

St. Vincent Ferrer, O.P. --- Sermon 2 on Easter

Why should we today sing Alleluia, Praise the Lord? Because this day we are fed, freed, assured of the truth, and given promises of being endowed, in our resurrection, with the gifts of clarity, agility, brightness and impassibility, which Christ showed in his resurrection.

"Alleluia," (Tobit 13 and Rev 19:1.)

This day is very desirable; many were excited [anhelaverunt, breathed heavy] over it, because of the sanctity of the day, and not rather because of the weariness of penance in fasts, or what is worse, because of the desire of returning to former sins, just as a dog returns to its vomit, (Cf Prov 26:11), about which the Apostle says to the Hebrews 6: "...Crucifying again to themselves the Son of God, and making him a mockery," (Heb 6:6). So it is not desirable for these reasons, but for the sanctification of this day, and its greatness.

You know that all the feast days of the year are given in memory of the blessings of God, which he gave to his holy church, so that it might praise God for them and give thanks. Isaiah 63 says: "I will remember the tender mercies of the Lord, the praise of the Lord for all the things that the Lord has bestowed upon us, and for the multitude of his good things to the house of Israel, which he hath given them according to his kindness, and according to the multitude of his mercies," (Isa 63:7). The greater the blessings given, the greater is the feast. About this see St. Thomas [\[Commentary\] on John, 10](#). The day of the Annunciation of the Lord is great, because then we receive the blessing of the beginning of our salvation, God assuming human nature in the womb of the virgin. A greater day is that of his Nativity, because on that day our salvation is openly made manifest, divinity seen in flesh, in humanity. Titus 2: "For the grace of God our Savior has appeared to all men," (Titus 2:11), and "the goodness and kindness of God our Savior appeared," (Titus 3:4). And Ps. 97: "All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God," (Ps 97:3). Greater still is the day of the Lord's Passion, because then through the death of Christ, the price has been paid, by which we have been redeemed from eternal death, 1 Cor 6: "For you are bought with a great price," (v.20), and 1 Peter: "not ...with corruptible things as gold or silver," etc.(1 Pet 1:18). It would not have profited us that he be born if redemption had not followed. But the greatest of all is Easter Day, the day of the Lord's Resurrection, because today assurance was given to us to obtain eternal and immortal life in soul and body. Christ gave it to us through his resurrection, which is the cause and the assurance of our resurrection.

Therefore today we should rejoice the most, and praise him by saying "Alleluia," for alleluia is said from "allelu" which is to praise, and "ia" which is the name of God, according as he is invisible. Whence "alleluia," that is, praise to God according to Huguccio [\[Hugh of Pisa\]](#). [Papias](#) [says. Alleluia, in Latin, praise the Lord. We ought therefore today to praise the Lord. Psalm: "O praise the Lord, all you nations, etc." (Ps 116:1). Today indeed all creatures praise the Lord and rejoice, namely the superior creatures, the intermediate [mediocres], and the lower [infimae], as is clear from the preceding sermon, namely, "He is risen, he is not here."

FED

There is, however, a multiple reason why today we ought spiritually to rejoice and praise God. First because God feeds us with his body and blood in the sacrament of the altar, for families celebrate much by eating together. So the body which today he gives us sacramentally is the same body which he assumed from the Virgin, in which he lived for 33 years, and in which he wished to suffer, be buried and rise. With his body, he gives his soul and divinity, because of natural concomitance. According to St. Thomas [III, q. 76, a. 1](#), something is in this sacrament in two ways. From the power of the sacrament, that is signified through the form, and from natural concomitance, that is, really conjoined to Christ. So the soul of Christ and his divinity is in this sacrament. Secondly, to the extent [tantum] under both species there are similarly the quantity and the soul of Christ. His flesh and bones and such are under the species of wine in the second manner only, and under the species of bread in the first manner. Blood however conversely is under the species of wine from the power of the sacrament and under the species of bread from natural concomitance, as also St. Thomas says in III Sent, dist. 10. Whence through this gift is signified the state of blessedness in which he gives himself inseparably, unfailingly [inamissibiliter], immediately and visibly, not under the species of bread. And this is the difference between this giving and the eternal giving, because here he gives himself bodily, there totally; here temporally, there eternally; here under the species of bread hidden, there openly without any intermediate. O what a gift, where God gives himself. Never can anyone receiving such a gift be a poor man, because in him is whatever is desirable. He can never be able to be disturbed or become saddened, because he is joy without end. Never can he become sick or grow old, because God is life. O truly is he a poor man who today is not fed with this food.

But before he can receive, it is necessary that the one receiving be well disposed, for just as medicine the more powerful it is, so much more ought the one receiving it fear that he be well prepared. Just as strong medicine heals the one well prepared, so it kills the one indisposed. The body of Christ is just such medicine, which cures the one receiving it well disposed from all sin, because someone should receive communion with such devotion, that he should be without any sin, just like a newly baptized child. As St. Thomas says [III, q. 79](#), through the whole question, and in IV Sent., dist. 12, the Eucharist is a great fruit. For the remission of sins it causes threefold, namely of the unknown future, insofar as it confers on us strength against future sins, by avoiding and causing contrition, and this happens in two ways. One way, not perceived in act, but in intention [non actu, sed voto] just as when one is previously justified from sin. Another way also perceived by him who is in mortal sin, of whom he has no conscience and sentiment [affectum]. Perhaps in the first he was not sufficiently contrite, but devoutly and reverently coming forward he pursues through this sacrament the grace and charity, which perfects contrition and the inquiry of sin both mortal and venial. He deletes the punishment due to sins, not all, but according to the measure of sins and devotion. The Eucharist frees us from purgatory according to the same St. Thomas, [III, q. 52, a. 8, ad 2](#), insofar as it is a satisfactory sacrifice for sins. Moreover it has other effects. For since it is effective of spiritual life, it acts like bodily food, because it sustains, grows, restores and delights, and in the blessed it increases accidental glory, but not essential. The proper effect of the Eucharist according to St. Thomas in IV Sent., dist. 12, is the transformation of man into God, to which follows growth of virtues and the restoration of what was lost. The consequent effects and less principal is the diminution of temptation [fomitis]. The same St. Thomas notes that Isaiah 10, The Eucharist gives five,

namely pardon of sins, life of grace, confirmation in the fight, strengthening in life and a foretaste of glory. It strengthens from sin and preserves in two ways, as St. Thomas in III, and IV Sent where above., namely interiorly strengthening through grace and repelling externally every attack of the demons through the passion of Christ of which it is a sign. One can however approach with such lack of devotion that he would earn damnation. Whence, 1 Cor. 11, " For he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks judgment to himself," (1 Cor 11:29). One taking the Eucharist conscious of mortal sin, sins mortally as St. Thomas says, IV Sent, dist. 9, and [III, q. 79, a. 2 ad 3m and 8m](#), and [a.] 4. Therefore with great fear and reverence we ought to prepare ourselves, and so, in the same place, " But let a man prove himself:" namely by premeditating [praemeditando], " and so let him eat of that bread," etc.(1 Cor 11:28). The manner of eating is given under the sign, in Exodus 12, of the paschal lamb. etc.

FREED

Second, we should rejoice and praise him, because he has liberated us from the captivity of hell. For a captive rejoices much at his liberation and we should rejoice over our liberation from hell. For the jail of hell is fire, and eternal fire, and the punishment is inflicted there without measure by the devil, and his minions living there. This hell God destroyed when he descended into hell. Ps 106, "Because he has broken the gates of brass, and burst the iron bars," (Ps 106:16). The gates of brass of hell are the desires [cupiditates] and vicious habits of men, which do not allow those imprisoned to escape. Christ shatters the iron bars with his power. We have a figure of this from Judges 16, about Samson, who "...went also into Gaza, and saw there a woman a harlot, and went in unto her. And when the Philistines had heard this," they placed guards there, "and watching there all the night in silence, that in the morning they might kill him as he went out. But Samson slept till midnight, and then rising he took both the doors of the gate, with the posts thereof, and the bolt, and laying them on his shoulders, carried them up to the top of the hill, " (Judg 16:2-3). Where Gregory in the Gloss asks "What is signified in this deed. Samson signifies the redeemer; what is Gaza but hell? what the Philistines but the faithless Jews? who when they say Christ dead and his body laid in the tomb, posted a guard there, and they rejoiced that they had captured the author of life. But Christ straightaway [recte] destroyed the enclosure of hell, just as Samson the gates in Gaza. And Samson in the middle of the night broke out alone, but he also carried away its gates, because our redeemer rising before daylight, not only exited from hell a free man, but also destroyed the enclosure of hell. He took the gates and raised them to the top of a mountain, because by rising he broke the enclosure of hell and by ascending penetrated to the kingdom of heaven. Not only did Christ destroy hell, but also he diminished the power of the devil. For from the beginning of the world before the passion of Christ the devil freely went about the earth, that he might seduce all peoples, and so Christ therefore bound him. Apoc. 20: "And [the angel] laid hold of the dragon the old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. And he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should no more seduce the nations, till the thousand years be finished," (Rev 20:2-3). The Interlinear Gloss has "Angel," Christ, apprehended the "dragon" for the violence of his harming, the "serpent" for deceptions, "old," because from the beginning of the world he has done harm, who is the "devil" coming down, and "Satan," that is, the adversary, and "bound him," that is deprived [him] of his prior power, and "cast into the abyss, and shut him up and marked with a sign," that is he put on him the sign of the holy cross, so that "he would not seduce more people," until the thousand years be accomplished," that is until antichrist comes.

Note according to St. Thomas in [III, q. 49, a. 2](#) that through the passion of Christ we have been freed in three ways from the power of the devil. "There are three things to be considered regarding the power which the devil exercised over men previous to Christ's Passion. The first is on man's own part, who by his sin deserved to be delivered over to the devil's power, and was overcome by his tempting. Another point is on God's part, whom man had offended by sinning, and who with justice left man under the devil's power. The third is on the devil's part, who out of his most wicked will hindered man from securing his salvation. As to the first point, by Christ's Passion, man was delivered from the devil's power, in so far as the Passion is the cause of the forgiveness of sins, as stated above (1). As to the second, it must be said that Christ's Passion freed us from the devil's power, inasmuch as it reconciled us with God, as shall be shown later (4). But as to the third, Christ's Passion delivered us from the devil, inasmuch as in Christ's Passion he exceeded the limit of power assigned him by God, by conspiring to bring about Christ's death, Who, being sinless, did not deserve to die. (Summa theol. III, q. 49, a. 2, body.). Augustine says in De trinitate, Bk 14: "By the justice of Christ the devil is conquered, because although in him is found nothing worthy of death, he killed him. So indeed he is just, that the debtors whom he held, they are set down [dimitterentur] they who believing in him whom without any debt he killed.

ASSURED: APPEARANCES

Third we should rejoice and give him praise, because through his resurrection he gave us the certitude of knowledge. For he rejoiced much who saw the one desired for a long time. First he cannot appear or be seen clearly. Reason is because in a book with tiny letters [subtilis litterae]. the careful eye cannot read well, and so there is laid over itself with a crass body and obscure, but when a clear and lucid body is placed over it, it is read better, because indeed it appears larger, just as when a crystal or magnifying glass is held over it. The Son of God is a book containing in himself what is necessary for the salvation of mankind. He also is the book of life, and the testament of the most high, and the acknowledgement of truth. But this subtle book is his divinity; so that no created intellect can read there in the present life. Ex 33: "for man shall not see me and live," (Ex 33:20). After the incarnation this book was bound with coarse and rough hide, namely a mortal body. Therefore the divinity cannot be read nor be seen hiding under such a body. Therefore the Jews were wishing to stone him saying: "For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy," (Jn 10:33).

But today in the blessed resurrection since the glorious body, bright, and lucid was placed over divinity, then freely was it known and appeared, (Jn 12). His disciples did not recognize him at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered, that these scriptures were about him. Therefore through the resurrection he gives us recognition.

As a sign of which it is read that he appeared often on the day of the resurrection. The first apparition he did was to the Blessed Virgin Mary, although the gospel does not tell us about this. And this can be shown by the authority of Sedulius, saying, "Always remaining a virgin, standing at his side. His own light first the Lord showed to her." Secondly, from the custom of the church. The Pope, on Easter, goes to St. Mary Major [a Roman basilica] first to celebrate the station, through this suggesting that [Christ's] first appearance was made to the Blessed Virgin. Third through the observance of the commandment. God indeed commands: "Honor your father

and your mother," etc. If indeed someone was overseas, and his mother had understood that he had died, and he nevertheless healthy returned and would visit [first] other friends, and only last come to his mother, this would not be a good son, nor would he seem to have honored his mother. But if Christ first had rejoiced with others, and only later had appeared to his desolate mother, he would not seem to have kept the commandment of honoring parents. For more reasons about this, see the preceding sermon. The second apparition was made to Mary Magdalen about which today's gospel speaks saying, "Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought sweet spices," (Mk 16:1).

You ask why especially did these women seek out Christ? Reason, because they were especially obligated to Christ from the fact that they had received many favors [plura officia] from him. Mary Magdalen was greatly bound to Christ, because he had cast out seven demons from her, (Cf Mk 16:9). Martha her sister had been cured of a flow of blood, and her brother Lazarus was raised after four days. He always spoke favorably of her, especially with the Pharisees who were calling her dirty, and with her sister who called her lazy, and with Judas who was calling her a spendthrift. Second, Mary of James, mother of James the Less, owed much to him. He was her nephew, and because her three sons, namely James, Simon and Jude the son of Alphaeus, he made cardinals, that is apostles. Third, Mary Salome was obligated to him, because he was her nephew, and because made her two sons, James and John, apostles.

Second, why did the three of them go together? Reason, first for the greater truth of their testimony, because from the mouth of two or three witnesses every word stands. Second out of a sense of decency and modesty, it is more fitting that these women [matrones] go together. Third, because of the mystical significance. They who had faith, charity and works came to Christ. Fourth, to commend community. It is better to serve God in society than singularly. Eccl 4: "It is better therefore that two should be together, than one: for they have the advantage of their society," (Eccl 4:9). Such persons, by their associations, sometimes rightly are kept free from the evil of committing sin. If some [tempter] shall prevail against one, two will resist him, and sometimes they encourage each other in the love of God, therefore it is added, "And if two lie together, they shall warm one another," (Eccl 4:11), one warmed by the other. Sometimes they are protected from the temptations of the devil, whence is said, "A threefold cord is not easily broken," (v.12). The devil cannot break the servants of God who are gathered together [insimiliter]. Ps. 132: "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity," (Ps 132:1) Nor can he invade those united 1 Kg 17: "Choose out a man of you, and let him come down and fight hand to hand," (1 Kgs 17:8).

These three women show a great devotion in three ways. First, they wished to anoint Christ, where it is said that they "bought sweet spices," (Mk 16:1), that is aromatic oils, so that coming [to the tomb] they might anoint Jesus. Out of great devotion they wished to anoint the body of Christ. It was the custom of the Jews to anoint the bodies of the dead, that they might be preserved from decay and from putrefaction, and from worms. But these women were deceived, because the body of Christ had been embalmed [balsamatum] by his divinity, and so if it had laid in the ground for a million years, it would never have putrefied, or decayed, nor would it have generated maggots. Psalm: "nor will then give your holy one to see corruption," (Ps 15:10). So in this they show very well their love for the dead Christ, a love which they had for the living Christ.

There are few friends in life who truly love, because almost everyone loves for themselves, and not for the friend. [propter sua, non propter se]. Sir 6: "And there is a friend a companion at the table, and he will not abide in the day of distress," (Sir 6:10). Fewer still are those who love in death, usually parents look to their children and children to their parents in death, when they wish to make some arrangements [prayers, Masses] for their salvation. Fewest of all are those who love someone after their death, because after a short time a father is forgotten by his son, a son by his father, and a friend by his friend. Psalm: "I am forgotten as one [*dead from the heart. I am become as a vessel that is destroyed*]," (Ps 30:13). And elsewhere, "Their memory hath perished with a noise," (Ps 9:7). These holy women loved Christ in life, and they followed him preaching. Luke 8: "Mary Magdalen and the other women followed, " who ministered to him of their substance," (Lk 8:3). They loved him in death, because they were there with him on the cross. Jn 19: "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen, " (Jn 19:25). And they loved him after his death, because they wished to anoint him lying in the tomb.

Second, the devotion of these women is shown in this that they wished to come at the most appropriate time, and so it is said: "And very early in the morning," (Mk 16:2). But if it was "very early in the morning" how then was the sun risen? And if the sun had already risen, how was it very early in the morning? Reason: because these women lived in the city, and the tomb of Christ was outside the city. They arose very early in the morning, but because it was a long way, and decent ladies [honestas matronas] ought not to run, but proceed maturely, therefore the sun had already risen when they arrived at the tomb. And this is the meaning, they came "very early in the morning," that is, they began to come, but the sun had risen when they arrived. Or they came at sunrise, with respect to its becoming light, which is called dawn, not with regard to its orb. So Augustine says, "The sun having risen, that is, when the heavens in the east had brightened." Or by the name of sun is understood Christ, who "had risen" from the womb of his mother through physical birth, and from the tomb through a certain glorious birth. This is the meaning, they came "very early in the morning," namely, when the true sun, Christ who had risen in this world from the womb of his mother by a bodily birth, now is risen by resurrecting from the tomb in a heavenly birth.

Where it says, "the first day of the week, [una sabbatorum]," it is to be understood the first day of the Sabbath, which is now called Sunday. The Jews name days one way, the Romans another and the church still another. The Jews name them from the Sabbath, saying first of the Sabbath, second of the Sabbath etc, and this out of reverence for the Sabbath, in which God rested from his work, and which he then sanctified. The Romans name the days from the planets and especially from that which rules the first hour, because the sun dominates the first hour of Sunday, it is called the Day of the Sun, and so of the others. The church names days from "ferias" saying Feria Prima, Feria Secunda, Feria Tertia, etc., and so for the rest. Feria is the same as rest [cessatio]. Hence the ancients called a solemn day a ferial, because they rested from servile work. Or it is called feria for offering sacrifices, because in the festive days they offered sacrifices. But on the other hand the Church now calls every day a ferial, because for all time there is a cessation from sacrificial victims. The ceremonial precepts of the old law were in force up to the passion of Christ, but from then on, they are dead, and after the spread of the Gospel,

they are deadly, as St. Thomas says [I-II, q. 103, a. 3](#), and [II-II, q. 87, a. 1](#) and [q. 93, a. 1](#) and in IV Sent., dist 1 & 2.

Third the devotion of these women are shown in this that they were desiring to see the tomb open, and so they were asking themselves, "Who shall roll back the stone for us?" (Mk 16:3). The tomb had been closed in three ways: by rolling a large stone over its entrance; by the affixing of seals; and by the posting of an armed guard. So the women could not imagine how they would enter, because they were not able to move such a great stone, since they were fragile, and the soldiers would chase them away, and they did not dare break the official seals. However Christ, who had come out of the closed womb of the virgin, and who would come to the apostles through closed doors, came out of the tomb with the stone still closed, the seals unbroken, and the guards overwhelmed with terror. After he had risen, an angel rolled back the stone, so he might give the women access for entering. The soldiers were like dead men, half crazy, from this sudden opening of the tomb, and the ground shuddered mightily. There was a great earthquake which terrified the soldiers. It was as if the earth showed its happiness at the resurrection of Christ. Just as in the passion of Christ there was an earthquake as a sign of sadness, so now in the resurrection it was moved as a sign of gladness. Or the earthquake happened that to signify that the hearts of earthly persons through faith in the passion and resurrection might be promoted in faith.

The women approaching and taking it all in, saw the stone rolled away. But why did these three women wish to approach the tomb, when they had no assurance of the stone being rolled back? Reason: because, believing that the body of Christ would be in the tomb, they were saying to themselves: "Even if we are not able to anoint him, at least we would be able to touch the tomb, and there weep for him and be near him." See how wonderful was the love and devotion of the women for their dead [friend]. Today, for many, the memory [of the dead] fades like an echo. Today many are like pigs, who come running to the cry of one pig, [slaughtered,] bleeding to death, and when they see the pig thrown into a bucket, they flee and forget about him. Many [today] when mourning the dead, when he has been buried, forget about him.

The women, however "entering into the tomb, saw a young man," (Mk 16:5), that is, an angel, whom they saw as a young man, to signify, that we all will rise as young people, not with respect to our numerical age, but with respect to our physical stature, as St. Thomas says, IV Sent., dist 44, a. 2, and [III, q. 46, a. 9, ad 2](#). He was "sitting on the right side." Gregory: "What is designated by the left, but the present life? what by the right but eternal life?" (Cf Glossa ordinaria), Therefore since our redeemer has passed over the corruption of the present life, rightly the angel who came to announce his eternal life, would be sitting on the right, etc. "Clothed with a white robe." Truly this robe is not from mortal cloth, but shining with celestial vitality, not in an earthly color. The prophet says, "Clothed with light as with a garment," (Ps 103:2), And of the just Matthew 13 says: "Then shall the just shine like the sun, in the kingdom of their Father," (Mt 13:43). Gregory: He appears clothed with a white robe because he announced the joy of the festivity. Whiteness of the clothing bespeaks the splendor of our festival. Matthew also says, "His countenance was as lightning, and his raiment as snow," (Mt 28:3). Lightning is from heaven, snow from earth, through which it is given to understand that in Christ' resurrection earthly things are joined to heavenly. According to Gregory in lightning the terror of the fearful is signified, in snow the allurements of the sincere [blandimentum

candoris]. through which it is understood that Christ in the [Last] Judgment shall appear terrifying to sinners and comforting to the just.

This angel spoke to the women first to comfort them saying, "Do not be afraid," (Mt 16:6), In this you can tell a good angel from a bad angel, because a good angel in the beginning terrifies with lightning, in the middle he comforts with his speaking, and in the end brings gladness from immense consolation and his pleasing appearance. A bad angel, on the other hand, in the beginning would terrify [you] from his horrible appearance, in the middle from his conversation would terrify you even more, and at the end would inflict sorrow from his deceptions which follow, as St. Thomas says, [III, q. 30, a. 3 ad 3](#), and On Job, ch. 4, and II Cor. 11, and there saying that every angel appearing exhorts to good, but the good angel persists, the bad however, reveals himself as evil.

Second, by convincing them and making certain of the resurrection [the angel] said, " Jesus of Nazareth, whom you seek, who was crucified...is not here," (Mk 16:6) Gregory: "He is not here through the presence of the flesh, but nevertheless he is everywhere through the presence of his majesty." That this is true, "Behold the place where they laid him," (v. 6). For this reason he rolled back the stone, so that he could show them the place, as if he had said, "If you don't believe my words, believe the empty tomb."

Third the angel sent them to the apostles, saying, "But go, tell," etc (v. 7). It should be noted that the first woman was the intermediary between the serpent and man, leading to perdition. The second, namely the virgin Mary was the intermediary between God and men fashioning our reconciliation. These women, [in the tomb,] were the intermediaries between the angel and the apostles, announcing to them our welfare and salvation. Already man was not able to be conquered from a woman, because if the first damned, the second saved, the third announced. If the first was the cause of our death, the second was the cause of our life, the third the herald [annunciatrix] of our salvation, and so the angel made these women messengers of our resurrection..

But why did he say and [tell] "Peter?" Response: three reasons. First, because Peter through denial had ceased to be a disciple and still was not certain, whether he had been restored to grace. So if he had not been named, he would have been confused, and perhaps he might have despaired. And so that he might know that through [his] tears his sin had been forgiven, and that he had been restored to the office of disciple, it was appropriate that he be mentioned by name. Secondly, that the angel might defer to him as the supreme pontiff. If someone sends letters to the pope and to the college of cardinals, the Pope is addressed by name, and the cardinals in general. Therefore the angel expresses Peter by name, as the pope [summum pontificium], the disciples however in general, as if a college. Third because Peter is interpreted as unbelieving or broken up, through which it is understood that those come to Christ, who have broken themselves up by carnal love, and who acknowledge their sins with contrition, and judge themselves humbly to be nothing. Fourth, the angel announces to these women Christ's appearance in Galilee, saying to them, "He goes before you into Galilee; there you shall see him," etc. (Mk 16:7). The apparition took place in Galilee. There is a mystery in this name. Galilee, is interpreted as "transmigration." Christ while he was in this mortal life endured a threefold weakness, namely, mortality, with respect to his body, vulnerability with respect to his

soul, punishment and multiple miseries with respect to both. But in the resurrection a transmigration has taken place, because the body migrates from mortality to immortality, the soul from vulnerability to impassibility, the body and soul from miseries and punishment to glory and happiness. Whence Pope Leo: "After the passion, the chains of death, shattered, weakness passes into strength, mortality into eternity, contempt into glory."

Those women going out announced to the apostles that he has risen. But the apostles thought that they were hallucinating, and did not believe them. Then Peter and John ran to the tomb, and saw the linens and the napkin etc. "The disciples therefore departed again ... But Mary stayed outside the tomb, weeping," (Jn 20:10-11). There Christ, appeared to her in the guise of a gardener. And this was the first appearance, about which the Gospel speaks, although he had first appeared to his mother, as was said. But why does Christ appear first to Mary Magdalen? There are four reasons: First, because she had loved him more ardently, and so she remained there weeping. Second, that he might show that he died for sinners, (Cf Matt. 9 and Luke 5). "I came not to call the just, but sinners," (Lk 5:32, Cf Mt 9:13). Third that just as a woman was the messenger of death, so she would be the messenger of life, according to the Gloss. Fourth, that where sin abounded, grace would abound the more, (Cf Rom 5:20).

The second apparition was made to the women returning from the tomb, when he said to them, "Hail," (Mt 28:9). The third to Peter, but where or when the evangelists do not say. Fourth to the disciples going to Emmaus. Fifth to the disciples gathered as one.

We should therefore rejoice at his resurrection, just like the apostles and women rejoiced, because they beheld the one they thought to be dead. Hence if we wish to see Christ, we must serve diligently with the fervor of enkindled charity, like Mary Magdalen. For we see that excessive moisture [humor] especially impedes our seeing of the brightness of the sun, but dry eyes see well. So man having eyes of his heart filled with the juices [humores] of carnal pleasure, cannot see Christ. So Mary Magdalen when she was living voluptuously, did not see Christ interiorly, because her interior eye was filled with moistures impeding it. But afterwards, the fervor of divine delight excited her, then Christ appeared to her. Therefore those wishing for Christ to appear to them should remove every depraved moistures and excite in themselves the fervor of divine delight. Romans 12: "In fervent spirit. Serving the Lord," (Rom 12:11).

ENDOWED

Fourth we should be glad and rejoice, because through his resurrection he has opened the gates of heaven for us. For many rejoice who are invited to be in the company of princes, so etc. Whence, just as Christ in his resurrection has four endowments [dotes] although not according to the proper sense of endowments, just as neither the angels, as the Doctor [St. Thomas] says, in IV Sent., dist.49, q. 4, a. 3 and 4, so the blessed in the future resurrection will be endowed with four endowments [dotes] in their body, as also the Doctor touches in IV Sent., dist. 44, and [III, q. 45, a. 1](#) and [3](#). The body of Christ was subtle, agile, bright and impassible. With these four our body will be endowed. They are called endowments [dotes] because the Lord gives them as a dowry to the saints, who are joined to him here through true faith and life and in the future through eternal enjoyment, just as a bride is given a dowry by her groom.

Subtlety

The first endowment or nobility is subtlety, which the body receives from the soul which makes the body wholly subject to the soul and elevates it into a certain likeness to the soul just as it had been elevated into a likeness of God, so that the body seems as if one spirit with the soul. And this the Apostle says I Cor 15: "It is sown a natural body," (1 Cor 15:44), that is having animal movements of inordinate concupiscence, like in other animals, but, "it shall rise a spiritual body," that is totally subjected to the spirit and conformed, so that it offers no impediment to the soul in anything, by which God would be the less contemplated, loved, and adhered to, which the soul does not have in this present state of life. Now indeed "For the corruptible body is a load upon the soul," (Wis 9:15), and "For the flesh lusts against the spirit," (Gal 5:17), and impedes the soul, so it cannot continuously meditate on God, nor can it attain to his perfect awareness or love, and the grossness and weight of the body depressing the soul does this. Sleep gives us a sign of this, when the soul is not occupied with the use of the exterior senses, as when awake, then revelations can take place. The mind has two views [respectus], namely to the things above by which it is enlightened, and to the body in respect of which it is bound in sleep, not [bound] however with respect to the first, but [in sleep] it becomes freer than when awake, as St. Thomas says in [De veritate, q. 12, a 3. ad 2m](#), and [q. 28, a. 2, ad 6m](#).

Moreover we see that the heaviness of the body impedes, that it cannot pass freely, because other bodies resist it, like a wall or panels. But a glorified body shall be so subtle that it shall penetrate any body without resistance. Something similar is found in nature. For oil penetrates the vessel containing it without breaking the vessel. By oil is understood grace. Just as indeed a sailor dives in the sea, bearing oil in his mouth, [or, on his face. portans oleum in ore], by means of which he is enlightened seeing the dangers of the sea, so the grace of God illuminates and directs those navigating between the dangers of the world lest they perish, in 2 Cor 12: "My grace is sufficient for thee," (2 Cor 12:9). Therefore the glorified body is not only full of grace but of glory which is consummated grace. Every body also penetrates heaven without division. "Glory shall uphold the humble of spirit," (Prov 29:23).

Agility

The second endowment [dos] will be agility, which also flows from the glory of the soul into the body, so where the spirit wills, immediately there the body will be without any impediment. For it is because of the weight of the body in this life that the soul cannot be where it wishes. Whence when a soul wishes to raise up the weight of the body with it, and lead it to good works, frequently it [the body] casts it down, just as a monkey when it tries [credit] to raise up a ball tied to its back, the weight of the ball hurls the monkey into the mud, so the body hurls the soul into the mud of sin. But in the resurrection, the body entirely obeys the soul. Augustine, "Wherever the spirit wishes, immediately it shall be and the body." Therefore the Apostle says in 1 Cor 5, "It is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power," (1 Cor 15:43). We see a similarity in nature. For some stone lying on the earth cannot be moved by ten, which is moved nevertheless by a child outside of the earth or its proper existing place. So the body which cannot be moved by the soul when it lies on the earth, in the resurrection shall be raised to heaven, and is moved by the soul at will. This power God gives to the very glorious body. Eccl 17: "God created man of the earth, and made him after his own image. And he turned him into it again, and clothed him with

strength according to himself,"(Sir 17:1-2), for just as a ray suddenly passes from east to west and the eye from earth instantly sees a star, so suddenly, at will, the body shall be where the soul wishes.

Clarity

The third endowment, will be clarity, which also flows from the glory of the soul. And according as every saint shall have greater merit, so shall there be greater clarity in the body, 1 Cor 15, " For star differs from star in glory," (1 Cor 15:41). So shall it be in the resurrection of the dead, for one [saint] shall be and shall appear more splendid than another, nevertheless each shall have a bodily brightness more than seven times brighter than the sun, because then the light of the sun will be like the light of seven days, and then " shall the just shine as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father," (Mt 13:43). And although now the light of the sun is disproportionate to our eyes, nevertheless it shall not be such there, because the light shall be moderated [demulces], and our eyes will be stronger and more noble. This clarity, according to Gregory, shall be everywhere [pervia], so that without impediment of the body one saint shall see what is in the body of another, and as much as he shall abound in the light of glory, to that extent shall he more clearly see, as in a clear spring. Therefore the Apostle says in the above citation, "It is sown in dishonor, it shall rise in glory." (1 Cor 15:43), not however in that glory about which 1 Macc 2, " for his glory is dung, and worms," (1 Macc 2:62), just as a snake puts his whole power in its beautiful colored skin, but under its skin has nothing but putridity and poison. So some care so much about bodily beauty, that interiorly there remains only the putridity of sin. Such beauty shall not be there. But because the beauty of the glorious body comes from the soul, Ps.44: "All the glory of the king's daughter is within," (Ps 44:14), it therefore lasts forever. Not so with modern beauty, about which James 1 writes: "For the sun rose with a burning heat, and parched the grass, and the flower thereof fell off, and the beauty of the shape thereof perished," (James 1:11), Then all bodily defects shall cease and the body shall have whatever is beautiful.

Impassibility

The fourth endowment shall be impassibility [impassibilitas], and immortality, so that neither hunger or nor thirst, neither cold nor heat, nor any wound which the body suffers now shall have any place there. And this also shall be in respect to the glory of the soul, because just as then it shall be entirely elevated into divine likeness, so the body through the soul, attains impassibility and immortality. Augustine: "God has made the soul with such powerful strength, that it redounds into the body with the vigor of incorruptibility."

The reason is, change alters nature, just as it is clear, the tree situated in bad earth does not bear fruit, but transplanted to good earth immediately bears fruit, because the tree draws nourishment from the earth, so fruit follows from the condition of the earth in which it is situated. For this reason Augustine says, that the first parents if they had stayed in innocence, their bodies would have been immortal and incorruptible, because whoever ate of the tree of life would be incorruptible. So, I say that we now eat corruptible and rotten food, as is clear of bread and wine, and so now the body nourished by such food has to corrupt. In fact, the more it eats and delights, the quicker it putrefies and dies.

But after the resurrection in paradise we eat the food of life in which there is no corruption or decay. Apocalypse 2: "To him, who overcomes, I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of my God," (Apoc 2:7). Again we shall drink from the spring of life, Apoc. 7: "and shall lead them to the fountains of the waters of life," (Rev 7:17). To drink the delights of this world is to drink of the spring of death. Therefore just as it is necessary now that our body decay because of the corruption of the food which we eat, so in paradise we shall be immortal because of the food which we use. John 6: Whoever "eats of this bread, shall live for ever," (Jn 6:52). Therefore, because of the condition of food in paradise, "For this corruptible must put on incorruption; and this mortal must put on immortality," (1 Cor 15:53). This is what the Apostle says in the same place as above: "It is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption," (v. 42).

These are the four endowments or nobilities which our bodies receive from God, through the mediation of the soul in glory. And in order that he might convince us, he wishes in the present to show them in his body for a time, while he was still in the world. For he had subtlety, when he emerged from the closed womb of the virgin. Agility, when he walked over the waves of the sea. Mt 14 and Jn 6. Clarity, when on Mount Thabor he was transfigured, and showed the glory of clarity to his disciples. Mt 17. Impassibility, when he escaped from the hands of the Jews who wished to cast him down or to stone him. Lk 4 and Jn 8. If therefore in the resurrection we desire to be renewed by these ennoblements of the body, which the Lord showed in his body before the resurrection, and after the resurrection had permanently, it is necessary that we should so walk in newness of life.

Previews: Spiritual Subtlety

In this life we have a hint of them spiritually in the soul, so that we have subtlety and agility etc. We have subtlety when our heart has been purged from the inordinate love of earthly things, from which it contracts impurity and grossness. Inordinate love makes for impurity in the soul through this, that it causes it to flow out of itself into that thing which one loves, and to be united with it. Ps 21: "My heart is become like wax melting in the midst of my bowels," (Ps 21:15). Just as silver when melted and mixed with copper is made impure, so the soul through inordinate love, mixed with earthly things, is made impure. And so, the more the soul is elevated above earthly things, by despising them, so much subtler it is. Just as air is called subtle when it is not filled with heavy clouds, and wine subtle when it is elevated above sediments and impurities, likewise a man is said to be subtle in spirit, whose mind is not weighed down by sensual and gross things, who is able to grasp and sustain spiritual things. We see this too in everything that is well designed, that that which is subtler is more eminent, as a flower on a tree, and fire among the elements. So the soul when it rises above these earthly things is made subtle, from this, that it is united to God, who is the ultimate [in termino] of all subtlety. Whatever thing, how much more it approaches its perfective [source], and that from which it receives its perfection, by so much more is it ennobled, just as air filled with light is more noble than murky, and likewise a body joined to the soul, than separated from it. When therefore the soul adhering to God alone, seeks "the things that are above, not the things that are upon the earth." (Col 3:2), as the Apostle says, "our conversation is in heaven," (Phil 3:20), then it is subtle and supple, and also merits subtlety in the body. On the other hand when it turns to earthly things, and pursues the desires of the body, it becomes weighed down, as it clear in an avaricious sinner who has an earthly soul,

because he centers his whole pleasure in acquiring earthly things. Likewise, a lustful person has a filthy soul, because it lies in the filth through lust. A proud man has a soul puffed up, and so for the rest. Therefore if the soul wishes to have subtlety, it is necessary to remove such things and to extract itself from the inordinate love of earthly things, and to raise itself through this subtlety to contemplating heavenly things.

Spiritual Agility

There follows another nobility, namely agility. When in our mind we are withdrawn from the love and grossness of earthly desires, and the mind is totally elevated in the love of God and the desire of heavenly things, then we become agile and quick to running through the increasing number of good works there where our love and desire tends. Augustine: "My Love, my weight, in the same way, I am carried wherever I am carried." To grow in this agility the Apostle urges us, saying: "So run that you may obtain," (1 Cor 9:24), and he gives an example saying: "But I follow after, if I may by any means apprehend," (Phil 3:13). And through this running and following he intends nothing else but to be perfect in good and virtues through the exercise of good works. To this we are obliged as long as we are in this life. Because according to Jerome, Gregory, Augustine and Bernard, no one can be satisfied to stand still, neither in the body nor the soul, because on the path to God, not to progress is to regress.

Spiritual Clarity

Third it is necessary that we have a preview of clarity, if we wish to rise with Christ. And I call a preview of clarity [*praevidiam claritatem*], when man is bright interiorly and exteriorly. Interiorly through the testimony of a good conscience, externally through a good reputation. Of the first the Apostle says, 2 Cor 1, "For our glory." that is joy, "is this, the testimony of our conscience," (2 Cor 1:12), and rightly so because what is naturally bright and lucid rejoices, as is clear in birds, for when dawn breaks, they rejoice and sing. Even men living in dark places are afraid and seeing light are comforted. If such extrinsic things bring joy, how much more the intrinsic clarity which shines in the conscience? Prov. 15: "A secure mind is like a continual feast." (Prov 15:15). And just as a pure conscience rejoices, so on the other hand a conscience shadowed with sin, upsets and saddens. Wis. 17: "For a troubled conscience always forecasts grievous things," (Wis 17:10).

Spiritual Impassibility

Fourth it is necessary for us to have impassibility, that is, not to be elevated by good fortune and depressed by adversity, but to patiently suffer all troubles, all adversities, for Christ. Nevertheless we ought not have the patience of an ass. For naturalists tell us that an ass when it sees the wolf coming, hides its head in the bushes and permits itself to be bitten by the wolf, until it gets near the heart, and then it tries to resist. So it is with many, the wolf is the devil, the ass, a man seeking delight in sins. Such patience we should not have, but we ought bravely to resist the devil in his bad suggestions, and when temptation begins, [to resist] contempt and disgrace [*contumelias et opprobria*], willingly and cheerfully for Christ, and following his example to bear up, and to pray for those doing us evil, so that by such an impassibility of soul as clothed Christ's soul and body in the resurrection, we might merit to be clothed in the general resurrection.

