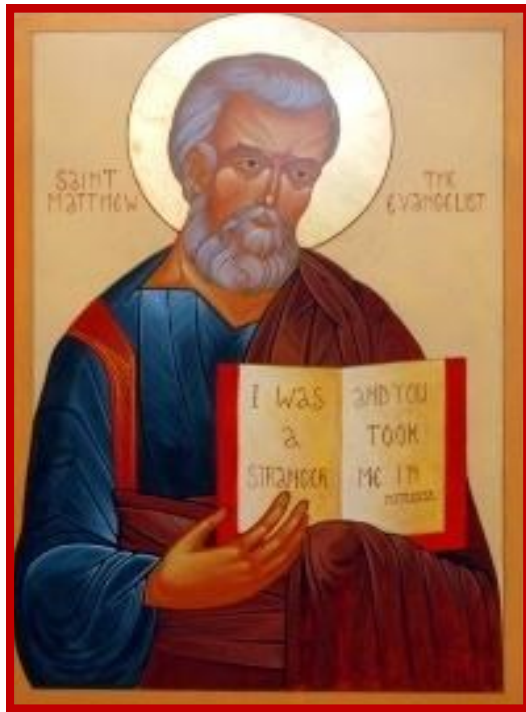


famous dialogue of S. Catherine of Sienna upon this subject, in which she teaches that the utmost peace and perfection consist in conformity to the Divine Will; that a man should plainly and wholly resign to that Will not only his own will but all that he is or has, and should say everywhere and always in every event whatsoever, *Thy will be done*. S. Catherine had fashioned an abode in her heart, with chambers tabulated according to the Divine Will; and in it she was wont to dwell most happily and holily. In it she shut herself up, so that she thought nothing, said and did nothing, save what she believed would be pleasing to the Will of God. And therefore the Holy Spirit was wont to teach her whatever ought to be done; for she had heard from God, "Believe, My daughter, that thy God is better able to know and will what is for thy good than thou art; and therefore to order and direct all things, prosperous and adverse, for thy good, far more surely than any father and mother care for, and procure benefits for, an only child"



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For the Catholic Church, God's Revelation is found in Sacred Tradition, understood as God's Revealed Word handed down by the Living Teaching Authority established by Christ in the Church. That includes both Written Tradition (Scripture) and Unwritten Tradition received from Christ and handed down Orally by the Apostles and their Successors. The Church founded by Christ on Peter, and only that Church, has been Empowered by Christ to 'Interpret' His Teaching Authoritatively in His Name.

Scripture is *Inspired*; *Inspiration* really means that God Himself is the Chief Author of the Scriptures. He uses a Human Agent, in so marvelous a way that the Human writes what the Holy Spirit wants him to write, does so without Error, yet the Human Writer is Free, and keeps his own Style of Language. It is only because God is *Transcendent* that He can do this - insure Freedom from Error, while leaving the Human Free. To say He is Transcendent means that He is above and beyond all our Human Classifications and Categories.

Matthew writes his gospel account to give us the view of Jesus as the King. He records Jesus' authority in calling the disciples: "Follow me" (Matthew 4:19), and he also records more than any of the others about Jesus' teaching concerning God's kingdom and heavenly rule.

Considered one of the most important Catholic theologians and Bible commentators, Cornelius à Lapide's, S.J. writings on the Bible, created a Scripture Commentary so complete and scholarly that it was practically the universal commentary in use by Catholics for over 400 years. Fr. Lapide's most excellent commentaries have been widely known for successfully combining piety and practicality. Written during the time of the Counter Reformation, it includes plenty of apologetics. His vast knowledge is only equaled by his piety and holiness.

Matthew 6: 1-10

Douay Rheims Version

A continuation of the sermon on the mount.

1. Take heed that you do not your justice before men, to be seen by them: otherwise you shall not have a reward of your Father who is in heaven.
2. Therefore when thou dost an alms-deed, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honoured by men. Amen I say to you, they have received their reward.
3. But when thou dost alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth.
4. That thy alms may be in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee.
5. And when ye pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites, that love to stand and pray in the synagogues and corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men: Amen I say to you, they have received their reward.

Lastly, R. Gamaliel (*in Pirke Avoth*, c. 2) well says, "Make God's will altogether thine own will; yea, leave thine own to fulfil His. For thus will God make the will of others concordant with thine." This is the congruous reward of obedience, that like as we obey the Divine will, so will others obey and consent to our will.

As in heaven, so in earth. "He bids us who have our conversation here below have fellowship with the inhabitants of heaven; and He would that before we come to that habitation above, we should make earth another heaven."

The hieroglyphic of prayer is a golden chain let down from heaven with the motto, *Thus are we drawn to the stars.* Homer feigned that a golden chain was let down from heaven by Jupiter, that the rest of the gods who were living upon earth might attach themselves to it and drag him out of heaven. They, endeavouring to do this with all their might, were by it, beyond their expectation, drawn up as by a ladder into heaven. This is the symbol of prayer, for prayer is the ascension of the mind to God; and D. Dionysius affirms it to be the golden chain by which we draw God Himself to us, and draw ourselves to Him, when we submit our will to His most just and infallible will. And this is the great result of our prayers; and this Christ Himself has expressed for us in these words of the Lord's Prayer, *Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*

Mystically, S. Cyprian by *heaven* understands the righteous, and by *earth*, sinners: Grant, O Lord, that sinners may do Thy will as the righteous do it. Second.—S. Augustine by *heaven* understands Christ, who descended from heaven to earth, that He might espouse earth, *i.e.*, the Church on earth to Himself by the Incarnation; as though He had said, Grant, O Lord, that like as Christ doeth Thy will in all things, so also the Church may do it; for she is the Spouse of Christ, whom it behoveth to be in all things conformed to her Bridegroom.

Moraliter. The sanctity, rest, joy, and perfection of a Christian consist in denial of his own will and conformity with the will of God. As S. Bernard says (*Serm. 28 in Cant.*), "This conformity marries the soul to the Word." S. Gertrude was wont to repeat these words, *Thy will be done*, three hundred and sixty-five times a day with the greatest devotion, and she perceived that this was a sacrifice most pleasing to God. Once, when she was told by God to make a choice of either health or sickness, she replied, "I most fervently desire that Thou wouldst not do my will but Thine." And by this means she abode in the deepest peace and joy. For he who knows that he possesses all things in God, and counts all other things as nothing, and considers God's will as the best, and rests wholly in it is able to say with the Psalmist, "I will lay me down in peace and take my rest;" and with S. Augustine (*lib. 1 Confess.*, c. 1), "Thou, O Lord, has made us for Thyself, and our heart is restless until it resteth in Thee." There is extant a short but

God that this should not be, we must not fight against it, nor murmur at it, but rather submit humbly to it, and acquiesce in it, and say with Christ in the garden, "Not My will, but Thine be done." For that first will of ours, differing from God's will, as respects the thing willed, is wishing (*velleitas*) rather than absolute will. Wherefore, it always includes this condition, expressed or implied, "if it so please God."

Hence it follows further that we are not bound to will those things which happen by God's permission only; indeed, there are some things which we ought not to will, as sins, for neither does God in any manner will these. And some other things which are not sins we are not bound to will: we may wish them not to happen, and with all our might strive against them, such are slaughters, the destruction of cities. Yet even in such things as these it seems best to say with the Psalmist, "Just art thou, O Lord, and right is thy judgment." (Vulg.) Wherefore it is better, for the most part, to consider that these things are permitted by the just judgment of God for His glory, and to acquiesce in the Divine dispensation, rather than to vex ourselves by grieving too much over them.

We can, therefore, be unwilling that such things should happen, so far as evils spring from them, and yet will them so far as God wills them to be for the just punishment of sins. For this is God's absolute will, which is called of God's good pleasure, to which we ought to consent by rejoicing in good things, and by suffering without murmuring in evil things, as when God chastises us with famine, or pestilence, or war. As Maldonatus says, "We ask that the will of God may be done *in* us, as well as *by* us; for it is of greater importance that the very least part of the will of God should be done than every good of a creature, *quà* creature, should befall. And S. Cyprian (*Traci. de Mortalitate*), when he was exhorting his people to bear patiently the pestilence which was at that time devastating the province, says, "We should remember that we ought to do not our own will but God's, according to what the Lord has bid us daily pray."

That is a notable thing which we read in the Life of S. Christina (*apud Surium, Jun. 23*). On the same day on which Jerusalem and the Cross and Sepulchre of Christ were captured by Saladin and the Saracens, she, who was then in Belgium, knew what had happened by revelation from God, and yet she rejoiced in spirit. When asked why she rejoiced, she answered thus: "Christ hath decreed, that for the indignity done to Him that land should be subject to this ignominy, although it was sanctified by His Passion; yet it shall return with Him in the end of the world, when, for the sake of recovering that soul which is to live for ever, and which was redeemed with His blood, men shall be turned from iniquity to a zeal for righteousness, and shall shed their own blood, and shall, as it were, recompense the death of the Saviour with great devotion."

To this we may add that infidels relatively live better and offend God less than professing Christians who know God better, and have received greater benefits from Him. Wherefore the Holy Land was given up by God to Saladin and the Saracens on account of the multitude of the enormities which the Christians committed who inhabited it, such as not even the Turks are wont to commit. These enormities are graphically described by Marinus Sanutus, in his work entitled *The Secret Cross of Christians*.

6. But thou when thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber, and having shut the door, pray to thy Father in secret, and thy father who seeth in secret will repay thee.
7. And when you are praying, speak not much, as the heathens. For they think that in their much speaking they may be heard.
8. Be not you therefore like to them for your Father knoweth what is needful for you, before you ask him.
9. Thus therefore shall you pray: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
10. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
11. Give us this day our supersubstantial bread.
12. And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.
13. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. Amen.
14. For if you will forgive men their offences, your heavenly Father will forgive you also your offences.
15. But if you will not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive you your offences.
16. And when you fast, be not as the hypocrites, sad. For they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Amen I say to you, they have received their reward.
17. But thou, when thou fastest anoint thy head, and wash thy face;
18. That thou appear not to men to fast, but to thy Father who is in secret: and thy Father who seeth in secret, will repay thee.
19. Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth: where the rust, and moth consume, and where thieves break through, and steal.
20. But lay up to yourselves treasures in heaven: where neither the rust nor moth doth consume, and where thieves do not break through, nor steal.
21. For where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also.
22. The light of thy body is thy eye. If thy eye be single, thy whole body shall be lightsome.
23. But if thy eye be evil thy whole body shall be darksome. If then the light that is in thee, be darkness: the darkness itself how great shall it be!
24. No man can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one, and love the other: or he will sustain the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.
25. Therefore I say to you, be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than the meat: and the body more than the raiment?
26. Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow, nor do they reap, nor gather into barns: and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they?
27. And which of you by taking thought, can add to his stature one cubit?
28. And for raiment why are you solicitous? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they labour not, neither do they spin.
29. But I say to you, that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these.
30. And if the grass of the field, which is to day, and to morrow is cast into

the oven, God doth so clothe: how much more you, O ye of little faith?

31. Be not solicitous therefore, saying: What shall we eat: or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed?

32. For after all these things do the heathens seek. For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things.

33. Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God, and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you.

34. Be not therefore solicitous for to morrow; for the morrow will be solicitous for itself. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.

Verse 1- Take heed. &c. Instead of *alms*, some Greek Codices read *δικαιοσύνην*, *righteousness*, or *justice*. This is the reading of the Syriac and the Latin Vulgate. The Complutensian, Royal, and other Greek Codices read *alms*. The Arabic translates *mercy*—of which the Saviour speaks next. For this is in Scripture *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, or *par excellence*, a common word for righteousness, as I have shown on 2 Cor. ix. 10. Hence S. Chrysostom reads *justice*, understanding *alms*. After Christ in the preceding chapter had expounded one by one the precepts of the Law, which prescribe all righteousness, *i.e.*, whatever is just, and right, and holy, or all good works, now, in this chapter He proceeds to teach the way of doing things holily and rightly, that we should do them with a right intention, and with the desire of pleasing God, not man. He begins with alms. Then He teaches how we ought to pray, and next how to fast; for with these three vain glory is wont chiefly to be bound up, says S. Chrysostom.

That ye may be seen. The word *that* denotes the intention and the end. “Do not do holy and just works with this intention and object, to be seen and praised of men, for this is vain ostentation.” But Christ does not here forbid them to be done publicly, and advantageously, that men may see them and glorify God. Whence S. Gregory says, “Let thy works be so done openly that thy intention may remain in secret, and that we may afford an example of good works to our neighbours, so that yet with our intentions, by which we seek to please God only, we may always desire secrecy.” Moreover, vain glory eats out all the dignity, worth, and merit of good works, like the worm the gourd (Jonah iv.).

Otherwise ye have no reward, &c. The reward of vain glory is the applause and favour of men. He who seeks to please men displeases God. For God, forasmuch as He is the author of good works, desires to be the object and end of the same, that we should do them for God, and refer them to His glory. Wherefore S. Paul says, “For if I yet pleased men I should not be the servant of Christ.”

S. Basil (*in Constit. Monast.* c. 11) calls vain glory the robber of good works. “Let us fly from vain glory,” he says, “the insinuating spoiler of good works, the pleasant enemy of our souls, the moth of virtues, the flattering ruin of our good things, who colours the poison with the honeyed mixture of her deceit, and who holds out to the souls of men her deadly cup. And I think she does this that men may the more greedily drink her down, and never be satiated with her. How sweet a thing is human glory to those who have not had experience of it!”

Note 1.—The optative will of God which is termed *significative*. First, as commanding, by which He commands, or forbids something to be done. This we are always bound to fulfil. The other, persuading and counselling, by which He counsels us to embrace a state of poverty, or virginity, or a state of perfection, &c. This we are not bound to fulfil absolutely; for we may decline on account of some special honest cause, as, for example, infirmity, temptation, the duty of succouring our parents, or the State—something which God has only counselled generally. The reason is, that God neither wills with an absolute will that which He only counsels, nor does He will to bind *me* to this particular thing. Hence I am not bound to fulfil it. But it is otherwise with respect to God’s will of *commanding*.

Note 2.—Our will ought to be conformed to the Divine will.

First, *effectively*, because that our will may be good, it ought to will that which God wishes it to will—that, namely, which the law of God wishes it to will and do. For our will ought to submit itself to the Divine law and will, as creating and ordering all things.

2. Objectively: Our will ought to consent to the Divine will, as to its formal object, or as to the reason of willing. That ours may be a right will it ought to will that which is good and conformable to right reason, and, therefore, to the Divine will. For the Divine will wills that which right reason declares ought to be done. For the eternal Law which is in the mind and will of God is the norm and the rule of all goodness and all virtue.

3. Our will, in order to be good, is not bound always to conform itself, with respect to the material object or thing willed, even when this is known, to the Divine. This is plain from examples of Holy Scripture. For God willed Sodom to be overthrown; but Abraham, as far as he was concerned, wished it not to be, wherefore he prayed to the LORD that He would not destroy it. God willed that the infant which was born to David of adultery should die. David was intensely grieved that it should die. God willed that Christ should not come in the flesh until 4,000 years had elapsed. The prophets desired that Christ should come quickly. God willed to forsake the Jewish nation, and to transfer His beneficences to the Gentiles. But Paul was so grieved at this that he wished to be *anathema* from Christ to avert it. In fine, this is so true, that God can command me to will something which He Himself willeth not. Thus He commanded Abraham to will to slay his son, whom, nevertheless, God willed not to be slain. The reason is that what God willeth may be inconvenient and troublesome to man. For, as S. Augustine says, one thing is suitable for man, another thing for God (*Enchirid.* 101). Whence, so far as it is troublesome, a man may will it not, and grieve over it. But this affection will be in accord with the Divine will in general. For piety and charity dictate that it is right that we should desire our own safety and that of our friends, and that we should, as far as we can, procure it. But if we perceive afterwards that it is the absolute will of

4. That is the kingdom of God, most perfect and complete, in which, after the kingdom of the devil, after sin and death have been altogether conquered and destroyed, God alone shall perfectly rule over both His friends—that is, the saints—and His enemies, *i.e.*, the impious and the reprobate. And this shall be at the Resurrection and the Day of Judgment, of which 1 Cor. xv. 28. This is the best way of understanding this petition; for, as I said, these three first petitions are concerned directly only with God's honour and glory, and with ours only as a consequence. The meaning, then, is this—We pray, O Lord, that Thou mayest reign wholly, and without any adversary, that all creatures whatsoever may be wholly subject unto Thee. Hence, also, we ask, as a consequence, for ourselves, that we may be speedily translated from this world, as from a wearisome pilgrimage and a perilous warfare, to the kingdom of everlasting glory and happiness, that we may reign with Christ and His saints for ever. For then shall God wholly reign in us, and we in God, according to these words of the Apocalypse, "Thou hast made us to our God a kingdom and priests, and we shall reign upon the earth." For then shall "God be all in all." (1 Cor. xv. 28).

Thy will be done, &c. This is the third petition, although Tertullian (*lib. De Orat.*) places it second, and the third, *Thy kingdom come*. This petition, also, has respect to God and God's kingdom, because the more God's will is done, the more God's kingdom is extended. For the great honour of God, the great empire of God, is that all men and all things should be subject to His will, and that it should be fulfilled in all. Now the will of God is twofold. The will of well-pleasing, and the will of signification, or *absolute* and *optative* will. The will of well-pleasing in God is that with which God absolutely wills a thing to be done, which will is always fulfilled, and which nothing can hinder or delay, according to the words of Ps. cxxxv., "Whatsoever the Lord pleased (*voluit*, Vulg.) that did he in heaven and earth." And in Is. xlvi., "All my counsel shall stand, and all my will shall be done." (Vulg.) In this will we must acquiesce, either by rejoicing at it, or by submitting to the adversity which it may bring upon us.

The will of signification is that by which God signifies that He wishes His laws and precepts, which He has imposed upon us, to be done by us. All the Fathers understand this petition to speak of this second will. The words, therefore, do not apply directly to God's will of *efficacy and good pleasure*, for it cannot but be fulfilled, but to that desiring and commanding will of God which theologians call *significative*. The meaning, then, is—"Grant, O Lord, unto us Thine abundant and efficacious grace, that, by means of it, all men may, both in doing Thy behests and in suffering what Thou willest, obey thy will with as much alacrity and concord as the angels obey it in heaven." So S. Jerome, Chrysostom, Theophylact, &c. Christ seems here to allude to the words of Ps. ciii. 20, 21, "Bless the Lord, all ye angels of his, ye that excel in strength, doing his will, and hearing the voice of his words. Bless the Lord, all his virtues, which do his will." (Vulg.) We ought, therefore, to imitate the promptitude, swiftness, and perfection of the angels in fulfilling the will of God, that we may venerate and honour it, and in so doing we shall do good to ourselves. For, as the Apostle says (1 Thess. iv.), "This is the will of God, even your sanctification."

Verse 2- *When thou doest thine alms do not sound a trumpet before thee. Syr. do not blow a horn.* When the Scribes and Pharisees were about to give away alms in the public streets they either sent a trumpeter before them, or else blew a horn themselves, under the pretext of drawing together by that means crowds of poor persons, who might run and receive alms, but in reality out of ostentation, and that their liberality might be seen and talked of by those who flocked together.

Observe that Holy Scripture, the prophets, but above all Christ, detest hypocrisy and hypocrites, who intend one thing in their heart, and pretend something else outwardly. For Christ is truth, simplicity, sincerity itself; wherefore He hates all falsehood and duplicity.

Moreover, hypocrites are like the monstrous beasts which S. John saw in the Apocalypse (chap. ix.), for they had the faces of women and the tails of scorpions. In the same manner hypocrites smile with their faces, and flatter with their mouths, but at the last they secretly strike and sting. Yet these very hypocrites, whilst they wish to hurt others, hurt themselves far more, "for there is nothing hid which shall not be revealed." Wherefore their hypocrisy and fraud is easily detected, by which means they are confounded and lose their fame and credit, and become hateful unto all men. Wherefore David prays against hypocrites, and at the same time threatens them with most dreadful punishments (Ps. cxx.): "Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue. What reward shall be given or done unto thee, O thou false tongue? Even mighty and sharp arrows with hot burning coals."

They have their reward—their, i.e., their own, viz., what they sought for. Again, *their own* is what is agreeable and congruous with their vanity, that of which alone they are worthy, that, like chameleons with wind, they may feed upon fleeting popular breath. How foolish are merchants like these, who, when by alms they might buy heavenly and eternal riches, neglecting these, prefer to buy the empty praise of men, that is, vain words, which beat the air, and then pass away!

Verse 3- *But thou, when thou doest thine alms, &c.* Omitting various explanations which are here collected by Maldonatus, I would say briefly, the meaning is as follows:—Avoid ostentation in thine alms and thy virtue, and as far as thou canst, seek for secrecy, that thou mayest not be seen of men, nor thy virtue talked about, that if, *per impossibile*, thy left hand could have eyes, it should not be able to see what good thy right hand doth, what, or how great alms thou dost bestow. It is a parabolical hyperbole common among the Syrians. Thus S. Chrysostom, Theophylact, and others. And as S. Jerome says in his Epitaph of Fabiola, "Virtue which is concealed rejoices in God as her judge."

That thine alms, &c. Openly, i.e., says S. Augustine at the Resurrection, "Thou shalt be blessed, because the poor have not wherewith to recompense thee; but there shall be a recompense given thee at the Resurrection of the just, when the Lord, as the Apostle says, 'shall reveal the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart, and then shall every man have praise of God.'" Just and congruous reward of secret work is public praise in the judgment. For Christ will reward thy secret work publicly in the judgment before God, angels, and men with eternal glory. Thus when S. Martin had divided his cloak, and given half of it to a poor man, in the night following, Christ appeared to Martin, clad in the same cloak, and praised him in the presence of the angels, saying, "Martin, while yet a catechumen, has clothed Me with this garment."

But if thou make a show of thine alms, or any good work, God will hide it so that no one may behold, admire, or remember it: but if thou hide it God will manifest it to the whole world, especially in the Day of judgment. Thus S. Gregory gave alms to an angel in form of a shipwrecked sailor. He gave him large alms, again and again, when the angel asked them, but always in secret. But through this he gained the very summit of public glory; for the angel afterwards revealed that it was for this cause Gregory had deserved the chief bishopric of the Church. So Christ, in the form of a ragged beggar, asked of S. Catherine of Sienna first her tunic, then her cape, then her gloves, all of which she freely and secretly gave Him. On the following night He appeared to her, showing her the tunic bespangled with jewels, and promising that he would give her an invisible gown, which would preserve her from all cold (wherefore in future she never felt any cold), and in heaven public and illustrious glory.

Ver. 5.—*And when ye pray, &c.* Foolish and imprudent was this vanity and ostentation of the Scribes by which they affected the public streets, where was a greater crowd of people, that they might stand before them, and exhibit their prayers and devotion, when they ought rather to have sought for a secret place for prayer, in which they might collect their thoughts, and converse with God alone without distraction. What therefore is commonly said of three places unfit for study, that it is useless at a window, in the street, by the hearth, because of the various distractions which occur at those places, may be even more truly said of prayer. Prayer is useless at a window, in the street, by the hearth.

Stand praying. From this and other passages Jansen is of opinion that the Jews stood, not knelt, to pray. But I say that the Priests and Levites sacrificed and sang Psalms to God standing, and the people who were present also stood, because if they had knelt they would have been unable to witness the sacrifices, especially in a great press of people, on account of the screen, three cubits in height, interposed between them and the altar. Again the people stood to hear a sermon, or to receive benediction, as in Solomon's case; also in a solemn thanksgiving for victory, or any similar benefit, as we stand when a *Te Deum* is sung. S. Azarias and his fellows stood and sang the *Benedicite* in the fiery furnace of Babylon.

behold, rapt as it were in an ecstasy, and which they so admire and are amazed at, that they sing for ever, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God of Sabaoth; the whole earth is full of His glory." Hence, too, the Blessed Virgin, when she had conceived in her mind and her womb the Holiness of God, the Eternal Word, cried out in glad amazement, "My soul doth magnify the Lord," &c. "For He that is mighty hath done to me great things, and holy is His Name."

When we say, *Hallowed be Thy Name*, we also desire our own sanctification. We cannot sanctify God as He is in Himself, nor can we increase His eternal and infinite glory; but when we sanctify God, sanctity is added to, and increases in, ourselves, that is to say, holy faith, holy charity, the holy worship of God. By these things we are sanctified inwardly, and we hallow God outwardly, because by means of our holiness the holiness of God is glorified and made known among men. Lastly, all our own hallowing of God is finite and poor; learn therefore that there is a twofold way of infinitely hallowing God. The first is, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen." That is, I ascribe to God that infinite glory which He has had from all eternity, that glory with which the Father, the Son, and the Spirit perpetually glorify each other with Divine and infinite praises. The other way is, when we offer Christ crucified to God in the Mass. For Christ, because He is God and Man, is a Divine Victim, commensurate with God, and infinite. Iterate then, and constantly use, both these methods that thou mayest hallow God as He deserves, and as He ought to be sanctified and glorified.

Verse 10- Thy kingdom come. This is the second petition of the Lord's Prayer. The kingdom of God is fourfold.

1. It is the empire of God over all created things. Of this it is said in Ps. cxlv. "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all ages."
2. God's mystical kingdom: by it, through faith and grace, He reigns in the hearts of the Faithful. It is such a kingdom as this, that the devil should cease to reign in the world, and that sin should no longer reign in our mortal bodies, that S. Ambrose, S. Jerome, and Euthymius think is here meant. Hear S. Arnbrose (lib. 6 *de Sacramento*. c. 5): "The petition is, that the kingdom of Christ may be in us. If God reign in us, the adversary can have no place in us. Fault, or sin reigns not, but virtue reigns, modesty and devotion reign."
3. The kingdom of God is in heaven, in which He happily and gloriously reigns among the Blessed. This is what Tertullian and S. Cyprian here understand. "Well indeed," says the latter, "do we pray for the kingdom of God, that is, the heavenly kingdom, because there is also an earthly kingdom. But he who has renounced the world is already greater than its honours and its kingdoms; and thus he who dedicates himself to God and to Christ desires not earthly but heavenly kingdoms."

conversation as temples of God, that it may be evident that God dwelleth in us. Nor let our actions be degenerate from our spirit, that we who have begun to be celestial and spiritual may think and act only after a heavenly and spiritual manner.”

Our. Christ does not here say, *My Father*. For this expression is appropriate to Christ alone, who is the only Son of God by nature, says the *Gloss*. But He says, *Our Father*, because He is speaking in behalf of all, that He may teach that God is the Father of all, and that all we are brethren, and ought therefore to love one another and pray for one another. “So,” says S. Cyprian, “He would that one should pray for all, in such manner as He Himself bore all in one.” And the *Auctor Imperfecti* says, “That prayer is more pleasing to God, not which necessity pleads, but which the charity of brotherhood presents.” Christ willed that each should pray for all, that all might pray for each, that every one should have the gain not only of his own prayers, but obtain the profit of every one else’s prayers. This is spiritual interest and usury indeed.

Which art in heaven. This expression signifies, first, the supreme power and dominion of God, that He is both able and willing to grant whatever we ask; that as being Father, he is most good, but that He is also most great. 2. It signifies our inheritance, which we hope for by reason of our adoption of God our Father, and that it is heavenly, not earthly. 3. Christ admonishes us that when we pray, we should transfer our thoughts from earth to heaven, where God manifests His glory to angels and saints. So S. Chrysostom. Therefore when we pray we turn to the east, where the sun rises, says S. Augustine, that we may be all instructed to turn to God.

Hallowed be Thy Name. 1. S. Ambrose and S. Chrysostom understand by this hallowing, the sanctification of God in our Baptism, that having received this sanctification it may remain in us. For we have need, says Cyprian, of a daily sanctification, that we who sin daily may be daily sanctified. 2. Tertullian explains it to mean, *make men holy*. But by this meaning the first petition would become identical with the second, *Thy kingdom come*. More correctly therefore SS. Augustine, Chrysostom, and others explain thus:—Grant, O Lord, that not the names of idols, or devils, of Mahomet, of Arius, or Luther, or Calvin, but that *Thy Name* may be hallowed among men.

Moreover, *name* may be here understood properly, and figuratively for the thing named, and this, 1. For the Deity Itself, as though He said, “Let Thy name, *i.e.*, mayest Thou Thyself, O Lord our God be hallowed.” 2. For the honour and glory of God, for we pray that these may be had in honour by all men. 3. For the attributes of God, as His omnipotence, wisdom, justice, mercy. And the meaning will be—Grant, O Lord, that men may know, worship, and sanctify Thee Thyself, as One in Essence, Three in Person, as well as Thine omnipotence, wisdom, &c. And so may they celebrate and glorify them continually, both with heart and tongue, in life and actions; and not Christians only, but Pagans, Jews, and heretics, by having a true faith in Thee, and a true love towards Thee, in a word, that Thou shouldst convert them to Thyself. Note, the Holiness of God is the most sacred majesty, perfection, Divinity of God, His purity, faithfulness, goodness, and other Divine attributes, which the Seraphim

But at other times, the Jews prayed kneeling, especially in acts of adoration or penitence. Especially Solomon at the Dedication of the Temple prayed and worshipped kneeling. For—mark this, ye courtiers and delicate ones, who like the Jews, bend one knee to Christ—he kneeled with both his knees upon the ground. (1 Kings viii. 54). So Daniel kneeled down three times a day and worshipped God. So Micah (vi. 6). “I will bow my knees to the Most High God.” For this is the manner of adoration among all nations. Hence the words, “I will leave me seven thousand men in Israel, whose knees have not been bowed to Baal.” And God says (Is. xlv. 23), “Every knee shall bow to me.” And (2 Chron. xxix. 30), “They bowed their knee and worshipped.” This standing then to pray on the part of the Scribes and Pharisees was a part of their pride and vanity. They thought themselves to be worthier and holier than the rest of the people.

As for Christians, from the very beginning they have been accustomed to kneel down to pray. For when Christ was near to die, he prayed, kneeling down; yea, prostrating Himself upon the earth. See also S. Peter (Acts ix. 40), and S. John (Apoc. xix. 10, and xxii. 8); and S. Paul (Acts xx. 36; and Eph. iii. 14, “For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”). Christians, therefore, in memory of the fall of Adam and his posterity, pray kneeling at all times except Sundays and the Paschal season, when they pray standing, in honour and as a figure of the Resurrection of Christ, as S. Justin teaches (*Quæst.* 115), “Whence is this custom in the Church? Because we ought to retain in everlasting remembrance both our fall through sin, and the grace of our Christ by which we have risen again from our fall. So for six days we kneel in token of our fall through sin, and on the Lord’s Day we stand in token of our deliverance from sin and death.” S. Irenæus teaches that this practice began in the time of the Apostles. (*Lib. de Paschat.*) Tertullian enjoins the same custom. (*Lib. de Corona Militis.* c. 3.)

Verse 6- *But thou . . . enter into thy closet.* Gr. *ταμεῖον*, *i.e.*, any private place such as thy bedchamber; Vatablus renders, *thy cell*.

SS. Augustine, Jerome, and Ambrose understand by *closet* the heart or the mind, and their privacy, as though he who prays should enter there and shut it, so that no distractions may creep in to draw away the soul from God. As S. Jerome says: “*Shut the door—i.e.*, shut thy lips and pray inwardly in thy mind, as Hannah, the mother of Samuel, did” (1 Sam. i. 13). Hear S. Ambrose: “The Saviour says, *Enter into thy closet*, not that which is enclosed by walls which shuts up thy bodily limbs, but the closet which is within thee, in which thy thoughts are enclosed. This closet for prayer is ever near thee, and ever private, of which there is no witness or judge but God alone.” “God who,” says S. Cyprian (*Tract. de Orat.*), “is the hearer of the heart, not of the voice.” It was a saying of Francis, that “the body is a cell, and the soul a hermit, which tarries in its cell wheresoever it may be, even among men, to pray to the Lord, and meditate upon Him. Cassian

gives another reason (*Collat.* 9, c. 34): “We must pray in silence, that the intention of our prayer may not become known to our enemies the demons, lest they should hinder it.”

This meaning is true, but mystical rather than literal. But there is no reason why *closet* here should not be understood in its plain ordinary sense, of any private place. Hear S. Cyprian: “The Lord bids us pray secretly in hidden places apart, in our very chambers, because it is more agreeable to faith, in order that we may know God is everywhere present, hears and sees all, and in the plenitude of His majesty penetrates the most hidden and secret places, as it is written. “Am I a God nigh at hand, and not a God afar off.” (Jer. xxiii.)

So, then, Christ does not here condemn public prayer in church, which has been the common laudable practice both of Jews and Christians, as is plain from 1 Kings viii. 29, Acts i. 24. Tertullian (in *Apol.* c. 30.) writes. “Looking up thitherwards (to heaven), we Christians pray, with hands expanded as innocuous, with head uncovered, because we are not ashamed.” For the Jews, especially the priests, were wont to pray with their heads covered, as I have said on the Pentateuch. Our missionaries also in China cover their heads when saying mass, in accordance with an Indult of Pope Paul V., because among the Chinese it is a mark of disgrace to uncover the head. “Finally,” proceeds Tertullian, “we pray without a prompter, because we pray from the heart.” Lastly, the temple is the proper place of prayer, in which one and all may pray to God as secretly as though they were praying in their own bedchambers.

That is indeed a ridiculous heresy which has sprung up lately in Holland, from a wrong understanding of this passage by a certain innovator, who rejects all temples, and holds the conventicles of his sect nowhere but in bedrooms. The Calvinists, too, when they ask a blessing before meat, cover their faces with their hats, that they may pray in secret; but then a hat is not a bedchamber, as is very plain.

Ver. 7.—*But . . . much speaking.* Gr. *Battologia*, i.e., a trifling and futile profusion and repetition of words, as if by this their rhetoric they would give God information concerning His own affairs, and would bend Him to concede what they ask, as orators by their rhetoric endeavour to move judges to acquit an accused person.

Christ therefore here teaches that the essence of prayer does not consist in words profuse and drawn out, but in converse of the soul with God; and that the object, and, as it were, the soul of prayer is the desire and pious affection of the mind, which, however, does not, of course, exclude outward expression in words.

Verse 8—*Be ye not therefore like unto them,* &c. It means, the heathen think that God is ignorant, or at least does not consider their miseries and wants, from which they pray God to deliver them. They use, therefore, many words, that they themselves may tell Him of them. But they err, for God knows and considers their wants far more than those who pray. Still He wishes to be prayed to, and often He will not succour without being asked, that men may recognize both their own miseries and God’s

mercies, and may know that they are not delivered by their own merit, but by the gift and grace of God. S. Augustine adds, “that God in prayer exercises our desire, that by it we may be able to receive what he is preparing to give. For that is something very great indeed, but we are too small and narrow to receive it.”

Verse 9—*Thus therefore ye shall pray: Our Father,* &c. Christ here delivers to Christians a method of prayer, but He does not command that we should use these words and none else, but only teaches the things which should be asked of God, and in what order and with what brevity they may be asked. Well, however, does the Church use these very words of Christ, as being divine, most brief, clear, and efficacious. Whence S. Cyprian (*Trac. de Orat. Domini*) says, “What can be more real prayer to the Father than that which proceeded from the mouth of the Son, who is the Truth?”

Note, the Lord’s prayer comprises all the things which should be asked of God, whence Tertullian (*lib. de Orat.* 1) calls it the *Breviary*, that is, the compendium of the Gospel, in the same way that the Ecclesiastical Office recited daily by priests is a compendium of the whole of Scripture, whence it is commonly called the *Breviary*.

S. Augustine (*Epist.* 121, lib. 2, *de Verb. Dom.*), and Theologians after him, divide this prayer into seven petitions, the three first of which deal with the honour of God, the remaining four with our service. For first, before everything else, we must seek the honour of God. For this is our end, and involves our beatitude, and the means by which we may attain unto it.

Our Father. This, says Tertullian, is the title of goodness and power. By *Father*, S. Cyprian, Chrysostom, and Rupert, understand the First Person of the Sacred Trinity, for to Him as it were the *principium* of the Trinity, the Church addresses most of the prayers, or collects in the Mass, and desires that they may be heard through the merits of the Son, saying, *Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son.* But other writers more correctly understand the whole Trinity or Godhead, because all the Three Persons operate equally in all things *ad extra*, and therefore all are equally to be invoked.

By the word *Father*, we are put in mind of all God’s immense benefits, and consequently of that utmost fidelity, reverence, and love which we owe to God, and how we ought to strive to please Him as our Father. For what can be dearer to a child than a father? Or whom ought he to strive more to please? S. Cyprian bids us observe “the wonderful condescension of God, who bids us pray in such wise that we should call God our Father, and that as Christ is the Son of God, so we also, for whom eternity is laid up in store, may call ourselves the sons of God. Hence he gathers that “we ought to remember that when we call God, our Father, we should act as sons of God, that as we have complacency in God being our Father, so He likewise may have complacency in our being His children. Let us have our