

## Wednesday after Septuagesima: All Creation Invites us to Serve God

### *Summary of the Morrow's Meditation*

We will resume tomorrow our meditations on the service of God, and we shall see: first, that all creatures invite us to serve God; second, that they offer us means for doing so. We will then make the resolution: first, not to please ourselves in creatures, but only in God, whom we must see in everything; second, that we must make use of all events here below as of so many steps to raise us to God by the adoration and love of His providence, of His wisdom, of His patience, of His goodness. Our spiritual nosegay shall be this saying of the saints: "*How will that serve me for God, and for eternity?*"

### *Meditation for the Morning*

Let us adore the Creator making all the universe for man, and man for God. Let us bless Him for this admirable plan which binds together in one great whole all creation with the Creator, and let us repeat from the bottom of our hearts with a profound sentiment of gratitude and love: "All which exists exists only for me, and I exist only for God."

### ALL CREATURES INVITE US TO SERVE GOD

The magnificence of paradise and the terrors of hell invite us to serve Him, the one through hope, and the other through fear. Mary, the angels, and the saints exhort us by their example. Heaven, which is above our heads, cries out to us by a thousand voices how little the earth is to him who looks on high. From the heavens which recount the glory of God I lower my eyes to the earth, and there all terrestrial things cry out equally to me after their manner: Do not stop at us; raise your hearts and your minds to Him who has created us for you. The house that you inhabit cries out to you: Love God who has given you the stones of which my walls are made. The furniture of which you make use says to you: Love God who has produced out of the earth the wood of which I am made. The clothing which covers you says: Love God who has furnished the materials from which I am woven. The meats on your table say to you: Love God who has created animals for you, vegetables and fruits which nourish you. The sun in shedding light upon you during the day, the moon and stars which direct you during the night, the fire in warming you, the water in refreshing you, the air in giving itself to be breathed by you, the flowers in rejoicing your eyes or in delighting you with their odours, cry out to you: "Lift up your hearts." The events of this lower world hold the same language; if they harmonise with your desires, they invite you to give thanks to God who has so ordered them. If they are contrary to your wishes, they invite you to profit by them, to grow in conformity with the will of God, in patience, in humility, in detachment, in holy desires for heaven, in prayer, that supreme consolation of afflicted souls, and thus to acquire a rich provision of merits by each act of patience, and another jewel for your crown by each victory over yourselves. Lastly, there is nothing, not even excepting sin, which ought not, after its manner, to raise our souls to God, by a humility full of confidence, by a fervent prayer like that of the publican, an energetic resolution to lead a better life in reparation for the past Thus all turns to the good of those who love God, says St Paul (Rom. VIII:23), even sin, adds St Augustine, and we can and we ought

also to add: even the sins of others, for they ought to be to us an opportunity for praising and imitating the patience of God, His goodness, His mercy, and to pray to Him for the conversion of poor sinners. Let us listen to this voice which issues from all parts of the creation to invite us to love and to serve God. The saints knew so well how to listen to it, and they profited by it in order to keep themselves always recollected in God and to encourage themselves to perfection.

#### ALL CREATURES OFFER US THE MEANS OF SERVING GOD

Let us ask this secret of the saints. All creatures were to them as so many steps whereby they raised themselves to God, as so many mirrors in which were reflected to the eyes of faith the divine perfections, as so many focuses where their hearts were kindled with love for God by ever new flames; never stopping at created things, they passed from them to God as the first principle and the essential end of all that exists, they raised themselves thereby every day from virtue to virtue. Let us imitate their example. When looking up to the skies let our hearts exclaim: Let us praise the Lord whose eternal mercy has created all these marvels for us (Ps. cxxxv:1). When beholding the earth, its harvests, its meadows, its fruits, and its flowers, let us repeat the same cry of love: Praised be God, whose eternal mercy has made all these things for us. Witnesses of all the events which take place in this world, let us raise ourselves to the love of the Providence which directs all in a spirit full of wisdom and of goodness towards the elect. Even when beholding the sins committed on earth, let us raise ourselves to the love of that divine patience which bears so many outrages in silence. Happy he who thus makes use of everything for the purpose of elevating himself to God; but woe to him who, stopping at the creature, places therein his consolation and his happiness, who only looks at God as though only for a moment and as something which is an accessory thing in life. He misapprehends the destination of creatures; and, instead of raising himself by them to God, he makes of them instruments of sin and damnation which absorb all his senses, bind and corrupt his heart. Do I not give way to this kind of disorder?

*Resolutions and spiritual nosegay as above.*