submissive and believing" (Ib. 27). Thomas touched the divine wounds and was interiorly enlightened to believe and to acknowledge his ignorance. Prostrating himself to the ground he said: *My Lord and my God* (Ib. 28). His Majesty replied: *Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed* (Ib. 29). The Lord then disappeared, leaving the Apostles and Thomas filled with light and joy. They immediately sought most holy Mary in order to relate to Her what had happened, just as they had done after the first apparition of the Lord.

778. The Apostles were at that time not yet able to comprehend the great wisdom of the Queen of heaven and earth, and much less understand the knowledge She had of all that happened to them and all the works of her divine Son; hence She listened to them with highest prudence and with the loving sweetness of a Mother and Queen. After the first apparition some of the Apostles told Her of the obstinacy of Thomas, and that he would not believe their unanimous testimony

concerning the Resurrection of the Master. During the eight days in which his incredulity continued the indignation of some of the Apostles against him grew more intense. They went to the heavenly Lady and accused him before Her of being an obstinate and stubborn transgressor, a man too dull to be enlightened. The loving Princess listened to them sweetly, and seeing the anger of the Apostles, who were as yet all imperfect, was still increasing, She spoke to those most indignant and quieted them by telling them the judgments of the Lord were deeply hidden, the incredulity of Thomas would occasion great benefit to others and glory to God, and they should wait, hope, and not be so easily disturbed. The heavenly Mother offered up most fervent prayers and petitions for Thomas, and because of this the Lord hastened the cure of the incredulous Apostle. When he yielded and all of them brought the news to Mary, their Mistress and Lady, She confirmed them in their faith, at the same time admonishing and correcting them. She told them to give thanks with Her to the Most High for that benefit and to be constant in temptation, since all were subject to the danger of falling. She added many other sweet words of correction, instruction and warning, preparing them for what was yet to be done in the establishment of the new Church.

779. There were other apparitions and doings of the Lord, as the Evangelist St. John gives us to understand (20:30), but only those are mentioned which suffice to establish the fact of the Resurrection. The same Evangelist describes the apparition of the Lord at the sea of Tiberias (Jn. 21:1ff.) to Sts. Peter, Thomas and Nathanael, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples which, since it is so mysterious, I thought I ought not pass it over unmentioned in this chapter. The apparition happened in the following manner: The Apostles, after the above events in Jerusalem, went to Galilee, for the Lord had so commanded them and had promised they would there see Him. The seven Apostles and disciples finding themselves near the shores of that sea, St. Peter proposed they pass the time fishing since that was his trade. All of them accompanied him and they spent the night casting out their nets, but they caught not a single fish. In the morning our Savior Jesus appeared on the bank without making Himself known. He was near the boat on which they were fishing and He asked them (Jn. 21:5-6): "Have you something to eat?" They answered: "We have none." The Lord replied: *Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and you shall find.* They complied, and their net became so filled they could not lift it into the boat. This miracle caused St. John to recognize Christ our Lord, and going nearer to St. Peter he said: "*It is the Lord* who speaks to us from the bank" (Ib. 7). Then St. Peter likewise recognized Him, and all inflamed with his accustomed fervor he hastily girded himself with the tunic which he had laid off and cast himself into the sea, walking upon the water* to the Master of life, while the others followed in their boat.

780. They sprang ashore and found the Lord had already prepared for them a meal, for they saw a fire and upon its hot coals bread and a fish; yet the Lord told them to bring some of those they had caught. St. Peter then drew out the catch and found they had caught one hundred and fifty-three fishes,[†] and even with so many the net had not been torn (Ib. 9-11). The Lord then commanded them to eat. Although He was so familiar and affable in his behavior toward them, no one ventured to ask who He was, for the miracles and the majesty of the Lord filled them with great reverence. He divided among them the fish and the bread. Later when they had finished eating, He turned to St. Peter and said to him (Ib. 15-17): *Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me more than these?* St. Peter answered: *Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee.* The Lord

* cf. Mt. 14:29 [Ed.]

† It is interesting to note there are 153 Hail Marys in 15 decades of the Rosary. [Ed.]

replied: *Feed my lambs*. Then He asked again: *Simon, son of John, lovest thou Me?* St. Peter gave the same answer: *Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee*. The Lord put the same question the third time: *Simon, son of John, lovest thou me?* At this third repetition St. Peter grieved and answered: *Lord, Thou knowest all things, and that I love Thee*. Christ our Savior then answered the third time: *Feed my sheep*. By these words He made St. Peter alone the head of his only and universal Church, giving him the supreme vicarious authority over all men. This is why He had questioned him so often concerning his love, as if that alone could make him capable of the supreme dignity, and of itself sufficed for its worthy exercise.

781. Then the Lord intimated to him the duties of the office He had given him and said: “Truly I assure thee, when thou art old thou shalt not gird thyself as now, nor shalt thou go where thou wilt; for another shall gird thee and lead thee where thou wouldst not” (Ib. 18). St. Peter understood that the Lord held in store for him the death of the cross by which he was to imitate and follow his Lord. But since St. John was so beloved, St. Peter desired to know what would become of him, and he asked the Savior (Ib. 21-3): “What hast Thou determined to do with this one so beloved by Thee?” The Lord answered: “What does it matter to thee to know this? If I desire that he remain thus until I come again to the world, it shall be in my hands. Follow thou Me, and do not concern thyself with what I desire to do with him.” Because of these words a report was spread among the Apostles that St. John was not to die. But the Evangelist himself remarks that Christ had not said positively he would not die, as is plain from the words of the Lord, but He seems to have expressly desired to conceal his will concerning the death of the Evangelist, reserving this secret to Himself at that time. Most holy Mary, by her clear intuition so often mentioned (279, etc.), had a full intelligence of all these mysteries and apparitions of the Lord. Being the archive of the works of the Lord and the Depository of the mysteries of his Church, She preserved them and conferred about them within her own most prudent and chaste Heart. The Apostles, and especially her new son John, informed Her of all that happened to them. The great Lady persevered in her retirement for the forty days after the Resurrection and there enjoyed the sight of her divine Son and of the Angels and Saints. They in turn sang hymns to the Lord which She composed, and the Angels as it were gathered them from her mouth, celebrating the glories and virtues of the Lord.

INSTRUCTION WHICH THE QUEEN, MOST HOLY MARY, GAVE ME.

782. My daughter, the instruction which I shall give thee in this chapter shall be also an answer to thy desire of knowing why my divine Son appeared at one time as a gardener, at another as a stranger, and why He did not always make Himself known at first sight. Know then, my dearest, that the Marys and the Apostles, though they were followers of Christ and at that time privileged and perfect in comparison with the rest of men, nevertheless were infants in their degree of perfection and sanctity, and not as advanced as they should have been in the school of such a Master. They were weak in faith and in other virtues; they were less constant and fervent than was due to their vocation and the graces they had received. The little faults in souls favored and chosen for the friendship of God and familiar communication with Him weigh more in the scales of his most just equity than some great faults in other souls not called to this grace. Because of this the Apostles and the Marys, although they were friends of the Savior, yet due to their faults and their weakness, their lukewarmness and laxity in love, they were indisposed for the celestial effects which the divine Master would have communicated to them by his immediate recognition and presence; so by his paternal love, before manifesting Himself, He spoke to them words of

life by which He disposed, enlightened and enkindled them. When He had renewed faith and love in their hearts, He made known and communicated to them the abundance of his divinity, together with other admirable gifts and graces by which they were renewed and raised above themselves. When they had enjoyed his favors He again disappeared so they might yearn with more ardent desires for his communications and most sweet interaction. This was the mystery why He appeared in disguise to Magdalen, to the Apostles, and to the disciples on the road to Emmaus. The same course He pursues respectively with many other souls whom He chooses for his intimate converse and communication.

783. By the consideration of these admirable tactics of divine Providence thou shalt be instructed and reprehended for the doubts and incredulity with which thou hast so often met the divine blessings and favors of my Son, and thou shalt learn it is time thou moderate thy constant fears, lest thou pass from doubt to obstinacy and slowness of heart in rendering gratitude. Thou shalt also draw a very useful lesson if thou worthily contemplate how quickly the immense charity of the Most High responds to those who are contrite and humble of heart (Ps. 33:19), and how ready He is to immediately assist those who seek Him in love and who meditate and speak of his Passion and Death (Wis. 6:13). All this thou dost see well exemplified in Peter, Magdalen, and the disciples. Imitate then, my dearest, the fervor of Magdalen in searching for her Master; she did not permit herself to be diverted even by the Angels, or leave the sepulchre with the others, or rest until she found Him so full of sweetness and kindness. This she also earned by having accompanied me throughout the entire Passion with an ardent and unfaltering heart. Similar was also the conduct of the other Marys, by which they merited to be among the first to have the joys of the Resurrection. Next to them the humility and sorrow by which St. Peter wept over his denial secured this reward; afterwards the Lord bent down to console him, and commanded the Marys to give especially him the news of the Resurrection. Then He visited him and confirmed him in the faith, filling him with joy and the gifts of his grace. Then before appearing to others He showed Himself to the two disciples, because although in doubt they were conversing regretfully regarding his death. I assure thee, my daughter, none of the works of men done with a good intention and an upright heart shall remain without an immediate reward; for neither shall fire in its greatest intensity so quickly consume the driest flax, nor shall a stone freed from hindrance so quickly fall to its center, nor the waves of the sea rush on with so great an impulse and force, as the goodness of the Most High and his grace respond to those souls who are well disposed and have cleared away the hindrances of sin. This is a truth which causes the greatest wonder in the saints, who are made aware of it in heaven. Praise Him for this goodness, and also for his drawing vast good out of evil, as He did regarding the incredulity of the Apostles, for through it the Lord manifested the attribute of his mercy toward them, made his Resurrection more credible to all men, and made clear his benignity by the forgiveness of sins, pardoning the Apostles and as it were forgetting their sins in order to seek them, make his appearance to them, and deal humanely with them as a true Father, enlightening them and instructing them according to their necessity and little faith.