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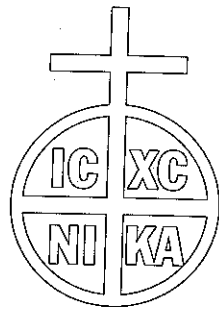
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No. 63



JULIAN OF TOLEDO:
PROGNOSTICUM FUTURI SAECULI

FOREKNOWLEDGE OF THE
WORLD TO COME

TRANSLATED, EDITED, AND INTRODUCED

BY

TOMMASO STANCATI, OP

Foreword by His Eminence
Cardinal Antonio Cañizares Llovera
Archbishop of Toledo, Primate of Spain



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The end without an end is the beginning that will never end
(*Prognosticum* III, lxii)

Having reached the end of his eschatological reflection, Julian of Toledo affirms that human beings will find all their fullness and their realization upon entering the intimate life of God. The first effect of such insertion will be the fullness of communion with the risen Christ. After the lengthy ecclesial experience of faith and the sacraments as ways of assimilation to Christ, the Christification of humanity will then finally become complete and perfect, with no more need of any salvific mediation. This will make the blessed ones perfect, who will thus reach the very peak of their happiness, participating in the feast without end or the Saturday without Vespers, as Julian quotes from Augustine. Saturday without Vespers means that such happiness will never set and it will introduce us into the endless Sunday, where the new and definitive church of Christ will become for all of its members rest, knowledge, vision, love, and praise of God. Such elements of beatitude will interlace themselves to form the sublime modality of the new existence in the new heaven and the new earth. This will be the end without an end: to enter forever as part of the kingdom of God that will never end.

But if this is the attainment of the goal of the human being, at the same time that it is achieved, it becomes the beginning of a new creation where God and humanity, and other creatures, will live in perfect communion and in an endless and new history about which nothing can yet be said.

This means that the end, which is also the beginning, will also constitute the fulfillment of the eschatology of God, in addition to that of humanity.

LETTERS OF IDALIUS OF BARCELONA

BEGINNING OF THE LETTER OF IDALIUS,
BISHOP OF BARCELONA, TO IULIANUS,
BISHOP OF THE PRIMATEAL SEE OF TOLEDO

Idalius, bishop of the see of Barcelona to the most holy, and for me among all the others, illustrious Lord Iulianus, bishop of the primateal see of Toledo

Frightened by the reminiscence of my sins and always bewildered by the memory of great faults, I thought that the divine ears were completely hardened to my cries, since I had not received the work you had promised.

For this reason, I was shaken first from various disturbances, then also deprived of the good outcome of a desired opportunity, and (as it usually happens) overwhelmed by forgetfulness, wavering in my suggestions after having greeted each other, I had not presented my requests to Your Holiness; nevertheless I was confident in the oracle of our Savior and Redeemer with which he had reanimated the disciples, saying: "if two of you agree on earth to ask something, my Father who is in heaven will grant it to you" [Matt 18:19].

Trusting with full confidence in your promise, I was convinced in my innermost being that the truth could not lie in any way, nor could the lover and disciple of truth be slave to lies. I awaited what was promised by Your Holiness, having placed great hope in the Lord Jesus Christ: I prayed, nevertheless, sincerely and often even if not every day, so that he himself who is present everywhere would inspire your heart and finally ensure the realization of our desires.

Now, therefore, since the Lord has remembered me and has heeded my vows, when he brought your holy work to perfection, he filled my mouth with joy and my tongue with exultation, and he has

enriched me with the completion of your work. I will say, therefore, to him, with the words of exultation of the spirit of his prophet: "blessed be God, blessed be the Lord, from day to day" [Ps 68:20].¹

And indeed, here comes a certain Jew, named Restitutus, almost without the light of intelligence, for so to say an animal, transporting a matter conforming to the light, that is, the book that, with learned synthesis, not only from the sentences of the ancient and saintly fathers, but also under the inspiration and the teaching of Christ, with effort and particular application, you have brought to completion, and that the wisdom of Your Holiness took care to send to our ineptitude, and he presented it to me with both hands. The book that, out of desire to know it, I snatched rather than received, I most rapidly opened, and I confess to have been astonished upon seeing the title, because Your Holiness had thought to entrust the cause of such and so precious merchandise to a carrier so untrustworthy and outside the faith.

But immediately, made aware by that reason for which a treasure is entrusted to earthen vessels, before to you, I gave thanks to the aforesaid Jew because he had delivered intact what he had received, considering that you had perhaps acted for a change of the right hand of the Most High, so that he who was accustomed to transporting transient merchandise might be well disposed to the divine and eternal mysteries. I intuited, nevertheless, in this task the humility of your holy and refined heart, which renders thanks to God, by whose gift it comes to you, how much of what is beautiful, splendid, and pure is present in your words, returns considerable and excellent, certainly rejecting the vain glory, and [your humble heart] strives to show to the gaze of those who see the work of so little account as to decide to entrust it to a rather despicable carrier.

Therefore, observing the style of the aforesaid codex and having considered its title, I was not able to find any other name more profoundly suitable for this work than the one it seems to have at the beginning of the volume. In fact it is called *Prognosticum futuri saeculi*, which in Latin can also be said, not inappropriately, *praescientia futuri saeculi*.

In this work, for as much as it seems that the first book, in a certain way, wants to arouse harshness and fear in the sinners, the two subsequent books, nevertheless, lift the hearts of believers in Christ to

1. Ps 68:19 NRSV: "Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears us up."

a great confidence, because of the hope in the future resurrection and the kingdom that Christ has promised to give to his faithful. Moreover, avidly reading the remaining part of the whole codex, I found what the Lord Jesus Christ says in the Gospels: "every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a household owner who draws from his treasure things both new and old" [Matt 13:52].

In fact, doubts are clearly dispersed and the things difficult to understand are illuminated, while the decrees of the ancient fathers and the proofs of the new synthesis of your science are exposed most fruitfully. Therefore, from their writings emanates the truth, while from your work has come a new and true synthesis.

Thus, whatever they truthfully, honestly, and soberly understood concerning the truths about God, you have in common together with them, to whose knowledge the teaching of the Lord has led.

Nonetheless he has also approved of your concern, because, having seen your pressing desire to know, he has clarified their statements and united them with an exposition of them that is accessible to the idlers and to the indolent. Therefore, even if, by the concession of Christ, it was they who furnished the material, nevertheless, the whole of it will be ascribed to your labor. In fact, even gold, for as much as it preserves the splendor of its origin and its nature, rightly exalts the talent of the artist when it is later skillfully transformed into forms and a variety of figures and is appropriately refined.

Moved by all of this, I would like to find the proper words to praise the effectiveness of the talent that the divine grace has conferred on your heart and the intense study with which you have clearly labored at the mysteries of Christ, and since I feel unable to do so, if I were not aware that this would displease you, I would like to ask others to praise you.

It remains, therefore, that I do what the soul of Your Holiness desires. And so my insignificance recedes, while the whole church is with me, as an ornament to which our weakness gave the news of your work. To the immense and ineffable Trinity it raises an abundance of thanks, not as much as it ought to but as much as it is able to offer, because at the end of time or, rather (to say more truthfully), almost at the consummation of the world, he has infused into the heart of Your Beatitude the gift of his grace together with the desire to accomplish this holy work. And he has lavished upon you the gift of a clear

and harmonious word by which you may heal the hearts of those who err by instilling fear into them, and vivify abundantly those devoted to good works by confirming them in holy actions with the hope of the heavenly kingdom.

We pray therefore the great mercy of the divine majesty that he may prolong the years of your life and thus preserve you in the episcopal service of his church, so that you may enlighten the faithful; and thus grant an overabundance of the gift of his graces which he has infused into your heart, so that the Catholic people may be enabled to accomplish every good action through Your Holiness's zealous works and teachings, and may he grant you, for the holy constancy of your work, after a very long span of life, forgiveness of your faults and remission of your sins, so that you may possess the heavenly kingdoms together with his saints and his chosen ones.

[END OF THE LETTER OF IDALIUS, BISHOP OF BARCELONA,
TO IULIANUS, BISHOP OF THE PRIMATIAL SEE OF TOLEDO]

BEGINNING OF THE LETTER OF IDALIUS TO SUNTFREDUS

Idalius, bishop of Barcelona, to the most holy and, for me among all the others, illustrious Lord Suntfredus, bishop of the first see of Narbona

The excellent work that, not only with great effort but also with the deepest dedication, in an admirable new synthesis of writings from the books of the ancient and catholic fathers, your brother my lord Iulianus, bishop of the primatial see of Toledo, wanted to gather in a single volume called *Prognosticum futuri saeculi*, and that he took care to send to our insufficiency, and that Your Beatitude, with praiseworthy obstinacy, ardently asked of us, I, being in this little city (over which I unworthily preside) and devoted to Your Holiness, offer with both hands through my fellow servant and send it to the see of your holy sublimity, so that from its knowledge the prelates of your whole province, participating in your joy, may ascertain with what gift of immense light the supreme divinity has enriched your above-mentioned brother to enlighten the church; and together they may bless the Lord God of Heaven, by whose benevolence your same brother deserved to receive this gift.

Therefore, may they offer to the divine Trinity the libations of their prayers, that he may protect with his grace the author of this work

for his great efforts, and that the divine indulgence may cancel the sins of our perversity, in that our sloth was concerned to give them the knowledge through which their heart may overflow with spiritual fruit.

I also pray, my lord and fellow countryman, that you command me to approach to the power of the divinity with assiduous supplications, to cancel my guilt, so that I, who am crushed by so many troubles, may be worthy to be lifted up by the help of your prayer. Thus, may you enjoy possessing without end the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[END OF LETTER OF IDALIUS TO SUNTFREDUS]

JULIAN OF TOLEDO

Prognosticum futuri saeculi

Foreknowledge of the World to Come

PREFACE TO THE BOOKS OF THE
FOREKNOWLEDGE OF THE
WORLD TO COME OF ST. JULIAN,
BISHOP OF THE SEE OF TOLEDO

Julian, unworthy bishop of the Toledan chair, to the most holy and, among all the others, most intimate to me, Lord Idalius, bishop of the see of Barcelona

Who, with the obvious exception of the Redeemer of all, would be capable of finding the right words to talk about that most memorable day of the famous feast on which, this year, being together in the royal city, with joyful transport of hearts, we participated in the celebration of the passion of the Lord?

It then happened that, desiring convenient tranquillity for such a great feast, we secretly made our way into a more secluded place. There we were both welcomed by separate beds with covers, where, to be flooded by divine passion we took the Sacred Scripture in hand while we were illumined by eternal light. We read in lasting tranquillity. Then we scrutinized the secret things of the passion of the Lord, joining together the harmonies of the Gospels. But when we came to an admirable passage of the text, which now I am unable to recall to the mind, we were shaken, we groaned, we sighed. A certain sublime joy was born in our minds and suddenly we were raised to the highest point of contemplation. Our flowing tears deterred our attempt to read; a common anguish induced us to abandon the book and wait to be made productive by the sole gift of a reciprocal discussion.

Who could ever put in writing, or who would ever be able to recount with a fitting voice, what divine flavor touched our souls, what sweetness of supreme charity infused itself into our mortal minds? In fact, you were then (I confess it, my lord and most holy

brother) writhing with the pain of gout, but much more elevated by the hope of divine contemplation.

I believe that all your tormenting pain was dispersed, when between us that divine dialogue started to occur. Then I experienced perfectly "how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!" [Ps 133:1], when that ointment of the Holy Spirit, which from our head was poured upon the hem of his garment (which perhaps we then were), and it purified us with the fire of a quest both great and necessary.

Thus, invited to these banquets of victuals, we started to ask ourselves what the condition of the souls of the dead would be before that last resurrection of the body; such that we would know, through our reciprocal discussion, what we would be after this life, in a way that, reflecting upon this condition sincerely and with ardor, we might flee more certainly from the present things, the more avidly we would know the future things because of our investigation of them.

From this situation some *quaestiunculae* (small questions) have come to the light that, for their contradictoriness, touched our minds in a major way. Nevertheless, though unable to put together an optimal solution for them or a definition of concise meaning, our minds were equally lifted up, because whatever would be debated about the matter, it would have to be noted in writing; so that what reason required, and what was derived as defined by the thought of the Catholic masters, would express for us the thought of the sacred reading: this would be done not with a continuous leafing through the books, but *viva voce*, with the application of memory.

Then, if I err not, having called the scribe at your pressing request, I gathered together, in the same day and in your presence, with the greatest possible brevity, the chapters concerning the aforesaid *quaestiunculae*.

But impatient, as is usual in the things that concern God, the mind of Your Holiness pushed, with a very gentle, familiar command, the forces of my weakness and obliged me, with a precept consequent on [our] inseparable communion, so that these same [questions], which had previously been discussed, and which had received your approval, would be listed in the definition of the titles, as soon as I was aware that some free time had been given to me by the gift of God, and I would gather them together in one complete and concise volume. I would show, with their appropriate teaching, what the author-

ity of the ancient fathers had understood in this regard; so that, however, in investigating these questions, the great number of books would not weary the soul thirsting for knowledge, but this concise collection might quench the manifold thirst of the reader. Moreover, it was also decided by us, in an exchange of mutual charity, to annotate as many as possible of the themes and *quaestiunculae* that we had gathered concerning the final resurrection of the body, and that I would take care to annotate them, with a style similar to that of the titles.

Moreover, we deemed that these two books would also be accompanied by the book "that saddens the heart," so that the first book, which would precede these two aforesaid books, would treat the death of the body, that it would be similarly structured with a listing of the titles, and that the reader's mind, terrified by an extreme fear of death, would be lifted up again by the hope of heavenly joys; and so by the investigation of the subsequent books, it has been underscored what and how great the enjoyment of the eternal beatitude, after the deposition or the recovery of this body, would be for the holy souls. Thus, you yourself know, together with me, all the things that we have treated and established in that unforgettable day.

Subsequently, since the departure of the glorious prince for war from the royal city had also brought about the removal of the turbulent units of the troops along with him, as I believe was the case, the agitation of our mind started to clear up after the storms with mild breezes, and so I came to remember your command and my promise.

Therefore I carried out, certainly not as I should have, but, in any case, as I was able, what I had promised. The first book treats the origin of human death; the second concerns the situation of the souls of the dead before the resurrection of their bodies; the third treats the future resurrection. Having established that everything would be contained in a single volume in three books, we gave it the title *Prognosticum futuri saeculi* with regard to its better and more extensive part. Nevertheless, you will find in it not my own teaching but the topics and the doctrine of the ancient fathers; and if in some places my voice does resound a little, I have written, in my own style, nothing else but what I remembered reading in their books. And if here I have said otherwise than what I should have said and have corrupted their teachings by arranging the things differently from how they should have been, may charity, which bears and tolerates everything, forgive me, as I admit to doing so; and moreover, may it obtain, in your holy

mind, what the perception of our weakness less wisely prepared, may the help of your wisdom correct, reveal, and prepare it; and above all, may our prayers obtain from the Lord that whatever guilt I may have imprudently committed in this work, he may command that it be canceled by the merit of the loving blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Therefore, it has seemed right to me that this work be compiled not so much to reveal to readers things almost unknown to them, since I do not doubt that I obtained knowledge of many of these things from the volumes of many books; but, rather, so that the discourse about these matters, unified here into a single collection, might touch in a more intense way the minds of mortals, because they could read this material without effort in such a collection, and, thus being offered food gratuitously, their composed reason could bear fruit in due time.

May this orderly collection of books with the contents gathered in them suffice for our mind to recognize itself in this faithful reproduction. If we, in fact, would meditate with a careful reflection on what we will be in the future, I believe that we would rarely, or never, sin. Thus, in fact, it is written: "Son, in all you do, remember the end of your life, and then you will never sin" [Sir 7:36].

Having brought to completion, therefore, those things that had been premised by discernment and memory, this I desire, for this I long, that the offered form of these books, whether it pleases you or displeases you, be clothed in a better garment from the exercise of your criticism, and that the outcome of your judgment be publicly known.

[END OF PREFACE]

PRAYER TO GOD BY JULIAN HIMSELF

Dwelling, blind and ill, in the desert of Idumea, I cry to you, Son of David, to have mercy on me. I seek, in fact, Jerusalem, my eternal homeland; I desire to see its inhabitants, but I cannot find the guides with which to pass over there.

You, therefore, who have deigned to show yourself to me as the Way, reach out your hand to me, so that, no longer blind but seeing, I may arrive there without being impeded by brigands.

You are, in fact, the only Way, and such is the way that the brigand does not possess. Behold my restless heart, which, sighing at great length to you for the return to its homeland, is filled with an immense preparedness for the future realities: longing that, before the break of day, it may already contemplate in this world the joys of its future beatitude.

Investigating, in fact, to the best of my abilities, what enjoyment the souls of the dead experience after the death of this body, and also what glorification awaits them after they are reunited to their bodies, I have collected in this work the structure of the questions for as much as I have been able to derive from the discussions of the ancient fathers.

But even these things have been said for as much as can be said by mortals; nonetheless it was not possible to say all those things that necessarily treat of the future, because the paths of your judgments are inscrutable.

Nevertheless, desiring to fly away to the bosom of that fatherland of which so many things have been said, I ask that I may advance through you, who are the Way, in you, who are the Truth, that I may not stumble, that I may reach you, who are the Life. From you, therefore, who are the Way of the supreme happiness, do not separate me for any reason, may no impediment distance me; but, advancing toward you when I am near death, may I not suffer from brigands, and, once I am dead, not fear the accuser.

At the moment of my death protect me with angelic shields, and, called to you, may I be consoled by the tender mercy extended to me, so that, coming to you without hindrance, I may see what treasures are laid up in Jerusalem.

Immediately, immediately, Lord, it is enough, because dimmed to this point by the darkness of sins, I am lost. So that what I myself prepare as a remedy for myself and my brothers may not be an obstacle for anyone, I entreat you, by the glorious power of your sacred blood and the invincible and venerable sign of your cross, that I may not be accused as reckless for these actions of mine, that I may not go to ruin as one in error, that I may not be held worthy of being subjected to judgment and punished with those who speak a lot from their own hearts and not from your spirit. Here I am, Lord, I, your poor man, mendicant and knocking at your door, who does not arrogantly define unknown things but is humbly desirous to know those things that can be known.

Feed me, therefore, on all the promises of your grace, which, even if they cannot be experienced with the senses, are nonetheless believed to be fulfilled with the true firmness of faith, so that you may give that joy that no one can describe with the pen, "what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived" [1 Cor 2:9], to me, wretched as I am, that I may happily enjoy it here, while there I may contemplate it with a fuller clarity.

[END OF THE PRAYER]

BEGINNING OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE FIRST BOOK, ON THE ORIGIN OF HUMAN DEATH

- I How death first entered the world.
- II Why God, after having created the angels immortal, threatened human beings with death if they sinned.
- III The condition of human beings as they were created and the punishment of death, to which they were justly condemned after their sin.
- IIII Why it is called death.
- V The three kinds of bodily death.
- VI The death of the flesh is harsh, yet the dying often do not experience its unpleasantness.
- VII It often happens that through a harsh death of the flesh the soul is freed from sin.
- VIII Death is not a good thing, and yet for the good it is good.
- VIII Against those people who say: If the sin of the first human being is forgiven in baptism, why does death also await the baptized?
- X When believers die, angels are nearby, and their souls are received by these angels to be led to God.
- XI The fear of bodily death.
- XII The particular fear that makes everyone wonder which is more bearable: to dread several different kinds of death while still alive, or to endure the one that actually occurs?
- XIII How to console those who fear bodily death.
- XIII Christians ought not to fear bodily death because the just one lives by faith.

- XV The considerations by which fear of death can be tempered, such that we should embrace rather than fear the day of our calling, and a great number of beloved persons awaits us there.
- XVI How contrary our will is to the Lord's prayer when we daily pray that God's will be done, and yet at the same time we do not want to pass over to him, because of the persistent fear of death, as in the story of the brother who was afraid to leave this world and to whom Christ appeared and rebuked him.
- XVII Let us not be overcome by despair when we are disturbed by the imminence of death.
- XVIII At the time of their calling, all need to devote themselves frequently to prayer and need to be helped by the brethren's assiduous recitations of prayers and other texts.
- XVIII The preparation of the tomb and the care of the corpses are duly imposed upon believers.
- XX Whether it benefits the dead for their bodies to be buried in churches.
- XXI The dead who are entombed in the church greatly benefit from the belief that they are helped by the patronage of the martyr near whom they are buried.
- XXII The sacrifices that are offered for the faithful departed.

[END OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE FIRST BOOK]

THE THREE BOOKS OF THE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD TO COME

BEGINNING OF THE (FIRST) BOOK ON THE ORIGIN OF HUMAN DEATH

I How death first entered the world.

The apostle Paul teaches that because of the sin of the first human being it happened that death has entered the world: "Just as through one person," he says, "sin entered the world, and through sin, death, and thus death came to all, inasmuch as all sinned" [Rom 5:12].

II Why God, after having created the angels immortal, threatened human beings with death if they sinned.

Death reaches human beings as a layer of sin. "It is not to be believed that God made mankind in the same way in which he made the angels, in such a condition that, even though they had sinned, they could no longer die. He had so made them that if they fulfill the obligations of obedience, an angelic immortality and a blessed eternity might ensue without the intervention of death; but if they disobeyed, death should strike them with just sentence."¹

Therefore the first sinners "were so punished with death, that whatsoever sprang from their stock should also be subject to the same punishment. For nothing else could be born of them than that which they themselves had been. Their nature was deteriorated in proportion to the greatness of the condemnation of their sin, so that what existed as punishment in those who first sinned, became a natural consequence in others who would be born."²

III The condition of human beings as they were created and the punishment of death, to which they were justly condemned after their sin.

The first human being was created in such a condition of nature as to be absolutely capable of immortality and mortality: not immortal to the point that, also sinning, he would not have been able to die;

not mortal to the point that, also not wanting to sin, he would have been submitted to death. He was endowed with free will, so that by right he who did not want to sin, though capable of doing so, would have been blessed; or he who sinned, though having been able to avoid it, without necessity but by his own will would have been miserable. And since something cannot be said to be right or sinful without the observance of, or the failure to comply with, the precept of someone, the man who was established in paradise received the precept for which he had in his nature the power not to die and the power to die: if he had been found obedient for the fulfillment of the vital precept, he would have become immortal, so much so as no longer to be able to die; if he had been found disobedient for his transgression, he would have begun to be mortal such that he could not avoid death. This seems to me the reason why the first human being received the precept and why the punishment inflicted upon the sinner because of his transgression is just.³

III Why it is called death.

"It is called death, because it is bitter, or it is called this way because of the bite taken by the first human being.⁴ In fact when the progenitor of the human kind, disobeying, touched the forbidden tree, through the bite he fell into death."⁵ Precisely for this reason, from the morsel death itself takes its name.⁶

V The three kinds of bodily death.

"There are three kinds of death: unripe, immature, natural. Unripe is that of children, immature that of the youth, normal, or rather natural, that of the elderly."⁷

VI The death of the flesh is harsh, yet the dying often do not experience its unpleasantness.

"For what concerns the bodily death, that is, the separation of the soul from the body suffered by those who are at the point of death, it is not good for anyone. In fact, for as long as it endures, it possesses a bitter taste, and the force itself is against nature, eradicating what in the living had been joined and united; until the consciousness disappears entirely, that consciousness which was inherent

in the very union of soul and flesh; sometimes a stroke of the body or a sudden separation of the soul impedes the feeling of unpleasantness by preventing it with swiftness."⁸

VII It often happens that through a harsh death of the flesh the soul is freed from sin.

"However it happens in the dying, if the loss of consciousness accompanied by a painful sensation is piously and faithfully borne, it increases the merit of patience but does not eliminate the meaning of punishment. Since death is doubtlessly the punishment of those born from the descent of the first man, yet if it be endured for righteousness' sake, it becomes the glory of those who are born again; and though death be the reward of sin, it sometimes ensures that nothing be awarded to sin."⁹ Similarly, therefore, the blessed Gregory says: "It is written: 'from whatever death the just man is stricken, his soul will be at rest' [Wis 4:7]. So, for the chosen who tend toward perpetual life, what obstacle is there if they die harshly in a short time? Indeed, it is perhaps sometimes a guilt of theirs, albeit minimal, that must be eliminated by the same death.... In fact, because the man of God sent against Samaria disobeyed by eating during his journey, he was slain by a lion along the way. But immediately, in the same text it is written that 'the lion stood beside the ass, and did not eat the dead man's body' [1 Kgs 13:28]. This shows that the sin of disobedience was forgiven, because the same lion that dared to kill a living being did not dare to touch one that had been killed. In fact, he who had the boldness to kill did not take the liberty to eat the carcass of the one killed."¹⁰ So it is to be believed that "in most cases the very fear of even the slightest guilt purifies the souls of the just when they abandon the body."¹¹ "In fact as the souls of the chosen ones exit from life, they are terrified by an excessive fear, not knowing if they are heading toward the prize or toward torment. Some chosen ones are purified of their lesser sins in the moment of their death; while others rejoice in the moment of their death, contemplating the eternal goods."¹²

VIII Death is not a good thing, and yet for the good it is good.

Death, by which the body is separated from the soul, is generally good for those who are good, since through it one passes to future immortality. "Not because death, which before was an evil, has

become something good, but because God granted so much grace to faith that death, obviously the opposite of life, became the instrument through which one passes over to life."¹³

VIII Against those people who say: If the sin of the first human being is forgiven in baptism, why does death also await the baptized?

Care is to be taken by those who ask why people suffer death when their offenses are forgiven by the grace of baptism. In fact those who talk this way usually do so with witty propositions: "The death that affected the first human being originated from the evil of disobedience, and therefore, by that original sin, death has become the condition of everyone. Then why are we, whose original sin is forgiven in baptism, submitted to the tortures of this death?"¹⁴ These objections are responded to by a well-known reasoning. Thus, in fact, the eminent doctor Augustine says accordingly: "The reason for the separation of the soul from the body, though its connection with sin was removed, is that if the immortality of the body followed immediately upon the sacrament of regeneration, faith itself would be thereby weakened since faith is really faith when it waits in hope for what is not yet seen in reality. And at least in adulthood the fear of death was overcome by the vigor and struggle of faith. This was especially conspicuous in the holy martyrs, who could have had no victory, no glory, to whom there could not even have been any conflict, if, after the *lavacrum* of regeneration, already as saints they could not suffer bodily death. Who would not, then, in company with the infants presented for baptism, run to the grace of Christ, so that he might not be dismissed from the body? And thus faith would not be tested with an unseen reward; nor would it even be seeking and receiving an immediate recompense of its works. But now, by the greater and more admirable grace of the Savior, the punishment of sin is turned to the service of righteousness."¹⁵ Concerning this subject Julian Pomerius also says: "Therefore those regenerated cannot pass to eternal beatitude without the death of the flesh, because all the good that the sacraments effect in the regenerated does not belong to the present life, but to the future. And particularly, if whoever saves himself does so in hope, and hope does not belong to the temporal life but rather to eternal life, the reborn in Christ will not be saved by just any hope, if they want to be reborn in Christ not to obtain eternal beati-

tude, which is not seen, and for which hope watches, but to possess without end this visible life: and thus they could not even be regarded as faithful, because they would not have faith in things unseen and they would become lovers of the life of this world and tepid toward obtaining the unseen goods."¹⁶

X When believers die, angels are nearby, and their souls are received by these angels to be led to God.

It must be said that when the souls are separated from the body at the moment of death, angels are present to receive the souls of the just as they exit from the body and to introduce them into the abodes of the pious. Thus, when the rich man and poor Lazarus are mentioned in the Gospel, it is written accordingly: "It happened that the poor man died and he was carried away by angels to the bosom of Abraham" [Luke 16:22]. This assertion firmly confirms that in the moment of the separation of the holy souls as they leave the body, the care of the angels is always present. In fact St. Augustine, too, discussing the opinion that the dead know what the living do, adds to the debate about the question by saying: "If the Angels could not be present in the places of both the dead and the living, the Lord Jesus would not have said: 'It happened, then, that the poor man died and was carried away by angels in the bosom of Abraham' [Luke 16:22]. They could thus be now here, now there, since they conducted from here to there the one God wanted."¹⁷ Similarly the same doctor says in the books on the Trinity of God: "Whoever, then, is renewed day by day by making progress in the knowledge of God, and in righteousness and holiness of truth, transfers the love from temporal things to eternal things....Whoever shall be found on the last day of this life in such progress and growth, holding faith in the mediator, is to be led to God, whom he has worshipped, and to be brought to perfection by him; he shall be welcomed by the holy angels, and so shall receive at the end of time an incorruptible body, not for punishment but for glory."¹⁸

XI The fear of bodily death.

"Everyone fears death of the flesh, few fear death of the soul. All are preoccupied with avoiding the coming of death of the flesh, which, sooner or later, certainly must come. And for this they weary themselves. Destined to die, humankind struggles to avoid dying, and

yet, destined to live forever, they do not labor to avoid sinning. And when they struggle to avoid death, they labor in vain; in fact, the most they obtain is that death is deferred, not avoided; if rather they refrain from sinning, their toil will cease, and they shall live forever. Oh, that we could incite humankind, ourselves included, to be lovers of everlasting life at least as much as they are lovers of the life that passes away! Placed under the peril of death, what will one not do? When the sword was hanging over their head, human beings have abandoned anything belonging to them, just to live. Who would not do so to avoid being stricken? And yet after having lost everything, they were struck anyway. Who, in order to live, has not been willing to lose even their livelihood, preferring a mendicant life to a sudden death? Who has had it said to them: Set to sea if you would escape with your life, and has delayed doing so? Who has had it said to them: Set to work if you would preserve your life, and has continued a sluggard? It is but little that God requires of us, that we may live forever, and we neglect to obey him. God does not say to you: Lose all that you have, that you may live for a short time oppressed with toil, but rather: Give to the poor of what you have, that you may live always securely and without effort. The lovers of the temporal life, who possess it neither when nor as long as they want, are our accusers, and we do not accuse ourselves in turn, so sluggish are we, so lukewarm about achieving that eternal life that will be ours if we wish it and will be imperishable when we have it; but this death that we fear, notwithstanding all our reluctance, will yet be ours to possess."¹⁹

XII The particular fear that makes everyone wonder which is more bearable: to dread several kinds of death while still alive, or to endure the one that actually occurs?

"What does it matter," the blessed Augustine says, "the kind of death that puts an end to this life, when he who has died once is not forced to die anymore? There being innumerable kinds of death that threaten every mortal in daily life, as long as it remains uncertain in what way it will come, I would ask whether it is not better to suffer one in dying, than to fear all while living. Nor am I unaware that one chooses more readily to live for a long time in fear of many deaths, rather than to not fear some, dying only once. But one thing is what carnal instinct, timorous, flees for weakness, and another what diligently

enucleated reflection shows. A death that was preceded by a good life is not to be considered a bad death. Nothing, in fact, renders death bad except what follows death. They who are destined to die, then, need not be concerned about what will happen to make them die, but where they will be forced to go upon dying. Since, therefore, Christians are well aware that the death of the poor and pious Lazarus, whose sores the dogs licked, was far better than the death of the wicked rich man, who lay in purple and in fine linen, what horrible kind of death could bring harm to the deceased who lived a good life?"²⁰

XIII How to console those who fear bodily death.

"What is this death? The dereliction of the body, the laying down of a heavy burden: but if man does not carry other burdens, what makes him fall into Gehenna? Of that real death then did the Lord say: 'Whoever keeps my word shall never see death' [John 8:51]. Let us not be frightened of the former death, but let us fear the latter. What is more grievous is that many, excessively fearing the first, have fallen into the second. It has been said to some: 'Adore idols; for if you do it not, you shall be put to death'; or, as Nebuchadnezzar said: 'If you do not, you shall be thrown into the furnace of flaming fire.' Many feared and adored: not wanting to die, they died. Through fear of the death that cannot be escaped, they fell into the death that could have easily been avoided, had they not unfortunately been afraid of that which is inevitable. Man, you were born, you will die. Where shall you go to escape death? What will you do to avoid it? Your Lord deigned himself to die willingly in order to console you in your inevitable death. When you see that Christ died, can you disdain to die? Therefore, you must die; there is no way to avoid it. Be it today, be it tomorrow, it is to be: the debt must be paid. What, then, does a man gain by fearing, fleeing, hiding himself from discovery by his enemy? Is he able to avoid dying? Or does he only die later? He does not obtain liberation from the debt, but only a deferment. Put it off as long as you please, the thing so delayed will come at last. Let us fear that death,"²¹ the second one, which follows this first death of the flesh. "Let us keep, then, God's word in faith, as those who are yet to attain to sight, when the liberty we receive has reached its fullness."²² "Concerning their fathers, long ago dead, the Lord gave this answer to the Jews: 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. He is not the God of the dead, but of the living' [Matt

22:32]."²³ "If, therefore, they live, let us labor so as to live, that after death we may be able to live with them."²⁴ This in fact is exactly what the Lord says: "Whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live" [John 11:25], that is to say "'whosoever believes in me,' even though temporarily dead in the flesh, 'will live' in the soul, until he will be raised up and his flesh will never die again."²⁵

*XIII Christians ought not to fear bodily death
because the just one lives by faith.*

As the blessed Cyprian, doctor and martyr, says in this regard: "He who fears death is not willing to go to Christ: and he who is not willing to go to Christ does not believe that he is about to reign with Christ. For it is written: 'The one who is righteous will live by faith' [Rom 1:17]. If you are just, and live by faith, if you truly believe in God, why, since you are about to be with Christ and are secure in the Lord's promise, do you not embrace the assurance that you are called to Christ, and rejoice that you are freed from the devil? Certainly, Simeon, that just man who was truly just and observed the commandments of God with a full faith, having been divinely given the oracle that he would not die before having seen the Christ, when the newborn Christ had come to the temple with his mother, acknowledged in spirit that the Christ was born, concerning whom it had previously been foretold to him; and when he had seen him, he knew that he would soon die. Therefore, rejoicing about his now approaching death and secure in his imminent summons, he received the child into his arms; and blessing the Lord, he exclaimed: 'Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation' [Luke 2:29-30], assuredly proving and bearing witness that the servants of God then had peace, then free, then tranquil repose, when, withdrawn from these whirlwinds of the world, we attain the harbor of our home and eternal security, when having accomplished this death we come to immortality. That is our peace, that our sure tranquillity, that is the steadfast, abiding, and perpetual security."²⁶

*XV The considerations by which fear of death can be tempered,
such that we should embrace rather than fear the day of our calling,
and a great number of beloved persons awaits us there.*

The previously quoted doctor says: "The Kingdom of God, beloved brethren, is beginning to be at hand; the reward of life, and the rejoicing of eternal salvation, and the perpetual gladness and the lost possession of paradise are now coming, with the passing away of the world; already heavenly things are following the earthly ones, and great things the small ones, and eternal things the ones that pass. What room is there here for anxiety and solicitude? Who, in the midst of these things, is trembling and sad, except he who is without hope and faith?"²⁷ Likewise, the same doctor adds: "what else in the world is done daily if not a battle against the devil, whose darts and weapons are battled against in constant conflicts? Our warfare is with avarice, with immodesty, with anger, with ambition; our diligent and toilsome wrestling with carnal vices, with enticements of the world. The mind of humanity is besieged, and in every quarter invested with the onslaughts of the devil, scarcely in each point meets the attack, scarcely resists it. If avarice is prostrated, lust springs up. If lust is overcome, ambition takes its place. If ambition is despised, anger exasperates, pride puffs up, drunkenness entices, envy breaks concord, jealousy cuts friendship; you are constrained to curse, which the divine law forbids; you are compelled to swear, which is not lawful. The soul suffers daily many persecutions, the heart is oppressed by many dangers, and yet it prefers to stay here at length among the swords of the devil, when it would be more appealing and desirable to go more quickly by death to meet Christ who comes, to Christ who instructs us: 'Amen, amen, I say to you, you will weep and mourn, while the world rejoices; you will grieve, but your grief shall be turned into joy' [John 16:20]. Who does not desire to be without sadness? Who would not hasten to attain joy? When our sadness shall be turned into joy, the Lord himself again declares: 'I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man shall take from you' [John 16:22]. Since to see Christ is to rejoice, and since our joy cannot be if not that of one who sees Christ, what blindness of the soul or what folly it is to love the afflictions and punishments and tears of the world, rather than hastening to the joy that can never be taken away! But this happens because faith is lacking, because no one believes to be true the things promised by God, though he is true, whose words to believers are eternal and unchangeable. If someone grave and praiseworthy should promise you something, you would assuredly have faith in the one who promises, and would not think that you

should be cheated and deceived by him whom you knew to be steadfast in his words and deeds. Now God is speaking with you, and you, unfaithful, waver unbelievably? God promises immortality and eternity to whoever leaves this world, and you doubt? This is not to know God at all; this is to offend Christ, the teacher of believers, with the sin of incredulity; for one established in the church this is not having faith in the house of faith. How great the advantage of leaving this world is shown to us by Christ himself, the teacher of our salvation and of our good works, who, when his disciples were saddened because he announced that he was soon to depart, spoke to them saying: 'If you loved me, you would surely rejoice because I go to the Father' [John 14:28]; thereby teaching and showing that when the dear ones whom we love depart from the world, we should rejoice rather than grieve. Remembering this truth, the blessed apostle Paul in one of his epistles says: 'To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain' [Phil 1:21]. Considering it the greatest gain no longer to be held by the snares of this world, to become free from every concupiscence and vice of the flesh, but taken away from anguishing troubles, and freed from the venomous jaws of the devil, to go at the call of Christ to the joy of eternal salvation...."²⁸ "If therefore we believe in Christ, let us have faith in his words and promises; and since we shall not die eternally, let us come with glad sureness to Christ, with whom we shall conquer and reign forever. While in the meantime we die, we are passing over to immortality by death; nor can eternal life follow unless it should befall us to depart from this life. That is not an ending, but a transit and, this journey of time being traversed, a passage to eternity. Who would not hasten to better things? Who would not crave to be changed and renewed into the likeness of Christ, and to the dignity of heavenly grace?"²⁹ Likewise: "Whoever is going to the throne of Christ, and to the glory of the heavenly kingdoms, ought not to mourn or lament, but rather, in accordance with the Lord's promise, in accordance with his faith in the truth, to rejoice in this departure and passage."³⁰ Still: "To wish to remain at length in the world is for the one whom the world delights, whom this age invites, flattering and deceiving by the enticements of earthly pleasure. Moreover, since the world hates the Christian, why do you love that which hates you and why do you not rather follow Christ, who both redeemed you and loves you?"³¹ Likewise: "With a sound mind, with a firm faith, with a robust virtue, let us be prepared for whatever be the will of God; with the fear

of death laid aside, let us think about the immortality that follows. By this let us show ourselves to be who we are, not grieving over the departure of those dear to us, and when the day of our definitive summons shall arrive, let us go without delay and without resistance to meet the Lord who calls us. What the servants of God should always do must be done all the more so now as the world falls into ruin and is besieged by the storms of evil that rage, in order that we who see that terrible things have begun and know that still more terrible things are imminent, may regard it as the greatest advantage to depart from it as quickly as possible. If in your house the walls are shaking with age, the roofs above you tremble, the house is already dilapidated, and old age threatens the imminent ruin with an immediate destruction of its structure, would you not escape at great speed? If, when you are sailing, an angry and raging tempest, violently aroused by the waves, foretold the coming shipwreck, would you not quickly seek the harbor? The world is vacillating and falling down and witnesses to its ruin not now by its age, but by the end of things. And do you not give God thanks, do you not congratulate yourself, that you are removed from it by an earlier departure and delivered from the shipwrecks and disasters that are imminent?"³² And again: "Let us embrace the day that assigns everyone to their abode, and restores us to paradise and to the kingdom, snatching us up hence and freeing us from the age-old ties. Who after having been in exile does not hasten to return to their native land? Who, navigating toward his dear ones, would not eagerly desire a prosperous gale, that he might sooner embrace those dear to him? We regard paradise as our homeland; we already begin to consider the patriarchs as our parents. Why do we not hasten and run, that we may behold our homeland, that we may greet our parents? A great number of our dear ones await us there, a dense crowd of parents, brothers, and children is longing for us, already assured of their own safety, and still solicitous for our salvation. What great joy for them and for us to attain to their presence and their embrace, what pleasure there is in the heavenly kingdom, without fear of death, and what lofty and perpetual happiness with an eternity of living. There the glorious choir of the apostles, there the host of the rejoicing prophets, there the innumerable multitude of the martyrs.... Let us draw near to them with an eager desire to be with them soon, so that it may happen that we meet Christ soon. May God behold this our eager desire; may the Christ look upon this purpose

of our mind and faith; he who will give the greater rewards of his love to those whose desire for him was greatest."³³

XVI How contrary our will is to the Lord's prayer when we daily pray that God's will be done, and yet at the same time we do not want to pass over to him, because of the persistent fear of death, as in the story of the brother who was afraid to leave this world and to whom Christ appeared and rebuked him.

To this regard is the thought of the quoted doctor. He says, in fact: "We ought to remember that we should do not our own will but that of God, in accordance with what our Lord bids daily to pray. How preposterous and absurd it is, that while we ask that the will of God be done, when God calls us and summons us from this world, we do not immediately obey his will! We struggle and resist; like obstinate servants we are led to the presence of the Lord with sadness and grief, departing from this world forced by necessity, without the assent of the will. We insist on being crowned with rewards and honored with heavenly recompense by him to whom we come unwillingly. Why, then, do we pray and ask that the kingdom of heaven come, if earthly captivity delights us? Why with frequently repeated prayers do we entreat and beg that the day of his kingdom may hasten, if our greater desires and stronger wishes are to serve the devil here, rather than to reign with Christ? Finally, that the signs of divine providence may be more evidently manifest, proving that the Lord, prescient of the future, takes counsel for the true salvation of his own, when one of our colleagues and brethren in the priesthood, near to him struck by infirmity and worried about the approaching, prays for his departure, near to the one who prays and who is already just about to die is a youth, venerable in honour and majesty, lofty in stature and shining in aspect, and on whom, as he stood by him, the human glance could scarcely look with fleshly eyes, except for the one about to depart from the world who could already behold him as such. And he, not without a certain indignation of soul and voice, rebuked him, and said: 'You fear suffering, you do not wish to depart, what shall I do with you?' The voice was of one rebuking and warning, one who, worried about what follows, and sure about the departure, does not consent to the present desire, but looks to the future."³⁴

XVII Let us not be overcome by despair when we are disturbed by the imminence of death.

Some often say: "Perhaps the soul of the Christian is not to be troubled by imminent death?" Those people who say these things receive a suitable reply. The firmest Christians, if there are any, are those who are not disturbed even by an imminent death; but are they perhaps more solid than Christ? What great fool can affirm this? For what reason therefore was he disturbed, if not that he has consoled the sick in his body, that is, in his church, by freely taking their infirmity upon himself; so that if some of his own who are still disturbed by imminent death look upon him, for as much as they feel the weight of their guilt, they are not swallowed by a death worse than desperation? Then how much goodness are we to expect and hope from sharing in his divinity, the divinity whose restlessness reassures us and infirmity strengthens us? In fact even the blessed apostle Peter, when the Lord told him: "When you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go" [John 21:18],³⁵ what else did he want if not, freed from the body, to be with Christ? "Yet were it only possible, he had a desire for eternal life without the hassle of death; the hassle of death to which he was led unwillingly...and he left this weakness of infirmity behind by which no one wants to die, so natural that not even old age was able to take it away from the blessed Peter, to whom it was said: 'When you shall be old,' someone else will lead you 'where you do not want to go.'"³⁶ "But however great be the grievousness of death, it ought to be overcome by the power of that love which is felt for him who, being our life, was willing to endure even death on our behalf. For if there were no grievousness in death, even of the smallest kind, the glory of the martyrs would not be so great."³⁷

XVIII At the time of their calling, all need to devote themselves frequently to prayer and need to be helped by the brethren's assiduous recitations of prayers and other texts.

When the last hour decreed for the end of our earthly life is imminent, continuous prayer ought to help us. In fact, if in this world we prepare ourselves to go to unknown or distant places, we recommend ourselves to the prayers of the brethren, and upon

departure we shed plentiful tears, asking the Lord to hasten with calm travel companions. And if we do these things so carefully among the known things of the world, while the union of the body and the soul remains, how much more carefully should we do them at the moment of our end, when we pass into that region where, the body having been separated from the soul, we come to such unknown things of which we do not have any knowledge here while we are living, if after death the blessed life welcomes us or if, once we have left the body, we are carried off to torture? In fact since the devil tries to tie the end of our life with his drawstrings, if really in the moment of leaving the body we are armed with the pious prayers of the brethren and the assiduous offices of psalmody, he is always chased afar, and he dares not enter the divine camps to cause harm where he hears the name of the Lord resound from the mouths of those who sing faithfully. In fact we read about some who are freed from the devil who is present and threatens in the hour of their transition, through the brotherly prayers and the frequency of the psalmody. Therefore there is no doubt that when the pious faithful and the true Christians pass from this life, if they are helped by the assiduous and frequent prayer of the brethren, not even the ferocious attack of malignant spirits dares touch them.

XVIII The preparation of the tomb and the care of the corpses are duly imposed upon believers.³⁸

Although "care of the corpse, preparation of the tomb, pomp of obsequies are more comfort for the living than help for the dead,"³⁹ nevertheless "the bodies of the departed are not to be despised and flung aside, especially those of the just and faithful, whose bodies were holily utilized by the Spirit as organs and vessels of good works. If, in fact, a paternal garment and ring, and whatever such like, are more dear to the descendants because the affection toward their parents is greater, are the bodies all the more in no way to be spurned, which in truth we wear more familiarly and intimately than any other garment?"⁴⁰ So for the human body, "whatever is bestowed on it is no aid for salvation, but an office of humanity, according to the affection by which 'no one hates his own flesh' [Eph 5:29]. Whence it is fitting that care be taken, as much as possible, for the flesh of one's neighbor, when the one who bore it is gone. And if those who do not believe in

the resurrection of the flesh do these things, how much more are they to be done by those who do believe; that so, an office of this kind bestowed upon a body, dead but yet to rise again and to remain in eternity, may also be in some way a testimony of the same faith?"⁴¹ "Whence also the corpses of the ancient just were cared for with dutiful piety, their funeral rites celebrated, and their burial provided [Gen 23; 25:9-19; 47:30]: and they themselves while living, gave charge to their sons to bury or even transfer their bodies [Gen 47:30]. Tobias also was commended, by witness of an angel, for having buried the dead, he obtained favor with God [Tob 12:12]. Also the Lord himself, who would be raised on the third day, preaches and commends to be preached the good work of the pious woman who poured precious ointment over his limbs, that she did this for his burial. And the Gospel praiseworthily remembers those who, having removed his body from the cross, diligently and honourably took care to cover it and lay it in the sepulchre. In truth, these testimonies do not teach us that there be some meaning in the dead bodies, but signify that the providence of God, to whom such practices of piety are also pleasing, takes care even for the bodies of the dead to assure faith in the resurrection."⁴²

XX Whether it benefits the dead for their bodies to be buried in churches.

"When someone is buried near the sepulchres of the martyrs, this alone already benefits the departed, because the survivor commending him to the patronage of the martyr increases the strength of the prayer."⁴³ Thus, "when the mind recollects where the body of a very dear person lies buried, and encounters a place bearing the name of a venerable martyr, the affection of the one who remembers and prays entrusts the beloved soul to the same martyr. And when this affection for the dearest departed is demonstrated by the faithful, there is no doubt that it benefits them who, while living in the body, merited that they shall benefit from such things after this life."⁴⁴

XXI The dead who are entombed in the church greatly benefit from the belief that they are helped by the patronage of the martyr near whom they are buried.

Most believers, because of their aforesaid faith, make provisions for their own bodies or for those of their dear ones to be buried near the memorials of martyrs. I do not retain unfruitful what one believes or useless what is faithfully hoped for from divine help,⁴⁶ unless the guilt of those who are buried in the churches be so insoluble as to not allow them to be helped after death even by sacrifices offered to God. And therefore if that faith is believed of merit that fills whoever prays to God for his beloved dead who are buried in the places of the martyrs, how much more is the fruit of hope achieved by that faith that procures a salutary place for his own corpse while he is still alive? Indeed, St. Augustine answers thus to the bishop Paulinus, who consulted him about the question: "Since a faithful mother desired to bury the body of her departed faithful son in the basilica of a martyr, if she really believed that his soul would be aided by the merits of the martyr, because she thus believed, some supplication was made, and this benefited, and how it benefited. And since she returns in her spirit to this same sepulchre, and in her prayers more and more commends her son, it is not the place that aids the spirit of the departed, but, by the memory of the place, the living affection of the mother. For at once, both the one who commends and the one commended to, not unprofitably touch the religious mind of the one who prays."⁴⁶ These holy words are of Augustine, by which it is believed that the faith of the living who piously arrange to bury the bodies of their dear ones near the memorials of martyrs is not vain, even though we have learned, by many other reasons and examples from antiquity, that those who live impiously up to their own end are disgracefully buried in churches.⁴⁷ "In fact, if the merit whereby these things may benefit them are not verified in this life, it is vain to ask for life after this one. As in fact what is done to benefit them after the life of the body is merited in the life that each conducts in the body."⁴⁸

XXII The sacrifices that are offered for the faithful departed.

"In the books of Maccabees we read of a sacrifice offered for the dead. Yet, even if such a thing could not be found at all in the ancient

Scriptures, great is the authority of the universal church that shines forth in this custom, by which the recommendation of the dead has its place in the prayers of the priest offered to the Lord God on his altar. In fact, when sacrifice is offered to God for the departed souls, it is a thanksgiving for the very good ones, propitiation for the not so bad, while for the very bad, even if the sacrifices are of no benefit to the dead, the act is nevertheless consolation for the living. To which nevertheless they benefit, or toward a full remission or at least for the damnation to be more tolerable."⁴⁹

[END OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE FIRST BOOK]

BEGINNING OF THE CHAPTERS
OF THE SECOND BOOK,
ON THE SOULS OF THE DEAD:
HOW THEY ARE BEFORE THE FINAL
RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

- I The different paradises.
- II Where paradise is, in which the souls of the blessed rest once they leave the body.
- III The meaning of the bosom of Abraham, where the souls of the blessed are received.
- IIII The different hells.
- V Why it is called hell.
- VI How hell is and whether it is material.
- VII Why it is believed that hell is underground.
- VIII As soon as they depart the body, the souls of the blessed go to Christ in heaven.
- VIII The souls of the dead are detained in some abodes.
- X Even though the souls that have achieved something less than perfect holiness and depart from this life in this condition can one day obtain the kingdom with the saints, they are anyway not immediately situated in the heavenly kingdom upon leaving the body.
- XI Before the resurrection of the body God is not seen by the holy spirits of the dead as he will be seen after the resurrection, and how the souls of the dead now desire to have their bodies once again.

- XII After the descent of Christ into hell, the souls of the elect are not kept in those places where the souls of the patriarchs had previously been kept, but they immediately go to heaven.
- XIII As the souls of the saints go to heaven upon leaving the body, likewise those of the sinners are delivered to hell.
- XIII Those who have been hurled into hell will remain there perpetually.
- XV The soul, after the separation from the body, is not deprived of its faculties.
- XVI The soul possesses a resemblance to the body, and in the same bodily likeness it feels rest and bears the torments.
- XVII Whether one can believe that the soul, being incorporeal, is tormented with a material fire.
- XVIII There is only one fire of Gehenna, but it does not torment sinners in only one way.
- XVIII It is believed that after death there is a purifying fire.
- XX One is the purifying fire, by which most are believed to be saved, and another is that fire in which the impious, by the judgment of Christ, will be immersed.
- XXI The souls of the dead suffer the purifying fire not after, but before the final judgment.
- XXII Whether it is to be believed that those who shall be saved through the purifying fire are tormented up until the time of the resurrection or afterward.
- XXIII The death of the flesh belongs to the tribulation of the purifying fire.
- XXIII Whether the souls of the dead can mutually recognize one another after the death of the flesh and, at the same time, whether they mutually have knowledge there of those whom they have not seen in this life.
- XXV Whether the souls of the blessed dare to pray for those whom they believe to be assigned to hell.
- XXVI Whether the souls of the dead pray for the salvation of their living dear ones.

- XXVII Whether the souls of the dead can become sad or glad over the salvation of their living dear ones, and whether they are touched by any sadness or worry about the living.
- XXVIII The patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles, and all the souls of the dead who have already passed to the blessed life ardently wait for us to rejoice with them, and their gladness is not perfect as long as they grieve for our errors.
- XXVIII Whether the dead can know what the living do.
- XXX Whether the dead can visibly appear to the eyes of the living.
- XXXI Only the souls of the saints, and not those of the impious, will know what can be done by the living.
- XXXII Whether after the advent of the mediator in hell, by which the way to heaven was opened for the saints, the good can see the bad in pain and the bad can see the good established in rest.
- XXXIII Against those who say that after death there is no life of the soul.
- XXXIII Against those for whom it seems too little that the soul after the death of the flesh, in a certain bodily resemblance, sees delightful things or feels sad things, and that the delightful or sad things seen there are more evident than the ones that can be seen here by the soul in a dream.
- XXXV What reward the souls of the dead are believed to have before the final time of the resurrection.
- XXXVI After the abandonment of this body, God is immediately seen by the holy souls.
- XXXVII Even the souls of the saints already reign with Christ in heaven.

[END OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE SECOND BOOK]

BEGINNING OF THE SECOND BOOK,
ON THE SOULS OF THE DEAD: HOW THEY ARE
BEFORE THE FINAL RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

I The different paradises.

"One thing is the earthly paradise where the life of the first human beings was corporally born; another is the heavenly one where the souls of the blessed are immediately transferred as soon as they leave the body, and rejoicing for the merited happiness, they wait to have again their own bodies."¹ About this paradise Julian Pomerius said: "The souls of the just going out of the body seem to be conducted or to go to paradise, where the apostle [2 Cor 12:2] is said to have been abducted, with the mind but without the body."² In the same way, after other things he says: "This suffices concerning the heavenly paradise and the fact that the holy souls are sent there immediately, by the gift of God, as soon as they have departed their bodies. That this is to be believed is confirmed by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, when he said to the thief, 'today you will be with me in paradise' [Luke 23:43], proved without any ambiguity that the heavenly paradise welcomes the blessed souls gone out of their bodies, without any temporal interval."³

*II Where paradise is, in which the souls of the
blessed rest once they leave the body.*

We read in blessed Augustine, when he explains with great clarity those words of the apostle Paul with which the same apostle recalls having been abducted to the third heaven [see 2 Cor 12:2], that the paradise to which the apostle was abducted, and in which the souls of the blessed who have departed their bodies abide, is situated in the third heaven. The same author defines as material the first heaven, spiritual the second, mental the third, to which one ascends through the contemplation of the mind, and he thus affirms: "If we correctly understand the first heaven, by this general name every material thing is included that is above the waters and on the earth; the second one then is understood with a corporal similitude, what is discerned by the spirit, as that from which Peter, in ecstasy, was presented a dish full of animals to eat [Acts 10:10-11]. The third one then, which is seen with

the mind, contains things so secret and hidden and entirely unattainable by the bodily senses, and pure things, such that the things that are in that heaven, and the same substance of God and God the Word through which all things were made, can be seen and heard ineffably in the charity of the Holy Spirit: it is not arbitrarily that we think that the apostle was abducted and taken there and that probably it is the best paradise of all, and so to speak, the paradise of paradises."⁴

*III The meaning of the bosom of Abraham,
where the souls of the blessed are received.*

I do not question that the "bosom of Abraham" means rest of the father or the secret of rest or even paradise, as it is defined by the assertions of many doctors, since among others, Ambrose, Augustine, and Gregory have taught more appropriately that the bosom of so great a patriarch meant nothing other than the patriarch himself.⁵

III The different hells.

I remember having read about a distinction of the hells in the treatises of the blessed Augustine, in which he openly says that there are two hells, believing that there is a hell on earth and another hell below the earth, according to the word of the Psalmist, who confides in God: "You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol" [Ps 86:13].⁶ In fact "for these two hells the Son of God was sent, to free from both. To this hell he was sent by being born, to that by dying."⁷ And again he says: "As for hell, brothers, up till now we are not experts neither me nor you; and perhaps there will be another way that will not pass through hell; but these things are uncertain. Since the Scripture says the truth, and cannot be contradicted, from the expression 'you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol' we understand that there are two hells, one upper and one lower. In fact how can there be a lower hell if not because there is an upper hell?"⁸ Likewise the same most holy doctor proposes another opinion for the fact that "in the same hell there is a lower part, where that rich man suffered inhumanely, and a higher part of hell in which Abraham rejoiced with Lazarus, also where all the saints were before the coming of Christ." Thus, in faith, the quoted doctor says "perhaps in the same hell there is a lower part where the ungodly are thrust who have greatly sinned. For we cannot define sufficiently whether Abraham

was not in some particular place in hell. For the Lord had not yet come to hell that he might rescue from thence the souls of all the saints who had gone before, and yet Abraham was there in rest. And when that rich man was in torments in hell, he lifted up his eyes upon seeing Abraham. He could not have seen him by lifting up his eyes, unless the one was above, the other below. And what did Abraham answer unto him, when he said, 'Father Abraham, send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am suffering torment in these flames. My child,' he says, 'remember that you received what was good during your lifetime while Lazarus likewise received what was bad; but now he is comforted here, whereas you are tormented. Moreover, between us and you a great chasm is established to prevent anyone from crossing who might wish to go from our side to yours or from your side to ours' [Luke 16:24]. Therefore, two hells probably exist, one in which the souls of the just were at rest, and in the other the souls of the ungodly are tormented."⁹

V Why it is called hell.

"Hell is called *infernus* in Latin¹⁰ because it is found below. Just as with bodies, if they have an order on the basis of their weight, the lower are the heavier, likewise in the dimension of the spirit the lower things are the sadder. In the Greek language, the origin of the name that designates hell refers to the fact that they do not have anything pleasant that can be heard to resound."¹¹

VI How hell is and whether it is material.

As the blessed Augustine says, "certainly the reality of hell exists, but I believe that it is spiritual and not material. Those who affirm that hell can be explained in this life or that it does not exist after death are not to be listened to. In fact, it would seem to be interpreted somehow with poetic images: we are not to recede from the authority of the divine Scriptures, which alone is to be believed on this matter."¹²

VII Why it is believed that hell is underground.

"Justly one asks why it is said that hell is situated under the ground if it is not a material place, or why it is called hell if it is not situated underground,"¹³ as St. Augustine says. Since the same doctor

says accordingly: "Therefore one says or one believes that hell is situated underground because thus it fittingly appears to the spirit, with that similarity with corporeal things, such that the souls of the dead who deserved hell sinned for love of the flesh, be shown through those similarities with corporeal things that it is appropriate for the same dead flesh to be sealed underground."¹⁴

VIII As soon as they depart the body, the souls of the blessed go to Christ in heaven.

We read that the blessed Gregory responded this way to Peter, who questioned him on these things: "We cannot affirm this thing for all the just, nor can we deny it: for the souls of some just are not immediately gathered in the kingdom of heaven and they are held back still in some abodes. What else is understood in this punishment that comes from the delay if not that they had something less with respect to perfect justice? And nevertheless it is of a clearer evidence of light that the souls of the perfect just ones, as soon as they exit the prison of this flesh, are welcomed in the celestial sees. He who is the truth affirms this when he says: 'Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather' [Matt 24:28], for where our Saviour is bodily present, there, without doubt, the souls of the just also gather. And Paul desires to be dissolved and to be with Christ [see Phil 1:23]. He, therefore, who doubts not that Christ is in heaven, cannot deny that Paul's soul is in heaven. The same apostle says about the dissolution of his body and the dwelling in heaven: 'For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens' [2 Cor 5:1]."¹⁵

VIII The souls of the dead are detained in some abodes.

"During the time that is interposed between human death and the final resurrection, the souls are detained in hidden abodes in proportion to how each of them is worthy of either rest or tribulation for how each behaved living in the flesh."¹⁶

[Eccl 11:3], because in the moment when a human being falls, the saint or the malignant spirit receives the soul that goes out of the closed place of the body and will detain it forever with himself without any change, such that if it is raised to heaven it will not descend into torture, nor, if dipped in the eternal tortures, will it climb again to the prize of heaven.²³

*XV The soul, after the separation from the body,
is not deprived of its faculties.*

In the works of Cassian we read that "the souls are not idle after the separation from this body, nor do they not feel anything,"²⁴ since the rich man in hell cries out to the poor Lazarus that he was suffering in the flame [Luke 16:24]; and that from the cross the Lord told the thief: "Truly, I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise" [Luke 23:43]. For the Lord would certainly never have promised him this, if he had not known that his soul after being separated from the flesh would either have been deprived of perception, or have been dissolved into nothing. For it was not his flesh but his soul that was to enter paradise with Christ.²⁵ "These things said," as the same doctor says, "it is clearly shown that the souls of the departed not only are not deprived of their faculties, but that they are not even without their feelings, such as hope and sorrow, joy and fear, and that they already are beginning to taste beforehand something of what is reserved for them at the last judgment. Nor, as some unfaithful maintain, are they dissolved into nothing after their departure from this life, but rather they live more vivaciously, and are even more earnest in waiting on the praises of God. Is it not, perhaps, true that it is beyond every stupidity, not to say fatuity, and even insanity to have the slightest suspicion that the most precious part of the human individual, in which, according to the blessed apostle, lies the image and likeness of God, becomes insensible once the burden of the body with which it is oppressed in this world is laid aside, when it contains in itself all the power of reason and that it makes the dumb and senseless matter of the flesh sensitive through participation in itself? It follows then absolutely, and conforms to the order of reason itself, that when the mind has put off the grossness of the flesh with which it is now weighed down, it will restore its intellectual capacities better than ever, and receive them in a purer and finer condition than it lost them. The blessed apostle, in

fact, knows that it is so true what we say that he actually desires to be separated from this flesh, that by this separation he might be rendered more strongly capable of being united to the Lord, saying: 'my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better' [Phil 1:23]. 'Even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord' [2 Cor 5:6]. 'Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So, whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him' [2 Cor 5:8-9]. Proclaiming thus aloud that the soul, while it abides in this flesh, is in reality in exile far away from the Lord and separated from Christ, he trusts with all his faith that his separation or departure from this flesh, is instead proximity to Christ."²⁶

*XVI The soul possesses a resemblance to the body, and in the
same bodily likeness it feels rest and bears the torments.*

This is the thought of the eminent doctor Augustine on why the human soul has a likeness with the body. He says in fact: "Whoever affirms that the soul cannot have a likeness with a body or even with the limbs of a body, should say that it is not the soul that in a dream sees itself walking or sitting down, going and returning here and there, walking or flying; but nothing of this can happen without it having a certain likeness with a body. Consequently, if it also brings into hell such a likeness—which is not bodily but something similar to a body—it seems that it would likewise be found also in places that are not physical but similar to physical ones, both in rest and in torments."²⁷

*XVII Whether one can believe that the soul,
being incorporeal, is tormented with a material fire.*

"If the human soul, though incorporeal, can be detained in a living body, why after death could it not equally be prey to a material fire? We say that the spirit is possessed by the flame, in the sense that the fire, seen and perceived, constitutes a torment. It feels in fact the effect of fire upon seeing it and, when it sees itself burning in the flame, it burns. It so happens that a bodily substance, as is the fire, can burn an incorporeal one as the soul, when the invisible pain and burning are derived from the visible fire, as through a corporeal fire the incorporeal mind is tormented by an incorporeal fire. After all,

from the sayings of the Gospel we can deduce that the soul suffers from fire not only because it sees it, but also because it experiences it. The voice of the truth, in fact, tells us that the rich man, upon death, was thrown into hell, and that his soul, prey to the flames, pushed him to beg Abraham, saying: 'Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames' [Luke 16:24]. Since, therefore, the truth shows us the rich sinner tormented by the flames, what wise man would ever deny that the souls of the damned can be tormented from fire?"²⁸

*XVIII There is only one fire of Gehenna,
but it does not torment sinners in only one way.*

"Without a doubt there is only one fire of Gehenna, but it does not torment all sinners in a unique way. Since as much as is required by each one's guilt, so much so is the punishment felt there. In fact, just as in this world many people live under only one sun, yet nonetheless they do not feel the burning of the same sun in an identical way, because it burns more one and less another; likewise there, in the one and only fire there is not only one way to burn, because just as there is a diversity of bodies here, likewise there is a diversity of sinners there, such that all have the one fire, and nevertheless it burns individuals differently."²⁹

XVIII It is believed that after death there is a purifying fire.

We know that there is a purifying fire after death, as defined by the writings of many commentators. Among them the eminent doctor Augustine, although he affirms that this can already happen to the believers in this life, he nevertheless believes that it is also possible after death to expiate some light sins, showing that this same purifying fire, now despised and considered by some as nothing, is in reality more painful "than anything a man can suffer in this life."³⁰ About this purifying fire, Gregory also affirms: "It is to be believed that before the final judgment, there is a purifying fire for light sins, as the truth says that 'whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come' [Matt 12:32]. In this expression it is given to understand that some sins can be expiated in this life, while others, instead, must be expiated in the future world. In fact, what seems to be denied for the one, subsequent understand-

ing shows is granted for others.³¹ Nevertheless, as I previously maintained, it is to be believed that this can happen for the small and least sins, as for instance: persistent idle talk, unrestrained laugh, or the sin of worry for family affairs, things that are hardly practiced without guilt, or by those who know how they must keep far from sin, or by the error of ignorance about things that are not serious; all these things also continue to be a weight after death, if while they are still present in this life they are not totally remitted. Likewise Paul, when he says that Christ is the foundation, adds: 'Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw...the fire will test what sort of work each has done. If what has been built on the foundation survives, the builder will receive a reward. If the work is burned, the builder will suffer loss; the builder will be saved, but only as through fire' [1 Cor 3:12, 13, 15]. Although this can be understood about the fire of the tribulation as applied to us in this life, nevertheless if anyone interprets these things about the fire of future purification, he must carefully consider that he [Paul] said that by fire can be saved whoever builds on this foundation not with iron, bronze, or lead, that is, with the greatest and therefore more serious and thus by then unforgivable sins; but with wood, hay, and straw, that is, the least and lightest sins, which fire easily consumes. Yet, we must know that no purification will occur in the future world, not even for the least sins, if, during this life one did not commit oneself to good works in order to obtain it in the other."³²

*XX One is the purifying fire, by which most are believed to be
saved, and another is that fire in which the impious,
by the judgment of Christ, will be immersed.*

From the distinction made by the blessed Augustine we have learned that one is the fire about which, according to the judgment of the Lord, it shall be said to the impious: "depart from me into the eternal fire" [Matt 25:41], and another is what is properly called purifying fire, destined for those who shall become saved through it. In fact, nobody will be saved through the fire that is destined for the impious, as it has been written: "And these will go away into eternal punishment" [Matt 25:46]. Rather, through the fire that makes one acceptable and purifies, certain salvation is promised. In fact, according to what the aforesaid doctor affirms: "But if we were to interpret

in this passage [of Corinthians] that fire of which the Lord shall say to those on his left, 'depart from me into the eternal fire' [Matt 25:41], so as to believe that among them there are those who build on the foundation with wood, hay, stubble, and that they, through virtue of the good foundation, will be freed from the fire after a time in proportion to their evil merit, what then are we to think about those on the right, to whom it is said, 'come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you' [Matt 25:34], if not that they are those who have built on the foundation with gold, silver, and precious stones? But if the fire of which it was said, 'but only as through fire' [1 Cor 3:15], is to be interpreted this way, then both—that is to say, both those on the right as well as those on the left—are to be cast into it. For that fire is to try both, since it is said, for 'the day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done' [1 Cor 3:13]. If, therefore, the fire shall try both, 'if what has been built on the foundation survives,' that is, if the superstructure is not consumed by the fire, 'the builder will receive a reward. If the work is burned, the builder will suffer loss' [1 Cor 3:14–15]; certainly that fire is not the eternal fire. For into this fire only those on the left hand will be cast, and that with final and everlasting damnation; but that fire proves those on the right hand. Yet some of them it so proves that it does not burn and consume the structure that is found to have been built by them on Christ as the foundation; while it proves others in another way, so as to burn what they have built up and thus cause them to suffer loss, while they themselves are saved because they have retained Christ, who was laid as their sure foundation with an eminent love. But if they are saved, then certainly they will stand at the right hand, and will hear with the rest, 'come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you' [Matt 25:34]. And not at the left hand, where those will be who will not be saved, and will then hear 'you that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire' [Matt 25:41]. In fact from that fire no one will be saved, because they all will go away into eternal punishment, 'where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched' [Mark 9:48]."³³

XXI The souls of the dead suffer the purifying fire not after, but before the final judgment.

Concerning the reason for which the purifying punishments will be realized before the final judgment, St. Augustine, proposing a certain opinion, says: "For our part, we recognize that even in this life some punishments are purifying. But temporary punishments are suffered by some in this life only, by others after death, by others both now and then; but nevertheless before that last most rigorous judgment; yet among those who must suffer temporary punishments after death, not all fall into everlasting pains which are to follow that judgment. For to some, what is not remitted in this world is remitted in the next, that is, in order that they not be punished with the eternal punishment of the world to come."³⁴ Whereby, and after other considerations, the same doctor says: "Whoever, therefore, desires to escape eternal punishments, let him not only be baptized, but also justified in Christ, and so let him really pass from the devil to Christ. And we dare to think that any purifying pains will be before that final and dreadful judgment."³⁵ Therefore, confirmed by the thought of such a great doctor, we believe that this purifying fire acts here before the final judgment and that it precedes the fire in which all the impious, by judgment of Christ, will be thrown.

XXII Whether it is to be believed that those who shall be saved through the purifying fire are tormented up until the time of the resurrection or afterward.

It is my opinion that just as not all the reprobates thrown into the eternal fire are damned to only one kind of torment, likewise all those who are believed to be saved through the purifying punishments shall not sustain only one identical punishment of the souls for the same length of time. Therefore, what for the reprobates is established by the distinction of the punishments is determined, for those who are to be saved through fire, by the measure of time. But, for them the torment of the purifying fire will last longer or less according to how much they loved more or less the transient goods here. About this, in his books, the blessed Augustine, treating the purifying punishments, among other things, says: "And it is not unlikely that something of the same kind may take place even after this life, and it

is a matter that may be inquired into, and either ascertained or left unknown, whether some believers be saved as soon as possible or later, through a kind of purifying fire, and in proportion to how they have loved with more or less intensity the goods that perish. This cannot, however, be the case of any of those of whom it is said, that 'none of these will inherit the kingdom of God' [1 Cor 6:10; Gal 5:21], unless after suitable repentance their sins be forgiven them. When I say 'suitable,' I mean that they are not to be unfruitful in almsgiving."³⁶

XXIII The death of the flesh belongs to the tribulation of the purifying fire.

The eminent doctor Augustine, treating the purifying punishments, says: "Even the death of the flesh itself, which was contracted from the perpetuation of the first sin, can be a part of this tribulation, because each experiences the time that follows it in relation to the edifice constructed by each. The persecutions, too, from which the martyrs were crowned and which all Christians can suffer, try, as does the fire, both edifices: consuming some together with their builders if Christ is not found in them as their foundation, while consuming others without their builders if Christ is found in them. In fact, they are saved, even though with a punishment; but the persecutions do not consume the other edifices, because they find them made as to remain forever."³⁷

XXIII Whether the souls of the dead can mutually recognize one another after the death of the flesh and, at the same time, whether they mutually have knowledge there of those whom they have not seen in this life.

That the souls of the dead gone out of their bodies can recognize one another is attested by the evangelist when he says: "The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. He called out, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am in agony in these flames'" [Luke 16:22-24]. Here is how the soul of the rich man recognized the spirit of poor Lazarus. From this, with-

out a doubt, we can deduce that in that place the souls of the dead mutually recognize one another. In fact, "the good" are able "to recognize the good and the wicked their own kind." "If in fact"—as St. Gregory affirms—"Abraham had not recognized Lazarus, in no way would he have been able to speak to the rich man situated in the torments about his late repentance, reminding him that Lazarus had received evil things in his life. And if the bad did not recognize the bad, the rich man situated in the torments would not have remembered his brothers who were still alive. Is it in fact possible for one who was concerned to plead for those absent not to know the ones present? In this it is also shown that the good can recognize the bad, and the bad the good. For the rich man was known by Abraham when it was said: 'Remember that during your lifetime you received your good things' [Luke 16:25]. And the chosen one, Lazarus, was also known by the rich reprobate, whom he called by name, praying that he be sent to him: 'Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue' [Luke 16:24]. It is evident that this mutual knowledge increases in both the measure of the remuneration, such that the good enjoy all the more to see those rejoicing together whom they loved; and the bad, while they are tormented together with those whom they loved in the terrestrial life, despising God, not only suffer for their own but also for their punishment. Moreover, something wonderful happens in the chosen ones, because not only do they recognize those whom they had met in the world, but they also recognize as familiar and known those whom they had never seen. For example, when, in that eternal heritage, they shall see the ancient fathers, they shall not be unknown to them by sight, because they have always known them through their writings. In fact, since in that place all behold God with the same clarity, what is there that they know not when they know him who knows everything?"³⁸

XXV Whether the souls of the blessed dare to pray for those whom they believe to be assigned to hell.

"They pray for their enemies," as St. Gregory affirms, "in the time when their hearts can be converted to fruitful penitence and, through this conversion, they can be saved. What else, in fact, can be implored for their enemies if not what the apostle says: 'God may perhaps grant that they will repent and come to know the truth, and that

they may escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will? [2 Tim 2:25–26]. And how can they pray for those who in no way can be converted from their iniquity and brought to do the works of justice? Therefore the reason why those condemned to the eternal fire are not prayed for up there is the same reason why the devil and his angels assigned to the eternal torture are not prayed for. Can there be any other reason why holy people do not pray for those who die in infidelity and impiety, knowing them to be already destined to eternal punishment, if not to avoid that the merit of their prayer be canceled in the presence of the just judge? For if even the righteous, while still alive, take no compassion upon those who are dead and damned for their sins, although they are aware of incurring themselves in some guilt liable of judgment, since they are still in the weakness of the flesh, with how much more severity shall they behold the torments of the damned, when they shall be freed of all vice or corruption, and shall be more nearly and intimately united to true justice? For their minds are so fully united to the most righteous judge, that the strength of this union will absorb them in such a way as that it will not be possible for them by any means to like what does not accord with the requirements of the inner norm.³⁹

XXVI Whether the souls of the dead pray for the salvation of their living dear ones.

If the rich man immersed in hell implores Abraham for his brothers that they be admonished and not fall into the places of torment, why should it be believed that the souls of the just, and especially those established in peace, are not concerned about their dear survivors? They can, in fact, pray for the salvation of the living, for as much as it is granted them by the Lord; in fact, they can certainly remember those whom they have loved while they were in this world: they have not lost the sensitivity that unites the living with the living, but it is to be believed that they have an even freer one, there where they cannot be weighed down by the bodily burden. According to the divine word, in fact, "a perishable body weighs down the soul" [Wis 9:15]; thus the soul, which now is weighed down by the body, once freed from the body, becomes more free. Therefore, after the death of the body, an integral sensitivity and a perfect memory belong to the soul. So the soul that avails itself there with certainty of the function

of memory, remembers the sweetness of the dearest ones. Thus, remembering those whom it loved in the world, it can recommend them to Christ with prayers; after all, the prayers of the souls of the faithful do not ask for anything else than that their desires be granted. I affirm this even though in the custom of the faithful it is of common use in this field, when they recommend themselves to those who are about to die and they desire to be remembered by them. In this way, the friendship of the dear survivors was entrusted to the martyrs, when they were dying; in this way, the crowd of pious faithful recommends itself every day to the chosen souls, called away from this world, and asks them to remember them always. Nor in fact would the faithful of the living ask this of the deceased, if they were not convinced that these, after death, could in some way assist them. But since the concern of such great authority does not go beyond, the outcome of the request is often verified since what many living ask of the dying to be done to them, they obtain without suffering delay. This, therefore, seems to me the essence of the little question that I put forward, which even if I am unable to express in the same words with which the greatest have developed it, I nonetheless believe that it was defined in the same sense by the doctors, and even though I discover something of that which they had defined, I prefer to follow their thought.

XXVII Whether the souls of the dead can become sad or glad over the salvation of their living dear ones, and whether they are touched by any sadness or worry about the living.

"If there were no care of the dead for the living,"⁴⁰ certainly that rich man who was tortured in hell would not have been worried for his brothers, saying to Abraham: "Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father's house, for I have five brothers, that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment" [Luke 16:27–28]. And therefore, the dead can care for the living, even if they do not know what we do in the present, just as we the living care for the dead, though we do not know what they are doing. If in fact the living were not to care for the dead, we would not pray to the Lord particularly for them, offering sacrifices frequently. Teaching this and other similar things in his volumes, St. Augustine proposes only one example, which in no mediocre way is worthy of admiration: "We heard tell of a certain person of whom was demanded payment of a

debt, showing his deceased father's caution money, a debt that the father had paid unknown to the son, whereupon the man began to be very sorrowful and to marvel that his father while dying did not tell him what he owed, when he also made his will. While he was in such anxiety, his father appeared to him in a dream and made known to him where the receipt was located that canceled the caution money. When the young man had found and showed the document, he not only rebutted the wrongful claim of a false debt, but also got back his father's note of hand which the father had not got back when the money was paid. This could lead one to believe that the soul of that man cared for his son and that he came to him while he was sleeping, teaching him what he did not know, to relieve him of a great trouble."⁴¹

XXVIII The patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles, and all the souls of the dead who have already passed to the blessed life ardently wait for us to rejoice with them, and their gladness is not perfect as long as they grieve for our errors.

About these things the doctor Origen, in his doctrines, so teaches: "Since not even the saints, departing this life, immediately obtain the complete rewards for their merits; but they also wait for us, though hesitant, though idle. For them there is no perfect gladness as long as they are distressed for our errors and cry for our sins. You will not perhaps believe me who speaks to you; in fact, who am I to have the audacity to confirm the meaning of such a great doctrine? But I call upon a witness of these things, one whom you cannot doubt: he is, in fact, the apostle Paul, 'a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth' [1 Tim 2:7]. Writing then to the Hebrews, and having enumerated all the holy fathers who were justified by faith, he adds, after all these things, this as well: 'Yet all these, though they were commended because of their faith, did not receive what was promised since God had provided something better for us, so that they would not without us be made perfect' [Heb 11:39-40]. You see, therefore, that Abraham still waits to obtain the realities that are perfect. Isaac and Jacob also wait, and all the prophets wait for us, so that they may receive perfect beatitude with us. For this reason, therefore, the mystery of the judgment deferred to the last day is preserved; in fact one is the body that waits to be justified; one is the body of which is said to rise again at the judgment. 'As it is, there are many parts, yet one

body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you" [1 Cor 12:20-21]. Even if the eye is healthy, and it is not disturbed for what concerns the sight, if the other members fail, what gladness will it be for the eye? Or what perfection can there ever be if there are no hands, if the feet fail or the other members are not present? Because even if there is some eminent glory in the eye, it consists especially in the fact that it is the guide of the body or that it is not deprived of the functions of the other members. I think then that this is also taught us by the vision of the prophet Ezekiel when he says that bone must be rejoined to bone, and joint to joint, and nerves and veins and skin, and the single members must be restored to their place. In the end, see what the prophet adds: 'These bones,' he says; he did not say: these are all the human beings; but he said: 'These bones are the whole house of Israel' [Ezek 37:11]. Therefore you will have gladness leaving this life if you will have been holy. But it will then be truly full gladness when none of the members of the body will be missing. Since you also will wait for others, just as you have been awaited. If to you, who are a member, it does not seem perfect gladness if another member is missing, how much more does our Lord and Savior, who is the Head [see 1 Cor 11:3] of the whole body, not consider it perfect gladness for him as long as he sees that his Body is lacking some of its members."⁴²

XXVIII Whether the dead can know what the living do.

"It must be confessed," as the blessed Augustine says, "that without doubt the dead do not know what the living are doing here in the moment in which it happens, but subsequently they hear of it from those who, dying, hence go to meet them, and certainly not everything but what they are allowed to reveal, therefore also to remember these things, and to those which it is shown as opportune to know. The dead are also able to know from the angels, who are present to the things that happen here, of what he to whom all things are subject, judges that everyone must know. In fact, if the angels could not be present in the places of both the living and the dead, the Lord Jesus would not have said: 'The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham' [Luke 16:22]. Even the souls of the dead can know some things that happen here, when the Spirit of God reveals them, and it is necessary that they should know not only things present or past, but also future things that are necessary to know. Just

as the prophets, unlike other people, while they were living here, not even they knew all things, but only what God's providence judged opportune to reveal to them."⁴³

*XXX Whether the dead can visibly appear
to the eyes of the living.*

Also about this, the aforesaid doctor affirms: "That some can be sent from the dead to the living as also, on the contrary, Paul, from the living, was rapt into paradise, is testified by the Sacred Scripture. In fact the prophet Samuel, even though dead, foretold the future to the living king Saul [1 Kgs 28:15]."⁴⁴ Although some believe that it was not Samuel, who could have been evoked with magic arts, but that some spirit, prone to such evil actions, was introduced under his aspect. Nevertheless the book of Ecclesiasticus, which is said to have been written by Jesus son of Sirach, and that because of the language it manifests a certain similarity with that of Solomon, in the praise of the fathers, it confirms that Samuel even when dead did prophesy [Sir 46:24]."⁴⁵ But, if this book of the Hebrews is not to be trusted because not in their canon, what shall we say about Moses who in Deuteronomy is certainly declared dead [Deut 24:5], while in the Gospel we read that he appeared to the living, together with Elijah, who is not dead?"⁴⁶

*XXXI Only the souls of the saints, and not those of the impious,
will know what can be done by the living.*

Without a doubt it is to be believed that just as the living are not able to participate in the happenings of the dead, likewise the matters of the living are not known by the dead. Nevertheless, we suppose that the souls of the saints do not perceive in any way this lack of knowledge, in that they know all things in the vision of God and they contemplate them in his knowledge. So also the blessed Gregory in the books of Moralia, in that passage where he seems to draw from the words of Job his well-known testimony, says: "Their children come to honor, and they do not know it; they are brought low, and it goes unnoticed" [Job 14:21], defining it this way: "For as they who are still living know nothing of the souls of the dead, in what place they are held; so the dead do not know how those who survive them live their

life in the flesh. Because the life of the spirit is, in fact, very different from that of the flesh; and as the bodily one and the incorporeal one belong to different genera, likewise the modalities of knowledge are also distinct. This, however, has no value for the holy souls, because if they see in themselves the splendor of the almighty God, in no way can we suppose that there be anything they do not know. But because carnal persons bestow their chief affection on their children, blessed Job declares that they are hereafter ignorant of what they loved here with all their heart, so that whether their sons be in honor or dishonor they know not, whereas their care for these was always preying upon their minds."⁴⁷

*XXXII Whether after the advent of the mediator in hell,
by which the way to heaven was opened for the saints,
the good can see the bad in pain and the bad can
see the good established in rest.*

From the testimony of the evangelist we learn that while the rich man died and was immersed in hell, Lazarus was placed to rest in the "bosom of Abraham"; and the rich man, though in hell, could see Abraham and the poor Lazarus, while Abraham saw that rich man placed in the torments. We know that these things happened before the descent of Christ into hell. After all, when our Lord and Savior, dying for us all, descended with only the soul into hell, he opened the doors of the heavenly paradise to the patriarchs, who were confined in underground places. And since he snatched them from hell and placed them in the heavenly region, we ask ourselves, not without reason, in what way Abraham and the other saints, from the heavenly paradise where they were placed after the resurrection of Christ, could see the souls of the impious who are in hell; how could they do so from that place from which they were drawn after the death of Christ? Since it seems that it is I who pose such a question, myself being so occupied by various concerns, wherever I have read I have not easily found an answer. About this theme, I remember to have read something only in the *Homilies* of Pope Gregory, in which he affirms: "It must be believed that, before the last judgment, the impious see some just ones in peace, and thereby seeing them and ascertaining their joy, they are tormented not only by their own sentence, but also by the happiness of the just. The chosen ones, then, always observe the

damned in torture, and their joy increases, since they see the evil from which they have mercifully escaped, and they direct all the more thanks to their redeemer, seeing in the others the punishments that they themselves could have suffered, if they had been abandoned. The sight of the punishment of the impious does not obscure the light of such beatitude in the just ones, because it is by then impossible to have compassion for the damned; thus without a doubt such a sight cannot decrease their happiness. Why then should we marvel if while the blessed see the torments of the impious, this becomes for them an increment of joy, just as when in painting a background of black color is first placed so that the white or the red may be seen more clearly?...And although their joys suffice for them to enjoy fully, without a doubt they nonetheless always observe the punishments of the impious; because for those who see the light of their creator, in the creature there is nothing that they cannot see."⁴⁸

*XXXIII Against those who say that after death
there is no life of the soul.*

Cassian says: "there are many who though they are dead in the body yet bless God in the spirit, and praise him, according to this: 'Spirits and souls of the just, bless the Lord, and every spirit praise the Lord' [see Dan 3:86; Ps 150:6]. And in the Apocalypse, the souls of those who are slain are not only said to praise God but to address him also [Rev 6:9ff.]. In the Gospel itself the Lord says with still greater clarity to the Sadducees: 'And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God, "I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?" He is God not of the dead, but of the living' [Matt 22:31]. About this the apostle says: 'Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them' [Heb 11:16]."⁴⁹ The blessed Augustine and the other doctors have also affirmed it in many passages and in numerous works. I want briefly to recall an example of the aforesaid Augustine, which strengthens the reasoning. He reports that it is attested that "in Carthage" there was a brother, a certain Gennadius, a physician "very well known and very dear to him," "very generous," who outdid himself with untiring mercy and well-disposed mind "in the care of the poor." This Gennadius, however, "doubted...as to whether there was any life after death. For as much, therefore, as God would in no wise abandon a

man so merciful in his disposition and conduct, there appeared to him in sleep a youth of remarkable appearance and good looking, who said to him: 'Follow me.' Following him, he came to a city where he began to hear, on the right hand, sounds of a melody so exquisitely sweet as to surpass anything he had ever heard. When he inquired what it was, the youth said: 'It is the hymns of the blessed and the holy.' I do not remember well what he himself reported to have seen on the left hand. He awoke; the dream vanished, and he thought of it as only a dream. The following night, however, the same youth appeared to Gennadius for the second time and asked whether he recognized him, to which he replied that he knew him well. Thereupon he asked him where he had become acquainted with him. There also his memory failed him not as to the proper reply: he narrated the whole vision, and the hymns of the saints that, under his guidance, he had been taken to hear, with all the readiness natural to recollection of some very recent experience. On this the youth inquired whether it was in sleep or when awake that he had seen what he had just narrated. He answered: 'In sleep.' The youth then said: 'You remember it well; it is true that you saw these things in sleep, but I would have you know that even now you are seeing in sleep.' Hearing this, he trusted, and in his reply declared that he believed it. Then he who taught the man added and said: 'Where now is your body?' He answered: 'In my bedroom, in bed.' 'Do you know,' said the youth, 'that your eyes in this body of yours are now bound and closed, and at rest, and that with these eyes you are seeing nothing?' He answered: 'I know it.' 'What, then,' said the youth, 'are the eyes with which you see me?' He, unable to discover what to answer to this, was silent. While he hesitated, the youth disclosed to him what he was endeavoring to teach him by these questions, and forthwith said: 'As while you are asleep and lying on your bed these eyes of your body are now unemployed and doing nothing, and yet you have eyes with which you behold me, and enjoy this vision, likewise when you will be dead, while your bodily eyes shall be wholly inactive, there shall be in you a life by which you shall still live, and a faculty of perception by which you shall still perceive. Beware, therefore, after this of having doubts on the persistence of human life after death.' This truthful man says that all doubts as to this matter were thus removed from him."⁵⁰

XXXVIII Against those for whom it seems too little that the soul after the death of the flesh, in a certain bodily resemblance, sees delightful things or feels sad things, and that the delightful or sad things seen there are more evident than the ones that can be seen here by the soul in a dream.

"Once the souls have left their bodies, those realities by which the souls are afflicted in good or in evil are not considered to be bodily but are similar to the bodily, since souls appear to themselves under forms similar to their bodies; nevertheless those realities are real and real is the joy or the pain produced by a spiritual substance. Also in dreams, in fact, there is a big difference between dreams of delightful things or of sad things. That is why in reality some are sad waking up from dreams in which they had enjoyed some goods that they had desired, while in other occasions, waking up from dreams in which they had been troubled and oppressed by serious terrors and torments, they were afraid to go to sleep to not renew the same bad dreams. Now of course it must not be doubted that those that are called punishments of hell are more intense and for this reason they are perceived with more intense pain. In fact, those people who have been removed from the senses of the body have subsequently said to have found themselves in stronger experience than that of a dream, although, naturally, it was less intense than how it would have been if they had been totally dead."⁵¹

XXXV What reward the souls of the dead are believed to have before the final time of the resurrection.

The souls of the blessed, as soon as they depart from the abode of this body, and until they reach the time of the final resurrection, benefit only from the joy of the spirit, as John attests concerning the souls of those killed for the cause of the Word of God, saying: "They were each given a white robe" [Rev 6:11]. Thus the first vestment that the soul receives after the death of the flesh is one of rest and joy; the second vestment will be that for which, once reunited with the body, it will exult for the immortality of the soul and the body.⁵²

XXXVI After the abandonment of this body, God is immediately seen by the holy souls.

The blessed Cyprian, illustrious doctor and extraordinary martyr, writing to Fortunate on the exhortation to martyrdom, among other things, says: "What dignity it is, and what security, to go gladly from hence, to depart gloriously between afflictions and tribulations; in a moment to close the eyes with which human beings and the world are looked upon, and at once to open them to look upon God and Christ! Of such a blessed departure how great is the swiftness! You will be suddenly taken away from earth, to be placed in the heavenly kingdom. It behooves us to embrace these things in our mind and consideration, to meditate on these things day and night."⁵³ Instructed by the exhortation of such a great doctor we must be certain that, after death, we shall not be at all deprived of the vision of God, but we shall enjoy it with gladness if we will have lived operating according to his approval.

XXXVII Even the souls of the saints already reign with Christ in heaven.⁵⁴

St. Augustine, eager to teach with absolute certainty that not only the souls of the martyrs, but also those of the faithful chosen ones, reign now already with Christ in heaven, proposes the proof of the Apocalypse of John, in which it is read that the souls of those who had been slain for their witness to Jesus and for the Word of God—that is, those souls of the martyrs who have not yet been reunited with their bodies—reign "with Christ for a thousand years" [Rev 20:4]. But the same doctor, in order to avoid advancing the conviction that only the souls of the martyrs and not those of other faithful reign with Christ, adds: "The souls of the faithful departed, therefore, are not separated from the church, which is even now the kingdom of Christ; otherwise they would not be remembered at the altar of God in communion with the body of Christ. Nor would it be of any help for them to resort to baptism in danger in order to avoid departing this life without it; nor would it benefit them to resort to reconciliation, if by chance someone is separated by that body for a penitence or for a bad conscience. Why are these things done, if not because the faithful, also deceased, are his members? Though not with their bodies yet,

their souls nevertheless already reign with him." Now, even daily, they desire that this beatitude be doubled, which they will then receive, and their desires are almost made words of supplication with which they beg God, that they may receive the resurrection of their deceased bodies. Great, in truth, is their cry and great their desire. In fact, everyone, the less he invokes it, the less he desires it, and he turns instead with a greater voice to the ears of God, all the more he expands himself fully in the desire of him. If in fact their cry did not express desire, the prophet would not have said: "your ear heard the desires of their hearts" [see Ps 9:38].⁵⁵ To these holy souls the white vestments have already been individually delivered, meaning that same heavenly beatitude in which they now exult, full of joy. To these it was said: "Rest a little longer, until the number both of their fellow servants and of their brothers and sisters will be complete" [Rev 6:11]. To say therefore to the souls that desire it, "wait a little longer," means for them to aspire to the Lord, with the relief of consolation, in the ardor of the holy desire of his very presence. Nevertheless, the kingdom of their souls, as we have already said, from now on is with him, "while these thousand years pass by. For this reason in the same book, and even elsewhere, it is read: 'Blessed are the dead who from now on die in the Lord. Yes, says the Spirit, they will rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them' [Rev 14:13]. Therefore the church now reigns first of all with Christ in the living and in the dead. 'For to this end,' as the apostle says, 'Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living' [Rom 14:9]. He has mentioned therefore the souls of the martyrs only, because they, who actually fought for the truth till death, reign in a special way. Nevertheless, taking the part for the whole, we understand that all the other deceased also belong to the church, which is the kingdom of Christ."⁵⁶

[END OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE SECOND BOOK]

BEGINNING OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE THIRD BOOK, ON THE FINAL RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

- I No human being will know the time and the day of the judgment.
- II Whether it can be believed that there is a particular place where judgment will be made by God.
- III No one will know for how many days such future judgment will endure.
- IIII On the terror of the coming of Christ. He will come for judgment and will pass judgment in the same way he was judged.
- V Christ will come to judge, preceded by his cross, and the same cross will be carried on the shoulders of angels, while Christ will come down from heaven.
- VI The terror and the horror from the vision of the devil, when he will be taken to be led to judgment.
- VII Christ, coming for the judgment, will show himself to be gentle with the just and terrible with the unjust.
- VIII The just and the unjust will see with the eyes of the body the Christ, who, in the flesh, is coming to judge.
- VIIII Why it is to be believed that not the Father but only the Son will come to pass judgment.
- X The question of "when" Christ will come down from heaven to judge the living and the dead is not a concern of this life.
- XI The judges' seats.
- XII Those who will sit with the Lord to judge.

- XIII It is not to be believed that only the twelve apostles will sit on the above-mentioned twelve seats, but the whole number of perfect ones who will be subdivided by Christ into numbers of twelve.
- XIIII The final resurrection of the human body.
- XV When the seventh angel sounds the trumpet, the resurrection of the dead will occur in a wink.
- XVI The resurrection concerns all human beings, while the transformation concerns only the saints.
- XVII It is not an ethereal body that rises, but the flesh that we bear, without any corruption.
- XVIII How we believe that we will then have spiritual bodies, when our future bodies are truly admitted not as spirits but as bodies.
- XVIII The property of the bodies that will be in the resurrection.
- XX In what age or stature will be those who rise, whether elderly, young, or children.
- XXI Whether the statures and the shapes of the bodies that rise again will be identical or different, and if in the resurrection the thin ones will preserve the same thinness and the fat ones the same fatness.
- XXII The bodies of the saints will rise again without any deformity.
- XXIII Concerning the bodies of the reprobates, it is superfluous to investigate in what size of the body or in what age they will be risen.
- XXIIII Men and women rise again in their own sex.
- XXV No trouble of food or drinks worries those who rise again.
- XXVI Our nature does not need bodily garments.
- XXVII About the aborted fetuses, and why one ought to consider that from the moment a human being begins to live in the mother's womb, then he or she is related to the final resurrection.

- XXVIII How it is believed that those who are born with a greater or less number of limbs, or those who are born with two heads and one body or with two bodies and one head or other kinds of monstrosity, will be raised.
- XXVIII Those who are devoured here by beasts, or are mutilated from various lacerations, will obtain the integrity of their body in the resurrection.
- XXX Those who have departed this life as cripples will be resurrected with all their limbs.
- XXXI Whether it is believable that in the resurrection all that had been taken from the fingernails and from our hairs, by cutting or dissection, will be restored.
- XXXII How those who have not been separated from the masses in perdition will be raised.
- XXXIII The order of the future judgment.
- XXXIII The separation of the good and the evil.
- XXXV This separation of the good from the evil occurs through the angelic ministry.
- XXXVI Once the good have been separated on the right side and the evil on the left, the books are opened, that is, the consciences of the individuals.
- XXXVII The just will not be afraid to listen to the punishment.
- XXXVIII The ruinous fall of the devil and the perdition of the impious.
- XXXVIII What is that book about which the apostle John says: all those who shall not be found written then in the book of life shall be sent into the pool of fire.
- XXXX The bodies of the impious shall remain in the fire, without being consumed.
- XXXXI How this future fire will burn the demons.
- XXXXII The variety of punishments in proportion to the diversity of fault.
- XXXXIII Against those who seek in the most meticulous way what this future fire is and in what part of the world it can be found.

- XXXXXIII The reward of the chosen follows after the damnation of the impious.
- XXXXV Once the judgment has been completed, the servant aspect with which Christ exercised judgment will pass away, and then Christ will deliver the kingdom to God and Father.
- XXXXVI The conflagration of fire by which, it is said, this world will perish.
- XXXXVII Once the judgment has been completed, the new heaven and the new earth will begin to exist.
- XXXXVIII Not all who rise again will be in the new heaven and new earth, but only the saints.
- XXXXVIII Against those who say that if after judgment has been passed the conflagration of the world will take place, where then can the saints be so as not to be reached by the flame of fire?
- L The reward and the kingdom of the saints when Christ, after having girded himself, upon passing will serve his own.
- LI Then the wicked will not know what happens in the joy of the blessed, while the good will know what happens in the punishment of the miserable.
- LII Then we can be led to and live in heaven with this body in which we now live.
- LIII Whether we will then have more refined movements of the body, and whether they will be identical to those that we seem to have now.
- LIII Whether God then is seen through these bodily eyes, with which we there see the sun and the moon.
- LV Then we will see God with that vision with which the angels now see him.
- LVI In the life in which they cannot sin, all the saints will exercise free will more steadily than in this life.
- LVII Then we will have forgetfulness and memory in an equal way.

- LVIII The variety of the merits and rewards in which, nevertheless, no one will envy anyone.
- LVIII The saints will praise God tirelessly.
- LX We will see God without end and he is the fulfillment of our desires.
- LXI Then God himself will be our reward, and our virtuous desires will be satisfied in a marvelous way.
- LXII The end without end in which we will praise God infinitely.

[END OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE THIRD BOOK]

BEGINNING OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE THIRD BOOK,
ON THE FINAL RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

*I No human being will know the time
and the day of the judgment.*

The Lord wanted the time or the day of judgment to be unknown to us. We read, in fact, that to the disciples who questioned him about the last day, asking him: "what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" [Matt 24:3; Mark 13:4], the Lord himself answered: "But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father" [Mark 13:32; see Matt 24:36]. Although he claims not to know the same thing, it cannot be judged that the Son himself knew not, but that, although knowing it, he did not want to say so to the others. "In fact, when the same Lord through the prophet says: 'For the day of vengeance was in my heart' [Isa 63:4], he thus indicates that he knows it, but that he does not intend to reveal it to all."¹

*II Whether it can be believed that there is a particular place
where judgment will be made by God.*

I do not easily remember what I have read about it in some codes: from the prophet Joel we have learned that in the time of judgment all the peoples will be judged by the Lord in the valley of *Jehoshaphat*. So, in fact, the same holy prophet says: "For then, in those days and at that time, when I will have restored the prisoners of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat, and I will enter into judgment with them there" [Joel 3:1]. But let us listen to how Jerome interprets these words, so that the reader may better know from his words this place of Jehoshaphat where it is said that judgment will be passed, whether it is to be understood literally or figuratively. In fact the same blessed Jerome says: "[the term] *Jehoshaphat* is to be understood as judgment of the Lord."² This is, therefore, what he says: "When I will have compassion on them, that is, on those who will be recognized by the confession of my name, then I will conduct all of my enemies into the valley of Jehoshaphat, that is, in the valley of judgment." Moreover, "all the peoples" either designates all the incredulous nations, or indi-

cates all the demons, because this is how the doctor himself continues in the same treatise: "These people, that is, those whom he calls incredulous nations, or demons, will not be judged on the mountains, nor in the plains, but in the depths of the underground, such that the very place of judgment will also be immediately for punishment."³

*III No one will know for how many days
such future judgment will endure.*

"That Christ will come from heaven to judge the living and the dead is maintained by the whole church of God in the confession and profession [of faith]," as the blessed Augustine says, "we call it the final day of judgment, that is to say, the last time. In truth, it is uncertain for how many days the future judgment will endure."⁴

*III On the terror of the coming of Christ.
He will come for judgment and will pass judgment
in the same way he was judged.*

When the world will have come to its end, Christ, the Son of God, will come for judgment with all the saints in the same bodily aspect with which he ascended to heaven. Because of him, in fact, who comes from heaven for the judgment, according to what he himself said in the Gospel: "the powers of heaven will be shaken. Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see 'the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven' with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" [Matt 24:29-31]. Also the apostle Paul so speaks about the coming of his judgment: "For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven" [1 Thess 4:16], [while] the psalmist proclaims: "before him is a devouring fire, and a mighty tempest all around him" [Ps 50:3]: because the same who once came incognito to be judged will then come visibly to judge everybody.⁵ Having thus reunited all of his saints, he will come from heaven, according to what Isaiah affirms: "The Lord enters into judgment with the elders and princes of his people" [Isa 3:14]. Therefore, he will certainly come dreadful and

striking much fear in the day of his judgment, when, with the angels and the archangels,⁶ the thrones and the dominations and the other virtues, with the skies and the earth inflamed, all the elements moved in terror to obey him, he will be seen in the glory of majesty.

*V Christ will come to judge, preceded by his cross,
and the same cross will be carried on the shoulders of angels,
while Christ will come down from heaven.*

John Chrysostom,⁷ in specifically examining and analyzing this problem, thus affirms: "We see in what way Christ will come with his cross: it is necessary in fact to expound upon this fact. He says: 'if they say, Christ is in the inner rooms, do not believe it. He is in the desert, do not go out there' [Matt 24:26], speaking about the second manifestation of his glory due to the false messiahs and the false prophets, due to the Antichrist, so that someone, prevented by error, does not run into a false Christ. Since the Antichrist will precede the coming of Christ the Savior, for this reason it is necessary to attentively prevent someone who is looking for the shepherd from running into the wolf. Therefore, I tell you this in advance, so that from this you may distinguish the coming of the true shepherd. He gave this sign: this in reality was his will, that his first coming be verified in a hidden way and that he looked for what was lost; yet the second coming will not happen like this, as he simply said: 'Just as lightning comes from the east and is seen as far as the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be' [Matt 24:27]. He will suddenly appear to everyone, and he will not be missed by the one who asks if the Christ be here or there. This way, in fact, just as when the lightning flashes we need not ask ourselves if there has been lightning, likewise when the revelation of his presence shines we will not be impelled to ask if the Christ has come. But since we wonder whether he will come with the cross (I have not forgotten in fact the promise to treat this theme), listen therefore to what follows. He said, 'when he will come, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light' [Matt 24:29]. The eminence of the splendor of Christ will be so great that even the brightest lights of the sky will be dimmed before the brightness of the divine light. Then 'the stars will fall...when the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven.' Have you considered how great is the force of the sign, that is, of the cross? 'The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light'

[Matt 24:29-30]. Instead, the cross will shine and, the heavenly bodies having dimmed and the stars fallen, it alone will radiate light, so that you learn that the cross is brighter than the moon and the sun, whose splendor it will overcome, illuminated by the divine brightness. And as the army precedes the king who enters the city, raising the royal insignias and banners, and announces the entrance of the king by rattling their weapons, so also will the army of angels and archangels precede the descent of the Lord from the heavens; and carrying on their noble shoulders that triumphant banner, they will announce to the astounded lands the divine entrance of the King of heaven" [Matt 24:30].⁸ Similarly, the same doctor, after other things, continues: "But the reason why the cross will appear and why the Lord will come preceded by its manifestation is evident: so that those people who have crucified the Lord of majesty may learn the intention of their iniquity. In fact, by this sign the shameless impiety of the Jews is blamed. And since for this reason he will come with the cross, listen to him as he declares in the Gospel: 'and all the tribes of the earth will mourn' [Matt 24:30] seeing the same cross as their accuser and, while it accuses them, they will be aware, but too late, of their sin, and in vain they will recognize their cruel blindness. Why do you marvel, therefore, if he comes bearing the cross, given that he will then also show his wounds? 'They will look,' it is said, 'upon him whom they have pierced' [John 19:37; see Zech 12:10]."

*VI The terror and the horror from the vision of the devil, when
he will be taken to be led to judgment.*

"When the devil will be brought away to be condemned, many of the chosen, who will already be found with the body when the Lord will come for the judgment, will shake from fear seeing that the impious one is punished with such a serious sentence. For this terror they will be purified, since if in them anything of sin still remains from the body, they will be purified by the same terror with which they see the devil condemned. What Job says derives from this: 'When he will rise, the angels will be afraid, and, petrified, they will be purified' [Job 41:17],⁹ thus intending like angels also each of the saints and the chosen."

VII Christ, coming for the judgment, will show himself to be gentle with the just and terrible with the unjust.

When the Redeemer of humankind appears, he will be gentle with the just and terrible with the unjust. In fact, he whom the chosen will trustingly see as gentle will be seen by the ungodly as dreadful and terrible. Yet, for this reason, the chosen will not see him as terrible, because they do not cease even now to consider the fear of him. And therefore the ungodly will look at him as terrible because even now they hold in so little account the fear of him in the last judgment and, what is still worse, they lie, as it were, without fear, in their vices.¹⁰

VIII The just and the unjust will see with the eyes of the body the Christ, who, in the flesh, is coming to judge.

When Christ, the Son of God, comes to pass judgment, all the just and unjust will see his humanity in the same way. The unjust, nevertheless, will not see his divinity since only the just were promised to see it. That the unjust would not see his divinity then was attested to by Isaiah, who says: "the ungodly is carried away so that he does not see the majesty of the Lord" [Isa 26:10]. From this it clearly follows that "anyway the ungodly will then see the humanity of Christ, in which he was judged, so that they grieve about it; certainly they will not see his divinity, so that they may not have joy from it. In fact, those to whom the divinity is shown are certainly shown so that they may have joy from it."¹¹

VIII Why it is to be believed that not the Father but only the Son will come to pass judgment.

About this theme the blessed Augustine says: "The Father will not come to judge the living and the dead, nor however will the Father be separated from his Son. In what sense will he not come? For it is not he that will appear in the judgment. 'They shall look on him whom they have pierced' [John 19:37]. He will appear in that same human form in which he appeared when he was submitted to the judgment: what was judged will judge. It was judged unjustly, but it will judge rightly."¹² "Since therefore in the books of the prophets one reads that God will come to pass judgment, even though there is no

distinction indicated about him, on the basis of the judgment only the Christ is to be understood; since even if the Father will judge, he will judge through the coming of the Son of Man. In fact, he 'will not judge anyone' with the manifestation of his presence, 'but he has given all judgment to the Son' [John 5:22]; since he who will manifest himself as man to judge was judged as man."¹³

X The question of "when" Christ will come down from heaven to judge the living and the dead is not a concern of this life.

We believe, consequently, that it does not concern this present life "when" Christ the judge, coming down from the skies, will appear plainly to all. In fact, according to the well-founded doctrine of the blessed Augustine, "what we confess as the future event regarding Christ, that is, that he will come from heaven to judge the living and the dead, does not concern our life that we live here, since it does not concern the things that he has done, but the realities that are to be done at the end of the world. Regarding this the apostle, continuing, added: 'When Christ your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory' [Col 3:4]."¹⁴ When, therefore, he comes, he will judge the living and the dead, because both the just, still living, and the deceased, rightly called the dead, will anyway be judged by him: "or rather we intend as living those who here have not yet died, and whom his coming will find still living in this flesh; and as dead those who, before his coming, have departed from the body or are on the verge of departing from it."¹⁵

XI The judges' seats.

We call "seats" what the Greeks call "thrones";¹⁶ the Greeks, in fact, call seats "thrones." The saints, then, for as much as they themselves are seats of God, according to what is written: "the soul of the just is seat of wisdom" [see Wis 7],¹⁷ will nevertheless have some seats upon which they will sit with Christ the judge, according to what the same truth says: "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man is seated on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" [Matt 19:28].¹⁸

XII Those who will sit with the Lord to judge.

It is clearer than day that all the saints who have departed the world in a perfect way will judge the others, sitting with the Lord. Therefore, what is read in the divine writings will then be fulfilled: "The man of God is known in the city gates, taking his seat among the elders of the land" [Prov 31:23].¹⁹

XIII It is not to be believed that only the twelve apostles will sit on the above-mentioned twelve seats, but the whole number of perfect ones who will be subdivided by Christ into numbers of twelve.

Concerning this, St. Augustine thus says in his treatises: "in fact since the Lord has said that his disciples will sit on twelve thrones, we ought not to suppose that only twelve men will judge together with him. For with the number twelve is meant, in a certain sense, the multitude of all those who will judge, since the two parts of the number seven indicate the totality of a whole; these two parts, meaning three and four, multiplied one with another, result in twelve, three times four, in fact, and four times three makes twelve. Another meaning can be found in the number twelve, which is toward this end. Otherwise, since we read that the apostle Matthias was selected [see Acts 1:26] in place of Judas the traitor, the apostle Paul [see 1 Cor 15:10], who worked more than all the others, would not have a place to sit in judgment; and yet he clearly demonstrates that he belongs to the number of the judges, together with the other saints, when he says: 'Do you not know that we are to judge angels?' [1 Cor 6:3]. The same observation regarding the number twelve is to be made with respect to those who are to be judged. It was said: 'judging the twelve tribes of Israel' [Matt 19:28], but not for this will the tribe of Levi, which is the thirteenth, not be judged by them; that is, they will judge only that people and not also the other peoples. Since then it was said: 'at the renewal of all things' [Matt 19:28], without a doubt it was understood to mean the resurrection of the dead. So then our flesh will be regenerated through incorruptibility, as our soul has been regenerated through faith."²⁰

XIII The final resurrection of the human body.

"Anyone who is really a Christian must in no way doubt that the flesh of all mankind, of those who have been born and will be born, and of those who have died and will die, will rise again, since the Lord says: 'In truth, in truth I tell you: the moment has come, and it is this, in which the dead who are in their graves will hear his voice and will come out—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation' [see John 5:25–28, 29]."²¹

XV When the seventh angel sounds the trumpet, the resurrection of the dead will occur in a wink.

The blessed Jerome, commenting in his letter to Minervius²² on the opinions of some who had disputed about the resurrection, thus affirms: "We are addressing why the apostle has written [1 Cor 15:52; see 1 Thess 4:15] that the dead will rise to *the last trumpet*. If, in fact, it is said that it is the last, this certainly means that others have preceded it. In the Apocalypse of John [see Rev 8–11] seven angels are described with trumpets, and when each of them plays, or rather the first one, the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth, and the sixth, it becomes apparent what each has done. At the sound of the last, that is, of the seventh, who will play the trumpet with a ringing sound, the dead will resuscitate, taking back as incorruptible the bodies that they had before as corruptible." Concerning what the apostle affirms about the resurrection of the dead, that is, that all the dead will rise in a wink to the sound of the last trumpet, the previously mentioned doctor says: "The resurrection of the dead will happen with so much speed that the living, whom the time of the consummation will find in their bodies, will not succeed in preceding the dead, who will rise from the underworld. In fact, when he says: the universal resurrection will happen in an instant, in the wink of an eye and in a moment, he excludes all the foolishness about a first and a second resurrection, as if one should believe that some will be the first to be raised and others last." Therefore he subsequently says: "We are to understand this in the same way that we understand that a light feather, a piece of straw, or a thin and dried leaf are lifted aloft by a gust of wind and a puff and are brought high from the earth; likewise, by a glance or a movement of God the bodies of the dead will move, ready at the arrival of the judge."

XVI The resurrection concerns all human beings, while the transformation concerns only the saints.

Here, the apostle says: "For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be transformed" [1 Cor 15:52]. But just because there is a general resurrection of all the good and bad, it is not to be believed that there is a common transformation for all the just. In fact, according to what has been attested to by the blessed Augustine,²³ Jerome,²⁴ Julian Pomerius²⁵ and others, the resurrection will be the same for all the good and the evil; yet the transformation will be granted only to the just, which certainly involves the glorification of eternal beatitude.

XVII It is not an ethereal body that rises, but the flesh that we bear, without any corruption.

In no way are we to listen to those who make up stories about not knowing which kind of body will rise ethereal rather than of flesh. Instead, according to the truth of sacred history, everyone will rise in this body in which they live. In fact, not to mention the others, I briefly reproduce here the words of our excellent preceptor Eugene, bishop of the see of Toledo: "We profess," he says, "in all truth the resurrection of the flesh, and not, as those who rave, that we will rise in an ethereal or some other flesh, but in this one in which we are and we live, in which also each will deserve to receive either the crown for right behavior or the punishment for wicked actions."²⁶

XVIII How we believe that we will then have spiritual bodies, when our future bodies are truly admitted not as spirits but as bodies.

"The bodies of the saints will rise again without any defect, without any deformity, as well as without corruption, weariness, deficiency. In them there will be as much readiness as happiness. By the fact that they are called spiritual, without any doubt, however, the future bodies will not be spirit. But just as the body is called now animal, though the body is certainly not soul, so then the body will be spiritual, and nevertheless the body will not be spirit."²⁷

XVIII The property of the bodies that will be in the resurrection.

As Julian Pomerius affirms: "The condition of their bodies that the condemned or the blessed will receive will be equally incorruptible and immortal; but the places and the merits they themselves will receive will be incomparably different and separate from one to the other. Thus the apostle affirms: 'We will all certainly rise again, but we will not all be transformed' [1 Cor 15:51].²⁸ What is meant by 'we will all rise again' is that there will be only one resurrection of all mankind, such that all the bodies of mankind, granted only one incorruptibility and immortality, can be eternally either in punishment or in reward. Therefore, it is to be believed that they will all rise together; but the impious will be sent to torture, the sinners to final judgment, while the saints are sent to the reward. The bodies of the condemned, however, will not be so immortal and incorruptible as if, unable to be corrupted or die, they could not feel any sensation of pain; but, since they have been situated in the eternal torments, the great pain neither weakens as it torments, nor destroys them; and for this reason the immortal flesh lives together with its condemned soul, in such a way as to feel; and it feels, to suffer, and undergoes pain, because it receives the things worthy of its merits."²⁹

XX In what age or stature will be those who rise, whether elderly, young, or children.

The most blessed Augustine, wanting to answer all those who obstinately and in various ways debated this problem, says: "If we were to say that even the taller bodies are to be reduced to the size of the body of the Lord, a large part of the body of such would be lost, while he himself promised that not even a hair would be lost. It remains, therefore, that everyone will get back their own bodily measure that they had in youth, even if they had died old, or the one they would have had, if they had died earlier. And furthermore, with respect to what the apostle recalls about 'the measure that suits the full maturity of Christ' [Eph 4:13],³⁰ we can interpret what was said in that the bodies of the dead will rise again in a form that is neither inferior nor superior to that of their juvenile aspect, but in the age and strength that we know that Christ had reached in this life (in fact, even the most learned of our time have determined that indeed youth occurs until around thirty years, which when it is limited by its own duration,

beginning from that moment one declines from the strain of increased and senile age). Therefore we interpret that what the apostle said is not to be understood as the dimension of the body or the measure of stature but 'in the measure that suits the full maturity of Christ'³¹ [Eph 4:13]. All therefore will rise again in the body as large as they were, or as they would have been, in juvenile age; therefore there will be no difficulty even if the form of the body is infantile or aged, in a condition in which no deficiency of the body nor of the mind will remain."³² "For which," the aforesaid doctor subsequently adds, "if anyone claims that each will rise again in that bodily form in which they died, it is not necessary to oppose them with a laborious reply."³³ I will not overlook what Julian Pomerius also said concerning the subject: "Reasonably," he said, "about the age I do not believe that there is any problem, because whether babies are deprived of life in the maternal womb, or when they are already born, it is believed that they will rise again in that form that they would have reached if they had lived, advancing in years; since if the resurrection restores nature, nothing can come short of the perfection of nature."³⁴ This, the aforesaid doctor adds, also happens for those who die in advanced age, and he says: "Also he who will die in advanced or even decrepit age, will rise again in the age in which he was young, since every weakness of old age is eliminated by then. Or, if it corresponds more to that blessed time in which all the saints, without any defect to their beatitude, will be destined to live, if a diversity of ages may exist there, it will be such as not to imply any impediment or dishonour to those who reign without end."³⁵ And similarly he adds: "What we have said about age, the same can be understood about stature."³⁶

XXI Whether the statures and the shapes of the bodies that rise again will be identical or different, and if in the resurrection the thin ones will preserve the same thinness and the fat ones the same fatness.

Concerning the stature with which in general the bodies will rise again, the most blessed Augustine, in a clear dissertation declaring his opinion, affirms: "It is not logical that the risen individuals have a different stature because they had different ones while alive, or that the thin ones will be resurrected with the same thinness and the fat ones with the same fatness. But if it is in the plan of the Creator that in

everyone's aspect a characteristic identity and a recognizable similarity are preserved, and that, on the contrary, to the other elements of body an equal wholeness is restored, then the material constitution of everyone will be modified in such a way that nothing perishes, and every lacking thing is compensated by him who could create what he wanted even from nothing. If then in the risen bodies there will be reasonable diversity, such as happens to the voices with which a song is performed, this will concern in everyone the physical structure of their body so as to assign the body to the angelic hosts, without provoking any disadvantage to their sensitivity."³⁷

XXII The bodies of the saints will rise again without any deformity.

"The bodies of all the saints will rise again," overflowing with every happiness and glory of immortality, and as they will be "without any corruption, lack, weariness, so they will be also without any deformity; in whose bodies," as St. Augustine affirms, "there will be as much swiftness as happiness."³⁸ The same doctor teaches that the "scars" may be visible in the bodies of the martyrs, but he believes that this will happen without showing any deformity. "In those bodies, in fact," as the same eminent doctor affirms, "there will be no deformity but beauty and in the body a great splendor will shine, even if not of the body but of the virtue."³⁹

XXIII Concerning the bodies of the reprobates, it is superfluous to investigate in what size of the body or in what age they will be risen.

It is totally useless investigating whether the ungodly will be of identical or different stature, since in those who will remain forever distant from the blessed light and from the beauty of the eternal house, stature is not sought, which usually turns to honor, according to what a certain wise man says: "The beauty of bodies is uselessly sought where there will be screeching of teeth, eternal and incessant weeping" [Matt 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30].⁴⁰

XXIII *Men and women rise again in their own sex.*

Most believe, by the fact that the apostle affirms: "Until all of us come unto him, to the measure of perfect man" [Eph 4:13],⁴¹ that all women will rise again as masculine, since man was made from mud, while woman was made from the side of man [Gen 2:21; 3:19].⁴² We, however, informed by the teaching of the Catholic masters, believe and consider this, that the Almighty God, who created, founded, and sought to redeem both the one and the other sex, will also reinstate them in the resurrection. Christ the Lord, in fact, tempted by the woman who had lost seven husbands and who asked him to which of her husbands she would have been given back when she herself was dead, answered: "in the resurrection, neither do the women bring husbands, nor the men wives" [see Matt 22:28-30; Luke 20:33-35].⁴³ From these most holy words it appears clearly evident that gender will not be extinguished there but only the marriage relation, nor will the nature of the flesh have to change, but its concupiscence shall have been extinguished. In fact, the blessed Augustine, facing this problem in his treatises, affirms: "It seems to me that those reason better who do not doubt at all that both genders will rise again. For there will be no sensual passion, which is the cause of disorder. In fact, before they sinned, man and woman were naked, and they were not disturbed. Therefore, the imperfections will be subtracted from those bodies, while the nature will be preserved. In fact, the female sex is not a sin, but is precisely nature, which will then be without a doubt free from carnal intercourse and from childbirth."⁴⁴ Having assimilated these reasons from the aforesaid doctor, it will happen as our holy preceptor Eugene teaches: "As great and such is the beauty of the glorified body that, though delighting the sight, nevertheless the heart in no way induces to vice."⁴⁵

XXV *No trouble of food or drinks worries those who rise again.*

As long as our nature, being corruptible, is subjected to this body, it suffers the need for food and drinks that are given as a sort of medicine for extinguishing the weakness due to corruption and mortality. But once the resurrection of the body has occurred, there will no longer be any need to consume food or drinks, necessity that in this life is attributed to corruption. Indeed, the life that will come after this one will enjoy incorruptibility and immortality. And, in fact,

in conformity to what Julian Pomerius affirms: "Having depleted every corruption and mortality, there will be no infirmity of the flesh but nature. Here, then, where flesh can die, it needs to be nourished with food and drinks so as not to succumb to death; in the other life, however, where it cannot die, the need for nourishment will not be felt, because hunger or thirst cannot destroy what is immortal."⁴⁶ If one objects to the contrary, saying that it is narrated that the Lord after the resurrection had eaten with his disciples [Luke 24:41-43; John 21:13], and from this his example believes that the risen ones will also eat, the same doctor answers: "Our Lord certainly ate, yet not out of necessity, but out of will; surely not to provide for the weakness of his flesh, but to show those who doubted that he was risen in a true flesh. In fact, if he had been a spirit, as it was then supposed, he would not have been able to consume any carnal food; and so he ate, both to confirm their faith that was starting to waver, and also to show them that he lacked not the possibility but the necessity of eating."⁴⁷

XXVI *Our nature does not need bodily garments.*

I do not doubt that from the thought of many doctors it has been affirmed that in the glory of that final resurrection garments are not necessary to the bodies, because there will be no illness by which the incorruptible and immortal flesh can be killed, nor will there be any sin by which the soul may be forced to contaminate itself; thus our ancient fathers maintain that those who believe in these things, that is, those who affirm that the risen need clothes, do not believe in all the so-called future goods. And nevertheless, even if clothes happen to be there, as they allege as a reason, the incorruptible bodies will certainly use incorruptible clothes. Similarly Julian Pomerius says: "If our flesh is transformed not in kind, but in quality, and does not become spirit but spiritual, it will not need bodily things; then either there will be no clothes in the resurrection, or if there will be, it is to be believed that they will be totally incorruptible clothes for incorruptible bodies, and the saints will dress in such a way that no concern about themselves can endanger their future happiness; or perhaps the future garments will be of the kind in which the Prophet rejoices to be dressed again, in the image of the church, and he says: 'for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness' [Isa 61:10],"⁴⁸ the same doctor referring the term "garments of salvation" to the flesh, and the term "robe of

righteousness" rather to the soul. The same doctor thus continues: "If it is so and if it is granted that the risen ones will use garments, neither will they be identical, as it is read, to those that were of the Israelites, because even though for forty years they were preserved by divine will, they were nonetheless then consumed by natural old age; nor will they be identical to those in which Moses and Elias were seen on the mountain with the Lord, or the holy angels, whose clothes then dissolved into nothing from which they had temporarily originated; but perhaps they will be those in which the risen Lord appeared dressed; however, these were not temporarily assumed so that they could be seen by humans, but they were his own. If there will be garments in heaven, whatever or of whatever nature they may be, they will be spiritual for spiritual bodies; and so, although those spiritual [bodies] will not be nude, nevertheless, they will not need material garments."⁴⁹ This is what Julian Pomerius teaches. The evident definition of all the many other doctors, according to which the clear thought of our preceptor is invoked,⁵⁰ adds this: "Since in the glory of the future resurrection, where there will be no ugliness of the holy bodies nor any adversity of pain or fatigue, it will not be necessary to use garments for those for whom 'Christ is all and in all' [Col 3:11]."⁵¹

XXVII About the aborted fetuses, and why one ought to consider that from the moment a human being begins to live in the mother's womb, then he or she is related to the final resurrection.

If it can be known with certainty "when a human being begins to live in the mother's womb," it is to be believed in truth that from that moment he or she can also die, and so whoever has life can also die and can then be restored at the time of the resurrection. The blessed Augustine, in fact, not so much debating this matter but proposing it, among other things, thus affirms: "From the time that a human being begins to live, from that moment he or she can also die. I cannot imagine, in truth, that he who is dead, wherever he happened to finish the life, is not related to the resurrection of the dead."⁵² Julian Pomerius also says: "Certainly also those who are expelled by the uterus will be resuscitated as if they had lived, and they will not be judged, but punished; because, being damned according to the condemnation of Adam, they had not been freed from the severity of the

sentence. And nevertheless, whether the infants are deprived of life in the uterus or upon birth, it is believed that they will rise again with the age that, if they had lived, they would have reached during the course of the years; because if the resurrection restores the nature, nothing can be lacking in the perfection of nature."⁵³

XXVIII How it is believed that those who are born with a greater or less number of limbs, or those who are born with two heads and one body or with two bodies and one head or other kinds of monstrosity, will be raised.

Regarding this question, the blessed Augustine thus says: "Nor, in fact is it to be denied that deformed beings who are born and live, even if they die quickly, will be raised, nor is it to be believed that they will be raised in that condition rather than with a restored nature without defects. Far be it from me to maintain that the creature recently born in the East with a double set of limbs, as faithful brothers have reported to me after having seen him and about which the presbyter Jerome,⁵⁴ of blessed memory, has left a written account, far be it from me, I say, to think that he will be raised again a single double man, and not rather two, as it would have happened if twins had been born. So, in the resurrection all the single newborns, who, considered in themselves are defined as deformed because they have come to the light with something more or less or with some serious deformity, will be restored to the image of human nature; in this way the single souls will have their single bodies, but without everything together with which they had been born, and provided, each for themselves, with their own limbs, so as to guarantee the full integrity of the human body."⁵⁵ Also Julian Pomerius, following the affirmation of the aforesaid doctor, affirms: "This I seem to understand, and that is, that our flesh, whether it is born with a lesser or greater number of limbs, will rise again with the usual and coherent limbs for its integrity, because both in those that have less, and in those that have more, there is a defect that here appears without a doubt contrary to nature, but that, in the future renewal of our body, it is believed that it will be eliminated, along with the corruptibility and mortality; so that the nature of our flesh rises again integral in all of its parts, according to its perfect form, without any diminution or addition of limbs. Also the bodies, whether two are born with only one head, or

only one body with two heads, though for us, and especially for me, it is not clear how these things can happen, nevertheless, since I am certain, I affirm, without any ambiguity, that the two bodies will rise again with their respective heads if in them two souls were generated, since it cannot be denied that the individual soul will receive in an immortal way its own body which it had lost; or if only one soul is generated, whether it was generated in only one body with two heads, or in two bodies with only one head, it will receive only one body. And therefore the nature of our flesh, whether losing what is superfluous, or receiving what is lacking, reestablished in its fullness, without any corruption as well as without any illness, will be united to its spirit in an immortal way."⁵⁶

*XXVIII Those who are devoured here by beasts,
or are mutilated from various lacerations, will obtain
the integrity of their body in the resurrection.*

St. Augustine says: "The terrestrial matter from which the flesh of the mortals has been created does not perish in front of God; but in whatever dust or ash it is dissolved, in whatever exhalation or wind it becomes volatilized, into whatever substance of other bodies or other elements it is transformed, to whatever food of whatever animal, even of human beings, it is reduced and has been changed into flesh, it will return, in an instant, to that human soul that animated it from the beginning, such that it became a human being, grew and lived."⁵⁷ Blessed Gregory, making a similar proposal and discussing this matter in his treatises, affirms: "Some are often accustomed to objecting with this weak question: the wolf ate the flesh of a human being, the lion devoured the wolf; then, dying, the lion returned to dust; when that dust will be resuscitated, how can the human flesh be distinguished from that of the wolf or of the lion? To these what else can we answer if not that they must first reflect upon how they came into this world, and then they will discover in what nature they will rise again? Certainly you, O human who speaks, were once foam of blood in the womb of the mother; here you were a small and liquid agglomeration that originated from the seed of the father and from the blood of the mother. Do tell me, I beg you, if you know it, how did that humor of the seed harden into bones, how did the liquid stay in the marrows, how did it consolidate into nerves, how did it grow into flesh, how was

it stretched into skin, how was it distinguished into hairs and fingernails, such that the hairs are softer than the flesh and the fingernails more tender than the bones, but harder than the flesh? If, therefore, such and so many realities derive from only one seed and distinct in kind, and nevertheless they remain united in only one form, what is so odd if the almighty God, in the resurrection of the dead, will be able to distinguish the flesh of mankind from the flesh of beasts, so that that same and only dust will not rise again in that it is the dust of the wolf or of the lion, and nevertheless it will rise again in that it was the dust of mankind?"⁵⁸

*XXX Those who have departed this life as cripples
will be resurrected with all their limbs.*

If someone, invalid in the body, departs this life maimed or crippled, there is no doubt that they can be reinstated in the due integrity of the limbs at the moment of the resurrection; just as anything that illness deformed in them or the cruelty of others mutilated, so will the beauty of immortality transform it in order for it not to be seen here as deformed nor as things unnecessary, nor dishonorable, nor diminished. In this way, in fact, does the blessed Augustine say: "Thin or fat, they need not fear being here what they would not have wanted to be even in the world if they could have helped it. All the beauty of the body consists in the proportion of the parts, together with a certain softness of its color. Where, then, there is no proportion of the parts, something is not pleasant because it is deformed or because it is lacking or because it is exaggerated. Consequently, there will be no deformity, which is produced by the disproportion of the parts, there where the realities that are deformed will be amended, and what is less than appropriate will be brought to perfection by something that the Creator knows, and what is greater than appropriate will be eliminated, except for the integrity of the matter."⁵⁹ Therefore, instructed by the wise exposition of this doctor, we believe that also those whom we have seen with our own eyes as having six fingers on the hands or six toes on the feet, will not rise again with this deformity, once the integrity of the body is saved; they will be with the number of fingers that maintains the proportion of the bodily parts. I say the proportion of the bodily parts, just as it occurs in the natural order of being born, such that everyone has two eyes, two ears, five fingers on each hand,

and five toes on each foot, without adding or removing anything that brings deformity to the parts, so as to make us believe that nothing of the body can go lost. St. Augustine, in fact, says: "I did not say this because I believe that for any body a connatural part will be lost; but only what was born in a deformed way."⁶⁰

XXXI Whether it is believable that in the resurrection all that had been taken from the fingernails and from our hairs, by cutting or dissection, will be restored.

About this the most blessed Augustine says: "Therefore the same earthly material, which becomes a corpse when the soul departs, in the resurrection will not be restored as those things that dissolve and are transformed into so many other things and other kinds and forms, even though they return to the body from which they were separated, it is necessary that they also be rejoined with the parts of the body in which they were situated. After all, if to the hair of the head is restored what a frequent cut subtracted, if to the nails what so many times had been clipped away, this lack of form appears excessive and inconvenient to those who think and do not believe in the resurrection of the flesh."⁶¹ Therefore, as the same doctor says in another one of his works: "If the hair so many times shortened and the nails so many times clipped were to be restored to their places in a disorderly fashion, then they would not be restored; yet, nevertheless, they shall not be lost for those who will rise again; because, respecting the proportion of the parts, they shall be rejoined to the same flesh with the mutation of the matter so that here [that is, in the afterworld] any part of the body may be constituted in it. Though what the Lord says: 'But not a hair of your head will perish' [Luke 21:18], can be much more adequately understood as having been said not of the length but of the number of hairs; for in another place he says this: 'And even the hairs of your head are all counted' [Matt 10:30; see Luke 12:7]."⁶² The same doctor, using for this question a similitude, says: "What, then, should I answer about the hair and the nails? Once it is understood that nothing of the body will perish, such that in the body there is nothing irregular, it is at the same time understood that all the parts that would have produced an excessive irregular greatness shall be joined to the same whole, not in those zones in which the form of the limbs is disfigured. As if one makes a vessel with the clay that, reduced

again in clay, was reconstructed anew, it would not be necessary for that part of the clay that made up the handle to return to be handle, or for the part that had constituted the base to return to be the base, provided, nevertheless, that all of it return to all, that is, that all the clay, without any part of it being lost, returns to be the vessel."⁶³ This way, therefore, the same doctor affirms: "It does not concern the reinstatement of the body that hairs return to hairs and nails to nails, or if anything of them be perished, changed into flesh and other parts of the body, the providence of the maker taking care that there be nothing inappropriate."⁶⁴

XXXII How those who have not been separated from the masses in perdition will be raised.

The most blessed Augustine affirms: "All those who have not been freed from that mass of perdition caused by the sin of the first human being, by the action of the only mediator between God and mankind, they too will rise again, each with their own flesh, but to be punished together with the devil and his angels. What need is there to tire ourselves so much researching if they will rise again with the vices and the deformities of their bodies, they who acted in such a way as to fill their limbs with vices and deformities? Neither, certainly, should the search for their physical features or beauty tire us in that their damnation will be certain and eternal. Nor should it agitate us in what way they shall have an incorruptible body, if it can be subject to suffering, or how it shall be corruptible, if it shall not be subject to death. Life is not true life if it is not that in which one lives happily; nor true incorruptibility if not when physical health is not altered by any pain. When, instead, it does not allow the unhappy one to die, or, as it were, death itself does not die, and when the pain without end does not kill, but torments, and such corruption does not have an end, this is what the Sacred Scriptures calls second death."⁶⁵

XXXIII The order of the future judgment.

As we have said that there are some who shall sit with Christ as judges, so it is to be believed that there are others who shall be judged by the host of those who are seated. In fact, two differences or orders of humankind are gathered in the judgment, that is, those who are chosen and those who are reprobates, which, nevertheless, are

divided into four. One is the order of the perfect ones who judge together with the Lord, of whom Christ says: "you will also sit on twelve thrones" [Matt 19:28]. These are not judged and they reign. The other order, then, is that of the chosen, to whom it shall be said: "I was hungry and you gave me food" [Matt 25:35]. These are judged and they reign. In the same way there are two orders of reprobates; the one being those who were found outside of the church. These shall not be judged and are lost; about whom also the Psalmist says: "the wicked will not stand in the judgment" [Ps 1:5]. The other order of reprobates is also of those who shall be judged and are lost, to whom it shall be said: "I was hungry and you gave me no food" [Matt 25:42]. "Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire" [Matt 25:41].⁶⁶

XXXIII The separation of the good and the evil.

Here is what the Psalmist says: "He summons the heavens above and the earth to the judgment of his people" [Ps 50:4].⁶⁷ What is it that he says with "the judgment of his people" "if not, through a judgment, to separate the good from the evil, as the lambs from the goats?"⁶⁸ In fact, he shall then have the lambs placed on his right and the goats, instead, on his left.

XXXV This separation of the good from the evil occurs through the angelic ministry.

It is to be believed that the separation of the good from the evil, that is, the division, can be carried out through the angels. In fact, when the Psalmist says: "He summons the heavens above and the earth to the judgment of his people" [Ps 50:4], "the judgment of his people" refers to the separation of the good from the evil, and immediately, in fact, he adds: "Gather to him his faithful ones" [Ps 50:5].⁶⁹ To whom is it said: "Gather to him his faithful ones," if not especially to the angels? This, in fact, is what St. Augustine says about this text: "Then the discourse is turned to the angels, the Prophet having said: 'Gather to him his faithful ones.' Truly, in fact, such a great task can be accomplished through the angelic ministry."⁷⁰

XXXVI Once the good have been separated on the right side and the evil on the left, the books are opened, that is, the consciences of the individuals.

Therefore, the good having been separated from the evil through the angelic ministry, in the presence of the chosen who are on the right and the reprobates on the left, the books shall then be opened, that is, the consciences of the individuals. In fact, the apostle John says: "And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and the books were opened. Also another book was opened, the book of life. And the dead were judged according to their works, as recorded in the books" [Rev 20:12]. It is evident that what is intended by books is all the saints of the New and Old Testaments, in whose lives, as if they were books, we learn how we must live. In this book, then, about which he says: "Also another book was opened, the book of life" [Rev 20:12], which is the life of everyone, it is known, somehow by divine virtue, what good someone has done or has not done.⁷¹ According to what St. Augustine says: "If that book was materially evaluated, who would be able to esteem the greatness or the length of it? And how much time would be required to read a book in which all the lives of humankind have been written? Perhaps there shall be as many angels as there shall be human beings, and everyone shall hear their life narrated by the angel assigned to them? Therefore, there shall not be only one book for all, but one for each. This Scripture, in truth, intending to mean that there is only one book, says: 'Also another book was opened.' Thus a certain divine power must be intended by which it will happen that all the good and bad works of everyone will be recalled by their memory and will be examined with admirable readiness by an evaluation of the intellect, such that the awareness shall accuse or excuse the conscience and each and everyone shall be judged at the same time. This divine power has certainly taken the name of book. In it, indeed, it is read, in a certain sense, all that under its action is recalled."⁷² Then the Lord will remind his chosen ones what he had foretold in the Gospel, thus announcing: "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me,

I was in prison and you visited me" [Matt 25:34-36]. And he will reproach the reprobates who stand on his left side for not having done those things, reminding them, rather, that the ones who stand on his right have done those things. Once these two discourses of our Lord Jesus Christ have been completed, one with which the good works they have done are mentioned to the chosen ones, the other with which those things that they did not do are imputed to the reprobates, "these will go away"—as the Truth confirms—"into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" [Matt 25:46].

XXXVII The just will not be afraid to listen to the punishment.

Therefore, once the Lord has judged the impious and has sent them to the eternal fire, telling them: "depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels" [Matt 25:41], the just, who have already been placed on the right side, shall not be intimidated at all in hearing this condemnation. In fact, by "hearing this condemnation" the eternal fire is meant, which is inflicted by the Lord; from which then, O Christ, with perpetual mercy, free us, and associate us with you, our head, as coreigning.⁷³

*XXXVIII The ruinous fall of the devil
and the perdition of the impious.*

With some allusions, the apostle St. John evidently wants to affirm the ruinous fall of the devil into the eternal fire. In fact, after having premised: "And the dead were judged according to their works" [Rev 20:12], he briefly adds in what way they will be judged: "Then Death and Hades," he says, "were thrown into the lake of fire" [Rev 20:14], wanting to designate the devil by these names, since he is the author of death and the infernal punishments, and at the same time the whole company of demons. This is, in fact, what he had previously said more evidently: "And the devil, who had seduced them, was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone" [Rev 20:15].⁷⁴

*XXXVIII What is that book about which the apostle John says:
all those who shall not be found written then in the
book of life shall be sent into the pool of fire.*

About the resurrection St. John wrote in his Revelation, among other things, that those who shall not be found written in the book of life shall be sent into the lake of fire [see Rev 20:15]. Saying these things, he does not affirm that God suffers from amnesia, almost as if things unknown could be known from reading this book. "But this book," according to what St. Augustine says, "means the predestination of those to whom eternal life shall be given. Not that God ignores them and reads in this book to know them; but rather his very foreknowledge concerning them, which cannot err, is the book of life, in which they have been inscribed, that is, previously foreknown."⁷⁵

*XXXX The bodies of the impious shall remain in
the fire, without being consumed.*

St. Augustine, producing many and different kinds of examples, attests that it is known for certain that the bodies of the impious will burn in eternal fires without being consumed and that the combustion of the fires will not incinerate these same bodies, because they will burn in the eternal fire but cannot die. "What," the same doctor continues, "shall I show for the unbelievers to be convinced that human bodies, animated and living, not only cannot be dissolved by death, but can withstand even the torments of the eternal fires?"⁷⁶ "Likewise," after other things, he says: "the soul, whose presence vivifies and governs the body, can feel pain and cannot die; here, then, is found a reality that, though having sensibility to pain, is immortal. What we now know to happen in the souls of all will then also happen in the bodies of the damned."⁷⁷ And this being the way of things, he says: "why do they still demand examples from us by which we teach that it is not unusual for the bodies of humans that will be punished with an eternal punishment not to lose the soul in the fire and to burn without loss and to feel pain without end?"⁷⁸

XXXXI How this future fire will burn the demons.

St. Augustine says: "Why could we not say that even the immaterial spirits, although in singular ways, though nonetheless truly, can be afflicted by the punishment of a bodily fire, if the spirits of humankind, which are themselves also certainly incorporeal, could be confined in bodily limbs and united indissolubly to their bodies?"⁷⁹ Similarly, the same doctor, after other things, says, "Gehenna, instead, which has been considered also as a lake of fire and brimstone [see Rev 20:9], will be a physical fire and will torment the bodies of the damned, that is to say, the material bodies of human beings and the immaterial ones of the demons, or just the human bodies, with their spirits, and the spirits of demons without a body, joined to the bodily fires, taking on the punishment, and not communicating life. Indeed, as the Truth has said, there will be only one fire both for the ones and for the others"⁸⁰ [see Matt 25:41].

XXXXII The variety of punishments in proportion to the diversity of fault.

"Punishment will be the mildest for those who, except for the original sin that they have contracted, will not have added other sins: while for all the rest who have added sin, the punishment will be more tolerable there the less the injustice will have been down here."⁸¹ "In fact, it certainly cannot be denied that the eternal fire, too, based on the diversity of the faults, shall be lighter for some and more serious for others, whether its power and its ardor be different according to the punishment of each, or whether it be that it burns in the same way, but that it is not felt as the identical torment."⁸²

XXXXIII Against those who seek in the most meticulous way what this future fire is and in what part of the world it can be found.

The knowledge of the contemporaries, compared to the science of the ancient fathers,⁸³ must be considered, if I shall not speak rashly, much less inadequately. Insofar as what the fathers and the scholars have claimed not to know, it would be very dangerous and superfluous, therefore, on our part, if anyone attempted to somehow define

it; even the blessed Augustine, discussing this same future fire, seemed so to affirm. When, in fact, he spoke of the future damnation, saying: "therefore, those not written in the book of life having been judged and thrown into the eternal fire," he adds, "I think that no man, except perhaps the one to whom the divine Spirit manifests it, knows what type of fire it is and in what part of the world or of reality it will be found."⁸⁴

XXXXVIII The reward of the chosen follows after the damnation of the impious.

The order of the Lord's words that relate to the promise by which we believe that Christ the Lord will give the kingdom to the saints and perennial torture to the reprobates presents itself in such a way that the condemnation of the impious comes first and is then followed by the reward of the chosen ones, as Christ the Lord forewarns: "And the impious will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" [Matt 25:46]. In the Apocalypse, too, we read that this order is maintained, where it is clearly expressed. First, in fact, it refers us to the punishment of the devil and all his own, and it is said: "Then death and hell were thrown into the lake of fire" [Rev 20:14], and after that it is added about the future beatitude of the saints: "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth" [Rev 21:1]. From these words it is given to understand that, for the right judgment of God, the sentence shall first be inflicted upon the sinners, and afterward, the eternal rewards shall be granted to the saints.⁸⁵

XXXXV Once the judgment has been completed, the servant aspect with which Christ exercised judgment will pass away, and then Christ will deliver the kingdom to God and Father.

The servant aspect with which Christ will be seen making the judgment will disappear once the judgment is concluded, according to what has previously been written by the pen of the ancient fathers, an aspect that was shown precisely to complete the judgment. "That aspect," it was said, "shall pass, not in that it shall perish, but because it passes 'from the judgment to the kingdom.'" "Certainly the Lord, after the judgment, will change aspect for us," according to what the blessed Gregory says: "Because from the aspect of his humanity he

raises us to the contemplation of his divinity. And his change of aspect means leading us to the contemplation of his splendor, because he whom we had seen with a human aspect in the judgment, we can see, after the judgment, also with that of the divinity."⁸⁶ Certainly, after the judgment he will hasten from here, and he will bring with himself the body of which he is the head, and he will offer the kingdom "to God and Father" [1 Cor 15:24]. And in which way, therefore, will he deliver the kingdom to God and Father, if not when he will manifest to his friends the vision of his divinity, in which he is one with the Father? And after he has led us, his members, to the vision and knowledge by which it is believed that he is equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit, then that aspect of God that cannot be seen by the reprobates will be completely seen by the chosen ones.

*XXXXVI The conflagration of fire by which,
it is said, this world will perish.*

From the clear teaching of the ancient fathers it is determined that "once the judgment has been completed, then this sky and this earth will cease to exist, when a new heaven and a new earth will begin to exist. In fact, this world will pass away with a metamorphosis of things, not with a total destruction."⁸⁷ "Therefore, the form of this world will then pass away in the conflagration of all fires of the world, as the deluge happened with the flood of all the waters of the world. And so, as I have said, in that universal conflagration the properties of the corruptible elements that were appropriate for our corruptible bodies will disappear by being completely burned; and the same substance of being will have those properties that, for an extraordinary metamorphosis, are appropriate for immortal bodies, such that the world, clearly understood as renewed for the better, be adequately suited for mankind transformed for the better also in the flesh."⁸⁸

*XXXXVII Once the judgment has been completed, the new
heaven and the new earth will begin to exist.*

As the blessed Augustine says: "once the judgment has been completed and finished, then this heaven and this earth will cease to exist, when a new heaven and a new earth will begin to exist. In fact, this world will pass away with a metamorphosis of things, not for a

total destruction."⁸⁹ Thus, the apostle also says: "[For] the present form of this world is passing away" [1 Cor 7:31]; so the form passes away, not the nature."⁹⁰

*XXXXVIII Not all who rise again will be in the new heaven
and new earth, but only the saints.*

According to what we read in the codices of some authors, the sinners and the impious, though as risen are incorruptible and immortal, will nevertheless not be on the new earth, because they will be completely extraneous to the transformation of the saints. When, in fact, the apostle says: "We all, in truth, will rise again, but not all of us will be transformed" [1 Cor 15:51],⁹¹ in general it suggests that there will be a future resurrection for everyone, while the transformation counts only for the glory of the saints.

*XXXXVIII Against those who say that if after judgment
has been passed the conflagration of the world will
take place, where then can the saints be so as
not to be reached by the flame of fire?*

The blessed Augustine so resolves this matter: "Perhaps someone," he says, "could ask: if, after the judgment has been concluded, this world will burn before it is replaced by a new heaven and a new earth, where will the saints be in the very moment of its conflagration, since they, having bodies, must be in some physical place? We can reply that they will be in the most elevated parts, where the flame of that fire will not reach, just as the wave of the deluge did not. In fact, their bodies will be such that they will be there, wherever they will want to be. But, rendered immortal and incorruptible, they will not be frightened by the blaze of that fire, if the corruptible and mortal bodies of the three men [Dan 3:23ff.] could remain unharmed in the burning furnace."⁹²

*L The reward and the kingdom of the saints when Christ, after
having girded himself, upon passing will serve his own.*

The reward of the blessed is the vision of God, which will give us ineffable joy. This reward is what I believe the prophet referred to

when he said: "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him" [1 Cor 2:9; see Isa 64:4]. Even Truth itself, substituting for the reward the manifestation of his vision and promising it to his friends, says: "Whoever loves me, observes my commandments, and whoever loves me will be loved by my Father and I will also love him and will reveal myself to him" [John 14:21].⁹³ And in fact, according to the words of the same holy truth, he will then gird himself, and he will place us at table and, passing, he will serve us [see Luke 12:37]. "He will gird himself, therefore," as the blessed Gregory says, "that is, he prepares himself for the reward. He will place us at table, that is, he makes us relive in eternal peace; in fact, being seated in the kingdom means for us to be in peace. And passing, the Lord will then serve us, in that he satisfies us with the splendor of his light. What is said: *passes*, means that the Lord almost passes from the judgment to the kingdom."⁹⁴

LI Then the wicked will not know what happens in the joy of the blessed, while the good will know what happens in the punishment of the miserable.

"Those who will be in the torments will not have knowledge of what happens inside, in the joy of the Lord; however, those who will be in that joy will have awareness of what happens in the darkness outside. For this it was said"⁹⁵ by the Prophet about the saints: "And they shall go out and see the corpses of the people who have rebelled against me" [Isa 66:24]. But what he said: "they shall go out," means "almost as a science,"⁹⁶ that is to say, "because it shall not be hidden to them even those things that happen entirely outside of them. If in fact the prophets could know these events even if they had not yet happened, for as little a way, in their mortal minds since God was present; how then shall the immortal saints not know what has already happened, since God shall be all in all? [see 1 Cor 15:28]."⁹⁷

LII Then we can be led to and live in heaven with this body in which we now live.

St. Augustine, appropriately disputing against the Platonists, who claim that the human body cannot ascend to heaven, explains this, and shows with excellent examples of reasoning, that our bodies,

becoming immortal after the resurrection, can have an abode in heaven.⁹⁸ In fact, certainly "after the resurrection, the saints were promised ascension into heaven in the flesh; Christ, in fact, said to the Father: 'I desire that where I am, they also be with me' [John 17:24]."⁹⁹ If, in fact, we are members of the head, and one in himself and in us is Christ, undoubtedly, wherever he ascends, we will also ascend."¹⁰⁰

LIII Whether we will then have more refined movements of the body, and whether they will be identical to those that we seem to have now.

About the movements of the body, St. Augustine, afraid to furnish a definitive teaching, thus says: "I dare not determine what the movements of such bodies will be there, because I am unable to imagine it; nevertheless both movement and stillness, as well as the semblances, whatever they may be, will be appropriate, since whatever will be inopportune will not be there at all. Certainly wherever the spirit will want, the body will be there immediately; and the spirit will not want anything that may be inopportune for the spirit and for the body."¹⁰¹

LIIII Whether God then is seen through these bodily eyes, with which we there see the sun and the moon.

St. Augustine, perspicaciously disputing whether we will be able to see God through our bodily eyes in the future life, says: "Therefore, when I am asked what these eyes will do in that spiritual body, I do not say what I already see, but I say what I believe in, according to what I read in the Psalm: 'I have believed and for this I have spoken' [Ps 116:10]."¹⁰² I say, therefore: they will see God in this body; nevertheless it is not a small matter if they will see him through the body, as through it we now see the sun, the moon, the stars, the earth, and the things that are found upon it. It is, in fact, hard to affirm that the saints will then have such bodies as not to be able to close or open the eyes when they want; besides, it is even more difficult to maintain that whoever shall close their eyes there shall not see God. Far be it, therefore, from saying that those saints will not see God in that life with the eyes closed, since they will always see him with the spirit. But, rather, the question is whether the saints will see God through these eyes of the body when they hold them open, if in fact also those same spiritual

eyes in the spiritual body will have their power, such as we now have them—without a doubt God cannot be seen through them. Their power will be much different, therefore, if through them that incorporeal nature will be seen that is not contained in space but is all everywhere. For which" according to what the same doctor says, "it can happen, and it is very believable, that we shall then see the bodies belonging to a world of a new heaven and a new earth, such that in the most limpid clarity, through the bodies that we shall possess and that we shall perceive, wherever the eyes shall turn, we shall see God, who is present everywhere and who also governs all material things,"¹⁰³ not as the intellects now recognize the invisible realities of God in the things that are created, as in a mirror, in a confused and partial way, where the faith by which we believe has more value in us than the kinds of bodily realities that we distinguish through the eyes of the body.¹⁰⁴ But as soon as we recognize the human beings in the midst of whom we live, as existing and through their vital movements, we do not believe them to live, but we ascertain it, and even if we cannot see their life without the bodies, nevertheless we distinguish it in them without equivocation through the bodies. In the same way, wherever we shall turn those spiritual lights of our bodies, we shall observe, also through the bodies, the incorporeal God, who sustains all things. Therefore, either God will be so seen through those eyes, such that they have, in their superiority, something similar to the mind with which the incorporeal nature will also be seen, which is, however, either difficult or impossible to demonstrate with some examples and with the testimonies of the Sacred Scriptures; or, and this is easier to understand, all of God will be so equally visible so as to be seen by the spirit of each of us in every one of us, he will be seen by one in the other, he will be seen in himself, he will be seen in the new heaven and in the new earth and in every creature that will then be there, he will also be seen through the bodies in each body, wherever the eyes of the spiritual body will be turned with an acute sight that reaches the object. Even our intentions will reciprocally be manifest. Then, in fact, the thought of the apostle will be fulfilled, who, after having said: "Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time," added immediately: "before the Lord comes. He will bring to light the secrets of the darkness and will show the intentions of the hearts; then everyone will have his praise from God" [1 Cor 4:5].¹⁰⁵

IV Then we will see God with that vision with which the angels now see him.

We read in the Gospel that Christ said: "Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven" [Matt 18:10]. Thus, as they see him, so also will we see him. Yet we do not yet see him so. Therefore, the apostle says: 'For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face' [1 Cor 13:12]. So this vision is reserved to us as a reward of faith; about this the apostle John says: 'When he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is' [1 John 3:2]. God's face, however, must be intended as a manifestation of him, not as that determined part that we have in the body and that without a doubt we call with this name."¹⁰⁶ We will then be, therefore, similar to the angels because as they now see, so also we will see God after the resurrection.

LVI In the life in which they cannot sin, all the saints will exercise free will more steadily than in this life.

All of the doctors clearly indicate that in that life the capacity of free will shall be greater for us than down here. If, in fact, as someone says, most live with free will in this life, during which, even if they can avoid the sins, nevertheless they cannot be without sin, how shall they not be more free in the soul there where the blessed will be so united to God so as not in any way to be subject to sin? In fact, the more one is free, the more that person is absolved from sins. And thus in that blessed life they will all be even more free so they will not be able to sin. In fact, according to what seems to me, if we are promised equality with the angels, how then shall we not have the free will by which they eternally praise God? Nevertheless, what perhaps happens for the reprobates is probably uncertain; because according to the thought of one who is rather hesitant about the matter, "for those who shall be estranged from the life of the saints, I do not know if there can somehow be free will for those who, condemned to the eternal combustion of the vengeful flames, can have neither a free soul nor a free body."¹⁰⁷

*LVII Then we will have forgetfulness and
memory in an equal way.*

"For what concerns the intellectual knowledge, everyone will also remember their past evils, but on the level of the sensible experience no one will remember absolutely anything. In fact, even the best physician knows almost all the illnesses of the body, as they are known in the art of medicine; but he is oblivious of many of them as they can be known in the body, not having experienced them. Therefore, just as there are two kinds of knowledge of evils, one by which they are not unknown to the power of the mind, the other because they belong to the experience of the senses (one thing, in fact, is to know all the vices through the teaching of wisdom, another is to know them through a foolish life), likewise there are two ways to forget the evils; the wise person forgets in one way; while whoever has experienced and suffered forgets in another way; the former by ignoring knowledge, the latter by avoiding unhappiness. Based on this forgetfulness, which is put in second place, the saints will not be mindful of the past evils; in fact all will be deprived of them, such that they will be canceled completely from their senses. However, with the capacity of knowledge that will be great in them, not only will their past not be hidden, but also the eternal misfortune of the damned will not be hidden to them. Otherwise, if they will be oblivious of having been unhappy, how can they say with the Psalmist: 'I will sing without end the graces of the Lord' [Ps 89:2]?"¹⁰⁸

*LVIII The variety of the merits and rewards in which,
nevertheless, no one will envy anyone.*

As St. Augustine says, "who is able to think, and even more, to say what shall be the various degrees of honors"¹⁰⁹ and the glories that will be in that life? Yet, that they shall be there is not to be doubted. "And that blessed city shall have in itself a good also for the fact that no inferior being shall envy any superior being, as now the other angels do not envy the archangels; as no one will want to be what they have not received, even though they are linked by the most serene bond of harmony to the one who has received it, as not even in the body does the eye want to be what the finger is, although the harmonious structure of the whole flesh contains both the one and the other

member. Thus, certainly, one will have a smaller gift than the other, in order to have this gift as well, to desire no more."¹¹⁰

LVIII The saints will praise God tirelessly.

The praise with which they will honor God will not be tiring for the saints, because according to what the Prophet says of them: "they will not be troubled nor will they get tired" [see Isa 40:31]. Indeed, they will enjoy the beatitude of eternity: this will be the reward of beatitude for them, in that they will be devoted to the incessant exultation of praise. The Psalm, in fact, says: "Blessed are those who dwell in your house, Lord, they will praise you forever and ever" [Ps 84:5].¹¹¹ "Therefore, he who has given virtue will be the reward for virtue."¹¹²

*LX We will see God without end and
he is the fulfillment of our desires.*

If, according to what the apostle says, "we will be with the Lord for ever" [1 Thess 4:17], it is also certain that we will see him without interruption. "Christ will then be the fulfillment of all our desires, he who will be contemplated without end, loved without satiety, praised without weariness. This gift and this love, this action will certainly be common to all, just like eternal life itself."¹¹³

*LXI Then God himself will be our reward, and our virtuous
desires will be satisfied in a marvelous way.*

He who created us promised us that he would give us himself as reward, than which nothing is better. "What else is meant by what he said through the Prophet: 'I will be your God, and you shall be my people' [Lev 26:12], if not: 'I shall be the one by whom they shall be satiated; I shall be those things that are virtuously desired by humanity, the life and the well-being and the nourishment and the abundance and the glory and the honor and the peace and every other good'? Thus, in fact, what the apostle says is also correctly understood: 'so that God may be all in all' [1 Cor 15:28]."¹¹⁴

*LXII The end without end in which we
will praise God infinitely.*

Christ, our end, rendering us perfect, will be at the same time solace and our praise; we will praise him forever and ever and, praising him without end, we will love him. "There," says the most holy doctor Augustine, "truly will be the supreme Sabbath without sunset, which the Lord commanded to observe in the beginning of the works of creation, where it is read: 'And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. God blessed the seventh day and consecrated it, because on it he rested from every work he had done creating it' [Gen 2:2]. In fact, we ourselves will be the seventh day, when we will be filled and restored to his blessing and glorification."¹¹⁵ There it will be fulfilled: 'Be still and know that I am God' [Ps 46:11]."¹¹⁶ Then truly it "will be our Sabbath, which will not end with sunset, but rather, the day of the Lord or the eternal eighth day, which has been consecrated by the resurrection of Christ.... There we will rest and we will see, we will see and we will love, we will love and we will praise. Here is what will be at the end without end! In fact, what else is our end, if not to reach the kingdom of which there is no end?"¹¹⁷

[END OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE THIRD BOOK]

[END OF THE PROGNOSTICUM OF SAINT JULIAN,
BISHOP OF THE TOLEDAN SEE]

NOTES

CHAPTER I

1. In this brief presentation of the historical, social, and religious environment of Visigothic Spain in which Julian of Toledo was born and lived, the following studies were referenced from among the thousands possible: R. Aigrain, "La Spagna cristiana," in *Storia della Chiesa*, vol. 5, *San Gregorio Magno, gli stati barbarici e la conquista araba (590-757)* (Rome/Turin, 1980), 315-52; J. Fontaine, "Conversion et culture chez les Visigoths d'Espagne," in *Settimane di Studio*, XIV, *La conversione al cristianesimo nell'Europa dell'alto Medio Evo* (Spoleto, 1967), 87-147; *The Early Middle Ages to 1300*, ed. R. Crocker and D. Hiley (Oxford, 1990); J. N. Hillgarth, *Christianity and Paganism, 350-750: The Conversion of Western Europe* (Philadelphia, 1986); idem, "La conversión de los visigodos: notas críticas," *Analecta Sacra Tarraconensia* 34 (1961): 17-46; idem, "Historiography in Visigothic Spain," in *La storiografia altomedievale: Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'alto medioevo* 17 (Spoleto, 1970), 261-311; A. Momigliano, *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century* (Oxford, 1963); J. O'Callaghan, *A History of Medieval Spain* (Ithaca, NY, 1975); J. Orlandis, *Historia de España: La España Visigótica* (Madrid, 1977); R. M. Pidal, *Historia de España: España visigoda* (Vol. III 1/3), Reedición (Madrid, 1985); M. Sotomayor et al., *Historia de la Iglesia en España, I, La Iglesia en la España romana y visigoda (siglos I al VIII)* (Madrid, 1979); J. Orlandis, *La vida en España en tiempo de los Godos* (Madrid, 1991); *Historia de la Iglesia en España*, ed. R. García Villoslada (Madrid, 1979).

2. After the sack of Rome in 410, the Ostrogoths built an empire that had its center in Italy with its imperial capital in Ravenna.

3. Brother-in-law and successor, as king of the Goths, of Alaric. He reigned from 410 to 415, the year in which he was murdered in Barcelona. In Narbonne he married Galla Placidia, sister of the emperor Honorius. While outwardly showing respect and admiration for the Roman tradition, in reality he was a firm opponent of the empire. His kingdom was reduced to the Iberian Peninsula.