

Christian education of children

Silvio Antoniano

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THREE BOOKS OF THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OF THE CHILDREN, WRITTEN BY M. SILVIO ANTONIANO, AT THE INSTANCE OF MONSIEUR ILLUSTRISS. CARDINAL OF S. PRASEDE, ARCHBISHOP OF MILAN. IN VERONA, MDLXXXIII. APPRESSO SEBASTIANO DALLE DONNE, ET GIROLAMO STRINGARI, COMPAGNI. BY PERMISSION OF THE SUPERIORS.

[Dedication].

FROM THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS AND REVEREND LORD AND MY MOST RESPECTED PATRON MONSIEUR CARLO BORROMEO CARDINAL OF S. PRASEDE.

The City of Milan has much to thank the Lord (Illustriss. et Reverendiss. Monsignor) for having granted V. S. Illustriss as its Pastor, and sure guide, and together with all the neighbouring peoples, or rather all Italy, or rather the whole Church of God, that he deigned in these calamitous times, to provide it with such a minister, who was like an incentive to all the other Pastors to make him exercise with diligence the pastoral office, and who at the same time brought ornament to his militant Church, granting it so many graces, and giving it so much virtue, that it could be an example, and a

rule of good living to everyone: Many foreigners from distant lands came to see the marvellous order of the great house of the wise King Solomon; and finally the prudent Queen Sheba, from the far corners of the East was drawn by the fame of her wisdom: and when she had reasoned with him at length, and had resolved all her doubts, considering the order of her ministers, and the ornaments of her royal palace, she was so greatly amazed, that she almost came out of herself exclaiming: I have heard great things about you, but what I have heard, compared to what I have seen, can be said to have been nothing: blessed are those servants who are worthy to be in your presence. It is no wonder, if those who come to Milan from different parts, having seen and understood the wisdom that Your Illustriousness shows in the government of your Church, and the holy institutions, with which you lead the flock to Christian perfection, to your faith and care, claim to find more in effect, than what they have heard reasoning. And what increases the wonder is that not only she procures the good and the health of her people, but she is always thinking, and investigating how she can help the needs of others, and she is not content that her Church alone feels the benefit of her wise government, but in order to imitate as much as she can the nature of God, she tries to communicate her graces to others, and to spread her gifts to all. Therefore, considering that with her great prudence accompanied by true and sincere piety, how much advantage it could be to understand what Christian education is, and how much health it could bring to fathers and children, and how much it was necessary for the good government of the City, and how much consolation it gives to the people (since the Devil does not triumph more than anything else, Nor does he gain more than from the negligence of the fathers in the government of their children, putting more thought and care into the government of wild animals, in the worship of the fields, in

reclaiming the estates, in the buildings, and in the ornaments of the garments, than in the education of the children; Wherefore so much misery is born in the world, and people live with so little fear, and with so much offence to God, and so many fathers find themselves disconsolate, and so many mothers afflicted that it would be a long and tedious task to narrate it), she judged that it must be something above all useful, if one could find one who would deal with this matter, and reduce it to precepts, and with good order teach the way of instructing children. And knowing very well the lively intellect, and the great learning, together with the Christian piety, of the very Reverend Messer Silvio Antoniano, judging him to be very apt for this business, she asked him to help the need of this century for such instruction for the fathers of families, by writing a book of Christian education. Which he understood, because of the great reverence and devotion that he has for Your Illustriousness. Most Illustrious H.H., knowing that this was a work of great charity, he willingly undertook the undertaking, which he happily carried out to its end. Now finding this work in Antoniano's hands, and (as he is most humble) not trusting in himself, he wanted, before it was seen in public, to be examined well by judicious men, among whom he judged that the Most Reverend Monsignor of Verona was most attentive to this; since his sure doctrine was well known to him, he knew that with the perspicacity of his intellect, he would have been able to judge very well, what the Christian customs should be, and of what virtues his children should be instructed, and as one who has much experience in public governments, it would have been easy for him to determine what the life of a Citizen of the Christian Republic should be, he also considered that Monsignor Reverend Verona, as the one who has the most experience in public governments, would have been easy to determine what the life of a Citizen of the Christian Republic should be. Reverend of Verona, because he is bound to Your

Most Illustriousness by a knot of holy friendship, and because of the reverence he bears you, would have had the same desire to help the world by this most effective means. Therefore, trusting in the paternal affection that the Bishop has always shown him, as he is wont to embrace and favour all men of letters and the good servants of God, he sent him the treatise that he had written on Christian education, begging Most Reverend H.H. to take the trouble to read the book, and then to notify him of his opinion. He did so very courteously, and not only did he content himself with reading it, but he wanted it to be seen by very learned people, all of whom, conforming to the opinion of Most Reverend H.H. judged the work to be most useful, full of varied erudition, of serious sentences, of illustrious examples, written with great perspicuity, and with admirable piety, and zeal for the honor of God, and the health of souls. And because Monsig. Reverendiss. was forced to leave Verona, sent by N. S. to visit the Church of Padua, and of Vicenza (finding myself at the present time in this City with the obedience of my superiors, for some honourable, and convenient occasions, with the wish however as soon as possible to be allowed to return to my Roman Province, in order to be able there the rest of the life that is left to me, since I am still in charge of years, to serve God) desiring also that the work be published, he was content to order me to take care of having it printed, and at the same time that I should send it to Your Illustriousness as a departure. Your Illustriousness as a work that has originated from you, and as the fruit of your zealous desires. And I remember how many favours she did me, and how many signs of love she showed me when she deigned to call me to preach her Church, and having then clearly known that she keeps a vivid memory of me, because of the great devotion that I have always brought to her singular goodness, she received this as a signalled favour, since it gives me the opportunity to make you reverence, and by this means to remind you of

my service, and I did it all the more willingly, since I judged that these labours of the Antonian, must be most fruitful, and most grateful to the world, and at the same time to obey and satisfy Monsig. Reverend of Verona, who for consolation, and for the satisfaction of V. S. Illustrissississ. and for the profit that will come to the souls has wanted that this worthy work be sent in light.

Plutharco wrote of the education of children a very grateful little work, and again the Illustrississ. et Reverend Cardinal Sadoletto good memory a very elegant, and learned book on the same subject, but no one really (if I am not mistaken) has treated it more copiously, nor with more sentences, nor come more to the detail, and to teaching more useful things, than the composer of this book, who, with the salt of Christian wisdom, has seasoned the whole work, reducing it to practice, and introduced this most useful doctrine into the houses of simple and idiotic people, and has at the same time expressed the juice of the whole Theology concerning good morals, called Theologia prattica or morale. And at the same time he has facilitated in a way the Roman Catechism, a book so useful, as well as learned and pious, that it can easily be enjoyed and understood by private and simple people. For this great benefit, all those who will read this book, will be obliged to Your Illustriousness who urged the author to write it, who composed it, and ordered it with great judgement, because it is seen that it is always improving, and saying things which are more useful, and more delightful, the more it reaches its end. Therefore, if the whole volume is very fruitful, the third book is so delightful and useful, that one cannot desire more, nor can one teach more appropriate things for the education of children, in which order, one discovers the art of the author, who has very ingeniously expressed the true way of teaching, beginning with the most universal things, as he does in the first book, and then coming from hand to hand to the

particular things. And this was his own way, and easy, because of his knowledge of many kinds of letters and sciences, because of the practice he has always had with great people, and much more because of his devotion and Christian piety, because of the innocence of his life, and because he frequently offers to God sacrifices, and prayers as a good Priest, so that he has been able to implore the grace of explicating the truth, so that this treatise of his, will be able to help as much as to delight and to delight as much as to help. To which one could very conveniently accompany that which S. Thomaso wrote on the erudition of Princes, different from another that he composed on the rule of Princes. Which I have reduced to the vernacular, because Monsig. I have reduced it to the vernacular language, because the Most Reverend Bishop of Verona, has wished that it be read by those who are born Princes, or true who must be proposed to public governments, and perhaps with the grace of God, it could one day be printed, as he wished this to be printed, for the benefit of the noble City of Venice, his homeland, and for the benefit of his beloved Veronese. Therefore, as long as you are waiting to be seen, Your Illustriousness deigns to receive this work, which I in the name of the Reverend Messer Silvio Antoniano, your dear servant, offer you. And since with your authority you have given spirit and strength to the author to make such a perfect work, receive it as your own. And I will not fail to do so (as each one is obliged, and I in particular will pray to Our Lord God that He deigns to preserve for a long time V.S. Illustrississ. for the ornament of his Church, so that he may be able to use such a noble instrument, as he has done and continues to do, to instruct and teach Christian piety, not only in the ecclesiastical and secular state of Milan, and of all Italy, but also outside Italy, and in the parts where the catholic truth is contested, as it does at the present time, when by means of his preaching, and by the example of his life the name of God has been so glorified in the countries of

the Griffins, and the holy Roman Catholic Church exalted, and remaining desirous to serve it, I kiss you with all my heart. I kiss your hands with all reverence. From Verona the first of Novemb. M D LXXXIII. Of V.S. Illustriss. et Reverendiss. Humiliss. et devotiss. ser. F. Alessio Figliucci de l'ord. de'Predic.

Exhortation

SILVIO ANTONIANO TO THE FATHERS OF FAMILY HEALTH IN THE LORD

I have been constrained by the authority, and by the commandment, of Monsignor Illustrississ. Carlo Cardinal di santa Prassede, and Archbishop of Milan, to have to do myself something, that many times I have wished, that someone more suitable than me would do, that is to write the present treatise on the Christian education of the children, in which I have endeavoured, according to the weakness of my forces, to show the way of good, and to raise them in a Christian way, in conformity with the holy fear of God, and with the norm of his salutary law. A subject, if one considers the end, and the intention which I have had, and the manner in which I have explained it, more novel by chance, and not treated by others, than perhaps at first sight it does not appear, but certainly, a necessary subject, especially in these times, and which, put into practice with due diligence, will be able if I am not mistaken, to bring more than mediocre benefit to those fathers of families, who from duty wish to bring up their children well.

Having therefore with the help of divine grace, brought this discourse to its end, and having to consent, by the same obedience which from the beginning moved me to make it, that it should come out to you honorable fathers of families, whatever it may be, I offer it, not as my own thing, but more

soon as that of that most vigilant Pastor of souls, and most clear light of Holy Church, whose very serious judgement must make you believe, with great reason, that Christian education is not a trivial thing, but on the contrary is of great importance, through which, cooperating with the grace and favour of God, good children are raised, and consequently good men, which is the most excellent and the most beneficial of all human things.

And in order to give you a general idea of the whole work, which will be given to you in a greater and more distinct way by the Table of Chapters, which follows a little further down, you should know that I have divided it into three main parts, or rather into three books.

In the first of which we discuss the great importance of raising children in a Christian manner, which in Latin, although very well known, is called education. We also discuss the dignity and sanctity of the married state, which is the plant, so to speak, blessed by God, of which legitimate children are the proper and most suavest fruit. And finally some other things are treated, which are like preparatory, and dispositions preceding the good education.

In the second book, because the substance of Christian education consists in the knowledge and observance of the divine law, it necessarily deals with some of the most important aspects of our holy religion, briefly and easily, reducing the doctrine to practice, so that the father may see the goal, where he must continually look, and according to which he must regulate all his studies in raising his son.

In the third, and last book, beginning with childhood, and proceeding through the following ages, the conditions and dangers of each are shown, and it is said which, from time to time, must be the fatherly duties. And lastly it speaks of the

various states, and praiseworthy exercises, of the common life, so that living our son of the family, not uselessly, but virtuously in the homeland, and among men, he may then after this brief pilgrimage, more happily live with God, and with his chosen saints, in the true heavenly homeland.

I have written the present work in our vulgar language, out of a desire to be of greater help to many, and from this same desire, while I have descended much to the detail, and while I have tried not only to teach, but to move, with some delight, a certain prolixity has proceeded, which perhaps to some of more delicate taste, will be less welcome; However, I have tried to give the reader a certain amount of relief by distinguishing the chapters, which are usually short, and it should not be a burden to the father of a family, in his less busy times, to read one or another for his own pleasure, making a useful record of the documents that are given, in order to put it into practice with judgment and discretion, taking into consideration many circumstances which, by necessity, are left to the prudent educator, to whom nothing will be difficult, if he wishes to undertake the task of Christian education with duty; For in addition to divine help, on which all good depends, the same practice will be an excellent teacher.

Therefore I beseech you, honorable fathers of families, to consider often, that the dearest and most precious riches that you have, are your children, whom God has given you to guard, so that in due time, you may return them to him, as faithful servants, and good negotiators of the talent committed with fruit, and spiritual gain. Even if it is not absolutely within your power, since a child, even a very well bred one, may want to be sad, it is not probable that it will happen, but if it should happen through his own fault, his blood will be on his head, and you will free your soul, and you will not lose the due merit before the just judge.

Therefore, look after yourselves, look after your children, and see to it promptly that, as far as your side is concerned, they succeed in such a way that in this life they may bring you consolation, and not affliction, praise, and not blame, and in the next life they may be the subject of a greater crown in Heaven, and not of greater punishment, and greater torment in Hell.

Book 1

LIBRO PRIMO DELLA EDUCATIONE CHRISTIANA DEI
FIGLIUOLI.

Chapter 1

AS IN THE HOLY CHURCH ARE VARIOUS, AND DIFFERENT STATES.

David the Prophet, filled with the Holy Spirit, describes in the fourth and fortieth Psalm the wedding of the heavenly bridegroom Christ Jesus with his beloved bride the Holy Church. And after having sung highly of the beauty, of the fortitude, and of the kingdom of the bridegroom, he turns to narrate the praises of the new bride, whom he represents in the guise of a most noble Queen standing at the right hand of her beloved consort, adorned with beautiful, and very rich attire, dressed in a golden robe, and surrounded by a mantle, embroidered with various friezes, and with the greatest artifice context of different colors of silk and gold to marvel. Now these rich friezes and embroideries, which adorn the robe of this great Queen, overshadow us, and illustrate the diversity, and vagueness of the various states of the holy Church militant, that is of the virgins, of the continents, and of the married; For there are some who, renouncing the cares of the world, and having made a perfect sacrifice of themselves to God, live in the flesh, almost outside the flesh, a life more quickly angelic than human; others then, bound to the yoke of matrimony, amidst the cares of the family, and the many occupations of civil life, as though sailing on a troubled sea, toil to reach the port of true quietness. And although among them are these and similar states in the Holy Church of different rank and dignity, all are nevertheless beautiful, all holy, all adorn the noble bride, and consequently all are grateful and pleasing to the eyes of the eternal bridegroom; who is not only pleased with those who, in the holy cloisters, and in the mountains, and in the woods, stay with the beautiful Rachel,

barren, but with sharp eyesight, and shining eyes, contemplating God, but also greatly enjoys seeing his beloved, adorned with numerous hosts of active, and industrious men, who with Leah, though less beautiful, nevertheless fruitful, toil in the exercises of the active life. And just as from many distinct voices, which with great harmony discord, a most sweet harmony and chorus is born, and just as from various distinct limbs, deputed by nature to different and separate operations, there results one body beautiful to see, most useful to conserve, and most able to work, so not otherwise from such a variety of states, which are in the holy Church, a marvellous union proceeds, and this spiritual body is formed, of which Christ is the head, so ordered, and so strong that it frightens hell, so graceful, and so beautiful, that it enchants God, and all of Paradise.

Chapter 2

THAT GOD HAS NOT OBLIGED US TO THE HEIGHT OF SOME STATES

And truly great is the mercy of God, who has not obliged his servants to choose some very high state of affairs, but, considering the infirmity and weakness of many, has left each one free to choose the way of life that pleases him best. Christ our Redeemer and Master, has not said to anyone under the obligation of law or precept, but by way of evangelical counsel and perfection, go and sell what you have, and give it to the poor, and follow me. Paul the Apostle, speaking of the virginal state, affirms that he has not been commanded by the Lord, but as his Legate and Ambassador, he advises, persuades and desires that all be as he was, freed from the cares and solitudes of the world, and not subject to the tribulation of the flesh, Therefore he did not say to anyone not to take a wife, and not to marry your daughter, but he only said exhorting, and inviting to the highest, and most perfect state, he who marries his virgin spinster does well, and he who does not marry her does better, if however such is the will of the girl, or of the son not to want an earthly marriage, but a heavenly one. Therefore, much gratitude must be given to the most gracious God, the Father of mercies, who has not closed the way of eternal salvation to anyone, nor made it difficult, but has opened it for us in many ways, so that not only the poor of voluntary poverty, the religious, the cleric, the virgin, and the continent, and those who, for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, have deprived themselves of the procreation of children, but the rich man also, the layman, and the secular, and finally the father of a family, by keeping his riches, and enjoying his possessions, his wife, his children, and his

servants, will be able by divine grace to have a place and share in the kingdom of God, and in eternal beatitude.

Chapter 3

THAT IN EVERY STATE THE FEAR OF GOD IS NECESSARY,
AND THE OBSERVANCE OF THE DIVINE PRECEPTS.

Therefore, as has been said, these various states, although distinct in perfection, are all nevertheless good, and acceptable to God, and each of them is the way that leads to paradise, although some are more perfect, others with greater difficulty and toil. But let no one deceive himself, and persuade himself that he has done everything by choosing a state of life which is praiseworthy by nature; for if in the good state he does not live well, and does not fulfill the obligations of his vocation, in vain will he praise himself for the goodness of his state; indeed as a bad and disobedient servant, who knew the will of his Lord, and did not take care to carry it out, he will be severely chastised. Therefore the husbandman must not believe that he is not bound by the bonds of religion, that he has not stripped himself of his own abilities, nor of the use and power of the flesh, and that he has not voluntarily deprived himself of his own will, let him not believe, I say, that for this reason he is freed, and free from all obligations, since the obligations of married persons are many, and greater than some do not understand, and especially concerning the inviolable observance of the faith, and conjugal chastity, as will be said in its place. Therefore, let no one say, I am neither a monk nor a friar, I have made neither a vow nor profession of chastity, poverty or obedience; but say more quickly, I am a Christian, I made the great vow in baptism, and the noble profession of soldiering under the banner of Christ crucified, and of fulfilling by his divine grace his most holy law, I have solemnly renounced the tyranny of the devil, and of the world, and I have placed my neck under the sweet yoke of

the servitude of Jesus Christ. Therefore, he who with mature advice, as will be said below, has chosen the life and state of matrimony, let him happily marry, but let him also invite Christ to us, as did that wise bridegroom of Cana of Galilee, so that the great, so that the great and almighty host may also convert the waters into wine in his house, may possess his goods, but with Christ, may he be free, not of freedom of the flesh, but of the spirit, from which freedom Christ has freed us, may he attend to the generation of children, but for the glory and honor of Christ. And briefly, knowing that each one is told and commanded by the supreme lawgiver, if you wish to enter into life, observe the commandments; seek with all solicitude and diligence to fulfil your obligations, and to live well and holily in the holy marital state.

Chapter 4

OF THE OBLIGATION OF FATHERS TO BRING UP THEIR CHILDREN IN A CHRISTIAN MANNER.

For certain, and not lightly, are the obligations and duties of a father of a family in the care and reign of the family, since he is almost a small king in his own house, to whom belongs the preservation of peace and domestic tranquility, the maintenance of justice, and the provision of food and other necessary things for his subjects, and all this with various respects and modes, according to the variety of persons; for in another way the care, and authority of the father of the family concerns his wife, in another the children, and in another the servants; now as we have begun to say, many, and not slight are the aforementioned offices in the government of the house, but without any doubt one of the greatest, and most serious obligations, is that which the father has towards his children, that is to educate them, and raise them well, and in a Christian manner. For to bring them up only in terms of body and natural life is common to us with animals, and moral education, in accordance with the light of reason alone, is likewise common to us with peoples who are in the darkness of infidelity and do not know the true path to health; but the proper of the Christian, and of the faithful, is to bring up children according to the rule of the law of Christ, so that, living and dying well and healthily, they may be on earth instruments of God, for the benefit and help of human society, and may be in heaven heirs of the Kingdom of the same God, by whose grace and help we have the right to live and die, and to live eternally in His glory, that is, in the eternal benefit of Himself. Therefore, let no one believe that he is doing a small fault, while he is negligent in the offence of which we speak, and while he

does not take care to bring up his children well, indeed he commits a very grave sin, and offends himself, his children, his house, and his descendants, his country, mankind, the saints of Heaven, and finally the supreme God in many ways. In order that it may be better understood, it must be considered that the father who neglects to bring up his son well, first of all offends himself; for the son is in a certain way his own part and work, which, remaining through his own fault imperfect and defective, reverberates in him the defect and the imperfection; and he is like a body, whose members are either broken or dry and useless. In the second place it offends the same children, to whom, having given, as an instrument of God, being and living, it does not give them good being, which is much more important. He offends his house, and his lineage, because his evil children will probably give birth to worse descendants; so that the ancient nobility, which is the virtue of the eldest, is gradually lost, and the way to acquire it by the true means of virtue is closed, and families fall into ruin. He offends likewise, and does grave insult to the country, and to the republic, to which he was obliged to give good and useful citizens, who knew and wished to help it, and succour it in every need, where he leaves a useless and wretched generation, but what is worse, it leaves guilty and pernicious men, who are like so many little faces to kindle a thousand fires of discord and dissension, and who enjoy nothing more than to disturb and destroy with their bad example and bad works the peace and quiet of the community. But the bad fruit of the seed of paternal negligence does not stop here; on the contrary, proceeding further, it is the cause that he offends with his bad children the whole human generation, and the whole community of men, of which each individual man is a particle; This is because the indisposition and bad quality of one part, however small, is not without harm to the whole, and as far as this father destroys the human consortium, and reduces the world to a forest of beasts; for,

as a wise man well said, the unjust man is worse than any beast. And passing from earth to Heaven, how much offense is committed by the father who has not well and healthily brought up his children, against the saints and angels of Paradise, who through his own fault are deprived of a great joy which they would receive from the glorification of those souls, and from their company in Heaven, which they greatly desire. But who will ever suffice to say the most serious and inestimable insult that is done against God, to whom alone we are more obliged than to all creatures together? Woe to the father who has ill-guarded so precious a deposit given him by God, I say the soul of his son, entrusted to his care under the danger of eternal damnation. A deposit, which God esteems so highly, that, having made himself a mortal man, in order to redeem it from the hands of the devil, who through man's sin had usurped it, he judged that the price of his most precious blood, shed with infinite charity, and with most bitter pain and death on the trunk of the Cross, was well spent.

Chapter 5

HOW ACCEPTABLE TO GOD IS THE GOOD EDUCATION OF CHILDREN.

From what has been said above it is very easy to deduce on the other hand, how much good is done and how much praise deserves that good father, who, remembering his great obligation, and loving his children no less according to the spirit than according to the flesh, urges him to govern them promptly, and endeavors with all diligence to bring them up well; he will truly accumulate for himself a precious treasure of consolation, and of merit in the present life, and in the future; he will receive the sweetest fruits of his labors, and his memory will be in the blessing of posterity; he will increase with true honor and nobility his house, he will leave to his country the dearest pledge of love that can be left to them; for it often happens that the goodness, and valor of a single Citizen, is the conservation, and the health of an entire republic; and finally this one will be praised by men, and rewarded by God; therefore we read in the sacred scripture, the great Patriarch Abraham having been specially commended by God in this part of the good of raising children, when having to God to make the terrible punishment on Sodom, and Gomorrah, he said in this sentence: How shall I conceal from Abraham what I am about to do? knowing that he will not fail to command his children, and his descendants after him, to keep the way of God, and to do justice and righteousness, so that the promises which God has made may be fulfilled. Likewise the Holy Spirit, not without reason, has left us a record of the paternal care and solicitude of Job, who was continually concerned that his children should not offend God. And other similar examples are to be found in the divine letters,

from which it is evidently clear how much it pleases God that his children should keep themselves holy, and how much it displeases him to the contrary.

Chapter 6

OF THE NEGLECT THAT IS SEEN IN MANY ABOUT EDUCATIONE CHRISTIANA.

Now after so many bonds of natural, human, and divine law, by which (as we have shown in part) each father is obliged to do every possible diligence, so that his son may be good and virtuous; it is also something worthy of the greatest wonder, and of weeping together, to see how commonly this most important study of Christian education is neglected, which many people hardly know the name of. I do not deny that, by the grace of God, good fathers, zealous for the honor of God and for the health of their children, are to be found in all places and in all states, who with solicitude attend to bringing them up in the fear of God and in virtue; the prudence and diligence of whom is not detracted from by anything I say, indeed I intend always to give them the greatest praise. But the number of these is too small for the holy people, to whom, as the prophet says, God has manifested his judgments and his will, and who seek something of such moment, and of such private and public consequence, as good education; Because some fathers do not think about it, neither more nor less than if it did not belong to them, and as they are all devoted to sensual appetites, so they not only allow, but they are pleased to see their wretched children immersed in it. Others, a little more careful, see to it that their children are shrewd, and alert, and apt to the preservation, and to the acquisition of their possessions, that they are educated in the letters, and adorned with a certain apparent civic manners, or as they say, of a gentleman, and it seems to them that they have done a great thing, and that they are excellent masters of feeding their children well, not paying much attention to

true, solid Christian goodness, either as little necessary, or as not being the main thing, and in the end considered by them as such, that as the child grows, in his more mature years, he comes after the aforesaid things almost by himself without any other industry, that is used in tender childhood; which will be demonstrated at greater length in a more opportune place.

Chapter 7

THAT FOR THE MOST PART THEY TAKE BETTER CARE OF THEIR ANIMALS AND POSSESSIONS THAN THEY DO OF THEIR OWN CHILDREN.

But there would be much less cause for complaint if we were to bring up our children in a civil and moral way; for everything that the light of right reason teaches us, though it may not be perfect, is nevertheless good, and beneficial, and can be ordered to its proper end; but the worst thing is that the majority of fathers do not think about it except superficially, and for a print, as they say. Nor can it be said that this happens because men are coarse, material, and lacking in understanding; indeed our century is too acute, and prudent with the prudence of the flesh. But this is also the case, that the fathers of families, not all of them, but many, hold everything else in higher esteem than their own children, and when they say “children”, they mean the soul above all, which is the best and most essential part of ourselves, and they mean it in relation to its true and final end, which is God. A wise writer, though a gentle one, is surprised and saddened at the same time, that he takes more care and concern for his flocks, herds, oxen and horses than for men. But with greater zeal the glorious father St. John Chrysostom exclaims, as the one who was entirely enkindled by charity, and who understood better the very serious prejudice of souls, complaining of a very great inconvenience, and too much out of reason, that greater care should be taken of estates, and possessions, than of one’s own children, for whose sake the aforesaid things are acquired, and preserved. And who is there that does not see how much diligence is used in the breeding of horses? How much effort is put into raising and taming them, as well for

the use of war as for pleasure? It is truly a matter of amazement to consider the labour and patience of a Cavalier while he labours to make such a ferocious animal docile and obedient to every little movement of his hand and his spur, not to speak of those who for the sake of a slight pleasure, with much attention and industry train dogs and birds, instilling in them with artifice something humane and reasonable, stripping them little less of their natural pride and rapacity. So much can toil and perseverance, that in the end it overcomes everything; I leave to say of the cultivation of the fields, of commerce, of trade, and of the various exercises of men, in which neither toil, nor expense, nor dangers, nor the health of one's own body are forgiven, and God willing, that it should not often be of the soul too, that if a particle of those vigils, of those many thoughts, and labours were applied to bringing up a child well, admirable effects would be seen, and the world would be all the better for it; But it often happens, that while the father of a family goes sometimes through the snows, and sometimes through the heat of the sun, making sure that his possessions are well cultivated, he leaves in abeyance the most precious and fruitful field, that is the soul of his son, who neglected in his childhood becomes a forest full of thorns, of abominable vines, and sins. And while the unwise father, in order to accumulate money for his children, sails the distant seas, he leaves his unhappy children in a more tempestuous sea of these unbridled affections, and evil inclinations of ours, without any government, nor any regiment, so that it is no wonder that such miserable shipwrecks of youth follow daily as we see, with great disturbance of human and divine things.

Chapter 8

HOW THE CALAMITIES OF OUR TIMES, CONCERNING RELIGION, HAVE IN LARGE PART ORIGINATED FROM BAD EDUCATION.

Perhaps it will seem to some that I use too much exaggeration in what I am about to say, but the importance, and gravity of the matter, moves me to say freely what I feel. It seems to me that the many calamities, of which we see the world full in these last times, and in this, so to speak, decrepitude of the century, have their origin in large part from the bad education of children, because just as men are not made until after they have been children and young people, so ordinarily speaking, good men and bad men are made only from good and bad children and young people; Therefore it happens that some, in their younger years, being badly disciplined and brought up without the fear of God, and being accustomed not to obey their father and mother, but to do their own will and to love themselves in a disordered way, putting the brakes on their carnality, their appetite for things and their ambition, they go much further, and their bad habits grow with the years, and in such a way that, together with the strength of the body, it strengthens the viciousness in a heart, that, not fearing nowadays either men or God, and since the continued use, and the bad habit of sinning to which one does not want to resist become almost nature, and almost necessity, it finally runs without any restraint to rush into the depths of all abominations, and of all wickedness. The devil manufactures these as if they were instruments prepared for every iniquity, not only the seditious, the disturbers of the communal peace, the turncoats of cities and kingdoms, but also the heretics, the heresiarchs, and those who, with the ignorant and

foolishness of which the Psalmist speaks, say in their hearts, there is no God. In this way were born divisions and heresies in the Holy Church, as can easily be proved by infinite examples, that is, that some proud and covetous men either out of indignation and impatience at having been repulsed by some honor and dignity, or because they do not know how to contain themselves within the terms of private life, and out of a desire to dominate, and of having followers to make themselves known in the world, and lacking the true means of virtue, they raise the banner of some new or old heresy, found and revived from the ashes buried in hell, in order to reach their evil ends more easily, and there they draw and gather all those who have the same nature and disposition; And these vessels of the devil, ministers of perdition, are all the more pernicious when with the vicious and gross life is joined some sharpness of intellect, some knowledge of the law, and that knowledge which, being as the Apostle says devoid of charity, does not edify, but inflates, and makes others insuperbate, and this happens much more, if there is language, and eloquence to reason and to write, which is precisely the blowpipe and the bellows that inflames every great fire of discord and sedition. In sum one does not easily reach such an extreme of sin as separating oneself from the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church if not after a long habit of sinning and this is done with many acts, and long succession of time, beginning little by little in the greenest age in which, if the first roots of viciousness are not uprooted, the sense becomes so powerful, that the force of the immoderate passion almost blinds the intellect, and men come to such a fury and terrible blindness that not content to sin, they want their sin to be considered a virtue, and the most impure lusts and a thousand other wickednesses to be worshipped as holy things, and as such as far as they are in them, they place them in the temple of God, dogmatizing in the cathedra of pestilence such abominable errors, both in faith and in

morals, that not only the divine scriptures, the consensus of the fathers, and the authority of Holy Church, but the very light of reason itself detests and condemns them.

Chapter 9

AS MANY DISORDERS, ET PERTURBATIONS OF STATES, HAVE OCCURRED FOR THE SAME REASON.

Similarly, whoever wishes to consider those who have raised the people, stirred up rebellions, and turned cities and provinces upside down, will find that in their infancy, and while they were young, they were debauched in every kind of sin, involved in the vice of gluttony, lust, and gambling, and in the superfluous expenses of satiating their unbridled appetites, for which reason, as the years went by, the fire of lust increased, and the lack of possessions increased, of lust, and of gambling, and in the superfluities spent to satisfy their unbridled appetites, for which reason, since with the years the fire of concupiscence becomes greater, and lacking the goods that foment it, they begin to desire changes of state and new things, For as they have not been able to conserve their own faculties, so it does not give them the heart to gain them in the proper ways, not being accustomed to the arts of peace, nor wanting fatigue, like those who from the first years are nourished in idleness and in carnal pleasures, for whom, judging the common peace, by their own war, not knowing how to be able to develop from their debts, nor how to make up for the large, profuse expenses, they throw themselves as if desperate into the waves of any chosen deliberation. And others of them give themselves to secretly forging in the Cities, others become public thieves in the woods, and others plot treason against princes, and government revolutions, especially those who are nobly born, and used to live comfortably, and to feed many servants, and dogs, and flatterers, and strikers, these impatient of poverty, indeed of mediocrity, prodigal of their own, and greedy of that of others, also stimulated by the

powerful ambition, they resolve to turn the iron in the bowels of the country that has generated them, hoping in the storms, and in the ruin of others, to find tranquillity, and their own establishment, and if otherwise it is not made possible for them to fulfil their wretched designs, they cover themselves with the cloak of public good, and hide themselves under the shield of religion deceiving the simple people with strange names; Therefore it is seen that they favor heresies, and become heretics themselves, although truly most of the times they are more quickly ambitious, seditious, obedient, and rebellious, than heretics, since their aim is not so much that they must believe, of which nothing, or little they care, as that of dominating, and of not being subject neither to law, nor to any legitimate power.

Chapter 10

AS THE SUPERIORS PRUDENTLY DO, TAKING PARTICULAR CARE OF THE GOOD EDUCATION OF THE CHILDREN.

I think it has been sufficiently demonstrated that the many evils that disturb the afflicted Christian Republic in so many ways have had, and have in good part, their origin in the negligence of raising children well, both privately and publicly. For this reason we can say, with much reason, that no less prudently, than pitifully do those Princes and Superiors, who keep a very open eye, and take special care, that their little children, and the youth are raised well, and in the exercises of virtue, and introduce in their Cities religious men, and saints, and make other similar provisions for this so important respect; where otherwise, and reason persuades him, and experience shows us all too clearly through ancient and new examples, that if a lofty spirit is not held back by the fear of God, much less is it held back by the fear of the laws, and whoever does not care to break the faith given to God, and to the Church in baptism, will not care to break the faith given to his prince; and to say it in one word, the change of the states, and of the kingdoms goes almost necessarily after the change of the religion, and where people live licentiously, and where men are carnal, greedy, irreverent to God, and devoted to sins, there is a great and very propitious disposition to accept, when the opportunity comes, the change of the religion. And for this reason, whoever wishes to prohibit such pernicious fruits, should cut off the first root of bad education in the early years, from which all the sins and disorders of the following ages germinate.

Chapter 11

THAT IT WAS NOT SUPERFLUOUS TO WRITE THE PRESENT WORK.

No one, I believe, who wishes to consider the things said up to this point, will deny that the proper rearing of children is a very important thing, both for public and private affairs. But perhaps there will be those who will consider that it was a superfluous effort to write this book, for they will say that in the books of the ancient philosophers, both Greek and Latin, and in the poets themselves, there are scattered sufficient precepts for the government of each age, and that there is no lack of authors, who not only incidentally, but purposely have dealt with education, and among the others it is not so long ago that there was a man of excellent wit, and learning, who in the Florentine language wrote a pleasant little book about the good manners of children. Although I believe this to be true, I have thought that there is still plenty of room to write usefully on this subject, and I have believed it to be a work worthy of merit, to try to do what I can: and all the more so because the way I am going to do it will be, if I am not mistaken, very different from that of many others; Therefore the aim of this book will not be to write simply about political education, since it has to do with human happiness, considered by the philosophers, but it will be sooner to write about Christian education, which is ordered and directed to the highest and perfect heavenly happiness. In this treatise the child will be considered more principally as a Christian than as a man or sociable animal, and more as belonging to the City of God than as a citizen or part of an earthly republic, if this too is given due consideration; it is enough for now, that in this way the philosophers of the Gentiles have not dealt with education, nor have they been

able to do so; from the vestiges of which some of our moderns have not departed far.

And although in the ancient fathers, clear in doctrine, and holiness, many notable things of similar matter are read, nevertheless they are scattered, and almost hidden in various places, and not being reduced together, in a certain and distinct order, one cannot gather all the benefit that would be useful, and perhaps more, they are not so well adapted to the capacity of many, as I intend to do, having proposed to write, generally speaking, for the more common, and popular men, to whom there is a greater need of instruction, and the number of whom is undoubtedly much greater, than of the very knowledgeable.

For this reason, I believe that I should at least be excused if, for the sake of good intentions of helping, I not infrequently lead myself to very particular things, knowing that for human operations, which consist in the particular, greater help is given by particular documents, than by universal rules, if perhaps these bring a certain greater dignity to the writer. But, however it may be, I consider it expedient for those who reason about the good of raising children, to lower themselves even to the smallest things, if they can really be a means to lead to the acquisition of a high end.

And if that skilful Florentine writer, of whom I spoke a little while ago, has been able not only without reproach, but with his own praise, to weave his book of very minute recollections, to train a young man in only civic manners, much more, if I am not mistaken, it should be licit to me, that I do not pretend to introduce only in the children the superior decorum, which is required in the common conversation, but much more the inner composure, and the solid virtue, by means of the good education, and Christian discipline.

Chapter 12

OF THE REASONS THAT PERSUADE US TO DEAL FIRST WITH THE DIGNITY AND SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE.

Therefore, as far as divine grace will grant us, we must show the way of raising Christian children, born of a Christian marriage, I am reminded of the saying of Saint Augustine, that children are the fruit of marriage, as this same name declares to us, the woman being married to become a mother. And if the good fruit, according to the proverb of the Savior, comes from the good tree, it will not be out of reason to say, that good children are also to be expected from a good and holy marriage; not that this is absolutely necessary, since it is not infrequent to see bad children born of good fathers, and on the contrary, but it is probably spoken of, and as is most common. Therefore, it seemed to me not inconvenient to begin our education from its first principle, that is, from the excellence and sanctity of the marriage state, expounding in part what Christian marriages must be, since each one confesses that in everything the good principle is of the greatest moment, and on the foundation, so to speak, of a good marriage, rests in large part the hope of the happy generation and holy education of those children whom we are now raising.

And if it seems to some, perhaps, that I expand too much on this subject, which is not the main one, I beg the kind reader to consider that it was my duty, almost by necessity, in three places of this work, to speak of marriage.

The first one is this one where we are now because of the close connection between children, and marriage, as between cause and effect, and because this is, as we have

touched upon, the first base, and the foundation of all our building.

The second place was in the second book, where, for the reasons mentioned in its place, we reasoned about all the seven Sacraments of the Holy Church, and also about this one, which is one of that number, it was convenient for us to reason a little bit.

Lately in the third book, after having brought our son to the age of taking a wife, we could not omit to say some things pertinent to that so important deliberation, and to the conjugal offences between husband and wife. So I thought it would not be improper to collect the whole discourse in one place, since there was a good opportunity. This I do all the more willingly, since it is seen, if we may say so, that one of the things, for the most part little understood, and less considered by the faithful people, is the sanctity of marriage, of which I do not intend, however, to treat subtly, but as much as is sufficient for our purpose, more quickly morally, than doctrinally, and with brevity, leaving the rest to our own books and treatises, where the nature of marriage, and its conditions, and effects, are taught in a broader and more solid way.

Chapter 13

OF THE ORIGIN, ET INSTITUTIONE OF THE MARRIAGE, LIKE OFFITIO NATURAL.

I say, therefore, that marriage is a marriage which is a marital and legitimate union of man and woman tied with such a tight bond, that it is indissoluble, and contains an individual and inseparable communication of all life, marriage, I say, was not introduced by invention, not by human law, but by the disposition of nature, and of God the author of nature; who instituted it in the state of innocence, before Adam our first father sinned; for as we read in the sacred writings, God having created the first man, did not want him to be alone, but to have a helper, and a companion similar to him, for which having put him to sleep in a deep sleep, he took from his side a rib, and formed it with his omnipotence, into a true woman, who was our first mother Eve. And having brought her to Adam, he gave her to him as a companion, and as a wife, and blessed both of them, saying, increase and multiply; then Adam receiving her for his own, according to the commandment of God, spoke with high sentiment in this manner: She is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called man, because she is taken from man; therefore man shall leave his father and mother, and be joined to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh. So far these are Adam's words. Therefore, the excellence and dignity of marriage is great because its origin and institution is from God, from the beginning of the world in the happy state of innocence and original justice, in which, if our first fathers had persevered, all their children and grandchildren would have been holy and just. And not only God instituted marriage, but He Himself bound it in that indissoluble knot of which we have

spoken above, as our Savior manifestly taught us in the Gospel in the words: What God has joined together, let no man put asunder.

Chapter 14

THAT CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE IS NOT ONLY A NATURAL OFFITIO, BUT IS A SACRAMENT OF THE NEW LAW.

Therefore, as has been said, marriage was instituted by God as an offense of nature, for the propagation of the human race, from which it follows that marriage, even considered insofar as it is a work of nature, and a union and companionship of one sex with the other, to which the natural instinct by itself invites, as such I say, was always reputed to be something in a certain way sacrosanct, and worthy of great veneration, and respect, and this not only after the law given by God for Moise, but before that too, and not only among the Jews, but among the people, if there is no doubt that the marriages of the S. Patriarchs, and of the Hebrew people were full of greater sanctity, and were made and observed with much greater religion. Now it must be known, that the Christian marriage is not only an offence of nature, as it was in ancient times, but moreover it is a sacrament of the new law, instituted by Christ Jesus Master and our Saviour, and to say it more clearly it is one of the seven sacraments of the Evangelical law, true and proper as the others are; and in sum it is one of those seven fountains, and of those seven golden channels, by which the divine gratitude, and the virtue and efficacy of the passion and merits of Christ are communicated to the soul that does not place impediment. Nor is it necessary in this place to prove with many arguments the truth of this doctrine, which has been fully proven by the sacred Theologians, and Councils, and lately, by the holy Council of Trent. We base ourselves on the authority of St. Paul, who, writing to the Ephesians, calls marriage a great sacrament in Christ and in the Church, because it signifies the union of Christ with the Holy Church,

his spouse, and confers special grace and virtue, so that the conjugal office may be exercised well and holily, as we will say below, so has taught us, and teaches us the Holy Roman Catholic Church, our mother, pillar, and firmness of truth, and this is sufficient for the true Christian children of the Holy Church, to whom, and for whom at the present time we write.

Chapter 15

OF THE GREAT DIGNITY OF MARRIAGE INsofar AS IT IS A SACRAMENT.

The Holy Doctors say, that grace does not destroy nature, on the contrary it gives it perfection and compliment, so that marriage, being a sacrament, does not lose those prerogatives, and goods which are appropriate to it, being a work of nature, on the contrary it acquires others, and those same ornaments, which it had before, become through the sacrament more perfect, and, so to speak, of better alloy, as, for example, is naturally achieved by marriage, which is such a union, that it is not dissolved except by death, which is a company of two faithful companions, husband and wife, to whom is common the habitation, the living, the sustentances, the lawful generation, and the raising of children, the prosperous and adverse things of this life, the helping one another with supreme love in all needs, and other similar things. Now all these things and fruits, in a greater and more perfect degree, are found in matrimony, since it is the sacrament of the Gospel law; for this venerable sacrament not only signifies, but also contains, and works effectively in the soul, which does not put obstacles in its way, a particular grace, which sanctifies the husband and the wife, makes perfect the natural love that exists between them, and confirms the indissoluble union of matrimony; and as St. Bonaventure says, it raises from the depths of the womb, the womb of the man, the woman, the woman, the woman, the man, the woman. Bonaventure says, it raises from the disordered corruption of concupiscence; for by the grace of this same sacrament there arises a sweet bond of charity, which gently binds the minds of both spouses, so that they love each other with holy and cordial

affection, so that one does not become annoyed by the other; and that neither of them seek foreign and illicit love, and do not stain the chaste marital bed, to which the Apostle showed such reverence in those very serious words when, writing to the Hebrews, he said In all things let the husband be reverent and full of honor, and let their true bed be immaculate. These and other graces and gifts are conferred by marriage as a sacrament instituted by Christ our Lord, who by his blessed passion has purchased and merited them, as the sacred Council of Trent teaches us.

Chapter 16

OF THE THREE GOODS OF MARRIAGE, AND BEFORE THE OFFSPRING.

And so that the dignity of Christian marriage may be better understood, I shall continue to say that the holy Doctors have reduced the goods and fruits of marriage to three heads, and these are: offspring, faith, and sacrament. A great good has always been in marriage the offspring, that is, the children who are born of a legitimate wife, and who by the laws, which in all things greatly favor them, are called children born of rightful marriage; But this good is so much greater in Christian marriage, as its end in this part is higher and nobler, since marriage, being a natural union, has regard to the propagation and multiplication of the human race, and in each particular man, has regard to generate another similar to himself, in accordance with the natural appetite, for which each thing as much as possible wishes to preserve and perpetuate itself; which cannot be naturally pursued in the individual, is pursued in a certain way in the conservation of the species, by means of generation, which is also common to animals without reason; but man as a very sociable and civilized animal, considers other more perfect ends in his union, such as, for example, the conservation of the family, and of the homeland, and other similar ends, which are all, however, either natural or civilized. But the marriage of the new law is elevated to such dignity, that it is principally instituted to generate, and multiply the chosen race, the holy people, the people of God, purchased with the inestimable price of their blood; by which, having washed and cleansed the little children in the waters of holy Baptism, they are inserted into the body of the holy Church, and are made living members of Christ, so

that, persevering in the faith, and in the worship of the true God, and in the observance of his commandments, they may fill not only the earth, where we are like strangers and pilgrims, but much more Heaven, which is our true homeland, and the end, and the quiet of this short and tiring journey. And although the holy fathers of the Old Testament had in their marriages the principal intention of having children, who were lovers of the true God, and of preserving that people, from whom the seed was born, in whom all the nations were to be blessed, nevertheless their marriages were not a true sacrament, as ours are, and every good thing that was found in their marriages, is more perfect in ours, how much more perfect is the grace, and the truth, than the law, and the shadows, and how much more perfect without comparison is the state of the holy Church, spread through all the nations, than was that of the ancient, and narrow synagogue.

Chapter 17

OF THE SECOND GOOD CALLED FAITH.

The second good is called Faith, that is, that fidelity which is between the husband and the wife, who, having given to one another the power of their own bodies, inviolably preserve the marriage faith, not giving power over themselves to anyone, since in this part they are not their own, but belong to others, as the Apostle says, the husband does not have power over his body, but over his wife, and the wife does not have power over her body, but over her husband. And this good of marriage is so necessary that without it every other good of marriage is either destroyed or greatly offended. Many things could be said in this place against those who, failing in the faith given, and in the strictest obligation of the conjugal bond, in contempt of the holy sacrament, and of the law of God, against the debt of justice, with offense and great insult to their neighbor and spouse, to the detriment of their children, and of their country, and finally to the ruin and damnation of their own soul, they commit adultery, a sin so grave in the sight of God, so abhorred by the human and divine laws, that I do not have sufficient words to explain it. Therefore it is now greatly to be mourned, that in these calamitous times of ours this sin has already become so common, that many take it for granted, and even less brazenly boast of it, who by the hardness and impenitence of their hearts, to use the words of St. Paul, hoard wrath and vengeance against themselves on the day of God's just and terrible judgment. Therefore, it is no wonder that in a house, where such a grave offense is committed against holy matrimony, there abounds as much dissension and calamity as we see all day long. And what is more relevant to our purpose, and what

leads us to discuss the above-mentioned things, it is no wonder that such marriages, by the just judgment of God, are often unhappy, both in the generation and in the education of the children; for where there is no observance of the marriage faith, there can be no love, no charity, no peace, no God, and no true good.

Chapter 18

OF THE THIRD GOOD CALLED SACRAMENT.

But how cordial, and how open love must be between the two spouses joined in marriage, and moreover how holy, how chaste, and pure, and more quickly divine than human, is shown by the third good of marriage called sacrament; for marriage as a sacrament is a sacred and venerable sign, which signifies the closest and most holy union of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior with the Holy Church, his dearest and most chaste spouse, from whom, like Christ, he is never separated, but rather is perpetually united with her with the firmest knot of charity, so the marital bond by virtue of this sacrament, can never be loosened or dissolved while the couple live, even if for some serious reason, by ecclesiastical judgment, the cohabitation between them is separated. If this high mystery were to be carefully and often considered by those who wish to marry, or who find themselves married, they would fully understand what Christian marriages must be, and what obligations and offences are owed between husband and wife, and what union and delight it is agreed to be between them. It will not be too much trouble for me to explain this in more detail, since a great disposition to obtain children from God, and to bring them up well, as has been touched on elsewhere, consists in laying the foundations of a holy marriage well, opening the door to the grace which God wishes to give for this effect principally.

Chapter 19

HOW MANY USEFUL CONSIDERATIONS ARE DERIVED FROM THE UNION OF CHRIST WITH THE CHURCH, REPRESENTED IN HUMAN MARRIAGE.

and commerce of men, but sooner a work full of holiness, and of the highest mystery, since Christ our Lord true God and true man, wanted to declare to us the divine and closest union, and the inestimable love that is between him, and the Church, with the holy marital union of man, and of woman. For this reason the Apostle rightly said those words which we have already enclosed, namely, this sacrament is great, but I say in Christ and in the Church, so that the man is assimilated to Christ and the woman to the Church, And as Christ is the head of the Church, so man is the head of woman, the Church is the body and flesh of Christ, and woman is the flesh and body of her husband, and of Christ and the Church, and of husband and wife, according to the sentence, they shall be two in one flesh. Now if we consider what love Christ bears to the Church, and the Church to Christ reciprocally, and how she loves and reverences him with a holy loving and affectionate fear, how she desires only to please her husband's eyes, how she flees impure and false lovers, how fruitful she is in the procreation of spiritual children, how solicitous she is in teaching them and raising them well, how she is always in agreement with her spouse and of the same will, and of the same disinterest in all things; From these I say, and from other considerations one can easily come to know what must be the behaviour of the husband towards his wife, and conversely that of the wife towards her husband. This is demonstrated by the Apostle St. Paul. Paul who, in many places of his divine Epistles, admonishes husbands and wives of their duties, so that they

may do well and live blissfully in the state and vocation of marriage, is forming his precepts and exhortations from this rule and norm of the heavenly wedding of Christ and of the Holy Church, because wanting to show the great love, full of chaste affection that husbands must bear to their dear wives, he says in one place in this way: Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the Church, and gave and offered himself for her, in which place the Apostle means the oblation to death, when the Savior, driven by excessive and ardent love, underwent the most bitter passion of the cross, to cleanse and sanctify the Church, and fill it with honor and glory. And in the same place, a little further down, he says in this way: Husbands must love their wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself; no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and fosters it, as Christ does towards the Church; for we are members of his body, and of his flesh, and of his bones, and what follows, applying and comparing the heavenly and earthly nuptials. And with the same similitude he also reasons about what belongs to women in this form: Let women be subject to their husbands as to the Lord, for the man and husband is head of the woman and wife, just as Christ is head of the Church, and he is savior of the body, that is, of the Church, which is his body. Therefore the Apostle follows, just as the Church is subject to Christ, so are wives subject to their husbands. And at the end of that, after a long discourse, he concludes with those words already attached more than once: this sacrament is great, I say in Christ, and in the Church, and he adds, let each man love his wife as himself, and let the wife fear and revere her husband.

Chapter 20

EPILOGUE OVERO COLLECTION OF THE UTILITIES ENCLOSED IN THE SIGNIFICATIONE OF THE MARRIAGE.

We conclude, therefore, that it is impossible to express sufficiently how great and how holy the love of the bridegroom and the bride must be, since it represents the most holy and most fervent love of Christ with the Church; hence it is also clear what reverence and respect the wife must have for her husband, how much faith is common to both, and how much custody of the marriage bed; so that no small stain of impudence ever contaminates it, how modest and truthful must be the matrimonial intercourse, how much peace and concord in all things, together with a loving communication of all the domestic secrets, and of the goods and possessions, removing the hateful names of yours and mine, which in such a union must have no place. Besides this, that great readiness and charity, which is required between two spouses in helping each other in necessity, a common sorrow and enjoyment not regulated by self-interest, but by sincere love. And in sum, whoever goes on to discuss the matter will find that all the goods, all the fruits, all the debts, and the offenses of marriage are contained in this divine representation of the union of Christ with the Church. And for this reason the married couple must often reduce themselves to the mind, so as to know better their own obligations, and also to receive continually with this holy meditation new grace and virtue from God to be able to fulfill them. But two things in particular, which more closely pertain to our present purpose, are demonstrated to us by this mysterious sacrament: one, that the desire to obtain children is primarily to make them good for the glory of God. And in this, maternal fecundity must be

considered happy, just as the holy Church, fecundated by the divine grace of her heavenly spouse, generates every day by water and spirit in holy Baptism numerous hosts of beautiful and most holy children. The other thing is that whoever wishes to place his head under the yoke of matrimony, can and must learn from the marriage of Christ what Christian matrimony must be, and with what intention, for what respects, by what means, and for what purpose it should be contracted by both parties, and how carefully they must be warned not to commit anything that offends the eyes, and the sanctity of him, whose purest and most divine marriage, in the sacrament of this human marriage, is represented, as it seems to me to be necessary to demonstrate somewhat more distinctly.

Chapter 21

WHICH CHRISTIAN MARRIAGES MUST BE, AND OF THE MATURE DELIBERATION OF CONTRACTING THEM.

It is evident that in whatever deliberation and action of the moment the prudent and Christian man wishes to make, he must not only proceed maturely and with much counsel, as the wise men of the world have known it must be done, but in the first place he must set before his eyes the glory of God and the health of his soul, and this is sooner one end than two, so that both ourselves and our health must be loved principally in God, and for the glory of God, in such a way, that where this end of the good of the soul and the honor of God is jeopardized, there is no place for Christian deliberation, since the saying of the highest truth is always true: *quam dabit homo commutationem pro anima sua?* meaning that there is nothing in this world of such value, in which man must give his precious soul in exchange. And if one must enter into any undertaking with right intention, and with mature advice, even if it extends over a short period of time, how much more will this be required in entering into marriage? an act so great, and which, once done, will continue forever until the end of one's life? He, therefore, who intends to take a wife (for now we shall speak of the man as the head, if the same things are proportionately to be understood of the woman), should know that, as has been said elsewhere, he intends to do something which by its nature is good, holy, and grateful to God, and that saying this alone is enough to praise it greatly; But it may well be that a thing is absolutely good, and not good for any particular person, just as good wine is not good for the weakling, and it may also be that an operation which is good in its own way, by the conjunction

of an evil circumstance, or of a bad end becomes harmful, just as giving alms for vainglory would be. I therefore say that the prudent and Christian man, deliberating among himself to enter into the holy state of matrimony, must first have recourse to the principal and most efficacious means of bringing any negotiation to a good end, that is, he must most earnestly commend himself to God in devout prayer, both his own and that of God's servants, so that this deliberation and election may be guided by him, who is supreme wisdom and supreme goodness and who alone understands perfectly and wants our true good, and after this he must also adopt the human means, and sift through all that his own prudence, and the advice and help of good and faithful friends suggest to him. However, he must be aware that if God calls him to a higher and more perfect state of virginity and religion, he has no right to resist the Holy Spirit because of the satisfaction of others, or for human reasons, such as the preservation of his house, his possessions and the like, and the same is said of those who decide to marry for a second time, since holy virginity, and his continence, however laborious, is more perfect. But because these things consist of many particularities and circumstances, which are innumerable, and cannot be reduced to a certain rule, it is enough to have remembered that one should not rush blindly or hastily, as many do, but that one should cook and digest well the deliberation of taking a wife with prayer, with time, with advice and with obedience especially of the spiritual father, guardian, and governor of our soul, for whom, going to us in truth, faith, and humility, God will open to us his holy will, and will show us what is most expedient for us.

Chapter 22

OF THE INTENTIONS, AND OF THE PURPOSES THAT THOSE WHO WISH TO CONTRACT MARRIAGE MUST HAVE.

But supposing that it is expedient to marry, we must be warned to enter into this path, as we say with good footing, that is, with right and holy intention, and with good purpose, so that God and his glory may always go before us, as we have said above, and as St. Paul admonishes us writing to the Corinthians when he says, do all things to the glory of God, and he repeats it to the Colossians saying, whatever you do either in deeds or in words, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, let him decide, and make a firm resolution, that he chooses that state for the glory of God, and to save his soul in it, by divine grace, since it is one of the praiseworthy states of Holy Church, ordained by God, which by holy matrimony, though inferior to the virginal state, brings forth virgins, who so please His divine Majesty, and so highly crowns him, and finally by means of matrimony multiplies the Church, and fills Heaven. Let him also propose the procreation of children so that they may be enrolled in the Christian militia, and in the profession of the true and catholic faith, and in short, so that they may be more God's children than his own, let him propose the holy remedy against the battles of the flesh, which he does not feel strong enough to resist, and, on the other hand, not wanting to be ugly and to damn his soul in the mire of lust and fornication, he chooses that state, which after the fall of Adam began to be the remedy and medicine of human concupiscence and frailty, to remedy the sins of lust, just as before, at the time of original justice, when appetite obeyed reason, it was the offence of nature.

Together with these principal reasons there may be other holy and good reasons, which, if they are more than earthly, do not contradict those above, but rather go together to the same end; as it would be to have a help, and a company to pass better, and more easily the stormy sea of the travails of this life, the desire to leave heirs and successors to maintain the families, to preserve the faculties, the states, and the ancient honors of the houses, and what is so much better, as the common good advances the private, for the desire to preserve the country, and the republic, and other similar reasons.

Chapter 23

OF THE ABUSES COMMITTED BY MANY IN THE ABOVE MATTERS.

It should be reconsidered, if after having formed the intention, and established the intention to take a wife, according to the correct order of the above mentioned reasons, then descending to the election of this or that person in particular, one has some consideration of nobility, kinship, beauty, wealth, and other such respects, which do not repugn, simply speaking, to the sanctity of marriage. But it is to be greatly regretted that the misery of our times, in which one sees that in contracting marriages one has mainly an eye open to large dowries, to the hope of successions, or rather to the venting of a youthful ardor, immoderately inflamed by the beauty of others, not remembering that they are Christians, and hardly remembering that they are not men, they run wildly where their appetite takes them, as if they were brute animals, who if they considered, if nothing else, at least what the Angel Raphael told young Tobias in this regard, would be more ashamed of themselves, and more afraid of the wrath of God; for we read in the Holy Scriptures that when the Angel Raphael comforted Tobias to take Sarah as his wife, the young saint feared to do so, and said to the Angel, whom he believed to be a man; I have heard that she had seven spouses, and none of them was able to marry her, and they all died, and were possessed by a demon; then the Angel of God comforted him and answered in this way: Hear me Tobias, and I will show you those against whom the devil can prevail. Know, therefore, that those who choose matrimonial union in this way, who exclude God from themselves and their hearts, and think only of satiating their lust, like horses and horses without

reason, the devil has power over them. Then he follows the Angel, and shows with what a different intention, and with prayer to God the good Tobias should chastely and religiously accompany his Sarah, and consequently enjoy a happy and happy marriage. And since in this place it was necessary to insert this part of the history of Tobias, I will not forget to say, that it is a very useful book for the fathers and mothers of families, and for the education of their children, and in sum it is all full of holy and salutary teachings, so that I remind the most knowledgeable, who find themselves in that state, to read it often with attention, and devotion, as befits the writing not of a simple man, but dictated by the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 24

THAT MARRIAGES MADE ONLY FOR EARTHLY AND CARNAL PURPOSES ARE OFTEN UNHAPPY.

But returning to our purpose, I say that if it is not condemned, as has already been said, to have regard in contracting marriages for nobility, faculties, and beauty, nevertheless it is very much necessary to restrain with the brake of reason the precipitate course of our appetite in these things, so that they do not go before the other more important respects, and worthy of a Christian man, but follow afterwards in their place, with moderation and with measure, otherwise reason and experience teaches us, that such marriages reconciled only by flesh and blood, often have unhappy successes; for as is the ordinary of human things, that while they are not to be had they are ardently desired, and afterwards that they are in our power they lose much esteem, and we care little for them; So it often happens that the young bridegroom, having vented the evil flame of lust from which he burned, turns to new loves, and as if intoxicated by a more powerful wine, not only becomes impatient, but the love of his new bride cools down in him, and sometimes it turns into its opposite and becomes hatred, and contempt, and like an untamed animal, that sees itself tied, trembles, and struggles under the matrimonial yoke, from which follows a miserable and unhappy life between the two spouses with great perturbation of everything.

Now those too, who in order to increase their condition, and to cover their lowliness under the greatness of others, go after nobility, do not realise that in place of sitting beside a friend, and a faithful companion they often place on their

head a harsh lord, so that ordinarily, according to our corrupt customs, nobility of the blood, produces among other bad offspring, the height and contempt of the inferior, so that if the wife is disproportionately superior to her husband in nobility, she wants to be a woman and a lady, and not to be a man, produces among the other bad children, the highness and contempt of the inferiors, so that if the wife is disproportionately superior to her husband in nobility, she wants to be a woman and a lady, and not to be righteous, but to rule her husband, and to hold the offence of head, and to be allowed what she likes, so that the good order is greatly confused. And if, on the contrary, the nobility of the husband is such, he forgets that his wife is given to him not as a slave, but as a companion, by which name Adam speaking to God named Eve, saying the woman whom you have given me as a companion; so that often the husband abuses the legitimate authority he has over his wife, and by transforming it through the heat of nobility into tyranny, imperiously takes all power to himself, with grave prejudice to domestic government, and to that love which is required between persons so closely united, who, as has been said elsewhere, are not two, but one flesh.

But what shall we say of those who, lured by gold, think of nothing else, and sell, so to speak, for the price of a large dowry, the perpetual peace and quiet of their lives? Therefore, according to an ancient proverb, as great as the sea is, so great is the tempest; I mean that the rich wife, with her great dowry, also leads to great expenses, and to excessive pomp, which cannot be compensated for, or is done by ruining houses, or if they want to be somewhat moderate, they give rise to continual complaints, because of the ill-desired dowry, which foment the vanity of others, and opposes all disordered appetites as a shield.

Chapter 25

THAT IN MARRIAGES ONE MUST SEEK EQUALITY AND VIRTUE.

It is not necessary, however, that the aforementioned marriages, measured more by the love and interest of the flesh than by the love of God, should always be accompanied by the inconveniences we have mentioned, because God, blessed by his supreme goodness, often rectifies what men have done wrong, and the prudence of one of the two spouses can gain in such a way the soul of the other, and finally the grace that is given in this holy sacrament, if it finds some spark of good disposition, does marvellous effects in the place and time as it pleases God, but because in human and moral things, as a wise man of the world said, mathematical demonstrations are not required, that is very certain and unchangeable; it must be known that we reason according to what happens most commonly, and therefore it is very likely that we can affirm that everything that begins with a bad beginning, is not to have either good success or a good end. And for this reason it must be considered an excellent thing for those who wish to be joined in matrimony to seek, as far as possible, equality of country, and condition, and ability, and age, and above all conformity of morals, which in itself can reconcile friendship, so that since marriage is a bond which binds the minds of two people with the closest knot of love that can be imagined, the more effectively it will achieve its effect, the greater the conformity and similarity it will find in the things which are to be united, as we see in natural things, verbs gratia, water which is cold and humid more easily transmutes and converts itself into air, with which it conforms to humidity, than it does in fire, which being hot

and dry, has qualities quite contrary to its own. Now then, because grace, as has been said elsewhere, gives perfection to nature, it is prudent in my judgement for those who wish to marry to reject as dangerous a stumbling block as far as they can, too much inequality in all things; but much more prudently, and in a Christian manner, he will have greater regard, in the election of something so important, for virtue, for the sanctity of life, and for good and gentle manners, than for beauty and dowry, to which most men are so intent, that by doing great insult to the sanctity of marriage, it seems that they are more likely to lead a concubine home, or to trade, than to make an honorable and legitimate marriage; The bride who is endowed with humility, modesty, modesty, truthfulness, taciturnity, solicitude for family care, chaste love for her husband, and other similar virtues, and above all with the holy fear of God, from whom and with whom all good comes. And if that Gentile said that he wanted a man who needed money more quickly than a man who needed money, how much more so must the Christian say? Not because dowry should not be taken into account, which was rightly introduced to be able to better bear the burdens of marriage, but because this is by far not the most important thing to think about, and yet it is considered so by many, if not by the majority of men. I could also say that a moderate beauty, with a lot of honesty is more eligible, for many reasons, but because I see that I have gone too far in this matter, I do not want to go any further; It is enough for me to have said that the Christian must in all his actions, and even more so in this, so holy and important for the good of his soul, govern himself in a Christian manner, that is more principally by the rules of the spirit, than by those of the flesh, and more quickly according to the example of the few, and good, of his state and condition, than of many.

Chapter 26

OF IMMODERATE DOWRIES, AND PUMPS.

I would believe, if it is permissible for me to recall it, that it would be something not mediocresly useful, if by public authority some temperance, and moderation of the dowries were placed where it is needed, which exceeding the due measure in each state give rise to infinite inconveniences, so that the poor father seeing himself burdened with daughters, and not being able to marry them all with that dowry, which the use, or sooner abuse of the homeland requires, he resolves to make his effort in one, and the others either remain to grow old at home, or go to the monasteries more forced than voluntary, or if he wants to marry all those who are inclined to the vocation of marriage, the faculties remain exhausted to the prejudice of the males, and sometimes the second and third daughters are married with dowries less than the first, and consequently to unequal husbands, from which arise emulation, and envy, and many disputes. From here it also arises that many good, and honest young women do not find that condition which would be suitable for their state, and as the snares of the devil are innumerable, they often lead themselves through poverty to great misery, and precipices, to which and to many other similar inconveniences, the public authority could remedy not a little. And truly, if we see in the noble Cities many very principal gentlemen who promptly and charitably toil in the government of the Hospitals, and in the care of the poor infirm, and in other pious works, it would certainly be, if I am not mistaken, a work of great piety even this, that some persons of quality, with the value of the public authority, should put their hands into the marriage of the poor spinsters, and all the more so the better born they

were, so that for lack of dowry, they might not remain completely abandoned; and certainly I do not know why it was not possible to give a courteous and Christian force to a rich young man, who would take a good and well-mannered young woman as his equal for a wife, even if poor; and I understand that if some men of rank, and God-fearing, would apply themselves to this care in the Cities, one would see beautiful and very holy marriages emerge, with much praise to the one, who had made greater esteem for goodness than for property. But since all the excess of dowries is covered under the veil of the many expenses and burdens of marriage, I believe that it would be necessary above all else to provide for the disorderly arrangements of the wedding, and for the continual pomp of women, which has never grown so much today, both in the clothing and in the other precious ornaments, and in the number of maids, and servants, and of coaches, and of carriages and in so many other ways, that it is almost impossible to be able to make up for it for a long time, so that the families go into extermination, besides that every distinction of status is removed, and in appearing in public every small citizen with her ornaments seems to be a great lady, It is to be feared, according to what we read in the Holy Scriptures and in the Holy Prophets, that God will be greatly displeased and perhaps the many scourges, with which the Father of mercies visits us every day to awaken us from the sleep of sin, are in no small part caused by this disorder, because behind the pomp of dress and excessive embellishment is followed by pride, vanity, lasciviousness, idleness, illicit pleasures, covetousness, shameless love, and in sum this is a bait of very great sins and for the advantage of men, whose gravity should have been their own, it seems that in the pumps they contend for lightness with the feminine ones; Therefore whoever has the fear of God, the desire for the public good, and zeal for the health of the soul must rightly desire that provision be made for it, but as has been

said above, and not superficially, for there is no lack in many principal cities, good orders on this, but little or nothing is observed, so that by raising children imitating the disorders of their fathers and also leaving them to their children by succession, they grow more and more, and become more difficult to take care of. But since we have made a long digression, let us return to our subject.

Chapter 27

OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE MARRIAGE IN CONSPECT OF THE CHURCH, AND OF THE CHRISTIAN PREPARATIONS.

The Holy General Council of Trent, among many very useful decrees made by the Holy Spirit, who always governs the Holy Church, has also ordered many things pertaining to marriage. And principally it has forbidden in every respect those marriages, which often were contracted secretly and furtively by simple and ill-advised young men, and are called by their Latin name “clandestine”, and which the Holy Council has taken away from them all efficacy and force, so that they are no longer true marriages, and if by some after the publication of the decree of the Holy Council they were contracted in this way by mistake, or by malice, they would not be the contracting husband and wife, but impudent lovers, and they would commit a great sin. And therefore, in order that the marriage may be true, firm, legitimate, and holy, it must be celebrated in the face of the Church, in the presence of a certain number of witnesses, and with the intervention and authority of the parish priest, spiritual father, and minister of God in this Sacrament, as the Council itself has fully ordained for these and other solemnities to be observed. Now, because in contracting marriage, the spouses who are well disposed receive, as has been said elsewhere, by virtue of this sacrament, divine grace, and a particular help and favor from heaven, so that they may live together with love, and in holy peace, and prosperity; therefore it is fitting that every due preparation be made, in order to receive the gift of God, cleansing through the sacrament of confession the heart from sins, which divide us from God, and close the door to grace. For this reason, the Holy Council exhorts the spouses with very serious words,

that before they contract marriage, or at least three days before consummation, they diligently confess their sins, and receive with devotion the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist. Similarly, before they are joined together in the marriage bed, the newlyweds must be blessed in the temple of God by the hand of their priest; This custom of blessing the bride and groom is very ancient in the Holy Church, which, filled with the Spirit of her heavenly bridegroom Christ, has composed for this blessing some devout prayers, which are said in the celebration of the Mass, and are so sweet and affectionate, that the bride and groom must try to taste them with all the depths of their heart, and conform with their own desire to that of our Holy Mother Church, which through the mouth of the priest makes these prayers to God over the bride, saying

Lord, may this handmaiden of yours be as lovable to her husband as Rachel, as wise as Rebekah, as long-lived, and as faithful as Sarah, and little more: may she be grave in truthfulness, venerable in modesty, and honesty, may she be instructed in the heavenly doctrines; and little more, after having wished him fruitfulness of offspring, holiness of life, and the eternal joys, she concludes thus: Let them see the children of the children together, until the third and fourth generation, and let them reach the desired old age. These and other religious, and mysterious ceremonies, which the Holy Church uses in the solemnity of marriage, show the faithful the sanctity of this act, and how much reverence it is necessary to treat it, and likewise with how much study, and solicitude the newlyweds must prepare themselves, and dispose themselves, so that the vows, the prayers, and the maternal supplications of the Holy Church, which by themselves are always efficacious in the sight of God, do not succeed in vain through their fault.

The same Council of Trent has exhorted the spouses that, after having contracted the marriage by affirmative words, and in the present time, with the other due circumstances, they should not live together in the same house, before they have received the priestly blessing, of which we speak. And all this in order to obviate as much as possible the need to proceed in anything pertaining to marriage, not according to the impulse of the flesh, but according to the rule of reason, and of the spirit, and finally the Council itself, in decreeing the times in which it is permitted to solemnly celebrate a marriage, has not left it to the discretion of the Bishops to remind them, and to order them, that they should see to it that the feasts and wedding celebrations should be done with that modesty and honesty that is appropriate among Christians, concluding all the reasoning done at length about the matter of marriage, with these last brief, and very serious words, worthy to remain perpetually engraved in the hearts, and in the memory of the married while they live, as words dictated by the Holy Spirit, and they are these: Sancta enim res est matrimonium, et sancte tractandum, *i.e.* marriage is a holy thing, and therefore holy is to be treated.

Chapter 28

EXAMPLE OF TOBIA, AND OF SARA, IN WHICH THE HONESTY OF THE MATRIMONIAL UNION IS DEMONSTRATED.

I cannot restrain myself, for the benefit of the readers, not to report in this place part of a useful history, recorded in the divine scriptures, and in the booklet of Tobias, of which I spoke incidentally not long ago, so that we may understand from the example and comparison of that father of the Old Testament, in the time of the law of fear, and of shadows, and of figures, what the Christian must be in the time of the law of love, and of grace, and in the time of fullness, and of truth. Therefore it is written in the aforementioned book, that the Angel Raphael, the guide of the young Tobias, discussing with him the marriage that he had to contract with the good Sarah, among others said to him these words: Therefore, when you have taken her for your wife, you shall go into the chamber, and for three days you shall abstain from her, and you shall do nothing else but wait to pray with her; the first night, by lighting the liver of the fish, the devil will be cast out; the second night you shall be admitted into the consortium, and the union of the holy Patriarchs, the third night you will have the blessing so that your children will be born with health, after the third night you will take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, guided and moved more by the love of having children, than by lust, so that in the seed of Abraham you will achieve the blessing of your children. These are the words of the Angel to Tobias, of which he was a most diligent observer, as we read a little later in this form:

After they had dined, they brought the young man, that is Sarah's father and mother, to the bride, Tobias remembering

the reasoning of the Angel, took out of his pocket the part of the liver, and placed it on the breeches, then the Angel Raphael took the devil, and bound him in the desert of Upper Egypt, and turning Tobias to the virgin, he began to exhort her, saying to her, Sara, let us rise and pray to God today, and tomorrow, and the day after tomorrow, because in these three days we have to be united with God, and after the third night has passed, we will find ourselves in our own marriage, so that we are children of the saints, and it is not lawful for us to be united together as the people who do not know God do. So both of them got up and continued to pray together, asking God for salvation, that is, to deliver them from the murderous devil. And Tobias spoke, and said, "Lord God of our fathers, may the heavens and the earth, the sea, the fountains and the rivers, and all the creatures within them, bless you, for you formed Adam from the silt of the earth, and gave him Eve to help him, and to keep him company, and you know, Lord, that it is not for the sake of lust that I take my sister, but only for the sake of love and the desire for posterity, in which your name will be blessed for ever and ever. And Sara spoke in this way, have mercy on us Lord, have mercy on us, and grant us grace that we may both grow old together in good health. Up to this point these are the words of sacred scripture.

I have wanted to transcribe from word to word this notable example, given to us by the Holy Spirit for the teaching and instruction of those who take wives, so that they may know how it is necessary to restrain the impulses of lust, with the bridle of reason and the fear of God, since, as St. Hieronymus says, there is nothing worse than loving one's wife, like an adulteress or a harlot.

Chapter 29

AS MARRIAGES CONTRACTED IN A HOLY WAY ARE PROSPERED, AND FAVORED BY GOD.

Therefore, marriages which will be reconciled according to the law of God, with good and holy intentions, and with that praiseworthy principle which is appropriate to a Christian man, can undoubtedly be hoped for in divine grace, that they will have a prosperous success and an excellent end, provided that the husband and wife do not intermit the study of piety, and good living, recommending themselves continually to God, from whom every good, both spiritual and temporal, comes, but not giving themselves to an idle and negligent life, and the wife do not intermit the study of piety, and of the good life, recommending themselves continuously to God, from whom all good comes, both spiritual and temporal, not giving themselves up to an idle and negligent life, but toiling according to their state in some honourable and fruitful exercise, so that they can support their little family; To such as these God will give his blessing both in substance and in children and they will have, if it is expedient for the greater glory of God and their own good, many good children, healthy and whole in body and mind, which if well it is not a universal rule, nevertheless it often happens that for the sins of the fathers, God does not give children, or allows them to be born imperfect and debilitated in body and mind, or takes them away from them while they are children and young people, or even leaves them for their punishment, because the bad life of children brings infinite sorrows to the fathers, who God permitting rightly taste the bitter fruits of their own sins, and of the negligence used in bringing up their children well. In sum, the first presupposition of the father

and mother of the family must be, that all our true good depends on God, and therefore they must strive to live in His Most Holy grace, avoiding sins, and attending the Holy Sacraments, medicines for the soul, and secondly they must toil in the family care, and not eat bread idly. These are the ones that the Holy Spirit through the mouth of David the prophet calls blessed when he says, Blessed is the one who fears God, and walks in his ways, that is in the observance of his commandments, you will eat the labors of your hands. Blessed will you be, and good will happen to you; meaning that whoever fears God in a holy way will live abundantly, and will enjoy peacefully what he has acquired by his own labors, and everything will happen to him with prosperity. The Psalmist goes on to say, your wife will be like a fruitful vine in the fields of your house. Your children will be like olive shoots around your table. Thus the man who fears God will be blessed, that is, the one who, out of love and reverence for God, abstains from sins and does the works of virtue, and finally the prophet prays to this man from God for every blessing, private and public happiness and long life, so that he may see the children of his children through long succession. And therefore we conclude that fathers and mothers who are eager to have many and good children, beautiful and fruitful as olive branches, must themselves first of all be good Christians, and fearful of the Lord, and make themselves capable of those favors and gifts that His Majesty, even temporally and in this present life, is pleased for His glory to grant to His true and humble servants.

Chapter 30

THAT ONE MUST PRAY TO GOD TO OBTAIN CHILDREN.

The Apostle Saint James says that every grace, and every good and perfect gift comes from above, and descends from the Father of lights, God our Lord. Therefore there is no doubt that children are a gift from God, and therefore not only the husband and wife must live in a Christian manner and with the holy fear of God, as we said earlier, expecting from the Lord's goodness the desired children, but moreover they must petition His divine Majesty with warm and humble prayers, always referring everything to the glory and goodness of God, for if it is true that God sometimes, for a greater good hidden from us, does not want to grant children to fathers and mothers, although they are his faithful servants, and grateful and accepted in his presence, it is also true that God wants to grant us many things by this most effective means of prayer, in which the mercy of God is greatly revealed, who is pleased that his gifts and graces are also our merit, and are acquired by us with a just title of reason, as a reward and merit of trust, humility, perseverance, and of many other virtues which are exercised in devout and fervent prayer, so that the benign father of mercies, and wants to grant us the grace we desire, and with greater measure, and with firmer possession, and with greater contentment he wants to grant it to us, that we ourselves know neither to desire, nor to ask for, and with advantage he wants to crown us in Heaven, for his own gift, as purchased, and deserved by us. Therefore, the husband and wife who wish to be a father and mother should often go before God, and there pour out their prayers with an abundance of spirit and faith, making humble recourse to the intercession of the most glorious Queen of Heaven,

Mother of God, and to the help of the other saints, often recalling the intentions that the children want only for the glory of God, and after this, if it pleases His Majesty to dispose otherwise, they should not be contrite in any other way, but should wait patiently, and with a tranquil spirit, for the time of divine blessing, persevering nevertheless in prayer, which is never unfruitful, if it seems that they are not heard. And let the two spouses be of good will, so that when the Lord sees them persevere in faith, he will say to them what he said to the unconquered Canaanite woman: “Magna mulier est fides tua, fiat tibi sicut vis”, “woman, great is your faith, do as you do.

Chapter 31

THAT THE CHILDREN OBTAINED THROUGH PRAYER OFTEN SUCCEED IN EXCELLENT GOODNESS, AND VALOR.

The power of humble and fervent prayer is so great, that it not only imposes on the children from God, but also imposes special grace and help so that they may be good. We read in the divine histories of men distinguished for their valor, and for their goodness, who were the fruit of the prayers of their fathers and mothers, such as the great Samuel the prophet and judge of the people of Israel, who, as the Scriptures say, was so called by his mother Anne, and was called “quod a Domino postulasset eum”, because he had asked God for it with the warmest of prayers. We also read that Abraham complained to God that he had no children, so that it was necessary that a servant of his born in the house, should succeed him as heir; and then God promised him the holy Patriarch Isaac, telling him that not one of his servants, but his natural and legitimate son, who would come out of his womb, would be his heir; and although he was old, and Sarah his wife old and barren, the holy man did not doubt the firmness of God’s word. In the New Testament we have the example of John the Baptist, whose greatest son was born among the sons of women. And that the old saints Elizabeth and Zacharias prayed to God to have this child is very clear from the words of the Gospel, where it is written that the angel of God appeared to Zacharias in the temple and spoke in this way: Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer has been heard, and Elizabeth your wife will bear you a son and you will call him John, and you will have great joy, and what follows. In writing about this passage the glorious Doctor St. Ambrose says a doctrine very much in connection with what we are now discussing, that children, and

especially good and holy ones are a gift of God, and therefore it seemed to me to transcribe it in this place, and he says it like this:

It is appropriate to rejoice greatly in the birth of the Saints, because the Holy One is not only the grace of the father and mother, but the health of many, so that this place admonishes us to rejoice in the generation of the Saints; fathers and mothers are also admonished to give thanks to God not less for the birth, than for the merits and virtues of their children, so that it is not a mediocre gift of God to give children who are propagators of the lineage, heirs of the succession. You see Jacob rejoicing in the generation of twelve sons, Abraham is given a son, Zacharias is heard. Therefore the fruitfulness of the father is a divine gift. Therefore, let fathers be grateful that they have begotten children, because they have been begotten; mothers, because they are honored with the rewards of marriage, since children are the salary and the wages of their military service. Herein are the words of the Saint.

From the lives of the saints one can also gather many examples of men of excellent holiness and virtue, granted by God through prayer, such as Saint Nicholas the Bishop and many others. Therefore, even if the husband and wife are young and fruitful, they must not cease to pray to God for children of such body and soul that God may be glorified in them, and that they may be, as Saint Ambrose says, not only the joy of the home, but the common joy of the country for the benefit of many.

Chapter 32

OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF ORATION IN THE TIME OF PREGNANCY.

The good mother, when by the grace of God she feels to be pregnant, must multiply her thanksgiving and prayers to the Lord, commending to him the happy birth of her child, and often dedicating her with new affection to his service, in whatever state he wills, either in religion or in the world. In this way I believe that some holy women were praying and offering their children to God, to whom God wanted to reveal, while they were pregnant, great things about the children who were to be born from them; as we read about the mother of St. Dominic, who, being pregnant, revealed to God the great things about the children who were to be born from them. Dominic, who being pregnant, it seemed to him to see in a dream that she had in her womb a little dog, which carried in its mouth a little face, with which, coming out, it inflamed the whole world; as indeed Saint Dominic did with the splendor of his holiness and doctrine, and has done, and still does through countless illustrious men of his order. Pregnant women must also abstain from violent movements of the body, and from other disorders, which could cause abortion, or other harm to the integrity and health of the fetus, and of the creature, which to warn more specifically is the work of doctors, and not of this institute.

Chapter 33

THAT BAPTISM SHOULD NOT BE DEFERRED.

If the good father and the pious mother have often commended and offered their little son to God while he was in his mother's womb, it is only right that since he was born and has come as a new pilgrim to this valley of tears, he should be presented as soon as possible to the holy temple of God and to the fountain of holy Baptism, so that he may be reborn more happily in water and spirit and in the world, and may be counted among the faithful people who, under the banner of the Cross, are fighting in Christ, so that he may be reborn more happily of water and spirit, and worldly, and white, may be placed in Christ, and may be numbered with the faithful people, who under the banner of the Cross militate, and war against the devil, against the world, and its pomps, and against the flesh, our perpetual and cruel enemies. Therefore, fathers and mothers must be solicitous to have the creature baptized without dilation, remembering the firm decree of the Savior, that unless someone is reborn of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Therefore, since there is no other way of health for little children except that of baptism, a grave sin is committed when the poor infants are left too long without the help of divine grace, and without the justification, which through Christ they achieve in the regeneration of baptism; so that no one should be so unwise, not to say so unmerciful, that for light-hearted and worldly purposes of celebrating, or waiting for friends, and the like, exposes to so much danger one of his dearest, and desired children, that by dying for some immediate accident they remain eternally excluded from the kingdom of God; especially since in that tender, and weak age the dangers are infinite, as the most learned

book called the Roman Catechism gravely warns everyone. Besides this, children must not be baptized in private homes, except in case of necessity, but in the Church, the house of God, the place specifically designated for prayer and for the holy sacraments, where the presence of Christ our Lord is truly present in the most holy Eucharist, the assistance and custody of the Angels, the relics of the Saints, and their venerable images, and many other prerogatives, which the temple has dedicated, and consecrated to God, here also His divine Majesty dispenses with greater abundance His graces, and favors. And this is remembered in spite of some nobles of the world, who with a different spirit from the Centurion of the Gospel, do not deign to go to the house of Christ, but want Christ to go to their house.

Chapter 34

OF THE QUALITIES OF THE GODPARENTS, OR COMPANIONS,
AND OF THE NAME OF THE CHILD.

But more specifically for the poor, who most often sin in this area, it should be pointed out that in the election of a companion, and a godmother, more consideration should be given to the spiritual utility of the soul, than to the temporal utility of the body; For this reason, one should not so much look for a rich man as for a good and God-fearing man, who, if it should happen that the child should be deprived of his father's education, either through death, negligence or any other accident, has another father, who, remembering that he has entered into the confidence of God for him, is concerned for his godson's health and his own, so that, in accordance with his duty, he may instruct him in the doctrine of the faith, in the fear of God and in good morals. I do not want to leave out of my mouth something that will easily seem trivial to some, but perhaps it is not without fruit, and is not far from our subject of Christian education, whose end is true goodness. I say, therefore, that it is useful and laudable to baptize the child with the name of some Christian saint, more quickly than of a gentle man, especially of some whose memory is famous only for their pride, and for their choice. The same is said of some extravagant names, and placed in order to invite the children, once they are grown up, to revenge, or to wiles, and to sins, which should not be behaved by the baptized, rather they should, as it is said, impose on them the name of Saint Christian, to whose intercession the father and the mother could often recommend the child, and give him as a particular advocate, training the child, as he grows up, to do the same, and exciting him to virtue with the example of the

life of that Saint, who is piously called in needs, by the one who was taught in childhood, has no doubt that he will obtain from God many graces, and for the preservation of life, and for the benefit of the soul, as in the histories and legends of the Saints can be observed. And when there is no other reason, the Christian father must in all things make an open profession of his desire that his son may be a true Christian in name and effect.

Chapter 35

OF THE CARE OF FORMING THE BODY OF THE CHILDREN.

In the beginning of childhood, it seems that one can hardly expect anything other than the formation of the child's body, which, if studied from afar, and as a remote disposition, nevertheless belongs to education; For this reason the body is an instrument of the soul, and the better it is disposed in all its parts, the better it can serve the soul, and it often happens that in children there are some defects of the body, which, while the child's limbs are like soft wax because of their tenderness, they can be corrected to a great extent with the diligence of some women breeders of such things, besides that it is necessary to warn the child not to offend any member, which would then make any difference, and impede the human and civil operations; that if any father, or mother is of such a cruel, and bestial mind, that for the sake of gain he cripples, and deforms his own son, I do not know what punishment does not deserve such impiety.

Let the mothers and nurses also be warned not to place the creature easily in the same bed where they are lying, because of the danger of suffocation; and let them also warn that it should not remain alone, exposed to various accidents, such as fire, or falling, or animals that could harm it; since even domestic cats are read in some histories to have taken the eyes from the head, and eaten them, of a poor creature abandoned in the cradle.

And to continue the thread of this same subject, which touches on the good formation of the body, I say that this care and diligence must be persevered for a good period of time, until the limbs are well established and firm. A great

philosopher says that it is a good thing for children to let them weep, because with that movement their limbs expand and become stronger; The same says, that they should be accustomed to suffer the cold, which is understood after some time that they are born, so that it seems that those who, out of vagueness, put hoods and little hats on the heads of children do not do very much, so that they become less able to withstand the ravages of the air at a more mature age, just as it is not good to want to see them dressed like young people for a slight pleasure, to dress them with clothes very suitable to the person, and too affectionately, rather it is better when they begin to be older, that the clothes are comfortable, so that the body grows more easily, and in the dressing and undressing of the putto that is done very often the limbs do not receive distortion, or other kind of offense.

And because this part of the body, which is necessary for it to be healthy, of good habit, and fit for the work that human life requires for private and public needs, cannot be spoken of in a determinate way in all the conditions of men, so that the other requirements must be those of the farmer and the craftsman, others of the middle-class citizen, and of the noble man, and consequently various dispositions of the body are sought, Therefore, generally speaking, we can say that in the care of the body two extremes must be avoided, one of making it too strong and fierce, and the other of making it too soft and delicate; in the first extreme those peoples exceeded, who, when their children were born, immediately threw them into the waters of the coldest rivers, and in all the rest proceeded as if they had not raised a reasonable man, but a bull or a horse; In the other extreme there are those who, loving their children too tenderly, nourish them with such delicacy, that they are weakened by every small harm, so that often a rain, a wind or a similar extraordinary accident offends them so much that they fall

ill, and die, or if they live they are so unwell, and alienated from their labors, that the house, the friends, and the homeland can gather little or no fruit from their work. And therefore, since each man is born not for himself, but to help others, and since each one, however noble and rich, must meet in the journey of this miserable life many inconveniences and discomforts, the best thing is to accustom the body in its tender years to suffer, using however that discreteness and moderation which is appropriate. And even if from the middle one were to decline to one of the two extremes, it would be less evil, commonly speaking, to bend towards too much suffering, than towards too much pleasure, and comfort, not only for the reasons mentioned above, but also because the soul has no greater impediment to the acquisition of virtue, nor greater enemy, than its own body, nourished and brought up in a harmful way.

Chapter 36

OF SUCKLING CHILDREN, AND OF NURSES.

If education by its nature has more regard for the formation of the soul than for the body, nevertheless there is such a close connection between these two parts, from which one man is composed, that it is almost impossible not to touch something. And some people of great doctrine have held, and not without probability, if we look at what happens more generally, because of the negligence of his own, that the habits of the soul follow the temperature of the body, not that complexity can do violence to reason, and force the freedom of the will, but they speak of a certain varied inclination to the passions according to the different temperaments; For this reason it should not seem far from our purpose, something which, if it is remotely relevant to the good education that is claimed, and among these the first nourishment of milk, which is given to the child, is not of little consideration. Now I do not want to enter into a criticism of mothers who do not give milk to their children outside of every law of nature, which in our times is so common, and more so in the noblest women, that it would seem very surprising to see some of them feeding their child, who is their own flesh and blood, with their own breasts. I will say well that very serious and saintly doctors. I will say that very serious and saintly doctors have greatly criticized this abuse, as an argument of little love, and also of incontinence; nevertheless, because such respects can sometimes occur, that the mother is justly excused from this offense, at least it is to be greatly warned to the election of the nurse, or nanny, in whom one should not only look for good milk, but also for good manners, because it is evident from experience, that very often the creature escapes with

milk the vices, and defects of the nurse, such as anger, drunkenness, sleepiness, stupidity, and other similar ones. And if we see that from fathers and mothers through generation similar qualities are derived in their children, it should not seem surprising that from milk, which is also corrupted blood, and at that tender age is almost a second generation, the same effects follow. So I repeat again that the nurse should not be deputed at random, and without any regard for her habits, otherwise, partly through milk, and partly when the child grows through frequent conversation, such seeds of vices are sown which take root over the years, so that they may never or at least not be uprooted without great effort. But in the particular of breastfeeding, I will also add that it seemed to me strange to see in some countries beyond the mountains, feeding their young children with milk not of man but of animals, so that perhaps in good part it arises, that many of the little people fed in that way, have something more feral than reasonable.

Chapter 37

WHEN YOU BEGIN THE CARE OF EDUCATION WITH RESPECT TO CUSTOMS.

Perhaps some will ask at what time the care of education should begin, understood precisely as that diligence which must be used to introduce slowly into the tender souls of children the seeds of virtue, stimulating and nourishing those that nature has placed there, and, on the contrary, closing the door at an early hour to the vices that may come from outside, and remedying the natural evil inclinations, and trying to accustom the sensory appetite to obey, as it is capable by nature, the rule of reason, and not to become its lord and tyrant. And although some may say, by chance, that to do this some use of reason is required in the child, who being in his early years little different from a brute cannot be capable of discipline, as one who understands neither good nor evil, nevertheless I am of the opinion, that it is necessary to begin this care at a very early stage, not waiting for the use of reason, because it is not necessary for children to do some things, and abstain from some other things, so that they understand what is appropriate to follow, so that they understand what it is appropriate to do, or to avoid, but it is enough that they become accustomed to do them, or not to do them, so that from simple principles, with some small acts, as much as that tender age allows, the good habit, or at least a certain disposition, is introduced, not differently from what we see in artificial things, that very first the matter is arranged, so that it is then easier, suitable, and obedient to receive the form that one wants to introduce. But it is not possible to give a certain and determined time in all children, because according to the various temperatures of the bodies, and varieties of regions,

and countries, and of the same way of nourishing and governing, and for many other reasons, it happens that in some children sooner, in others later, a certain light flashes, as if it were dawn and aurora of the light of reason. And to descend more to the particular, I say that just as the child begins at first, already somewhat freed from the bonds of his swaddling clothes, not only with his weeping, but also with his hands and with the movements of his body, to make a certain conato in order to express the affections of his soul, if I am not mistaken, some diligence on the part of the wise and shrewd nurturer can take place, and this diligence then increases from time to time; Saint Augustine writes a remarkable thing in this regard in the books of his confessions, in which, being already old with a great sorrow, and repentance of the sins of his past ages, he goes on discussing his childhood, and his puerility for a long period of life, giving us very useful teachings, in order to know the many sadnesses of our nature; therefore that great father writes in one place these words I have seen, and I have had the experience of a little boy who had zeal and envy, who did not speak, and who looked at his companion, that is the other little boy who was in his company, with an eye and a bitter look. Now then, if medicine must be applied to the appearance of evil, surely this little spark of a vice so contrary to charity as envy is is not to be despised; on the contrary, we must try to extinguish it as much as possible, and if not in any other way, at least by subtracting the matter, and the occasion of fomenting this evil seed and other similar ones of our corrupt nature. It could be said that some people do not do it very well, who frighten children with larvae and frightening things, making their blood swollen, and nourishing natural fear without reason, so that it becomes immoderate, and children become excessively timid and weak. But if this which we are now discussing is too minute a diligence, then it is certain that as the child begins to walk, to stammer, and imperfectly unravel his

tongue, and more openly to discover the intrinsic passions, some odour of virtuous affection can be spread in the little pot. Because of the vocation to which it pleased God to call me, I did not have the opportunity to practice much inside, and to discover which affections sprout naturally in tender infancy, so that by philosophizing in them, so to speak, I could experience the ways and means, now to cure them, and remove them as far as possible..., now to nourish them according to their needs, but speaking in common, one sees that around the first and middle year of infancy, and around the second year, children do, according to what they have been shown, or have seen others do, such things that have a certain shade of virtue, such as hearing the name of God with reverence, and speaking it too, inclining themselves to divine images, honoring their father and mother with some movement of their body, taking with certain modesty things from the hands of others, and similar other good institutes and customs. Therefore, I do not think it should be anything but a useful warning, that good education should begin as soon as possible, beginning first with small things, and then continuing with greater care and vigilance from time to time, always remembering that leading a child to such a state and perfection, that he may be a good man and a good Christian, is not as easy an undertaking as others think, indeed it is no less tiring, than important.

Chapter 38

OF THE ERROR OF SOME, TO WHOM IT DOES NOT SEEM NECESSARY TO BEGIN EDUCATION SO EARLY.

I have promised above to show how some people are deceived, who do not value, or at least do so very superficially, the education of their children, I mean in the most essential and most important part of all, which falls to Christian goodness, for whose purpose this work is principally written, and it is given to understand, that the children by themselves, as they grow up, and converse with other men, without other discipline will learn to be good, not otherwise than one learns to speak perfectly the language of one's own country, without much study, and effort of the children, although it is harsh, and difficult to pronounce. And certainly I cannot but be very surprised that there is no art, however vile it may be, which, in order to learn it excellently, every one does not confess that it is very necessary to begin as a child to practise it; and that likewise a good and skilful teacher is needed, and it takes time and long practice and effort, and yet there are those who believe that to become good it is not necessary to give oneself any other thought, but to leave it to the benefit of chance and time; Therefore we see that fathers are solicitous to see that their children learn to read, write, number, sing, ride horses, and other similar arts, and they seek to have good teachers, and they do not spare the expense; which diligence is good and praiseworthy, and they do not condemn themselves; but it is certainly too strange to see how, on the contrary, fathers care little or nothing about introducing in time the good habits of Christian virtue into the tender breast of the child, and to learn the art of serving God, and of knowing how to tame the horses unbridled by these appetites of ours.

Therefore, most fathers, if not in words, then certainly, what is more important, in the effects themselves, say that the most important care among them is to make a son a good singer, a good craftsman, a good horseman, a good tinkerer, a good writer, and a good litterateur, rather than a good Christian, as if all the other arts and studies were difficult, and this art alone were very easy, or even as if knowing it, or ignoring it, were of little importance in the sum of things. It is therefore necessary to say something briefly about the difficulty of acquiring virtue, and true goodness, because of our wretched and defective nature; for this reason it is necessary to be very careful, so that in early childhood, by means of good education, one may learn this art of being good; whoever has not learned it, in vain, and without any fruit will know all the others, which the world esteems.

Chapter 39

OF THE CORRUPTION OF OUR NATURE, AND INCLINATION TO SIN.

The divine scripture says, that God created man righteous, just, and holy, but he entangled himself in a thousand intricacies, for having our first father Adam transgressed in paradise the commandment of God, he immediately lost that justness and holiness which he had, by gift of his Creator, and he fell into the wrath and indignation of God, and into the necessity of death, and into a thousand miseries, as much as to the body, as to the soul. And just as if he had persevered in the righteousness and holiness given him by God, he would have preserved not only for himself, but also for his children and descendants that precious heritage, so that they too might have been born holy and righteous; so, on the other hand, Adam's transgression and inobedience brought harm and damage not only to him, but to all his offspring and posterity; So that each one who is born of Adam, is not only born subject to death, and to the innumerable pains and afflictions of this body, but by the same generation contracts the death of the soul, which is sin, which is called original sin. Just as the pride and obedience of the first Adam made us sinners and enemies of God, so the humility and obedience of the second Adam, Christ our Savior, reconciled us to God and made us holy and righteous, and the merit and virtue of his most precious blood was applied to us in the sacrament of baptism, in which we are regenerated in Christ and incorporated into him, and thus the stain of original sin is removed from the soul, and the obligation of eternal damnation, and all that is true and proper reason for sin, so that the whole of the old Adam remains buried in the waters of holy baptism, and

clothed with new clothes, we are reborn into a new creature, and we are given that white stole, which if pure and immaculate were kept by us, there would be nothing that would delay us more from the eternal wedding, and from the entrance into Heaven. Although by the sacrament of baptism the soul remains purified, as has been said, and filled with heavenly grace, nevertheless in the Christian after baptism there remains the weakness and frailty of the body, apt to suffer many infirmities, and to feel the acerbity of pain; Likewise, there remains in us the disordered motion of concupiscence, called by the sacred Doctors fomite, which concupiscence is not its own and truly sinful, but proceeds from sin, and inclines to sin, and as has been said, is a certain motion and unregulated appetite, which by its nature is repugnant to reason, but this movement which is rebellious to reason, if it does not have with it the consent of our will, or negligence at least, is not a sin at all, indeed this concupiscence is left to us as a field, and matter of virtue, as the sacred Council of Trent and the Catechism says; because concupiscence, to those who do not allow it, or rather virulently with the help of the grace of Jesus Christ resist it, and repulse it, not only does not hurt, nor can it hurt, but it is the occasion of victory, and of a crown, and of more copious rewards, and of more abundant glory in Heaven; because, as the Apostle says, only he who fights legitimately will be crowned. Therefore, if the crown presupposes legitimate combat, and the combat and the fight is not without an enemy; we have no reason to complain to God that he has left us this domestic adversary, but we have much reason to thank him that he has given us such an abundance of his most holy grace, that if we do not throw ourselves down in a cowardly way, we will undoubtedly remain victorious, and we will acquire the immutable crown of glory; for which it is only right that we should toil for so short a space, seeing that many for a crown, and for an

earthly and corruptible prize, willingly shed not only sweat,
but blood, and life itself.

Chapter 40

THAT FEW THERE ARE WHO FIGHT LAWFULLY.

But nevertheless there are few who, enraptured by the duty of that noble crown, which the Apostle Paul shows us, want to fight legitimately, and to do a little violence to themselves, rather they let themselves be carried away by the impetus of appetite, and of this carnal concupiscence of ours, as by a very rapid torrent, which finally leads to the sea of eternal condemnation. And because the senses are not kept in check at a good hour, so that they do not run wildly towards their goals, and men are not accustomed from the beginning to the fear of God and the love of virtue, good Christian education is greatly neglected, Hence, sins and iniquities abound, so that the state before the universal flood has almost been revived, of which Scripture says, *Omnis caro corruperat viam suam*, all flesh, that is, all men had corrupted, and contaminated their way. Therefore, as we have said, our proneness and inclination to sin is great, and as it is very true that we cannot overcome it without the help of divine grace, it is also true that we must accept and cooperate with divine grace, which prevents us, excites us, and is offered to us by the most blessed God as a strong armor against all evil; but because man is free, and works freely, he may not accept grace, and he may, because of his unwillingness, allow himself to be overcome by the disordered appetite, and by the taste for present pleasures; wherefore it is necessary, that man take upon himself a certain force, and violence, and as S. Paul says, chastise his body, and reduce it to the servitude of reason, remembering the sentence of the Saviour, who says, that the kingdom of Heaven suffers force, that is it can, and must be taken by force, and the violent ones are those who kidnap it.

Chapter 41

OF THE GREAT FORCE OF ADDICTION, AND OF THE NECESSITY TO BEGIN AT AN EARLY HOUR TO RESIST EVIL.

And therefore it is necessary that, wishing to be virtuous, we do violence to ourselves, but this violence is accompanied by fatigue, and by pain, because of the grief and repugnance of the sensual side, which, as has been said, most men do not wish to endure. And for this reason it matters above all to accustom oneself to wanting good, and to abhorring evil from the earliest age, because the force of habit is very great in the one part, and in the other, and from it arises the ability to operate not only without pain but with ease and delight. Hence a great sage of the world left this sentence written: "It is not of little importance, but rather it is the chief, and the sum of the thing, to be accustomed to one way or another. And this is so true, that even in those things which are contrary to nature and disagreeable, custom has the power to make them agreeable; but how much more so in those things which are in conformity with nature, as is virtue? This means that in man there remain many seeds of a certain inclination towards good, just, and honesty, but these seeds, although small and hidden by themselves, must be discovered, nourished, increased, and cultivated, so that they are not suffocated by contrary inclinations, as we see happening with a fat field, which, if not cultivated, produces only a great quantity of incultuous grasses and thorns. In many places the Holy Scripture admonishes us to begin early in this spiritual culture, by weeding out the noxious weeds which our flesh continually sprouts by itself; this sentence is written in the Book of Genesis by God himself: The senses and thoughts of the human heart are prone and inclined to

evil from its youth. And Solomon in Proverbs, showing the great power of custom, relates this ancient saying: The young man according to his way, that is, according to the way of life, to which he will cling in his early years, when he grows old he will not depart from it. And some expositor in that place said, that the letter, and the Hebrew text, admonishes fathers to establish, and introduce their children in a good way while they are young, and that of this advice, scripture gives the reason why when they become old they will not depart from the way where they are already accustomed, and the one sense, and the other is true, so that the Sage in the Ecclesiasticus said so: Do you have children? Teach them, and bend them from their childhood; with this voice of bending, he tells us that it will happen in men, as in tender bushes, which easily bend to the side that others want, and with mediocre industry, leaning on a pole, grow straight and beautiful, where hardened and distorted, they sooner break than twist. Many other places could be cited from the sacred writings, but to avoid being longer we conclude two things; the first, that those who teach their children in any other study than that of the fear of God and true goodness are too deceived, as if this were a matter of little moment, or as if by itself it would easily stick to the minds of the young, when they have already attained perfect discretion, and begun to practice with many, in the same way that one sees that civil conversation teaches a certain courtesy, and a way of knowing how to deal with others, things that have only a shadow, and not solidity of true goodness; So that those who hear this way show that they understand little of the world in which we live, with which adversary it is necessary for us to fight, which is the devil, the most cunning enemy, and most greedy for our loss; and finally they do not consider what flesh we are surrounded by, infirm and weak for good, but strong and most ready for evil. And for this reason the second conclusion follows, that since we need to arm ourselves with

many weapons against so many enemies, it is necessary to practice from our earliest years in this spiritual battle, until the habit of virtue has taken root in us, and our sensuality remains so debilitated and mortified by divine grace, by good and continued education, and by frequent virtuous acts, that there is no longer bitterness and pain, but sweetness and delight in the observance of God's law. And this is what St. Paul teaches us when, writing to the Hebrews, he says thus: Every discipline from the beginning, and in the present, does not seem to be of pleasure, but rather of displeasure, but afterwards, to those who have been exercised by it, it will bear fruit of supreme peace, and justice.

Chapter 42

CONFIRMATION OF THE ABOVE THINGS, WITH THE AUTHORITY OF THE TRIDENTINE COUNCIL.

It would not be difficult to prove, and confirm the truth of the aforementioned things, by the authority of philosophers, and worldly sages, who in dealing with the government of republics have given particular warnings on the education of children, understanding very well that in order to make a good Citizen one must not postpone the more mature years, but it is better to give him form from childhood, and likewise with the example, and with the practice of some famous Cities, in ancient times, one could very easily demonstrate the same, and leaving the strange, and coming to our own times, we do not lack authority, and examples, and we could easily attach very serious sayings of the Holy Fathers, and Doctors of the Church, among whom Chrisostom writing about St. Paul, exclaims that youth is fierce, not unlike an untamed horse, and a wild fair, and a wild beast, so that the greatest diligence was needed, and to begin at the earliest age to bring it up well, with the discipline of excellent laws, so that, he says, the very habit of virtue, is then the law, and the guide, passing into habit, and nature. But as for the example of those who, through long experience, are most efficacious witnesses of the truth, what more suitable proof can there be than that of so many most holy religions and congregations, some of which are very ancient, I say of monks, friars and canons called “regulari”, who, being like small republics or large houses and families, have always taken great care of the education of the children and, as they say, of the novitiate. But, leaving everything else aside, I shall be satisfied with the authority of the great universal Council of Trent, which in our age introduced, and certainly

after a very long period of time revived in the Church of God the custom of raising and instructing clerical children as a perpetual seminary for the ministers of the Holy Church. And because the decree of the Council is very serious and worthy of consideration, and is very appropriate to our subject, I have thought to refer here only to the beginning, so that from this teaching everyone may understand how necessary it is to raise children well, beginning in their earliest and most tender years. The words of the Council, then, spoken in our vulgar tongue, are these:

It is therefore a fact that the age of the young, if it is not well taught and instituted, is prone and inclined to follow the pleasures and the voluptuousness of the world, so that if from their tender years they are not trained and accustomed to piety and religion, before the habit of virtue possesses the whole man, they will never perfectly, nor without great and almost singular help from Almighty God, persevere in ecclesiastical discipline; therefore the holy synod orders and decrees that each cathedral Church must nourish a certain number of children in a College deputed to this effect, and there religiously educate them, and train them in ecclesiastical disciplines, and what follows; from which it follows, that just as in order to make a good clergy, it is necessary to make a seminary of good plants, which are the children, in the same way, given the due proportion to have good citizenship of secular men, it is necessary to begin to educate them well from childhood.

Chapter 43

OF TWO WAYS OF EDUCATION, THAT IS PRIVATE AND PUBLIC, AND HOW THEY MUST BE IN AGREEMENT WITH EACH OTHER.

This authority of the Council gives me the opportunity to gather together some of the seeds which have been scattered above for various purposes, and to say in this place a little more openly, that education can be considered in two ways, either as private and particular under paternal authority, or as common under public authority. And moreover both can be considered as moral, and as Christian, and finally Christian, private, and public education can be considered as regulated, partly by the ecclesiastical, and partly by the political, or secular regiment. If well there is no doubt that more perfectly, and in a higher degree to the ecclesiastical one it belongs, as that which more rightly, and for its own offence has regard to the ultimate, true, and accomplished happiness of its Citizens.

But it is certain that all these ways of education are in agreement with each other, not only not impeding each other, but rather helping each other more quickly, so that it is easier to reach the very high goal of eternal beatitude.

Therefore we say that private education is ordered to public education, and the latter leads to the perfection of the private, and just as the fathers of families in their homes are like particular magistrates, so the superiors in the city are like common fathers. And nothing can be more salutary in a republic than to be so well ordered that the good discipline which the young man has learned in his domestic education is preserved for the public, or rather increased, since it is

reasonable that the public good should be greater and more perfect than the private, just as on the contrary it is too much to be lamented when private discipline is lacking for whatever reason, and the restraint of paternal authority, the young man does not find in the public, many fathers, and many restraints which restrain his impulses, and do not leave him at his own will, and of his corrupters to dissipate the sustentances not of his own, but of the family, and of the country, and in sum do not allow him to live like that prodigal son, of whom the Gospel speaks, from whom then arise so many evils, that it would be long to recount them.

But returning to our purpose, not only between private and public education, but between moral and Christian education there must be such a union and order that it is certain that every study of moral education is weak and imperfect if it is not reduced to Christian education as the highest and most excellent, and as the end and perfection of all others.

Finally, it is fitting that between the temporal and spiritual governor there should be supreme union and concord, and that in public education and in every other matter concerning the common good, the politician should remember that he has to minister and assist the ecclesiastical rector as well as the left arm working together with the right arm for the benefit of the whole body. And the more the temporal regiment orders itself to the spiritual, and the more it favours and promotes it, the more it serves the conservation of the Republic, because while the ecclesiastical rector seeks to make a good Christian, with spiritual authority and means, according to his purpose, he also seeks in necessary consequence to make a good Citizen, which is what is required of the politician. This happens because in the Holy Roman Catholic Church, the City of God, situated on the mountain, of which all the

baptized, and regenerated in Christ, are Citizens in this I say Holy City, and most perfect Republic, which the ancient philosophers saw through dreams, one and the same thing is absolutely the good citizen, and the good man. The grave error is that of those who disunite such things, and think that they can have good citizens by other rules, and by other ways, than those which make the good Christian. And let human prudence say and discuss, as much as it pleases, that it is not possible to give birth to true peace, nor to true temporal tranquillity, whatever is repugnant, or departs from eternal peace and happiness. But leaving this discourse, which perhaps it will seem that I have gone too far in my terms, I say in conclusion, that although that manner of education and discipline, which depends on public authority, is necessary in every way, I do not intend to speak principally of this; but only of private authority and in relation to the authority and care of the people; if at the time and place where the matter requires it, it may happen that some things will be touched on, since, as has been said, they are very closely connected.

Chapter 44

THAT EDUCATION CAN BE CONSIDERED VARIOUSLY ACCORDING TO VARIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES.

In order that our reasoning may proceed in a more orderly fashion, it is necessary to know that education can be considered in various ways, according to the variety and difference of the circumstances, of which, speaking not very subtly, we can reduce them to two parts: in the first are the circumstances which we can call natural and common, in the second are those which can be called accidental and private. And to state it even more clearly, the natural circumstance is that which is taken from the sex, since the children who must be educated are some male and some female. Similarly, the circumstance of age is natural, since all children are first infants, then children, and then adolescents, so that according to the variety of age, the education varies somewhat. Of the accidental circumstances, which can be many, some are closer to the natural ones, others are more remote, such as, for example, the circumstance of birth, that is, the birth of noble relatives or peasants, because there is no doubt that from the same generation there is a different disposition in children, and according to the body, and according to the mind, if this does not always happen necessarily. The regions also, and the diversity of the countries bring with them more commonly certain inclinations, as we see that some nations are more timid, and ingenious, others more fierce and of lesser intelligence, others cunning, others simple, others are in a certain mediocre disposition; so that education has the field to exercise itself variously, proposing higher goals in the noble, than in the commoner, and correcting and helping masterfully the dispositions that the country brings.

But more accidental circumstances are the birth of rich or poor fathers, of private property, or of Lords, and who command not only a small number of vassals, but also provinces and kingdoms. The fact of being born in a free republic, where one has the right to participate in the same government, with many, or even under the rule of a prince, is also an accidental circumstance, and in these and many other circumstances that can be numbered, it must not be denied that according to their variety, education also takes on various aspects, since in another way, generally speaking, the son of a prince must be brought up, and the son of a private gentleman, the citizen, and the man of the villa, and so of the others. However, since the discussion of all these matters would be infinite, and our purpose is to deal with Christian education, which belongs to everyone, since all of us are obliged to know and love God, and obey his holy commands, in whatever state we wish to be, if we seek greater perfection in some than in others, then we will deal with education in a middle way, in relation to the majority of the men who live in the Cities, and are of average condition. And nevertheless this way will be common to all the states of men in that all must, as has been said, be good Christians, and it will be something that seems to me not difficult, that every mediocre intellect for itself will apply the same things variously with a certain proportion to the various sexes, to the various ages, and to the various conditions, and circumstances, so that it will not be necessary for me to repeat the same thing several times, although in the most important things, I will not fail to consider separately what will be necessary.

Chapter 45

TO WHOM THE EDUCATION OF THE CHILDREN MAY BE ATTRIBUTED, TO THE FATHER OR TO THE MOTHER.

It is perhaps not out of purpose to seek to whom the care of bringing up children should belong, or at least to whom the care of bringing up children should belong more, to the father or even to the mother, so that it does not happen, as often happens with things that are entrusted to more than one person, that one looks to the other, and as ordinarily the work is avoided, and the greater part is willingly left to the companion, it follows that that thing which should have been governed communally is communally neglected. But if it is true what we have discussed at length above, about the union of husband and wife, and how they are no longer two, but one flesh, then certainly that common defect which is seen to occur in other couples, must not take place in them in the government of their children, who are the effect of both, and all the fruit, and the contentment born of good education, must be common. Therefore, together they must see to it that their children are well brought up, so that we see that the Apostle St. Paul attributes to the father as well as to the mother the burden of education, because writing to the Ephesians he says: Fathers, bring up your children in discipline and in the fear of the Lord. And writing to Timotheus among the other conditions, which he requires of the holy widow, who was elected according to the custom of the primitive Church, he connotes this, *si filios educavit*, if she has well brought up her children, although it could be said, that she means after the death of her husband. But in the same epistle above, speaking nevertheless of women and married women, he says this: The woman will be saved by the generation of children if they persevere in faith, and

delight, and sanctification with sobriety; which place the Fathers explain, they intend that the woman must be saved not only by the sympathetic fecundity, and for having given birth to many children, but mainly for the education of them, and not for what one wants education, but Christian and holy, as those words show, in faith, delight, sanctification, and sobriety; for the education is a second generation, if well more perfect than the first one. We can therefore conclude that the education of children is common to the father and the mother, who, if in all things of domestic government they must be in agreement, in this, which is the most important of all, they must be very much in agreement. It is, however, true that the difference in sex and age teaches us that some greater care must be given to one than to the other, so that generally speaking, the care of the children, because of their sex, is given more to the mother. And because a man's work is to be away from home a great deal, so as to make a living for his family, as he is obliged to do, so as to govern and manage the wealth that is out there, so as to trade with other citizens, a woman must always stay at home, unless a necessary and honorable reason leads her away, in which case she must return as soon as possible. For this reason, in infancy and early childhood, the greater part of the education must fall to the mother, just as, when the child is older and more capable of more mature precepts, and able to go out more often, it will be more of a father's duty to instruct and watch over his son.

Chapter 46

OF THE BENEFIT THAT GOOD MOTHERS CAN ALWAYS BRING TO THEIR CHILDREN.

The female sex is ordinarily inclined to piety and religion, so that the Holy Church calls it the devout sex with a singular title; for this reason I believe that a good mother can at all times, and in many ways, have a great share in the Christian education of her son. In addition, there is the tenderness of maternal love, and the most gentle way of admonishing, and with greater perseverance and patience than perhaps the father usually uses. And although in the father authority is greater, the mother can more easily mix prayers with authority, which sometimes is not disagreeable in her. And because in the son there is a certain correspondence of more tender love for his mother, he is also more willing to receive her precepts and admonitions. It is true that it is often more necessary to use paternal severity than maternal pleasantness, but the mother can always be a useful temperament of that severity which the father must prudently maintain, for the preservation of his authority. In short, both of them, father and mother, must agree to apply all the appropriate remedies for the health of the child, taking place in the care of the soul what happens in the care of the body, which needs various medicines, sometimes pleasant and soothing, sometimes harsh and effective. And for this reason the good mother must never dismiss the thought of her son, so that he may be good and virtuous, nor must she say, he is already grown up, I leave it to his father; for some things, as has been said, she will then be able to persuade her son with greater ease, and dispose him more willingly and more fruitfully to health. However, the wise mother must not be so pleasant that she does not retain

severity; on the contrary, she must be very careful that her love for her children is not so soft that it damages the vigor of virtue, and with a certain false compassion dissolves the nerves of good discipline. Let mothers love their children according to the best part, that is, according to the soul, and when it is necessary for their health, and for the glory of God, let them clothe themselves with a manly spirit; remembering that great mother of the young Maccabees, so celebrated in Sacred Scripture, and by the ancient fathers, who not only was present with great constancy to the death, indeed to the most atrocious martyrdom of seven of her children, but she herself with most efficacious words exhorted them to die strongly for the law of God.

Chapter 47

EXAMPLE OF A HOLY MOTHER WITH HOW MUCH STUDY SHE PROCURED THE HEALTH OF A SON WHO WAS LATER A SAINT.

Many other examples similar to this one, which took place in the time of the Old Testament, could be recounted under the Gospel law, in the state of grace, but leaving them for brevity, and for their height, I wish at least, so that good mothers may understand, how children are to be born in Christ, to relate in part the ardent piety of a good mother, towards a son who was later, and is still, one of the principal pillars, which support the holy Church, I speak of Monica, and of Agustin; this mother gave birth to her son, according to the spirit, with greater and more bitter pains, than she did in the carnal childbirth. This one, then, as Saint Agustin himself has left us written in the books of his confessions, since he was a child, induced him to believe in Christ, which Agustin's father did not believe; to whom, because of the good diligence of the holy mother, it was not possible to bring the son to infidelity, indeed he himself, after some time, was also won to Christ by his own wife. This same pious mother admonished her son, who had already entered adolescence, with great solicitude, to take care not to be stained by the sins of the flesh. And finally S. Agustino being already a man, and having fallen into a very deep abyss of errors, for having approached the sect of the heretical Manichees, in which he persevered for many years, as he and these, and his other sins, with a rare example of humility has left us written; the good mother wept day and night, the death of the soul of her son much more bitterly, than other mothers weep the death of the body. And she never ceased to weep, and to pray to her son, that he might

return to the way of truth, and so fervently did she pray to God, and so earnestly did she commend herself to the holy Bishops, and learned persons, so that they might dispute with Agustin, and to try to free him, and to reduce him, that once among others, making a great request of this with a Bishop, and importuning him with a great number of tears, the holy Bishop almost annoyed, said with a prophetic spirit; Go away, for it is impossible that a son of these tears should perish. And the holy woman persevered so much with prayer, with tears, with prayers, and over the fragility of her sex, following her beloved son in distant countries, that is, from Africa to Milan, that God finally granted her the grace to see the wonderful conversion of Agustin, which had its origin in the teaching of the glorious St. Ambrose in Milan. Ambrosio in Milan, disposing, and working wisely, and strongly the hand of God, the health of that new vessel of election, and of what great light of the Catholic Church.

Chapter 48

HOW THE GOOD FATHERLY EXAMPLE IS SO IMPORTANT.

That therefore the education of children belongs jointly to the father and the mother, and that because of the difference in sex and age, one can consider some greater convenience in the one than in the other, and that nevertheless at all times the good mother can and must be solicitous for the usefulness of the child as has been demonstrated up to now. Now it is time to explain some particular warnings that are properly adapted to Christian education, so that the child, together with the milk, drinks as much as possible the goodness and fear of God, and the true worship of our holy religion. But before we begin this, it seems to me that a general reminder is necessary, which is useful at all times, and all the more so as the child grows with the years, he will have greater light, and use of reason, and this is the good paternal example; for if we speak of children who are still tender, and not capable of reason, it is certain that most of the things they do, they do by imitation, and are by nature itself formed for this, that is to imitate; in this way they learn to speak, and while someone else is speaking, they physically watch the movement of the lips, and observe the other movements of the body, and of the eyes, while something is wanted or refused, and they imprint those images in their memory, and like new inhabitants of this world, they marvel at each thing they see, and are curious to see new things, and because, as that philosopher says, children are like a naked table, where nothing is painted, therefore it happens that those first colors make a great impression; for which it is necessary to take great care, that children do not see, nor hear anything less than honorable, rather on the contrary they see, and

hear all those things, that one wants them to do, and say; because the first education is learned by a certain assuaging, and imitation, to which, as has been said, children are for themselves so inclined, that they willingly go to imitate, what they see others do. But when the child has grown in such a way that the rays of reason begin to appear, then education is exercised around him in two main ways, one with paternal authority, which is somewhat more violent, the other with persuasion, which proposes the beauty of virtue, and gently with the light of reason, affections and tempts the will. Now the rule and persuasion is of two kinds, that is to say of effects and words, of which the most effective is that which consists in doing, so that he who with effects contradicts the commandment and persuasion is less effective in commanding or persuading, so that if I am not mistaken, this must be a firm maxim for all fathers and mothers of families, that a principal foundation of good education consists in good domestic life, so that whatever they wish to imprint of virtue, and of religion in the soul of their son, in addition to the exhortations, and commandments, which are good, and necessary, they must principally represent to the eyes of the youngster vividly expressed in themselves, otherwise if they said anything else, and did anything else, more would be that which would be destroyed with a single fact, than that which could be built up with many words; Because, as that worthy man says, things that enter through the ears move the soul less effectively than those that are subjected to the eyes, because our nature, friend of pleasure, more easily clings to where it feels the greatest ease, that is to say to evil, and it cannot be said often enough how much the authority and credit of he who wants to persuade others is diminished when his works are contrary to what is said; But Saint Luke writes of the master of masters, Christ our Lord, saying that he did and taught, putting doing in first place. And the Savior himself said, learn from me, who am meek and

humble of heart, and another time speaking with the Apostles: I have given you an example, so that you also do as I have done. And the Apostle St. Paul, the Doctor of the Gentiles, exhorted the Corinthians in this way: Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ; and writing to his beloved disciples Timothy and Titus, Bishops, and therefore fathers and teachers, he admonished them that with doctrine and exhortations they should principally unite the example of their life and holy conversation, so that to the first he said Let you be an example to the faithful in speech, conversation, charity, faith, and chastity. And writing to the second, after having admonished him to preach continuously to every sex, and to every age, the obligations, and the offenses, he concludes as follows: In all things set yourself as an example of good works. The Apostle means that no shorter or more effective way can be found to teach others than by example. In short, the first example to which a child's eyes naturally turn is his own father, who, not unlike a living mirror, represents in himself all the forms and qualities that he intends to transfer from vase to vase in the child. And for this reason our reasoning will ordinarily be with the father of the family, since he is the first teacher, and it falls to him like an eagle, to use the similitude of the sacred scripture, to spread his wings before his chickens, inviting them to fly, and teaching them to fly, I mean that the father must be the guide who leads his son along the path of virtue, and Christian goodness.

Chapter 49

HOW ALSO TO BE WARNED BY THE EXAMPLE OF THE RELATIVES.

It is not, as has been said elsewhere, a small matter, nor of little value, to bring up a child well, and therefore it should not seem surprising if much diligence and care is required. It is not enough that the father and the mother give their children a continuous example of every virtue, and that they do not do so with any kind of vice, but even in licit things it is necessary to be warned not to give their children any, however small, occasion for scandal, as for example, they must be careful not to do in their presence any act, however licit, and holy, because of the sanctity of marriage, but nevertheless full of danger, in the curious eyes of the children, because, as has been said above, our corrupt nature, is like a bait of sin, which is ignited by every small spark, besides that many, and very subtle are the wiles of Satan. But in addition to all this, it is also necessary to keep one's eyes open on the servants in the houses where there are servants, because these, being for the most part, and in the gestures of the body, and in the words, dishevelled and immodest, and because of their desire to live licentiously, unfriendly to any good discipline, bring great harm to the poor children in a thousand ways. And when they see that they are already grown up, there are those who try to gain their gratitude by proposing pleasurable things to them, and by opening to them the way to achieve them, with peril and ruin of the soul. Therefore the good father of a family must not give himself over to the sleep of negligence, nor trust anyone indifferently, but must keep watch, and want to know the nature and the conduct of his servants, and with prudence and discretion let it be understood that he is on

the alert, and it is not easy to deceive him, and when he notices something badly done, he will never bear it. The father of a family must treat his relatives well, in their wages, in the things necessary for daily food, and when they are sick it is right to use much charity and gentleness, but in the rest he must conserve his authority with them, keep them occupied as much as he can, because idleness is the master of evil deeds, and in short he wants them to live in a Christian way in his house, because this is his duty as master, and also because it is important for the education of his son. And it is enough to have said of the good domestic example of the father and mother, and of the other relatives, in whom at least it is necessary to ensure that they do not harm, and do not sow over the good seed of paternal discipline, the joy, and the disease of their evil customs. As for the conversation outside the house with peers, and contemporaries, and with all kinds of people, perhaps in another place we will have a better opportunity to discuss.

Chapter 50

THAT IN TEACHING CHILDREN IT IS BETTER TO ADAPT TO THEIR CAPACITY FROM TIME TO TIME.

It has been said above, that good education must be prompt, and begin very early, even in the most serious matters, as in imprinting in tender souls the holy fear of God, and every good custom; but the same things must be taught variously, according to the various dispositions of the child, and according to the fact that from time to time he acquires greater capacity and intelligence. And this happens in the soul as in the nourishment of the body; for in the beginning the child is nourished with milk, then with somewhat more solid food, and gradually he grows in the firmness of the food, according to the growth of his ability and strength to digest it; So also in teaching children, which is a certain food for the soul, it is necessary to proceed from grade to grade to greater perfection of teaching; just as the light of reason and the intellect of the child grows by proportion. And in order that I may be better understood, I will state this with some examples. I say, therefore, that as soon as possible we must strive to instill in the child's heart some knowledge of God, some love and reverence for his holy name, the same as we would say about obedience to the father and mother, and honoring the elders, and other similar good habits. So that in childhood, in childhood, and in adolescence, good education demands that the child should fear God, and honour his relatives, and his elders, but more and more perfectly in the more perfect age, and so it is done in various ways, and from time to time it acquires more profit for the child, because from the beginning the child loves God, hears him mentioned with a certain reverence, kneels down, makes the cross, honors the elders, inclining

his head, and bowing his hands to them; not because he understands that reason requires it, but because of imitation and custom, and because he has seen others do so, and because he is often reminded that he does so. But as he grows, and acquires the use of reason, he exercises the same acts with greater perfection, being already able to understand the power and goodness of God, so that he must fear and love Him and other things. And nevertheless that first childish habit, if it seems that it informs the body more quickly than it instructs the mind, it is of great benefit, and so much so that it continues more easily from good to better in childhood, just as in childhood it becomes ready for the greater progress of adolescence, and it happens as with a cloth, which with many, repeated dyeings soaks up the color more. Now if everyone could easily understand by himself, that regarding education it is necessary to observe that way, which nature itself shows us in all things, which is to go from the imperfect to the perfect, and from the less perfect to the more perfect; it seemed to me however necessary to reason about it somewhat more distinctly for my own excusation; Because in the things that will be said later on, it would be too long and troublesome to accommodate the same thing now for childhood, now for puerility, now for adolescence, and all the more so because these ages have a notable latitude, and there is the first childhood, and the adult childhood, to call it so, and likewise the other ages; So if I will go into the details of these ages in detail, as far as I can, it is nevertheless necessary to leave much to the judgement of the prudent educator, who must know how to adapt to the suggestion he has in his hands; which, however, as has been said, will not have much difficulty, since everyone knows that with children, in order to teach them to speak, first they stutter, and then they express the words more and more articulately, until they speak perfectly, which also takes place in other things in proportion.

Book 2

LIBRO SECONDO DELLA EDUCATIONE CHRISTIANA, NEL
QUALE SI TRATTANO ALCUNI CAPI PRINCIPALI DELLA FEDE,
ET RELIGION CHRISTIANA, CONSIDERATI PRINCIPALMENTE
PER LA PRATTICA DELLA EDUCATIONE.

Chapter 1

THAT CHILDREN SHOULD BE TAUGHT THE THINGS OF THE HOLY FAITH.

Innumerable are the benefits, that God has done, and does continually to man, but very great, and most divine are those that he does to the Christian man, to whom he has done this singular grace of calling him, and aggregating him to his people in the Holy Catholic Church, and enumerating him among his children, and heirs, heirs, as St. Paul says, of God, and co-heirs of Christ. Therefore we are greatly obliged to know and to remember that we are baptized, and in holy baptism we have received the gift of faith, of which we have made an open and solemn profession in the presence of God, of the Angels, and of men; Therefore we are called faithful, and for the preservation of this faith, which, as has been said, is a gift of God, and is the principle and foundation of our health, and without which it is impossible to please God, we must be prepared to expose not only our property, but our lives to every danger, and trusting in divine grace to die, if need be, with every acerbity of pain, as so many glorious and strong martyrs did in the time of the primitive Church. It is therefore worthy of both reproach and compassion to see how little knowledge there is, generally speaking, among the Christian people of the mysteries of our holy faith, which, when understood, have great power to inflame our hearts with the love of God, and to awaken us from the sleep of sin, so that we are disposed not to offend a God who is so good, who has done so much for us, and who loves us so much, and has prepared the eternal good, that neither language can express, nor intellect think of those who love him in charity; For the naked faith alone is not enough, of which some vainly boast

without charity, to lead us to eternal life; hence it is written, that faith without works is dead and idle; but the living and efficacious faith, which unites us perfectly with Christ, which makes us living members of his body, and which gives us eternal life, is the faith which works through charity and delight, as the Apostle says. And although it is true, that the multitude is not obliged to know so subtly many things of our faith, which belong more to those, who in the people of God hold the place of teachers, which are the Clerics, and Pastors, nevertheless also the simple, and idiots are obliged to know at least summarily, and so in universal the principal mysteries of our Catholic Religion. As for example, that God is triune in person, and one in essence; that the second person, the eternal Word, the only begotten son of the heavenly Father, became incarnate, and became man, and suffered death for our health, and other similar things, otherwise woe to him who through his fault in such important matters is ignorant; for it is written, whoever ignores, will be ignored, that is he will not be recognized by God, nor admitted into the number of his chosen ones. But it is often seen that not only the plebeian men, who are far from the cities and from the many aids which the greater number of inhabitants provide, are ignorant of the things of religion; but not less than them are many well-to-do citizens, and gentlemen, and such who are involved in many of the world's affairs, and traffic, and business, and seem to them to be of great judgement, and understanding, and yet they are very little instructed in the things of our faith, and of the offence, and the obligations of the true Christian, and they know little by what means, and by what ways we must attain eternal health, for which God has created us, and what is worse, not only do some not know such important things, but they do not even care to know them, and it seems almost as if they are ashamed of them, and they keep them for things of little girls, and in this way it happens what Saint Augustine says, that the induced arise, and rapture

Heaven, and these men who are puffed up with themselves, and prudent with earthly and carnal prudence, and perhaps even learned and learned in secular doctrines, with their prudence and science, descend into the depths of hell. So it is very necessary that good education take in time a remedy for such a serious drawback.

Chapter 2

OF THE SCHOOLS OF THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE, AND OF THE PREACHING.

But few are the fathers who fulfill this obligation, and few those who can fulfill it, as one would think, since they cannot instruct others in what they do not know for themselves; for this reason the holy Council of Trent, moved to compassion by this universal ignorance of the faithful people, ordered that the bishops take special care that the priests in each parish on feast days be brought up, and there they are to be taught the rudiments of the faith, that is, the most important and necessary things of Christian doctrine, at least in general and in a superficial way, and likewise they are to be taught with diligence how they are to serve obedience to God and to their fathers, with which order the Holy Council has partly made up for the common lack of education. Therefore, those fathers who do not know what every Christian is obliged to know, let them go to these holy schools, where Christian doctrine is taught by the authority of the Bishops and legitimate pastors, and let them learn it for themselves, and so that they may also teach it as is fitting for their sons, and more so for their daughters, whose sex and honesty requires less that they learn it outside the home, if pastoral providence will not fail to provide them with the necessary supervision. But if they do not fulfil their obligation to teach their children, nor lead them to those places where they can be taught, they must know that they will have no excusation whatsoever; and if their children do not know what it means to be Christian, and do not know or fear God, they will not escape the just punishment, but God will seek their blood by the strict hand of their fathers. The same sacred General Council has ordained that the bread of

the word of God, which is the nourishment of the soul, be broken and administered to the parable, that is to the simple and ignorant people, and therefore it has established and decreed that not only the Bishops, but also the popes and other pastors of souls preach on Sundays and other feast days, pasturing their sheep, according to their capacity for holy and useful instruction, teaching those things which each one needs to know in order to attain eternal health, and expounding them with ease., and clarity, the vices from which they must beware, and the virtues which they must follow, so that they may escape from eternal punishment, and attain heavenly glory. Now just as the sacred Council has provided that pastors and preachers should do their duty, so it wants and orders that the people should go to hear the word of God, otherwise it would be vain to prepare a table where there is no one who wishes to eat. And therefore let the fathers of families know that they are greatly obliged to go to the holy preaching and to hear the word of God as often as they can, and to lead their children there, so that by the efficacy of the living voice of the one who holds the place of God, they may learn and become inflamed with the desire to flee sin and to serve God. I could say many things, demonstrating how useful and necessary it is to hear the word of God, from good and legitimate preachers, and not only to the ignorant, but also to the learned, because to be saved it is not enough to know only, but it is necessary to do good, which is not the work of the intellect, but of the will, which is persuaded and moved by divine grace through the word, from which St. Paul said, how will they believe without a preacher? but I do not want to go too far in this matter. I will only say that St. John Chrisostom, the great preacher, exhorts Christians most earnestly to hear the holy preaching, not only of the gentlemen and the wealthy citizens, but also of the poor and of those who earn their food by their daily toil, and not only on feast days, but also on working days, proving with most effective reasons,

that not only according to the rules of the spirit, but also temporally it is expedient to subtract a short part of the day from the occupations, the negotiations, the exercises of human life, to dedicate it to God in hearing his holy word, and to know what his divine Majesty wants from us with the desire to fulfill it with his help. And that holy and most eloquent Doctor says that God, who is supremely good, and never lets himself be conquered, so to speak, by any kindness, will make up for that time with much usury, for he will ease all our affairs, he will smooth out difficulties, he will remove impediments, he will give health to the craftsman to work, he will send buyers to his store, and in short he will make him do more in one hour than others will do in a whole day. And well could the holy man promise these and greater things, having good assurance, that is, the infallible promise of the Saviour when he said, Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these other things will be given you in addition. Therefore, good fathers should not fail in every effort to accustom their little children to hear God willingly and to listen to the holy sermons, using every means of caresses, rewards, promises and punishments as necessary, so that they may become accustomed to them. And let the Fathers remember what has been said, and they will have to repeat many times, that the greatest and best inheritance they must leave to their children is the entire and uncorrupted Catholic faith, as it has been left to us by our elders for a very long succession, united with the most holy fear of God.

Chapter 3

HOW IT IS NOT ONLY EXPEDIENT, BUT NECESSARY IN THIS TREATISE, TO DISCUSS SOME HEADS OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

From what we have said a little above, perhaps some may come to the opinion that there is no need for me to go further into the things of Christian doctrine, having already shown the sources, so that others may, and for themselves and their children, draw as much as is necessary, the salutary water of such teaching and doctrine. But if you will consider more carefully, you will see, if I am not mistaken, that the matter lies in another way, and that it is not only expedient, but necessary for our matter, to discuss a little more in particular about some, as the principal heads of our most holy religion.

And first of all it must be remembered that we are dealing with education not in any way one wishes, but strictly as a Christian education, the purpose of which is to make, with divine help, a good Christian. Such is he who not only believes correctly, but also acts virtuously according to the law of God. But in order to believe, and to act as a good Christian should, so that we may bring back the prize of eternal life, it is necessary the heavenly grace, which is conferred and communicated to us through the holy sacraments. Likewise, fervent prayer is necessary, which keeps us united with God, and in so many of our spiritual and bodily needs we receive every help and succor from the Father of mercies.

Therefore it will be necessary to discuss the articles of faith contained in the Apostolic Symbol, and the seven

Sacraments, and the ten Commandments of the law, and finally the prayer taught to us by Christ our Lord, vulgarly known as our Pater; which four heads comprise almost the entire sum of Christian doctrine, and what we must believe and do. It is added that there is no part of Christian education, however small, that is not regulated by this end, that is, by the rectitude of faith and the observance of the divine law. For this reason it is necessary that the father be principally instructed in those things, without the knowledge and observance of which he cannot raise his son in a Christian manner, and therefore the father is reasoned with, so that he, like a wet nurse, having first converted this truly vital food into juice and blood, feeds his son, so that he then grows into a perfect man in Christ.

Nor should it be believed by others, that all this could have been done in very brief words, as we see in some small booklets called Doctrines, since in the four chapters mentioned above are contained infinite seeds, and very important principles of all life, and of all human actions, so that it was necessary to make a greater explication; especially since experience shows us too much, that in order to imprint effectively in our hearts the fear of God, and the love of virtue, it is not enough to say so nudely, Honour God, do not steal, do not adulterate, and such things, but it is necessary to break this hard bread, and chew it well, and with study and industry bring it to the child, so that the weak stomach, of this miserable nature of ours, holds it, and digests it.

It is not denied that pastors of souls and preachers are expected to provide the faithful with these foods, but it is well said that preaching is done more rarely, and that many years pass before a child is fully capable of understanding the sermons; nor are children sent so early to the schools of doctrine, and many do not go there for various reasons. And

what is of great importance, is that there, for the most part, many children are taught together, and only certain more universal things are treated, and there is not the present opportunity to put the doctrine into practice; and in short, medicine is not applied to particular suggestions, and to the various complexities, as much as would be necessary. Where the paternal education, as has been said elsewhere, begins to work very early, and coming to the individual, it does its work at all hours with a thousand different occasions, and uses many other ways of teaching, which the parish priests and preachers do not do, nor can do, as will be discussed below. And finally, to conclude, domestic discipline makes the child more disposed to public doctrine, and helping each other, as those who have no small conformity together, the greater is the utility that is reported.

Therefore I judge, that the subject of this second book of ours, is the most important, and the most principal of our education, and as such I have placed it in the first place, with respect to the third book, which subject we are going to explain under the guidance of the noble, and most useful book called Roman Catechism; whose order is distinct, and appropriate to our purpose; but however we will treat things less exquisitely, and with ease, and with a regard perhaps more our own, that is to reduce the universal doctrine, however, to the particular use, not being our intention so much to teach Christian doctrine, which others have done, as to derive from it many precepts, and documents necessary for the daily practice of education.

Chapter 4

OF THE APOSTOLIC SYMBOL, VULGARLY CALLED THE CREED.

The Symbol of the Apostles, vulgarly called the Creed, is a summary of the mysteries of our Most Holy Religion; whereby the ancient fathers called it a rule of faith, because in it is briefly contained all that pertains to the knowledge of the true God, that is to the unity of the Godhead, and to the trinity of the persons, and subsequently to the creation of the world, and of all creatures, to the redemption of the human race, and finally to the state of the future world, that is to the eternal life of the good, and to the eternal punishment of the bad. This brief rule was composed by the Holy Apostles, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit; and as they were twelve, so they divided it into twelve sentences, called articles, each of which includes a doctrine of some thing, that distinctly, and separately, with firm, and undoubted faith we should believe. And this admirable and heavenly doctrine is so well ordered that it is divided into three principal parts, in the first of which the first person of the Holy Trinity, God the Father Almighty, is spoken of, and the marvellous work of the creation of the world is described; in the second part, the second person of the Holy Trinity is discussed, Christ our Lord Jesus, the only eternal son of the eternal father, true God, equal and consubstantial to the father, born of the substance of the father before all centuries, and true man, born of the substance of his mother, the Virgin Mary, at the end of the centuries, to work in the midst of the earth for our salvation, to free us from sin, and to reconcile us with God in his precious blood. And therefore in this second part the admirable mystery of human redemption is described. In the third part the third person of the Holy Trinity is also spoken of, called the Holy

Spirit, true God, equal and consubstantial to the Father and to the Son, and his divine effects in the government of the Catholic Church and in our sanctification are discussed. In the Symbol, therefore, the doctrine of the Catholic faith is collected as a compendium, which anyone who does not believe faithfully and with all firmness will not be able to save himself. Of this faith we made profession in the holy baptism, when we were ascribed to the militia of Christ, and therefore also this confession of faith, is called with the Greek voice Symbol, which in addition to other meanings, means a sign, and a military card, by which we know, and distinguish the soldiers of one Captain, from those of the other. This faith is that which we must believe with the heart, confess with the mouth, and manifest with good works, so that it may be seen by all the world, of which captain we are soldiers, and so that after having fought legitimately, for the glory of our great Emperor against the devil, the world, and the flesh, ours and his enemies, we may bring back from him, the most just judge, the just crown of the victories purchased with the sword of his grace.

Chapter 5

HOW FROM THE SYMBOL THE FATHER MUST DRAW MATERIAL FOR EDUCATION.

The good father must promptly see to it that his son learns the Apostolic Symbol in his mind, and recites it often distinctly, and without any lack of anything, in pronunciation as well as in things, and makes him make a good habit of reciting it every day devoutly at least in the morning, and in the evening, recalling before God, and all the saints, the highest profession made in baptism, of wanting to be a true Christian, and to live and die a faithful servant and soldier of Christ. Similarly, the good father must see to it that the child understands, according to his ability, the things contained in the symbol, at least in such a gross way, from which he will be able to draw material for salutary warnings. And in order to give some brief example of this, let us briefly take those four items mentioned above, which embrace the entire substance of the symbol.

And before God, he will show with simple words, that in one divine essence, one must believe in the distinction of the three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Holy Trinity, and one God. Of this great God we will now consider his omnipotence, because with the sole reign of his word, he created from nothing this great machine of the world, and so many beautiful creatures that we see, and others much more beautiful that we do not see, which are the angelic substances. Now we will consider the supreme wisdom that governs all things with such order. Now the infinite goodness, because being God in Himself most blessed, and not needing anything, He wanted through His goodness alone to communicate Himself to creatures; which He not

only created, but preserves and sustains continuously, which if He did not do immediately would return to their nothingness.

Concerning the creation of the world, we will discuss how God created all the other creatures, and then from the dust and silt of the earth he formed man, as King and Lord of them all, so that if the Sun and the Moon are beautiful, the Sky and so many different forms of things that are under the Sky, man is much more beautiful in his first and entire nature, the Sky, and so many different ways of things, which are under the Sky, much more beautiful is man in his first, and entire nature, because all these so vague creatures, were made for man, as man is made for God.

Chapter 6

THAT THE MODE OF PATERNAL TEACHING IS DIFFERENT FROM MAGISTERIAL.

From these considerations, proposed by the judicious educator at the right time and place, the young man's soul will gradually be raised to feel highly of God, to fear Him, to revere Him and to love Him. Nor do I intend that these and similar things, which will be said at a lower level in their own places, should be taught to him in a certain order, and with purpose, in the manner of a doctrine, as is done by teachers or parish priests, if this can still be done, and perhaps it will have to be done in due time, but in due time with a thousand domestic occasions, that every day, and every hour, happen smoothly, and without molestation, and not as something only thought, but born in the present things, the child will be taught many useful points of faith, and not only will his intellect be enlightened, but what is more important, and more to be searched for, will light up the affection and the love towards God. And to descend to the particular examples, of the same symbol, which we have in our hands, if sometimes the father will lead his son to the vineyard, or to the field, where one sees the trees laden with fruit, and the vines full of grapes, and the fields full of grain, and the meadows, and the hills covered with flowers, and a thousand other beauties of nature, for the sustenance of man, turning to his son, he will say softly, "Behold my son, this is the bread, and the wine, which God prepares for us to nourish us, and our family, all these creatures serve us, and sustain us in this life. See the great power of God, how from a little grain that I sowed he made such a great harvest, and multiplied it with his blessing. See how he favors our labors, and how he cares for us not to be idle, he sends us the sun

and the rains, and makes the earth germinate, and without God's help the industry and the cultivation of men would be vain. Wait for his great goodness, that never tires of doing us good, for in the past years he has fed and nourished us, and this year he has already prepared the table to nourish us, and the following year, if it pleases him to give us life, we must be sure that he will open the hand of his goodness again, However, my son, we must not behave like brute animals, who graze under the tree, nor ever look upwards, but we must thank our most loving Father who created us and governs us with the greatest love, and we must take care not to offend him, but strive to do his will, as obedient children.

Chapter 7

OF SOME PROPOSITIONS, ET MAXIMS CHRISTIANE MUCH, IMPORTANT, THAT THE FATHER MUST EXTRACT FROM THE SYMBOL.

With these, and other similar ways, that prudence, and paternal affection will administer to the day, many universal propositions will be impressed on the tender soul, and Christian maxims very important for the whole life about the goodness, and about the providence of God, not only in general, but in particular of each one, as for example

That God is supreme goodness, and author of all good.

That life, property, health, intelligence, strength, and all that we are, and can do well in body and soul, is a gift of God.

That we should always thank and bless God and glory in him alone.

Because God has created us, and because he has bought us back from the servitude of the Devil, of whom we were slaves, as will be more fully said later, and because he governs us, and keeps us continually, we all belong to God, and we are obliged to spend our lives, and what we have for his honor.

That the eyes of his providence, are always open above us.

He contemplates all our actions night and day, and he is pleased with our good and virtuous works, and he dislikes the bad ones, and he rewards them in this life, but without greater comparisons in the eternal one, so he punishes sins, and in this world temporally, and in the other eternally, as

we will say below. And this is a very necessary persuasion, that is to say that the child firmly believes that God sees him in every place, however secret, and observes his actions, so that the child knows that he is never alone; this true opinion, rooted in long habit, will always be a brake for him not to sin in the presence of God, because if we see that by human decency this respect is shown to men, much more with good discipline it can be introduced, that it is shown to God.

Chapter 8

OF SUFFERING IN TRIBULATIONS, IN PARTICULAR.

And because our life is subject to infinite miseries, it is necessary to accustom our children to patience at an early age, and to thank God for everything, not breaking, as some do, on the rocks of despair, but remaining firm and steady with the support of this most firm anchor, that God is supreme goodness, who sees all things, and that no tree leaf falls to the ground without his providence, This is to be done by our father of the family principally by example, which is a very effective way of persuading, as we said above, and then also by words, so that if the son sees that his father, when he is ill or when he loses his possessions, or any other of those things which the world calls misfortunes, happens to him, he may be constant, and bears his cross with patience, and he will often hear from the mouth of his father, and of his mother, words worthy of a Christian, similar to those of the holy and most peace-loving Rab, blessed be the name of God, praised be God, thanked be God, God's will be done, and other similar things, the son will easily do the same, and with greater approval he will receive his father's admonitions, when he will tell him that God as a father chastises us for our own good, that he wants to give us a greater crown in Paradise for our suffering, that poverty, infirmity, and other similar things which the blind world considers as very serious evils, are not real evils, but only sin, which deprives us of God's grace, is the real evil. That the tribulations tolerated with patience are the seed that produces life, and earthly happiness, and that therefore God gives more to his dearest and most beloved children. Many other things could also be said, such as the confidence one must have in God, our most loving Father, and in all needs

to have recourse to his help, and in all dangers to hope in him, but it is not necessary to say everything, since each one can for himself, from what is said, make up for the rest, which is silent, which is said in this place for other similar things. And nevertheless, if elsewhere it is necessary for some good purpose, to discuss the fear and love that we have to bear to God, it will be the duty of the prudent reader to take from these places, as much as will conform to the present matter, and to make useful use of everything, in order to make use of it in the Christian education, which we are still defining and outlining.

Chapter 9

OF THE MYSTERY OF HUMAN REDEMPTION. CHAPTER IX.

If from the creation of the world, of the angels, and of man, we know the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of God, and we discover the great obligation that we have to reverence and love Him, much more are the same things manifested in the admirable work, and in the most profound mystery of the human redemption, where the most powerful God is shown, most powerful, most wise, and most merciful God, great power was that by which the divine nature and the human nature are united in unity of person, so that one and the same person is God and man, and of two things so distant, a union so great has been made, as the Evangelist Saint John gives us to understand in those words: The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. But the wisdom of God is declared in the incarnation of the Word, and in the liberation of the human race, for since man transgressed the commandment of God, and therefore became guilty of eternal damnation, justice demanded that the transgressor should not find forgiveness unless he satisfied it, and mercy, on the other hand, demanded that man, most powerless to satisfy his great debt, should be freed by grace; Therefore divine wisdom found a most admirable way of satisfying both, for when God became man justice and peace kissed each other, and God used infinite mercy on man, giving him his own son, so that with the blood of the son of God, made man, he might satisfy man to the utmost with the infinite justice of God. The justness, mercy, and goodness of God, who chose such a wonderful way to redeem the servant, with the great price, that is, with the blood and death of his own son, which St. Paul, considering this, was almost beside himself, in amazement, called this love of God boundless

and excessive, in those words, God, through his excessive love, with which he has loved us, since we are dead in sin, has made us alive in Christ, that is, through the most bitter death and passion of Christ our Saviour. Now the cross and the passion of Christ is the book where all the saints have studied the great goodness of God, and there they have learned the doctrine of perfect love. Therefore the father who desires his son to be well instructed in this supreme knowledge should see to it in time and place that he knows all that pertains to the fall of our first father Adam, through whose fault the whole human race fell into the tyranny of sin and of the devil, from which no creature, neither angel nor man, could free it; therefore it was necessary that, as has been said, God became man; and so, from hand to hand, he will make the child aware of the incarnation of the Word, and as by the work of the Holy Spirit he took on the human flesh of Mary ever Virgin, he conversed poorly and humbly with men, gave them the highest example of virtue, and salutary doctrine, and finally, after having shown himself to be the true son of God in the power of his works and words, in order to perfect the great undertaking of our liberation and reconciliation with his eternal father, he suffered a most bitter and ignominious death on the trunk of the Cross.

Chapter 10

OF THE GREAT USEFULNESS OF REMEMBERING OFTEN THE PASSION OF CHRIST OUR LORD.

Nothing is more fruitful than thinking often of the Saviour's Passion, and this is the glory of the Christian, as St. Paul said, may God protect me from glorying in anything other than the Cross of Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore, the good father should see to it that this most useful thought is impressed on the child's mind, accustoming him to remember it often; it will help to do this if he often and devoutly makes the sign of the Holy Cross, venerates the Most Holy Crucifix and the holy images of the mysteries of the Passion, keeping them in the house, so that they may be vividly represented to him, likewise, to recite some prayers genuflected before the Crucifix, to introduce that the child has in particular veneration the sixth feria, called Friday, in memory of the Lord crucified for us, and similar other things, which kindle the heart, and refresh the memory of the child, who will gradually acquire a good habit, to think devoutly of the passion of Christ. But there is no Christian virtue that a father cannot teach his son about the book of the Cross. And by way of example he will often narrate how much we are obliged to render love to so much love. That great is the benefit which God has bestowed on us by having created us, and by preserving us, but greater because he has redeemed us. That Christ died so bitterly for the sins of all in the universal, and of each one in particular, since he alone is most innocent and immaculate, and therefore it is necessary to have in supreme abomination sin, and to take care not to commit it, so as not to crucify again, as far as he is on the sinner's side, Christ Jesus. That the Christian must flee all pride, and be most humble in imitation of Christ, who, being

true God, took the form of a servant, and humbled himself to the point of death, and death on the Cross. We must not esteem so much the honor and vain opinion of the world, that by it we transgress the precept of God, because Christ our Lord chose the ignominy of the Cross, and we are followers and disciples of the Crucified.

It will also be possible from here to take abundant matter to persuade the suffering of insults, the forgiveness of enemies, the suffering of the tribulations of this life, so that being companions of the passions of Christ, we may also be companions of the consolations and glories of Christ.

In sum it is necessary that each one is persuaded, that there is no other way to reach Heaven, no other ladder to climb, no other door to enter Paradise, than that of the Cross, and that all the study of the Christian must be in expressing, and representing in himself the image of Christ crucified, otherwise as a coin that does not have the sign, and the impression of the prince, it will not be received, and will not be able with it to buy the rich, and precious margarita, that is the eternal beatitude.

And because our sense, and our flesh, does not understand this language of the Cross, and on the contrary hears very willingly, and understands very well the pernicious, and diabolical languages of the world, therefore it is necessary that for a long time the child be accustomed to the sound of this idiom, and learn it little by little, and make a habit of it, so that he does not keep his ears open to the serpentine voices of the flesh, and of carnal prudence, for if anyone imbibes from the beginning opinions, and rules rightly opposed to the Cross, apart from the manifest danger of the loss of the soul, which is worth more than Heaven, and earth, what fruits can the country expect from a citizen, who has for his maxims, that pleasures, and voluptuousness are the

highest good? That it is lawful to do anything to have great riches? That one must never forgive one's enemy, that one must avenge insults, and with greater measure, and similar dogmas from hell? Therefore, as has been said, before the world has sown its poisonous plants in tender souls, it is better to sow good and Christian ones, so that the contrary ones have no place there, or at least do not take root there so easily.

Chapter 11

OF THE HOLY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

In the Apostolic Symbol we confess that we believe in a Holy and Catholic Church, that is universal, because the faithful people are scattered throughout the world, always in all times, in all places, and by all the faithful the same Catholic faith has been confessed and is confessed, outside of which every other faith is not faith, but perfidy. Now this article of the Church is of great importance, because outside of the Holy Church there is no health, but condemnation, not differently from the time of the great flood, no one was saved, except those who were in the Ark. This is our mother, who gave birth to us in spirit; and as a saint says, God will not have for a father in Heaven, he who does not recognize the Holy Church as his mother on earth. This, by the Apostle Saint Paul, is called the house of God, where all the faithful dwell, under the government of a father of the family, where is the food of the soul, and the communion of all spiritual goods; for in her alone is the legitimate power to forgive sins, and to open Heaven. This is called by the same Apostle the pillar and firmness of truth, because it is governed by the Holy Spirit, who teaches it all truths; for which reason all that the Holy Church determines and commands is to be kept and observed. This is not instituted by human, but divine invention; it did not begin yesterday and the next, but Christ is its founder, who being the stone, and the firmest foundation, and immobile by nature, gave, and communicated by grace, the strength of stone to a man fragile for himself, who was Simon son of Iona, a poor fisherman, and made him Peter, that is rock, stone, and rock so strong, that over him, and on his legitimate successors as Supreme Roman Pontiffs, Christ our Lord has built, and will

build until the end of the century his holy Church, whose strength not of flesh, but of spirit, is so great, that all the machines of hell, all the persecutions of tyrants, all the frauds of heretics have not been able, nor will they ever be able, to conquer it.

Chapter 12

AS THE FATHER MUST TRAIN HIS SON TO BE OBEDIENT TO HOLY CHURCH.

Having now briefly touched upon a few things of the excellence of the Holy Church, as many as suffice for our purpose, leaving the rest to those who principally deal with this subject, it only remains for us to remind the good father, that he should not miss any opportunity to educate his son well, and in a Christian manner in this area. And descending to some particulars, he will have to propose to the young man, who will already have some capacity, how great happiness it is to be inside the Holy Catholic Church, and to have God as a father, who has prepared for us, if we do not lack the heredity of eternal life, something to which those who are not in the Holy Church cannot aspire, as infidels, heretics, and excommunicated, while they persevere in their error, and obstinacy, and therefore they must be considered most unhappy.

And because, in order to attain eternal health, it is not enough to be in the Church, but it is necessary to fulfill what God and the Holy Church command us, because out of the number of the faithful there are good and bad, just as on the same plough there is wheat and straw, and in the same body there are good and bad spirits, and in the Ark of Noah, which was a figure of the Church, there were worldly animals and unclean ones; Therefore it is appropriate to train the son in such a way that he will have great reverence for the Holy Church, and for the Pastors, Bishops, and other magistrates and presidents of the Church, and especially for the Roman Pontiff, the successor of Saint Peter, the Vicar of Christ, the visible head of the whole universal Church, the Pastor of

Pastors, and the father of the spiritual fathers. Therefore, it is most useful to teach the child to revere the holy priests, to kiss their hands, to kneel before them, and to ask their blessing, as has been the ancient custom of the faithful. And so that the son may be more ready to obey the commands of the Holy Church, the good father will often say to him such things that will imprint this concept in his memory, as, for example, once the father will say, dear son, let us go and hear Mass, because the Holy Mother Church has commanded us to do so; another time he will say, see, today we are not working, but we are observing the feast of this and that saint, because it is the Church's precept. In sum, tell him to understand that the will and the law of God is manifested to us by the Holy Catholic Church, his beloved spouse, so that whoever obeys the Church obeys God, and whoever is inobedient to the Church is inobedient and rebellious to God.

Chapter 13

WARNING TO BEWARE OF FALSE PROPHETS AND SEDUCERS.

And because we are in very dangerous times, in which false prophets and false evangelists are multiplied, who run and God has not sent them, and are dressed on the outside with a sheep's skin, and on the inside they are ravaging wolves, and they always have an apple in their mouth and an iron in their hand, with which they kill the souls of the simple ones, therefore it is very necessary this precept of obedience of the Holy Church, which is like a safe harbor, and a very strong fortress, and a very strong fortress, which is very necessary, and the iron in their hand, with which they kill the souls of the simple ones, therefore it is very necessary this precept of obedience of the Holy Church, which is like a safe harbor, and a very strong fortress, where the Christian must always withdraw, not to fall into the snares of the Devil; it is not the offence of the layperson, of the idiot, of the craftsman and of the woman to want to discuss subtly the things of our faith, nor to arrogate to oneself the place of the teacher. Our body is not all eye, nor all hands, nor all feet, but they are various and distinct members of a single body, and each member is content with its offence, so it happens in this mystical, and spiritual body of the Holy Church, and when the foot wants to do the offence of the eye, of necessity the good order is disturbed, and great confusion of schism, and of errors follows. For this reason the good Christian does not have to search curiously for many things on his intelligence, but he has to believe simply what the Holy Church, our mother, proposes to us and in this holy simplicity he will be saved, so that to go to heaven he does not need much doctrine, but much charity, humility, and

obedience. And therefore if any of those who, under the cloak of a false and pretended sanctity, sow new and pernicious doctrine, wish to enter into dispute with the Christian, Catholic and obedient son of the Holy Roman Church, saying why do you do this, and why that other? since it is not necessary at such a time to abstain from the flesh, nor to fast, nor to do similar things, let the faithful be warned to cut off reasoning, and flee more quickly than one would flee from a trampled asp, and let him not be entangled by sweet and melted words, such as those which the ministers of perdition frequently use to gain credence with the simple-minded, that is, the Word of God, Holy Writ, the Gospel, the Passion of Christ, and the like, for the devil transforms himself into an angel of light, and under this bait, is the weapon of heresy, and therefore as soon as possible, it is necessary to retreat to the fortress of the Holy Church, and with a single answer, as the Holy Church, our mother, has taught us, so believes, so orders the spouse of Jesus Christ, a holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Roman Church, with this I say only answer, as with a sharp knife one cuts off all the heads of the infernal Hydra. For this reason it is of great importance to have a good education in infancy, regarding this most important article, that of obedience to the Holy Church, and therefore as has been said, the good father must be solicitous, to accustom his son, and to impress firmly in his soul this truth, which by doing so will at the same time achieve that the son be obedient to God, to his father, and to his mother, to his country, and to his legitimate superiors, because all this is commanded by the Holy Church; and once the child has reached a more mature age, he will know how to safeguard the precious heredity of the Catholic faith, and will know how to protect himself with divine help from the children of darkness who in these last calamitous days have grown in such numbers that great caution and prudence of spirit are needed to guard against

their nets, as St. Paul admonishes us at the end of his epistle to the Romans with these divine words:

Brethren, I beg you to be warned against those who sow dissensions and scandals, teaching other doctrine than that which you have learned, and stay away from them; for these do not serve Christ our Lord, but his own belly, and by means of sweet sermons and blessings, they seduce the hearts of the innocent and simple. I know your obedience, which is spread everywhere, and I rejoice in you; but I wish you to be wise, and shrewd in good, and simple in evil. Up to this point St. Paul's words are very worthy to be kept in memory, and necessary for every faithful Christian to observe them faithfully.

Chapter 14

OF THE FOUR ULTIMATE THINGS.

The Sage says in the Holy Scripture: In all your works remember your most recent ones, and you will never sin; according to the sentence of the fathers there are four of these most recent ones, or last things, that is death, the judgment of God, eternal damnation, and eternal life, of which Dionysius Cartusianus wrote a divine and useful book, entitled *de quatuor novissimis*. These are mentioned in the Holy Apostolic Symbol when we confess that Christ our Lord will come from the right hand of the Father, where he now sits to judge the living and the dead, and likewise in the last articles in which we confess the resurrection of the flesh and eternal life. Now it would take me a long time to tell you all the great fruits that each of these novissimus brings, but in particular the consideration and mediation of death, which our sensuality by nature abhors; But by election men also ordinarily flee so much from this thought, that among many it is a common proverb, that one should not speak of death; seeming to them that this is the *absentia*, which makes every sweetness of this life bitter, as if not speaking of death, or not thinking of it, could prevent the irreparable necessity of dying; And these people do not consider how much better it is to think often about that action, which one must necessarily do, so that one may do well, since it matters to us as much as that which judges correctly, easily can be understood, that is, to say in one word, from good, or not well dying, hangs the eternity of glory, and the eternity of punishment. But among the many utilities which the memory of death brings, great is that which is contained in the sentence of the wise man, that is, that this is like a brake which withdraws us from sin, while we consider not only that

we must die but that we must render a very close account of our actions to God, the most just judge, before whose eyes, as the Apostle says, everything is naked and open, and who will render to each one according to his works, either reward or eternal punishment. For this reason the very cunning Devil, who understands the fruit of this thought, in a Christian heart, having made an agreement with the flesh and the world, our perpetual enemies, tries to keep us as far away as he can. But it is better for us to listen to Christ our Lord, who admonishes us many times to be vigilant, because we do not know the day or the hour.

The thought of death also helps to abate our pride, especially among the noble, the rich, and those who are superior to others, either by some dowry of body or soul, to whom the Scriptures speak, partly reproving them, partly deriding them, and partly admonishing them, saying: *Quid superbis terra, et cinis?* or ashes and dust, and what are you so proud of? He will not easily despise those who are lesser than himself, nor will he superbly exalt himself with the gifts of God, for which he should humble himself as the more indebted he is to His Majesty, who will consider that we are all little dust, and in little dust we return.

From the same thought we draw another great utility not to rejoice excessively in the prosperity, nor to be too much attracted by the adversities of this short life.

It is also a great remedy for the anxious solicitude that men have to buy things, which we will perhaps discuss elsewhere. And finally, in order not to be longer, he who thinks of dying does not go mad behind the vain honors of the world, realizing that neither they can be with us, nor we with them, as Saint Hieronymus said, he who always thinks that he will soon die, easily despises everything.

Chapter 15

AS THE FATHER MUST TRAIN HIS SON TO THINK OF DEATH.

Therefore, if it is very necessary for the Christian not to sin, to be humble, to be moderate in prosperity, constant in travails, and generous in despising, as much as is fitting, riches, honours, and those things which the blind world considers to be the greatest happiness, certainly it will also be necessary to keep in mind death, and the tremendous judgment, so that he may close his ears to the insidious songs of the sirens, and not hear the insidious songs of the sirens, which the blind world considers to be the greatest happiness, it will certainly be necessary to keep in mind death, and the terrible judgment, so that he may close his ears to the insidious songs of the Sirens, and so that the things of this world may not be a snare of the Devil, so that he may lose God through them. Therefore the good father, remembering that he is a Christian, and desirous of his son's health, as he will see sufficient capacity in the young man, will try with discreet manners, to imprint in his heart this salutary doctrine of thinking about death, and to die well, and so that the things, which are esteemed distant are not feared, and death, for the most part, we believe to be distant, therefore, show him with the same examples that at all hours the uncertainty of the hour of death occurs, and how death threatens us when we least believe it, like a thief who comes at night. And let the father beware of being too tender, so that he may think he is endangering the life of his son by speaking of death, nor let him excuse himself, that his heart does not suffer, even thinking that his son must die, this too much carnal tenderness does not suit a Christian heart, nor is love regulated, that which loves the body more than the soul, or the temporal life more than the

eternal one. And it is not the same as carnal men think the thought of death bitter, and melancholic, to the good Christian, who if he is of the flesh as we all are, and as such feels the natural repugnance, does not however live according to the laws of the flesh, but according to the laws of the spirit, and when he thinks of death he does not consider it only as the separation of the soul from the body, but considers it as a means that leads the soul to perfect union with God. And the spiritual man does not see death as the end of all goods and pleasures, with which the carnal man sees it, on the contrary, illustrated by the light of faith and grace, he sees it as a door through which, although narrow and hard, one enters into the possession of true and eternal pleasures. And for this reason, as has been said, when the good father sees that his son is already capable of reason, he must also train him in these holy thoughts, which will be the seed of many virtues in him at a more mature age, as has been shown above in part, but nevertheless, according to the various dispositions of the child, more and less generous and sweet of heart, and more easily moved by fear or love, so that, differently, now of the most bitter punishment of the damned, now of the inestimable glory of the blessed, and of the enjoyment of God, which is the sea and the lake of all good without any evil, he sweetly motivates them, endeavouring however that the fear of death, and of judgement, and of hell, may lead to the love of virtue, and of God, so that we serve the Lord not as reluctant servants for fear of the lash, and of punishment alone; of which fear it is written that perfect charity drives out fear, but as dear children out of love and filial reverence moved by that holy fear, of which it is written, The holy fear of the Lord endures for ever. And since we have said enough about the Apostolic Symbol, let us now briefly say a few things about the seven sacraments, following our intention, however, to draw from them some instruction in practice for our education.

Chapter 16

CONSIDERATIONE ABOUT THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS OF THE HOLY CHURCH.

Great things, certainly, are those which the most high and perfect law of Christ our Redeemer requires of the Christian, but great also, and most effective above all else, and more than can be expressed or imagined, are the aids which the same law gives us to lift our feeble and infirm nature, which the weaker it is by itself, the stronger it is by the grace of God. Considering the Apostle, he said in one place that he was not sufficient, as if by himself, to think good, but not to do it, but in another place he says: I can do all things in him who comforts me, that is, in God. Therefore we give infinite gratitude to that most wise and powerful lawgiver, who so commands us great and perfect things, that at the same time what no human law can do, nor less that of Moisé could do, he gives us the virtue and strength to carry them out, communicating to us his divine grace through his holy sacraments, of which many are the sacraments of the Lord. sacraments, of which we can speak very abundantly; but so as not to go too far beyond the terms of our subject, I say in brevity, that the holy sacraments of the new law, and of the state of grace, in which by God's mercy we are, are seven, and no more and no less, which were instituted by Christ our Redeemer, true God and true man, no other than God could institute them, for God alone is the author of grace, and of glory, and God alone is that which makes us just and holy. The sacraments are some sensible signs and admirable instruments, in which the omnipotence of God has placed so much virtue and efficacy that they penetrate into the depths of the heart, sanctify the soul, adorn it and enrich it with divine grace, provided that the soul itself receives with

humility the gift of Heaven, and does not resist the Holy Spirit, and does not hinder its justification, and sanctification, while with an impure heart, and with the affection of sin, it receives the holy sacraments. And certainly words are not enough to express how serious an offense is committed against that most blessed God, who made man for us, with so much pain, and with most bitter death left us these most suavest, and most efficacious medicines, and how much chastisement he heaps upon himself the wretched sinner, who prevents the gift, and the effect of grace, if returning to himself with true repentance, he does not take anew with due disposition, and reverence the salutiferous medicine.

And because it has been said that the holy sacraments of the Gospel law are no more or less than seven, as the Holy Church has taught us continually, it will not be out of purpose, I think, to demonstrate the sufficiency of this mysterious number, with a brief and clear doctrine of the Roman Catechism, taken from sacred Theologians, which every Christian should have in memory; And because it is taken from something that we have in our hands at all hours, which is our mortal life, it is easy to understand and remember, and it can be of great spiritual benefit for the life of the soul, to those who will give it careful consideration.

Chapter 17

OF THE CONFORMITY OF THE NATURAL LIFE, AND OF THE SPIRITUAL.

I say, therefore, that regarding the bodily life of man we can consider seven things, five of which pertain to each man individually, for the conservation of himself, and the last two pertain to him in order to maintain the public and common good. The first five are: to be born, to grow, to nourish oneself, and falling into infirmity, to heal oneself; and finally, to drive away the weakness of evil, and to restore the weakened forces of the body. As for the public, then, magistrates are necessary, with the authority and rule of which the republic is governed; and in the last place is the legitimate propagation of children, for the preservation of the citizenship itself, and of the human race. The same seven things respond adequately to the spiritual life, by which the soul lives to God, and therefore it is easy to gather the sufficiency of the sevenfold number of the sacraments; for in the first place is baptism, by which, regenerated of water, and of spirit, we are born again in Christ. In the second place is Confirmation, or Confirmation, which increases and strengthens divine grace in us, so that we can fight manfully against all our enemies. In the third place is the Most Holy Eucharist, true manna, and heavenly food, with which our soul is nourished and sustained. In the fourth place is Penance, the soul's medicine, by which the lost spiritual health is restored, and the wounds of sin are healed. In the fifth, and last place, of the things that pertain to man in particular, according to the life of the spirit, is the sacrament of Extreme Unction, which takes away the relics of sin, and recreates, and revives the virtues of the soul. But out of respect for the public good, in the sixth place follows

Holy Orders, by which we are granted the legitimate power to administer and dispense the other sacraments, and to exercise all public ministries in the Holy Church. And finally, in the seventh and last place, is the Sacrament of Matrimony, by which a man and a woman are joined together in holy wedlock, and beget children, and raise them religiously, for the worship of God, and for the preservation of the faithful people, and of the Holy Church, spread throughout all peoples, as we have declared at length above.

Chapter 18

CONSIDERATION MORE PARTICULAR OF THE SACRAMENTS IN ORDER TO EDUCATION, AND BEFORE BAPTISM.

Therefore, since these seven Sacraments are so excellent and divine, both because of the dignity of the One who gave them to us, God Himself, to whom alone is due all honor and glory, and because of the admirable virtue which they contain, it will be the good father's duty to teach his son, so that he may recognize in them the great mercy of God, and hold them in that esteem and reverence which is justly due. And since the life of the soul depends, as we have seen, on the Holy Sacraments, let the father ensure that his son understands this great need, so that by the example of the corporal life, out of a similar desire to preserve himself, and to make himself ever stronger in spirit, he may desire and frequent the Holy Sacraments. And to descend, according to our institution, more to the things of practice, we are presented in the first place with Holy Baptism, the door of all the sacraments, through which we have entered the Holy Church, and where we have made that solemn obligation to God, renouncing the devil, the world, and its pomp, and its works, and promising to follow in everything Christ our Lord, and Emperor, who has promised us eternal life. So little thought is given to this most serious and important obligation, and so little is observed, that those who consider the common life of men, will judge that they have made the earliest possible obligation to renounce Christ, and follow the world, and the flesh. Therefore, the good father should make his son accustomed to give thanks to God every day for being a Christian, and to pray to His Majesty to give him special help, so that he may fulfill the obligations made in Baptism. And he will especially encourage him to keep in

mind the day on which he was baptized, as his true birthday, so that he may celebrate it every year with thanksgiving to God, with the use of the holy sacraments, and with every offense of Christian piety.

Lead him sometimes to the Church to see children baptized, and admonish him to consider carefully those mysterious ceremonies, and see to it that he understands in some way their meaning, as for example, the white robe, or the white cloth, which is placed on the little creature, the priest saying with Latin voices this sentence: Take the white robe, which clean and unblemished you bring before the tribunal of Jesus Christ, to receive eternal life. Understand that this robe shows us the beauty and purity of the baptized soul, and the innocence and purity that the Christian must maintain throughout his life to obtain eternal life. Similarly, the lighted white candle, which is given in the hand of the baptized person, or on his behalf to the communion, signifies the sincere faith inflamed with charity, which is given to us in baptism, and we must nourish it, and increase it with the study of good works, until the end of life.

I know well that, ordinarily, there is little knowledge of such things among the faithful, so that few fathers can teach them to their children. But if men were so solicitous of the things of health, as they are of those which touch the comforts of this corruptible body, there is no lack, by God's grace, in the holy Church of pastors, and doctors, and spiritual fathers, who teach them; besides that in the Roman Catechism they are diligently declared. But if he knows nothing else, at least remember, the good father, often to his son the promise, which he makes to the Church, to be always her faithful servant, and to renounce the devil, and the works, and the pumps of the world. In this regard, much could be said, and perhaps will be said elsewhere, against those fathers and mothers, who accustom their children to

the pomp and splendor of dress, and lead them willingly to vain entertainments, and sometimes not very modest, not remembering the promise made on the day of baptism, and not realizing what they give to drink at an early age, which in the more mature years then takes over the soul. But to conclude this part, I will only say that it occurs to me to have read in St. John Chrysostom, if I am not mistaken, a father and doctor of great authority, that he reminds the Christian that every morning he should renew the pact made with God in baptism, and turning inward to the Lord, he should say with all the affection of his heart: "My Lord, I renounce the devil, and I unite myself with him to you. And the Greek word has such a force, that expressing better, how our life is a spiritual militia, it comes to say: I do not want in any way to be of the squad, nor of the soldiers of Satan, but of the militia of Christ, with which intention the Christian must be armed every day, against all the temptations of the devil, of which he has made, and must make open profession of always being an enemy.

Chapter 19

OF CONFIRMATION OR CONFIRMATION.

Since in holy baptism we are reborn in Christ, and we are like little children, the sacrament of confirmation comes which gives us spiritual growth, and strengthens us, and confirms us with new virtue of Heaven, and we begin to be perfect soldiers of Christ, for if well in baptism we are received and written in the militia of Christ, in the confirmation we are then armed for the fights, that overtake us from our perpetual enemies, flesh, world, and Satan, and the Holy Spirit gives us particular strength, so that we freely confess not only with the heart but also with the mouth the truth of our faith, not fearing threats, nor any danger, even if it were necessary to die as so many holy martyrs did. And how great is the efficacy of this sacrament, in confirming and establishing us in the confession of faith, from which confirmation is called, was openly demonstrated in the primitive Church, in the holy Apostles, who at the time of the Savior's passion were so fearful and frightened, that not only the others fled, But the good Peter, who had always shown greater fervour of love towards Christ, and who a little earlier had promised himself with too bold words constancy and firmness above all the other disciples, at the voice of a little woman fell so cowardly to the ground, that he denied his Master and Lord three times. On the day of Pentecost the Apostles were clothed with the virtues of highness, and filled with the Holy Spirit, who appeared with a sound, a vehement spirit and a tongue of fire, that they went about the whole world without fear, preaching the Gospel of Christ crucified before kings, principals and magistrates, and rejoicing and glorifying when they were despised and beaten for the name of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 20

THAT THE FATHER MUST HAVE THE CHILD CONFIRMED.

Therefore, the good father, who knows by experience what battles the new soldier of Christ enters into in this miserable world, should remember to see to it that his son is in every way confirmed, or, as is commonly said, confirmed; If this sacrament is not absolutely necessary for health, as baptism is, it is however of the greatest utility, since that same Holy Spirit, who worked in the Apostles and Martyrs, is also given to us, and that same divine virtue spreads through our hearts, which, if we want to use it manfully, we too will be victorious in spiritual battles, as the Saints were. For this reason, those deserve great reproach, who, showing little esteem for such a great treasure, pass not only pueritia, but also youth and more mature age without having received this venerable sacrament, whose excellence and dignity, besides other things, is demonstrated to us in this, that only the Bishop is its proper and ordinary minister. As for the age at which the child must be confirmed, it will be, generally speaking, a suitable time after the seventh year, or thereabouts, when for the most part the use of reason is already beginning, and consequently the soldier of Christ must already be armed to be able to fight spiritually, for which the too young children are not yet suitable.

Chapter 21

OF THE CONTEMPT OF WORLDLY FEAR.

From this sacrament the father will be able to derive a very useful document for the education of his son, that is to remind him often, that he despise every worldly fear, and banish from himself every vicious shame, and openly in word, and in deed, and with his whole life make an open profession of Christianity; which is so important, that I almost dare to say, that in this consists the sum total of the documents of the Christian life; for the majority of men withdraw from those means, which are the most certain and the safest way to lead them to health, and do not flee, but rather follow those things, which lead to sin, and to damnation, just for this fear of the world. And, as a saintly man well says, what will be said, and what will not be said, are a great net, with which the devil leads many souls to eternal perdition. Therefore let the father admonish his son often, that he has been anointed with the sacred oil of chrism, and has been marked by the Episcopal hands, with the sign of the Holy Cross, which is the character, and the imprint of the Christian militia in the middle of the forehead, which is the place where the passions of fear, and of shame, appear most, with the blush, and with paleness, so that he may understand that nothing must frighten him, nor should he be ashamed, so that he does not freely confess Christ crucified, which confession does not consist only in saying, I am a Christian, with simple words, but it is necessary to do it with living works, in conformity with the Christian law and profession, otherwise he will be of the number of those of whom the Apostle Saint Paul says, with words they confess to know Christ, but with facts they deny him. Therefore, the father is accustomed to hold the child in higher esteem than

what God will say, than what the foolish world will say. And because the affection of shame is good in children, when it is moved by the knowledge and repentance of some defect committed, they are therefore accustomed to be ashamed of their sin, and of having failed in their duty as good Christians, and not as many do, who are ashamed not to do evil, or at least to do good, of which the Saviour says in the Gospel: Whoever has erubescence of me, and of my doctrine, of this one will have erubescence the son of the Virgin, when he comes in his majesty, and glory of his father. For this reason it will be a good and useful custom for the son to mark his forehead often with the sign of the Cross, as we read that it was the custom of Christians in the early Church, so that he may often remember that he bears the sign of the Knight of Christ, and he renews inwardly the resolve, to want openly, and as is customary to say, with his face uncovered, to confess in his life, and in his actions Christ crucified, saying with Saint Paul, I do not blush, nor am I ashamed to preach the Gospel.

Chapter 22

OF THE MOST HOLY EUCHARIST, AND HOW THE FATHER MUST SEE TO IT THAT HIS SON IS DEVOTED TO IT.

If it is the duty of a good father to teach his son to show great reverence for all the sacraments, ordained by God, most precious vessels of grace, and efficacious instruments of our health, he has no doubt that with much greater diligence he must strive to ensure that he reveres them singularly, and be very devoted to the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist, where, after the consecration under the veil of those specimens of bread, and of wine, that we sensibly see, and taste really, truly, and substantially is the source of all the graces of Jesus Christ S. N. author of the life, and donor of the Holy Spirit. N. author of life, and giver of glory. This is the memorial of his blessed passion. This is the sweetest pledge of the inestimable love that he bears us, since not content with having died for our redemption, he made himself food for our souls, to unite us and incorporate us into himself with the closest union of love. Food that gives life, vigor, and strength to the soul, so that it can perform living works, which are appropriate to it in spirit, virtue, and holiness, not differently from the natural nourishment that gives strength to the body, so that it can vigorously exercise its actions. This is the celestial fire, which nourishes in our hearts the warmth of devotion. This is the true manna, which has every flavor of suaveness, and it relieves us of the taste of the flesh of this unhappy Egypt. This is the dew that restrains the ardor, and the flames of the fomite, and of concupiscence, because that virginal flesh, concocted by the operation of the Holy Spirit of blood equally virginal, and pure, without any sobriety of lust, confers particular virtue to whoever worthily feeds on it,

against the carnal impetus. In this way, young people in particular, in whom the fires of lust usually blaze the most, need to communicate often with all humility, so that they may preserve unharmed and immaculate the flower of holy virginity, most grateful to God.

Therefore, as we have begun to say, let the good father accustom the child to revere supremely the holy sacrament of the Altar, and in every good way let him kindle in his tender heart this fire of love and devotion.

To this end, it will be useful to teach him to adore it with great veneration in the Church, to accompany it in solemn processions, and while it is being carried to the sick, with the lighted torch in his hand, and with his head uncovered. Similarly, when he encounters it by chance, and when it is necessary to pass by the tabernacle where it is placed, he should never forget to greet it reverently, and with a humiliated heart, and with his knees bowed to the ground.

When the child has reached the age of discretion, so that he may already be able to discern the excellence of this heavenly bread from that of the earth, let him communicate it according to the judgment of his confessor, and gradually, as his capacity grows, introduce him to the more frequent use of this most divine sacrament. Do not fail to teach him how, in order to sit at the table of the supreme King, it is necessary to have white garments, that is, a pure soul, washed from sins in holy confession. Add with how much reverence, and with a holy loving and filial fear, with how much interior recollection, and also exteriorly, with how much devout composition of the whole body, one must attend that sacrosanct and tremendous table, to feed on the bread of the Angels.

These and other necessary things the father will teach his son all the more easily, if with the instruction of words, he joins the more effective instruction of work and of his own example, for since children, as we have said elsewhere, are by nature disposed to imitation, they will always do more readily and with pleasure what they see their fathers and mothers do.

Chapter 23

OF SOME WHO DO NOT APPROVE OF COMMUNICATING OFTEN.

It is a sad fact that among those who have the title and the profession of being followers of Christ, there are some who, priding themselves on the name, are nevertheless ashamed to appear Christian in their deeds and in their effects, of which shame, vicious and pernicious, was spoken of not so long ago. And of these there are two ways, for some know and approve of good, and choose to do it, but because of a certain pusillanimity, and fear of being shown the finger, they do not dare to reveal themselves as true disciples of Christ and faithful observers of his doctrine, but they are like Nicodemus, who secretly and by night converse and negotiate with the Savior, and by mid-day with the Pharisees, that is, with sinful men, and friends of the glory of the world.

But of a worse kind are those others, who despise and mock the works of true and pious Christians, which they do not do so much for lack of faith, which already do not deserve the name of faithful and Catholics, but so as not to be spoiled by the world, and to serve more freely the appetites and desires of the flesh. And as they deride many of the exercises of Christian piety, considering them the work of women, and of simple people, they make in particular a certain profession of not approving the frequenting of the holy sacraments, of confession, and communion, saying that it is enough to observe the precept of confession, and communion once a year, which if the Church did not constrain them with the fear of punishment, perhaps they would also do it, but they want to appear wise with advantage, blaming their little

devotion, with a foolish prudence, and with a false, and simulated reverence, discussing that it is not convenient to contract such familiarity, and domesticity with God, as if any good could happen to us, without being servants of God, and without being united with him, as much as possible. But if I am not mistaken, the truest reason for their fear of becoming too familiar with God is because they do not want to distance themselves from another familiarity, which they like too much, that is, from the close understanding and bond that they have with the freedom of the flesh, and with the world, and with disordered lusts.

It is added that this is one of Satan's cunning, who, not being able to bear the love of God for men, has arrived at such a sign, that he has not only made himself a man, but food and nourishment for men, and knowing by experience how strong is this armor, against all his insults, he seeks through envy and anger to divert his children, for whom this bread is prepared, from the precious table of his heavenly Father, and he moves every machine so that the souls do not feed on that food which, received worthily and with due preparation, makes them very strong and insuperable from his temptations.

Now I do not intend to reject in this place, with more words, such a false sentence, unworthy of a Christian man, I will only say that there has been no lack, as there has never been a lack in the Holy Church, of men of spirit and doctrine, who have opposed this battering ram of the Devil with a wall, and have written useful books in this matter, evidently proving the necessity, and the fruit of frequent communion, made however with that disposition, and with those circumstances that are deservedly suited to such a sacrament. And already by God's grace, and by the solicitude of religious men, and servants of God, the use of the good is multiplied in such a way, and has so confirmed

the doctrine with the work, that now the ancient serpent does not dare in this part, so openly, as in later years it used to, to vomit its venom.

And to end this digression, it is not said that each of the faithful people indiscriminately is fit to communicate often, but it is well to remind our father of the family, and for himself and for his son, that they have great devotion to this wonderful sacrament, that they listen with their inner ears to the sweet invitations of Christ, who above all desires to eat with us, that they try to live with purity of heart, as far as our human frailty implies, purging the maculae of the soul with penance, and holy confession, so that with the obedience of the discreet spiritual father, they may much more often, than many ordinarily do not, eat at that divine table, where we eat that bread, which makes us live forever.

Chapter 24

OF PENANCE OR CONFESSION.

There are many infirmities, to which, as everyone knows from experience, this frail and corruptible body of ours is subjected, but many more and much more serious are those of the soul, whose substance is too noble and delicate. The diseases of the soul are the disordered passions, and our unbridled affections, and in sum the many sins, in which we overflow at all hours in a thousand ways. Therefore, if we are diligent and concerned about the care of this transient body, which is irreparably dying, we should be much more concerned about the soul, which is eternal in nature, and is the most excellent and important possession of ourselves.

Now the spiritual medicine of the soul is the holy sacrament of penance, or confession, where the virtue and efficacy of the blood of Christ is applied to us in such a way that the soul, which was previously dead through sin, recovers the life of grace; something that no human medicine can do in the death of the body. And even if the soul were not dead from mortal sin, which is what spiritually kills it, but only found itself languid and weak from the thick punctures of the lesser and everyday faults, which are called venial, it receives in this sacrament health, and acquires at the same time vigor and strength of spirit, so as to be able to resist temptation better, and to be farther from the dangers of mortal sin; Therefore, holy confession is not only a curative medicine, which restores the lost health of the inner man, but it also has a preservative virtue, by which the soul is preserved and perseveres through divine grace not to fall easily into sin. And therefore, just as for those who have fallen into mortal sin, there is no other remedy for health

than the sacrament of penance, so for others it is extremely useful and fruitful; Therefore venial sins, even if they do not deprive the soul of the life of grace, as mortals do, nevertheless weaken it, and cool the fervor of devotion, and little by little after many small blows, such an indisposition comes about, that when a rather strong temptation comes, the soul is thrown miserably to the ground; For this reason, those who are not very prudent are those who do not estimate the faults and the less serious falls, to whom happens what the Sage says, He who despises the smallest things little by little makes a great fall. And it is marvelous to see how these same ones, in temporal things, and in things of the flesh, feel very differently, with the result that as far as possessions are concerned, they not only avoid great losses, but also small ones; and as for the body, not only do they guard against mortal wounds, but also against any light wound, and it is natural to flee not only the total destruction of this compound, and the deprivation of a principal member, such as an eye, or an arm, but there is no one who voluntarily chooses to lose even the extreme part of a small finger, only for the health and integrity of the soul are men prodigals.

Chapter 25

HOW CHILDREN SHOULD BE ACCUSTOMED TO THE ABHORRENCE OF SIN AND TO CONFESSION.

Now the good Christian father, who does not want to rule himself, nor even less his house with the false rules of the world, but with the true rules of Christ, will teach his son from his tender years to abhor sin absolutely, of whatever manner it may be, as something ugly, harmful, and displeasing to God, and at the same time to confess it humbly. Therefore, beginning with minor things, it will be useful to accustom the children to blush for things they have done badly, seeing how their father and mother are disturbed and offended by them, so that, feeling the sting of shame and sometimes of punishment, they may regret having committed them; in this way they will gradually become accustomed to fearing offending their supreme and heavenly Father God. They will make a great effort in this, as perhaps some might doubt, because of the little capacity of the putti; For just as beauty, and the vagueness of virtue is revealed by its splendour, and brings by itself a certain delight, which invites and attracts the soul, which is not yet accustomed, and hardened to evil, so on the contrary every sin, and whatsoever defect one wishes, and deformity, if it were not sin itself, makes itself known, and is naturally abhorred, and even in animals, which have a certain greater shade of reason, signs of sorrow sometimes appear, and of repentance for having done any evil. For this reason it is appropriate to nourish these seeds in the child, so that he is ashamed of the fault, not only out of respect for his father's presence, or fear of reproach and punishment, but also because the fault itself is ugly and disgusting.

It is also very important to train children not to obstinately deny their faults, but rather to confess them humbly, and to ask for forgiveness; and for this reason it is well done, that when they make themselves guilty, and humble themselves, and promise to amend, the father becomes more exorbitant, and easier to forgive. This will be a good way for the child to gradually become humble, reverent, truthful, and fearful of his father, in the hope of being able to obtain forgiveness in the tribunal, so to speak, of the paternal judgement, and his mind will be disposed to go in truth to the tribunal of Christ, that is, in the sacrament of holy confession, which is of great importance, and at the same time one will acquire a good habit of humbly confessing one's sin, and not excusing it, but detesting it with confidence in divine mercy, with the firm intention of not committing it again. Truly it is a thing worthy of compassion to see how this proud sensuality of ours goes most unwillingly to confess its sin; indeed we are so far from accusing ourselves, that we immediately find apparent reasons and a thousand arguments to excuse ourselves; which we have through the ancient heredity of Adam, who, when questioned by God why he had eaten the forbidden apple, instead of confessing his crime and asking forgiveness, rejected it in the woman, and a little less in God himself, saying The woman whom you have given me for a companion has given me some apple. Now, as I have begun to say, confession seems to be a heavy yoke to our flesh; and the very cunning devil, so that we do not escape from his bonds, tries to render that shame which he first takes away from the sinner so that he commits the sin, after he has committed it, so that he either escapes or does not confess it. Therefore, it is necessary to begin early to train the child to carry the Lord's gentle yoke; not differently from what is done by the peasants, who put some light wicker collars on their young calves destined for the plough, and then make them a little heavier, so that the real yoke may be less heavy and less tedious for them. Let the good father,

therefore, often lead his little son to the feet of his confessor, where, in penitent acts and words, as he may be able, he gradually learns holy humility, kneeling devoutly, beating his breast, kissing the priest's hand, and taking his blessing. And in the rest the confessor will sweetly comfort him in virtue, promising him that Jesus Christ will give him paradise if he is good and obedient to his father and mother. And after this he will make him do some cotal puerile penitentiola, to introduce him little by little to do in due time the true satisfactions, and briefly he will instruct him with other similar ways, as best will seem to the prudence of this confessor, who will not consider it a trivial thing, nor of small moment, to insert by this way in the soul of the child, as in a soft soil, the seeds of the fear of God, which with the divine grace will then produce great fruit.

Chapter 26

HOW IMPORTANT A GOOD CONFESSOR AND SPIRITUAL FATHER IS.

One cannot consider, nor report without pain, that men are commonly very prudent in things of the flesh, and in those of the spirit, and of their health, not very prudent, and very negligent, as in another regard we have touched upon above. Hence it is that for bodily health an excellent doctor is procured, not wasting any expense, and it is sought that he has perfect knowledge of our complexion, and he is discussed with him very minutely, even during the time of health, so that when we are ill, he knows how to better treat the evil from the root. And since the doctor is well instructed, and we have a certain faith in him, we do not go lightly to change him, on the contrary we see that the appearance of our own doctor alone is a way of medicine in hell. Now it would be very just, if this same prudence were observed in the care of the soul, and if penitents did not go every day to a different spiritual doctor; many things could be said about this, but I will leave them out so as not to be too long. I will only say that all the fathers and teachers of the spirit have considered it of the utmost importance, and almost the sum of Christian life, to have a firm and ordinary director, and a spiritual father expert in the government of souls, and full of charity, and who knows how to pity the sick, and has, as they say, knowledge and conscience; under whose hand, and obedience to others, he governs himself in all his actions, proceeding with great truth, and with sincere openness of the whole heart. Our affairs will now be safe, when they will be approved by this charioteer and rector of our life; which we must hold firm, not only because of the particular knowledge he will have of the complexity, so to

call it, of our soul, but because of the special light, which God will grant him, according to the place he holds, for our benefit and health. Therefore let the good father teach his son this doctrine, not only with words, but with the practice of himself, so that the son may see the honor and esteem which his father places on his parishioner, or on any other wise confessor whom he may have chosen, as is the case in large cities, where there is a large number of religious and approved confessors, and seeing that he reports to his council all the important decisions of his house, he should also learn to do the same when he becomes the father of a family; And in such a case let the father, as has been said, lead his son always to the same confessor, and assign him to him as a guide and teacher; and he, like a pilot ship, will lead him, with the help of divine grace, through the many storms of this life, into safe harbor. And let it not be doubted at all, that even if the spiritual father were less prudent and practical in human affairs than we are; nevertheless God through his minister, as has been said, will correspond to our faith, as experience itself, at all hours, clearly shows us.

Chapter 27

DE I TRE ULTIMI SACRAMENTI ET IN SPETIE DELL'ESTREMA UNZIONE.

There is little need to discuss the last three remaining sacraments, since we have already spoken at length about marriage, and perhaps we will need to say something about Holy Orders when we discuss the election of the clerical state, and the sacrament of extreme unction; it does not seem that much can be learned for our education, since this sacrament does not take place except when we are about to depart from this life, nevertheless, so as not to pass it away completely in silence, we say that if this sacrament is proper to those who are already close to death, so that it seems that it should be given only once, nevertheless it is certain that if one does not die of that infirmity, it can be repeated, whenever a similar need arises, that is, that death be judged to be above us, and not only can it be done, but it must be done in that difficult passage, on leaving this valley of tears, at the moment when the soul, with greater and more dangerous pain, has to meet its enemies at the door, one must arm it with the virtue of this sacrament, as that which was instituted by Christ our Lord to comfort the soul in that last battle, besides that sometimes this same sacrament also confers the health of the body, if it is an expedient for the good of the soul. And since we are speaking of the sacrament of the sick, it must not be forgotten that the good father, by the admonitions he gives at the right time and place, and by the example of himself, must teach his son that when he falls ill, immediately the greatest care is to have recourse to the spiritual doctor, evacuating the evil humours of the soul, that is the sins, for which bodily infirmities often occur, by means of confession, and

proposing to change life for the better, and then the human medicines will be more effective. And finally our father of the family, who in life and in death must be an example to his son of a perfect Christian, after having taught him how to live well, will also teach him how to die well, which is more important, disposing himself according to the saying of the Holy Scriptures, to the things of his house, and in particular by confessing devoutly, and receiving the most holy viaticum, and by asking while he still has feeling, and life the extreme unction, protesting to the last spirit that he is a true, and obedient child of the Holy Church. And this is enough to have said about the seven sacraments of the Gospel law. Now let us say something about the ten precepts given by God at the time of the ancient law.

Chapter 28

THE DECALOGUE, OR THE TEN PRECEPTS OF THE LAW.

Although in the soul of man a law has been impressed and engraved by God, and such a light that by it we discern good from evil, the just from the unjust, and the honourable from the contrary, nevertheless God wanted to give to his people, through the hands of Moise his faithful servant, the same law written in the two famous tables of stone, so that the inner law of the heart, which by the malice of men, and by the long tyranny of sin, was so darkened by this law, written in the two famous tables of stone, so that the inner law of the heart, which by the malice of men, and by the long tyranny of sin, was greatly obscured by this new light of the written law, might become clearer and more manifest. Therefore God wrote his very short law, because it is explained in ten precepts, and nevertheless it is the sum of all the laws, indeed these same ten precepts are reduced to a much smaller number, that is to two only, that is to the love of God, and of one's neighbor, from which as the Savior said in the Gospel, hangs the whole law and the prophets. So that the whole law is reduced to a single precept, of which the Apostle, writing to the Romans, said, the fullness and compliment of the law is love and delight. And Christ himself, our Lord and Master, confirming and explaining the law given in the Old Testament, reduced everything to love, so much so that this alone was the sign, and so to speak the mark of a good Christian, when he said to the Apostles: This will be known by men that you are my disciples, if you love one another. From here one understands how not only the law of God is not serious, but how wise it is, and how little we are worthy of excuse for not observing it, and how worthy we are of punishment for our transgressions. For this reason

St. Augustine says divinely: Who is he who dares to say that it is impossible for man to love? I say love the creator and benefactor, the most loving father, and then also love himself, his brothers, and his neighbors? Now he who loves God and his neighbor has fulfilled the law.

Chapter 29

HOW CHILDREN MUST BE TAUGHT TO BE OBSERVERS OF THE DIVINE LAW.

Therefore, let the good father try to instill in the child's soul a great reverence for the law of God, a holy fear and a firm resolve never to transgress it, but rather, with divine help, without which our strength is weak and insufficient, to observe and guard it always. It will therefore show how much we are obliged to observe the will of God, which he has deigned to manifest to us in his holy law, for he is our God, that is our Lord, our Creator, who has redeemed us, who maintains us, from whom we have and expect every good in time and in eternity. He is the Judge, before whose Tribunal we must all represent ourselves, and there each one will be given a strict account of the observance or non-observance of the law. So that the good father, sometimes with the lure of love and reward, sometimes with the lash of fear and punishment, will move the tender soul of the child, forming and imprinting in it some Christian maxims, most useful throughout life, both to withdraw us from evil and to spur us to good; for it is a great uplift in good and virtuous works, and almost a refreshment of food and drink to those who toil, to remind themselves of the will of God, with these or similar words: God commanded me, God wills it, I do this for God. And for the other part, God does not want it, God has forbidden it, it displeases God, God forbid me to do it, I will never do such a thing, which offends God. These and similar sentiments, rooted in our hearts from childhood, through good doctrine, and much more through good paternal example, since as has been said many times, and it cannot be said often enough, this is the most effective way of persuading, these precepts, I say, are like a very strong

shield, against all the temptations of the devil, who loses as they say his temper, when he finds a firm and resolute mind, that for anything in the world, no matter how great, beautiful or pleasant it may be, nor for any harm or danger that may overtake him, he does not want to transgress the law of God; in this way was raised up Saint Joseph, and the chaste Susanna, and a thousand others, of whom the divine writings and the histories of the Saints are full.

Chapter 30

AS THEY MUST LIKEWISE BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO REVERENCE FOR HUMAN LAWS.

It is also necessary that the child becomes accustomed to reverence and observe human laws, not so much for fear of punishment, as for the love of virtue, being convinced that the Princes and Superiors are God's Lieutenants on earth, and that all power is from God, and the very law of God commands us this obedience, so that whoever resists human power resists the order of God. Let the father, therefore, seek to imprint love and reverence in his son towards the Prince and the Republic, and because, as has been said elsewhere, in the family government one sees a certain image of political rule; for the greater things, it will be very useful for the son to be ready to obey the domestic laws, and to see that his family promptly obeys them, and to prove and recognize in himself and in others the reward and punishment of obedience and of non-obedience; often he hears his father praise the Prince and the Governors, who maintain justice and provide for all, as common fathers, as will be said below, and when it becomes necessary for the father to exercise some public office, or to do something according to the order of the laws, let him warn his son, and let him show that he does what he does, with gladness and readiness to obey as he must, the prince, and the laws, so that the son also may be well disposed to do the same, not judging, but obeying his superiors. How necessary and salutary this is, the calamities of our times, the many revolutions of states, the rebellions of peoples, despisers of divine and human laws, show us all too openly. And this is enough for now, since something else pertinent to this same matter will be found in the precept of honoring relatives.

Chapter 31

OF THE FIRST PRECEPT. THOU SHALT NOT HAVE ALIENS.

Let us briefly discuss the ten commandments, in order to derive from them some instruction in practice, as our institution requires. I say, then, that there is only one true God, the creator of Heaven and earth, as we said above in the Apostolic Creed, and that God is the first, supreme, and infallible truth, and therefore all faith must be given to him; this God is all-powerful, most gracious and most ready to do us good, and therefore in him we must place all hope, he is finally an abyss of infinite goodness, so it is right that we love him with all our heart, so that under this precept come the three virtues, called Theological, faith, hope, and charity, without which, we cannot please God, nor obtain eternal life. Now it is to be known that the precept of the ancient law, which says thus, you shall not have alien gods in my presence, contains in itself two precepts, one of which has the force to command, and the other to prohibit, and so it is as if it said, You shall render supreme honor to me true God, and not to false gods. How many obligations we have to love and revere this great and excellent God, we have said enough above, as far as it pertains to our matter, in the explanation of the Apostolic Symbol. Let the good father, therefore, be careful to remind his son at all hours of the holy fear and love of God, since at all hours, even now, or rather at every moment, his graces and benefits rain down upon us, and every creature cries out and invites us to love and honor him. May the child be filled with a holy confidence, so that in every need he may have recourse to God's help, and hope in Him.

Let him learn in his mind, and speak often those words spoken by the Savior, speaking of this first commandment, that is, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the highest and first commandment. The second commandment is similar to this, you shall love your neighbor as yourself; in these two commandments consist the whole law and the prophets. So far these are the words of the Redeemer, from which we understand what a saint pointedly said, that the measure of loving God is to love him without measure.

Chapter 32

OF THOSE WHO SIN AGAINST THE FIRST PRECEPT, AND IN SPITE OF THE HERETICS.

Many are those who, contrary to the first precept of the law, do not render due honor to the true and supreme God, such as the idolaters, infidels, Mohammedans, and Jews, but leaving the others aside, in this number are also the heretics, who worship the vain idols of their false, and damned opinions, idols truly made of gold, and silver, that is, doctrines fabricated, and adorned with a certain splendor, of lying holiness, and of a sound, and of a light of pestiferous eloquence, that dazzles the eyes of the sampled. Now, how the good Christian and obedient son of the Church must guard against their deceptions and snares, always withdrawing to the strongest and impregnable stronghold, which is the Holy Roman Catholic Church, has been discussed at length above, so that in this place, which has fallen into their lies, we do not need to say anything else, except to remind the good father, that he should keep his son far away from any trade with heretics, neither for the sake of gain, nor for the sake of trade, nor for the sake of curiosity to see foreign regions, nor to learn chivalry, ne to learn sciences, ne studies, ne for any human interest, exposes him lightly to so much danger, to lose the precious margarita, I mean the purity of faith, and if for the bodily health, so much guard is made, et private, et public in time of plague, and all commerce is forbidden, not only of persons, but of goods and of the letters themselves, what should be done by the public vigilance and by the paternal solicitude, so that the youth may not be infested or even feel the wind or the breath of heresy? Many things could be

said about this, and especially for those places which are closest to this most dangerous infection.

Chapter 33

OF FLEEING SPELLS.

But leaving the rest to paternal prudence, and to the care of the superiors, we pass on to speak of a miserable abuse, which by the cunning of the devil, is sown in many parts of the Christian people, I speak of incantations, sorceries, auguries, and other similar superstitions, and vanities, which have a great kinship with Idolatry and through them God is greatly dishonored, and the devil is honoured, if sometimes it seems to the simple ones to use pious things, and words of piety, and religion, being proper to Satan, as the Apostle says, to transfigure himself into an Angel of light. Therefore the good father should teach his son, when he is able, and according to need, I say, and by the exhortation of words, and by his own example, how these things are to be avoided. And how severely God is offended by having recourse in any way to the devil by tacit agreement, or indeed by express agreement, for the devil is the greatest enemy of God and of man, and seeing that through his own fault he has fallen from the height of glory, to which man has been raised by the great goodness of God, the accursed man cracks, and becomes furious with anger, and tries by all means to ensnare man in the same net of his condemnation; So it is never to be trusted, if it should appear that through him and his enchantments some secret is revealed, or some apparently profitable thing is achieved; one must not trust the most cunning and irreconcilable enemy, who has no greater thirst than for our perdition; everything is simulation, everything is deception; in short, the Devil has no good for himself, so much less can he give it to others. Therefore, fathers do very badly, who, in order to know the future events, which God has placed in his power, lead their

children to certain unworthy astrologers, who, uncertain of the present things, recklessly arrogate to themselves the knowledge of the future. And they do evil likewise when in their own diseases, and those of their children, they go to enchanters, and use the remedies of very vain and superstitious women; against whom God is angry, not less than He was angry against the impious King of Israel, Chozia, who, being ill, sent to the Idols to know if he should be healed; for which reason God commanded Elijah to meet the King's messengers and speak to them in this way: Is it not God in Israel, that you go to seek counsel from Beelzebub, God of the Akharachians? But God says, From the couch where thou art laid, thou shalt not come down, but shalt die of death. Let the father therefore take care not to give his simple son similar examples; but in all his needs let him have recourse first to God our Father, and then to the common and ordinary remedies of human art and prudence. And remember what God tells us through the mouth of the prophet: *Invoca me in die tribulationis, eruam te, et honorificabis me*, that is, have recourse to me in the time of tribulation, I will free you, and you will honor me. Beware also of auguries, dreams, and the observance of days, and times, made not for natural reasons, but for the sake of mere survival, and of other similar vanities; for the imitation of these things sticks so strongly in the minds of the young, and they remain so impressed upon them, that they retain them all their lives, to the serious detriment of their souls; Moreover, often these imaginations, more than puerile, make the soul vile, and incapable of honorable actions; and finally these things are ridiculous to men of intellect. And because these are vices proper to women, the prudent mother of a family must use great vigilance, so that this scabies does not spread to her daughters, especially through the trade of some wicked and diabolical old women, who must not be allowed to enter houses where the fear of God reigns. It seemed to me to extend myself somewhat in this matter,

because curiosity, avarice, and various disordered passions of men, are not lightly sinned against by many.

Chapter 34

OF REVERENCE TO THE ANGELS AND SAINTS OF HEAVEN.

One could not sufficiently express the great love that the Saints, who gloriously reign with Christ in Heaven, bring to the rest of us, who wander through this valley of tears, and through this terrible desert full of innumerable dangers, and the snares of our enemies, we walk to the land of promise, and to the heavenly Jerusalem our mother, to which the saints have already arrived, and are already assured of their own glory, and on the other hand, all burning with charity in the fire of the first, and immense love, that is in God himself, are greatly desirous, and so to say anxious for our health. And for this reason they intercede and pray continuously for us to the Supreme King of Glory, who by their merits and prayers grants us many graces, as the evidence in all ancient and modern times has openly demonstrated, so that if only one is our mediator, who with his own blood has reconciled us to the Eternal Father, of whom it is written. We have with the Father the Advocate, the just Christ, and he is the propitiator, and the one who merited us, and obtains for us the forgiveness of our sins, many nevertheless are our intercessors, that is the Saints of Heaven, living members of Christ, and united with inseparable union of love to him, and consequently most grateful to the eternal Father, as the Saviour himself said on earth to his disciples: Know that the Father loves you, because you have loved me. And if God has done marvellous things to the prayers of his Saints, while they were still in this exile, clothed in frail and mortal flesh, as the divine writings and other histories are full of, how much more will he grant them now in Heaven, where gratitude is consummated and beatitude perfect, and where the saying of the Psalmist is fulfilled, your friends and God

are honoured above all. For this reason the Holy Catholic Church, our mother, to whom the Holy Spirit teaches and reveals every truth, has always taught her faithful to revere the Angels and the Saints of Heaven, and to appeal with supplication to their prayers and aids, glorifying in them God, who, as the Prophet says, is admirable in his Saints, and has often disposed to grant us graces, not otherwise than through the intercession of the Saints. Let us therefore pray to the Most Holy Trinity and to the only-begotten Son of God as the author of all graces, but let us also pray to the Saints as friends of God and intercessors of graces.

Therefore, instituted by our Most Holy Mother, we say to God, Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us, Son of God, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us. But we pray to the Angels and the Saints in another form, that is, St. Michael now for us, St. Peter now for us, Saints of God intercede for us, recognizing the difference between the Lord and the servants, between the Creator and the creatures, between the King of Glory and his dear and intimate relatives. Perhaps I have gone on too long in this discourse, but I excusimi good zeal, while I consider how much venom the ancient serpent has tried to spread, especially in our times, both in this and in many other catholic truths.

Chapter 35

OF THE PARTICULAR DEVOTION TO THE MOST HOLY MOTHER OF GOD.

Therefore the good father, accustomed the child at an early age, to show great reverence to the glorious Saints, and especially to the most blessed Queen of Heaven, exalted above all the Saints, and above all the choirs of the Angels, Mother of God, Mother of mercy, Mother of all the children of grace, Most merciful advocate of sins, so that, just as the child begins to develop his tongue and to stammer a few words, so too, by the efforts of the devout Mother, he begins to utter, even if imperfectly, the sweetest names of Jesus and Mary, imitating the reverence that the mother has in uttering them. Let him also see often some beautiful and devout image of our Lady in his mother's room, and see how reverently his mother and the others bow to her, and then learn the angelic greeting, that is the Hail Mary, and greet her morning and evening with devotion; When the child grows up a little in his needs, let his mother lead him to Our Lady, and there with him he should commend himself to his mother and to her sweetest child, and let the child believe that some of these little children's houses, which that age delights in, are sent to him by Our Lady and the little child, or that the father gives them to him because he is devoted to Our Lady; Let him also offer something to the most holy Virgin, such as wreaths of flowers, and similar, and let him learn and practice frequently the devout and useful prayer of reciting the crown, and the Holy Rosary, and in short, from time to time, let him nourish himself in the child's breast, and increase the fire of devotion towards the Mother of God, so that throughout his life he may have her as his special advocate, and protector. And if this should be done in male

children, it should be done even more in females, to whom this most high Queen should be proposed as a mirror, and an example of humility, and of every virtue, and to her especially the virgins, and the married ones, should recommend themselves, as the one who alone is virgin, and mother, glory, ornament, and crown of the feminine sex.

Chapter 36

OF REVERENCE TO THE GUARDIAN ANGEL.

The child must also be taught to show reverence to the holy Angels, and especially to his guardian Angel, recognizing the great care that God has for us, and as for the soul, and as for the body also, since to each one of us, although of a very low state, he has given an Angel as a guardian, a most noble creature, who always sees the face of God, and nevertheless does not fail to always take care of man. And therefore the child is accustomed to entrust himself to his guardian angel, for whom the Holy Church has made a brief and particular prayer; believe that his Angel never abandons him, that he defends him from infinite dangers by the will of God, and for the love he bears him, that he represents his prayers to God, and that he prays for him, that he rejoices when he is virtuous, and good, and on the contrary he is sad when he is disobedient, and less solicitous in the works of virtue. And that the Angel, being most blessed in Heaven, desires nothing more than to lead him too to that blessed glory. With these and other similar exhortations and examples, which are easily found in the divine Scriptures and in the lives of the saints, of the great benefits that God grants us through the angels, the child should be led to love his angel and to revere him in such a way that, even when he is alone and hidden from human eyes, he may have truthfulness and respect for the presence of his guardian angel.

And to end this matter, we say that besides the honor due to all the saints, it is also very good to have some in particular devotion, and especially the one whose name the child bears, that if human prudence teaches us too much, to

procure suitable means, to enter into the grace of some great Prince, and deservedly honour, and recommend ourselves to his favourites, much more we must do this towards the saints, so that they may introduce us to God, and bring us back with the favour, and with the grace they obtain from His Majesty, the effect of our petitions.

Chapter 37

OF HONORING THE RELICS OF THE SAINTS.

So that men might better understand, how grateful and acceptable it is to God that his saints be honored by us on earth, whom his divine Majesty honors with inestimable glory in Heaven, it has pleased God to illustrate to their tombs with stupendous miracles, working through the sacred ashes of the strongest martyrs, and other saints, marvelous effects, freeing the oppressed from demons, healing the sick, and raising the dead. Therefore, the Holy Church, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, has always taught us to honor the relics of the saints, and those blessed bodies, which have been living members of Christ, and temple of God, whose bodies will be raised by God immortal, and glorious to eternal life. It is therefore part of the duty of Christian piety to honor the tombs and the memories of the saints, and to render them with interior affection and exterior reverence that veneration which is fitting. And for this reason the good father will also do in this part, his offence towards his son, making him aware, how worthy of being venerated are those members, who have suffered so much for love of Christ, sometimes from the fury of tyrants, sometimes through their own will in fasting, and maceration of the flesh, and building up the holy Church by example, by preaching, and by the doctrine which they have left us in writing, and by a thousand other holy labours, so that from these arguments the young man at the same time becomes inflamed with a generous desire to imitate the virtues of the saints, and acquires a certain warmth of devotion, which is greatly aroused in us, who by means of the senses ascend to the operations of the spirit with these visible objects, as in seeing the places where the saints have suffered

martyrdom, or done penance, and where are the tombs, and their holy relics.

Chapter 38

OF THE VENERATION OF SACRED IMAGES.

The spirit of devotion and the desire to imitate the sacred images of Christ our Redeemer, of the Blessed Mother of God, and of the saints, the use of which in the sacred temples and in the houses of the faithful, as it is very healthy, is also very ancient in the Holy Church. The serpentine malice of the Devil has the place to take back with reason the reverence that is done to the sacred Images by taking off their biretta, basciandoli and bowing their knees, because we do not honor those colors, nor that matter, or marble, or wood, or metal that is, nor do we think that in that image for itself there is any virtue and divinity, for which we must honor it, and we do not direct our prayers to the image, or expect help from it, but all our honor, and prayers, and the hope of being heard, concerns the representation of that image, so that adoring the image, and figure of Christ our Lord we adore Christ himself, and likewise we venerate the saints who reign with Christ, the similitude of whom their images represent to us, not otherwise than if they were themselves before our eyes. And if any simple person should err in this matter, this does not prejudice the truth, of which he must be instructed by the legitimate teachers and fathers of souls. But because, as a saint says, the faithful people are saved, not by the subtlety of understanding, but by the simplicity of believing, therefore the good father should accustom his son to revere the sacred images, with Christian devotion and simplicity, and according to the common custom of the faithful, and finally with the spirit of the Holy Church, our mother, who cannot err.

Chapter 39

OF THE MUCH FRUIT THAT CAN BE EXTRACTED FROM THE VENERABLE IMAGES.

Among all our senses, the sense of seeing is very effective, and the things that are seen make a greater impression on the mind and are more easily preserved in the memory, for which much fruit can be drawn from the venerable images, for the Christian education of children, which we are still discussing. We said above, in discussing the Apostolic Symbol, how necessary it is to teach children the principal mysteries of our holy faith. But in this case, it will be of no small help to raise the child's intellect, and to make him more docile to the understanding of what he hears, to show him the same thing expressed in figures and images, which are like a book, where not only the learned, but also the simple, can read, and learn with ease, and with delight, beautiful histories of the great works of God, and of the Saints, which have been described in long books. In ancient times the walls of the churches were all painted with stories of the Old and New Testament, as can be seen in the ancient temples; from which paintings follow many utilities, because the faithful people, reading in this way of book, as it is said, learn with delight, and with a certain taste the mysteries of our religion, and they confirm themselves more in the faith, and they are also interiorly moved to devotion, and they remember the great benefits, that God has made us, so that it follows that they thank God. And truly the paintings in the churches are like memorials, which reduce us to memory the great mercies of God, and how we are perpetually obliged to thank and bless Him. They are also an occasion, and a matter of being able to pray in the holy Churches, which, as the Saviour said, are a house of prayer, and not of vain

thoughts, and of useless reasoning; meditating now on the Son of God made man for our health, being born in a most vile crib, now being cruelly beaten on a column, and the scourges due to our sins falling on his innocent shoulders; now to suffer a most bitter and shameful death to free us from eternal death, now to rise again, glorious, and triumphant over his and our enemies; and this can be understood of the other mysteries of the life of Christ, and of the most holy Virgin Mother; which greatly excite the devotion, and inflame us with the love of God, and likewise seeing the images of the saints, and of their glorious martyrdoms, inflames the heart to imitate them, and to bless the wondrous God in his saints. And if the place allowed it, one could find many examples of the conversion of many sinners, who through some divine painting have entered into the consideration of death, and of the punishments of the damned, or of something similar, and have changed their lives, and it is no wonder that painting moves even more effectively than books and narrations do; for the fact is proposed not as past, but as present, and not otherwise than if in that same point it is performed in our presence, and under our eyes, which without doubt has great power to move our affection.

Therefore the father, as it is said, helps the weakness of the puerile understanding, with the expression of the images, of which naturally that age delights, and makes him learn the doctrine of the same thing with two senses, that is with the hearing, and with the face, which two senses, as the philosophers say, are those through which we mainly learn the knowledge, and the cognition of many things. I have seen the articles of our faith, contained in the Apostolic Symbol, having been masterfully engraved in copper, and printed on a sheet, such that one could see at a glance the whole doctrine of the Symbol, neatly arranged, and under each mystery there were the words of the same Symbol. This

painting seems to me to be very useful, so that the child learns with delight the Creed that we say, and so that he understands it, and holds it more easily in memory, and in the same way as the other similar paintings; as in spetie he reminds me that he has seen not so long ago the seven sacraments of the Church, which by the authority of a great ecclesiastical person of supreme goodness, and doctrine, were represented very vaguely in a figure, and declared briefly with a beautiful and appropriate instruction.

Chapter 40

OF PLACING DEVOUT IMAGES IN VARIOUS PLACES IN THE HOUSE.

It will therefore be expedient for the father of a family to have many paintings in the house, which will motivate devotion, and will be, as has been said, a reminder to the child, and to all in the house, to turn our minds often to God, and to accustom the child to look at them, and to greet them reverently, not only in the house, and in the Churches where we are most united with God, but also when in the streets, and in public places, one encounters in the images, placed in some conspicuous place, to excite divine devotion, and in the Churches where we must be more united with God, but also when in the streets, and in public places, one encounters images, placed for this purpose in some conspicuous place, to excite the devotion of the faithful, the little child must not pass without bowing to them, so that he may grow up and keep this good habit. And as for the paintings of the Saints, which, as we have begun to say, it is very expedient to have in one's own house, those who cannot have those made with colors, and with greater artifice, it will be enough to have the printed ones, which there are very beautiful, and are available for a small price; and it is good to place them according to the size of the house, not confusedly, but in some main places, although in some part of the house, as in some oratory, or loggia, it will also be good to have many images together, arranged with order, and consequence of things; as for example, the fifteen mysteries of the Holy Rosary of the Madonna, and similar, and such places are like spiritual gardens, for the recreation of the soul.

Chapter 41

OF THE SIGN IN PARTICULAR OF THE CROSS.

But because the compendium of the mercies of God towards man is the Holy Cross, where the most ardent love that Jesus Christ bears us is vividly manifested, and this is the victorious sign, which conquers the world and all hell, and is our glory. Therefore, there must not be any Christian house where the image of the Most Holy Crucifix is not placed in a decent place, and where the little son can see his prostrate father beating his breast, so that he too, both by his words and by his father's example, as I am always reminding you must do, becomes accustomed to remember the passion of Christ, to thank him for the great benefit of our redemption, and to abhor the sin for which Christ was crucified. For these reasons, it is an ancient custom that the banner of the Cross, under which we fight, is placed in an eminent place in the churches; so that, just as the children of Israel in the desert, looking at the bronze serpent, placed by Moisé as a sign, were healed from the stings of the venomous serpents, so we, looking at Christ, are healed from the venom of sin; For this reason, crosses are also used to be raised in the public streets, so that those who go by the road, having been well educated as children to honor the holy sign of the Cross, arm themselves with the memory of the passion of Christ, against imminent dangers, as the Holy Church teaches us to pray to God, with that brief prayer: *Per signu Crucis de inimicis nostris, libera nos Deus noster.*

Therefore, one of the first things that must be taught to children is to make the sign of the Holy Cross, and to repeat it many times a day, as I recounted above in another connection, which was the custom of the faithful in the early

Church, when the creed of the flesh was not disdainful of the creed of the spirit; because, according to what is written by very ancient authors, those first Christians, living portraits of Christ crucified, and rising, and taking their breakfast in bed, and leaving home, and entering the Church, and placing themselves at table, and in every eventuality, very frequently signed themselves; the example of whom must imitate the good father, teaching his son to do so, at least when he is relieved, and goes out of the house, and does the things already said, in which he mainly dispenses himself during the day, and when he enters to do something of the moment, as in the negotiations, and human commerce very often happens, begin from this good principle, invoking as is usual in making the Cross the whole Holy Trinity, so that in its name, and in its virtue, and through the merits of the passion of Christ, all our actions may succeed happily. But in spite of this, whenever he sees himself in some danger, or is overcome by some temptation, he should immediately arm himself with the Holy Cross, saying that well-known and very effective verse of the Psalm: *Deus in adiutorium meum intende, etc.*

And because the sign of the Cross is made, as is well known, by extending the palm of the hand from the forehead to the lower part of the breast, and from the left shoulder to the right, the Father can, with brief words, in the very sign of the Cross, teach the most lofty mystery of our redemption to his son, so that by touching those four parts with his hand, he may constitute, as a local memory of these four points, that is, that Christ our Lord descended from the heights of Heaven, and became incarnate in the virginal womb of Mary, to free us from the left hand of the cursed and damned, and to place us at the right hand in the number of the blessed of the eternal father, so that we say, Amen, praying to God, that through his mercy, and through the virtue and imitation in us of the Holy Cross, he may make it so.

Chapter 42

OF THE VAIN, AND INHONEST PAINTINGS.

One cannot, after the things said above, leave aside to make some just complaint, of the abuse that one sees in many Christians, who not only keep in their houses devout images, but on the contrary keep there vain paintings and statues, and what is worse sometimes unholy, and impudent, and they keep them in the most secret places, and where they stay most of the time, and for the most part alone, as if the fire, which we carry within ourselves, were not enough, without trying to light it with these external foment, which thing as it is full of great danger, so it is not without grave offense of God, and of the Christian profession. And it is something worthy of wonder, that sometimes one enters the palaces and the houses of Christians, and looking around one's eyes one does not recognize any sign that it is the habitation of a Christian man, not to say that sometimes it seems more likely to be the habitation of a gentleman. The Christian is not forbidden to have beautiful houses, and vineyards, and gardens, according to the decency of his own state, but it would be right that in every house of ours, Christian piety and virtue should shine forth, so that God would have no cause to complain about us, as He did about His own people, saying: because of you my name is blasphemed among the unbelieving peoples. Therefore, returning to the first point, I say that the good father, who pretends to raise his children in a Christian manner, must take great care not to keep in his house such vain and dishonest paintings, which can be a source of fomentation and stimulus to great vices; rather, wherever he can, he must keep the eyes of his children far away from them, if well they were of excellent masters, and of singular artifice,

and remember that if gold, and the gems that are nothing but little corruptible earth, are guarded under many keys, and are kept far away, and hidden from the eyes of others to avoid any danger, how much more must this be done in guarding the purity of a child, and of a virgin, so that the devil does not steal it? I want to say that no caution should seem excessive in something as important as the soul and the health of children.

Chapter 43

OF THE SECOND PRECEPT, DO NOT TAKE THE NAME OF YOUR GOD IN VAIN, AND HOW YOU HONOR THE NAME OF GOD.

The precept of the law, which follows in the second place, has much closeness and conjunction with the first, for after the worship and honor that we must render to God, it necessarily follows that we must also honor his most holy name, that is, God himself, whose immense majesty is signified to us by no name, if no name can express it sufficiently. This second precept contains two parts: in the first, we are commanded to honor the name of God, which is done in many ways, as we shall demonstrate; in the second, we are forbidden to despise the divine name, which can also be done in many ways.

And so that the good father of a family may understand at least in part how it is fitting to teach his son to reverence God's holy name, and to guard against the contrary, we will briefly discuss the two parts of the precept. I say, therefore, that he who honors the name of God freely confesses it in the sight of men, even at the risk of his life, when necessary.

Likewise he who humbly hears the word of God, and takes delight in knowing his divine will, with a desire to carry it out.

The name of God is also to be honored, praising him devoutly with prayers, psalms, and other prayers, according to the teachings of Christ our Lord and of the Holy Church.

The name of God is greatly honored when we praise and bless him in adverse and prosperous things.

And likewise, when we are afflicted and suffering, either in body or soul, let us invoke the divine help with devout affection, so that the Lord may give us patience and deliver us, according to the good will of His holy will.

It also belongs to the honor of the divine name, when for the confirmation of some truth, we take it as a witness, swearing by God, as the author of all truth, and the truth itself, and punisher of those who transgress it, this way of honor, is to be understood with the conditions, which will be exposed below.

From what has been said, if I am not mistaken, it will be easy for a good father to understand how he must instruct his son so that he may render all honour and reverence to the name of God. And because, as has been said many times, children learn most things by imitation, and example has great power, so let the father express in himself, and in his customs, that beautiful image of religion, and of Christian decency, which he wishes to form, and impress on the tender soul of his son. Let him, therefore, go willingly and often to hear the word of God, and let him lead his son to it, and let him teach him to hear it attentively, no less with effect than with words.

Have the child learn some psalms in his mind, of those that have been composed not by human artifice, but by the Holy Spirit, and are sung in the Church, and some of the hymns and canticles of the glorious Virgin, so that the child may recite them sometimes in prayer, and sometimes in a certain way of recreation, but always with devotion.

Instruct the father to a certain reverence and holy fear whenever he hears or speaks the name of God, as one who hears or speaks the sacred name of his Lord, and especially to the sweetest name of Jesus, which means Savior, let him bow or remove his cap, remembering how he saved us, and thanking him with that act.

Let the child enjoy his father's good teaching and example in attending the divine offices, where the praises of God are sung, and let him hear his father say often in his mouth, in the afflictions of this human life, the words of the most patient Job: blessed be the name of the Lord. Let the father also invite his son to give thanks to God in good times and to commend himself to him in adversity, and fill him with good confidence in the name of God.

Chapter 44

OF HONORING THE NAME OF GOD IN GREETINGS AMONG FRIENDS.

It would also be very good if in the greetings that are made among friends the name of God were mentioned more often, not disdainingly Christian simplicity, by saying God save you, God give you good day, and if well when without adding anything else we say good morning, it is understood that we pray to God, the giver of all good, to give it to us, nevertheless it is better to say it expressly so that the bond of friendship, and the entrance to every reasoning, and every negotiation is the name of God. I have heard it said, that by the work of a great preacher, and of holy life, this beautiful form of greeting was introduced in some parts, that one said in greeting to his friend, praised be the name of God, and the other replied, always be praised. We read that other times at Easter time the faithful used to greet each other in this way, The Lord is risen. And the friend rendered the greeting with these words: Truly the Lord is risen, or the one said, The Lord is truly risen, and the other answered, and appeared to Simon, that is to Peter; and a famous writer of the rites, and divine officii warns that this should have been done at that time. Other terms of good manners are not taken up in the greetings and conversations, such as the bowing of hands and the like, but the obligation we have to always praise the name of God is recalled, and to show that we are so educated in the school of worldly and courtly manners that it does not appear that we are totally ignorant of Christianity. And now that I have entered into these recollections, which will perhaps seem minute, but if I am not mistaken, they are useful and fruitful, I will also add this, that it would be a praiseworthy custom for me also in the

greetings that are made among the absent ones in order to give God his place, either in the beginning or in the end of the letter, as we see in the Epistles of St. Paul, who always prays in the beginning for the grace and peace of God, and also concludes his Epistle with the same or similar sentence. In short, the tongue of the Christian must always be ready and willing to praise God, confirming what the prophet said: *Benedicam Dominum in omni tempore, semper laus eius in ore meo*. That is, I will bless the Lord at all times, and the praise of his name will always resound in my mouth.

Chapter 45

OF THOSE WHO ABUSE, THE WORDS OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

It is not necessary to explain in detail how one despises and dishonors the tremendous name of God, contrary to the prohibition of the present precept, because from what we have said above about praise, it is easy to gather what its opposite is, which we must avoid with all study, but it is not necessary to conceal a very bad custom of some people, who, dyed with few letters, sometimes to seem sharp, sometimes to move the laughter of others, sometimes to vent their curses, sometimes for superstitious purposes, abuse the holy writing, twisting the sentences of the Gospels and other divine books to buffoonery, to impudent words, to detractions, and famous books, to sorcery and other vanities, against which the glorious St. John Chrysostom wrote many centuries ago. St. Chrisostom, and lately the great Council of Trent, has issued a most serious decree ordering that this kind of men who are reckless and profane of the word of God be severely punished. Therefore, so that the roots of this plague may soon be cut off, let the good father adhere to his son's high veneration of the holy and divine writings, in which God speaks to us, and has shown us his will, and the way to our health, and likewise, if in his City, or in the places where the young man must stay, there is danger of such recklessness, let the young man adhere to it, and especially if he has a lively intellect, and is introduced to the study of literature, to abhor and detest such irreverence, and above all to flee, as has been mentioned elsewhere, from heretics, who abuse Holy Scripture more brazenly and to the greater detriment of souls, corrupting the true understanding of it, contrary to

the sense and consensus of the Holy Doctors of old, and of the universal Church.

Chapter 46

OF THE HORRIBLE SIN OF BLASPHEMY.

And it is more worthy of tears than of words to see that in the Christian people, called by the Apost. S. Peter, holy people, and chosen generation, who have the true worship, and the true religion of the true God, there are nevertheless men so perverse, and so without fear of God, that they dare to put their impure, and defiled tongue in Heaven, and to blaspheme, and curse the tremendous name of God almighty, creator, and sustainer of Heaven, and of the earth, the name of Jesus Christ our Saviour, to whose name, as St. Paul says, all creatures in Heaven, on earth, and in hell bow down; the name of the most holy and immaculate Virgin Mother of God, Queen of Heaven, our advocate, the most excellent of all pure creatures; the name, finally, of the holy friends of God, who reign with him in glory, and who are continual intercessors for us before God. Truly one cannot find sufficient words to deplore, and detest a sin so abominable, and so inexcusable, because it cannot be concealed in any way, neither under the pretext of human frailty, nor with the vehemence of pleasure, nor with the acquisition of any utility, indeed this diabolical and infernal sin is openly demonstrated at first sight, and infernal sin, raising in the company of the accursed Lucifer the horns of pride directly and immediately against God, as if he wanted to expel him from Heaven, and throw him from the chair of his omnipotence, blaspheming the source of all good, which all creatures bless, praise, and exalt forever. And what is most to be lamented is that this detestable sin dwells most in the noblest hosts, where it should least find shelter, I mean among knights, who pride themselves on the clarity of blood, and make a profession of honour, and the profession

of arms, who more than all should pursue this vice by the law of true chivalry, as those who must be defenders of religion, and of virtue; so that they often bear a particular and public sign, adorning their chests and their rich robes with crosses of gold and silk, and of various colors. And nevertheless the effects of appearance are so discordant, I do not say in all, but in many, that they take the blasphemy of God and the Saints as a game, and in family and domestic speech, without any emotion of mind, almost as a joke, and for gracefulness they spread horrible blasphemies, and some come to such blindness, that they give themselves to understand that this is precisely the true way to appear noble and valiant knights. Against whom, and against all blasphemers great and small, if human justice is not sufficient, or does not take care to remedy them, which I do not think is worth seeking, God will use, in time and place, his divine justice with such severity, as the words of God himself, subject to this second precept, show to a good understanding, when he says *Nec enim habit insontem Dominus eum, qui assumpserit nomen domini Dei frustra*, i.e., The Lord will not let pass without punishment the one, who will take the name of his Lord God in vain. And if serious punishment is threatened to those who take the name of God in vain, what will become of those who choose to blaspheme and curse Him?

Chapter 47

OF FATHERLY CARE ABOUT THE SIN OF BLASPHEMY.

May it please God through his infinite clemency, that the time may come, that through good diligence, and private, and public discipline, this detestable abuse of blasphemy may be completely eradicated from the Christian people, people of grace, and of blessing. But leaving to the providence of the magistrates, that which pertains to the public remedy, we will continue to give around this some reminder to our father of the family.

I say, therefore, that this terrible sin of blaspheming God and the Saints at every step, arises as with many other evils, from small principles, not to restrain the tongue, and often times, as it is easier to imitate evil, than good, this plague sets in, having heard others blaspheme, and appearing to the wretched youngsters to make a manly act, and to come out, as they say, they burst out into some less serious blasphemy, and then stopping with the frequency of the acts to the worst ones, and repeating them sometimes as a joke, sometimes out of anger, or other passion, a very dangerous habit is contracted, and above all difficult to cure, the tongue being a member of our body, which easily does its work, and especially when it is accustomed to often uttering some words; Therefore the good father should begin in time to make remedies, so that by divine grace, and with his solicitude, he may preserve his son's soul from such danger. All that we have said above about the reverence of the divine name, confers on this; for he who is accustomed to praise and bless God always, and to name his holy name not in vain, but with fear and veneration, will not easily fall into the vice contrary to this virtue, and if by any accident

he should fall, he will rise more easily. And because the fear of punishment is a great brake on sin, it will be useful to show the young man, already capable of this remedy, the severity of divine judgments, and how much God hates this sin; so that by his commandment, in the time of the old law, blasphemers were stoned to death; and if it were not for the great mercy of God, who waits for sinners to do penance, all creatures would arm themselves against the blasphemer, and the earth would open up to devour him alive. In short, the young man is horrified to hear blasphemies, but never to utter them. And this is one of the most necessary measures, as mentioned above, that is, that the child does not hear others blaspheme, nor curse, and similar things; for which it is appropriate to take great care of the servants, and family members of the house, and to warn each one to beware of such pestiferous vices, otherwise the father of the family will cleanse his house, and alleviate the scandal, if the servant is useful for domestic service. The conversation of young people of the same age is also very important, and if they are not well brought up, they can do great harm. And because this consideration of the conversation of children and young people with their peers extends far and wide, because of the inconveniences which it can bring to a good education; for this reason we will perhaps speak in more detail elsewhere. In any case, we say that those fathers who teach their children to curse others, and to curse that this and that evil may come to them, are much to be blamed, and they laugh about it, and they make merry with the children, so that they take pleasure in giving pleasure to those who invite them to do so, and to take revenge in that way against those who in some way offend them, so that an innocent soul is poisoned with greater cruelty than if the body were harmed. But our good and judicious father, just as he will ensure as far as possible that his son's ears do not hear such ways of speaking either in the house or outside the house, so he will teach him to bless, and not to curse,

either man or any creature, so that he and his son may both be blessed by God.

Chapter 48

MEMORABLE AND FRIGHTENING EXAMPLE OF A BLASPHEMING CHILD.

In order that fathers may use the appropriate diligence and caution in raising their children, and that they may be moved to a just fear of the hidden judgments of God, it is useful for me to relate a terrible example of a blasphemous child, written by Saint Gregory, Supreme Pontiff and Doctor of the Holy Church, in the fourth book of his Dialogues.

He says, therefore, that in the City of Rome, there was a man known to all, who three years before had had a son of about five years of age, loved by him too carnally, and therefore nourished restlessly, that is without restraint of good discipline, and of the fear of God, so that the child had taken to custom, that as something was not to his taste, immediately, what he had to say, blasphemed the Majesty of God. It happened that, since the plague was at that time in Rome, the boy was struck by it, and as God pleased, he approached death. And being in the arms of his father, he saw the evil spirits coming towards him, and looking at them with fearful eyes, and trembling all over, he began to cry out, help me father, help me father. And turning his face so as not to see them, he tried to hide himself in his father's bosom, who, seeing him so frightened, asked him what he saw, and the angel said: They have come, dead men, and they want to take me away, and saying this, incontinently blasphemed the name of the Divine Majesty, and surrendering his soul, he died on the same spot, miserably.

Then the glorious Saint Gregory goes on to speak about why God allowed that wretched child to blaspheme in such a

way, to die, and demonstrates the grave sin of his father, which it is not necessary to go into at length. But I do not want to leave out a notable sentence of that great father, which serves not only for the present purpose but for many others of our education, and it is this one.

They are some little children, to whom the fathers themselves close the entrance to the heavenly kingdom, raising them badly.

Chapter 49

OF THE OATH.

It has been said above, that the oath pertains to the honor and worship of the divine name, which is undoubtedly true, because the oath originates from the faith, that men have, that God is supreme truth, and sees the depths of our hearts, and he can never deceive or be deceived, and for this reason he is called to testify to the truth that has been done, or is to be done, or that at present is such, in order to prove our justice and innocence, and to put an end to many disputes. But although it is true that by swearing we render a certain honor to God, it is not true that swearing is often a good or praiseworthy thing; quite the contrary. Therefore, as in the case of swearing, as in the case of medicine, which is not to be used except in case of need, so the oath, which is like a medicine for the infirmity of faith, and of the belief of men, is not to be used except in respect of something serious and important, which will happen only rarely. And as much as the thing will be such that it deserves an oath, it is necessary moreover that some conditions be observed, without which the Christian must not go to swear, and they are touched upon briefly by Hieremia the prophet in one place, when he says: Swear, Live the Lord God, in truth, in judgment, and justice. Three things, then, are required for the perfection and righteousness of the oath, the first being the truth, that is, that what is asserted or promised by swearing is true, and conforms to the opinion and belief of the one who swears, which opinion, or science, others believe, which opinion, or science which others believe, is not based on mere conjecture, but on firm arguments, and likewise in the things which are promised there must be truth, that is, the intention to observe them in due time, so

that the tongue agrees with the heart. The second thing is *giuditio*, by which condition it is to be understood that no one must swear inconsiderately, nor for frivolous things, but with much maturity, and deliberation. Finally, justice is required, a condition which is very necessary, especially in promises, otherwise if what is promised is neither just nor honourable, and one sins in the oath, and even more so in the execution. When, therefore, these three things come together, and *giuditio*, and prudence, considering all circumstances, persuades him, and truth and justice intervene, one can certainly swear.

Chapter 50

OF THE ABUSE OF SWEARING FREQUENTLY.

But no one will say that these conditions are observed by the majority of men, who for things of the slightest moment, buying or selling, and discussing familiar things, at all hours, and at every word have the oath in their mouth, and without thinking about it at all, or for the interest of gain, or for the bad habit, contracted by the frequency of the acts, they swear a hundred thousand times a day, calling with great temerity, and presumption as witness of their very vain not to say lying assertions, God of infinite Majesty. Therefore, in order that from all this discourse we may obtain the fruit which we principally expect for our education, let the good father remember to keep his son far away from oaths, so that he may swear, nor require an oath from others, nor send an oath against himself, nor against other curses, nor by God, nor by the Cross, as the putti inconsiderately tend to do, and when the child, in order to excuse himself, makes a shield of the oath, and of the name of God, then he believes him much less, and chastises him doubly. In somma avvezzi il fanciullo, alla semplice affermazione, et negatione, secondo il preetto del Salvatore, et se pur pur pur talor volte occorresse affermar una cosa, con alquanto maggior efficacia, potrà con reverenza dire, certo è così, così è veramente, siate contento di credermi, o altro modo tale modesto, et christiano.

Otherwise the frequency of swearing, is full of great dangers, and sins, so that the wise man says in the holy scripture: Do not accustom your mouth to swearing, because in it there are many lapses, and it is not enough to say as many say, I swear the truth, because the habit also leads to swear falsely, or at least not to think whether it is true or false what is said, and very serious sins are committed. For this

reason, whoever cares for the health of his soul must abstain as much as possible from swearing, and even from swearing which is dressed in the proper garments; I mean that he should take such swearing with slow steps, and almost by necessity, for he who walks on the edge of the precipice easily overflows. And as in every state of people, this institution of not swearing lightly is necessary, much more is it to be warned in those who will have to have it more often because of the corrupt custom of the world, such as artisans, and merchants, and the like, some of whom, forgetting the fear of God, and their own health, swearing falsely for very useful gain, sell their precious soul to the devil a thousand times. Not in this way will our good father persuade himself and his son of this true maxim, that with God's offence, one cannot prosper in anything, and that much greater power has finally the pure and simple truth, than the badly colored lie.

Chapter 51

OF THE VIRTUE OF TRUTH.

The thread of the present reasoning, admonishes me to say something about truth, a virtue most grateful to God, and to men, and as necessary to the common life of all, as it is necessary to the private life of each one the breathing of this air, because one could not live together, and not last long the consortio, and the human company, if men among themselves did not tell the truth, and did not believe each other. Therefore the good father must teach his son to be truthful, and to flee above all lies, and every vice contrary and opposed to that beautiful virtue, such as duplicity, simulation, hipocrisy, jealousy, and the like. It is useful from the beginning for the little son to realise that his father greatly dislikes lies, and that he does not accept his own false excusations, nor those of his servants; on the contrary, then it is easier for him and his servants to find forgiveness when they accuse themselves of a fault and confess the truth, and so little by little, partly out of paternal reverence, and partly knowing that no fruit is to be gained from lies, to cover up the faults committed, he will begin to abhor them; But then, as his intellect and the light of reason grow, his father will show him the beauty of virtue, and the ugliness of sin. Tell him that God is supreme in truth, and is faithful in his promises, so that he loves the truthful, and abhors liars, that lying is a servile vice unworthy of a gentle man, and born ingenuously, that every person of intellect flees commerce, and bargaining with a double man, and simulated, and on the contrary with a sincere man, and of an open nature each one willingly negotiates, that liars with their lies in the end gain nothing else, if not that they are not believed nor even the truth, even if they add a thousand

oaths, and execrations, and more credit, and more authority, has the simple word of a truthful man, than all the obligations of a man reputed to be a liar, and quibbling, which opinion of truthfulness, and reality, acquired in the concept of men, is infinitely useful in all negotiations, both private and public, and sometimes explicates very great difficulties, and which for other things are almost inexplicable. With these and other reasons, let the father persuade his son to be truthful, and this will also serve to abstain from swearing, so that a man who is considered truthful has no need to swear, since, as we said above, swearing is a medicine for the discredit of others. We do not intend, however, that because of things said in praise of the truth, anyone should think it necessary to say openly, and to everyone, what he knows to be true, nor that the young man should unthinkingly uncover domestic secrets, so that when he has become great he may not know how to keep the public, and those of his friends and patrons, which would be too great a defect, as will perhaps be said more fully elsewhere. But it is understood that the truth should be told when it is convenient, and according to what is appropriate, but never a lie.

Chapter 52

OF A VENERABLE COMPANY OF THE NAME OF GOD.

It was a venerable Spanish Father of the Order of the Preaching Friars, who, according to what is said, instituted a company, or confraternity as we want to call it, called of the Most Holy Name of God, which in Rome, which by the grace of God abounds in many similar institutes, is in the place of the said Fathers above Minerva, and has been approved by the Supreme Pontiffs, and favored with great graces of spiritual treasures. I believe that this company is also in other cities of Italy, and perhaps outside, and it would be very useful if it were not only in the noble and populous cities, but also in the castles, and in the villas, and in every place inhabited by men; so that it is introduced to honor the holy name of God, of which nothing should be done more readily by the Christian, and likewise to avoid blasphemy, and oaths, and any irreverence towards the tremendous, and blessed name of God. And to this effect they have made some brief, and fruitful chapters, and ordinations to be observed by the brothers of the Company, and they are printed, so that I urge everyone to read them for the good of his soul, because he will find useful remedies, against some daily abuses of swearing, and cursing this, and that, which to no one who holds his own health dear should seem light, here too he will learn how many ways of swearing, and certain little considered words, which at every moment are said, without thinking about it at all, either out of anger, or out of bad habit, are very serious sins, from which it is convenient to guard oneself with every study. Therefore, our good father will do a very laudable and Christian work, entering, if he can, into this holy company of the name of God, together with his sons, and with the whole family, so

that in every way, with the divine help, and with the good human diligence, he will keep his house clean from these abominations.

Chapter 53

OF THE THIRD PRECEPT, REMEMBER TO KEEP HOLY THE SABBATH DAY.

Nature itself, and a tacit law which God has engraved on our hearts, admonishes us that it is not right that the precious time we have should be spent entirely on sustaining this frail and weak body of ours in various earthly occupations and exercises, but that some part of the time should be assigned in particular to divine things, occupying ourselves piously and religiously in the contemplation of God, and in rendering due honor to His Majesty, not only with interior affection but also with external worship. D. Majesty, not only with interior affection but also with external worship. This natural obligation brings us back to the memory of the third precept of the law with those words: Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day, where we see that the Sabbath day was determined and prescribed for the ancient people, so that, resting from the corporal fatigue, they could freely serve God with the body and the spirit. And because this part of the precept, which is to render honor and worship to God more on the Sabbath day than on any other day of the week, is not a natural and perpetual precept, but something pertaining to the rites and ceremonies of that law, and therefore variable, so much so at the time of the new law when Jesus Christ came into the world, Our Savior, Sun of justice, and of truth, when the shadows and the ancient figures were no longer to be found, the Apostles of the Lord, by the instinct of the Holy Spirit, designated another day, that is the first of the seven days of the week, and it was called Dies Dominica, which is just as valid as the day of the Lord; If all the days are God's, nevertheless it is named so, because it is specially dedicated and consecrated to the

divine cult. It was truly the mysterious day of the Sabbath, whose name, meaning rest and cessation, recalled that God is the creator of Heaven and earth, who, having finished this wonderful and beautiful machine of the world and its creatures, rested on the seventh day. God also wanted the Sabbath to be a memorial to the hard and ungrateful people of their liberation from Egypt; But more than that, it overshadowed the mysterious Sabbath, of the redemption of the human race, when our great liberator, who freed us from the cruelest Pharaoh, and from the harshest servitude, defeated death, and he who had the rule of death, that is the devil, rested from the great work, which was to have remade the man undone by sin, and on Sunday then, rose glorious, and immortal, and then ascending victorious, and triumphant to heaven, opened to us the door of perfect Sabbath in eternal rest.

Chapter 54

OF THE OBLIGATION, AND OF THE FRUIT OF CELEBRATING SUNDAYS AND OTHER HOLIDAYS.

If therefore the Jewish people, because of the memory of the creation of the world, and of the recovery of carnal freedom, were both by the law of nature, and by written law, and by every right of gratitude obliged to keep the Sabbath, and to give thanks to God for the benefits received, what shall we say of the Christian, who by faith knows and confesses that God is not only his creator, but also his redeemer, and that he has freed and redeemed us not with the blood of a vile lamb, but with his own blood of infinite price and value? The Christian also knows and confesses that he has not passed through the Red Sea, nor eaten the manna of Heaven, nor been led to little Palestine, the land of promise of that people, but has passed through the blood of Christ in holy baptism, is nourished in the desert of this world, of the true heavenly bread, that is of Christ himself, and finally is described as a citizen of the true land of promise, that is of the heavenly homeland to reign in it, and to be eternally blessed with Christ; Now who can deny that not just one day of the week, but all the days, and all the hours should be spent in thanking God for the innumerable and great benefits that he has done to us, and does continually without intermission? and if he had commanded us that only one day of the week should be ours, and that all the others should be set aside for his service, who would ever have reason to complain? Certainly no one. But God, rich, as the Apostle says, and abounding in mercy, has wished to take pity on our infirmity, and just as in the terrestrial paradise, having granted to our first father Adam the free use of infinite trees, full of the most suavest fruits, he reserved only

one for himself, as a sign of supreme dominion, so of so many days of the year, he has wished that a few should be reserved for his worship; but however with great fruit, and our benefit, because what sweeter, and more desirable thing can be that after many labors of the arts, and negotiations of civil life, after the clamors of the courts, and of the squares, and after a thousand daily miseries of this laborious pilgrimage of ours, after I say so many storms that have agitated us, to rest a little, and to retire as in a tranquil port, in the house of God, and to give some spiritual refectory to the hungry and tired soul? Who does not see how much instruction and nourishment they give to Christian piety, the mysterious solemnities of the life of Christ, united with those of the Blessed Virgin Mother, the memory of the glorious Apostles, the victories of the strongest martyrs, and other saints, that the Holy Church with celestial artifice, in every day of the year, presents to us? I certainly dare to say, that if it were not for the holy feasts, which refresh our memory of the divine benefits, we are so forgetful for ourselves, and so wrapped up and occupied, like the Hebrew people in Egypt, in gathering the straw and the mud of this world, that we would hardly ever remember them. And yet, although the obligation and the usefulness of keeping the feasts holy is so great, there are some who, in order to show themselves to be true sons of the old Adam, consider the feast day as a heavy burden, as an impediment to their greed to gain, and almost as time wasted; Others are more numerous, who wait for the feast day not to serve God, but to serve the devil, and the unbridled appetites of the flesh, in the games of drunkenness, and in the fire of lust that will burn eternally in hell, if they do not change their lives. And certainly it is a miserable thing, and worthy of abundant tears, the abuse, and great irreverence that in this part is seen in the Christian people generally speaking, a fault if I am not mistaken, not small of lack of good education, both public and private.

Chapter 55

OF THE PUBLIC CARE, ET OF THE DOMESTIC, ABOUT THE OBSERVANCE OF THE FESTIVITIES.

The ancient and religious Emperors took great care that Sunday and other feast days be observed with all reverence, prohibiting not only the noise of the courts, but also the spectacles of the theatres and other public games, and even up to the solemnity and feast of Christmas and of their own empire, they ordered that it be postponed, if by chance it was necessary, to a day dedicated to the honour of God, as can still be seen in the laws recorded in the Code of Reason. And truly the Princes, and public magistrates, deserve great praise when with the authority they have from God, of whom they are ministers, they try as well in this particular matter of the sanctification of the feasts, as in many other such things, to do service to God, helping the pastoral solicitude of the Bishops, and ecclesiastical superiors as they are obliged. But leaving this aside, and returning to the principal motive of our education, I say that the good father of a family must be a diligent observer of feast days, so that he can easily accustom his children and servants to the same observance, and if at all other times he must keep an eye open that God is not offended in his house, he must do so much more at feast time, occupying himself and others not in illicit pleasures, and in the vanities of the world, but in holy and Christian exercises, as will now be said more distinctly.

Chapter 56

HOW THE FEAST DAYS ARE TO BE CELEBRATED IN A CHRISTIAN MANNER.

Whoever will consider well the words of the divine precept, will understand for himself how the feast day is to be observed, and in what activities the Christian man must exert himself at that time. God says, remember to keep holy the Sabbath day; in which voice sanctify openly demonstrates that the feast is a time consecrated to God, and that in it all our study must be principally in the works of holiness, and of religion, so that God sanctifies us with his most holy grace, for this reason God has ordained that on the feast day one should not work, not because this is evil of his nature, indeed he himself has said, six days you shall work, and do all your works, the seventh is the feast of the Lord your God, but because the culture of the earth, and the mechanical artifices, and the other earthly occupations, distract us from uniting ourselves perfectly with God, and from raising our minds to the consideration and love of heavenly things, therefore in the precept of the sanctification of the Sabbath, he has forbidden the work to men, and to the instruments, which are like instruments of the operations of man, so that on that day at least, he could dedicate himself totally to the worship, and service of God. Therefore the good father should imprint in the tender soul of the child, and with the growth of the years he should imprint more firmly this opinion, that the time of the true gain, is the time of the feast, when one gains the divine grace, which blesses, and prospers all the negotiations, and all the operations of the other days, and that, on the contrary, miserable, and unhappy gains are those, which are made contrary to the law of God, and contrary to the orders

of the Holy Church, therefore the feast day never prompts its servants to work, except perhaps in some case of necessity permitted by the Sacred Canons. Show also, how on Sunday, and the same we intend for the other feast days, we present ourselves before God, as our Father, and our Lord, who has created us, and redeemed us, and governs us continually giving us life, health, substance, and every good of body, and soul, and therefore we go to the holy temple to exile ourselves as servants, and obedient children, ready to every commandment of his, and to thank him for the innumerable benefits, which he gives us at all hours, and at the same time to ask forgiveness from his Majesty, of the many faults, and negligence of ours, that if well no day should pass, that we do not give thanks to God, who never ceases to do us good, and likewise every day we must ask his forgiveness for our daily failings, nevertheless with greater attention, and affection, and more purpose, we must do it on the day consecrated to the Lord with the spirit of the holy Church our mother, who at this time particularly invites us, gathering all together in a spirit of charity, and undoubtedly the union of the faithful, congregated in the name of God in the holy temple, has no small effect in warming our minds to devotion, while the holy priest, as a public minister, offers in the name of all the people the sacrifice of the Mass.

And because the hearing of the Mass is one of the principal obligations of the feast, which many fulfil tepidly, and are so present to that very grave work that little, or nothing seems to them to understand what is here treated, therefore I consider it necessary to linger a little in this matter, so that our child may be well instructed in the Christian creed, with which one must enter, and stay in the Holy Church, and attend Mass, and the other divine offices. And remembering what I have promised in another place, I will not hesitate to go into minute things, as long as I think that they can be of benefit to the Christian education of our children.

Chapter 57

OF THE REVERENCE THAT MUST BE BROUGHT TO THE TREMENDOUS SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

If in all spiritual matters pertaining to divine worship, the good Christian must be attentive and devout, so that that terrible curse of the Scriptures does not fall on him, cursed is he who does the work of God negligently, with how much greater attention and devotion must the Christian be present at the tremendous sacrifice of the Altar? a work of such majesty, and sanctity, that nothing holier, nor more divine can be done on earth, where that same hostia vivifica, and immaculate, that same Christ, who for the redemption of mankind, offered himself once only to the Father on the Altar of the Cross, with bloodshed every day by the ministry of the Priests, is offered without bloodshed? where, with a very high Sacrament, we make alive the memory of the ineffable love that God has brought us; where, finally, raising our pure hands with our contrite and humiliated hearts to God, we appease His Lordship with this true and propitiatory sacrifice of the new law, figured in so many ancient sacrifices, and we impart mercy to Him. M. and we impart mercy, and gratitude for the living, and for the dead, and we bring back abounding fruits of the salutiferous passion of Christ, since as it is said, and that, and this is one and the same oblation, and one and the same sacrifice, different only in the manner. Truly the height, and usefulness of this mystery is so great that one cannot say, nor think enough, with how much inner purity of heart, and with how much devotion, and outward reverence it is appropriate, and to treat it, and to be present in it, while the public minister of the Church, treats it for himself, and for all the faithful people, in the celebration of the Mass. Therefore,

our good Father, who is more solicitous to treasure heavenly treasures for his son than earthly treasures, should endeavor with all study, doctrine and example to make him particularly devoted to the Holy and Venerable Mass.

Chapter 58

OF THE OBLIGATION TO HEAR MASS.

It would be a very fruitful thing, and worthy of praise, if every day the Mass were heard by Christians, I speak of men, because as for women, because of different respects of that sex, and because of domestic care, it is perhaps not possible to persuade the same so indistinctly. I do not know anyone who is so busy, even speaking of craftsmen, who with their daily labors earn their food and support themselves, that he could not consecrate less than a small hour to God, to attend Mass devoutly, especially where it is easy to hear it, which would be of particular help, so that all the activities of that day might be happier, and blessed by God, but nevertheless, since the impediments and occupations of civil life are many, and of many ways, and the Holy Mother Church, merciful and benign, has not wanted to oblige us under sin, if not to the dominical and festive days, at least in these days the father of the family must never pretermitt to hear Mass with all the people of the house, among whom I also mean those who take care of the fields, and of the herds, for whom with some good way that prudence, and much more Christian charity will suggest to him, he must try to provide; so that, as far as possible, they may attend Mass without any inconvenience or notable damage to their ministries. But as far as our child is concerned, he should see to it that he is accustomed to the firm resolution never to leave Mass, neither he nor his family for any temporal occupation or need, and not only for the vain pleasure of hunting or the like, as some do, who, not only for gain but also for pleasure, occupy their servants in such a way that they cannot fulfill the precept of the Church; whose guilt is most grievous, so that human service

cannot and must not go on likewise, nor prevent the service of God. Here we could touch on some words, of certain un-Christian customs, when, either because of grief, or because of the death of the parents, or because of viduity, or because the daughters are already unmarried, they leave the Church, which respects, and other similar things that can happen, if they are sufficient to excuse in any particular case, I leave it to the determination of the good, and understanding confessors, with the judgment of whom must govern themselves, whoever loves the health of his soul. But our son, well and christianly educated, will have as a very certain rule, that if just and grave necessity does not interpose itself, the day of Sunday and feast day must be God's, and his own, that is to say of the soul, and of the quiet and spiritual reflection. It would not be a very praiseworthy thing, if not a very praiseworthy thing, to touch a word of this, that the Mass be heard by each one in his own parish, honoring his own Pastor, and for many other good effects, for which in ancient times this institution was observed by the faithful, and commanded by the sacred Canons.

Chapter 59

OF THE WAY OF GOING TO CHURCH, AND OF MERCY TOWARDS THE POOR.

The child is accustomed by good paternal discipline, to wait for Sunday with a certain desire, and Christian taste to go to the Temple, and to present himself before God our Lord, Father, Creator and Redeemer, and from whom we have and expect every good, and then it will happen that the child himself, well brought up, will sometimes anticipate his father and mother, inviting them to go to the Church. And what is customary for urbanity, to dress oneself in the best clothes on the feast day, must be converted for the glory of God, before whom we must appear primarily with the world's heart, but also with the outer garment composed, and without debauchery, guarding ourselves however from the excess of vanity, especially in female children, of which perhaps we will speak in a more convenient place. Therefore, when Sunday comes, after a little prayer and preparation in the house, after reverencing the image of the Savior and of the Madonna, after having received the maternal blessing, and having signed himself with the holy sign of the Cross, let the little son be led by his dear father to the Church. And because the blind, the crippled, and other needy people are used to stand at the doors of the Churches, asking for money, the father must have taught his son many times before, that we are all poor, and in need of God's grace, so that we go to the temple to beg him to open the hand of his immense liberality, and to help us with our spiritual and corporal needs. But if we want to move God to compassion towards us, it is necessary that we also be compassionate towards our neighbor, which, since it must always be done, it is right that we do it especially when we go to ask God for

help and mercy in his house, in which the poor are like porters, who open the first entrance to us, and that affection of mercy that we will use with them, we will find from God, for it is written, Blessed are the merciful, for they also will obtain mercy. Now I know well that a small child is not so soon capable of these and other things, which are said to be done by the father's instruction, so that he may teach them to his son when he will see in him a greater capacity and disposition. But in the meantime it is necessary to accustom him for a long time to compassion for the poor, and to give them alms willingly, which will not be difficult, seeing the example of the father, and invited by him with sweet words to do so, take my son, and give this alms to the poor, see, In him dwells Christ, Christ is the one who stretches out his hand, and will give it to you most abundantly in heaven, we also receive every day great alms from God, and other similar concepts, which the Spirit of God gives, and are heard every day from the holy preachers, and all the books are full of them. Let us conclude in one word, that the miserable aspect of the poor, on entering the Church, provides no mediocre matter of education, and of Christian education. When entering the Church, the father must make sure that the child serves with a certain gravity and modesty, and with a certain recollection and holy fear, that he recognizes the veneration of that place; therefore, the father must be careful not to enter it laughing or speaking loudly, as is customary at times, or looking here and there, and if he has been somewhat distracted on the way, he must immediately recollect himself at the entrance to the Church, and show a composure within himself that will motivate his son to imitate it; If, on entering the chamber where the Prince is, one feels a certain fear, and feels that others are moved to reverence, how much more should we be clothed with these feelings, on entering the house of the Supreme King of Glory? In order to be moved inwardly by this spirit of reverence, it will also be useful to utter some verses of the

Psalms in a low voice at the entrance to the temple, such as the one that says Domum tuam Domine decet sanctitudo, Lord, in your house one must stay with holiness, and respect, and that other one, Domine in multitudine misericordiae tuae, introibo in domum tuam adorabo ad templum sanctum tuum in temore tuo, that is, my God whose mercies are immeasurable, I will enter your house full of religious, and filial fear to adore you, and other similar ones.

Chapter 60

OF THE OTHER THINGS YOU HAVE TO DO, AFTER ENTERING THE TEMPLE OF THE LORD.

When you have entered the church, let the father take the blessed or holy water, and sprinkle himself and his son, saying that verse of the psalm: *Asperges me Domine hysopo, et mundabor, lavabis me, et super nivem dealbabor*, that is to say, sprinkle me Lord, with hisopo, which is a herb of great virtue, and signifies Christ our Redeemer, with whose blood we ask to be sprinkled and purified, and therefore following the sentence of the verse, wash me Lord, and I will be whiter than snow. The father must know that holy water has the virtue of erasing minor and venial sins, in which, because of our great frailty, we daily incur, and therefore the child must be accustomed to receive it with reverence, and in due time he must be taught of this salutary effect, of the remission of venial sins, remembering the passion and blood of Christ, in which and through which we have all remission. It also reminds us of the fountain of holy water, that fountain of the holy baptism where our soul was perfectly washed, and because we have not preserved that whiteness and purity, rather we have soiled ourselves with many stains of sins, it is appropriate for us with tears and sighs to pray many times to God to wash us.

After this, let them go before the Holy Sacrament, and with both knees bent to the ground, with their eyes downcast, and with their hands joined, and with every composition of the whole body, let them pray devoutly, saying the Pater and the Ave Maria three times in honor of the Most Holy Trinity, and the Apostolic Symbol, inwardly thanking God, that through His goodness we are Christians and faithful,

and begging Him to help us, so that with works and effects we may correspond to this high calling and fulfill the obligations of a good Christian.

And because the Holy Church is like a heavenly hospital, where there are admirable and most effective medicines to heal all the infirmities of our soul, so the good Christian, who will consider the many wounds of his soul, received throughout the week, will not be lazy, at least on Sunday, to procure the remedy through the sacrament of penance, for which it is a very laudable and fruitful institution to confess every Sunday. And there has been some Theologian of great authority in the schools, who has said that every Christian, under penalty of new sin, is obliged to have contrition on the Dominical day, and sorrow for his sins. But how it is, we do not need to discuss for now, it is very sure, and very useful to do it, and to confess at present, because in the sacrament of the confession, not only the soul is cleansed from the sins committed, but acquires, as elsewhere it has been said, virtue, and strength, to resist temptations, and not to fall so easily in the future. And therefore, let the good father confess, and let his son do the same, however small, with that modesty, and composition of body, of which we recalled above, so that, growing, he may grow with this holy habit.

Chapter 61

MORE IN PARTICULAR OF THE WAY OF BEING TO THE MASS, AND OF SOME DEVOTE, ET CHRISTIANE CREANZE.

After the reconciliation made with God in holy confession, the soul being beautiful in the presence of its creator, who has filled it with grace, our prayers will be more acceptable, and of greater fruit and merit every holy exercise that we will do. And because hearing Mass is the principal obligation of the feast day, as has been said, if we have already touched on how much devotion and reverence is required to comply with this obligation in general, it seems to me in this place, however, to descend more to the particular, so that our good father may know, both for himself and for his son, the true Christian creed in this part, not to appear outwardly, but to please the eyes of God inwardly with sincerity of heart, giving at the same time edification to his neighbors.

It is therefore to be known that the Mass in all its parts is a representation of the passion and death of Jesus Christ crucified, and there is no word, no gesture, no ceremony that the priest performs that is not full of mystery, there the priest prays for himself, and for all the people, and for the living, and for the dead, and as ambassador of the faithful people, his assistant, and of the whole Church, he deals with God in very important matters, such as are not dealt with any king on earth; Therefore, even if the simple Christian does not understand these mysteries so distinctly, he must remain with great attention, accompanying with devout affection the intentions and actions of the celebrant. And beforehand one must remain in the entire Mass, and kneel from beginning to end, except when the Holy Gospel is read.

In ancient times it was the custom, every Sunday of the year, and in the pastoral season, which runs from Easter to Pentecost, to remain at Mass, and to pray on one's feet, in memory of the resurrection and triumph of the Savior, but nowadays this custom is not generally observed, and considering our great facility in distracting ourselves from the due attention, it seems better to me to always remain on one's knees at all times, because that position of the body humiliates and gathers the soul; and this is intended for the low Mass, or small Mass, as we wish to say, because in the sung and solemn Mass, one can stand for a certain period of time, or sit, as we see the Canons do in the cathedral churches, but in any way and place that the body is, beyond external decency, our mind must always be united with God in the interior. But returning to the subject, one must be present at Mass kneeling with both knees, so that some are very much to blame, who either stand, or only at the elevation of the Most Holy Sacrament even bend a little, almost violated by the sound of the bells, and by the respect of the most devout, others bow only one knee, not to speak of other more unseemly ways, that are a manifest sign of little devotion, and these are often people who make profession of Knights, and of well created, and are not ashamed to know so little of the Christian creed, if they do not consider themselves ashamed to know it, and to observe it. Not so will our father to whom we speak, not so will he raise his beloved son, but he will remember that praying to Christ our Lord in the garden, the night before his passion, not only with one knee, but with his whole person prostrate, he shed for us not only tears, but the sweat of blood, so that one Evangelist writes of him, Procidit in faciem suam orans, and another says, Procidit super terram, and the third writes, Positis genibus orabat, and of St. Stephen is written, that praying in the extreme spirit for his stonecutters, he bowed his knees, and St. Paul writes of himself: Flecto genua mea ad patrem Domini nostri Iesu Christi, but more than

anything else we should be moved by seeing the Son of God, made man, confined for us on the cross with both feet, whose bitterest pains we should reduce to memory at all times, but especially while celebrating Mass, which as mentioned above, is a living representation of his passion. But what shall we say of those who, out of vanity, pride, or a certain opinion of greatness, keep their heads covered without any necessity, not remembering that the King of kings, who is present on the same altar, while on the cross, did not have any covering but the crown of thorns. There are others who, because of their vagueness, and in order to show that they are occupied with many affairs, do nothing more than call this and that servant, and speak to them in their ears, or hear answers; others negotiate with friends, or for entertainment they reason, which for now I do not wish to say of those who shamelessly spend that time of such sanctity, and veneration, in impudent looks, but concluding, I say that it is something to do for pain to break a heart of stone, to see the great irreverence, with which many of name, and of Christian profession, attend the Mass, as if it were something to joke about, and not the highest, and mysterious act of our religion. And for this reason our good father will instruct his son to remain with all attention, completely united and fixed to the work of the holy priest, accompanying him from part to part, as for example in the general confession, in rendering the greeting, when the priest says God be with you, and when he invites the people by saying, pray brothers, so that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable before God, one must humbly pray to God to give an abundance of divine grace to his minister, and to hear his prayers; Likewise, when the priest says in a somewhat elevated voice, Memento Domine, now for the living, and then for the dead, that is, before and after the consecration of the Most Holy Eucharist, the devout Christian must also do the same, commending to God himself, his relatives, and the whole Church, and likewise he

must never forget the souls in purgatory, and in sum he must conform step by step with the priest, and whoever is simple, and does not learn everything so distinctly, at least in general have this intention, always waiting as much as possible for what the priest is doing, so that at that time it would be better to postpone certain devotions that some people have, such as reciting the Litanies, and the seven psalms, and the hours of Our Lady, if they are good things, and holy, and are sometimes also in the Mass itself, a way of remedy against distraction, especially while the priest is now in silence. Finally, let the good father understand and see to it that his son also understands, as, and when he can, that they too in their own way, offer to the eternal father that tremendous oblation, and are not idle spectators, but cooperators, and helpers of the public minister, with holy desires, with uniformity of intention, and with fervent prayer; for this reason some deserve reproach, who not only do not help, but disturb the priest, and among these there are those, who pretend to be more devout than the others, and run the first to be very close to the altar, and at the time of the reading of the Gospel, they approach with one ear, and with such a manner, that shows more ardor, than reverence; others look physically into the face of the priest, who show well that they do not understand how great a thing is to be done at that point by the priest, who should not be given any opportunity to distract himself, because he is also a man, surrounded by infirmity, and many are the snares of Satan. Therefore, let our educator know that he must adhere to the Christian way of life, in which he intends to educate the child, to place himself behind the celebrant, a little far away, because it is not necessary to hear all the words of the Mass clearly, but it is necessary to be attentive, and devout, considering us unworthy to approach so close to the sanctum sanctorum, which was called the most intimate part of the ancient temple, where only once a year the high priest entered, and there were only the Ark of the testament,

and other figures, and shadows of future goods. In this regard the father can tell his son about the example of the good Publicanus praised in the Gospel, who stood far away, and did not dare to raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, asking God for forgiveness; from which history, and from that of the proud Pharisee, the good father will learn many good lessons, so that his son may learn with how much humiliation of body and soul a sinful and guilty man, as we all are, must stand before his supreme judge, God of infinite majesty. Those do not do well who, in wanting to respond to the priest, or in saying their private prayers, raise their voices too much, and disturb the others; likewise, in my opinion, it is not to be praised in the Church, and at Mass, to do some acts, devout yes, but not used in common by all the faithful, such as opening one's arms in the form of a cross, prostrating oneself on the ground with the whole body, and the like, which are done in private rooms, when we pray secretly to God, are very useful to kindle devotion, and can also be done in some oratory among a few people of the same spirit, and are also sometimes lawful in public Churches, when all the people are moved together with the weeping, but generally speaking, one must not be singular, nor seem to want to condemn others as not being devout, besides we must not expose ourselves to the danger of the thin wind of vainglory; However, the father will warn that our child serves mediocrity in this part, but always remaining attentive and reverent, and meditating in his heart on the passion of Christ, inviting others to be attentive with his attention.

It has been said elsewhere, and it is not out of purpose to repeat it here, that the child must always be accustomed to make a sign of reverence, when he hears the most holy and sweet names of Jesus and Mary, and when glory is said to the most holy Trinity, he must likewise bow down to the ground, when the priest says, Et homo factus est, and in the

Gospel at the end of the Mass, Et verbum caro factum est, which words remind us of the great benefit that God has done for us, who for our sake has made himself a man, so that I marvel at how some are so proud and ungrateful, or so little observant of Christian decency that when the priest bows down, they stand frozen and motionless as if they were statues, and it is a great thing that the most high God for the love of man has bowed down to take our earth, and dust, and vile mud, and does not want to honor God by raising his hand, bowing his head, and bending his knees; not in this way will our well-bred child, but with all subservience, decently humble himself to the name of Him, to whom God, as the Apostle says, has given a name which is above every name. Finally, let the child know that he must receive the priestly blessing with great devotion, as from the hands of Christ himself, and as a seal of this holy act, so that the fruit of it may persevere in us, and we may be blessed in eternal life. It is also a term of good and Christian decency not to leave before the priest departs from the altar, and to bow to him as he passes, greeting our neighboring brothers, as a sign of love and union, which is the effect of that holy sacrifice, that we are one with God, and one with each other in charity. Some devout people, while passing the priest, touch the sacred garments, and bash their hands; I would not dare to repeat this custom, but I would like it to be done with such modesty, that it does not seem that they want to hit the shoulders of the priest, but to limit the humility of that holy woman who suffered from the flow of blood, who, as if secretly, with great faith, touched the fimbri, or rather the fringe of the garment of Christ, and was healed.

Chapter 62

OF THE HOLY COMMUNION, AND OF THE SERMON OF THE MORNING.

I realize that to some it will seem that I fill the pages with very minute memories, and others perhaps will say that these are ordinary things, and known to everyone; to the latter there is no need to say anything else, since I have already protested elsewhere that I write many things for the simple, and it pleases God that they are so common, and so observed among the Christian people, that it is not necessary to remember them; To the former I will only say, that nothing that disposes us, and inflames us to the love of God, should be neglected, nor considered as small, seeing as a practice many times, that a genuflection, by saying the name of Jesus, softens a hard heart, and obstinate heart, and to each of these small things, when they are done in gratitude, corresponds such a reward in heaven, that if we thought well about it, we would not be so negligent, as many of us are, leaving to do with small labors the great gains. But returning to our subject of the divine worship on Sunday, it seems to me a good institute that of some, who hear the solemn and sung Mass, and are pastured by those venerable ceremonies, which truly are an image of paradise. When the Mass has been devoutly heard, it will be a good time for the father to go with his son to receive the most holy Eucharist, or if the child is not yet capable of that divine table, he should at least remain reverent to see it, so that little by little he may be inflamed with a holy desire to taste the food of the Angels. And since the fruit of frequent communion, done in the proper way, has been sufficiently discussed elsewhere, I will not be longer, I will only say, that great crown of glory will be granted by God to that father,

who will lead his son along the paths of health, and will give him the opportunity to be able to say, when he is dead, blessed be the soul of my father, who taught me this way, and thus accustomed me. It is also the duty of a pious and devout Christian to listen attentively to the sermon, where the will of God is exposed, the vanity of the world is shown, the snares of the Devil are revealed, and finally it is declared what each one must do to obtain eternal life.

Chapter 63

OF THE CUSTODY OF HIMSELF RETURNING HOME IN THE MORNING FROM THE DIVINE OFFICES.

After having spent the morning in the way we have said in the service of God, the good father of a family will return home happy, not otherwise than a faithful servant, returns to the face of his prince, with many graces, and favours. And because the envious and very cunning Devil is especially at work on such a day, to make us lose the fruit of the morning's good expenditure, the father should take care, if by chance the food is not prepared, and the table is not set, not to break out in a sudden outburst, but to quietly command the necessary things, and wait patiently. And it is written in this regard, in the life of the blessed Gio Colombino Senese that being all wrapped up in the earthly gains of the merchants, one morning among others, not finding the food prepared as he wanted, in order to return quickly to his business, he became very upset. But his wife, who was a discreet and devout woman, gave him a book of legends of the saints, she sweetly begged him to stay with it for a short time, and taking it unwillingly, he began to read it, and coming to him, as God would have it, the story of the sinner Maria Egittiaca, he took such pleasure in it, that he forgot about the bodily food, he not only read it all, but he impressed it vividly in his heart, so much so that by divine operation, from that hour he began to despise the world, and in a short time he gave himself entirely to serve God, and was then the founder of the order of the Giesuati brothers. This is how from a small seed, from a not entirely voluntary suffering, God drew great fruit. Let our father of the family, therefore, also imitate that great servant of God, and let him not be afraid to read, or to do anything else, but wait

patiently; in this way he will confound the Devil, he will not disturb the domestic peace, and he will teach his son to be meek and patient, and to know how to overcome himself, which is very necessary in life, both at home and abroad. Finally, let the good father of a family and his family sit at table, and give the necessary nourishment to the body, with hilarity, and spiritual joy, blessing the giver of all goods, and therefore do not fail to bless the table at the beginning, and at the end give due thanks to God, which must be done every day, morning and evening, and see the child, and observe what the father does, and see in the mother, and in the others at that time signs of reverence, and of prayer, and then he himself, by commandment of the father, says the blessing, and is pleased, and is accustomed to wanting that God is the beginning, and the end of all our actions. The good father may also invite his son, while we are eating, to say something heard in the sermon, and with some salutary warning, or with some example of the life of that saint, whose feast is celebrated, not with severity, but gently, Let him also spiritually feed his family, so that Christ will be in their midst, and will give such wholesomeness, and taste to the food, that often a table of a mediocre citizen, and of a poor artisan, with a poor food apparatus, will advance the lavish banquets of the richest; For the sentence of the Redeemer is true, that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

Chapter 64

OF THE GOOD DISPENSATION OF THE REST OF THE DAY.

At all times the Devil our capital enemy lays snares, and binds the Christian, to make him overflow in sin, but above all on Sundays, and on the most solemn feasts as he knows very well, that at that time the weather is more acceptable, and days of health, offered to the faithful people, like some spiritual fairs and markets, so to speak, in which, whoever knows how to haggle well around this not earthly, The most astute adversary, therefore, makes every effort, first of all to prevent us from gaining the true fruit of the holy feast days, and secondly to steal from us what we have gained, and if he could, he does everything possible so that at the same time, and in the same places, where the Christian soul could and should be enriched with divine treasures, he may suffer the gravest losses, and lose the most. Therefore, our good father of the family, solicitous for his own health, and that of his children, after that by the grace of God he has well and christianly dispensed the morning, will give perfection to the work begun, continuing to dispense well and holily what remains of the day, remembering that God in the Old Testament ordered that the morning sacrifice and the evening sacrifice be offered to His Mother. Therefore, the time will be divided into various virtuous exercises, usefully deceiving the young man, because the variety of things recreates the soul, and the second spiritual activity is like a rest of the first, because recreation is not denied, indeed it is useful and necessary, as will be said more distinctly in another place, but whoever has made a taste for the things of God, while passing from one to another, finds, as has been said, room for recreation. Therefore, after the middle of the day, the time for Christian doctrine appropriately arrives,

and it must be done in such a way that the child will be pleased with it, which will happen easily when he sees that his father and mother commend him for having learned well, when sometimes he relates some part of it, and by his father's authority he exercises the office of teacher in the house, teaching his sisters and younger brothers, and giving not only praise, which must be moderate and serious, but also some childish rewards; Then follow the Divine Offices of Vespers, and where if one can read the Holy Scripture, one must not fail to hear it, because that portion of time is passed without boredom, and God is greatly honoured, and food and nourishment are given to the soul. In some places processions are also made, and Litanies and lauds are sung, to the honour of God, and of the Most Blessed Queen of Heaven, at which our good father, with his son, must intervene with every devotion, and so little by little the child will be accustomed to stay willingly in the house of God, and to enjoy the ecclesiastical chant and the venerable ceremonies of the sacred offices, worthy of a true Christian, and he will come to such a state with the frequency of the acts, and with the good habit acquired willingly, that not only is it not a nuisance, but it is a great pleasure to occupy oneself in the above-mentioned things. And because on feast days, dedicated to the glory of God, Christian piety must be more evident, it will be an appropriate time to visit the sick, and in public hospitals, and in private homes, and especially the poor and afflicted, relieving their need as much as possible, and consoling them with sweet and affectionate words, giving the child to understand how Christ is visited in their person, who will render very great reward for this and other similar works of charity and mercy. And it is also useful to go for pleasure to the places of the religious, where there are cloisters, and pleasant gardens, and one has the opportunity to discuss with some fathers of holy life, and to take material for edification. In sum, the aim of the father of a family must be to spend himself, and all his

family, on the holy day of the Lord in such a way that, when evening comes, he has no regrets about having offended God, when he should have done less, but he has sooner consolation of spirit, and interior joy, and he gives thanks to God with the whole house, by whose grace, refreshed and as if revived, he prepares himself happily in the following days of work, for the usual labors.

Chapter 65

OF SOME ABUSES, AND IRREVERENCES THAT MANY COMMIT ON HOLIDAYS.

It has been said, that in the precept of the observance of feasts, it is expressly forbidden to do servile, manual, and mercenary works, not because by their nature they are evil, so that at other times they are lawfully done, but because they distract us from divine worship, which is the purpose of this precept, however great is the blindness and misery of those, who, either do not demand anything on the feast day, other than to cease from ordinary labors, or what is worse, give themselves then to every license and dissolution, as if that were the proper time assigned to broaden the brake to the flesh, and to all illicit voluptuousness, not realizing, that no work is more servile than sin, of which it is written, he who does sin, is servant of sin, nor is there any operation, however mechanical, and low, that so distracts us from the study of divine things, as sin, which not only diverts us, but totally separates us from love, and union with God.

Therefore it is a very sad thing to see how little observance there is in common among the Christian people of the feast day, and in how many ways the divine Majesty is offended, in that time which has been deputed especially to honor her. I leave aside those who buy and sell and work for money and make others work, I leave some others who for minor reasons do not go to Mass, but who will be able to keep silent about those who wait until Sunday to immerse themselves in the mud of all their lusts? Then the temple of God is profaned with glances full of lust, and men are voluntarily thrown into the flames of hell, and gazing fixedly at the objects proportioned to our frail nature, they are miserably wounded, and they take pleasure in it, and use every artifice

to pull any simple virgin, or other innocent soul into the same perdition. I do not want to exaggerate in this place, the gravity of such a sin, as I could, and perhaps I should, but suffice it to say that if they do not return to true penance, Christ our Lord with scourges of fire, and with eternal punishment, will expel them from Paradise, the heavenly Temple of God, since they so brazenly dare to defile his earthly, and visible Temple, not by selling oxen, and doves, but by selling their own soul to the Devil. Others are those who consume the day, in which the soul must be nourished with spiritual food, in the taverns, in the drunkenness, and crapule, and especially the artisans, and those of the minute people, who in one day alone, throw into the insatiable chasm of the throat all the efforts of the week, and often they take it away from the necessary nourishment of the poor little family, and returning home in the evening, drunk and out of their minds they fill everything with shouts, and sometimes they beat the poor wives, and they give occasion to curse the days, instituted to fill us with blessing, and peace. What shall we say of illicit games, nourishment of a thousand evils, a seminary of brawls, of bickering, of deceit, where, in a short space of time, by badly dispersing the money, an instrument of family care, the good domestic order is disturbed and destroyed for many months? From which, how many evil consequences have then originated, each one can easily consider for himself. But what shall we say about dances, very familiar and proper to some countries? The inhabitants of these countries are all the more obliged to bless the giver of every good, and to sanctify the feasts more devoutly, the greater the quantity and abundance of the earth's goods which God has given them; It is not my intention to discuss these ways of recreation in detail, which perhaps, considered so nakedly and in their own nature, are not bad, so that some have wished to defend them, or at least to excuse them, but going down, as they say, to the practical act, and to the common

way in which they are done, there seems no doubt that they are accompanied by very bad circumstances; It is too dangerous to make a congregation of young men and women, where not the restraint of reason, nor of the fear of God, but the license of the flesh guides the dance, I mean, that there the place, the end, the means, and all that is done, serves no other purpose, nor has any other rule than the flesh: who will place the straw and the bait near the fire, and prohibit the flame? Who will be able to deny that a young man full of blood, warmed by motion, by wine, by the emulation of rivals, and by the present object, does not burn with lust, and with a thousand impure desires? Besides that a certain ancient simplicity of men has been missing, or has been completely extinguished, which is still spoken of by reputation. I leave it to say of the disputes, and of the scandals that are bound to follow, because the Devil does not keep his hands to himself, but knows how to make use of the opportunities of the time, and of the place.

Now I do not intend to reduce things to such an extreme that I do not grant any recreation, even on the feast day, indeed it is necessary in our life, as perhaps will be said elsewhere, but however recreation may be public or private, let us remember that it is a medicine, and as such it must be taken moderately and in such a way that it does not prejudice the greater good, that is, the usefulness of the soul, the honor of God, and the reverence, which is due to the day, and the holy time of Sunday, and of the other feasts.

Chapter 66

CONCLUSION OF THE AFOREMENTIONED THINGS, ABOUT HONORING HOLIDAYS.

It is certain that public authority, to which public education is also attributed, can take many useful measures against the abuses and irreverences which are committed on public holidays, and can in many ways help the care and pastoral solicitude of Bishops, so that the time dedicated to God may be dispensed for the greater part, at least, to the glory of God, and the health of souls, and may also order for the entertainment of youth such public recreations, which do not contradict Christian piety, as we may come to say elsewhere; but since we are now speaking with our father of the family, who is the first to lay the foundations of good education, on which the building of public government rests, we remind him once and again that he should prepare the child at an early age to enjoy the things of God, and to delight in the good dispensation of that holy time, so that when he grows up, and is gently drawn by good habits, he does not seem to live on that feast day, that morning and evening he does not participate in the divine offences, and does not give himself entirely to God. Therefore withdraw him from those places, and from those conversations, which go against the way, where the devil's snares and the corruptions of youth are, and lead him to the places where God is praised, and finally impress on the young man this firm opinion, that the feast day is the Lord's day, and this is the greatest gain, the greatest delight, and the greatest contentment, to preserve it and dispense it all for the glory of the Lord.

Chapter 67

OF THE FOURTH PRECEPT, HONOR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER.

It was said at the beginning, that God gave to Moisé the ten precepts of the law, described in two tablets, in the first of which were contained the three precepts, which directly regard the highest good, and our final end, and teach us charity toward God, of which we have spoken so far; in the second tablet were carved the other seven precepts, which teach us charity toward our neighbor. And this charity, and love of neighbor, derives from and depends on the love of God, and it is related to God, and it must be regulated according to God's love, so that it may be a just and righteous love, for in God and for God we must love our neighbor, and exercise toward him every due offering of charity, otherwise that love, which is repugnant and contradictory to the love of God, is false love. It remains, therefore, to reason briefly about the precepts concerning our neighbor, the observance of which is above all necessary for the maintenance of human society, and is a clear sign of the love and obedience which we bear to God, from which the Apostle Saint John argued in this way, saying: Whoever does not love his brother, whom he sees, how can he love God whom he does not see? Now, among the commandments of the second table, the precept of honoring one's father is deservedly placed in the first place, since after God our supreme and heavenly father, the obligations we have to our earthly fathers are very great, and the sentence of the divine precept is this Honour thy father and thy mother, that thou mayest have long life on earth, which the Lord thy God shall give thee; under the heading of honour, is meant love, observance, obedience, respect,

esteem for our fathers, and prompt help and assistance in all their needs. It is also important to know that under the name of father is meant not only the natural father, who generated us, of whom, however, it is principally meant, but many others are also meant, who with a certain proportion do paternal work towards us, such are the Bishops, and pastors of souls, and priests, and religious, who are rightly called spiritual fathers; such also are the Princes and magistrates, the godfathers who have held us to baptism, and to confirmation, from which also vulgarly, compatri are called, similarly the guardians of the pupils, that the paternal authority, or the public has deputed, come under this appellation; place likewise of fathers hold the teachers, and governors of the children, and finally for fathers we intend the old, the age of which, and long experience of the things makes them honorable, and venerable. All those whom we have mentioned are included under the name of father, and in conformity with the intention of the present precept, we must render them that honor and reverence which is appropriate.

Chapter 68

OF THE OBLIGATIONS THAT ARE OWED TO THE FATHER, AND TO THE MOTHER.

It would take a very long time to recount fully and distinctly in how many ways and for how many reasons we are obliged to honor our fathers, from whom we were born, but in one word alone it is enough to say that they have given us being, on which rests all the good that we have and can have; Although Almighty God is the principal author of our being and of all being, and he alone is the creator of the soul, he has nevertheless made use of our fathers, and through them has brought us into this life and made us reasonable men capable of bliss. Add to this that immediately after our birth we were presented to the Holy Church and to the font of baptism, where we were regenerated more happily than we had been born a short time before; How much more must we owe to our fathers, who through many difficulties, and dangers of infancy, and childhood, have brought us up, and tolerated us, and led us to a state of being able to operate in some part for ourselves, what shall we say of the benefit of finding teachers, who teach us various arts, and faculties, and sciences, which give man such excellence, and perfection? In addition to teaching us good morals, and what above all is important in piety and the fear of God; add to this the introduction into the common and civil life, and into the honors of the major, the preservation of the ancient heredity, and the clearing of the way for us to live honorably in the world, and to be able finally to arrive by the path of virtue, with the guidance and favor of divine grace to heaven. But not without grave, and particular reason, the mother is mentioned in the precept, for the tender, and

singular love she bears her children, for the acerbity of the pains she endures in childbirth, and for the infinite number of molestations she endures with great patience, and love in feeding and raising them. In short, the many reasons which oblige us to honour the father and the mother, who in our eyes must be like an image and a representation of God himself, by whom, as the Apostle says, every fatherhood in heaven and on earth is named.

Chapter 69

OF THE VARIOUS WAYS OF HONORING THE FATHER, AND MOTHER. CHAPTER LXIX.

And therefore it is rightly our duty to honour him with every manner of honour; in this respect it is important to know that, in addition to that honour which is shown by certain external signs and demonstrations of the body, such as standing, taking off the biretta, bowing, and other such modes of reverence, honour extends to many other things, as was mentioned above. Therefore the obedience of the son is of great importance to his father's honour; he promptly carries out his commands, governs himself according to his own advice, and submits everything to his father's will and authority; he truly honours his father. His father is honored by the son who prays to God for his father, who makes sure that he is held in high esteem among all, who provides him with all the necessary help, who bears with love and filial patience, if sometimes his father in his old age, either because of indisposition or because of age itself, which is an ordinary and natural disease, becomes somewhat bitter and annoying. But above all things the good son has to honor his father in the extreme of life when, after all the human cares and diligence, nature has already yielded to the force of evil, and is about to depart from this world, and return to God, at which time no solicitude must be neglected, so that the old father is helped to die well, with the salutary medicine of all the holy sacraments, which are required for that very important passage, with the comfort of religious men, and good servants of God, and finally with all the means, and ways, that Christian piety and charity administers. Nor after death does the honor due to the father cease, not only in burying him honorably according to his state, in which thing

no one is commonly lacking, but much more in prayers, alms, and holy sacrifices, for the soul of the deceased, of which honor the blessed Widow Monica, sought in death her beloved son Agustino saint. And if the son must give alms for the health of his father's soul, he is even more obliged to carry out the alms ordered by him, and to fulfill with all readiness the pious legacies, according to the last will of the father, in which many sons are not very careful, with grave offence to God, and to the honour and debt of the soul, and to the paternal memory. Now to that son who will honor his father and mother in this way God promises long life on earth, as Saint Paul says in writing to the Ephesians: this is the first commandment to which the promise has been added, which not only refers to the length, but also to every other prosperity of this life, as much as it is expedient for the good of the soul, and therefore principally this promise will have its full and perfect fulfillment in the future life, and in the land of the living, that is in eternal beatitude, just as, on the contrary, those ungrateful and unmerciful children who curse their father and mother, and are disobedient and insulting to them, will be punished by God in this world, will have by the just judgement of God the same amount of disobedience from their own children, and finally if with many, and heartfelt tears dipped in the blood of Christ, they do not wash away their sin, they will be with most severe, and eternal punishment in hell.

Chapter 70

OF PATERNAL DILIGENCE REGARDING THE OBSERVANCE OF THIS FOURTH PRECEPT.

Up to this point our custom has always been to reason with the father, as the one to whom the office of education is appertaining, and of forming and clothing the soul of the child with all the good habits of virtue, since the child, because of the weakness of age, is not yet capable of being his own guide and director. But in the exposition of this fourth precept of the Decalogue, we have for the most part reasoned with the son, induced by the form of speech used in the same precept, when turning to the son it says: Honor thy father, and what follows, and because it does not seem so convenient that the father himself should persuade and admonish the son to honor him. And nevertheless in this part, which is undoubtedly most important, his father's diligence is not otiose; Therefore, taking up again the manner of the usual reasoning, we say that the father must not fail to explain to his son this precept, not as his own thing, but as it really is, as a will, and divine ordinance, the observance of which is no less important to the health of the son than to the satisfaction of the father, so that if the prudent father will not say so crudely to his son; son, obey me, son, honor me, because I am your father, he will nevertheless tell him that God our heavenly father, and our creator, has commanded him in this way, that children should honor their fathers, and from the things said above he will show how deservedly it is to do so; he will also often take him to those places and to those people who, for their own sake and for the sake of good intentions, and not as something artificially done, will instruct the child in this great obligation, such as teachers of Christian doctrine,

preachers and spiritual fathers. And truly it would be very expedient if the preachers would descend more often to these particulars, imitating the style of the holy Apostles, who in their Epistles, after having dealt with the doctrine of the faith, as the time then required, turned to giving precepts to every state, and condition of men, as to husbands and wives, fathers, and children, masters, and servants, and the like; Let the father sometimes narrate to his son an example from the divine scriptures, or from the venerable histories of the saints, how grateful and acceptable to God the obedient children have been, and how abundantly he has blessed them with every blessing, like one Isaac, who allowed himself to be bound by his father, and to offer himself as far as he was able, as a victim to God; like the chaste Joseph who promptly carried out his father's commandment, and went to visit his disdained brothers with whom he was sold, and being then, as it pleased God, in a great state in Egypt, he did not seem to be able to have the full consolation of that greatness, if he did not share it with his father; such was Solomon, of whom the Holy Spirit has willed that it remain written for our instruction, that when he was in the royal seat, and saw his mother coming, he stood up and went to meet her, and placed her at his right hand and sat down, and a thousand other such examples, although the highest of all examples is our Lord Jesus Christ, who was obedient not only to his heavenly father until death and death on the Cross, but also to his most holy mother, and even to his foster father, the reputed saint Joseph, for it is written in the Gospel that he was obedient and subject to both. Similarly, it will sometimes demonstrate the severe punishments that God has exercised against the rebellious and disobedient sons, as happened to Absalon, who was miserably hit with three spears in the heart, hanging from an oak tree by his thick hair, while in battle he was fleeing the forces of his father David. There are also in the sacred writings, very serious

sentences in this regard, such as that of proverbs: Qui maledicit patri suo, vel matri, extinguetur lucerna eius in mediis tenebris, *i.e.* whoever curses his father, or his mother, will extinguish his lamp in the midst of the darkness, meaning that in the greatest need he will lack all help, and his life will be short, and every clarity he had in this life will be extinguished, or of honor, or of contentment will be extinguished, and what is worse in the darkness of death, since he has not wanted in life to open his eyes to the light of grace, he will not have the light of good works, nor of merit, but for his own fault justly abandoned, he will go into eternal darkness. With these and similar ways, taking occasion from what is heard in the preaching, and with other good opportunities, the good father will go about explaining to his son the importance of this precept. If I am not mistaken, it will also be a good and effective way for the wise mother to admonish her son about the obedience and honour due to his father, and for the father to admonish his son about what he owes to his mother, both with the same aim, the benefit of the child. But above all, with the same works, let the father make the son worthy of obedience and honour, which will not be difficult to do, since nature itself has placed in the child's heart the respect of the father. Therefore, the father should warn his son not to be too lenient, and not to become too familiar with him, especially when he has already grown up a little, and not to be too strict or severe, but to maintain a certain gravity, seasoned and tempered with gentleness and sweetness, so that the son may fear and love his father, and this is what we call reverence. He should also take care not to do things in the presence of his son which make him feel cowardly, and he should begin at an early age to do things in such a way that the child becomes accustomed to obeying his commands promptly, and finally, with the servants and family of the house, he should hold such authority that the son has the opportunity to imitate that obedience and reverence which

he sees in others, or rather, all the more so, as is more appropriate to the son than to the servant, the love and obedience of the father of the family, who nevertheless, both with the sons and with the servants, will guard himself as far as he can from excessive harshness, keeping, as has been said, his face sweet and serene with gravity, not showing himself rigorous and angry except when the fault of others requires it.

Chapter 71

OF HONOUR TOWARDS THE OTHERS WHO HAVE PLACE OF FATHER AND BEFORE THE ECCLESIASTICS.

We have touched elsewhere on the honor and obedience which we owe to our superiors, spiritual as well as temporal and earthly, but the consequence of the matter admonishes us to remind our father of the family that the honor and obedience which he desires from his children, he should show in himself towards his elders and lead them to do the same. Teach them that our Bishops, priests, parish priests and pastors are the fathers of our souls, are our mediators before God, praying for us, sanctifying us with the sacraments, and teaching us the way of eternal health, But let the father and the son be accustomed to show great reverence to priests as the ministers of God, in which many are guilty, especially the nobility, some of whom seem to be disdainful of honoring priests by giving them the way, Some of them seem to disdain honouring priests by giving them the way, saluting them, and giving them the first places, who show little understanding of the dignity of the priest, and that even if he were of low lineage, and dressed poorly, and even not of good living, which it would please God that it should never happen, nevertheless out of reverence for him whose place and authority they represent on earth, they must be honoured, esteemed, and obeyed by all, and all the more so when with the preeminence of rank, is joined the goodness of life. It is well known the memorable example of Theodosius, first Emperor of such power, who, forbidden by Saint Ambrose not to enter the Church because he had too bitterly taken revenge on a rebel City, not only obeyed, but humbly accepted the penance imposed on him, and did not scorn to perform it publicly in the presence of the whole

world. And truly, whoever well considers the humiliation of the holy priests is to aggrandize himself, because all that honour redounds principally in God himself, and in the eternal, high priest Christ Jesus, who, speaking with the holy Apostles, and with their successors, his lieutenants, so to speak, on earth, said: Whoever hears you hears me, and whoever despises you despises me. To the performance of honour belongs properly, as we have already said, the overvention, however it is the offitio of the father of the family, and with the example, and with the admonitions imprint in the puerile breast, and however more highly in the mature age, to plant this propensity of will to help the pastors, and ecclesiastical superiors, and also the religious men who for the love of God have made themselves poor, and have shut themselves up in the cloisters of the holy religions, who preach the Gospel to us, and who spiritually feed us; It is no great thing, says St. Paul, if one gathers fleshly fruit from those from whom spiritual things are sown; and in the same place, which is in the first epistle to the Corinthians, he goes on to say very beautiful things in this regard, showing by the example of the soldier, the farmer, and the shepherd, the one who plants the vine, how rightly, out of a debt of justice, spiritual fathers and shepherds must be sustained and maintained in temporal necessity. And so they commit a great sin who take away from the Churches, and in a thousand ways diminish or delay the payment of tithes, and fees, and other rights due by them to the Churches, where they ought to give their due promptly. Men do not understand how mercantile it is to earn money, and how fruitful is the industry and sure art of the field, to offer with a happy heart to God and to his ministers, the tithes and the first fruits of one's own sustenance; Solomon understood it well, who said in the proverbs, "Honour God with your substance, and with the first fruits of all your fruits and crops; then your granaries will be full of abundance, and your vats and presses will overflow with wine. But we are so

far from this, and from the imitation of our ancestors, and our elders, who have founded so many noble Churches and Monasteries with their offerings, that one sees more quickly in this calamitous century of ours, a common thirst, and greed to take away from the Churches, which how much it displeases God and of how many evils it is the cause, and in the private, and in the public, it does not concern me now to discuss at length; It is enough for me to remind our good father, that after having persuaded himself, he must persuade his son effectively, that everything that is unduly withheld, or usurped from the Church is hellfire, which consumes the other faculties, and what is more important, destroys souls.

Chapter 72

HOW GRAVE IS THE SIN OF MELEDICENCE AGAINST SUPERIORS, ESPECIALLY ECCLESIASTICAL ONES.

But a grave sin and above all one opposed to this precept of honour, is committed against superiors, and in particular against the Ecclesiastics with meledicence, and detraction, and murmuring, of which if well elsewhere we will have to discuss in general, I cannot however contain myself, not to make some complaint, now that we speak of the honor due to our superiors, especially Ecclesiastics, for this being a sin, where many easily overflow, with great offense to God, who in the ancient law left us with an express prohibition saying *Diis non detrahes, et principi populi tui non maledices*, that is, Do not detract from the Gods, and do not curse the prince of your people; and by the Gods are meant the priests, because of the excellence of their rank and office, so that it is shown how much we must be subject to them, and obedient, and not want to arrogate to ourselves the judgment, and the union of their actions, because it is not the offense of the sheep to judge, but to follow the shepherd. Therefore, let the son never hear from the mouth of his father anything that would give him scandal toward the priests; rather, sooner on the contrary, let him hear things that would invite him to veneration and respect, so that he may never be among those who take pleasure in speaking ill of religious persons, and spiritual fathers, imitating the terrible Cam son of Noah, who with laughter, and mockery, revealed to his brothers that his old father lay Jewish, and naked, but imitating more quickly the other two sons blessed by their father, who with their own clothes without even looking at him covered him. And this is said, even if sometimes it happened that the religious was less

than good. And in this matter it is most worthy of remembrance and imitation that saying of the most Christian emperor Constantine the Great, after whom, accusing some bishops of various sins among themselves through human passions, he rejected not only the judgment, He said to them, among other things, these words: "If I saw a priest fall because of superficial weakness into danger of the flesh, I would cover him with my purple cloak so that no one would see him.

Chapter 73

OF THE HONOR DUE TO THE TEMPORAL SUPERIORS.

Now all that we have said so far about the honour and reverence due to the spiritual fathers and ecclesiastical superiors, and how one must give them obedience and help, and not judge or murmur about them, and if anything else in this way appears, I say everything is to be understood in proportion to the magistrates, princes and temporal superiors, towards whom we must be obedient and ready to obey, all the holy writings are full of it. St. Paul writing to Titus said thus: *Admone illos principibus, et potestatibus subditos esse, dicto obedire etc.* that is, admonish the faithful who are under your care, that they be subject and obedient to the princes, and to the powers. And in the Epistle to the Romans he discusses this at length, demonstrating that the superiority, and preeminence of the magistrates, and of the princes, and the authority they have over the peoples, is from God, so that whoever resists them, resists the divine disposition, and several times he calls them ministers of God, and commands that tributes, and taxes be paid to them promptly, and all due honor, and fear. And it is to be noted that in those times the Christian people were under the empire of unbelieving princes, and nevertheless our saintly teachers, the Apostles, persuaded so effectively that the faithful should remain under their obedience, with every subject, and it is no wonder, since this is what they had learned from Christ our Lord, when he said, render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's, how much more, therefore, should all honour and obedience be rendered to the Christian princes? This is a point of great importance for the good, and for the public tranquillity, and therefore the good father must use

every solicitude, and industry, to form the young man's mind in this part too, so that he recognises in the prince something divine, and sacrosanct, so that on certain solemnities, when the prince shows himself to the people in greater majesty, the father may bring his son to see him, showing him with a happy face, as a father, and benefactor, telling him then, as he will be able, how much obligation he has to the one who administers justice, preserving to each his own, and defending us from insults, and from violence, procuring peace, and abundance, and in sum every good of this common and civil life, and civil life, therefore it is right that in recompense for so many labors, obedience is rendered to him, and every Citizen is so disposed, that after God he has nothing more dear nor more venerable, than the life, and the authority of the Prince; and how readily the limbs are offered to every danger, for the preservation of the head, so much so, that every particular citizen should do neither more nor less, for the Prince, persuading himself that without the health of the head, the limbs cannot be saved. And because a good prince is a singular gift of God, just as God sometimes allows sour princes because of the sins of the people, so the Holy Church has taught us to pray for them, so that they may rule the people of God with justice and peace, wherefore Saint Paul writing to Timothy admonishes him that prayers be made for the Kings, and for all those who are placed in highness, and Lordship, so that, says the Apostle, we may lead a quiet and tranquil life in every way of piety, and holiness. It will be a good and laudable institute for the father of a family to teach his children to render to their superiors this truly Christian form of honour, that is, to pray to God for their life and health, and for the good state and happy government of the public, so that, except for the helmsman, the ship may be brought prosperously to port.

Chapter 74

OF HONOR TO THE MASTERS, AND THE OLD MEN.

From what has been said above one gathers enough, how children must be taught to revere their teachers, who have the place of fathers, and the old as well, and truly, out of Christian charity and for the benefit of the country, every citizen of mature age and more so the old ones to whom the white beard and senile gravity gives authority, they should, I say, esteem all the children and young people for their children, and always in case of serious need, and sweetly admonish them, and take them away from the youthful indiscretions, which are often seen in the streets, and public places by young people who are not very well behaved, so that the correction can be more fruitful and effective, it is very necessary to get used from childhood through good education, to show reverence to the old people not otherwise than if they were fathers, This custom is said to have been very much observed by the Lacedaemonians, a republic already very famous, and full of good institutes, and of great esteem, and power among the Greeks, and an example is recounted in this regard that for having been considered worthy of memory by ancient writers, perhaps it will not be without fruit to refer to it in this place. In Athens, the principal city of Greece, a solemn feast and spectacle was celebrated, to which a great multitude of citizens and foreigners were gathered. It happened that an old man was looking for a place to sit as the others had, but because of the great crowd he could not find it, so many people laughed, and mocked him, and passing through the theater he arrived in a part where some young Lacedaemonese were sitting, who saw the old man, not otherwise than if a father or a superior had seen them, immediately stood up, and

courteously invited the cow, they received him in their midst to sit down, which thing warned by the people, raised a great shout applauding, and approving that act of good manners. And so much for this digression.

Chapter 75

OF HONOR, AND GOOD MANNERS TOWARDS EQUALS AND INFERIORS.

Now if the present discourse is only about the honour that is due to the father and to some other persons, who however are in some way included under the name of father, nevertheless because to the child, because of the tenderness of age, each in a certain way is father, and superior, and to continue the consequence of the matter, we will remind our father of the family in this place of some things of that honour, and of those terms of courtesy, and of urbanity, that should be used with everyone in common conversation. These consist of words and reverent gestures of the body, by which we show the esteem in which we hold a person. Therefore, our good father will not neglect in any way to accustom the young child to this good manners, so that he may be called promptly, do reverence, not be coy and uncouth in the presence of others, but modest and ashamed, not clamor with his body, nor with his hands at his mouth, or in any other way make any indecent gesture, but remain composed and attentive while others speak to him, and in reply be accustomed to leave the naked yes, and the no, which is more common for cherubs as it is shorter and more expedient, saying in that place according to the custom of our times, Mister yes, and Mister no, and Sir yes, and Sir no, likewise in giving and receiving things let him make a sign of reverence, and as he grows older let him be ready to greet, to ascend, to yield the first places, always using a certain modesty, which is a great ornament of young people. And because at times very serious inconveniences arise from slight words, the father is accustomed to answer modestly, especially in denying something, and

contradicting what others say; So it is not necessary to say, as many do, "You do not understand, you are deceived, it is not true," and other similar ways of speaking, which have the appearance of a certain contempt, or at least of not having much esteem for the person with whom we reason, which is a serious error in civil conversation, and when it is necessary to contradict, it must be done with a certain temperament, so that others may realize, that if they show him respect, as for example by saying, forgive me I will speak my mind, I could be mistaken, but it seems to me that the thing is like this, always saving the truth, saving your gratitude, and in other such forms of saying, and more quickly aggravating himself than his companion; it does no harm to say of oneself, I did not know how to say, I was not warned to remind you of such and such; but on the contrary it can offend to say, you did not hear me, you did not remember to do this and that. If my memory serves me well, the booklet called Galateo speaks of such courtesy and modesty of speech, as well as of many other things that are useful to know, and it is expedient that our educator observes them, so that his child may be in all respects well constituted, for if the aim of this treatise of ours is to treat primarily of education as well as of the education of the child, then I would like to ask you to read it, is to treat principally of education as Christian, nevertheless it does not exclude moral decency, on the contrary it is desired, and it is persuaded, as more than once has been said, and therefore where in this I would be less diligent, I refer to those who write about it more copiously. In conclusion, therefore, I say that the vulgar proverb is very true, that the honour given to others in word or deed costs little, and is worth a great deal, and the more it is worth, the greater the honourer, and certainly it is something worthy of consideration, that with such an easy price as a loving greeting, a happy face, a pleasant welcome, a call by name, and similar things, one buys such a precious commodity, as

is the heart, and the goodwill of men, and therefore our father should take care to cultivate the tender soul of his son, so that in him are not born thorns of rusticity, and pride, but flowers of the most suavest humanity, and pleasantness.

Chapter 76

OF THE FIFTH PRECEPT, NON OCCIDERE.

And it is impossible to think of it, that a man, by his very gentle nature, should become so proud and bestial that he should kill another man like himself, and run, as the Psalmist says, quickly to shed the blood of his brother, because although we are separated by kinship or by birth, we are all, however, spouses of the same nature, and children of the same heavenly father, in whose house and whose abundant resources we all live; and after this short pilgrimage we all expect from him the same heredity in heaven, of which even those who are different from us in faith and religion are, as reasonable men, and of free will capable, and can when they do not fail to accept the faith, and receive Holy Baptism to be participants. And truly I cannot persuade myself that a man reaches such an extreme that, almost deprived of his humanity, he becomes in a certain way a wild animal, if not after a long chain of sins and after a very bad previous disposition, caused in great part by a defect of good education. And therefore our good father of the family should watch over his son and try to uproot all the evil seeds, which growing in the course of time can produce such bitter fruits, and on the other hand try to introduce those virtues and opinions, which can keep him far from such abominations, as we shall now say in more detail. Et in somma habbia il padre sempre avanti a gli occhi questo pensiero, che egli deve allevar alla patria, et a tutto 'l consortio del genere humano, un'huomo man tame, sociabile, et benefico. et non una fiera cruele, sanguigna, et micidiale.

Chapter 77

HOW GREATLY IT DISPLEASES GOD TO HOMICIDE.

The supreme God, after having created Heaven, and Earth, and all these beautiful creatures that we see, also created man in his own image and likeness, and placed him in this great and rich hotel as King and Lord of the Earth and of the animals; Therefore he who kills man, greatly offends God, because he spoils one of the most beautiful and noblest works that he has done, and everyone knows how much an artist dislikes the destruction of his work, and all the more when it is of greater excellence and perfection, because it is seen that the homicide is violent against God as far as it is possible, since it cruelly destroys his image, and just as the insults made to a royal statue, are meant to be made against the person of the King himself, so for the homicide one mainly offends the divine majesty. Add that the homicide spoils, and corrupts, as far as it is in itself all creatures, taking away the man, for whose conservation, and maintenance they have been created. Moreover, in the same way, he is the destroyer of all mankind, and of every company and fellowship of men, not failing for him to reduce this world to the habitation of beasts, for which reason God has always given manifest signs of how much this terrible sin displeases him, so that speaking with Caimo after the murder and fratricide committed, he said to him in this sentence: Ah wretch, what have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to me from the earth, so cursed will you be above the earth, which has opened its mouth and drunk your brother's blood, shed by your hands. And although Caius was the first shedder of human blood, he was not the first murderer, but the devil, of whom the Savior says in the Gospel, he was a murderer from the beginning, either

because in the earthly paradise he killed man through sin, both in soul and body, causing him to fall into the necessity of dying, or because, as some Doctors contemplate in great detail, having heard of the incarnation of the Word and of its glory, he was moved by pride and envy and wished to kill it, and so Christ our Lord said to the Pharisees in the same place, who were already planning to kill it; You are children of the devil, and seek to fulfill the desires of your father. This sin is properly called diabolical, and as we began to say, it displeases God so much that in the ancient law he commanded that homicide done out of hatred and vengeance be severely punished, hence the famous sentence, he will render the offender soul for soul, that is life for life, tooth for tooth, eye for eye, and what follows. And so that those uncouth people might better understand how much God abhorred homicide, he commanded them that if any of the animals killed a man, he would kill him for no reason; and after the Flood, having given men the custom of eating the flesh of animals, he ordered them to abstain from their own blood, and this order was renewed under Moisé, so that the people, still children, might be more distant from the shedding of human blood under these veils.

Chapter 78

OF RESTRAINING THE IMPETUS OF WRATH.

Therefore, our good father, from the things said above, will take the matter, according to the child's ability, to explain to him this precept of the law, You will not hide it, so that he will be greatly dismayed, and as in a horror of homicide, and he will consider a deadly man almost a wild beast, enemy of men, and demonstrates to the child that the magistrates, using their legitimate power, chastise criminals with the last punishment, and are not guilty, nor transgressors of the precept of God with such an occurrence, on the contrary they execute the divine will, providing for the life, and health of many with the death, and chastisement of a few. But in addition to the reasons which have been given and which could be given, it must be considered that the effect of such a grave excess, such as insulting first with words, then with deeds, striking, wounding, and killing, has its origin in immoderate anger and other passions of the soul, For this reason it is necessary to put the brake of reason and the yoke of the fear of God on these untamed horses at an early stage; the Christian law, a loving and most perfect law, wanting to keep the Christian far from the most serious sins, forbids the remote causes, and for fear of a great fire promptly extinguishes as far as possible the sparks of our affections. Therefore our Savior, speaking in Saint Matthew about this precept, of which we are speaking, said these words:

You have heard that your ancients were told not to kill, and whoever kills will be guilty of judgment. But I say to you, that each one who is angry with his brother will be guilty of judgments, and whoever says to his brother, "racha", will be

guilty of the Council, and whoever says to him, “pazzo”, will be guilty of the fire of hell. From this doctrine one understands that the Christian must beware not only of homicide, which is the extreme evil of this kind, but also of anger, hatred, insulting words, inner desire, and everything that in some way is a way, and a disposition to the death of his brother. For this reason, as has been said, while the child does not yet understand the gravity of evil, the good farmer must smooth out the roots of evil, and restrain anger, and the other affections that are in our hearts, not unlike so many beasts. Children are by nature wrathful, and having different appetites, and not achieving them, and not being able to defend themselves because of the weakness of age from many things that displease them, they become inflamed with anger and indignation, and having no other way, they avenge themselves with weeping; For this reason those who entice children by inviting them to speak insults, and to beat up those who have offended them, do not do very wisely, giving bait to anger, and the natural appetite for revenge, rather it is better to do the opposite, and to train them to bear some small insults patiently and to reconcile easily, which from that tender and simple age is easily obtained. And because children are eager, and they ask for many things, which some, not to hear them cry, immediately grant them, so that they are more ready to ask for others because of the instability of childhood, hence it happens that little by little, they become such friends of their own will, that if anything is denied to them, they become indignant and angry; for this reason it is expedient to break the children in their wills, and not to allow them to become obstinate, and stubborn, but that they be ready, and agile to obedience, and turn to every direction, without feeling hardness, nor passion, not differently from well tamed chickens, which are obedient, and light at every small movement of the Knight’s hand. And this care and diligence must be used more with the sons of gentlemen and great

men, who have more things around them that nourish the spirit of pride in them, such as delicate dress, many domestic comforts, many servants, many caresses and flattery, and the greater facility of having what they want, that if from the beginning they are childish desires, they grow with the years, and come to such a point, that if they are not obeyed at a sign, they burst out in great anger, and say rude words, and are intolerable to the family, and to the vassals, and no service pleases them. And so they begin to be obedient, and to be content with what is given them, and to ask for things not with authority, but with modesty, and fear, and to render them willingly when their father and mother ask for them, and to suffer when they are not always pleased. As the child's capacity grows, show him with reasons the ugliness of immoderate anger, which is called by the sages "furor brevis" (short fury), because truly a man taken by vehement anger, does not use reason, but is like a raging madman, so that his face is full of a bloody redness, his eyes sparkle like flames, his mouth foams, he cannot find his place, and his body moves in deformed ways, and he cries and says and does things of which, since that ardour remains, he has great cause to repent. Wrath is a natural passion, and therefore useful, and at times even necessary to operate with a certain vigour and vivacity in many virtuous actions, and to know how to take up and punish the failures of subjects when necessary, and to rise up against vices, so that philosophers have called wrath the whetstone of virtue, which sharpens and sharpens virtue, not differently from the whetstone of a knife; So it is not said that it trains the child to be stupid and foolish, but to know how to temper the impetus of anger, so that it may be the servant, and minister, and not the mistress of reason, otherwise it is no more intolerable than an angry man, and everyone flees from talking and conversing with him, and so the Sage exhorts us in his proverbs saying: Do not be a friend of a wrathful man, and do not practice with a furious

man, adding that it is not without danger that that evil habit of getting angry will be set in motion, so that one then incurs a thousand scandals, and very serious disorders, besides that it is very difficult to remain a friend of such a man who at every slight encounter breaks down, and bursts into indignation.

Chapter 79

HOW BENEFICIAL AND GRATEFUL MEEKNESS IS.

But on the contrary the father shows his son how beautiful, how grateful to God and to men is the virtue of meekness; A pleasant and meek man attracts the hearts of all to love him, and all the more so if this virtue is in a noble man, who is like a gem in gold, and shines all the more, since it is no great marvel that the poor man is meek, in whom necessity may seem more quickly than election, but if the rich man, if the rich man, the gentle man and the Lord is pleasant, it is well seen that it is a mere virtue, and how much, according to the opinion of many, it is less due, the more it is esteemed, and appreciated, although truly to no one is this virtue more appropriate than to the noble, and great, and generous of heart, but certainly to no one does it bring greater fruits. It is the sentence of our Saviour, Blessed are the meek and gentle, for they shall possess the earth, which has various intelligences, but it also receives this one, that truly these men of gentle nature, especially if there is accompanied by valor, are reconciled with the goodwill of others, so that they are like masters of peoples and cities. We read of Moise, who was most meek above all the men of the earth, and likewise the meekness of David, is recorded in the sacred scriptures, and both of them of a lowly state, were exalted both by God, and by men to great power, yet they lacked it, when it was necessary to exercise wrath, or sooner, holy zeal against sinful men, for the glory of God, this is said, so that no one may believe that the meek man does not know, and cannot in place, and time, in the rule of right reason, take out of his vagina the knife of wrath; On the contrary a great sage of the world says that the truly strong man is fervent and good in battle, but pleasant elsewhere;

and on the contrary we see many who falsely claim to be brave, who in common conversation and in civil deliberations are terrible, and in times of trouble are cowardly and vile. They are also very profitable in the Republic, the meek men, because in the councils, in the judiciary, in the government, and in every deliberation, they are like the triac, and the temperament of the broken, choleric, and hasty men, of whom there are always some in the congregations, and because of their roughness, and imperious nature, they are so ungrateful, that sometimes good opinions are rejected, just because they are proposed by them, besides that they excite discord and quarrels, which the tame man with his dexterity calms down, and composes, so well said Solomon; *Vir iracundus provocat rixas, qui patiens est, mitigat suscitatas*, that is, the angry and choleric man stirs up fights, and the patient and meek man mitigates and restrains them. Therefore the paternal diligence will be usefully tested in this matter, to bring up the son in a pleasant and meek manner, and that he may at times, as is necessary in human commerce, be able to bear, and dissimulate the impertinence and unruliness of someone, otherwise a man who is too sensitive and easy to anger will very often meet with great anxiety; and however the Saviour said, learn from me, who am meek and humble of heart and you will find rest and peace in your hearts.

Chapter 80

OF FORGIVING INSULTS, AND OF THE FALSE RULES CALLED OF HONOR.

The perfection of the Christian law, as has been said elsewhere, consists in charity, and in the love of God, and of one's neighbor, and he who loves has fulfilled the law, for so grave a sin is the hatred one bears towards one's neighbor and brother, and this obstinate hardness of not wanting to forgive, nor to forgive the insult received. And truly one of the highest and most excellent actions of the Christian profession is to forgive those who have offended you, and to love, for the love of God, one's enemies, so that this virtue is a divine thing, and raises us above the human condition, and makes us similar to God, as our Saviour said in Saint Matthew, where he exhorts us at length and with great efficacy to ascend by his grace to the height of this mountain, which our corrupt nature abhors so much, I mean to the delight of our enemies. This very high doctrine sealed the most innocent lamb on the cross, while he was more pierced by the most bitter pains, asking forgiveness from the eternal father for his crucifiers, and offering for their salvation that same immaculate blood, that they with supreme cruelty, and choiceness shed. But the ancient and irreconcilable devil, an enemy of God and of man, envious that man should acquire such a noble crown as to be similar to God, or rather desirous of making him similar to himself, that what he is, is all pride, anger, hatred, and vengeance, has sown in the good seed of the Gospel his pestiferous zealotry, and he has introduced into the world some laws falsely called of honor, and with them he has so intoxicated the minds of many, that he has led them miserably like beasts to the slaughter to offer spontaneously to the devil

with the bloody death of the bodies the eternal perdition of their own souls. Now woe to those fathers who are the devil's ministers and satellites in procuring the damnation of their children, and who, as they are painfully removed from their swaddling clothes, instead of teaching them the fear of God and Christian meekness, teach them these detestable laws. And they think only to leave them for their inheritance the implacable hatred, that they have brought to some whom they call their enemies; to this end they impose on them bizarre names or nicknames, and they keep in their houses for a long time such things, that keep alive the memory of the ancient and already buried offences, and with every way they instigate the simple and miserable children like dogs destined to hunt wolves, and similar beasts, so that they may be greedy, and hungry for human flesh and blood. Our good father and Christian educator will not do the same, but he will remove from the child's eyes and ears every incitement of hatred and vengeance, and he will never say in the presence of his son what some, in the opinion of honorable knights, inconsiderately and without being harassed by some, say for a certain vain bravery, I will never let a hair on my head be twisted, if anyone should say or do anything to me, I would pay him back, such a one is not to resent such an insult, if he had done it to me I would not let him live, I would cut out his heart, such another has done very well to avenge himself, so it must be done. These and similar words are said all day long by some, who also give the impression of being good Christians, and for their own pleasure, while sitting at table, or walking through their rooms, they often commit not small sins, proposing many times that they do not want to obey the law of God, but that of the Devil. And when the children hear these propositions, as the scab of sin sticks easily, they remain impressed in their minds, and remember it after many years, and say, so I heard my father say; but our father will not say, nor will he

allow his son to convert where others say such doctrine, but with deeds, and with words he will teach him the opposite.

Chapter 81

SOME REASONS, ABOUT PERSUADING THE REMISSION OF INSULTS.

And for this reason, in addition to what has been said above, that forgiving and loving our offenders makes us like God, so that Jesus Christ also said, Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be the children of God, let the father show his child, already capable of reason, that true Christian nobility admits of no law contrary to the law of God, and let the world say and believe what it will, that true and false honor is not proved by its own comparison, but by that of God. The strongest martyrs were reputed by the world as dishonoured, when, in order not to offend the supreme King of heaven, they left the honours and the magistrates of the Kings of the earth, and voluntarily loosed their military belts, sign of nobility and chivalry, and nevertheless in that act, and in suffering the same death for God, they were no less honoured than strong and valiant. True honor is the reward of true virtue, true virtue never consists in the opinion of others, nor in what others do or say, nor even in viciousness, otherwise it would follow that one could be virtuous or vicious for the deeds of another, but it is not so, indeed each one is virtuous for his own deeds, done deliberately for love of honor and for God, and so on the contrary. And certainly it would be not only hard, but ridiculous, that after having lived virtuously for thirty or forty years, the misdeed of another should take away his honour; even the philosophers have understood that it is better to suffer than to do wrong, because in doing wrong is injustice, and with injustice sin, and with sin dishonour, and there is nothing more vile, nor more dishonoured than sin. The same philosophers, by the light of reason alone, have understood that it is a matter of a

generous spirit to despise insults, and they have attributed it to the property of the magnanimous, and they have also said that there is no greater victory than to conquer the passion of anger and to overcome oneself; indeed reason and experience show that vile women and timid souls are more vindictive. Therefore let the good father persuade the noble and generous young man to act virtuously, and if someone, out of envy or malice, detracts from his reputation, let him renounce it, because the works themselves answer, and convince him as a liar and malignant, but if by chance what is opposed to him is true, he will have no reason to be angry against him, but against his own sin, and he will wisely convert the adversary's melicitation into a friendly warning; and this is one of the utilities that one derives from enemies, as some gentle writers have shown, that sometimes an enemy is more useful than a friend, because through his bad will he has a sharp eye, and penetrates and discovers our faults, and gives us the opportunity to amend them. The father also reminds his son that it is a sign of a noble spirit not to render great insults for small insults, but on the contrary to render great recompense for small services, and to forget and mock insults, just as we read that an ancient non-Christian king, laughing at those who spoke ill of him, was accustomed to say: It is a thing for a king to hear evil after having done good, but without doubt it is a thing for a perfect Christian to do good, and to suffer evil in this life. The father adds by saying, that a grave insult is done to the country, when he wants to be the judge of the insults received by others, and in contempt of the laws, and of public authority, takes in his hand the rod and the power to punish the guilty, over whom he has no jurisdiction, with great perturbation of the whole government, besides that no one is a just judge of his own cause, because the affection, and the passion do not allow the right estimation of the offence, but always seems greater, so that one sees by experience, the great excess of a heart impassioned by

anger, and disdain, that for a little word, for a twisted look, for a gust of air, wants the blood, and the death not of one, but of many, even innocent, and the extermination of an entire family.

Chapter 82

CHRISTIAN REASONS MORE IN PARTICULAR ABOUT THE SAME MATTER.

These and many other reasons, which for the sake of brevity we shall omit, the natural light alone teaches us, and uncovers from us the false doctrine of the world clothed in the pitiful name of honour. But in the Christian mind Christian reasons founded on the principles of humility, and regulated by the eternal rules of true honor, must have greater strength and effectiveness. And this above all the good father must inculcate in the soul of his son. And before this is the will of God, who has promised us, that if for his sake we forgive our enemies and forgive our offenses, he will take our cause into his hands. Wherefore St. Paul exhorted the Romans in this form, Do not avenge yourselves, dearly beloved, but temper and remit your wrath, for God has said, Leave vengeance to me, and I will be the rewarder; in which place St. Paul says many other things not only about forgiving, but about doing good to the enemy, and he concludes by saying: Do not let yourself be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good, and for certain this is a noble victory and high vengeance, to overcome the malice of others with your own goodness. Let the good Father also say that in the Holy Scriptures God's chosen ones are likened to the sheep, a most tame and patient animal, to which nature has given no weapons to defend itself other than to offend, no horn, no tooth, no nail, and finally, as other unarmed animals have, not even the speed of their course, but the whole defence of the sheep is in the providence of the shepherd; such is the Christian, he knows no harm to anyone, such was the good David, whose psalms are full of this confidence in God, calling him with great

affection his defender, protector, his helper, refuge, and tower of fortitude against all his enemies. Let the Father add that we must consider the grave offences, which we commit at all hours against the supreme God, Father, Lord, and our perpetual benefactor, and nevertheless the long-suffering and benign God dissimulates with us, and waits for us to do penance, and is the first to invite us to reconciliation, and when from afar we rise to return to him, he runs to meet us with the arms of his mercy open. And how then will the worm of the earth dare to deny his brother and his guardian the remission of one hundred denarii, that is, a slight offense, having God forgiven him the debt of ten thousand talents? As in that noble Gospel parable our Savior expounds to us; therefore, whoever wishes to find forgiveness from God, let him forgive his neighbor, this is the law that the supreme judge has proposed to us, and as we do to our neighbor, so shall it be done to us. Let the good father see to it that his son understands and remains convinced that there is nothing more dishonorable than sin, nor more honorable than doing the will of God, and that true honor does not depend on the judgment of the world, which is blind and a liar, but on the judgment of God, who in his time will honor his servants so highly, that the worldly men will be astonished, when, having opened their eyes through punishment, which are now closed by guilt, and having repented of the false judgments made by them, they will say of the deeds of the righteous those words which we read in the Holy Scriptures: We foolish and senseless ones thought their life madness, and their end dishonoured and vile, behold how they are numbered among the sons of God, and their portion is with the saints.

And because the anger, and the hatred that is kindled in us against our brother arises from the opinion that he has done us, or can do us, some harm, the good father carefully demonstrates that no one can be truly offended, if not by

himself, for the true and most serious offense is that which touches the soul, that is, sin, which deprives it of the life of grace, which makes it a slave of the devil, and obliges it to eternal punishment, and it is not a creature to be offended, and most serious offense is that which touches the soul, that is sin, which deprives it of the life of grace, which makes it a slave of the devil, and obliges it to eternal punishment, and there is no creature that can bring us harm to the soul, except our own will. And this is that famous paradox, which many holy fathers, but especially the glorious St. John Chrysostom treated with great eloquence, *Nemo laeditur nisi a se ipso*, that is, no one is offended except by himself. Moreover, the good Christian knows that no small inconvenience can happen to him without God's permission, so that he does not become angry with his neighbor, but humiliates himself before God, who sometimes awakens us from the sleep of sin, sometimes preserves us in virtue, and sometimes crowns us with a greater crown, *hora* for other effects to his glory, and our utility, allows that we are afflicted, and offended, but if we will not offend ourselves with impatience, and with anger, and we will take together with Job everything from the hand of God, the small losses of this world will bring us the great gains of Heaven. With these and other similar Christian reasons let the good father persuade his son to forgive his insults willingly, and not to wound himself with a mortal wound in his soul, while he holds his hatred against his brother, who has to hope, desire and pray that he may be consort with him in divine glory. It could not be sufficiently expressed how great an evil it is to kill a man, who, overcome by an unthinkable violent death, has no room for penitence, and for the vain interest of money, for a childish indignity, and for nothing is deprived by his brother's hand of the life of the body, and that of the soul together, with irreparable loss, and with such a weight of damage, that neither all the gold, nor all the honours of the world, nor the temporal life of all men can match him.

Chapter 83

THAT ONE MUST TAKE CARE OF HONOR, AND
GOODESTIMATION.

Do not believe that because of what has been said above, I mean that the Christian gentleman does not take into account the honour and the good esteem of his citizens, for I remember well what Solomon says in his proverbs, Better is a good name than much wealth, and he has no doubt that having reputation and credit in common is a means of doing many good and useful things for the benefit of the country, so that generally speaking one must not be contemptuous of gratitude, and good opinion of men. But the Christian, who with the prudence of the Spirit separates the precious from the vile, must be convinced that true honour is preserved and maintained by the same ways and manners by which it is acquired, that is, by virtuous works and deeds, and that no work can be truly virtuous, Nor can any work be truly virtuous, nor honored that is contrary to the law of God, just as, on the other hand, true honor is never offended by the observance of the law of God, if the world with false judgments should judge otherwise, so let the Christian wait to work according to virtue, and not fear that a fact, or a dishonorable saying, of whoever it may be, may take away his honor; and because we are not speaking now of the highest perfection, which for the love of heaven, despises all earthly things, but we are speaking of the common, and civil life, therefore it is not taken away, nor is it taken back that the Christian retains his rank, and his dignity, and does not make himself acceptable to men, and does not expose himself to insults through lack of prudence, but maintains his gravity, and is such in works, in words, in keeping, and in dealing that without vanity, and swelling of pride he makes

himself worthy of being respected. Likewise, one can and must conserve one's own property, and desire its right, but everything is to be done in the ordinary and lawful way, according to the rules of divine and human justice, without offending God, and without hating one's brother. And this is what is remembered, that the good father persuades his son not to burst into anger at every little word, that he does not make a mountain out of a small stone, which sometimes he crosses between his feet, that he does not see many things, and does not hear them, and dissimulates them, and generously scorns them, continuing to work virtuously, because in the end the good will judge incorrectly, and the time itself, is father as it is said of the truth. Let him make himself easy to forgive, and let him make more of a profession of this, than of something too sensible and terrible. Similarly, in the matter of giving and having, where serious disputes often arise, he should not always be willing to make amends as much as he could, but should be content at times to suffer some slight damage for the preservation of peace and friendship. It is true that one should value one's possessions, but not to such an extent as the world does; on the contrary, it is often a great gain to let a few coins fall from one's hands, and to withhold one's neighbor's love; as a wise man said, it is an expedient to withdraw a little, and to yield one's reasons for living in peace. In short, let the father show his son that if one must esteem the honour of men who deceive themselves, one must esteem even more the honour of God who never deceives himself, nor by the opinion of men must one in any way transgress, or not fulfil the law of God, which, if in order to observe it, the world either reprimands or mocks us, then one must remember what Saint Paul says: I take very little account of being judged by you, or by human prudence, and in another place; if I were pleasing to men, I would not be a servant of Christ.

Chapter 84

OF OVER SUSPICION.

I don't know if perhaps I have gone too far in the matter of this fifth precept, Non occidere (Don't kill), but whoever will consider the great evils, that are born of anger and of the shedding of human blood, and of this idol of honour so venerated by men, and will see before his eyes the ruins of houses, and of cities, and sometimes of provinces because of the bloody sects, and divisions and parts, of which the old histories are full, to say nothing of our times, one will easily come to believe, that to deal usefully with this part, a few words were not enough, so that by chance he will judge this length to be less long, to which to put an end now I will add this only, that being the purpose of good education so in this particular one, as in many others, to remedy future evils from afar, and consequently not having to leave any diligence behind, it will be useful, as it seems to me, to avoid anger, hatred and the bitter fruits that such plants produce, to ensure at an early stage, that the child does not become too suspicious, and this is said so studiously, or by inadvertence the father does not approach it himself, or by example, or by persuasion, because ordinarily this defect is very far from the young, just as it is very proper to the old, who partly because of the cooling of the blood, partly because of the long experience of the offenses, and of the deceptions received are suspicious beyond measure. There are some fathers who seem to give very useful reminders to their children while they say, see son, don't believe in anyone, don't trust anyone, let yourself be awakened, and want to know everything, and similar things, which prepare the children for a restless and painful life. Whoever wants to know everything that is said about him, whoever delights in

hearing detractors, and reporters will have oftentimes matter of anger against his neighbors, and well often without foundation of truth, for there is no lack of men who curse and slander, who partly because of a certain malignity, that seems to feel no other pleasure than to do evil, partly for various purposes, and interests, go about sowing scandal, and dissension, and where they find credence, all day long they come before you with lies, and little stories, he who has said, and the other one has done, and they show themselves zealous of our honour, and exaggerate so much the little things, that the wrathful, and bold ones rush to avenge themselves in fact, or at least to speak altered and resentful words, which, once out of their mouths, are irrevocable, and come to the knowledge of the offended, and true enmities are generated, and it is not enough to say, I had bad relations, I deceived myself. But if someone else is of a timid and suspicious nature, and has ears which are easy to slander, he conceives hatred within himself, and nourishes it with the fomentation sometimes of anger, sometimes of fear, so that to secure himself he resolves to make dangerous and terrible deliberations against the life of his neighbor. Therefore, it is appropriate now to remove the root of evil, and to accustom the child not to be too suspicious, nor too curious to know everything that is said about him, and not to listen willingly to this sort of men, of whom David says in the Psalm: *Detrahentem secreto proximo suo hunc persequeris*, that is, I persecuted him who secretly detracted from his neighbor. Finally, persuade your son to live virtuously and in accordance with God's law, and after this to generously despise others who speak ill of him, or try to slander him, or seek to bring him down, and when one of these slanderers and complainers happens to him, if he shows little regard for his gossip, he will throw water on the fire, and prudently extinguish the sparks of great fires. Now it is not said ill of princes, and of kings, and of most holy men, and even in Heaven, the boldness of men

puts their mouths; it will not seem to us therefore great wonder, that evil is also said of us, we are all defective, and without doubt there is in us matter, that can give others a just occasion to reproach us, and if we do not seem to be guilty in those things that others accuse us of, it is enough that we have others and by chance greater. In short, the good father accustoms his son not to be hasty in judging, nor to believe anything lightly, worrying, and sometimes losing his true friends and getting himself into a thousand tangles through vain suspicions; it is not denied, however, that the father of the family must keep his eye open, over his house, and prudently suspect those evils that commonly occur, not to judge inconsiderately and define that one is sad, but to close the ways, and the ease of being able to be; and it is said vulgarly, but wisely, that the father of a family must not esteem anyone as a thief, but he must watch over, and guard his goods, and much more his children, and to say it in one word, it is not warning, and caution that is condemned, but too much credulity, and excessive suspicion.

Chapter 85

OF THE SIXTH PRECEPT, DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.

After the offense against the person and the life of someone, the most serious offense is that of adultery, which can easily be considered from the sanctity of marriage and from the great union of the two spouses who are already one and the same flesh, so that between them there must be supreme love and observance of faith, as has been discussed at length above, and it is properly adultery to offend the legitimate marriage bed, so that if the married person commits adultery with the unmarried one, he is violator of his own bed, and if the unmarried one, and free from the bond of marriage sins with the one who is maritally obliged, he stains and defiles the alien bed, and in any case, besides the ugliness and deformity that is in the same sin, as an act of incontinence, there is also a great injustice against one's neighbor, because as has been said elsewhere, according to the Apostle's teaching, the husband and wife have no power over their own bodies, but one possesses the body of the other, but exchange it with the other, so that to take it back to its legitimate possessor, and to give it to someone who has no right to it, nor any reason, is something above all unjust, and iniquitous, and doubly God the author of this venerable sacrament, is offended by it, besides the great insult, which is committed against the public, and against the civil society, which by the true, and sincere succession of the legitimate children preserves the families, and the heredity, and the honors, and finally itself. Therefore, all human and divine laws have forbidden and severely punished adultery, and in the Old Testament, by divine law, adulterers were stoned and punished by death, so that it is greatly to be regretted that among Christians in the state of

evangelical perfection, there are those who take upon themselves this most serious sin, which God will punish by means of the eternal and most cruel stonecutters in hell without end. But leaving this aside for the moment, it must be known that under the prohibition of adultery, of which the law principally makes a lie, as full of injustice, and of harm to the common good, every other manner of impurity and carnal sin is also included, of which it is not convenient for us, nor is it necessary to speak distinctly, it is enough that all are forbidden, and not only as to the exterior act and operation, but also as to the interior thought, and desire, which if well it is contained and virtually enclosed in this precept, Do not adulterate, this is understood, neither with the effect of work, nor with affection of heart, as we also understand the precept about homicide, and of the others such, because the law, as St. Paul says, is spiritual and spiritually has to be understood, is spiritual and is to be understood spiritually, if I say well, the ancient law also forbids disordered affection of heart, nevertheless it pleased the great Master, and our Doctor Christ Jesus, to declare it openly, so that no doubt would remain, nor any veil to cover the too coarse Pharisaic ignorance, and therefore he said in Saint Matthew, he who seeing any woman will be inflamed with lust, and with the desire to sin, already by the sole will, and consent, has committed, and consumed in his heart adultery, and fornication, therefore we must be in great fear and guard of the heart, praying continually to God with great humility to give us the gift of chastity, so that we may be worlds from all ugliness of flesh and spirit, and be able to fulfill this precept completely, which so forbids adultery and all lechery, that at the same time commands the observance of chastity and modesty, which is necessarily required not only in those who have chosen the high and sublime virginal state, but in widowers, in those who are married, and in those who have chosen to live free of the yoke of matrimony, and finally it is necessary in every age, and in every state,

since no one who is not chaste and pure can share with the purest and immaculate lamb; therefore it is right that our good father should take pains in this matter, as in something very important for the health of his son, as will now be said more fully by divine grace.

Chapter 86

OF PATERNAL CARE ABOUT THE CHASTITY OF THE SON.

Wrath and lust, are two passions of the sensory appetite, very strong and natural to man, which used well, and according to the rule of reason, and the law of God, are like two useful tools for human operations, as well as on the contrary they are the cause of great disorders, if they are not restrained, but are allowed to flow impetuously in their objectives. Therefore some philosophers have very aptly likened our soul to a chariot drawn by two fierce horses which are the concupiscible and the irascible appetite, and the charioteer, or rather the charioteer is the reason, to which it is appertaining to keep the brake, and to lead by the right path these steeds, that is these appetites, which if well by their nature are like untamed beasts, they are however apt to be disciplined, so that they become obedient to reason, but it takes diligence, and study, and effort, and it is right, since even the true horses are not suitable for the service of man, without the artifice of the good tamer, but the more right it is to put study, and effort into taming the beasts of our soul, the greater the utility and profit.

Therefore our good father of a family should not tire in caring for the education of his children, always having before his eyes how beautiful, how fruitful, how praiseworthy is the work of making a good man for the glory of God, and for the service of the homeland, and of all mankind, and for the health of the same children, that there is not, nor was there ever a painter, nor an architect, nor a craftsman, nor any other craftsman, who did work of such value, and so perfect and excellent; Therefore, having understood in part in the discourse on the previous sin, how he must restrain and correct the anger of the young man, it follows that he

should dispose himself with all his soul to restrain and repress the second element of lust, while the child is still tender, otherwise it will overflow at every age, and the more seriously the more it grows up, in a thousand precipices of abominable sins of gluttony and lust, as we see happen ordinarily, because the vice of the flesh is a great net with which the devil draws infinite souls to eternal perdition. And although no age is safe from carnal urges; Therefore our flesh is always flesh, and while we are still in this valley of tears, if it is not preserved by divine gratitude, and seasoned by the salt of the fear of God, nothing but worms and corruptions will spring forth; nevertheless, this domestic enemy most commonly infests adolescence, and youth, when the amount of blood is greater, and the scourge stronger, and therefore it is necessary to begin at an early hour to protect against the fire that burns so many souls, because the sparks are already in us, and the devil blows and the world invites; and therefore it is necessary that the good education be solicitous in this part, continuing from time to time with opportune remedies, with which, and with divine grace above all, which is always prepared for those who humbly ask for it, our young man will be able to preserve himself as a pure vessel, and as a world of the Lord, prepared for Heaven in honor and sanctification.

Chapter 87

OF THE ERROR OF SOME INDULGING IN YOUTH.

Before I enter into a more detailed discussion of the offence and care of the father, concerning the chastity of his young son, I cannot restrain myself from making a complaint against some, who call themselves wise men, and prudent, and are accustomed to say, that it is not fitting to be so strict, and that it is good to conceal, and allow men in their youth to let off steam a little, and to take their own course, as they use to say; because at the end, weary and sad of certain vain pleasures, like untamed chickens, who have joked and run around for a while in the wide meadows, they then reduce themselves with a more sedate and composed spirit to the affairs, and to the civil and family care, and dedicate themselves totally to serious and virile thoughts; which opinion, if the name of opinion deserves an open error, shows very clearly for itself to have origin from carnal prudence, called in the sacred laws, earthly, animal, diabolic, and enemy of God. One does not enter, nor can one enter through the door of vice into virtue, nor through the acts of one contrary, does one acquire disposition for the other, so it is ridiculous to persuade oneself that loosening the bridle of sensuality, is the way to become chaste, and it is a most false proposition that youth vents its impetus, or rather inflames it more, and the acts repeated are like wood added to the fire, and the proportion that our corrupt and spoiled nature has with carnal lust is so great, that if it is not repressed with great solicitude, it takes on so much vigor and strength that it possesses the whole man, and the fear of God is lost, and the respect of men, so that without any restraint the torrent of pleasure already tasted, of which the sense is greedy, carries reason, so that it no longer does any

work, and men become like beasts; for as the saints say, there is no vice that so obscures the intellect, and submerges it in the mud, and makes it more obtuse and incapable of its own workings, than the vice of dishonesty; so that up to the philosophers, and gentle writers have understood, and said, that men who are studious, and who wish to give themselves to speculation, should abstain from crapule, and from wine, and from lust. How much more so must the Christian abstain, who knows not only the temporal and sensible damages of this sin, but also the spiritual and eternal ones, that is, the disgrace of God, the death of the soul, and the eternal punishment of hell, in which horrendous evils one incurs by a single simple fornication, for which reason it is much to be marveled at, that from the mouth of a Christian such words come out, as are often heard, he is young, let him be, as if he were saying, let him be submerged, let him kill himself; But on the other hand it is less to be wondered at, that some hear and speak in this way, since as has been said the dark smoke of lust obscures the intellect, indeed some reach such a degree of blindness, that measuring all others by themselves they dare to speak blasphemy, and not only do they not believe that one lives, but they consider it impossible that one can live chastely, and from this belief it is then a very short passage to heresies, and to many heresies, as we have so many, and all too clear examples of in our times. Therefore our good father of the family knows, and holds it to be an undoubted fact, that if in order to uproot the seeds of any viciousness and to plant any virtue in the soul of a young man, it is necessary to be solicitous and to begin at an early hour, in this particular case which we are dealing with, it is necessary to be most solicitous because it is certain, and by reason, and by experience, that this enemy, when it begins to be conquered, becomes weaker and weaker, and loses almost all its strength; where, on the contrary, if from the beginning he has begun to throw the wretched young man to the

ground, his viciousness becomes so strong, and the vigor of the soul so weak that it is a most difficult and rare thing to be able to rise again, and when by the singular grace of God he does rise again, it is not done without great effort, and with the sweat of blood, so to speak, since the ardor of the flesh, burns, and stimulates with greater vehemence those who have experienced it the most, even if it has been lawfully in holy matrimony, and therefore the fathers have called the continence, and chastity of widowers laborious, where the virgins who have never been thrown to the ground by this hostile intestine, feel it less fierce, and more easily with divine grace they resist it.

Chapter 88

OF THE CAUTION THAT MUST BE USED IN REASONING ABOUT CHASTITY.

And our misery and readiness to sin is so great, that often the same things, which are said to remedy sins, give occasion and incitement to sin. Therefore it is very necessary that the good father, while he is discussing with his son such filthy matters, is well warned and does not descend to the particulars, and to the various ways, by which this infernal Hydra poisons so much of the world, so that perhaps in place of quenching this fire, he may awaken it, and light it imprudently in the simple, and tender breast of the child; in which thing it is also advisable that the preachers, and the spiritual fathers be much considered. And generally speaking, while childhood lasts, it will be enough to use these remedies, which introduce the virtue of chastity with the same effect, and close the entrance to its opposite, which will be discussed below, not entering with the child into many words, but after the years, will have brought maturity of judgment, and the previous good education will have armed the young man in such a way, that there is not so much danger of discovering in part the qualities of this enemy, and cruel oppressor of youth, the good father will then be able to discuss chastity with his son, so that he may fall perfectly in love with this beautiful virtue, and take hatred, and disgust of the vice of lust, and in particular when the time of tying him in marriage approaches, he will effectively exhort him to the observance of the matrimonial faith, as we see that the holy old Tobias did with his young son, saying to him in this way: Beware, my son, of all fornication, and never know any other woman than your lawful wife, and as for this part, one can have

abundant material from the things said above about the sacrament of marriage.

Chapter 89

SOME CHRISTIAN REASONS TO PERSUADE CHASTITY.

And to say briefly and in particular how the good father can praise chastity, and persuade his son with sound reasons, and on the other hand detest incontinence, the first consideration will be the will and commandment of God, to which we must always obey, and although this is a common respect for all the precepts, it must be known, however, that God is particularly pleased with chastity, from which the Apostle Saint Paul writing to the Thessalonians said The will of God is your sanctification, that is, that you abstain from fornication, and that each of you know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor, not allowing himself to be carried away by the passion and disordered affection of concupiscence, as people do who do not know God, in which place it is to be warned, that the Apostle calls chastity specifically by the name of sanctification, as the same is chaste and holy, not because this virtue alone is sufficient for holiness, for we read in the Gospel of the foolish virgins, but because this virtue is a great disposition for the acquisition of the others, and because holiness means purity and cleanliness, and such is chastity; and finally because he who is perfectly chaste in body and spirit is also holy, therefore he who has a pure and worldly heart is holy, as the Saviour said, Blessed are the worldly in heart, for they shall see God. Therefore the good father should kindle his son to the love of this virtue by showing him how grateful it is to God, and how dear a gift it is to him to give him the flower of youth, white and immaculate, and that virgins are like Angels on earth, and after this short life, will be like Angels in Heaven, and as the sacred Theologians say, besides the essential beatitude of all the blessed, which consists in

seeing and enjoying God, they will have a particular splendor, and beauty, and a special glory called a halo, God being pleased that in the kingdom of heaven his virgins are distinctly recognized, marked with a particular sign, in such a way that on earth with certain distinct garments the authority and excellence of some person is declared, and of these haloes, a few other very high states of the holy Church, will be privileged, as for example the very strong martyrs of Christ, but happy is the one who, being in fear, and watching with solicitude, and recommending himself with great humility to God, will know how to preserve himself with precious joy, to which the devil tends continuous snares. Let the good Father also show that not only our spirit, but also our bodies are the temple of God and the habitation of the Holy Spirit, since we are sanctified by the holy sacraments and incorporated into Christ; for this great insult is done to the Holy Spirit by expelling him from our heart, which, as it falls prey to the abominable sin of lust, becomes a den of all filthiness, as the Apostle exclaimed in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, saying: Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Wherefore, taking away the members of Christ, shall I make them members of a harlot? God preserve me from this. And above he said, "Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone violates the temple of God, woe to him, God will send him into dissipation and ruin. Therefore the Christian must have a certain reverence for his own flesh, not defiling it with the mud of impurity, remembering that God has taken our flesh with immense purity, and with the same virginal flesh he feeds us in the wonderful sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

Chapter 90

OF THE DAMAGE THAT TEMPORALLY IMPUDENT LIVING BRINGS.

The good Father will also say of the very serious inconveniences and damages that gross carnal vice brings with it, not only spiritually, but also temporally, for, leaving aside for the moment how miserable it is to lose for a momentary and bestial pleasure, the grace of God, and the kingdom of Heaven, and to be condemned to eternal punishment, it often happens that for a brief incontinence one falls into serious and incurable infirmities, which full of pain in the body, and of shame in the soul, make one's whole life unhappy, and unfit for civil affairs, and for the deeds of chivalry, and of gentle man, and ordinarily the lustful men, are short-lived, losing their strength and natural vigour, where the continents live healthier and longer; chaste men are also more awakened and witty in their intellect, and more apt to the study of literature, to judging, to government and to all things, where intellect and prudence are needed; where the carnal man is so immersed in the sense, that he becomes almost a brute, and does not know how to raise his thought to anything spiritual, but like a pig finds no greater pleasure than to be in the lotus; Therefore impure pleasure, as a saintly doctor says, absorbs the whole man, and these people are pernicious citizens of the Republic, and all the more so when they are in a greater degree; for it is easy to make them deviate from the right path of justice, no less than a miser for the thirst for gold. What shall we say of the loss of goods, because of the disordered expenditure that others, having gone mad, make in order to satisfy their disordered appetites? What shall we say of the infamy that follows? Because impudent men

become the talk of the town, and the fact that they have spent their youth imprudently is often a great impediment to the acquisition of due honour, with a great lowering of families. I leave aside to say of the fights, the emulations, and the deadly enmities that arise from unbridled lusts, and how many caught in the unhappy adulteries and rapes remain miserable, and shamefully wounded and dead. But what greater misery, and misery than to see free men, and of noble blood and high status, who have many servants, and family members around them, nevertheless having become servants, of their servants, who are conscious, and mediators of their impudent delights; So that a great man is often obliged to be subject to the vilest and most infamous people for fear that his wounds may not be discovered, which are most often revealed to the world with a great stench of infamy; and this happens to those who make themselves servants of sin. But since a great number of reasons have been prepared for our father of the family, from which he will be able to deduce many others for himself, we pass on to speak of the other remedies which consist in doing, and which are very necessary and effective.

Chapter 91

OF VARIOUS REMEDIES TO PRESERVE CHASTITY, AND BEFORE THE CUSTODY OF THE SENSES.

The Holy Scripture says in one place, that death enters through the windows, that is through these external senses of ours, which are like windows of the soul, and by bringing to the heart the images of the sensitive objects, which from outside are represented to us, inwardly kindle various desires, which kill the poor soul of death by sin, therefore the first care of the good father of a family must be, that his son does not see, nor hear anything that gives occasion, however small, of lust, to the simple, and innocent child; Therefore, as has been said elsewhere, the father and mother must beware, in the presence of the children, of every act, every gesture, and every word, which might excite some curiosity. The same, and much more if it is meant by the servants, I say much more, because ordinarily the children are willingly with them, and this kind of people is not used to watch neither from indecent acts, nor from dishonest words, indeed what is worse they take pleasure in teaching them to the small children, and hear them report them with simplicity, besides that when they are grown up, to be grateful to them, and for other purposes they invite them, and pave the way for them to commit sins. And it is a general reminder, which we have discussed elsewhere, to have a very open eye for those who keep themselves, men and women, in the house. Good neighbourliness is not a small matter, especially in houses which are joined together, so that one can easily hear and see many things, both useful and harmful; and so the good father of a family should try to stay close to good people, and, as they say, of his own humour, understanding them well, so that together and in

the same way they can procure the common good of their children, so that one neighbor may be the guardian of the house of the other, with Christian love and charity. It is not necessary to speak of paintings and other lewd images, of which we have said enough above, because these must be banished in their entirety from the house of a true Christian, even if he were a painter or a similar artist by profession. But it is well to remind our father of the family that he should not allow in his house books of love, and fables, and comedies, and novels, and other such things, from which little use is derived, and for the most part they are the cause of much evil, and are hidden, and pernicious teachers of grave sins, and the more the sweetness of the rhymes, and the variety of the events that are told, and the vagueness of the narrative allures and invites, the greater the harm they bring; It is necessary above all that such books do not fall into the hands of children, and I am not speaking only of those that deal with obscene and impudent things, worthy of not being known by their name, against whom we have a serious problem, and express prohibition made by the authority of the sacred Council of Trent, but I also mean those who, veiled by apparent honesty, infuse the venom of lust into the breasts of youth more secretly, but no less perniciously. But in that change, provide for good books according to the advice of religious and devout men, who by the grace of God do not lack books, and of spirit, and of honorable delight, and entertainment, such as the lives of saints and the like. As for the care of the teachers in this part, while they teach literature to children, and the knowledge of languages, this will be said in its place.

It is part of this same custody of the senses, not to hear comedies, which for the most part are full of not very modest sayings, and of events that fill the hearts with fire; similarly the child should not be present at lascivious shows, and licentious dances, nor at banquets where young men and

adorned women are found together to celebrate, so that the wretched young man does not learn the hidden looks, and lusts and remains, not realizing it, miserably wounded. And so as not to descend into every detail, it is necessary to repeat in this place, what has been said so many times, that is, that it is of the utmost importance for the education that the life of the father agrees with the precepts, and with the provisions he makes for the good and Christian upbringing of his son. And for this reason the father must take care not to be involved in incontinence, because besides the great insult he would do to holy matrimony, he would add sin to sin, and would lead the poor son into the same precipice, who will consider the words to which the facts contradict them as a joke, and the father will not be understood, to be able to keep hidden in his son, because apart from the blurred conscience which will prevent him from persuading the contrary of what he does, believe also that at some sign, and some day the curious eyes and ears will come to the knowledge of the truth, and in one point, with the evil example one destroys more, than one builds up in a long time.

Chapter 92

OF FLEEING IDLENESS, AND OF SOBRIETY.

And idleness, and a life of neglect and dissipation, is the source of all vices, as not only the divine Scriptures show us in many places, but the philosophers themselves and the wise men of the world have known; but in spite of this, idleness is the father of carnal viciousness, and just as water which has no motion is easily corrupted and generates worms and similar troublesome animals, so the idle man conceives in himself a thousand thoughts and abominable desires, and gives birth to filthy and vicious deeds, and although we all have in ourselves the seed and matter of sin, nevertheless there is no one who is more exposed to the temptations and snares of the devil than the idle man; and therefore a great saint said to one of his disciples, always do something, so that the devil finds you occupied. Now we will discuss this same matter of avoiding idleness, and of dispensing time usefully, and especially young people, by applying themselves to some honourable occupation for the common service of the country, in another place, more generally, but it is sufficient for now to point out that the prudent father of a family must drive out idleness from his house as much as he can, and from his servants, and from his children, and not less so, indeed by good fortune, more so from his female children, otherwise he will see the effect of what Scripture says, *Multam malitiam docuit otiositas*, that is, idleness is the teacher of many sins.

The temperance and sobriety of eating and drinking is not a small remedy against the ardors of lust, just as craziness and drunkenness are a foment of lust, especially in the young, whose blood boils for itself, so that the more it is inflamed by

food, and by the heat of wine, the more it is not able to contain the fire spread through the veins, the more it overflows, and as a saint well says, the belly full of lust foams, and flows out in lust. And not only must one beware of eating and drinking too much, exceeding in the quantity of nourishment, but one must also have regard for the quality of food and wine, because the hot food, and too delicately seasoned, with an abundance of aromas, and spices, and the powerful and strong wines, heat the flesh in such a way that like a fat and well-fed horse it recoils, and does not allow itself to be held in check by reason. And this is enough to have said about temperance for the present purpose, since in another place we will have the opportunity to touch on something about the nourishment that is convenient for children as something that not only must be considered alien to simple education, but also to Christian education.

Chapter 93

OF THE DELICACIES, AND EXCESSIVE ORNAMENTS OF THE BODY.

All the things that make our body too soft and delicate, are enemies of chastity, because the flesh itself is nothing more than a brute, all devoted to sensual pleasures, so the saints who have chosen to serve God in the sacred monastic cloisters, and in the solitudes, have taken great care to mortify, and tame this rebellious beast, feeding it with vile and scarce food, and with bad bedding, and with coarse clothes, and giving it continuous labors, and occupations, as we see in the lives of those ancient holy fathers, who have been lights of the Church, both for holiness of life, and for doctrine, considering them, and rightly, that the greatest enemy that the Christian has, is the body and the own flesh. But because for the moment we do not reason with men of such perfection, and in the Holy Church there are divisions of grace and of state, as has been said elsewhere, for this reason the due and moderate care of one's own body is not taken, indeed it is necessary to preserve this instrument of the soul, so that it may be suitable and well disposed to all honest, and virtuous actions, but it takes back that excess, and that superabundance, which outside of the needs of nature and civil decency serve only to effeminate the soul, so that weakened it cannot resist this domestic enemy of which we speak. Therefore, our good and prudent father of the family will take care to bring up his son in too many comforts and delicacies, which can be of many ways, but for now, continuing the proposed reasoning of the remedies against lust, we say that the too vague and refined ornaments are often not a light occasion to make a soul overflow into the pit of sin. And usually mothers are the ones

who exceed most in this respect, and provided that in young children, it is possible to conceal some little thing, the good father should not in any way impose on the young man, who is being raised to be a servant of God, and a useful citizen of his country, that his face be painted, or his ears pierced, and his hair ringed, so that he may appear in public as a pretty young woman, full of odours, and of lasciviousness, pompously dressed, that it would be better to dress even very noble children in thick cloth, than to expose an innocent soul to a thousand dangers, some of which it is not lawful to name. Therefore the father must remember that in every age some ray of virility must shine in the man, and he must not let himself be carried away by the fullness of common use, and he must not easily accept what many, with many intentions, are accustomed to say for their excusation, that is, this is how it is used, and this is how it is done; but he must watch, according to the prudence regulated by the fear of God, and by the law of Christ our Lord, what must be done, and what the few, and the best of his state do.

Chapter 94

THE ADORNMENT OF WOMEN IN PARTICULAR.

It is my intention (as I have elsewhere warned our father of the family) that the memories which are given for male children must also be proportionately understood for females; for which reason the things said above serve no less for their education than for that of their children, as far as the state and condition of the sex is appropriate. But since the present reasoning is about vain and superfluous ornaments (a common abuse of women), it seemed to me to touch on a few things in particular in this place. I do not wish for the moment to enter into a dispute as to whether or not the adorning and embellishment that women commonly do is a grave sin, or a light one, and how and how much it is, or how much it is not worthy of excusation, which I leave to the scales and to the definition of the sacred Theologians and of the wise and learned confessors; I will only say that the ancient fathers, in whom the highest doctrine and sanctity of life shone together, reproached women for this abuse, among whom St. John Chrysostom, bishop of such a great city, was one. St. Chrisostom, Bishop of such a great city, and such a principal city as Constantinople, and a man greatly exercised in the government of souls, raises in many places in his divine sermons, against this license of ornaments, and of beauty; something that in our times, and especially from a few years on, in many cities of Italy has grown so much, that it would need not only a private good education, but a public remedy. That Saint speaks of women who paint their faces in various colors, not content with the form God has given them, as if they were better craftsmen, and knew, and could correct the works of God; he demonstrates that beauty is a useless thing, and dangerous,

and full of harassment; for easily, where it is found, it gives occasion, if it is not accompanied by great honesty, for it to be believed, and ill-accounted for; and the husband himself lives in jealousy, and full of bitterness, knowing the many insidiators of modesty, and even more so when the woman with her excessive adornment gives just cause for suspicion to her husband; For that blessed saint does not accept the excuse that many women make, saying that they adorn themselves to please their husbands, that those who adorn themselves to please foreigners need not be reasoned with, since these are clearly nets of the devil, and if they do not adorn anyone, their corrupt intentions condemn them in the sight of God; but speaking of the former, the saint laughs at that ill-conceived reason; Because, he says, ornaments, jewels, smells, and other vanities are laid away on the way home, and we considering this same sentence from another point of view, we can say, that now women with more study, and more artificially adorn themselves when they go to feasts, shows, and places where crowds of spectators gather, and where well and often their husband is not present. But besides the fact that this excuse is insufficient, and false for the most part, it proves moreover Chrisostomo, that the poor wenches are much deceived, and procure, not realizing it, harm to themselves, teaching their husbands not to love them, while they try by adorning themselves, and by coloring themselves, to be more loved. And so that the truth of this paradox may be better understood, I want to recite in our language the formal words of the Saint, who says, speaking to women:

We do not teach husbands to beware of anything but their faces, for as soon as your husband begins to be pleased with the study of adorning himself, he will very soon be attracted by the vagaries and the face of a whore, like one who is accustomed to love the face. But if, on the contrary, you teach him to love good morals in his wife, and a modesty

and gravity in her appearance, he will not easily turn to harlots, for these qualities are not to be found in them, but quite the opposite: do not teach your husband to be deceived by a gentle laugh, nor to be taken in by a soft and lascivious manner, otherwise you will be giving him weapons against yourself; teach him to delight in chastity, and what follows. Now, as we began to say above, the books of the holy Doctors of old are full of complaints, and rebukes of the immoderate adornment of women; but it is not necessary to refer to them here, and the doctrine of the two glorious Apostles, and teachers of the world Peter and Paul must suffice; the first of whom exhorts women to try to please their husbands, not with braids and headdresses, with gold and gems, and with vaguely adorned garments, but with holy conversation. And the other, writing to Timothy, says in the following words: Let the women be in a composed dress, adorning themselves modestly and soberly, not with curls, gold and pearls, and precious garments, but as befits women who promise piety and religion through good works.

Chapter 95

OF THE OFFICE, AND PARTICULAR CARE OF THE MOTHER OF THE FAMILY ABOUT THE ADORNMENTS OF HER DAUGHTERS.

Therefore, in conclusion, we say that the good mother of a family, to whom this care belongs, must bring up her daughters in such a way that they may be clean and pure, but not vain and light, and by her own example she must teach them to despise blondes and false whites and reds, not only while they are in their father's house, where no appearance of colorful reason can excuse them, but also when they are married, teaching them that it is a very ugly thing that an honorable gentlewoman adorns herself as a whore, where the true beauties and ornaments of a wise and worthy wife are chastity, modesty, truthfulness, taciturnity, and sobriety, love of her husband and children, knowing how to conserve her wealth and dispense it prudently, and other similar virtues grateful to God and to men. Therefore the good mother must take care that her daughter does not see in her the vestiges of perdition, and that she does not allow some bad women to come to her house, masters of these and of worse inventions, but she must watch over the chastity of her daughter from afar, Mainly preserving in her the beauty of the soul, so that she may be pleasing to her heavenly husband, besides she will also preserve the bodily beauty that comes out of a virginal soul, not to say that those who give themselves too much to the study of adorning themselves, distemper their heads, and often spoil their complexion, and contract various infirmities, and much more quickly grow old, and when there is no other inconvenience than a woman being well, and vaguely adorned, in a public place, a devil's bait, and a stone of ruin, and a stone of scandal to a thousand unhappy men,

certainly a Christian woman should never want to appear beautiful, with such and such great offense of God, and loss of souls, bought back with the inestimable price of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 96

OF REMOVING THE OCCASION.

It is said by vulgar proverbs that the pleasure of stealing makes others become thieves, and this same saying can be applied to many other things, because we are so weak, and so little ordinarily disposed to resist virility to temptations that at every small encounter, and invitation to sin we remain cowardly losers, therefore it is useful advice to flee from opportunities, and not to expose oneself to dangers, of which the holy scripture warns us with that famous sentence: He who loves danger, will perish in it. But above all this remedy is necessary to preserve the precious chastity of children, and of young people of every sex, and of every age, since victory over carnal sin, as the saints say, is won by fleeing, and there is no surer way of fighting than not fighting oneself. Therefore the good father of a family, solicitous and diligent custodian of his God-given deposit, that is, of his soul, and of the purity of his children, should take care to avoid any occasion in the house or outside, nor should he trust lightly either his servants, or his nurse, or his own relatives, because the wiles of the devil are many, and it is precisely here that he spreads his nets, where there is less cause for suspicion. It is not said, however, that the father of a family perturbs and disturbs the house, and by too much suspicion is overshadowed by every little thing, but it is said that he does not sleep and removes the occasions, and does not let the fire and the straw get so close that the fire follows; Therefore I wish to know, especially in noble houses, and in those with a large family, where and with whom the young man spends the hours of the day, so that he does not stay long with servants, or with women, except when necessary, and does not remain so

alone that no prudent eye, be it that of a father, or of a master, or of an old and very faithful servant, is not somehow open over him, and not only in the house, and in the City, but also outside when one goes for recreation, or according to the custom of many places to stay there for some time, because the gardens, the vineyards, and the villas, for the width of the place, and for the solitude in many parts, and for a certain greater freedom of time, and of place, are often the occasion of great ruin. And because the night is the mother of many dangers, let the good father keep his house well guarded, and let his son sleep in a place where he can, as the saying goes, sleep safely. And do not think it a matter of gratitude to anyone that I remember things impossible to practise, regarding the custody of the children, because if in watching the fields, the herds and even a small dog in the house, not to speak of gems and gold, so much care is taken, what must be done with one's own children? But if the father is persuaded that the most precious thing he has is the soul, the chastity and the health of his son, and that this is a treasure of God given to him for safekeeping, and that God wants to pay him eternal reward for his good and faithful guardianship, he will certainly not find it difficult, and he will guard it not anxiously, but with pleasure. And for this reason we intend that this guardianship should be done not with a harassing solicitude, scolding and shouting without need, but with good orders for living in the house, and with not opening the door inconsiderately, or rather closing it to inconveniences, and in short with using that vigilance, and attention that is prudently used in the things that concern us greatly; and in the rest always proceed rightly as far as you can, and with gentleness and discreteness, because extremes are harmful, and sometimes by too much suspicion the opposite effect is achieved, and desire is aroused in others, for something that perhaps had not previously crossed their minds. But above all the good father of a family should always commend

himself to God, and ask Him for the grace to be able to carry out the will of His Lordship in the education of His children, and be of good cheer, who will feel greatly comforted, and will see the help of the Lord present, and the Holy Spirit, the excellent teacher and guide of our actions, will show him and make a thousand ways easy to bring this boat to port, which neither language nor human pen could ever remember, nor write.

Chapter 97

HOW IT'S A LOT TO FEEL TO THE CONVERSATIONS OUTSIDE.

Besides all the things said above, it is necessary to be very careful with the practices, and conversations outside the house, or in the schools, or in whatever other way one wishes, because the world being broken, very rarely others will meet with children raised with the fear of God, and with that good discipline with which it is assumed that our good father trains his son. This consideration of the people with whom one converses closely is, in my opinion, one of the most important things that can be remembered for a good education, and it is very certain from experience that much good, and much evil is done in the company of others; for this reason, as a very necessary thing, it will be discussed in another place more in general, in any case we wanted to mention it so that the father of the family may be cautious, and very well warned in this part, because if our child will converse domestically, I do not say only with young people, but with children of the same age, who through little paternal care are in some way stained, and impure, it is to be feared greatly that in the end he too will be stained, by many ways, and of speaking, and of seeing, and by a thousand hidden ways, the fire of sin will be set in the bait of this our spoiled nature. And to say it in one word, with the sentence of the Holy Scripture, Whoever touches the pitch will be soiled by it.

Chapter 98

OF THE FREQUENCY OF THE SACRAMENTS, AND OF THE LOVE OF GOD.

I have left in the last place that remedy which is undoubtedly the first, that is, to ensure that in the tender and pure heart divine love is kindled, which when it has taken root in the soul, does not allow earthly and carnal love to penetrate. And if we see many young people in the greatest boiling of their blood not only abstaining from the pleasures and delights which tend to enmesh that age most tenaciously, but also disgusting and nauseating them, and this because they are taken by another love, albeit a human one, be it the knowledge of science, or of the acquisition of honors, and of possessions, or of the desire to possess, by means of an assiduous and indefatigable servitude, the gratitude of some powerful prince, or for whatever other reason one wishes, what shall we say of the sweetest and strongest love of God, which has greater conformity to our soul than all the others? and which satisfies and pleases it more? Therefore, let this be the principal study of our good father of the family, that the child falls in love with God, and with the glory of Paradise, and with the beauty of virtue, so that, like the holy and most chaste Joseph, he chooses to die before offending God and blotting out the most candid flower of his virginity. Therefore with every good, and holy exercise of piety, and of religion, with thick, and sweet teachings, and with the study of prayer, the good father arms the young man against the thunderbolts of the devil, but especially with the use and with the frequency of the holy sacraments of confession and of the Eucharist, because through these channels divine grace is infused into the soul, and as has been said elsewhere, it is the property of the

most holy and virginal flesh of Christ taken in the holy sacrament to mortify the flesh, and purify, and sanctify in a certain way the flesh itself. And let there be no one who doubts, that asking for help from God without whom one cannot be chaste, and using those remedies that the doctor of our souls Christ Jesus has left us, and following the good memories and advice of spiritual men, and exercised to overcome this enemy, it is not only possible, but easy and pleasant to preserve the precious chastity, as so many servants of God in the Holy Church preserved it in ancient times, and preserve it every day, by the example of whom Saint Augustine was already moved, and considering that countless others similar to himself, clothed with the same infirmity, nevertheless lived continually, he took great heart and confidence in overcoming this adversary, that is carnal sin, from which, as he himself has left us written, he was bitterly infested in his youth, and finally, with the help of God, he was victorious, because the strength of divine grace is greater for those who desire it and who humbly ask for it from Him who is always ready to give it to us, than for the weakness of our nature. And here we put an end to this matter, which has perhaps been dealt with too extensively, but certainly not without necessity, since this is one of the greatest nets, with which the devil draws more souls to perdition. The fact that holy matrimony is also one of the remedies for human frailty has been said enough elsewhere, and there is no need to repeat it. But when the time comes for the marriage of children to be more suitable, when we shall be dealing with the election of various states and forms of life, it will be possible, as it seems to me, to touch on something more appropriately.

Chapter 99

OF THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT, DO NOT FURARE.

God's love for man is so great that he has surrounded him on every side with the custody of his divine precepts, and placed around him, like so many shelters, so that without any offence he might live peacefully and quietly on earth, so that not only has God forbidden homicide, so that our life and our body might be safe from any offence, but not only has he forbidden adultery for which we are offended, and which is so dear to us, and which is so dear to us, and our body is safe from all offence, and not only has He forbidden adultery for which we are offended and insulted in a thing very close to us, and which is so important to us, and in short it was not enough for Him to show great care for our life, and the preservation of all our being, and of our fame and honour; but as far as our property and assets, which among the goods we possess are in the lowest degree, God has taken them under his protection and tutelage, commanding by law that they be neither taken from us nor usurped by anyone. And this is what is contained in the seventh precept, when God says, do not commit theft. The subject of theft is a very wide one, and has been copiously treated by the sacred Doctors, in their books and sums, to which I will only refer, according to my custom, to a few things for the instruction of our father of the family, so that with all solicitude he may ensure that this pestiferous poison, which so delights in taking the property of others, does not infect the soul of our child with death of the soul, and often also of the body. It is well known that theft is taking, or keeping, and possessing something of another against the will of one's own master, and it is also well known that this name of theft extends as a kind to many

ways of theft, and stealing; for some are done secretly, others openly, and by force, which are properly called robberies, and are all the more serious when to robbing others, violence, and contempt are added. Other thefts, and robberies are committed against private persons, others against the public, sometimes profane things are taken away, some other sacred things, and dedicated to the divine worship, such as sacred vessels, altar ornaments, and the like; and likewise enter in that number, those goods which are attributed to the ministers of the Church, and to the poor of the Lord, this way of theft is a very serious sin, and with the same name is called sacrilege. But who could number the many ways of theft and robbery, which the avarice of men, and the thirst for gold has subtly found, and finds every day? for in buying, selling, renting, and conducting, in private and public offices and loads, and in many other human contracts and trades, there is an infinite amount of theft, of which there is neither time nor place to speak in detail here, it is sufficient to say that all are detestable, and forbidden by God in this seventh precept, when he says, do not commit theft.

Chapter 100

THAT THE NAME OF THIEF INCLUDES MANY, AND THE OBLIGATION TO RETURN.

However, so that no one may deceive himself, and so that our good father may better teach his son to flee this ugly vice, it must not be forgotten that by the name of thief is meant not only the one who by himself immediately commits the crime, but all those who consent to it, and lend aid and favor, or in some way share in the miserable and abominable gain of stolen goods. Therefore it is not enough to say, I have not taken anything, I have not intervened, I was not present, but if you have commanded with authority, if with counsel you have persuaded and induced, if you have consented and allowed, if you have given help to the thief, if you are the custodian and receiver of thefts, if you buy or receive knowing stolen things; for all these and similar ways, which it would take a long time to say, the name of thief suits you, and you are really such, and consequently you are obliged to restitution; Well it is true that the main ones, and the others involved in the theft are obliged to restitution in a different way, as can be seen in full from the Doctors, who deal with these matters, it is enough for now that all of them in some way abstain from the obligation of restitution, an obligation as strict, and as necessary as that famous sentence of Saint Augustine shows: Sin is not forgiven unless it is returned. And because making the due restitution is often very difficult, and more so in those who are accustomed to theft, and robbery, and who by usury and other illicit ways, sucking the blood of the poor, have become rich and wealthy, so that not wanting, and almost not being able, by their own fault, to unwind from this tenacious mistletoe they go, before going to make

restitution, into eternal damnation, therefore it is fitting that good education be solicitous to repair so much evil, preventing at an early hour the wiles of the devil, and the evil inclinations of our corrupt nature. As to how this is to be done, it is time that we discuss this in more detail with our father of the family.

Chapter 101

OF PATERNAL CARE REGARDING THE OBSERVANCE OF THIS SEVENTH PRECEPT.

And it is well to recall in this place what has been said elsewhere in similar regard, that in three ways the father must lead his son away from sinfulness, and promote him to virtue; the first is by the living and continual example of himself working virtuously; the second is by the paternal admonitions and by the efficacy of reasoning, demonstrating the deformity of sinfulness, and the beauty of virtue, so that the one may abhor it and the other may fall in love with it: The third way consists in doing the same, taking away the incitements of evil, and making the child accustomed to do good, if he does it well without election, and without knowledge, so that little by little he acquires the good habit, and it becomes sweet and pleasant, and so to speak, natural to live according to virtue. Now applying these general recollections to the present matter, and beginning with the last way, I say that it is a very bad thing that some fathers do, and for the most part this happens to men of low condition, and sometimes out of ignorance, sometimes because of ignorance, sometimes because of a bad disposition of will, who, having found or simply taken something from someone else, praise it, and applaud it with laughter, and do it in such a way that the child is often pleased to bring something to his father or mother, or to the mother, so that the bad talent of the bad nature is sharpened, in finding ways of having nine things, so that the child is often praised, and sees the laughing face of him, who should show it to him severely, Because praise is a great incentive in that tender age to nourish good and evil inclinations, and the little child takes delight in having

known how to do well, and how to do wisely the same evil, which he does not yet know to be such, and so it happens that from slight principles, deep roots are taken in viciousness. I do not say, however, that the child should be accustomed to neglect the things lost in the house, when by chance he finds them, but I do say that he should get used to discerning his own things from those that are not, and that he should hand them over to his father or indeed to his mother, and he must know that these must be given back to his own master, but if, as it usually happens, something of the neighbor's has fallen into the house, and the child has found it, tell the father, son, this is not ours, let us give it back to the master, and let him make the restitution himself, so that, praised by his father and by his neighbor, he may rejoice and make a habit of returning it willingly, and if he finds something in the public street, or in a place where it is not known whose it is, let his father pretend to have found its owner, and let him return it to a friend, who will then give it to the poor, whose things are really those found by chance, and whose owner is not known after due diligence, and let the same thing be done by the child, I mean to give it to the poor, when the owner is not found. But if by chance the child has stolen something, even if it is minimal, it is better to scold him, and take him back, and if there is need, beat him again, and lead him as far as possible to return the stolen goods, so that he will not be tempted to take other people's goods again. I am well aware that I am speaking of very minute things, and that some will say that I waste time and ink in writing these little things, but for this reason I will not remain in memory of what I judge to be profitable for the good education of our children, seeing from ancient examples and from daily experience, that the neglect of simple things leads to the most serious disorders. Therefore, continuing with our institute, I say that it does not seem good to me to put the way in which some people hold money in too high esteem among children, to whom,

showing them gold and silver, and with gestures and words, giving them the impression that it is a precious thing, they make the simple age become joyful of that which it does not naturally desire, and with these stimuli their desire grows all the more, when the children realize that money is the means to obtain those things for which they have a natural inclination to desire, so that they like to have money, and they strive to have it, even taking it secretly where they can. But just as the instilling of these seeds of avarice in a young child does not seem to be well done, so when the youngster has come to the use of reason, and understands the difference, and the value of things, I think it is not expedient to hold him so tightly that he does not have a penny in his power, On the contrary, it seems to me that according to his state and condition, he should be allowed to have a certain amount, besides providing him sufficiently with all the necessary things, because the things that are forbidden to us are desired more ardently, where when they are in our power they move us less. And it will happen sometimes that the child will give his money to his mother, or to his sisters, or will lend it to them, and will be pleased to keep it, and like a father of the family will be a good dispenser of it, but what is more important, many dangers will be avoided, for not only will he have no reason to steal, but he will not be easily ensnared by the use of money, with which, as with a bait, the poor youngsters are often drawn into the nets of sin. It is also very important to warn, especially as the years grow, and in the first stages of youth, that the servants and family members of the house be trustworthy people, so that for whatever reason, or to gain profit, or to gain goodwill, they do not persuade, or at least do not give help to the ill-advised young man, to squander the money, and the father's wealth, preparing nourishment for gluttony, lust, games, and all the disordered appetites of youth. And so the wise father should watch over his son's care, and above all, as has been said before, should warn him of the practices

and conversations of young people of the same age. And although the dangers of youth are very great, and especially in this corrupt century of ours, so that I know well that some may say, that giving reminders and precepts is easy, but carrying them out, and putting them into practice is a matter implied by many difficulties, our good father of a family must not lose heart, indeed, he must firmly hope in divine grace, that, having guided his son's education in his tender years, through those Christian ways, which have been shown up to now, and having known how to maintain with his son the paternal authority, and love together, everything will be easier for him, than one could ever believe, and in the end he will reap the sweetest fruits of his many labors and efforts.

Chapter 102

OF THE MORAL REASONS, ET CHRISTIANE CONTRA IL
FURARE.

There is no need for too long a discourse, in order to give our father of a family the field of reason, so that he may make theft odious to his son, who will already have become capable of reason, and able to understand the beauty of virtue, and the ugliness of its opposite, it is enough to say, that this vice is directly contrary to the queen of virtues, that is to justice, of which it is the proper offence to render to each his own, where theft, and robbery unjustly takes away the property of others; and this vice is so ugly, that it does not seem to be able to fall into a naive mind, rather it is proper to the most useful servants and slaves, called by the ancient proverb furaci, so that all civil laws have always detested thieves, and punished them with severe penalties, even with death itself, but with penalties, and death full of opprobrium, and ignominy, to demonstrate their cowardice. How many private and public inconveniences are brought about by crimes in the commerce of human life, it would be too long to say, and they are such that by their nature they destroy the society and communion of men, which is greatly preserved, while each one has and possesses his own peacefully. But if reason and human fear do not suffice to curb the immoderate avarice of some, who with subtle inventions cover up their chosen thefts, at least the fear of the severe and inevitable judgment of God must suffice, for it is written, thieves, misers, and rapacious will not possess the kingdom of God, therefore it is a great wonder that a Christian man goes to take, or to retain illicitly the property of others, knowing for sure that without returning it, he cannot obtain forgiveness, nor health.

Chapter 103

OF SOME LITTLE CONSIDERED LATROCINII.

I said earlier, that theft and robbery are such ugly and vile crimes that it is hardly credible that they can be committed by a gentleman, or by anyone else, who is even naively born; and without doubt a nobleman, and even a mediocre citizen, would be reputed to be greatly insulted to be esteemed, and called a thief. But it is a great marvel that those very ones, who because of their nobility abhor this name so much, do not notice, or pretend, or do not care to commit serious crimes; as if there were no other manner of thieves, than certain miserable little thieves, who at night time secretly, and with great fear, steal well and often things of small value, or through the woods, and solitary places, with a thousand inconveniences, and dangers to themselves, tend snares to the wayfarers; he has no doubt, that such thieves are like guilty men, and infamous generation, justly punished, and vituperated. But it is too serious a deception to condemn petty thefts, and not to esteem the greater and more pernicious ones. Many do not consider the withholding of due wages from workers, who by their sweat nourish the wealth of the rich, to be theft; the taking of the goods of poor children and widows, harassing them and oppressing them with unjust quarrels, the devouring of the poor with usury, the locking up of the granaries in the caristries, and with various artifices to raise immoderately the prices of the things necessary for the profit, are thefts, and robberies, of which some nobles are little ashamed. What shall we say about the administration of the public revenue, how many frauds and robberies are committed there? And as far as the Hospitals, and other pious and miserable places, they are not safe from avarice,

and from the rapacity of the ministers. I leave to say of those, who do not pay tithes, and other duties to the Churches, and to the Ecclesiastical Prelates, according to their obligation; and likewise of those who with subtle deceptions do not pay the debts given, and tributes to the Princes, and secular magistrates. In sum, whoever considers well, will see that in the Cities, in the palaces, and in the courts of the judges, in the stores of the merchants, and in the midst of the greater frequency of civilized and well-born men, more crimes are committed than in the woods among the beasts.

Chapter 104

OF THE REMEDIES MORE PARTICULARLY, AND OF THE PATERNAL DILIGENCE AGAINST THIS VICE.

Therefore, since this vice has spread through all the states, and exercises of men, because of the too disordered appetite for things, so much so that whoever well considers the common way of living, sees everything to be full of thievery, deception and theft, without distinction of sacred or profane things. Without doubt it must be granted that great remedies, and not mediocre diligence is necessary so that this plague does not nest in the bosom of our well educated son. I remember having heard other times, of a great Prince of our times, very shrewd and who watched over his affairs, and by his power was to be well feared, and nevertheless he was accustomed to say, in nothing did he find greater difficulty, than in not being stolen by his minors; Such is the power of avarice, and the greed to enrich, that men expose themselves to manifest danger, not only of their souls, which if it is more certain, seems more distant, but of their own lives; Therefore, it is necessary that good education be employed for a long time, and that our father, by persuasion and good example, provide strong protection and weapons for his son's soul, so that he may not be overcome by this terrible monster. Therefore do not cease to remind him, and teach him with the same works, to render to each his due, to pay creditors promptly, and especially the poor workers and servants. And since we are speaking to nobles, citizens and craftsmen, each father must inculcate those precepts which are more in conformity with the state of his son, as for example, the nobleman must detest the oppression of the poor, he must persuade them that in public offices the revenues must be administered with the greatest faith, that

the judgments must be uncorrupted, so that no price, no gift, however great it may be, may ever be taken away from the rule of justice; the citizens have to be real in the great commerce, and not introduce, and maintain the famine, with serious damage to the poor; those then who are in the lowest rank of the people, and resell the merchants at the retail level, must sell at a fair price, and honest goods, not corrupt, nor simulated, and must not deceive in the weight, and in the measure the simple buyers, or who at least, not being able to do anything else, endure, if they are well aware of it, the unjust burdens, in these things, which have now become so ordinary among sellers, that few make any offence of them, so that the sentence of the Saviour is well verified, *Wide, and spatiosa* is the way, which leads to perdition, and many go for it. Similarly, those who hire out their works at a price must fulfil their obligation in full, otherwise they do not receive the full payment, which rule is extended to every kind of person who is led to any kind of work, whether private or public. In short, in order not to go into infinity, the good father should try as much as he can to make his son fall in love with justice, as we read that the Persians did, who, sending their children to school, taught them to answer, if others asked them, that they should go and learn justice, a doctrine which is undoubtedly very important, since it is of little use to know how to speak congruently according to the rules of grammar, if one does not also work well according to the rules of Christ the Lord. Most shining Sun of justice, who for the conservation and maintenance of this our human consortium has naturally impressed in the hearts of men those two famous precepts and as two principles and universal maxims, that is one: Do unto others as you would have others do unto you, and the second, on the contrary: Do not do unto others what you would not have others do unto you, which two precepts, given to us by the law of nature, the Lord wanted to repeat in the Gospel, and again command them, and sanctify them

with his own mouth. And we read that Alexander the Roman Emperor, unfaithful but morally good, and who in many things approved of the Christian institutes and rules, always had this saying in his mouth, learned from Christians: Quod tibi non vis fieri, alteri ne feceris, which we have already declared, not to do to others what we regret, that others do to us, and he was so delighted with this sentence, that he had it also carved in various places of his palace, and in the public buildings. How much more appropriate then is it that the Christian father admonishes his son to the observance of this salutary precept? which if it were done, there would be no need for so many quarrels and judgments, and one would live among men with supreme love and peace.

Chapter 105

FRUGALITY OR THRIFTINESS.

An infirmity is not perfectly cured, if not when the main cause is removed, and the root of the evil is eradicated. Hor non ha dubbio, che se gli huomini volessero fare quello che l'Apostolo dice di se stesso a i Philippensi, Ego didici in quibus sum sufficies esse, volendo dire che l'egli sapeva contentarsi de lo stato suo presente, et di quel poco che hava, non ha dubbio dico, that if men were to do the same, that avarice, and greed, the root of all evil, would not only lead them to the hidden crimes, and subtle inventions of illicit gain, but much less lead them, as often happens, to violent, and manifest robberies. The disorder, therefore, is that men do not want to be content, I will not say of poverty, but also of mediocrity, and sufficiency, rather they all want to pass over their state, and their condition, in the pumps, in the delights, and in every way of disordered expenses, so that great confusion is generated in the Republic, and it follows that, not being enough their own abilities to make up for their immoderate appetites, they deliberate to want in any way of the others. There are also the rich who, because of their insatiable avarice, put no end or termination to the acquisition of riches; others want to stay in idleness, and even though they are poor, they nevertheless want to live comfortably, and as they do, almost excusing themselves they say to maintain their rank, now these, and other similar ones tend for various reasons to the same effect, that is to want that of others, either by the straight way, or by the crooked way, truly plague and ruin of the Cities, and seminary of infinite evils. Therefore our good father, who labours to give his country a good citizen, and not a son of iniquity, will try by example and by doctrine to persuade his

son and to impress upon his heart that the greatest, surest, and most stable wealth is the holy fear of God, and the observance of his divine precepts, and his grace and protection, under the shadow of which we will always live securely, and we will never lack anything necessary, just as David said, I was young and have grown old, and I have not seen a righteous man abandoned, nor his seed lacking bread. But on the contrary, without divine grace not only do great riches come to nothing, but the very kingdoms and states are lost, and fall into ruin. Try to persuade your son not to be such an admirer of riches, as the blind and foolish world is, which does not seem to know, esteem, or expect other goods, except those which it sees and touches, and tastes with those senses, common to beasts; likewise, teach him not to be so afraid of holy poverty, so beloved of God, as if it were the supreme evil of this life, but only to be afraid of sin and vice, which deprives us of true and eternal goods, where poverty not only does not prevent us, but helps us to go more expediently to Heaven, and not only does the very high doctrine of Christ teach us to esteem these temporal and transitory things on earth, and vile mud, as they really are, but even to the Gentile philosophers they have despised them, and in the ancient Roman and Greek histories we read of valiant heroes, and Greeks we read of valiant captains who were so poor that with their own hands they ploughed their own small fields, and sometimes at death there was no money to bury any of them, but they were buried at public expense, and nevertheless they generously repudiated the treasures offered to them by vanquished enemies, offered to them by vanquished enemies, and they handled the public revenue with clean hands, and they brought back the great spoils of the victories they had won without appropriating anything for themselves, delighting in public wealth and magnificence, and in private poverty and frugality. And nevertheless their poverty did not prevent them from doing great and

honorable things, which after so many centuries, still live in the memory of men with clear praise.

Chapter 106

SOME AUTHORITIES IN HOLY SCRIPTURE ABOUT THE IMMODERATE COVETOUSNESS OF RICHES.

Now if the gentle and unfaithful men, by the light of reason alone, were so generous in heart that they were able to despise riches, how much more so must the Christian, whose inheritance is in heaven, and who knows that this life is nothing but a pilgrimage and an exile? Therefore let the good father console his son, if by chance they should be poor, with those words of the good Tobias, when he said to his son: Fear not my son, for our life is poor, but we shall have much good, if we fear God, and turn away from all sin, and do good. Show him that there is nothing more wise, than to have the little that one possesses with just title, and of good purchase, as the Holy Spirit says through the mouth of David, *Melius est modicum iusto, super divitias peccatorum multas*, that is, better is the little that is just, over the many riches of sinners.

Riches are not damned, but the poor are consoled; riches, which are an instrument of human life, are not damned, but the insatiable thirst of many is damned, who appetite what is only a help and a means of good living with such ardor, as if it were the ultimate goal, and our happiness; the rich are useful and necessary in the Republic, and although poverty chosen voluntarily for the love of God is a heroic Christian virtue, and a state of the highest perfection, nevertheless, because for now we are speaking to ordinary men and fathers of families, it is said that riches are appropriate to their state, and they are good, when they are well used, and bad if not, and one can be rich and good at the same time, and there have been anciently and always there will be rich

people, and saints if good is not a thing without great danger, and difficulty, according to the saying of the Savior in the well-known parable; that it is easier for a camel, or for that great and tortuous animal, or for a large ship's beam, to enter through the eye of an anchor, than for a rich man to enter paradise; but as it is, the evil is not in riches, but in disorderly will, as St. Paul shows us very well writing to Timothy, whose doctrine, being very notable, and for the purpose of our reasoning, it seemed to me to record it word for word in this place. He says thus:

Piety is a great gain, to be content with what is sufficient, because we have brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can bring nothing away, having therefore food and clothing of which we are content, so that those who wish to become rich, stumble into temptations and the snare of the devil, and many useless and harmful desires, which submerge men in death and perdition, stumble in temptations and in the snare of the devil, and in many useless and harmful desires, which submerge men in death and in perdition, for the root of all evil is greed and the love of money, which some, by appetite, have deviated from the faith, and have involved themselves in many miseries and travails. So far these are the words of the Apostle, well worthy of being very well pondered and considered.

Chapter 107

OF THE HONEST INDUSTRIES, OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE GOODS, AND OF THE ESCAPE FROM DEBTS.

We have heard from the Apostle, in whom Christ spoke, that the unbridled greed to become rich, leads to the most serious and extreme evils, but this does not forbid moderate care and diligence about the conservation of one's possessions, nor does it forbid the attempt to increase them with due and honorable means, because our father of a family must prudently consider that perhaps he has many children among whom he has to distribute his wealth, and there are by chance some female children, who must be married decently, so that, according to the saying of the same Apostle Paul, fathers must hoard for their children, which is meant by just ways, and according to the rules of Christ our Lord, and not according to the rules of the world, which has for the most blessed the richest. But our good father will always have in his heart and in his mouth that sentence of the Saviour, what good is it, and what profit is it, for someone to gain the whole world, and then lose his own soul? Now, since the young man whom we are teaching will also be able to be a father in his own time, it is appropriate that he learn from his father's example and admonitions to know how to preserve and increase his wealth. And to touch on a particular point, I say that the best way to increase one's income is to cut off excessive appetites, because where greed exceeds wealth, there one cannot call it wealth, but rather poverty, for an ancient and wise writer, speaking on this subject, said Of my small income, after deducting my greed, at the end of the year I will have something left over, and so it is truly true that knowing how to curb one's appetites is a way of income, because what is necessary,

and also what is comfortable with modesty, does not put domestic things in disorder, but the games, the superfluous banquets, the wanting to exceed the number of servants, the competing with the richest and vainest in dress, and feasting, and feeding horses, dogs, and sparrow hawks, and a thousand other similar superfluities, outside the decency of one's own state, are good. There are others who do as they say, the study of collecting medals, and ancient statues, which others with more reason call humour, others want paintings by excellent painters, others jewels, and similar things, which are bought above all by the desirable, at a great price and in need they make a very small portrait of them. I leave to say about the furnishings, that have arrived to such luxury, that those that today are used in the villas, surpass much in value those, that our major, and of the noblest, and better off used already, it is not however ancient time in the same Cities. Hor do not believe that I want to teach our child deafness, from which thought I am far away. It pleases me that the father of the family keeps his house furnished with linen cloths, and with good beds, and other such things, not only for the domestic necessity, but also for the comfort of the guests, and it is allowed that in dressing, and in living there is used in some way to the use, or abuse of the times, spending as they say the current currency, but that the walls, the tables, the chairs, and finally everything should be covered with velvet, damask, tapestries, and the finest rockets, and the clothes should be full of embroidery, and of vain ornaments, and of extreme expense, with the richest linings, and that every day there should be an effort to find new inventions and styles, and that the small craftsman should want to match himself to the citizen, the citizen to the gentleman, the gentleman to the titled, and these to the Prince; these are things beyond all reason, and intolerable, things that displease God, that lead to a thousand sins, and to this one in particular which we are dealing with, I mean to the robberies, and there is no

wealth that can compensate for such a chasm. Then the debts, and the interests, and the large, and multiplied usuries, slow and pernicious fever, arise, and one cannot find a worse state in this part of the world than an indebted man, who is not even master of the bread he eats, nor sees any fruit of his income, committed and devoured before it is born, nor can he remedy one disorder without another greater disorder, and at the end he goes to fall into a miserable, and ignominious bankruptcy. Therefore our prudent father of the family, should abhor living with debts, and measure his expenses by his wealth, and more prudently reserve something which exceeds his income, pay his creditors promptly, at least at certain times of the year, so that the debts do not swell, and do not imitate the custom of some fathers, who seem to have provided enough, saying that their children will pay, Besides the fact that one should not burden one's children with such burdens, when not necessity, but the disordered life of the father has made them so, it often happens that the son, following the vestiges of his father's bad example, accumulates new debts to his elders, so far he is from paying them, so that the cries of the poor creditors ascend to heaven, there is damage to the honour and good name, and the souls suffer in the next life.

Chapter 108

OF THE SAME MATTER OF PRESERVING, AND LAWFULLY INCREASING FACULTIES.

It is therefore a good thing, and worthy of a Christian man, to be content with what God has given us, and to know how to conserve and increase it without offending God, nor harming one's neighbor, partly, as we have said, by curbing appetites, and reining in and moderating superfluous expenditure, partly also by making sure that everything in the house is dispensed in moderation, not lacking what is needed, but not wasting, nor squandering, and although some people laugh, and mock at this assigned life, nevertheless no one should deny that it is much better to live sparingly from one's own, than amply from the life of others. And because in these things one cannot descend to the last individual, we intend, as has already been said, not to persuade meanness, and sordidness, against the honorableness and decency of that state which others can, and must maintain, but only to persuade moderation, and frugality, which does not destroy, indeed helps to maintain for a long time in families, the decorum of civil life. In addition to this, it is very useful to take care of the conservation of wine, wheat, and the things that are stored annually for human food, otherwise what should suffice for the entire year, and beyond, does not suffice, often only for half. The same is said of the furnishings, and of all the kinds of instruments which are used in the house, and outside, which good government maintains, and if it has good service for a long time, without having to continually incur new expenses. But above all our father of the family must avoid idleness, and sitting with his hands at his waist, so that at the proper time he must apply his son to some honourable

exercise in conformity with the state and inclination of the young man, which we will discuss elsewhere, but in the meantime, continuing our purpose, I say that our good father must teach his son to increase his wealth in a way that is very honourable among others, and safe, that is with the diligent cultivation of the land, which as a benign mother, gives us ample nourishment, as long as we are not idle, nor negligent in cultivating it, and it is this very proper office of the father of the family, to have an understanding of agriculture, and to ensure that his fields are well cultivated, and although he is busy in civil affairs and exercises, there are, however, his times of leisure, which serves the health, and the domestic care, and we read of those ancient Romans, who were good ploughmen, and also good Senators, and good Captains, so that they reputed themselves with great honor to be well versed and diligent in agriculture, and from the ploughs to be called to the consulships, and if well I do not absolutely say, that our father of the family makes the exercises of villa, as I do not exclude it either, according to the convenience of his state, as long as this is not an impediment to greater good, and to greater service of God, and of our neighbor, I nevertheless say that he should go there at time and place, and take pleasure in seeing, and in understanding, and in commanding, and in making sure that his lands are well cultivated, and in sum all rustic things are well, and usefully governed.

Chapter 109

OF TWO EXTREMES IN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, THAT IS OF NEGLECT, AND OF ANXIOUS SOLICITUDE.

And now that the thread of reasoning on the care of the family has taken us so far, I shall continue to say that our father of the family must distance himself in this part from two vitriolic extremes in the one, and in the other of which they overflow very differently, indeed in a totally contrary way, because some, even if they are of good intellect and prudent in other matters, are very neglectful in the government of the family, and do not want to understand anything about it, and they leave the care of it entirely to mercenary men, nor do they want to know the state of their affairs, not otherwise than if they did not belong to it, and this happens either through laziness, or delicacy, or impatience, or other similar reasons, so that these people do not receive half of the profit of their goods, which diligent fathers of families would receive, and often to escape from some harassment, which taken with justice would be a pleasure, they incur in very serious inconveniences and troubles. Others are at the other extreme, so anxiously solicitous, and diligent, that it seems that the ground is missing under their feet, and they must die of hunger, and they lean so much on their industry, vigilance, and labors, that it seems they do not know that God has provision for us. And these people lack, as they say, the time to hear the word of God, to read some good spiritual book, to revise the accounts of the soul, and to confess, both of which are damaging extremes, and the second most of all, because it keeps the hearts of men so much in the mud of earthly things, that they forget, with too great a prejudice, heavenly things. Therefore, it is necessary that our father, at times,

uses the spur, to excite his son who is too slow, and neglected, and at times the brake, to hold him back so that he does not get so engrossed in the care of temporal things, that he does not forget eternal things, and neglects the best part of himself, that is the soul, and he also becomes in a certain way coarse, and inept, in the civil conversation, as some people are who do not want to converse with others, but with their peasants, who think, negotiate, and have no other taste, than to talk about making things.

Chapter 110

SOME AUTHORITIES OF SACRED SCRIPTURE AGAINST THE LAZY, ET NEGLECTED.

In the Holy Scriptures, which are like an armoire full of precious and most effective medicines for all the infirmities of the soul, there are, I say, many sentences against these two vicious extremes, and it may be out of place to relate some of them here, so that our Christian educator, comforted by the word of God, may proceed happily and happily in the enterprise begun. Solomon, therefore, in the book of his proverbs, which is full of very useful morals, scolding the lazy man, says: "I, lazy man, go to the ant, and consider the ways, and the movements of that small animal, and learn to be wise, it has no leader, no master, no prince, and even in the state it prepares food, and gathers at the time of eating, so that it can then feed itself. How long will you sleep? When will you wake from your sleep? Behold, while you sleep a little, and then snooze a little more, and stand with your hands clasped, behold, I say thatopia will come upon you suddenly, like a traveler running through the post, and will attack you like an armed man. Solomon wants to say that the lazy man will not have a shield or a shelter against poverty, like an unarmed man, caught unawares, against an armed knight. And then the sacred scripture follows, saying:

But if you are diligent and diligent, the harvest will come to you like a spring, and poverty will flee from you; with these words the wise man teaches us that the man who is the enemy of laziness will reap abundant and copious fruit, like a spring. Solomon himself, speaking of the lazy man, says in another place

I passed through the field of the lazy man, and through the vineyard of the foolish man, and behold, everything was filled with nettles, and thorns covered the whole surface, and the wall had fallen to the ground, which I saw and set myself to think about in my heart, and from the example of others, I learned useful doctrine. So far Solomon, whose words give us to understand that the fields and vineyards of lazy men become uncultivated and wild, and do not bear the proper fruit. And although the Holy Spirit in these and similar places pretends to teach us a higher doctrine, that is, of the evil state of souls incapable of virtue, and untamed by vines, nevertheless the literal and moral sense is what we have said, in detestation of the laziness and carelessness of many.

Chapter 111

SERMON OF THE SAVIOR AGAINST THE EXCESSIVE SOLICITUDE OF TEMPORAL THINGS.

But against the excessive solicitude for temporal things, which turns us away from the service of God, and plunges us wholly into the mire of earthly love, it seems to me that I cannot enclose a more appropriate place than a notable sermon of the Savior recorded in Saint Matthew, which, if it is well proposed to us by the Holy Church at certain times of the year, and is well known to all, nevertheless because this is a very common evil, so much so that it seems that all the labors and industries of men, even of the noblest professions, are reduced to the comforts of this short, and transient life, And because it seems to me that in the above sermon our Lord is striving, so to speak, to eradicate this anxiety from our hearts, so many and so effective are the reasons and the similes he gives, Therefore I have judged it expedient to describe it in this place, according to the formal words, and I beg the good father of the family that he does not regret to read carefully what I have not regretted to report, for his benefit, and for the benefit of the Christian education of our child. Therefore the Saviour said in this form:

Do not be anxious and anxious for the sake of your soul and life that you will eat, nor for the sake of the body that you will clothe yourselves with; for is not the soul more precious than the bait, and the body more precious than the clothing? Look at the birds of the air, how they neither sow nor reap, nor put back into the granaries, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them: are you not more than they are? And which one of you, for so much that he thinks of

you, can add one cubit to his stature? And why do you have so much concern for the clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, do not toil and do not spin. Truly I say to you, that even Solomon in his greatest glory was covered as one of them. If, then, the hay of the field, which is today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, God dresses it in such a way, how much more so do you, men of little faith? Do you not therefore grieve so much, saying that we shall eat, or drink, and what shall we be clothed with? These are the things that the people are seeking and searching for; your father knows well that you need all this. And therefore seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you for granted.

Up to here are the words of the Saviour, with which, as we have already said, the supreme master does not forbid the moderate care and providence of domestic affairs, but that anxiety and restless continuous occupation that does not allow us to seek the Kingdom of God.

Chapter 112

OF THE VIRTUE OF LIBERALITY.

From what has been said above, we can conclude that our child has been brought up with frugality and modesty, and has been taught to flee from disorderly desires, and to be content with his state, dispensing his own abilities with moderation, and not neglecting his affairs, and, on the other hand, having been fully taught by his good father, how much our Lord God displeases him with every kind of theft and robbery, and how strict is the obligation of restitution, from this I say good education and teaching we can conclude, and hope with divine help that our young man will always be a good and faithful observer of the seventh commandment, and not only will he not take illegally from others, but he will rather give voluntarily and freely of his own, which is the part that nowadays is the only one among those that belong to this precept, It remains for us to deal with after such a long discourse, because it is not enough to abstain from evil, but it is necessary to do good, and it is not entire praise, not to take away that of others, but one must be ready to be charitable, fleeing avarice, and tenacity, a sordid vice, and unworthy of every ingenuous, and Christian soul. Since our purpose is not to deal with the virtues in a subtle way, since there are many who have been fully and expertly fulfilled in this, it will suffice to say that liberality is a moral virtue, which moderates our affections with regard to the desire and greed for money, and by money we mean every kind of substance, and anything that is measured by the price of money, around which this virtue is exercised, dispensing it usefully where, when, and to whom it suits, and receiving it also, or not receiving it according to the rule of reason; although this virtue consists more in giving than

in receiving, as an operation of much greater difficulty, and more praised, and more honorable, because according to the saying of the Savior, *Beatius est dare quod accipere*, that is, it is greater happiness, and it is more excellent to give, than to receive, and therefore this virtue makes men very lovable, as that which is mainly employed in helping others. And just as it happens with the other moral virtues, which are a certain mediocrity between two vitriolic excesses, so too liberality is placed in the middle between two extremes, which are illiberality, or true avaritia, and prodigality, for which reason some people are very deceived, especially young noblemen and rich men, who give themselves to be liberal and virtuous, in order to spend, and donate inconsiderately to clowns, parasites, and pimps, and to make banquets, and hunts, and shows for the people without any other fruit, than a very vain popular aura, who instead of being liberal, fall into the vicious extreme of throwing away their goods, and discover their other vices, either of intemperance, or of ambition, or other such, according to the variety of the ends for which they spend profusely. But the true liberal takes care of his goods, and does not dispense them indifferently and without judgement, in order to use them where it is necessary at those times, in those places, and with those people that honour and the due circumstances of virtue require.

Chapter 113

OF ALMSGIVING AND WORKS OF MERCY.

Therefore the good father must train his son to be charitable, and ready to help with all his power, and especially to exercise it in Christian liberality, so that he may be merciful to the poor, and promptly give them alms for the love of God; Almsgiving and charity are a way of people who are most grateful to God, and he rejoices in this so much that he considers that he has done for himself all that good which is done for the poor out of love for him, so that on the day of judgment, as we read in the Gospel, the supreme judge, Christ our Lord, will praise him highly, not for having helped the poor, but for having helped himself, saying I was hungry, and you gave me food; I was a pilgrim, and you took me in; I was naked, and you clothed me; I was sick, and you helped me; and so of the other works of mercy, for which he will give them eternal beatitude. On the contrary, nothing seems to anger him more against the impious than for not having had a heart of pity and mercy towards his poor, or rather towards himself, as he says: What you did not do to one of my least ones, you did not do to me. For this reason, all the divine writings are full of exhortations to give alms, and the sacred Doctors inculcate it continually in their sermons to the faithful people, and especially the glorious St. John Chrysostom, who seems not to have done so. St. Chrisostom, who, it seems, never ceases to celebrate this virtue which he calls the art of great gain, and little known to men, and truly it is so, because almsgiving imparts to us from God the remission of sins, and mercy gives birth to mercy in the next life, as it is written, blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy, but also in this present life God blesses and multiplies the abilities of men of mercy,

so Solomon promises us this from God, in that notable sentence, which was given above in a similar vein, and it need not seem burdensome to us to repeat it; he says therefore Honour God with your substances, and with the first fruits of all your fruits, soothe the poor, and your granaries will be filled with abundance, and your tanks and presses will overflow with wine. And elsewhere it says so, *Fenerator Domino qui miseretur pauperis*, that is, he who has mercy, and provides for the poor, lends to God at usury. Therefore, our good father should accustom the tender child to give alms gladly, giving, as it has been said elsewhere, with his own hands, sometimes the penny to the poor man, and sometimes the bread to the religious, learning to recognize Christ in his poor, and persuading himself to receive while giving for God. Let the son see that his father gives alms with a happy face, and never rejects the poor with disdain, and with insulting words, as some do, but let him always see in his father at least an affection of pity and compassion. And so that no one may excuse himself for not being able to give alms because he is poor, I wish to transcribe here the words of Saint Tobias, whom we have often proposed as an example of a good father of a family, to his son, and they are these Son, of your own ability, give alms, and do not turn away from the face of a poor man, for it will happen that even the face of God will turn away from you, according to your power, so be merciful, if you have much, give abundantly, and if you have little, then study to give it promptly, and willingly, so that you will have a good reward to treasure, and store it for yourself for the time of need, so that the almsgiving frees you from all sin, and from death, and will not allow the soul to go into darkness, the almsgiving will be a great confidence in the confidence of the most high God to those who will have made it.

So far these are the words of Saint Tobias, which are not to be understood so nakedly, that alms alone without anything

else is sufficient to acquire Heaven, but with the company of other virtues, and with the observance of the other divine precepts, as the same Tobias admonishes his son in that place. It is true, however, that this is a very efficacious means of imploring forgiveness and gaining health, because the voices of the poor, who pray for their benefactors, are heard by the Father of mercies, and when any one is silent, the alms are shouted with such a loud voice that they reach the throne of the Most High, so that the holy scripture says in another place, "Place the alms in the poor man's bosom, and he will pray to God for you, and he will ask for help in every need.

Chapter 114

HOW EACH ONE CAN GIVE ALMS, AND THE ADVICE OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM FOR THE POOR ARTISANS.

Therefore, let not the poor be afraid, and let them not fear, because they are not rich, not to be able to exercise this beautiful virtue, but of the little they have, according to the advice of Tobias, let them give a little, but with great readiness, for as far as the wise men of the world have understood, that being more liberal does not consist in the greater quantity and value of the gift, considered absolutely, but considered with respect to the strength of the donor, So that sometimes a great rich person giving for example one hundred scudi, will give less than a poor person giving only one, besides that the greater act of virtue, consists in the inner habit, and in the greater affection of the heart, and to speak christianly in the greater charity, and for these respects the Savior said, that the poor widow who offered the two minutes, had offered more than all. Therefore, each one, poor as he may be, can give alms, and when all temporal faculties are lacking, certainly giving alms with the affection of the heart, having compassion for the afflicted, consoling them with sweet words, exhorting them to patience, praying to God for them, and other similar things, can never be lacking, for as Saint Augustine says, no one can truly say, I cannot love, and therefore each one can and must do spiritual alms, which depend only on the inner affection, such as giving for the love of God to enemies, faithfully advising those in need, and the like, which are called spiritual works of mercy. But our glorious Father St. John Chrysostom gave the poor artisans a reminder that it is very easy for them to give alms in the temporal world. May there be no one who considers the advice of such a saint to

be trivial, but strives to put it into practice for the good of his soul. Each craftsman, he says, when he sells something of his own artifice, or in any way he wants, takes the money of some of his work, and toil, let him set aside a small particle not to be considered, as we call it a baioco, or a quattrino, and this is the money of God, and let him keep it in a box or in a separate case, and never interrupt to do it, and at certain times open it, and give the harvest to the poor of the Lord.

Chapter 115

TO SUBSIDIZE IN PARTICULAR THE RELIGIOUS, AND THE MAGNIFICENT ALMS OF THE RICH AND POWERFUL.

With these and other similar ways, our father of the family will teach his son to be charitable, not only towards the poor who go begging from door to door, but also towards the hidden ones, who, because of an erubescence worthy of compassion, are ashamed to ask for alms openly, and above all towards the poor religious, who by election have made themselves poor, in order to more expediently seize the kingdom of Heaven, and stay night and day praising God, and they give to us the great spiritual alms, of which we are all in need, so that we must help them very promptly, and in particular our parish priests and pastors who minister the sacraments to us, and have care of our souls, and it is much to be regretted, that the ancient custom of the faithful people, of making offerings to the altar, and giving the tithes, and the first fruits to the priest, is almost extinct, so that it is observed by those who are bound by strict obligation. But our child will be so educated that he will be persuaded to make a great gain, when he will be able to give alms to pious and religious men, and servants of God; and if he is rich and great, he will do works of the rich and great for the glory of God, knowing that God has made the rich to be treasurers, so to speak, and depositories of the poor, for which reason he will be more pleased to build churches and monasteries, to provide for hospitals and pious places, to marry poor maidens, to establish colleges where they can learn science for the service of the Republic, especially for poor students, and other similar praiseworthy and magnificent works, and of public benefit, in these I say he will spend more than in some superfluous things of great

expense, of short duration, and of no use at all, except for a slight pleasure, and to satisfy a vain appetite, which praised by a few adulators for their own interest, is then finally blamed by all. Do not think, however, that I want to sit on the bench, and reproach those who build noble palaces, and places of honourable recreation, in the Cities and outside, only remember to avoid excesses, according to the state and the various conditions of people, and that we give moderate satisfaction to our sensual tastes so that we do not forget to fulfil our spiritual obligations.

Chapter 116

OF THE GOOD TREATMENT OF THEIR FAMILY.

Now if it is required of the father, that with exhortation of words, and of effects, he teach our child to be charitable towards strangers, and far away if well we are all one in Christ, nevertheless because charity is ordered, it is certain that in equal terms, and if no particular reason of greater goods does not persuade otherwise, the relatives, the neighbors, and the servants and relatives, and the poor friends, as more related are also more included in the number of those, towards whom charity must be exercised. This will be done at times liberally by giving to them, especially in some serious cases of infirmity, famine and other similar events, and in spite of this, so that they can place their poor daughters, which is one of the alms which are very acceptable to God, and at times, if it is not possible to do otherwise, by graciously lending money, without any kind of gain, as is always necessary in the case of loans, which in time and place can be no small service. But to speak in particular about the servants and family members to whom we are also obliged by justice, I say that the father of the family must treat them well and with charity as if they were his own children, so that they do not lack the things necessary for food, and that they are generally good and wholesome, and likewise their wages must be paid promptly in their own time, and when it happens that they fall ill, it is very convenient to visit and console them, and to provide for them with the affection of a father, not of a master, so that they may be healed, and with good care for the body be helped in the needs of the soul; which, besides the fact that they must be done out of Christian charity, are also useful for the care of the family, since the servants are more

faithful and loving and better able to take care of the household, and with these attitudes, and by giving them some recognition at times, and donations above the ordinary salary, they come to oblige themselves in such a way that the master is more loved, and more revered by them, and he with more authority, can command them, and they with more respect obey him, and willingly continue their servitude with their children, and with their grandchildren, and they come to take that love towards the things of the master, as if they were their own. Therefore, let our child learn from a prudent father, to treat his servants well, and to be a good acknowledger of their servitude, and their labours, and not to have them in place of animals, or slaves, but of men as they are, and to keep them under a common Lord, who is God, and to retain with them such dignity and authority that they do not pass into bitterness and tyranny. It is true that good servants are seldom found, but our father of the family with his prudence will try to find some, and when he has some, he should remember the saying of the wise man: *Servus sensatus, sit tibi quasi anima tua neque; inopem derelinquas illum*, that is, Love the good and prudent servant as yourself with all your heart, and do not leave him in poverty. But now let us pass on to the eighth commandment, since we have been much preoccupied with the seventh, and perhaps not without some benefit to our subject.

Chapter 117

OF THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT. THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOR.

God's works are perfect, and his holy law has made sufficient provision so that among men, who live a sociable and common life together, there may be no matter of offence, which slows down or altogether breaks the bond of that union, and of that love which ought to be among us. And because, generally speaking, offenses are made either in the person, or in the possession, or in the reputation of others, therefore, after having forbidden God that anyone offend his neighbor unjustly in the person, or in the possession, he forbids in this eighth commandment the offense that is made against good esteem and reputation by saying: Do not speak falsely against your neighbor. And just as homicide and butchery are offenses of hand and effect, so false witness is an offense committed with the tongue and with words. And although the tongue is a weak part of our body, and of much less strength than the hand, nevertheless the thing is otherwise, that where the hand by removing, and striking damages only the body in temporal things, the tongue is a knife so sharp, and a venom so penetrating, that it kills the body, takes away the faculties, denigrates the reputation, and kills even the soul itself with the pestiferous persuasions, and with the false doctrines. And what is more marvellous is that not with great apparatus or movement, but with great ease it makes stupendous effects, so that a single word that passes with such speed, not otherwise than a small spark has excited such great flames and fires, that not only individual persons and families are miserably burnt, but also cities, provinces and entire kingdoms. In sum, there is no language, nor pen that is sufficient to express the

many damages that a cursed, and serpentine language can do, as we see by experience every day, and modern and ancient histories are full of examples. The tongue is such an untamed and cruel beast, that the blessed Apostle St. James, speaking of it in his Epistle, writes in this form: All kinds of beasts, birds, snakes and sea animals can be tamed, and have been tamed by man, but the tongue is not a man who can tame it, a restless evil that cannot be restrained, full of deadly poison, and what follows. With these words, and others that were written before and after in the same place, the Holy Apostle shows us the many evils that the tongue does, and how difficult it is to restrain it. For this reason, it is the merit of our good father of a family to make every effort in this matter, so that the tongue of his son may not be a sword of an enraged man, nor a net of deceit and snares, but a vessel of blessing for the glory of God, and for the help of his neighbors. And because the subject matter of this eighth precept is very broad and abounding, we shall limit ourselves to those things which seem to us most relevant to our education, leaving the rest to the sacred Theologians and Doctors who deal more exactly with this doctrine.

Chapter 118

OF LOQUACITY, AND OF SPEAKING CONSIDERED.

A principal root, as it seems to me, of many sins that are committed with the tongue, is loquacity, a vice familiar to young girls, among whom the child is ordinarily reared, it is to be warned that in the tender breast seeds of this defect are not sown, so that later he may become, when he grows up, an idle talker, because as the wise man says, In much talking there is no lack of sin. And because in this, as in all other things pertaining to morals, it is true that famous saying, *A teneris assuescere multum est*, which means that it is very important to become accustomed to something from tender years, so that the nature of the nurse is taken into consideration, and the wise mother helps, as elsewhere has been said, the paternal diligence, and especially around the daughters, remembering that in women is a great ornament the modesty, and the taciturnity, so that St. Paul wrote to Timothy saying, The woman learns in silence with all submission. And in another place of the same Epistle he complains that young widows go around idly in the houses of others, and not only idle, but verbose, as he says, and chattering, and curious, speaking of what is not necessary, and in the Gospel history we read few times that the Blessed Virgin spoke, and always briefly if not praising and magnifying God, and her speech, was for works of charity, and necessary, but it is well written about her, that with the *silentio* she preserved, and conferred in her heart the things heard. Therefore our father accustomed his son to modesty, and to speak soberly, above all in the presence of his elders, because at a childish and youthful age, which, as inexperienced, needs to learn from older men, it is more appropriate to listen than to reason; and we read of our

Saviour in the Gospel, that when he was in the midst of the Doctors, at the age of twelve he listened to them, and questioned them. We also read of the blessed saint Thomasso d'Aquino, nobly born, and sanctimoniously educated, who was so taciturn that his school companions called him a dumb ox, but the skilful teacher, knowing that this was not stupidity, but attentiveness and modesty, used to say, this dumb ox will one day give great mourning, of which he was not deceived. But generally speaking, and for the most part, it helps to be restrained in speaking, and according to an ancient sentence it more often harms to have spoken, than to have been silent; and a wise man said that nature itself has taught us to be more ready to hear, than to speak, having made two ears, and one tongue; and another one said, that not without mystery the blessed nature has made two shelters, which are the lips and the teeth, so that the tongue does not break out in haste to speak. And in the divine letters St. James exhorts us to speak weightily, saying: Let every man be quick to hear, and slow to speak, and slow to anger. And the Apostle rightly linked the slowness of anger with the slowness of speech, because anger is often aroused by many words, and because people speak more carelessly when others are angry.

Chapter 119

OF VITRIOLIC TACITURNITY

But since vice is always inimical to virtue, it is not my intention that the father of a family should teach his son to be so stupid that he knows neither how to speak, nor to question, nor to answer; truthfulness and modesty are good, but to such an extent that they may be a condiment and not an impediment to virtuous action; Moderate speech is also good, as long as it does not overstep the mark, because in the government of the house, and of the republic, and of all human affairs, speech is above all necessary, which if done at the right time and place, produces excellent effects, just as, on the contrary, if badly used, it is the seed, and the cause of great harm. And therefore our child should answer modestly when asked, and when needed, with the same reverence, question his elders, and know that speaking is not forbidden, but rather speaking carelessly and without purpose, and even more so when it is harmful to one's neighbor, which we will discuss a little later. David said it well when he prayed to God to place a guard over his mouth, and a door around his lips; for just as the door is not always closed, nor always open, so too is the similitude of our mouth, which must now be closed, and now open, in order to know how to be silent, and to speak according to prudence and charity.

Chapter 120

OF MURMURING, AND DETRACTION. CHAPTER. CXX.

A very bad, and most pernicious way of men are in the Cities the murmurers, and detractors, others of whom, placing their mouths in Heaven, keep in check all the actions of the Princes, and of the Superiors, and there is nothing where they do not find that to reproach; Others, penetrating into the hearts of men, who are naked and open to God alone, when they cannot slander the actions, accuse the intentions, and make endless reckless judgments, and pronounce a thousand sentences every hour, not only without having the power to judge the alien servant, as the Apostle says, but also without having sufficient information about the fact. This vice of murmuring and detracting from the reputation of others, partly out of ambition and envy, partly out of an abundance of idleness, is very proper to courts and courtiers; for many hope to gain honor by the destruction of their neighbors; and many, while they are idly singing by the fire, or in other conversation, enter to read the book of their companion, forgetting their own, and take such pleasure in murmuring, that it seems they cannot live without discussing the facts of others, and it has passed into proverb, that murmuring is the fifth element. Others are of such a malignant and wicked nature, that by secretly reporting the truth, but with amplifications, and by keeping silent what convinces their evil mind, now fabricating completely artificial slanders they delight in sowing scandal, and very serious discord among friends, and relatives, and among the closest people. How many hatreds, how many fights, how many deadly enmities are born because of these serpentine tongues, and likewise how much damage and harm is done to property and honour, it would be a very long

thing to say, but it is not necessary, since all day long we see open examples of it everywhere.

Chapter 121

OF THE PATERNAL CARE, AND DILIGENCE AGAINST THE AFORESAID SCREWS.

It is therefore appropriate that our father of the family uses effective remedies to preserve the soul of his son from this plague, for which it is not good to bring up children to want to know the facts of their neighbors, and it is often the fault of curious fathers and mothers, who while wanting to know everything that is done in the neighbourhood, accustom the poor child to keep his eyes and ears open always to the facts of others. And those who think that it is their own service, that children should be explorers, and reporters of all domestic affairs, I do not know how prudently they do it, because the cherubs, partly because of such a curiosity of childhood, partly because that paternal applause excites them, and it seems to them to do well, sometimes penetrate to see things, so that that simple age learns sin in time, and nourishes it like a venomous seed, which kills the soul. It is not even certain that they will know the truth, because the putti easily deceive themselves because of their little knowledge, but the damage is very certain and evident, since with these ways they acquire a bad habit of being curious about the facts of others, and of reporting them. Therefore, the father of the family himself watches over his house, and he also checks the diligence of one of the most trustworthy and prudent relatives, and he does not expose his poor son to such dangers, neither as a joke, nor less out of duty.

But as the child grows in years and years to a greater capacity for reason, let him see how much God displeases the detractors and sowers of discord, whom the Holy

Scriptures call “troublemakers”, who will be severely chastised, as the Holy Spirit well demonstrates through the mouth of David in the first fiftieth psalm, where he assimilates the tongues of those who think of nothing else all day long, He likens them, I say, to a sharp razor, which with every little twist of the hand wounds grievously, so that they have such a sharp and poisonous tongue, that with pain they turn it so that it wounds others to the living, for which reason the prophet says, that God will destroy them, and will remove them from the earth of the living; But Saint James in his Epistle admonishes us with great affection to flee from this evil, saying: Do not detract from one another, my brothers; whoever detracts from his brother, or whoever judges his brother, detracts from the law and judges, and despises the law; and all the sacred writings are full of similar judgments. Let the good father add how much we must fear the just and strict judgment of God, who has told us, by the measure you measure others you will be measured, and if idle and useless words, which do not help or harm, will have to be accounted for in the divine examination, what will become of pernicious, unjust and contrary to the charity of God, and of our neighbor? Let him often propose to his son that most just law, of which we spoke above, Do not do to others what you would not want others to do to you, and not only do not lay snares and snares for those who do not offend him, but if others have offended and slandered him, remember that he is a Christian, and that the judge of his cause is God, and therefore do not render evil for evil, as elsewhere when speaking of insults we have recalled, but with Christian generosity let him overcome with his goodness the malice of others, and let his defense be to work ever more virtuously, and if it is necessary to say something in defense and justification of himself, let him do it with modesty, and with such a temperament that he does not offend his slanderer, indeed where he could with truth, let him praise him, or at

least excoriate him, so that he himself may burn and repent of his error. With these gentle ways, and with a few discreet fraternal corrections, prudently made at the right time and place, as the Holy Spirit, the most excellent teacher, knows how to teach to those who truly wish to gain their brother, the noblest vengeance is often made, that is, the enemy becomes a friend, and the slanderer becomes a praiser, and what is most desirable for the glory of God and the health of the brother, he detests, and leaves his sin forever.

Chapter 122

SOME OTHER REASONS AGAINST CURSING.

Now returning to the reasons and convictions of our father of the family, we must not leave out this one, that is, that of the cursers, detractors, and slanderers, the same thing happens as is said in the proverb about those who, despising the law of God and their own souls, betray someone in order to please others, that the betrayal pleases, but not the betrayer, so that the very ones who cherish and approve of the fact, have in abomination the author. Now this also happens to the slanderer, who delights in slandering: for who is he to whom the slanderer takes such pleasure, that while he hears his slander he says tacitly to himself, this one is of such a bad nature, that when it becomes good for him, he will do the same and worse towards me, and will gossip with the same imprudence about me in my absence, as he does now about others with me. And so it is that these people most of the time carry and report their lies on both sides, either to inflame them more with enmity, or to gain credit and gratitude with more people, or because such is the condition of malignant tongues, that they have no more restraint, nor any restraint. In short, the slanderer should never think of being surely loved, nor of giving true satisfaction, if those who hear him for some purpose, and interest, would show otherwise. What shall we say of the public disgrace that these evil-mouthed people bring? For they cannot remain hidden for long, and often their lies and tricks come to light, so that they are shown to be the enemies of all, they are abhorred by all, and no one trusts them, so that they live a most unhappy life, full of outward infamy and inward remonstrance. With these, and other similar arguments, the father of the family will make our

young man abominable, every curse, and detraction,
inflaming him to be such, that by true virtue he may aspire
to reach the gratitude of men, and the acquisition of honour,
and not by way of depression, and the lowering of his
brother, to which means those who do not know in
themselves the quality, nor the merit of being loved, and
honoured, cling.

Chapter 123

OF NOT WILLINGLY LISTENING TO DETRACTIONS.

But it must not be enough for our good father of a family, that his son does not turn out to be a murmurer, nor a slanderer, but he must also persuade him, not to lend his ears to this kind of men, and not to communicate in any way to their sin. This matter has been discussed above, when we spoke of excessive suspicion, and in that place we spoke only of those murmurings and reports which were in the particular interest of our well-bred son, and which he was warned not to believe in lightly, so as not to arouse suspicion in vain, so that he might fall into wrath and other evil consequences, but now more universally speaking, we say that he must abhor all manner of murmuring and detraction of people and things that do not belong to him, and our young man must not be deceived, but must know that it is no less a sin to willingly hear detractions and curses than to detract from them, and few detractors would be found if it were not for those who willingly listen to them, fomenting their wickedness. Therefore the Christian who fears God, and who from his earliest years has been educated in the observance of the divine law, and who remembers the obligation that we all have to love our neighbor as ourselves, having reached a more mature age, may with some greater authority remedy the situation, so that he may be able to remedy with some greater authority this plague that is going around so much, if by chance he finds himself in a place where the reputation of others is torn, when he cannot do otherwise, show at least by his face, and by his appearance that he does not like that reasoning, and this is what the Sage says in the proverbs:

Ventus aquilo dissipat pluvias, et facies tristis linguam detrahentem, that is, The north wind dissipates the clouds, and the melancholy face, by which others show that they do not hate willingly, dissipates the tongue of the detractor, and chases away the curses. Sometimes he also uses a clever way of reasoning, or amuses the reasoning, or throws in a few words of correction, pointing out that we all have our own beam, and as the Scripture says: In many things we all err, so we must not be so severe censors of the faults of others, considering our own. In short, let our well-educated young man try to excuse as much as he can the common frailty, and let him not sharpen, but rather let him discreetly sharpen his biting tongue, and let him develop from similar reasoning, which is of no use whatsoever; and on the other hand, for the benefit of himself and his neighbors, let him remember that admirable sentence of Scripture, and let him always have it in his heart and mouth: Attende tibi ipsi, that is, attend to yourself; on which Saint Basil, a father of singular eloquence and learning, wrote a beautiful sermon. And truly he who would observe this precept well, would be free from infinite curiosity, and useless cares, and sins.

Chapter 124

THAT THE GREAT AND POWERFUL MUST MOST FLEE THE
DETRACTORS, AND FLATTERERS.

I do not wish in this treatise to go into the particulars of the education of Princes who have the power to govern great states and provinces, having proposed from the beginning to reason with the nobles and citizens of the most common state, but without doubt the detractors and similar sowers of calumny are a plague, from which it is necessary that Princes guard themselves more than from any other, since each one desires by good and evil means to insinuate himself into their grace, and to possess the greater part of it, and it is all the more difficult for Princes to guard against it, since for the interests of their states they are almost obliged to hear many people, and to want to know many things. Therefore it requires great judgement to discern a true man, zealous for the service of his Lord, from one who is simulated and pretended, and who walks with the aim of his own interest. But generally speaking I would believe that it was expedient to train the Prince not to give easy access to detractors who make him timid and suspicious, and mistrustful of all, so that it is necessary that great inconveniences follow, and there is no peace and harmony among his courtiers, and often he deprives himself of the ancient, and faithful judges for the guilty. I already had a close servitude with a Cardinal, who died young, but was of a shrewd prudence, who, when one of his relatives reported to him the gossip of another, used to answer him in this way: why do you think so little of the good opinion that I have of you, that now you give me the occasion to make a different judgment, seeing that you so keenly observe the faults of your brother, and try to put him at the expense of the

common master? How would you like this to be done to you? Or do you not have any defect? Put your hand to your chest first. Having soon learned of the nature of the Lord, and that these were not good ways to be ungrateful to him, the courtiers began to think of gaining their master's goodwill by serving him well and diligently, and not by supplanting and crossing one another. It is not said, however, that the Prince despises the warnings of the moment, indeed he must open his eyes to them, and make the necessary provisions, only that he does not believe in them lightly, and does not begin, as is said, from the execution where it concerns the fame, and life of others, and even more so of those who by ancient experience are known to be good, and loyal. And whoever hears someone being detracted from, should always do what one reads of Alexander the Great, who, while he was talking to the one who was doing the office of accusing, closed one ear, wanting with that way of doing things, to show that he reserved the place for the accused to be able to defend himself, and in this way he did not prejudice him, nor did he pronounce the sentence against him.

Another kind of domestic enemies princes have, no less pernicious than their detractors, and these are the flatterers, cunning, artful, simulators, who under the appearance of love, do great harm to those who lend them faith, for they say good evil, and good evil, as they see it more agreeable to him from whom they hope to gain profit by this means, according to which they measure the praising, or blaming, the persuading, or dissuading, the affirming or denying of anything, and not according to the rules of truth, so that as iniquitous, and false witnesses they are guilty of this eighth commandment. Therefore, God forbid that our young man should be in such a number, on the contrary, the good father of a family will show him the vile condition of these people, who, like weathervanes placed on towers, turn to

every wind, and have neither firmness nor stability, and are often ridiculous to everyone. Nothing is more unworthy of a naive and noble soul than servile flattery, just as candor and truthfulness are worthy of a true gentleman, who loving the Lord cordially, and his friend, speaks the truth out of pure love, which, if as a bitter beverage is not so pleasant to the taste, has however the virtue of evacuating the corrupt humours of the soul, and finally knowing the simplicity of the one, and the duplicity of the other, the bitter friend is more grateful than the suave flatterer. And this is what Scripture says in one place: *Meliora sunt vulnera diligentis quam fraudulenta oscula odientis*, that is, the wounds of those who love are better than the fraudulent kisses of those who hate, meaning by wounds, and by kisses the truth that stings, and the flattery that delights. It is not said that the son whom we seek to raise well, civilly, and in a Christian manner uses an indiscreet freedom of speech, as one who cares for no one, rather distinguishing between people, times and places, must use prudence and modesty together, because even medicines used against time, or in greater quantity than necessary, do not heal, but often kill the sick person.

Chapter 125

OF THE FALSE WITNESSES IN GIUDITIO.

If every false witness, in whatever place it is said, affirming the false, or denying the true, is always a grave sin, nevertheless it is most grave when it is done in a judgement, where there is public authority, where the oath intervenes, where the name of God is interposed, and where finally the sentence is to be pronounced according to the acts and the evidence, and that which is true, which the legitimate number of the sworn witnesses asserts, not being able to judge the hidden. For which the false witness commits a great sin, as the many and so important circumstances of that judicial and public action openly show us. It is all the more to be regretted that this crime is very frequent in our times, and that there is a great number of men, who not only for love, hatred and other similar affections, but for a small price have their own souls venal, and exposed to every iniquity, to this kind of crime are reduced the false contracts, and wills, and the supposed persons, and a thousand other similar deceptions and falsehoods, of which we hope that our young man by divine help, and by good paternal education will be inimical and therefore the good father must persuade his son with the most effective reasons that are possible, that never in his life, neither to harm his enemy, nor to help his friend, nor to satisfy the prayers of anyone, nor to acquire all the gold, nor all the honours of the world, should he allow himself to be led to bear false witness, and that he should know that he is not truly a good man who, whose integrity in some way, whatever it may be, can finally be destroyed, whatever he may be, can finally be conquered, just as that woman would not be properly chaste, whose modesty could be bought for any price, even

the greatest, so that the virtuous man is such electively for the same virtue, and for the love of God, and not for human respects. And because our young man will in due time have to exercise himself in government, and in public offices, he will be fully instructed by his father, and well resolved in himself that not only as a witness, but not even as a procurator, or advocate, and much less as a judge, neither in saying, nor in doing, nor in public congregations, and councils, nor less in private ones will he bear witness to falsehood, nor will he approve, and favour lies, nor oppress the truth. And woe to those who, in contempt of the human and divine laws, will do otherwise, for the slander, the perjury, and the false judgments will be justly condemned, and severely chastised in the just and tremendous Court of God, besides that many times infamy and chastisement begins in this world, allowing God, that the hidden deceptions of such, more likely monsters than men, come to light, and to the notice of all the world.

Chapter 126

OF TRUTH IN UNIVERSAL, AND OF SECRECY.

In sum, by virtue of this precept, all falsity is forbidden, and we are commanded, that after all simulation and deception is laid aside, we are in all actions, and in simple, straightforward, and true words. And because in discussing the second precept of the law above, and in particular the oaths, we have said enough about the virtue of truth, how praiseworthy it is, how grateful it is to God, how beneficial in private and public life, Therefore it is not necessary to say any more in this place, except that between telling the truth and not telling a lie, there is some difference, because the lie must never be told, and is always a sin, although more and less serious, according to the matter, and the offense one does to one's neighbor. But our child must be brought up in such a way that he abstains as much as possible from every lie, even playful ones, and where no harm is done, because from light lies one passes to serious ones, and acquires the evil habit of lying, with serious damage to health and good reputation. As for the truth, it is very certain that where the judge legitimately interrogates in *giuditio*, the witness is obliged to manifest the truth, and according to the saying of Saint Augustine, he who conceals the truth is not less guilty in such a case than he who asserts the lie. But outside of legitimate judgement it is sometimes lawful, and sometimes even obligatory, to conceal the truth. And so many deceive themselves, believing that they are not guilty, nor detractors, for having spoken the truth against their neighbor, as if it were lawful to reveal the hidden wounds and miseries of one's neighbor and to show them to those to whom one is not obliged to make them known, and from which there follows no other

fruit than to denigrate the reputation of one's brother, and to put him in a bad light with one who previously held him in good stead; But even if it were not a matter of infamy, it is a reprehensible thing, to be like a vase full of leaks, which leaks out on every side, and does not contain the liquor, such are some who are so incontinent that it seems to them that they cannot live, if after having heard some secret, they do not immediately run to report it, to this one and to that one, who greatly offend the laws of friendship, since it is a necessary thing in life to communicate our secrets to our friends, in order to bring back their counsel; Wherefore the wise man used to say in his proverbs, Treat and confer with your friend about your affairs, and do not reveal your secret to a stranger. But from the good education of knowing how to curb the tongue, and not to be a chatterer and talkative, of which we spoke above, we will also obtain this fruit, that our child will become more easily accustomed to serving secrecy, This is a very necessary condition in those who administer public affairs, and are participants in the counsels of Princes, otherwise it often happens that a word spoken out of lubricity of tongue, or out of vanity in showing oneself aware of the secrets of great ones, ruins an important business. And so the Angel said well to old Tobias and to his son in this sentence, The hiding of the sacrament, that is the secret of the King, is a praiseworthy thing, and well done, but the works and mercies of God must be revealed and made public. Therefore, let our father of the family teach his son to know how to observe secrecy, where and when it is appropriate, and not to be like the foolish girls, whose curiosity in wanting to know the secrets, and the ease of discovering them in others, is very peculiar. In the ancient histories a noble Roman boy is celebrated, who, annoyed by his curious mother, to hear what was decided in the council, was able to cleverly conceal the affairs heard by him in the Senate; to gossip inconsiderately, and to tell all his own affairs, and those of others on every subject, is

something to be drunk on, as the holy scripture says, There is no secret where drunkenness reigns, and finally men of this nature lose their old friends, and do not acquire new ones. Let our young man therefore remember the saying of the wise man in the Ecclesiasticus, Qui denudat arcana amici fidem perdit, et non inveniet amicum ad animum suum, which means, whoever discovers the secrets of his friend loses his faith, that is he loses credit, both with the first friend to whom he has not served the faith, and with the others, who will not trust him, so that it follows that he will not find a friend, according to his mind and desire.

Chapter 127

OF THE OBLIGATION TO RETURN THE FAME TAKEN AWAY.

The divine scripture says, speaking of excessive drinking, that wine is drunk with relish, and descends gently, but in the end it bites like a snake; this saying can be morally applied to every sin, but for now we will use it for our purpose of detraction. It is a tasty thing for many who have a depraved taste, and who drink iniquity like fresh water, to detract from the fame of others, and it is done with great ease, but they do not think of the bitter taste that remains afterwards of restoring the fame taken away, which part I have reserved in the last place as a seal to all this reasoning, so that the father of the family may effectively impress on the young man's soul, how tight is the knot, which obliges us to the restitution of honor and fame. And if it is true, as it is true, and we have said sufficiently above, that he who has taken away the property of others, will not have remission of his sin if he does not return it, what will become of fame, a good of a higher order, and of greater price, and esteem without greater comparison? So that if men would consider with due attention what they do, and in what necessity they place themselves, when they defame someone, for certain they would sooner bite off their own tongue, than speak. Therefore, let our good father inculcate in his son, on the one hand, the great obligation of restitution, under penalty of the eternal disgrace of God, which is the most horrible thing that can be said or thought, and on the other hand, the great difficulty of coming to the practical act as is customary, because men, out of a vain worldly fear, do not wish to be accusers of themselves, nor do they wish to be rid of false, slanderous, and accursed relations, and when they do so with the most sound advice, it is not the same as with

goods, which easily become equal, but with fame it often happens that the infamy has spread so much that the damage is almost irreparable, as for example, the honor of women is such a fragile thing, that for a sonnet, for a famous book, or for a little word said for boasting, a poor virgin is offended in such a way, that all the water of the sea is not enough to remove the stain of an infernal tongue. Besides, the soaked men who once have an opinion do not lay it down lightly, even if the slanderer disdains it. And briefly, these cases are so serious, and full of so many and so many difficulties, that very learned men have written long discourses on them, to which I refer so as not to pass over the terms of our institute, it is enough for me to remind our father of the family, who so disciplines his son that he lives far from this obligation, and from his earliest years trains him to know how to refrain from speaking, often reminding him of the sentence of Saint James the Apostle, who writes as follows in his Epistle:

If anyone considers himself to be religious and pious, not by refracting his tongue, but by seducing and deceiving his heart, his religion is vain and useless.

Chapter 128

OF THE LAST TWO COMMANDMENTS OF THE DECALOGUE.

As a compliment to the Decalogue there remain the last two precepts, about which we need say little, in accordance with the manner observed so far, which is not primarily to explain the doctrine, but to extract documents for our Christian education. Therefore the sentence of these two precepts is as follows: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, nor his wife, nor his servant, nor his handmaiden, nor the ox, nor the ass, nor anything of his. The first seed, and the root of all evil is lust; hence the Saviour said in St. Matthew, that homicide, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, and blasphemy come out of the heart; hence these last precepts are like a compliment to all the others, keeping our hearts far from the effect and affection of sin. And because there are two principal objectives of sin, that is, the useful good and the pleasurable good, two concupiscences are forbidden in these precepts; the one concerns the pleasurable good, when it is said not to desire another's woman; the other concerns the useful good, whereby it forbids the desire for one's neighbor's house, servants, horses, and other possessions. It is not enough for the observance of the divine law not to kill, not to commit adultery, or any other impudent act, not to take away the property, and the reputation of others, abstaining from the work, and from the external act, which is done through this body, of which the human laws are content, but God above all wants the pure, and sincere heart, and the chastity, and integrity of mind, which does not cost, but leaves the brake to the lusts, and unbridled cupidity, and unrestrained, and unbridled greed, and delights in, and pleases, and gives consent to the illicit appetites, that now the flesh, now the world, now the devil

suggests to us, besides the fact that he is already guilty of sin in the presence of God, it easily follows, that lighting up the flame of desire, he finally comes to the execution, and puts into manifest work, what was already conceived in his heart, as S. Iacomo shows us speaking of the origin and the progress of sin with these noble words:

Each one, he says, is tempted by his own lust, drawn and enticed, and then when lust has conceived, that is, when it joins with consent, it generates sin, and sin consumed not only by the external work, but by full consent, generates death, and eternal death. So then are the robberies and oppressions of the poor, then the insidiousness of the marital bed, then the infamy of others, either to lower it or for some other end, and this is finally the source of all evils, which naked beforehand, and open to the eyes of God, in the depths of the heart, are then manifested to the eyes of men, by external works. Therefore our father of the family, whose aim is to make a true man of good, that is a good Christian, and not a hypocrite, nor a Pharisee, content only with an outward appearance of righteousness, and inside all hatred, and robbery, like whitewashed sepulchres, as the Lord called them, will seek with all diligence, that his son may be truly good in the depths of his heart, for the love of God and virtue, exhorting him not to want to serve the cruelest of tyrannical greed, but to serve the will of God, and to want above all to appear good with a pure heart, for he is the scrutinizer of hearts, and not to care about the praise and glory of men, except for the greater glory of God, otherwise the eternal reward will be lost; Moreover, it often happens that men, careful observers of the faults of others, discover the feigned and simulated goodness, and despise and mock the simulator. Tell him that there is no greater, nor more noble victory, than to overcome one's own greediness, which if we are accustomed to resist, will become weaker and weaker, and the devil will have less powerful and

effective stimuli to tempt us. Add that a man given over to his greed, advises nothing, nor discourses, nor judges correctly; and not differently from the eye, over which is placed a colored glass, sees all things of that color, so he regulates everything by his own appetite, and not by honesty, nor by the common good. In short, the purpose and aim of all the Christian's work, as a holy man says, is to attain and attain purity of heart, which then leads to the last of all ends, that is to God; for it is written, Blessed are the worlds of the heart, for they shall see God. But because all this and every other perfect gift comes from above, as St. James says, and descends from God. Iacomo says, and it descends from the Father of Enlightenment, and from him it is fitting that it be asked humbly and with devout prayer, otherwise human solicitude is vain and fruitless without divine help; therefore it is necessary to discuss prayer a little, especially since of the four things proposed from the beginning, which were the Symbol of the Apostles, the seven sacraments, the Decalogue of the ancient law, and Dominical prayer, only this last point remains for us to discuss a little.

Chapter 129

OF THE ORATION.

I therefore say that prayer, as the Holy Fathers have taught us, is an elevation, an ascent of our mind towards God, when, withdrawing ourselves into the little room of our heart, and closing as much as we can the door of it, so that the temporal solitudes and the burdensome cares of this earthly life do not disturb us for some time, we begin to consider the greatness of God's mercies, and in general towards the whole human race, and in particular towards ourselves, and raising ourselves little by little from the earth, and ascending by this divine ladder to heaven, the eye of the soul, previously clouded by the fog of carnal affections, is purified and sees with greater light than usual other countries, other honors, other goods, and consequently other desires, and other loves are kindled in the soul, which, nevertheless, drawing nearer to the source of every good, fixes its gaze of consideration and meditation on God and on his innumerable benefits, and is completely immersed in the abyss of that infinite clemency and goodness, and there humbly prostrates itself at the feet of its most benign Lord, its most loving father, and its most beloved spouse, and now praises him, now she blesses him, magnifies him, rewards him for herself and for all creatures, now with great trust she pours out, as the prophet says, in God's conspect her desires and her petitions, and she exposes to him her tribulations, and she asks him for help and succor, and the supplicating soul never returns empty from the presence of him, who desires nothing more than to find in us the capacity to fill us with his grace. In short, prayer is a key that opens Heaven, it is a trustworthy messenger, and a most acceptable mediator, who offers our petitions to God and implores us to

forgive our sins; and finally it is a chain of celestial gold, which binds us to God, from whose union all good in the soul rejoins, so that prayer is more perfect, the more it pursues this goal of raising and uniting our mind with God.

Chapter 130

OF THE PARTS, AND CONDITIONS OF THE ORATIONE.

Now it is not our duty to deal in detail with the two parts of prayer, which, as we mentioned above, are two, the performance of gratitude and petition, nor is it our purpose to explain subtly many other things that can be considered about prayer, such as, for example, we can say that there are two ways of prayer, one called vocal and the other mental, and the other mental, the vocal one is done by pronunciation, and with the external sound of the words, which way is more commonly used in the sacred temples salming, and reciting divine prayers, according to the institution of our mother holy Church, and this way of praying is very useful to excite the devotion of the faithful people, in public oration, and in private, it also helps to warm and inflame our heart, so that it is more disposed to the mental prayer, which is so called, because the tongue is silent, or only speaking a few words, that the ardor of the spirit, mixed with fiery sighs from time to time pushes out, in the rest the mind is the same as now, in silence and in the secret of the heart, where God hears it with great pleasure, and responds to the beloved soul, and reasons with it such noble things, that the human tongue cannot express it, and it is this way of prayer so perfect, that is the life, and the soul, so to speak, of the vocal prayer, otherwise if the inner man is not now in spirit, and truth, little is the fruit that only the movement of the lips, and the sound of the words brings.

It would also take a long time to recount the conditions, which are sought in good prayer, as if to say, that it must be full of trust, and hope in the immense goodness of God, it must be humble, resigned to the will of God, especially in

asking for things that pertain to the body, and to the sustenance of this life; prayer must also be fervent, not lukewarm, and remitted; and moreover it is necessary that prayer be assiduous and persevering, in which way it finally overcomes the invincible; I leave it to say that all the impediments must be removed, which make a dam and a wall, so that our prayer cannot penetrate to God, that is sin, and the affection and willingness to sin, and hatred of our neighbor, not wanting to forgive the insults received, otherwise with what face will we dare to raise our bloody hands to Heaven, and hope to be heard? And since we ourselves are unworthy of imploring anything, therefore our prayers must take efficacy from the merits of Christ, and in his name we must implore the Father of mercies, that he may grant us, as we see that the Holy Church does in all her prayers, imploring together the help of the Most Blessed Mother of God, and of the glorious saints who reign with Christ, so that they may be our helpers and intercessors, praying with us and for us to the Supreme God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the only author and giver of grace and glory.

Now of the aforementioned things, and of others very similar, pertinent to good and fruitful praying, it is not, as I have already said above, my business to discuss subtly, I remind our father of the family, however, to read some of those books, which purposely, and copiously treat this matter, such as the Roman Catechism, which has never been praised enough, and the book of Friar Luigi Granata, great master of the art of the spirit, which book is inscribed, of prayer, and meditation, and other similar books, from the reading of which books, and learned treatises the father of the family, will be able to teach many useful things to his son, which for us are silent.

Chapter 131

HOW SERIOUS DAMAGE IS DONE TO THE CHRISTIAN PEOPLE BY THE LITTLE STUDY OF PRAYER.

Among the many calamities of these last times, in which charity has cooled and iniquity has abounded, the least is not to be considered the little study of prayer, which is commonly seen, indeed some spiritual men are wont to say, that all the evils by which the people of God, and the whole world is afflicted, arise from a lack of prayer, just as, on the contrary, all that is good on earth is the fruit of prayer. And truly it is a thing to be lamented, seeing that some reputed experts do not know by name what mental prayer is, so far they are from exercising it, others consider it as something to be done by old women, and by monks and friars, others wearing beautiful and rich crowns as an ornament in their hands, and saying some part of it, while they deal with family matters with the attendants, or discuss with friends impertinent things, not to say while they are wishing for their pleasure, and in sum praying with no, or very little attention, it seems to them to have accomplished enough with the obligation of praying. Therefore it is necessary that good Christian education should remedy this drawback, and that the prudence of the flesh, God's enemy, should be understood and practiced to the extent that we are Christians by the grace of God, and no longer Gentiles, as our most ancient ancestors were, so that in a Christian way, according to the precepts of Christ, and according to the institutes of the Holy Apostles who so often remind us to pray, it is necessary that we live, and not as people who do not know God. Now I would like to know from those who, under the name of Christians, live a little less than as Gentiles, what is more necessary to us than prayer? Who

does not know how many needs and necessities we have, both for our body and soul, for ourselves and for our relatives, for private and public life? Without doubt we are poor and in need of infinite things. But perhaps it does not seem true to the rich and powerful that they are neither poor nor needy, for what have we that does not depend on the mighty hand of God, not only as giver, but as preserver, and as absolute mistress, to return to us, when it pleases, our state and strength, our body, our health, our children and our life itself, as was well understood by that very strong fighter against the devil when he said to each of his temptations: God has given it to me, God has taken it back, blessed be the name of the Lord; and not only for these carnal goods that we like so much, it is convenient for us to knock at the door of divine mercy, but much more for spiritual goods, as more important, since we are all, as a holy Doctor says, poor and in need of God's grace. Therefore, whether it be to impose on the Supreme God the things necessary for the body and soul, or so that he may deign to preserve them for us, or to thank him for the continual benefits which we receive at every moment, since we cannot turn our eyes in any part, that we do not see ourselves surrounded by the gifts of our most blessed Father, or whether it be to ask his forgiveness for our daily offenses and sins, and to obtain light, and intellect, and strength of spirit, so that all our actions may be directed to a prosperous end, and so that we may walk in safety among so many dangers of this life, and among so many snares and traps that the devil, our most bitter enemy, tends to us; in sum, for all the needs mentioned above, and for many others that it would be difficult to enumerate, we have a great necessity, to have recourse continually to prayer. I leave to say what sweetest and most suavest fruits this blessed plant produces, and what treasures God dispenses to the soul in the colloquy of prayer, and how much worship and honor is rendered to God by this most adored sacrifice, and how the

most sublime virtues called Theological virtues, that is faith, hope, and charity, are exercised to the highest degree; Of these and other admirable effects that prayer has, I refer to its own writers, who for the main subject, as we have said above, deal with it copiously.

Chapter 132

OF THE PATERNAL CARE ABOUT THE HOLY EXERCISE OF PRAYER; AND BEFORE THE TIME, AND THE PLACE.

But to come down now more specifically to the paternal care and diligence in prayer, and especially in the time and place of praying, I say that one of the most necessary things in human life and in the good regiment of the family is the dispensation of time, which, even if it is very short and very fast, if it is shared with discretion, it makes up for many tasks, as we see from experience in the well-ordered congregations of religious. For this reason, in domestic activities, all confusion should be avoided, assigning to each its proper time. And since prayer is as necessary and important an activity as we have demonstrated, it is only right that of the twenty-four hours of each day, at least one hour should be allotted to this holy exercise of prayer, leaving a large part for the moderate care of the body, and for human exercises and affairs. But which of these hours is more convenient for the family to gather together as at the table, to be nourished with spiritual food, is up to the prudence of the father of the family, considering the order of the house, and the particular circumstances to determine it; but generally speaking, the hour that is more removed from the noise, and from the commerce, for the reason of which many come and go in the house, that will ordinarily be more appropriate; Because in order to pray it is very necessary to have a quiet mind, and not to have things that divert us, since one of the greatest difficulties, especially for those who are not well trained, is to collect and unite our soul, scattered by the senses, and by the various cogitations, which distract it. So it is that the remote and solitary places, and the less sensational hours, such as those of the night,

help us not a little to be better disposed to pray. I would therefore believe that the evening after the sign of the Hail Mary, when the Holy Church invites us, and the occupations of the day largely cease, would be a suitable time for this holy exercise. I say the same thing about the first hour of the day, and about dawn, especially in the season of summer, in which one could also use the middle of the day, to resist the meridian devil, who is more infamous there. It should be known, however, that the longer the interval after eating, and the more the head is cleansed of the vapors that rise from the stomach, the better disposed a man will be to pray. And because, as we said earlier, the condition of the place is very important, I return to what I have said on other occasions, namely, that in every Christian house, but at least in those of the nobility, which are spacious and large, there should be a small oratory, according to the number of inhabitants, devoted only to divine worship; Because we are men of soul and body, and not naked spirits, we learn things by means of those external senses, and more so do children, so that the appearance of the place alone, where prayer is done, moves a certain reverence and devotion, all the more because it is decently decorated, and with holy images, and with some lighted lamps; all these things help to make the soul withdraw into itself, and to apply itself with greater attention to this office. But because the snares of Satan are many, therefore, in order to avoid any scandal, it does not seem to me to be expedient, especially where there are many families, for all men and women to meet together in the oratory, and even if they could be separated, if however the division were not such that they could not see each other at all, but in any case it seems better to me that the father of the family be with the men, and the mother of the family with the women at separate times; and if the separate apartments, as is the case in noble palaces, also have different places, it would be even better. If, however, because of the small number of members of the family or for

some other reason, the father of the family should find that all the members of the house are present in the same place for the prayer, he should at least warn that there is always light in the oratory, and that he should be in a corner where he can easily see what is being done by each member.

Chapter 133

HOW LITTLE BY LITTLE THE CHILD MUST BE ACCUSTOMED TO PRAYER.

We see from experience in natural things, that a small seed first sprouts from the earth with difficulty, then sprouts into a plant, then grows into a small shrub, and finally becomes a sturdy and perfect tree; the same happens with the culture of the soul, around which the paternal care is labored in the education of the child; for which it is necessary to have a little patience in the first principles, and not to withdraw one's hand from the work, but to propose before one's eyes the fruit, which in due time by divine grace will be harvested. I therefore say, returning to the purpose I began with, that from the beginning it will be sufficient that the child be present in the oratory with a reverent act, for as long as the father sees fit, and it will be no small thing that he observe silence with the others, and to make the sign of the Holy Cross, or some similar thing, then to say the Pater, and the Ave, and to listen, from hand to hand, then, as he will be more able, he will answer to the Litanies, and he will make vocal prayer, saying the penitential Psalms, or the nocturne for the dead, or other devout prayer, and other offence approved by the Holy Church. However, the child should be accustomed to kneel down with his whole body, and to pronounce the words in an appropriate manner and with the attention that age demands, so that he may accompany his inner devotion in some part with the devout utterance of his tongue, and this may warm up the heart's intentions. And because while one is in the oratory there is not much opportunity, the first thing to do is to warn the child of what he is going to do, and then the father corrects him where necessary, and gently with some praise, he adds

spurs to the course. But after he has reached a more perfect use of reason, after the vocal prayer, which is always good to use, as a preparation for the mental one; so that with the pronounciation of those words, which are full of the spirit of God, the soul will begin to warm up, and it will be easier to dispense with that time, because to do a whole hour of mental prayer requires habit, and not mediocre exercise. Therefore, as I have begun to say, after the vocal prayer, the father of the family will briefly propose one or two points to meditate on, or he may do it later, as he sees fit, until such time as the spirit itself, and the assiduity of praying, will teach our devout youngster how to pray, so that frequent prayer is an excellent teacher of itself. However, since from the beginning it is necessary, like a weak vine, to lean on some support, the father of the family will be able to have his son read to him some part of some divine book, so that the others will also be edified, and the subject of prayer, and the widest field of meditation is the life and death of our Savior Jesus Christ, and the book of the cross, and likewise the consideration now of death, and of the vanity of all present life, now of the glory of paradise, and of the other new things, of which we spoke in the treatise on the Apostolic Symbol, the feasts which also occur daily, in which the holy Church represents to us all the principal mysteries of our redemption, the sermons heard, and other similar things will provide material for meditation. The father of a family should also remember to pray in spirit for his domestic needs, for those of his relatives, friends and benefactors, for the dead, for his homeland, and for the whole of the holy universal Church, so that the child may broaden the affection of charity, and become accustomed to having recourse to God in all private and public needs.

Chapter 134

OF THE EXAMINATIONS OF THE CONSCIENCE, AND SOME MAIN POINTS.

We read that the ancient Cato the Censor, used to remember every evening, and to repeat to himself all that he had said, heard, and done that day, which, following the custom of the Pythagoreans, he used to do in order to exercise his memory, which, if a Gentile man, for the sake of not much time, did not burden himself with doing daily, how much less should it be burdensome to the Christian for the health of his soul? And if careful merchants revise their books every day, and if the diligent father of a family wants to know daily and with reason, about his factors, and the most important things of the day, how should not the Christian revise the book of his conscience, which is done in a very short time, even while lying in bed? Besides that for the same family care, and for the good domestic regiment, the consideration of the day's activities can help not a little, referring everything to God, and reordering where it was lacking, ourselves, and our activities, and with the rule of the divine law. It reminds me in this regard to have seen printed a little memoir which contains the way of examining the conscience every evening, reduced to five very brief points, which because they conform to our subject, it seemed to me good to record in this place.

So the first point is this;

To give thanks humbly to God for all the benefits received that day. The second is to ask for grace and the light to know and hate sin. The third, to ask his soul to account for all the offenses done to God that day, in thought, word, deed, and

omission of what he should have done. Attending especially to those faults, to which one usually feels most inclined.

The fourth, to beg God's forgiveness with a humble heart, for the above defects and failures, and to grieve and rebuke Him.

The fifth, to firmly propose to guard oneself in the future with the help of God against sins, and as for those already committed, to make a resolution to confess them.

It contains the same memorial, five other points, for the morning when we get out of bed, and because they serve our Christian education, and the matter of prayer, I will not leave to report them too.

The first, to thank God and bless Him in all His gifts, and in spite of Him for having guarded us that night.

The second, to offer all of oneself into the hands of His Divine Majesty, begging Him to have us on His guard, and to give us the grace to do everything that day according to His holy will.

Third, to strengthen ourselves inwardly against those sins where we are most wont to fall, renewing our resolutions to abstain from them by divine help.

The fourth is to ask God for help in this and every other need of ours, commending ourselves to the glorious Virgin Mother, to the Guardian Angel, and to all the blessed of Paradise.

Fifth and last, to say three times the Pater noster, and Ave Maria, for all the faithful living and dead, and then to hear Holy Mass with devotion, offering to God that blessed

sacrifice, for his sins, and for all the needs of the Holy Church.

Chapter 135

OF THE USEFULNESS OF THE AFOREMENTIONED POINTS,
AND OF THE ORATIONS CALLED IACULATORY.

These same points will be able to provide us with the material to make mental prayer longer when it will be opportune. But when, because of the human occupations and various accidents of this painful life, we are not allowed a long time to retire, at least let us not leave morning and evening to make a little recollection of our heart, according to the above-mentioned way, and each one will feel the wonderful benefit of this little preparation and meditation in the morning and evening, and will spend the days happier and the nights quieter. And although earthly affairs and occupations should be taken with such measure, that they do not impede the negotiation of health, and the principal care of the soul, nevertheless no one can be excused from not praying because of lack of time, since our mind is free, and can always rise to God while our hands are also exercising themselves in some work. Besides a single movement of the will, which lovingly turns to God, a chaste sigh, which bursts forth from the depths of the heart, a single saying with true affection, Lord, and God my sinner's wretchedness, such a short prayer will often be so effective, and these are those prayers called "iaculatory", which, like thunderbolts, propelled by the bow of a humble heart, lit by love of God, fly very quickly to Heaven. And the Christian must often arm himself with these prayers during the day, as, for example, when he begins a conversation, when he has to speak for a moment, when he is assailed by some temptation, and finally to rekindle in ourselves and to keep alive the fire of the love of God, because we are in this valley

of tears, where cruel winds blow from all sides, continually chilling it.

Therefore, our father of the family should accustom his son little by little to these holy exercises, and first make him learn these points in his mind. Secondly, it will be very useful for the child to see his own father who, morning and evening, presents himself before God, to say at times the father in a loud voice, in a beautiful way, so that the child understands in an act of prayer, and to repeat every day some of the points mentioned above, as for example, "My God, give me grace that I do not offend you. I thank you, God the Father of mercies, for all the favours it has pleased you to do me, and the like, so that the child will learn to imitate his father, and then, from hand to hand, the child will begin to say some of those prayers, in a devout act before the most holy Crucifix, as verbs of gratitude, rising in the morning, he will say one or two points in his own person, with simple and brief words, saying, My Christ, I dedicate myself entirely to your Majesty this day. Let him also propose that he does not want to commit that day, with God's help, any defect, in which he may fall and be taken back, and such things. In short, little by little, he will become so accustomed that when he is older he will not feel fatigue, but with wisdom he will do the examination of conscience and other things. And this must be the father's study, not to want the child to do everything at once, nor less at a certain rate, as one who works at work, but he must sweetly try to make him fall in love with good, so that the child delights in it, and works with taste, and with slow, hidden growth he comes to such a point that he acquires the good habit, for which he then works perfectly with ease and with pleasure.

Chapter 136

YOU RESPOND TO SOME WHO MAY RESUME THIS MANNER OF EDUCATION.

I fear that some learned and judicious men, if they should ever come across this treatise, and have the pleasure of reading it, apart from what they may deservedly desire in it, of greater prudence, and doctrine, will take up one thing among others, certainly very serious, and worthy of consideration, for they will say that this way of education will not only be of little use, but harmful to the republic, and that in exchange for raising noble Gentlemen, Knights, and Citizens, as the country requires, there will be many monks, and religious, more suitable for the choir, and the cells, than for the palaces, and the cells, and for the palaces, and Knights, and Citizens, which the need of the country requires, they will make many monks, and religious, more suitable to stay in the choir, and in the cells, than in the palaces, and in the squares, in the administration, and civil commerce, and they will affirm this to be an evident thing, then that with these exercises of prayer, with the examinations of conscience, and with attending the sacraments, all will give themselves to the spirit, and will want to become religious. To which objection, wanting to answer something briefly, I beg the kind reader, who wants to remember that the title of this work is Christian education; so if I thought to lead our child by other ways, than by those of the observance of the law of Christ, I could certainly spare this effort, whatever it may be, and leave writing. But going on, I would like to know from those who feel otherwise, if it is true, as it cannot be denied, that the Philosophers in their Ethics and Politics, have proposed for man's end the happiness of this life, which they did not see

beyond, except perhaps very faintly and doubtfully. And if they have placed this happiness in the operation of virtue, as is also certain, for this reason they seek in the civil man the habitations of all the moral and intellectual virtues, which however do not exceed the forces of nature. Now if the Philosophers proposed to themselves, according to their understanding, such a high end, that in order to achieve it it was necessary to form a perfect virtuous man, what shall we say of the Christian man, whose end is eternal happiness, who does not know, that such a height cannot be reached by other means, than by virtuous deeds, done in the grace of God? and climbing the ladder of those highest theological virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity, which the Philosophers did not know? But divine gratitude, which is that which gives life, and efficacy of eternal merit to our works, is given to us, and multiplied by the holy sacraments, as by some channels of gold, and by that trustworthy messenger, and ambassador of our needs, that is by holy prayer, of which we have spoken above. Therefore, in conclusion, we say, whether the gate of paradise will be open only to the friends of God, whether the friendship of God, which he bestows on us through his goodness alone, is then preserved and continually increased by the means already mentioned; and whether grace is that which is deserved, and brings forth new grace to those who do not keep idle talent, but work according to grace; if, I say, it is so, for sure those who want little commerce with the sacraments, and with prayer, show that they want little close friendship with God, and want little of his help, and favor, and show that they do not know well among how many enemies, and how many dangers we are, and how much need we have of the continuous grace of God, from which it is written in Saint Luke: It is necessary always to pray, and never to lack.

Chapter 137

THAT THE FORM OF LIFE PROPOSED IS COMMON TO ALL.

So, they will say, would you like all men to be religious, and what else is Christian? On the contrary, they will reply, you will make all children monks and reformed clerics in this way. To this I say that it occurs to me that I have read an answer of a holy Doctor, who, praising virginity highly and advising it, introduces some people who say that if all wanted to be virgins, the world would soon be lacking; to whom he replied in this or a similar sentence: O God willing, heaven will soon be filled with the blessed; perhaps I could reply in the same way. But leaving this aside, I say that holiness does not repulse, indeed it confers on the affairs of the world, and on the government of states, and on the administration of magistrates, and one could cite innumerable examples of kings, queens, and lords of high business, and noble and rich men, who have followed this form of life, which we are overshadowing with our education; On the contrary, many of them have kept their eyes on a higher goal of perfection, as it appears from the testimony of the Holy Church, which has canonized them as saints; as it was Saint Ludwig King of France, Saint Liopoldo of Austria, and many others, and not less they kept their states, their preeminence, their honors, and they governed cities, and led armies, and did things worthy of knights, and senators, indeed they did them all the better, because they were saints, and servants of God. Now whoever will consider the progress of my reasoning, will see that I have accommodated myself to that Christian way of life, which according to our infirmity can be observed most commonly. The fear of God is necessary to all, not to remain in a state of sin, or rather to abominate it, and to strive as much as one

can with the second grace not to offend God, the resurrection as soon as possible, when one falls because of frailty, the fulfillment of the obligations of his vocation, proceeding with justness, and truth in all his ways, finally loving God, and one's neighbor, are very common things, and necessary to everyone. It is well known that the Saviour answered to the one who asked him what he had to do to obtain eternal life, *Si vis ad vitam ingredi serva mandata*; that is, observe the commandments, if you want life, do not fornicate, do not commit fury, and the others. But how much of this can be done without some frequency of sacraments, without some study of prayer, without some care, and vigilance of his soul, say it to himself in the secret of his conscience, but openly say it to the whole world, full of discord, robbery, luxury, quarrels, of slander, of false witnesses, of venal judgments, of usury, of impudicitie, and of a thousand other miseries, and yet those who so live are called, and want to be called Christians, and are in the lap of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, and confess, and communicate at least once a year. Therefore, if I am not mistaken, the prudence of the flesh will not be right in saying that this education of ours pulls the rope too much, and that this is a desire for all the children to become friars. I have said, and I say, that I would like all of them to be good Christians, and the same must be desired by anyone who rightly wants it; but if there is another better form of education to do this, let it be observed, which I do not repudiate, but I do not think that it will be found by law. But we have made too long a digression, if perhaps not without necessity, so it is time to return to where we left off, and now to give a compliment to this part of the oration, and to the whole treatise on Christian doctrine.

Chapter 138

DELLA ORATIONE DOMINICALE OVERO PATER NOSTRO.

The Dominical prayer, that is the Lord's prayer, which by another name we call the Our Father, is so called, because the Lord and our Savior composed and instituted it himself, so that each one can understand for himself how perfect it is. And because many holy Doctors have labored to discover the artifice of the Holy Spirit, from which it is most full, and lately the Roman Catechism has described it in such detail, that nothing remains but to be desired; therefore it is not necessary that I extend myself much in this part, but only in order to observe our institution, we will briefly go over it not without utility for our education. The Apostolic Symbol contains the sum of things pertaining to the faith and what we must believe; the Decalogue, that is, the Ten Commandments, contains what we must do; the Lord's Prayer contains what we must ask of God and hope for from his ineffable clemency. And this admirable, and divine prayer is divided into two parts, the first is an invocation to God, and almost a small proem, before we come to the prayers, and questions, which are seven, and are contained in the second part, *i.e.* in all the rest of the prayer.

Beginning therefore from the proem, comprised in those brief but very mysterious words, Pater noster qui es in celis, our father of the family will have, and from this sentence, and from the others that follow from the Dominical prayer, ample, and abounding matter, to insert in the soul of his son many Christian virtues, of which we are going to scatter a few seeds.

Father is the name of love, of providence, of honor, and of discipline, most sweet, and most lovable is the name of the father, and it declares to us the ineffable love of God towards us, so that if he is creator, and Lord, he wants us to go to beg him not timidly as servants, but confidently as children.

And God is the father of all men by reason of creation and government, but in a singular and most lofty way he is the father of the Christian, that is, by the work of redemption, having adopted us in his only begotten Son Jesus Christ our Lord, when we were regenerated in the waters of holy baptism.

The name of “father” assures us that God has so much providence for us, that He has given to every man, no matter how low and vile he may be, according to the world, an angel from the first birth as a guardian; this same name makes us certain and sure that not only we will never lack the necessary sustenance in this life, but what is more important, without comparison, it makes us understand that in heaven the eternal heredity is reserved for us.

It is the offence of a father to exercise the discipline of correctness, and to chastise his son not out of hatred, but out of love.

Finally, the name of father implies honour and reverence, and not servile but loving fear on the part of an obedient son who, representing his dear father in his fatherhood, fears not to offend him, or to be separated from him.

Therefore let the father of the family apply these and similar considerations, showing his son how much we are obliged to give love, and how hard we must go to the throne of his mercy, and how much we must console ourselves in

affliction, and not be faint-hearted, and humbly kiss our father's hand, not only when he gives us prosperity, but also when he touches us with some tribulation, since all are equally effects of his love, either to withdraw us from sin, or to give us a greater crown in paradise. But above all let the good father engrave this concept in the soul of his son, that he may think often what it is necessary for him to be like his father, and how humble he must be, and fearful not to commit any act, unworthy of so high a lineage.

Moreover, while praying we all say Our Father, so that it is understood that we are all brothers, so that we must love each other in a brotherly way, and help each other, and pray for the needs of the brothers, because as a saint says, it pleases the heavenly Father very much that a brother prays for another: To pray for oneself is a work of nature, but to pray for others is grace; to pray for ourselves is necessity, but to pray for one's brother is charity.

But from this place, let the good father take occasion to admonish his son to be pleasant and humane towards all, of which admonition the nobles and the rich have the greatest need, who have a habit of despising the poor, as if God himself were not the father, both of kings and of the beggars, Therefore the nobles must lower their highness, and the poor and vile must console themselves with their spiritual nobility, and not call themselves wretched and miserable, having God as their father, and Jesus Christ as their brother, and expecting, if they are good and virtuous, the immense heredity of glory, no less than the greatest and most powerful,

Let us say in addition to this, praying, that our Father is in Heaven, that if he is for all things, sustaining all things with the arm of his infinite virtue, nevertheless in Heaven his power and majesty shines more brightly, and therefore

remembering that our Father is the King of Heaven, there our desires must ascend, and all our requests must be directed primarily not to lowly earthly things, but to the acquisition of heavenly goods.

Chapter 139

BRIEF EXPOSITIONE OF THE SEVEN PETITIONI CONTAINED IN THE ORATIONE DOMINICALE.

PRIMA PETITIONE, SANTIFICETUR NOMEN TUUM.

Here follow the seven petitions, with which our Redeemer and Master has taught us, not only what we must ask, but the order of asking, in accordance with the dignity of the very things that are asked, and with the rule of charity. The first request is that the name of God be sanctified, for since God is the supreme good, he must be loved above all things and above ourselves, and everything that pertains to the honor and glory of God must take precedence over any other respect and desire of ourselves and of our neighbors. And this is the maxim which, through good fatherly industry, must be firmly rooted in the heart of the son, so that in all his actions he may put the glory of God first. Now there is no doubt that the name of God is holy in itself, as God is the source of all holiness, nor can new holiness increase it, but our prayer expresses the affection of our heart, for which we desire that the holy name of God may be better known, and that all people come to the knowledge and obedience of the true God, so that His Kingdom, by which He reigns spiritually in our hearts, may be expanded and increased, as is more expressly stated in the following petition. Thus are the joys of the true Christians for the conversion of souls, then the ardent desires that all the infidels come to the light of the Gospel, and the heretics return to the Holy Catholic Church from which they left, then on the contrary the pain that the name of God is blasphemed and dishonored. Therefore our child will be brought up in such a way, that not only with words, but much more with effects, and with works, he will

sanctify in himself, and in others as much as he can, the most holy name of God.

SECOND PETITION. ADVENIAT REGNUM TUUM.

We are children of God, but our Kingdom does not belong to this wretched and deceitful world, on the contrary here we are exiles and pilgrims, surrounded by a thousand calamities and miseries, not only as regards the body, but what is more serious, as regards the soul, since it is in constant conflict with this rebellious flesh, and is in the midst of cruel enemies who continually make war on it; from whose forces and snares no one would be safe, if the mighty hand of God did not defend us; therefore foolish are those who, like brute animals, never raise their eyes to heaven, and only in the mud of the pleasures and delights of this life have placed their kingdom. But the truly wise Christian, thinking night and day of those ineffable goods, with which the house of his heavenly Father is filled, cries out from the depths of his heart, and says, Thy Kingdom come, which is the end, and the compliment of our desires. But whoever wants the Kingdom of glory must first pass through the Kingdom of grace, and God must reign in him, and not sin. And this we pray and ask in the present petition, that God may reign in us and in the hearts of all men through faith, hope, and charity, so that, reigning in us here by grace, he may make us sharers in the Kingdom of glory, which as the sacred Theologians say is perfect and consummate grace.

Therefore, let our father of the family see to it that his son falls in love with this Kingdom, reminding him that such happiness, which eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor human heart imagined, is not prepared for the idle and negligent, who ask for it only with the sound of their tongue, but to those who strive to please God, with the works of virtue, cooperating with divine grace, and fighting manfully,

for it is written that the Kingdom of Heaven is exposed to force, and the violent and courageous rob it.

TERZA PETITIONE. FIAT VOLUNTAS TUA.

The sure way to reach the Kingdom of God, is to do his most holy will, which he declared to us in the divine writings of the Old Testament, and more expressly Christ our Lord manifested it to us, and manifests it to us every day through his Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. The Apostle St. Paul says, this is the will of God, that you be holy; for this will we pray to the heavenly Father, that he fulfill in us, and that he give us virtue, and strength to observe his holy commandments, and to serve him in holiness and justice all the days of our life. Let us also pray to God not to do our will, which has banished us from Paradise, not the will of the flesh and blood, prone to sin, not the will of the devil, so greedy of our loss, but the will of God; for in this consists our beatitude. To this petition is added the particle, Sicut in Coelo, et in terra; desiring to obey the divine will, with that readiness, with that joy, and with that purity of love, which the Angels do, and the Blessed in Heaven. And this addition can also refer to the two first petitions, asking that the name of God be sanctified on earth, as in Heaven, and likewise that God reign on earth in the hearts of men, as He reigns in the Blessed in Heaven.

As regards the matter of this third petition, the father in particular must instruct his son, so that he may be resigned to the will of God, and in all his actions pray to God that he may conform to His will, which is the rule of all good, and often make a sacrifice and oblation to God of his will, and for the love of God submit it to the obedience of his superiors and spiritual fathers, who have the place of God. In short, exhort him to rest in all the events of this life in the will of God, which will free him from infinite anxieties, since our

vision is very short, and often some things seem to us good, and expedient for us, which if they happened according to our desire, would be the cause of our total ruin, and so on the contrary. And such a one with poverty, with infirmity or with persecutions will go to paradise, than with riches, with health and with the favor of men will be condemned to hell, therefore in the midst of the stormy waves of so many travails, and dangers, by which we are continually agitated, the firm anchor that sustains us is the resignation of everything to the will of God. And I for my part desire that by divine grace, through good paternal care, our good and christian child may be raised, in whose heart, and in whose mouth resounds in every respect that truly christian sentence, may the will of God be done.

QUARTA PETITIONE. PANEM NOSTRUM QUOTIDIANUM DA NOBIS HODIE.

After the glory and kingdom of our heavenly Father, and the fulfilment of his will, in the fourth place we neatly and fittingly mention temporal and earthly goods, which are to be referred to those, eternal and divine, as to their end, according to that sentence, Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and you will have the other things in consequence and in addition. By way of speaking, the things which we need to sustain this transient life of ours are infinite, and in order to attain them it is necessary to toil and sweat, even though that great sentence endures, In the sweat of your face you shall eat your bread, and nevertheless all our diligence and toil are in vain, without the paternal blessing of God, as has been said elsewhere in sufficient measure. And therefore the father must admonish his son, that with humility and faith he should go to the feet of his father, who is in heaven, and ask him for bread as a petition; by which voice is meant all that is necessary for the maintenance of the bodily life, but not less also that which is

necessary for the life of the soul, whose nourishment we must never forget. In addition, let the father teach his son that our heavenly master taught us to ask for bread, that is, enough, and what is sufficient for moderate food and clothing, and not luxury, pomp, and superfluous abundance, which the insatiable thirst for enrichment demands. And this bread must be ours, that is to say justly and legitimately, and not with fraud and evil arts acquired. It is also called daily bread, referring to the parsimony mentioned above, and because we understand that our life depends daily on God, and from day to day we must beg him to sustain us, and no less the rich than the poor. And not only do we ask for food and clothing, but we pray that God grants it to us, because that food truly nourishes, and those goods are beneficial to the body and soul, which the hand of God gives us, from which comes all blessings. Moreover, saying that he gives to us, and not only to me, we are warned not to be solicitous of ourselves alone, but of our neighbors, and that he who abounds the most, must share with his needy brother, because, as has been said elsewhere, God extends his hand to the rich, so that they may be Treasurers, and dispensers of the poor. In sum, the father of a family has ample opportunity to teach his son in many important Christian matters in this fourth chapter. But above all let him not forget the spiritual bread, and the food of the soul, of which our well-bred son will always be hungry, and this food is especially of two kinds, the one is the word of God, the other is Christ our Lord himself, who is contained in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, truly our bread, that is of the faithful, and of the true servants and friends of God, who strive to live in such a way, that every day they may feed on it, if not really communicating, at least spiritually with the affection of the heart, but often also receiving with all humility, and devotion the same sacrament, as elsewhere it has been recalled that it should be the custom of Christians, at least to take every Sunday the most holy Eucharist,

considering that it is the bread of the soul, and daily bread, without which by the way of this life, which is like a barren, and tiring desert, we fail through weakness; from which not without reason Saint Ambrose said those notable words: If this is daily bread, why do you take it after the year?

QUINTA PETITIONE. DIMITTE NOBIS DEBITA NOSTRA ETC.

We are all sinners, and there is no one who can say in this life, world is my heart, I am pure from sin, and therefore we are guilty and debtors of divine justice. But because the sinner is powerless to satisfy himself, he has recourse to divine mercy, and this is what the present petition teaches us, that is, to ask God for remission of our debts, that is, sins, through his infinite liberality, and for the inestimable price of the precious blood of the immaculate lamb Jesus Christ, which price was paid on the hard wood of the Cross, and is applied to us by means of the holy sacraments, when we effectively or at least with true desire receive them, nor is remission possible without this blood. Let the good father, therefore, try as much as he can to make his son hate and abhor sin, which makes us indebted to such a debt, that no human creature can pay it, and which brings us infinite evils, for it is in itself most ugly, and defiles and deforms the soul, the spouse, and deforms the soul, spouse of Christ, and Temple of the Holy Spirit, and subjects it to the hardest and most bitter servitude of the devil, a cruel tyrant, who never ceases to torment it from sin to sin, until with it he hurls it into the crucified realms of hell. But above all sin must be detestable to us, because it offends the immense majesty of our most clement Father, who loves us so much, and has shown us his love so highly and with such efficacious effects, and whose terrible ingratitude it is to offend such a good God and Father; nevertheless, because we are fragile and miserable, at least we do not like our falls, that break the bones of the soul, but we desire to rise again, and

remembering with the sharpest sting of pain, to the depths of the heart, the offenses done to God, let us humbly ask his forgiveness, who God is so merciful, and so ready to forgive us, that he himself invites us, and teaches us the same words, with which we ask him for vengeance, and remission of our debts. But we warn, that it would be too presumptuous and unjust to ask God to be liberal and benevolent towards us, since we are stingy and bitter against our neighbor; it is necessary, therefore, that if we wish to obtain mercy, we also be merciful; and if we wish God to forget the insults done to him by us, let us likewise forget those that others have done to us. And although this flesh of ours, rebellious to the spirit, recalcitrates, and does not wish to be able to forgive its enemy, we do not cease, however, to offer this petition to God, begging Him to give us true and perfect penance, and all that we need to impose total remission of our debts, which, as has been said, cannot be, if we do not also forgive those who have offended us, about which matter we have discussed elsewhere in great detail.

SESTA PETITIONE. ET NE NOS INDUCAS IN TENTATIONEM.

And such is the frailty of human nature, such are the occasions of sins which surround us, and such are the snares and traps which the irreconcilable and perpetual adversary of the devil tends to us at all hours, that it is necessary for us to be vigilant and to keep constant watch over our souls, But above all it is necessary to have recourse to divine help, and not to trust in ourselves, because we have to deal with an enemy, who has thrown down such things on the ground, that like very strong towers placed on high mountains, seemed to human judgment unconquerable and impregnable. And therefore this sixth petition teaches us to pray to God, who does not allow us to be tempted by our strength, but gives us such an abundance of his grace that

we remain victorious. The good father of a family will therefore teach his son, when he sees him capable, that our life is a continuous battle of a thousand temptations, and the more we strive to do the will of our heavenly father, the more the wrath of Satan is kindled, who persecutes more bitterly not his subjects and followers, but those who make open war on him with good works. However, comfort him not to fear, for it is not lawful for our enemy to do against us all that he can do by his own strength, and that he would like to do because of the hatred he bears us, just as he could not offend a sheep of Job if God did not give him permission. And therefore in whatever adversity, or persecution, and in every way of temptation, that assails us, let us have recourse to the tower of our strength, that is to God, who is present at our duels, and who arms us with his grace, if recognizing our weakness, and distrusting ourselves, we place ourselves in the omnipotent hand of God, so that we do not ask not to be tempted, but not to be led into temptation, that is, that we do not allow through deception, or yield through weakness to temptation, which God allows to give us a greater crown, if, as it is written, we will fight legitimately.

SETTIMA, ET ULTIMA PETITIONE. SED LIBERA NOS À MALO.

In the preceding request we asked God, that He might watch over us so that we do not fall into the evil of guilt; here we ask Him to deliver us from the evil of punishment, that is, from all the inconveniences, calamities, and miseries, which afflict this painful life of ours. And although it is almost natural that when we see ourselves oppressed by some evil we have recourse to God, the good father must however teach his son to invoke God in the time of tribulation humbly teaching him to have the glory and honor of God as the principal thing before his eyes, and therefore to observe from the heart the order that the celestial master has

established in these seven requests, asking first for the sanctification of the name of God, his Kingdom, the fulfilment of his holy will, and the rest that follows, and then ask to be freed from bodily infirmity, and other similar evils, always relying on the good will of God, who alone sees perfectly, and wants the best for our soul. And for this reason we must pray to him to free us from the evils of the soul, which are sins, and from the wiles of the evil and perverse devil, our capital enemy and author of sin, and in the rest we must be full of good hope, that our most benign Father, whose eye is open day and night over us will not let us perish, and will not abandon us. Therefore the Christian must be most resolved to suffer all his life, if need be, any infirmity, or calamity, before having recourse to demons, or to enchantments, or superstition, or to any other means, which is with sin and offence against God. Therefore, let our good son be raised with a generous heart, and let him endure the tribulations with patience, manfully embracing the Cross where Christ is. And this is the straight and royal way by which the saints have walked to glory, and the saint of saints, of whom it is written: It was necessary that Christ suffered, and so entered into his glory. And elsewhere the Scripture says: Through many tribulations it is fitting for us to enter into the Kingdom of God, to whom it pleases him through his immense goodness to grant our petitions and prayers, and to give us a share in his Kingdom, in the company of his chosen ones.

Chapter 140

EPILOGUE OVERO COLLECTION OF THE THINGS SAID ABOVE, AND CONTINUATION OF THE FOLLOWING.

By divine grace we have reached the end of a long voyage, having declared, as far as our institute implied, those four principal heads of the Christian doctrine, which I proposed to myself at a great distance, when, having brought our family son to his first childhood, I entered into this long discourse, of the things pertaining to our holy faith, and religion. And the reason that motivated me to enter into it was exposed in the very entrance. But because I wanted to place this part in this place, and not earlier in the end of the whole work, sending forward everything that pertains to each age, it was not said as clearly as perhaps it should have been. And yet some may be of the opinion that the subject matter of the third book should have preceded it, not only as being more delightful, and more likely to attract the reader because of the variety of many things, but as being more proper, and more immediately pertinent to education. Therefore, wishing to give some reason why I was induced to do this, I say that this happened for two reasons. The first was so that others might not think that this care for the law of God was one of the last things to be done in education, arguing perhaps in appearance probably, that such facts, because of their gravity, should be taught to the child, when he had already reached a more mature age, and a perfect use of reason. But I was and am of this opinion, which I think to be more probable and more useful, that it is necessary to instil in the tender soul of the child the fear of God, and all the seeds of Christian virtues, if only in various ways, and more or less perfectly, according to the greater or lesser capacity that he acquires from time to time, as I have remembered

elsewhere. But the second respect, and in my opinion, more important for those who wanted to do what I wanted to do, was that everyone should understand very clearly that the main purpose of this book, and that which makes it different from other similar books, was to deal with education, as Christian education, which can in no way be without the knowledge and observance of the law of God through His most holy grace. And therefore from those four sources it was necessary for us to extract all the essential precepts, according to the rule of which the Christian father could raise his son in a Christian manner at every age. So, if it would have been a little difficult for me to include in the Third Book this part, which seems doctrinal, so to speak, and speculative, but in fact, treated in our way, is the essence, and the very practice of Christian education, if I say that it would have been easy to place it elsewhere, nevertheless I have not been able to do so, persuading myself that in the end this way of order, and of disposition, which has been observed, must be judged by the understanding, not only expedient, but necessary in our case, for if it is true, as it certainly is true, that the principal and proper end of this education is that the child should know God, and love Him, and love Him, and do His will, in order to possess Him and enjoy Him eternally in Heaven, it follows that at no time, and in no part however small, should the child know God, and love Him, and do His will, in order to possess Him and enjoy Him eternally in Heaven, and in no part, however small, of the education, neither before, nor afterwards, can paternal care be used, if not in order to the above mentioned end, that is to say that such is the nature of the end, that gives norm, and rule, to all the other actions that tend to the end. Therefore it was necessary that before everything else, the end be fully understood, and that the father of the family should see the target, and the aim, where he must continually direct the bow of his vigilance, and solicitude, otherwise in vain was required of him, to bring up his son in

the fear of God, and in the observance of his commandments, if he himself was not instructed, and did not know the way to lead him there, beginning, as has been said so many times, from the earliest years, as did the good Tobias, who, having had a son from infancy, taught him to fear God, and to abstain from all sin, a doctrine so necessary, that blessed is he who, beginning at an early age to learn it, studies in it all his life, without which all human wisdom and knowledge is foolishness before God.

Having thus far prepared for our father of the family the most solid, so to speak, and principal material for Christian education, it will be less difficult for us now, as I hope, to bring our construction to its complete perfection on this good foundation. Therefore, resuming our discourse, with a new beginning of the book, beginning with the first age of childhood, and following through the others as we go along, we shall speak of the conditions of each, as far as divine grace will be pleased to give us.

Book 3

DELLA EDUCATIONE CHRISTIANA DEI FIGLI LIBRO TERZO. IN WHICH FROM AGE TO AGE IS DISCUSSED, DEMONSTRATING THE NATURE, AND DANGERS OF THEM, AND WHAT ARE IN EACH THE OFFITII PATERNAL, ACCORDING TO THE RULE OF THE FEAR OF GOD, AND OF THE CHRISTIAN LAW.

Chapter 1

OF THE VARIOUS INCLINATIONS OF CHILDREN TO VIRTUE, AND TO SIN.

Although the seeds of every sin are in us because of the corruption of human nature, there is no doubt that some defects are more proper to one age than to another; Just as we also see that the variety of complexions makes men variously disposed, and more, and less inclined, sometimes to certain affections, and dispositions of virtue, and sometimes to its opposite, so that it is necessary for the prudent father to observe the nature of his son, which in those early years, not yet accustomed to simulate, and dissimulate, is discovered for itself to those who wait a little for it. And this is the field where the paternal diligence has to toil, moderating with education certain excesses of nature, and correcting as much as possible the defects, and planting the first shoots of some vines, which like small nettles, and thorns, come out. And if in the culture of the earth, and in the generation, and conservation of the herds, and of the flocks, and in the vines, and in the plants, and in the seeds, men have been such curious and diligent investigators, that they have learned to know the various qualities of the land, and of the animals. and of the other things mentioned above, so that from some present signs they will know how to conjecture the future, as for example, they will judge of a chick, whether it will succeed in being a generous horse, fit for war, and also with art they have found many ways of remedies, to compensate for natural defects. And if these diligences, as I say, have been done, and are being done in the care of the villa, how much more reasonable will it be to strive to know the various inclinations of a child, in order to nourish and increase the

good ones, and weaken and perhaps completely eradicate the bad ones? Although it is true that this is not the case with men, who are free and masters of their own affairs, than with wild animals, it is nevertheless true that education is very effective, and is almost another nature, especially when it is used in time, as has been amply explained elsewhere. Therefore, our father should not regret, but rather take pleasure in observing and philosophizing, so to speak, about the nature of his son, beginning from his earliest childhood, and continuing to observe the progress of nature; which will serve two very important purposes among others. The first will be to discover where it is most necessary to apply the remedy of good discipline. The second will be to conjecture from afar, as we said earlier about the instruments, so proportionately about the child, to what manner of life and praiseworthy exercise he will be best able to apply, when he has reached the proper age to be elected, that is, whether he should be a merchant, a doctor, a cleric, or something similar; for it is in the paternal care to accommodate the good inclinations, and to promote them ahead, leading the child along that path where he discovers himself more inclined, and not twisting him to the contrary, for then there is something perfect, and a task, when nature and art are joined together.

Chapter 2

OF CERTAIN DEFECTS PROPER TO PUERITIA.

We said that each age has its own defects, which are common to almost all of them, as for example, youth is more stimulated by the ardors of the flesh and less by the love of money, while in old age the opposite is true. But because in all things the beginning is of the greatest importance, and in the small seed is contained virtually all the trunk and branches of a great tree; therefore in the early years paternal care must be more fatiguing, because, generally speaking, all the serious vices, which then burst forth in the more mature ages, have some root in puerility; wherefore the father of the family must be persuaded that it is necessary to use the defensive and preservative medicines, so to speak, against the defects and vices of all the other ages, and this is what we have said so many times, that it is necessary to remove very early the small roots of evil, which can hardly be seen; And this likewise is what was said a little while ago, and I return to repeat it, that one must observe the proper inclinations of particular children, and the most common of childhood, and think of the remedies in time, which many fathers do not know, or do not care to do, in vain when they do, as is said by the proverb, the evil has penetrated as far as the bones, and the stench can be smelt everywhere, in vain I say, they have recourse to curative medicines, and often to the most extreme, such as to put them in prisons, and to exterminate their children, and similar things, which most of the times are not enough. Now, it is not possible to discuss in detail the particular inclinations of children, since they are as many and as varied as the children themselves, as long as they are not hidden from a good and diligent speculator, and so that

what I want to say may be better understood, I will give one or two examples. It seems to me that I have read in an ancient writer, that it was once observed that a small child gouged out the eyes of a bird with an axe, which was judged to be a sign of a proud and very bad nature, and as some ancient authors tell of the severity and constancy of Cato, called Uticense by his nickname, memorable signs were seen in childhood, and at an age so tender that it did not exceed the fourth year; because one day, being asked as a joke by some ambassadors, that he wanted to help his uncle, a senator of authority in the Republic, in one of their serious affairs of state, he answered with a firm face, that he would not do it, and begged several times for the same thing, he always persisted in denying it, so that one of them, to make him afraid, took him in his arms, and placed him above a high window of the house, showed that he wanted to throw him to the ground if he did not consent, but it was never possible to make him say yes, so that he turned to his companions and said, we can rejoice that this child is not a man, otherwise we would never have been able to obtain what we seek. And subsequently, in all of Cato's childhood, there were clear signs of that rigorous goodness and firmness of spirit which he maintained throughout his life. Now, in the same way, by various events, and with interrogations made at a good study, the inclinations of children are seen from afar, both good and bad, to those who carefully consider them. But passing on to speak of the most common inclinations of childhood, the cherubs are excessively fond of games, and shows, and of jugglers, and similar amusements, and therefore little fond of those occupations which distract them from this, such as going to school, or learning any art. They are also ready to pretend to excuse themselves and to tell lies, in order to cover up the little faults committed, and just as they are ready to excuse themselves, so on the contrary they willingly accuse and blame others. They are also addicted to gluttony, and this is

where domestic theft comes from, either to buy what they like, or to play with other children of the same age, to whom, as nature delights in her own kind, they take great delight, and have no greater pleasure than to be with them. The children are also curious to know what others do, and say, and they report it lightly, they have many desires for what they see, and not allowing themselves, they are irritable, and for the most part they are not ready to obey, on the contrary they are retrogressive, and unwillingly do what does not suit their taste.

Chapter 3

THAT CHILDISH FAULTS ARE NOT TO BE DESPISED.

We could also say other things, but this is enough, so that our father of the family may see and understand in part the evil inclinations, and the dangers, and sins of childhood, which we can imagine arriving up to the fourth decade; so that he may be solicitous to remedy it in time, not considering it something to be despised, however small the defects of childhood may appear. There is no doubt that the sins of the young man, and of the perfect man, are born of a more deliberate election, and of greater malice, so that there is greater light of reason than in the child, just as in the man there will be a firmer and more accustomed disposition to evil, which is not so impressed in the child that in a shorter space of time he has been able to do less, and the greater will be the effects that force will produce, and the greater capacity of the man, so that by way of example, the thefts of the child will ordinarily be of lesser things, and likewise the effects of anger will be weaker because of the weakness of his strength, but nevertheless the vehemence of affection does not yield much in the child, even to the point of blood, which with stones and knives many have shed from his little companions. In sum, as has been said, our nature is spoiled and corrupted in such a way that, if it is not preserved and seasoned with the salt of good discipline, small worms spring from its sores, which then become venomous snakes, I mean to say, that small sins are proportionately found in children, which are then great in mature men. And therefore the glorious saint Augustine, speaking in the first book of his confessions of these puerile sins, demonstrated this proportion, saying that from childish frauds and deceptions, which are committed in very light things, and as he says

from nuts, from balls, and from the birds, one passes in the greater age, to the gold, and to the possessions, as from the pedagogues, and from the teachers, one goes to the governors, and to the magistrates of the Cities, and to the rod with which the children are punished, succeed the serious punishments for the wrongdoers. So if this is the case, the father of a family must not in any way despise small errors and defects, and must not say, they are idiots, they do not have more intellect than that, there would be too much to do to take into account the apples and nuts of children; Let us not say this, but rather close the way to evil at an early hour, and make good remedies, and put virtue in the house, and in possession, and introduce it, and establish as much as possible the habit of working virtuously, and of fearing God, and build the banks before the torrent of evil inclinations swells through frequent acts, even though from the beginning it is so small that it may seem difficult. And because it has been said that children also have little intellect, and therefore do many things thoughtlessly, our father of the family knows that this is precisely the reason that obliges him to watch over the custody of his son. And truly it is a thing worthy of compassion to consider the condition of poor human nature, that within ourselves we have the venom, and the infection of sin, that is, the fomite, and the lust of the flesh rebellious to the spirit, which bows us down, and stimulates evil, and from the beginning the child lives, and works without speech, following only those things that are sweet, and pleasing to the senses, and before reason, almost buried in sleep, awakens, and opens its eyes, and begins to discern between the light of virtue, and the darkness of sin, and before it can take the reins in its hand, already the appetite, the flesh, and the sense have taken such strength and so much possession, that like fat, and fierce horses they recalcitate, and carry the soul into the precipice of sins, not being able to suffer to walk by any other road, than by that where for a long time they have

been accustomed, that is to sensuality and pleasure. It could be said, not without apparent and probable reason, that the condition of men is worse than that of brutes, who, born with pain, know what is good and useful to them, and guided by natural instinct do not go astray, and do not err from their goal. But it is answered that reason, which even now does not exercise its office in the child, is perfect in the father and in the mother, who must make up for the lack of age not otherwise than a guide to one who is either blind or short-lived, and a support to one who is weak, and in the same way it is not permitted that the child, lured by the lust for light, take with his hands the fire, the operation of which he does not know, nor does he allow himself to walk through all his senses, so that he does not inadvertently fall into the dangers he does not know, to the detriment of the body, so and much more it is right that one should not let the cherubs do whatever they want to do to the detriment of the soul, On the contrary it is better that not only the actions of the elder putti, but of the children, as far as possible, be reasonable, and directed towards the end of virtue, not by the rule of their own reason, which does not yet come into being, but by that of their father, which must not seem strange, since animals also operate inanimate things, and even inanimate things act in this way reasonably, that is with speech and intelligence, which is in him who moves them, so the lightning bolt runs straight to the target, so the painter's brush paints a beautiful figure, and so the zither makes a sweet, harmonious sound.

Chapter 4

THE WAY TO REMEDY CHILDISH DEFECTS.

Wanting to descend to the detail, of the way of remedying childish defects, although the field is very wide, and almost infinite, as singular things are, nevertheless in the reasoning done behind, if I am not mistaken, we have sufficiently satisfied a good part of what could be wished for, since against lies it has been said, dealing with the second and eighth commandment of the law, against theft in its own precept not to fure, and of the matter of curbing childish excandescence, and their many desires, and of accustoming oneself to bear the yoke of obedience, which is the principal point, and without which nothing good can be done; It is also touched on in the fifth precept, which is not to kill, and in particular in the. of restraining wrath. And if our father of the family will observe with some attention, what has been said so far, he will find scattered in many parts, various seeds of useful memories, both for childhood, and for the following ages. But in coming to the application, and to the present use, it is necessary that judgement, and paternal prudence do its office, to which it is necessary to refer in many things. However, in what remains for us to say, we will recall some opportune things. But the general and most common remedies are the fear of God, obedience, and paternal reverence, mixed with love and fear; and under these we include the teacher, who in terms of morals must be a father; good occupations, good domestic example, and generally good conversation, and the lash when necessary; of which, since it is more proper to pueritia, we shall discuss something in this place.

Chapter 5

OF BEATING THE CHILDREN.

Just as cities, in order to preserve themselves quietly and well, use the reward and the punishment, the one encouraging virtue and the other repressing vice; so we can say that the same is necessary in the government of the house, which is like a small city. And for this reason it must not be denied that the father of the family, who holds the place of the magistrate, should use the rod and the scourge to correct the children, either to withdraw them from evil or to incite them to good. We have in the Holy Scriptures various places which confirm this sentence, and especially in the Proverbs of Solomon, a book full of excellent teachings on the subject of morals. Therefore the Sage says in one place in this form: *Qui parcit virgae odit filium suum, qui autem diligit illum instanter erudit, i.e.* the father who forgives the rod, *i.e.* refrains from beating his son, hates him; because although he seems to love him, he nevertheless does something contrary to the true good of his son, and therefore follows the Sage, saying: but he who truly loves him chastises him, and quickly corrects him. And in another place the same one replies more openly, saying: Do not take discipline away from the child, for if you strike him with the rod, he will not die; and as if declaring what death he means, the Sage adds: Thou shalt smite him with the rod, and deliver his soul from hell; which words give us to understand that if children are not corrected at an early age, when they commit small errors, they then become so guilty, that they incur eternal death, and often also temporal death, and where the rod was forgiven, the gallows and the horses are not forgiven. And the same Solomon elsewhere says: "Stupidity is bound in the heart of the child, and the rod of

discipline will drive it out”, meaning that the inclination to vanity, vanity and sins, is so natural to children, that it seems to be closely bound up in their hearts, as if all their studies and thoughts were of useless and harmful things, so that this evil quality cannot be eradicated and eradicated by admonitions and words alone, but it is necessary to use beatings; which, says Sage, finally drive it out. The Sage agrees with Solomon in Ecclesiasticus al. trentesimo, where he says many notable things in this regard, and generally commending the good education of children, which in order not to be longer I leave to report.

Chapter 6

OF THE TOO MUCH INDULGENCE AND TENDERNESS OF SOME FATHERS.

But experience itself shows us the benefit of beating children. However, as in other things, the extremes are vicious, and virtue consists in mediocrity, there are some fathers who are so indulgent, that not only do they not beat, but they do not even want to suffer, that the masters, or others, give their children a single stroke, and this happens more in the nobles, and the rich, and in those who have only one child, and a much desired one; and there are fathers who are so tender, that if by chance the child is of a kind appearance, and somewhat witty, they are so fond of him and so little can they conceal their inner affection, that the child, as our wicked nature is sharp in evil, notices it, so that he loses the fear, and the paternal reverence, which is one of the greatest drawbacks that can be in the matter of education. And these same indulgent fathers, if at times they correct their children with words, do so coldly and remissly that very little or no use follows. It is memorable in the Holy Scriptures the example of Helios the High Priest, and of two of his sons, ministers of the Temple, dissolute and licentious young men, who gave public and serious scandal to the people of God, of which the father warned them, but not with the effectiveness that the fault required, so that he did not satisfy God, and they remained in their sin, and it can be conjectured that in their childhood their father, too loving according to his sense, did not beat them, so they became proud and insolent, and when the bone was too hard, they did not bend to their father's admonition, so that God caused them both to die in one day at the hands of the Philistines, of whose history St. John Chrysostom gives an

account in a place, where he tells us that the Philistines were not the only ones to die. Chrisostom in a place, where he speaks remarkably of the education of his children, says in this same regard against the overindulgent fathers, that Helios was the cause of his own ruin, and that of his children. The first extreme, therefore, is too much paternal indulgence, and such a badly regulated compassion, either for impatience to hear the children weeping, or for too much tenderness towards them, and undoubtedly this extreme is harmful, and deserves reprimand. In the other extreme there are other fathers whose nature is so quick and angry, and who let themselves be carried away by the impetus of passion, that for every slightest thing they beat their children as fiercely as if they were horses, and such is their fury, and in the motions of their whole body, and in their scolding, and in the redness of their face, and in the gleaming of their eyes as if they were on fire, that it can be said that often the greater is the sin which they commit by correcting, than that which they wish to correct; but keeping silent about this, a notable disorder follows, that the son many times remains so stunned, and astonished that he does not feel the fruit that he should have from the correction, indeed he sooner learns to be angry, and furious, with double inconvenience

Chapter 7

OF MEDIOCRITY IN BEATING CHILDREN, AND OF FILIAL LOVE AND FEAR.

Mediocrity, therefore, is that which must be kept in time and place, and moderately, even giving the child, according to his ability, the reason for the punishment, so that he may know that he is not beaten by chance, but justly for his own demerit. The father and the teachers should remember that beatings are medicine, and as such must be given at the right time, and with measure, so that it does not offend more than it helps, and they must be beaten with discretion and judgement in order to truly heal the soul of the child, who for the most part can sin through ignorance, and frailty, and it is not good to beat him in such a way, that it seems as if one wants to take revenge, and more quickly to vent one's own anger, than to correct him. The doctor uses iron and fire also, but very carefully, not with anger and indignation, but with compassion for the sick person, and with a great desire for his health, and he leads himself to these harsh remedies when the soothing ones are no longer needed. And since this similitude of medicine is very appropriate, I will continue to say that just as the too frequent use of medicines is harmful to the health of the body, so in my opinion too frequent beating brings harm to the soul, and makes well-born children become servile and unworthy, and perhaps this is what the Apostle meant when writing to the Colossians he said: *Patres nolite ad indignationem procurare filios vestros ut non pusillo animo fiant*, for truly the very frequent beating of children makes them pusillanimous, and on the contrary they become hard to beat, and they make a callus and do not care for them any more or less than if they were mules. And if I have the right to freely express my

sense, I wish that this remedy of the scourge be used by our fathers of families as little as possible, and especially with naive and nobly born children. And it should be noted that in domestic punishments, the proportion does not entirely conform to public punishments, because the magistrate is sufficient through his punishments to preserve justice and external peace. But the father's main aim is to make his son good on the inside, so that he abstains from sin more for the sake of virtue than for fear of punishment. And therefore the most effective means is the fear of God, and the knowledge of the beauty of virtue, and of the deformity of sin; and sometimes the reason itself scourges the soul more bitterly than the body does the rod, and finally paternal reverence must be the brake, and the spur, which withdraws and pushes the child according to need. And in short, I would wish that our well-behaved son be so accustomed to reverence his father, that the sight of his father's face being disturbed, and with a sign of unhappiness with any of his actions, would be a very serious punishment for him. And, on the contrary, the son was nourished, as with a healthy food, by the desire, and the effect of giving satisfaction, and contentment to his own father. As we read in the ancient Roman histories of Coriolanus, and of Sertorius, valiant warriors, who, when they did some honorable deed in the battles, the greatest joy they felt was the pleasure they saw their mothers receive from them, who had no father. Therefore the father must proceed in such a way with his son that he loves him and fears him at the same time. Too much domesticity without any gravity, causes a certain contempt, and I think that Savio meant this excess, when he said with irony: "Do as much as you like and caress your son, and he will frighten you, joke with him and play with him, and he will mock you. But, on the contrary, to make oneself feared only, does not win the heart of the child, and does not become virtuous in the intrinsic sense, and things done out of fear alone, are not lasting, and other not mediocre

inconveniences follow; Let him therefore temper the one with the other, and retain a sweet severity, so that he may be loved and feared, but with a filial and not servile fear and of a slave, who fears the stick, just as the son, because he loves, fears not to do something that displeases his dear father. I do not deny, however, as was said at the beginning, that one must sometimes put one's hand to the lash, especially since it may be that there are harsher natures than usual, with which it is necessary to do what the wise man says: Incline and bend his neck and neck, while he is young, and strike his hips while he is a child, so that he does not harden, and does not want to listen to you, so that you will have bitter pain in your soul, with which words of striking the hips, it seems that he shows an extraordinary hardness; and with these words, so as not to harden them more, I would believe that the beating should be rare, if perhaps somewhat more sensitive, and that it would bring more pain. In short, whenever the good father wishes to beat the child, he should send forth for guidance not blind anger, but discreet reason; and for this reason fathers and teachers are to be blamed, who without any consideration whatsoever, beat their children in any part of the body, especially in the head, which is the principal seat and dwelling place of all feelings, and where nature has created the instruments that serve the noblest operations of the soul, and sometimes suspending and lifting the poor child in the air, by the hair, or beating his head in the walls, or debating him in the banks, or ferociously and inconsiderately scourging his face and eyes, they not only stun him, but deform him, and another inconvenience also follows, that either the father, having rested the ardor of anger, and love succeeding, regrets what he has done, or the relatives and spouses of the child disdain it with the master, and in the one way, and in the other, one falls into the other extreme, of never wanting to beat, nor allowing

others to beat the child, which then harms in many ways, that each one can consider for himself.

Chapter 8

OF THE VARIOUS WAYS OF CORRECTION AND PUNISHMENT OF CHILDREN.

Not only must our father of the family abstain from the aforementioned furious and bestial ways of chastising his son, but he must also consider that this is not the only, nor is it always the best, and most convenient remedy for correcting his son, and however he must not believe that he has immediately satisfied his offence by having beaten him, because the end of paternal chastisement, as mentioned elsewhere, is the fruit of true emendation. Now just as various illnesses are cured by intelligent doctors with various medicines, so too with various punishments the child can and must be corrected, no less effective than beatings, but all the more proportionate to man, the more they move reason, and understanding to the consideration of the fault committed, for which it is always expedient with the beating of the hand, to add reprimand, so that the child knows where, and how he has failed, because every error is deformity, and as such it is appropriate that he be reprimanded for himself. It has been said above that often the mere erubescence is a serious punishment, especially in a noble soul, and not without reason, because if the wand adorns the body, the repression made in time penetrates and pricks the soul, which is more sensitive. In this regard it occurs to me that the glorious St. Basil in his monastic rules speaks of the corrections, and punishments that must be given to young monks, and to be useful doctrine to our subject, I will report in substance a good part of it, that if well we do not raise monks, nevertheless this one must have for certain, that the first foundations of every praiseworthy institute of life are to be laid in the paternal house. The

saint, therefore, wants the errors of children to be amended in such a way that the punishment of sin itself becomes, together with the child, a school and an exercise, he says, so that the child learns to overcome that passion of the soul by which it has fallen, as for example, he will be angry with a companion of his, the punishment will be that of having to serve the offended in proportion to the gravity of the excess, for what the Saint says, this humiliation truncates and represses the haughtiness of the soul, which is that which often makes us angry. Has he eaten before the due time? Let him fast until the greater part of the day; it is seen that he eats more than his duty, and in an uncoordinated manner, let him be obliged at the time of eating, while he is fasting, to look at those who eat moderately and with decency, so that he will be punished with abstinence, and learn modesty; has he let out of his mouth obnoxious or insulting words against his neighbor, or lies or other such forbidden things? chastise yourself partly with fasting, partly with silence, and thus learn to be wise. Up to this point is the teaching of St. Basil, which I have wished to relate, so that our father of the family may understand that there are other ways of chastisement besides the lashings, and that one must principally seek to cure the passion of the soul, which causes evil, applying medicines contrary to the sinful humor, to say so, as that holy father corrected the pride of his novitiate, with the acts of mortification, and lowering, the gluttony with fasting, and the excessive, and inconsiderate talk with silence. And so as not to repeat the same things over and over again, from the same doctrine of that great Doctor the teachers will also learn the way of correcting their disciples, which is not always necessary with the scourge, as has been said.

Chapter 9

OF THE CONTINENCE OF FOOD AND DRINK.

Before I enter into the discussion of sending children to school, and of the conditions of the teacher, which I already realize may seem to some to be approaching the time, I will say a little about some things that pertain to the body, such as eating and drinking, embracing together with childhood the other ages; Since the recollections which can generally be given are of particular use to the young and the young at heart, and it has been our custom to do so, when no other particular reason persuades otherwise, I say that I shall treat in one place all the matters which pertain to each age, whether more or less, leaving it to the prudence of the discreet educator to apply the recollections given in various ways. And not less we will try to descend to the details as far as we can; I said as far as we can, because, as the same S. Basil teaches us in the above mentioned rules, we will not be able to do so. Basil teaches us in the above-mentioned rules, not only the various ages, but the various complexities and habits of the bodies, the different studies and exercises require different nourishment, both in quantity and in quality; for this reason they cannot all be regulated by the same rule, but discreteness must do its work, applying the general recollections to the particular with due measure, according to the variety of circumstances. I say, therefore, generally speaking, that the use of eating and drinking is not to be measured by the end of pleasure, but by the necessity of the sustenance of this life of ours, which naturally cannot last without the proper nourishment, which restores and fills what is continually being consumed and evacuated from our body, and the providential nature has given to the animal appetite, and has placed the pleasure of

food in the sense of taste, as an enticement for it to take food, and nourish itself, and in this way to be nourished, and nourishes himself, and so he lives, and however the other animals do not go beyond the terms of necessity, which nature has prescribed, only man, who by reason and will regulates his actions as free, often makes the end what is the means, and seeks in his nourishment the delight of taste, rather than the necessary sustenance of the body, whereby many and serious inconveniences arise to the detriment of the soul and of the body itself, as will be said a little later. Therefore a general rule is this, that as far as the nourishment of the body is concerned, it is necessary to pay attention not to what gluttony and pleasure persuade us, but to what nature desires in order to maintain life. Let us add to the preceding rule a similar one, that as much dry and humid nourishment should be taken by each person as is sufficient to ensure that the body is fit and well disposed to carry out its own operations, and does not impede those of the soul, but rather that it should be like an agile, well trained and well concerted instrument, with which the soul can operate promptly and without impediment.

Chapter 10

OF THE INCONVENIENCES OF TOO MUCH EATING AND DRINKING.

Now there is no doubt that too much food, and crapulence, and drunkenness, and indigestion greatly impede the good disposition of the body, and consequently of the soul in their workings, because a man who has his stomach distended and filled with immoderate food, is inept, and heavy in every way, does not like fatigue, and on the contrary seeks peace, and he does not do anything more willingly than to give himself up to sleep, and the long nights are not enough, since a good part of the day is added to them, and if the body is heavy, and heavy, the soul cannot be light, but it too remains as if suffocated in a fog of thick, and thick vapours that rise from the stomach, and take away the use of speech. What shall we say then of the many and various infirmities that are caused by the intemperance of eating and drinking? Therefore it often happens that a citizen who could, and should have been useful to his country, and to his house, sits in an unhappy chair, or lies in a bed, in the most beautiful season of life, grievous to others, and to himself; This is why old age is immature, and death is accelerated, and especially when, as is usually the case, the intemperance of gluttony is joined by that of carnality, a miserable companion, because according to the true sentence of Saint Hieronymus, the saturated belly defumes lust, as has been said elsewhere, on the occasion of discussing the remedies against the vice of lust. But here we speak of the necessity of moderate eating, as a necessary means to maintain life, and consequently so that each one may operate virtuously in the state, and vocation to which God calls him. And on the contrary we are obliged to blame

too much eating, and drinking, because they impede the civil, and virtuous, and proper actions of man, they shorten the very life, and finally they lead the soul into a thousand vices. Perhaps it will seem a paradox to some what I intend to say now, but we can see from ancient experience, and from nine, that it is too true, that intemperate men, given to gluttony, drunkenness, and incontinence, sins which are not commonly held in high esteem, have a great disposition and facility, not only to commit more serious crimes, but what is the greatest of evils in this life, to depart from the union of the Church, and to apostatize from the faith, as I remember having touched upon in the beginning of this work, speaking of the evils, which the neglect of good and Christian education has given rise to. And this is the first door, through which the false prophets and false apostles, who preach pleasant things, and the teachers of errors who scratch their ears, through this door I say begin to insinuate themselves into the carnal souls, widening the bridle to the sense; So it has happened that many, and many, liking this new, delicate, and comfortable way to go to heaven, which Christ our Lord did not teach us, who on the contrary called it difficult and arduous, it has happened that they have accepted the new Evangelii, and the nine religions, and they have stumbled on the rocks of heresies, and miserably made shipwreck of faith. And therefore it should not seem surprising, if more than once we remind our father of the family that he accustomed the child to sobriety, as we will say hereafter.

Chapter 11

OF PATERNAL CARE ABOUT MODERATE FOOD.

Although it is true what has been said above, that the measure of food, and its quality, must not be the same for everyone, because those who toil according to their bodies, such as farmers, artisans and the like, need more food, and more solid food, while men who exercise their intellect more and are of a weaker complexion need less food, and easier to digest, such that what is mediocrity in one use, is excess, and overabundance in another; However, this proposition must be taken for granted, that in every state and condition of men, and in every age, sobriety is a very praiseworthy and necessary virtue, and therefore it is appropriate that our fathers of families accustom their children to it from their earliest childhood. We read in the ancient histories of the Greeks that the Spartans or the Lacedaemonians by the institute of Lycurgus, their famous legislator, fed their children very soberly, and among other good effects, they had the opinion that by sobriety, their bodies became taller and more willing, and their limbs more beautiful and better formed; For since the vital spirits are not occupied with cooking or digesting much food, nor are they overfed or stretched out by the excessive quantity of food, they can easily, through their lightness, ascend to the heights, so that the body also grows. Likewise, bodies that are rather small and frail seem to obey better the natural virtue, which is to give to each member its due form, where on the contrary it seems that fat and overfed bodies make a certain resistance, and because of their gravity, they are not as well handled as the first ones, which become better formed. But as it is, since we do not know how to dispose of such things subtly, it is very clear from experience, that bodies which are raised

with moderate nourishment, and which are dry, and not overflowing with superfluous humors, which too much food generates, are also more agile, and ready to work, more persevering in the effort, more tolerant of the heat and the cold, and of the other bad weather of the air, and less easy to get sick, especially when with sobriety is joined the exercise of the body, for which not only the Spartans mentioned above, but other peoples, and republics have had the law, and the custom of living very temperately, and such were the Romans themselves from the beginning, before Asia conquered them, as some say, with its delusions, and yet they were warrior men, and warlike, and strong, it is a wonder that others do not say that soldiers need to eat a lot, that as for the studious and contemplative men, everyone will easily concede that sobriety is necessary in them, following an ancient Greek proverb, whose sentence was this: That the fat and full belly does not generate subtle intentions.

Chapter 12

SOMEWHAT MORE IN PARTICULAR OF THE SAME MATTER OF THE NOURISHMENT.

Because in infancy, man is almost no different from the brute, and for now little else can be done, other than to attend to the body, therefore it will be the care of the mothers of families, and of the good nurturers, that the child is well nursed, and nourished in such a way, that it does not become exhausted, and languid; and in sum is governed in such a way, that the little body can be a suitable instrument of the soul, as we remembered from the beginning. It should also be noted that children, and the other ages which are still growing, require, according to their proportion, more food, and more often than the perfect ages, since nature must have nourishment in them not only to maintain the body, but to give it augmentation, until it reaches its due perfection, nevertheless with children, and with young people who are a little more grown up, no less than with men, sobriety and temperance have to be exercised, since children must not be given everything they want, nor as much as they want. Children are voracious, friends of fruits, and of sweet things, which given to them excessively, not only spoil their pleasure, but often cause infirmity. What kind of food is suitable for each age, to form a body that is healthy and of average strength, suitable for civil exercises, which are commonly done by gentlemen, and by citizens in the government of the City, and in the care of the family, it is the quickest task of doctors to give particular precepts and rules. But in general it seems to me to remember that children must be trained in such a way that they do not abhor food of any kind that is commonly used among men; because the necessities of human life force us to travel and

find ourselves in foreign countries, where it is necessary to live according to the conditions of the place, besides that, if sometimes a friend invites us to eat with him, it cannot be that he does not receive discomfort, Seeing that we do not eat this or that food, and sometimes there are some who, by tasting something unintentionally, or rather only by smelling it, and perhaps by seeing it before them, feel nauseous, I say even of such things, that others, well bred and civilly raised, are inclined to eat. And it is true that there are some people who seem to have a certain natural repugnance to some kind of food, but nevertheless, as in other things, education corrects many defects, and if it does not remove them at all, it makes them more tolerable, so too in this case your diligence will not be useless, because if it seems to be a matter of little moment, nevertheless beyond what has been said, it may happen that due to such a factual impediment of not being able to nourish oneself with any kind of food, or to vehemently abhor wine, one may not be allowed to celebrate, or may not be able so comfortably to make an election, to enter into any particular religion; one does not speak, however, of those who by the advice of doctors, and by indisposition are obliged to abstain.

Chapter 13

OF THE UTILITY OF SIMPLE AND COMMON FOODS.

Likewise, continuing to speak in general, I consider it expedient that our father of the family accustoms his son to eat no more than one or two kinds of principal foods in the same meal, and these not artificially seasoned; For this reason, besides the fact that simple, simple food requires less apparatus, and less occupation of the servants, it is healthier, more easily consumed, generates better juice, and less excrement, and the stomach embraces it much better, and nature feeds on it. Where the various condiments, the allurements of the throat, are a seminary of many illnesses, and what is worse, they are a foment of many sins, for they are ordinarily full of aromas, and of spices, very harmful to the young; as was said speaking of the remedies against the fire of lust. Let our child also be so accustomed, under the discipline of his father, that when he is self-supporting he may be content with a simple table, with ordinary food, which at a reasonable price can be found at all times for everyone, so that if he becomes a citizen or an artist, does not go to the taverns to satisfy the unbridled appetite of gluttony, and the gentleman does not want, at great expense, rare foods, and from other countries, and out of season, and in short, such that either for the very thing, or for the seasoning, costing a great deal of money, are deservedly called precious. I remember having read that once Pompey the Great was ill, and the doctors advised him to eat a certain number of birds, which, being out of season, could not be found except in the house of Lucullus, a very rich Roman citizen, but no less dissolute, who diligently fed them all year round; but Pompey generously refused to eat them, saying these notable words: Therefore, if Lucullus

were not a voluptuous man, Pompey could not live? I wanted to report this for our own confusion, since we Christians, to whom Christ himself says: Beware lest your hearts be burdened with crapulence and drunkenness, live for the most part in such a way as if we had made our God the most vile belly, as St. Paul complains. So much has luxury and excess grown in this area, that it is greatly praised by others to keep many ministers busy, and to spend a great deal of money in eating delicately and out of common use; I do not want to make any further exaggeration, so that others do not say, that I want to know better. It does not mean, however, that in order to honor one's hosts and relatives, and sometimes receiving for honorable recreation a friend for dinner, one cannot do something more as a sign of honor and joy; as also on feast days and on the major solemnities of the Holy Church, but always within the terms of Christian modesty; remembering that our feasts are to be celebrated, not in luxury, and in the crapule, and delitie of the body, but in spirit, and holiness, and purity of the soul, as the great father S. Gregorio Nazianzeno admonishes. Gregory Nazianzen. But returning to the subject, whoever has noticed my way of speaking, will see that I do not love sordidness in our family father, and I do not blame civility, and that decency which is appropriate to the state of each one. But it seems to me to be well remembered, that in every time, and in every place Christian modesty and temperance must shine through; and I for my part believe that the hospitable, and the judicious, and temperate friend will be better received, and honoured, seeing the whole table seasoned with a joyfulness, and sweet hilarity, and of heart, such as true friendship produces, than seeing it full of a deluge of food, that it seems quicker to want to suffocate it, than to nourish it

Chapter 14

THE GOOD MANNERS OF THE CHILD IN THE TABLE.

Therefore, let the table of our father of the family be such that it is a continuous school of sobriety for the child, and in the rest let everything be clean and clear, not repugnant even in poverty, to worldliness. For this reason I praise the fact that our child, already grown up, eats at table with his father, not sitting, but standing, and with his head uncovered, things that become more relaxed as he grows older; but in this case he must be well grounded in his father's reverence; there he must be silent, and not speak unless asked; he must be content with that portion of food, and drink, which will be given to him by his father; who will rightly observe his manners, to warn him, and correct him where he lacks, sweetly however without restlessness of the table; he eats with modesty not voraciously, he does not make deformed acts, neither with his body, nor with his face, nor with his mouth, nor in any other way, whether eating or drinking. Do not turn your eyes here and there while eating, or observe too curiously how others are eating, or numbering the food, declaring with your eyes the hidden appetite, and noting the greater portions of others, but pay attention to yourself, and above all you must break it in this part, that he does not hope to have anything at his own will, except what pleases his father, who may at times, as if by himself, on the occasion of something well done by the child, give him a little something extra, as a reward for his obedience, or other virtue. Let the child be polite and clean in eating, accustomed to taking and offering things with reverence. It is a good and holy custom for the child to bless the table at the beginning, and to give thanks at the end, and to give good pleasure to all, and at least to remain

reverent and attentive while the father blesses the table, and to reply, Amen, and say the pater noster. Warn him that in entering the table he should not hurry, nor should he want to be the first, nor occupy the first place, but wait for his father's commandment, and begin in time to learn that precept, which the eternal wisdom clothed in our nature did not disdain to teach made men. When the Saviour says in Saint Luke, If you are invited to a wedding, do not put yourself at table in the first place, lest someone more honourable than you be invited, so that the inviter may tell you, give the place to him, and you should be in the last place, But go, and stay in the last place, so that when the one who invited you comes, he may say to you, Friend, ascend higher, and then you will be more honored in the sight of the other guests, for he who exalts himself will be humiliated, and he who humiliates himself will be exalted. This is the Lord's precept, full of good manners, and very necessary for the Christian, so that the foundation of all Christian virtues is humility, but it is also a very fruitful reminder in civil life, where often by the slightest accident of preceding one another, hatred and serious quarrels arise. Therefore our child, as I have said, should get used to the observance of this beautiful doctrine of the Saviour from the earliest years, so it is good that the child does not always enter the table from the beginning with the others, but the father makes him serve or read for a while, and when he seems to command it, he goes to the table. In short, as I said at the beginning, the table of the prudent father of a family will be like a school, and a daily exercise of virtue, and of many good manners. However, it should be noted, as has often been said, that the father himself must be like a seal, who has within him that form of sobriety, and other good qualities, that he wishes to imprint in the soul of his son, which is like soft wax, otherwise if the father, while at table, were to become intoxicated, or burst out in anger into inconsiderate words, and did other inappropriate things, it

would not be in any way expedient for the child to be present there. Let the father of the family also remember to sometimes cheer up the table, and after having given God first place, introducing some useful and Christian reasoning, it is lawful to say something pleasant, gently teasing the same child and training him to know how to bear some difficulties, and to pass it off with a modest laugh, and not to look upset, always keeping however the paternal gravity, and more so with the female children, of whom Savio says speaking to the father: *Et non ostendas hilarem faciem tuam ad illas*, that is, do not show them a happy face. This, however, is to be understood as moderation, as we shall perhaps state more fully elsewhere. For the rest, the good father of a family should not think that the things that we remember about the manners of the child can be done in a single day, but it takes time and patience, and it is necessary to remember that the cherubs are not yet perfect men, and it is necessary that they have some childlike qualities in some things, so that, like early fruit, they do not reach too soon a certain maturity that is not lasting, it is enough that continuing little by little, and still making some purchases in the good, and not going back to the past, they make no small progress at the end of the year, therefore the good father should take this care for a sweet restraint, and he should delight in seeing the small plant growing, while he waters it, and irrigates it with good education, and God blessed, from whom all good comes, gives it, as the Apostle says, the perfect increase.

Chapter 15

MODERATE USE OF WINE IN PARTICULAR.

I do not want to forget to remind in particular our father of the family that he should accustom his son to drink wine moderately, the temperate use of which rejoices, as the holy scripture says, the heart, and revives the natural heat and has other good effects, but on the contrary, taken intemperately, it harms the body, the intellect, and the soul, as an incentive to lust, from which the wise man said in his proverbs, *Luxuriosa res vinum, et tumultuosa ebrietas, quicunque his delectatur non erit sapiens*, from which words we learn, that wine incites to all intemperance, et dissolutione, et la ebrietà partorisce tumulti, et risse, et finalmente chi chi troppo si diletta del vino, non farà acquisto della sapienza, la quale è amicissima della temperanza, la onde i Greci hanno chiamato la temperanza con un nome, che da intendere, that it preserves, and maintains wisdom, for which reason it appears to all to be sober, but more so to scholars, who must judge, and govern the republic, and likewise to the ecclesiastics, and religious, who must be masters of continence; one could enclose an infinite number of places from the Holy Scriptures where excessive drinking is condemned, and one could refer to an infinite number of examples of very holy men, who totally abstained from wine, as all the ancient monks ordinarily did, but for us, who for the moment are speaking to those who live in this century, it is enough to remind our father of the family, that he should see to it that his son does not become a drunkard, in which ugly defect many fall very easily, and more often than in the excess of eating; It is necessary to say, how much one can sin in this part by craftsmen and small people on feast days, as we have complained

elsewhere; therefore the good father should take care of it at an early hour, because drunkenness is harmful to the common people, but it is intolerable for noble men. It was the custom of the Lacedaemonians, at public banquets, to inebriate a slave, so that seeing the gentle men, and especially the well-born children, the laid, and filthy ways of the drunkard, and the indecent words and gestures, they would abhor drunkenness, and beware of too much wine. Therefore, children must be regulated with good care about the use of wine, and it would be good if for some years they did not drink it, but at least they must not be given to drink powerful wines, nor pure in any way, but very temperate, which must be understood much more about young people, the age of which, being itself very hot, needs not to increase, but to subtract fomentation to the boiling of the blood of youth.

Chapter 16

OF THE SOBRIETY IN SPETIE OF THE FEMALE CHILDREN.

But above all it is necessary sobriety, and abstinence from wine in the female children, who must be adorned with modesty, silence, and chastity, and in whom it greatly displeases to have in the face a certain fiery redness, which wine alone produces, and more it makes them venerable to have such a virginal paleness, and the low eyes, and the grave gait, and the not very high and rare speech, than to run here, and there around the house, as if crazy, and to make other such trifles, that often are caused by the wine. We read not only in the pagan historians, but also in Tertullian, also a very ancient Christian writer, that the ancient Roman women, did not drink wine, and if they were found in fault, their husbands and relatives chastised them severely, with how much more reason then shall we demand from the Christian women at least sobriety and continence? Certainly, if I did not fear to be held too strict, I would say that a good and well mannered spinster, should not drink wine, or certainly very little, before she left for her husband. However, the prudent father must warn his sons and daughters not only to observe sobriety in his presence, but also to close the roads to them, so that by means of servants and maids, or in any other way, it is not permitted for them to do anything in secret. It is not lawful for them to do the opposite, which would be more harmful, drinking with greater avidity, and without restraint of that shame, which one has in one's father's presence, therefore it is necessary to be very discreet, and according to the proverb not to pull the rope too much so that it does not become unstable, and above all to ensure that good deeds are born from the depths of the heart, for the fear of God, and for the love of

virtue; and finally the same good habit, begun at an early age that has not yet tasted, or better said, has not imbibed the wine, will make it easier, and more enjoyable to operate, as has been said many times.

Chapter 17

EXAMPLE OF SAINT MONICA AS A YOUNG GIRL FELL INTO THE INCONTINENCE OF WINE.

I hope that it will not be bothersome and fruitless for me to refer briefly in this place to the story of the childhood of Saint Monica, which Saint Augustine, her son, tells at length in the ninth book of his Divine Confessions, so that one may understand how much vigilance one should have over sons and daughters in this same particular matter of wine, which will serve as an instruction in many other things, seeing how from small principles one arrives at the habit of wine.

Therefore Saint Augustine says, that Monica her mother was brought up well in her father's house, especially because of the diligence of an already decrepit maid, who from the first years had lived in the same house, and because of her praiseworthy customs she took care of the master's daughters, whom she governed, and kept in check, with a holy severity, so much that out of those hours, that at the paternal table they were parishly nourished, he did not allow them during the day, even if they were burning with thirst, to drink nor even water, which he did so that they would not take that bad habit, and he said to them, as Saint Augustine reports: *Hora bevete acqua, perché il vino non è in poter tuo, ma quando sarai andate à marito, et sarai fatta padrone delle dispense et delle cantine, l'acqua vi puzzarà, ma la consuetudine del bere sarà prevalerà; con questi modi la buona et prudente vecchia, brakenava l'avidità delle tendci ragazze, et così à poco la cosa era ridotto à tale, che già non avevano più voluto di fare quello, che vedevano non si convenire.* It happened that Monica, as an old maid already known to be sober, was sent by her father and mother to draw some wine, and began with great difficulty to drink a

little, not being able to take any more, because the taste itself abhorred it, which she did not do because of her appetite for wine, but because of a certain childish madness, but then adding to that little bit, daily another little bit, it was verified in her what the holy scripture says, that whoever despises and does not take into account the small things, goes to make a great fall, so that the good girl came to an end, that already without respect she drank greedily the full glasses of strong wine, or it means pure. God was pleased to free her from this viciousness, which was unknown to everyone in the house, and all the more difficult to cure, in a strange way, so that one day she came into dispute with that servant, who used to go with her in company to drink wine, since they were both alone, the indignant maid reproached him with bitter punishment for her sin, calling her with the Latin word Meribibula, which means so much, as a drinker of pure wine; This word, like a thunderbolt, penetrated his heart so clearly that he looked at his ugliness, and immediately condemned it within himself, and had it in abomination, and he divested himself of it forever, teaching us how we can draw fruit from our enemies, who, if, as has been said elsewhere, we know to be wise, do us no less good by reproaching us with our faults, than they do us harm by flattering us with their praise. This is what Saint Augustine wrote of his mother, who was then of admirable holiness, and he wrote it when she was already in Paradise, to give glory to God, or so that our fathers of families might learn from the fall of the saints to be prudent and diligent in the government of their children.

Chapter 18

OF THE TIMES AND HOURS OF EATING.

As far as the time of eating is concerned, in order to say something about this, it has been said that it is better to be more discreet with children, so that they do not have to wait until mealtime, but to give them some bread, with some apples, or dried figs, or raisins, or something similar, more quickly than meat, or cheese, foods that are not so good to be seen in their hands, and of greater nourishment than is needed to keep nature in check until lunchtime, and the same can be said of the snack, especially in the long days of summer when, because of the great heat, it is easier to allow the child to drink a little; but always the breakfast and the snack should be a reward for something good done, or to be done, verbs of gratitude for going to school, or for having recited the lesson well. Likewise, one cannot limit the hours of eating to those who have to do strenuous work, such as those who work on the land, and those who work in the factories; but speaking of the most common men, who live in a civilized manner, it seems to me that the best way is to eat twice a day, morning and evening, moderately; so that, as that eloquent writer so well said, *Vires reficiantur, non obruantur*, that is, that the strength of the body be restored, and not oppressed by food, as most often happens to those who eat only once a day, if they eat in the morning, they remain almost useless for the day's activities, having to take enough nourishment to last them twenty-four hours, and if they delay until the evening, nature suffers in many ways, especially in the less cold times and regions; because the body, because of the long fast, and the external heat, and outside, relaxes too much, and debilitates, and less readily fatigues during the day, and when the time comes to take

food, nature eats too greedily, and it is necessary to sleep for a long time, and it is not easy for a stomach of mediocre virtue to carry so much weight at one time, besides that these people stay long at the table, and want company, and entertainment more than their duty, so that many serious things are jeopardized, and other not good consequences often follow. It is true, however, that the various occupations of men, and many circumstances, which are partly within ourselves, partly dependent on others, require various rules, so in this, as in many other things. However, it seems to me that the way I have said is the best, and so it is done more commonly, and it is not inconvenient that the City is almost a large house, in which all eat around the same time, and so in an orderly way, at the same time, the other things are done, so that we too will be better able to negotiate with others, and we will give others the opportunity to be able to deal with us more appropriately, if we follow the most common use, not doing as some do, who eat at extravagant hours sometimes before the day, and sometimes in the middle of the night, who displease not only their own family, and those who have to do with them, but who harm their own health. Therefore, as the child grows older, our father of the family discreetly reduces it to the custom of taking food only twice a day, with such moderation, that neither nature is too burdened to eat, nor is he prevented from working, always remembering that eating is done only so that the body is sustained, and can be used expediently for the tasks, to which we are obliged, as civilized men, and as Christians.

Chapter 19

OF THE OBLIGATION, AND OF THE CONDITIONS OF CHRISTIAN FASTING.

It requires, as it seems to me, the matter of the present reasoning, that we also say something about Christian fasting, so that our father of a family may remind his son in due time how he must be ready to obey the commandments of Holy Church, no less in the observance of this precept than in others. However, it is not my task to report in this place which are the determined days, on which everyone who is not legitimately prevented must fast, and which are those that are dispensed from fasting, and how one must fast, and where the custom allows dairy products, and eggs, and where not; and other similar things, which one can and must learn from the spiritual fathers, and from the Christian doctrines, where are briefly collected the most necessary things, which each one must know and observe. And truly it is something worthy of tears to see the little care that is taken by Christians in common to know the things pertinent to the health of their own soul, and what are the obligations that must be fulfilled, to those who wish to be Christians in effect, and not only in name. I dare say, and not without probable conjecture, that there are those who know so much about these things that it is of little importance to ignore them, and yet they do not know that each one is obliged on Quadragesima not only to abstain from meat, eggs and dairy products, but also to fast every day, except Sundays; others seem to fast sufficiently during Lent, and the commanded vigils, because they abstain from the foods mentioned above, which are vulgarly called fat, and do not leave, however, to dine, and perhaps to make colation. Others know well the obligation of fasting, and they know how it is

appropriate to fast, that is, fasting requires three main things; which are, Abstinence from certain foods, Eating only once a day, and this, which is the third condition, must be done in the middle of the day, or thereabouts, that there is no danger in delaying, but it is good to anticipate too much the due time. Now, as I say, they know the laws of fasting, as everyone is obliged to know them, but not content with a large midday meal, in the evening, under the pretext of not eating cooked things, they make a new abundant supper, where only a little is allowed, as if it were medicine, to reconcile sleep, and rest the night more quietly. I leave to say of those who are too indulgent to themselves, considering themselves weak, or to receive harm from quadragesimal foods, they do not fast at all, nor do they abstain from meat; and all these deceive themselves only, and not God, of whom it is written, *Deus non irridetur*, God cannot be deceived nor mocked. Certainly it is not my intention to be rigorous, nor do I like to take things too far, nor do I intend to stir the consciences of the weak, because I know well that many can be justly excused for many respects, but I only say, that it seems that one sees in many too much neglect, and a certain blindness in the things that touch the soul, as if they did not matter much, since we on the contrary are so attentive, and exquisite in the interests of property, and of bodily health. Therefore the sure remedy is that each one confers his state and his particular circumstances with his spiritual father, who, with discretion of spirit, will not impose on him a greater burden than he can bear, and moreover he will have the merit of obedience, with which obedience it is likewise appropriate to make voluntary fasts, which are made only for divotions, and not to regulate himself by his own head; for no one is fit to be judge of himself and the devil is transfigured into an angel of light, and no less, or perhaps more, can anyone be sinned by the excess of fasting, than by lack of it

Chapter 20

OF THE WAY TO ACCUSTOM CHILDREN TO THE OBSERVANCE OF FASTING.

But returning to our father of the family and to the diligence that he must use to accustom his son to the observance of Christian fasting, since I am convinced that disorder in this, as in many other things, is born in a good part of education, I say that if well the Holy Mother Church, most benign, does not oblige under sin not only the young but also the young to fast before the end of the twenty-first year, nevertheless it is very expedient that the ears of the child, hear often around the house this holy name of fasting, and the eyes of the child, hear often the name of fasting, before the end of the twenty-first year, nevertheless it is very expedient for the ears of the child to hear this holy name of fasting often in the house, and for the eyes of the child to see and observe his father, mother and servants fasting in a Christian manner. Let them know the established days of the vigils and the tempora, and let them have great reverence for Quadragesima, of which Christ our Lord gave us a particular example, and in which we pay in a certain way to God the tithe of all the days of the year. Sometimes the father and the mother may invite the child gently to keep them company in the fast, without however depriving him of his necessary contribution, but the fact that he does not see the usual apparatus, nor the ordinary food, leads him to a certain belief in fasting, and then, as he grows older, he gets closer to the truth. And although it is not too little, according to the common warmth of men, to observe the precepts of the Holy Church without adding a new burden, nevertheless it would be a laudable custom in a Christian house, that in memory and reverence for the most bitter passion of Jesus

Christ our Saviour, one should fast on the sixth day of the week, which we say Friday, and that the father should leave this holy tradition to his son. Is it not a great thing to abstain a little when the body is already at rest, as it is around the fourth year of the tenth, and the others that follow, and yet it is seen that for a thousand accidents young people are left to dine, even if only on a whim, but how much more must be done for the sake of virtue, and for the good of one's own soul? and it is not to be doubted, that if one remains silent for now about the pleasure of doing virtuous work, the same habit will make fasting easy, just as it can happen, on the contrary, that to some, even though young and vigorous, because they are not accustomed to it, it seems a very serious thing if the confessor imposes a fast on them. Now the father of a family knows that the greatest enemy that his son can have is his own body, which is too delicately nourished and fattened, so that he then resists the soul, for which reason it is necessary at times to take away the weapons from this domestic enemy, as the Holy Scriptures exhort us, and all the ancient Fathers and Doctors of the Holy Church, that there is hardly any of them who has not written sermons and books in praise of fasting, and divinely among others St. Basil, and the same Holy Church calls fasting the medicine of the souls, and of the bodies, as well as for civil affairs and various states of men, it is very necessary to be able to endure starvation, and fasting, and not to do as some do, who, having arrived at home, cannot wait for a very short period of time, not so much for the need of nourishment, as for impatience, but as it is, it is not uncommon in the more mature years, if someone from a young age is accustomed to being able to suffer hardships, and in particular hunger and thirst.

Chapter 21

OF SLEEPING IN GENERAL.

The rest of sleep is necessary to nature in order to restore the tired body, and because of the moisture that abounds in them, children are very devoted to sleep, but just as what is necessary must not be taken away from them, and especially in childhood, so it is necessary to be careful that they do not cross the line, so that they may become sleepy men, which is a serious defect, and makes their minds stupid, and makes the bodies heavy and heavy to work, and takes away a very useful part of the day to do many things, so that, as a wise man said, getting up early in the morning is useful for the health of the body, for the study of Philosophy, and for the care of the family, from which the Gospel says about the man, father of a family, who left the house at dawn to lead the workers, and Solomon says Do not love sleep, and do not sleep too much, if you do not want to be oppressed by poverty. But generally speaking, it seems that the time spent in bed should not be less than seven hours, nor more than eight; and just as too much sleep makes men negligent, and inept at their studies, and at their labors, so on the contrary, the other extreme of too little sleep, causes almost the same inconveniences, and man remains drowsy, and as if dazed all day long, and nature does not do perfectly its consummation, and digestion, and remains languid, and little by little contracts some indisposition; and often it happens, that almost disdainful of what has been unduly taken away during the night, it demands it, and wants it back importunately during the day, so that some people are seen sleeping, in the places where they should have been awake. And although we read of some men of excellent virtue, or we see some, who, as

already living more of a celestial life than a human one, are content with a very short sleep, not however the common men must measure themselves with the same measures, but must take a middle way, so that this instrument of ours can carry its weights comfortably, not throwing the rider too softly on the ground, nor less failing through weakness in the way, and falling, as they say, under the burden. It is true that the flesh, the friend of comfort, always asks for more than it needs, therefore it is good to get used to getting up early in life, since sleep is an image of death, and it can be said that those who do not sleep, live longer. And among the other virtues of temperance and sobriety, of which we have spoken above, there also follows this one, that those who dine soberly will have less need of sleep, and will be able to get up earlier, and deal with God first the business of the soul, as we said when speaking of prayer, and then avoid many domestic matters, and better prepare themselves for public affairs, especially men of great business, and who have loads and governments; just as an ancient poet judiciously pretends to have been admonished in a dream by a great king, to whom it seemed to be said that it was not fitting for those who rule peoples, and execute governments, to sleep all night long, Some of the greatest and noblest gentlemen often deceive themselves in this, thinking that never seeing the rising sun, as Sardanapalus said, is a matter for their equals, and that only poor artisans need to get up at an early hour to earn their daily food. But solicitude is useful, and praiseworthy in every state of people, and therefore our father of the family should accustom his son to it discreetly, and as far as possible, without manifest offence, accustom him so that he may be master of his own body, and do as little as possible in the weather, of which, as a wise man says, none is more serious.

Chapter 22

OF SLEEPING BETWEEN THE DAYS.

As for sleeping during the day, some spiritual men have advised that the hour after dinner be assigned to rest and sleep, since it is not possible at that time, so close to food, to return to the usual operations, especially where the mind must be fatigued, something that is done at that time, prevents the offence of nature regarding the nourishment taken, which cannot be without offence to the body, and on the other hand, since it is the custom of the devil, who for that reason is called meridian, to assail man at that hour, as more exposed to his snares, especially of sins of the flesh, they have judged it less evil that that hour be spent sleeping. Others are wont to say, that by experience they find that sleeping half an hour of the day, they can without difficulty diminish an hour, and more, of night sleep, and others, speaking medicinally, harm sleep after lunch, as that which fills the head with vapours. However, I would believe that when someone has taken his due portion of sleep at night, it is not necessary to sleep again during the day, especially in winter, when the days are short and not so troublesome, and when we have eaten soberly, we are not so easily assailed by sleep, and there is no lack of a thousand ways, both for the cherubs and for men, to spend that hour with honest recreation, without offending God, nor of health, indeed with not mediocre fruit, so that the cleaning of the cage of a bird, the watering of a horticultural plant, the doing of some not very subtle work with one's own hands, and other such things, suffice to pass that hour without molestation, all the more so, since it is not only a rest to cease working, but a moderate fatigue, for the suavity that accompanies the change, is a rest of the other. But when a

little sleep is judged to be beneficial to our youngster, we are not speaking here of infancy, nor of early childhood, in which time, until the body is strengthened, it is appropriate to use a little more indulgence, in which case I say, let him not lie down, and let him not be accustomed in any way to enter the bed undressed, things that cannot be done without much loss of time, besides that he becomes too soft in this enemy flesh, to the detriment of the soul, but he rests on a chair, a little sooner, a little uncomfortable, so that the sleep is not so long, and not so deep, so that the senses receive liveliness sooner, than happiness and amazement. Well it is true that the advice of those spiritual men, of whom I spoke at the beginning, is more necessary for those who spend that hour alone, and if they are withdrawn, because if they are not well prepared they run greater risks, but the cherubs are not to be left alone at all, and without custody, especially in the long and troublesome days of state; But both for them and for the older ones it is necessary to find some useful exercise and activity, so that, as the saint says, the devil finds us always busy, as we have said elsewhere in full, speaking against lust, so that it is true, for the most part, the saying of that wise man, that he who has nothing to do, thinks of doing evil.

Chapter 23

OF THE EXCESSIVE WORSHIP OF THE BODY, AND OF THE NEGLECTED CONTRARY.

I would not descend willingly to such minute things, as I am about to say now, if I did not think, that in order to form a virtuous and useful man for his country, as we pretend to be, it is necessary to avoid too much delicacy of the body, and the excessive care of many in certain polite habits, which easily displease women, not men; for there are some, especially young noblemen, and rich men, who after having got up in the morning, spend a long time combing their hair, brushing their teeth, washing their hands with perfumed soaps, and so much so that their clothes are trimmed, and every hair is so annoying to them, and so often they return to the mirror; and at times there are so many long discussions to be had with the tailor, the shoemaker, the servants and the waiters, that the best hours of the day are consumed in vain; and the saying of the Comedian is no less true of them than of the women: While they polish themselves, while they adorn themselves, the year passes. But what is worse, these vanities bring with them evil consequences, the soul becomes soft, and effeminate, the body abhors robust, and virile labors, gravity is lost, and the opinion of a light man is acquired, to whom it is not convenient to trust in the hands of negotiation, who seeks brains and firmness. And so these people are reduced to being good for nothing else, than to walk through the streets, with the title of gallant, and tight-fitting; leaving aside to say of how many sins this excessive tightness exits, which elsewhere we have dealt with sufficiently. Now I do not dislike in any way politeness, indeed I remember it to our father of the family, and I desire it in our child, as long as it

is virile, and without affectation, so that it does not seem, that all our study is placed there; indeed in the children themselves it must have moderation, so that it does not pass into too coquettish softness, but retains a certain gravity, and so that it is a good clean spinster, that does not lose its modesty, and gravity. Therefore, let our father of the family accustom his son not to lose much time in the morning in such things, but satisfied with the natural necessities, so that during the day they do not molest us, to which use nature easily accustoms us; in the rest, let him dispense with what he devotes to the cult of the body with mediocre diligence, so that there may be more time to cultivate the soul, which is more important, and to employ himself in studies, and in the operations of the house, and outside. He warns his father, however, that his son should not become neglectful, and that he should go about with his face gross, and with his clothes untidy, or similar negligence, which is the other fatal extreme, indeed it will make him abhor everything disconcerting, and deforming, and of the soul, and of the body.

Chapter 24

OF DRESSING IN GENERAL.

And very much connected to the above matter is that of dress, about which we have discussed a little in the past, but only on occasion, and not in general, as this place requires. It has been said, speaking of the care taken in forming the body of children, that they should not dress too tightly, nor too thinly, but rather comfortably, so that nature can be more easily expanded, and this is written by Greek historians, who had the Spartan nurses, who used a certain artifice of raising small infants without much squeezing, and wrapping them with bands, and with ties, so that their limbs came to be more dissolved and better formed, and they of more beautiful, and gentle build. We have also said above, in the discourse of the sixth precept, against vain adornments, both of women and of young men, showing that they are bait and nourishment for lust, and therefore they must be avoided. And elsewhere it has been said of excessive pomp, full of waste, and of other serious inconveniences. Now we will continue to remember something else in this same regard. And first of all it seems to me that the cherubs should not be dressed too richly nor with too precious materials, since the expense is completely useless, and made only for ostentation, but another inconvenience follows, which is more important, that is, that the children become vain, and proud, and despise others of the same age who are not so well dressed, however our father of the family should in this matter remain within the terms of modesty, according to the decent of his state. As for the form of dress, it is to be regretted that the long robe, which so pleased the ancients, has almost completely disappeared, although the Romans were not philosophers, so

that it can be said that their dress does not suit knights, and not without reason did he call them masters of the world, and educated people, because with the robe, armed, they were able to conquer, and with the robe, in peace, they were able to govern the world for a long time, but we do not use neither robe, nor robe, but rather jacket and similar garments without flaps, short at all, uncovering children and young people not very honourably those parts, that nature itself has taught us to cover. If it is true that because of the continuous habituation of the eyes, there is almost no deformity, nevertheless whoever considers well, will see that some nations beyond the Alps, and those who are unfaithful, advance us in this part of veracity, and honesty of dress. But who can deny that the dress is not a mediocre moment for the respect of customs? Certainly a young man will have more serious and mature thoughts, who sees himself around a long dress, and will be more careful to make in public some gestures to which the short and free dress invites him in a certain way, for which the toga is also judiciously considered in some republics. But since the use, or the common abuse has obtained this way, at least one would not see in the clothes of our youth a thousand other irregularities, because besides the immoderate pomp and luxury, and the extravagant fashions of the clothes that are found all day long, sometimes large, sometimes on the contrary extremely small, it is a strange thing to see a noble gentleman, dressed as a jester in a hundred colors, and in the most vivid and flaming colors that can be found, such as yellow, green, and similar, so that they can be seen more easily in the squares, and in public places, and the brigades are moved to laughter. Now for these and many other things, it would be necessary for the public authority to provide, however, that our father of the family dresses his children in such a way, that it is known that they are of a Christian father, and that they remember to have renounced the devil in their baptism, and his pomp; clothes, especially when

they have come out of their early childhood, in colors tending more towards brown, rather than too light, honorably however, and of good material, and that the clothes are well made, so that one does not see in them any affectation, nor deafness, but a bearing mixed with seriousness, and of gracefulness, that is born from the uniform, straightforward and simple dress, but at the same time graceful, and not entirely cowardly, and we also see that a gentleman does not appear less nobly dressed, when he dresses corruptly, than when he dresses in the ridiculous ways that we have already said. And above all, as has been recalled elsewhere, let not the father of a family pass over his state, and let not the craftsman contend with the citizen, nor the latter with the noble in the most vain pumps and inventions, but let us all contend to love God, and to work more virtuously with His grace.

Chapter 25

OF THE HONESTY OF THE FEMININE CLOTHES, AND IN SPITE OF THE VEIL.

If the things said above regarding the dressing of men, are also proportionately to be understood of women's clothes, nevertheless because modesty and honesty are required mainly in women, and because abuse and license grows more and more every day, therefore it seems to me that I must say something in particular. It is a very indecent thing that the honorable madrone, wear their clothes so low-cut, and open that they show all their breasts, and their breasts, not less indecent is to dress in such a way, that it seems that they want to appear more quickly men than women, but a very serious inconvenience is to go publicly, even in the churches, without a veil on the head, or placed in such a form, that more quickly seems a mockery of the honourable bearing, than true honesty, as if one went to the tremendous sacrifice of the mass, and to the divine officii, as to a vain spectacle, to dance, and to celebrate, and not to stay with holy fear, and trembling, with all the senses gathered, asking God's forgiveness of the committed faults, and giving thanks to that immense majesty of so much benefit. This same abuse took place in the women of Corinth in the time of the primitive Church, and of the glorious Apostle St. Paul, who were in some ways more excusable than our women are, like those who, even now born in Christ, had departed from the errors of the Gentiles, and from the lasciviousness and licentious customs of Greece. And because some people, perhaps too knowledgeable, might say to me that I have taken to making too much noise about a thing that in itself is of no importance, or at least is indifferent, and that makes a woman go to Church in braids, not to say with a bonnet

and plumes, as if she were going veiled, I do not know how to answer them otherwise than that the great Doctor of the Gentiles, in whom Christ spoke was of another opinion, and although he was raptured to the third heaven, he did not scorn to lower himself, writing in this particular matter as long and as effectively as anyone can see in the eleventh., of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, of which I want to report some sentences, so that one may understand the great obligation beyond honesty, that women have to wear the veil on their heads, as a sign of their commitment to their husband, according to the ancient sentence of God, says the Apostle:

I want you to know that the head of man is Christ, and the head of woman is man; the man who prays with his head veiled, does insult to his own head. These words can be understood in two ways, that he is insulting Christ his head, to whom alone he is subject, and also his own head, that is his preeminence and authority over the woman. The Apostle goes on to say that the woman who prays with her head unclothed does insult to her own head, for it is as if she were bald or sheared, so that if the woman is not to be veiled, she should therefore be veiled, but if it is an ugly thing, and deformed to the woman, she should be sheared or decapitated, she should therefore veil and cover her head. And lower, it says so:

Judge for yourselves whether it is fitting for a woman to pray to God unclothed, or does not nature itself teach you that if a man wears his hair long, he will be ashamed, but on the contrary, if a woman wears her hair, he will be honored and glorified, for nature has given her hair as a veil. Finally the Holy Apostle concludes his reasoning, closing his mouth to those too many wise men of whom I have spoken above with these words: If anyone wishes to be content, and to reapply, let him know that we do not have such a custom, nor does

the Church of God. From these words we deduce that the custom of the whole Church was that women should go veiled, and that no one should dare to contradict this custom. Now these things are said so that our prudent and good mother of the family, with her own example, and with suitable persuasions, may teach her daughters to observe that custom which the Apostle of Christ testifies to us, and not that which the unbridled world has introduced. Let not the daughters of our honorable mother, neither spinsters, nor married, be the devil's snare to the wretched youth, and to their own souls, while on all sides they can see and be seen. The veil, most of all of fixed cloth, and pulled well forward, as it must be done, is like a shelter for the eyes, and makes others go more gathered in themselves not looking curiously here, and there, for which reason also the institutors of the families of monks, and friars, have used the hood. Tertullian, the most ancient and serious writer, writing at length on the wearing of the veil, calls it the helmet of virgins, and a shield against the darts of temptation, the armor of honesty, and a bastion, and a shelter against verecundity. It is also read in the holy writings, that Rebecca, coming on a voyage as a bride, seeing Isaac her husband from afar, immediately covered herself with her mantle; and that the ancient Romans called the wedding from the Latin voice nubere, which means to veil, and to cover, and so they called the novitia nova nupta, because the brides were veiled. I have extended myself in this matter, because I think that the little honourable bearing of women, displeases God greatly and is the cause of serious ruin in the one sex, and in the other, therefore I remind again the fathers, and mothers of families, that they should think that the one who has the duty to judge us is God, and not the world, and therefore they should bring up their children in a Christian way, and modestly according to the rules of God, and not according to the rules of the world.

Chapter 26

OF SENDING THE CHILDREN TO THE SCHOOL TO LEARN LYRICS.

By chance it may seem to some, that the reason of good order requires, that after the things said above, we should deal with the games, and other bodily exercises of children, which I do not deny could perhaps be true, however considering that the game is like a rest of the previous fatigue, I judged it to be convenient, that our child first tends to fatigue, and then if he is allowed by the discreet father of the family, he can recreate himself modestly. Hence childhood, free from any other sollicitude, does not have a greater effort, than learning to read, and even more so in learning grammar, having to pass through some thorny and troublesome ways and rules, found as Saint Augustine says in his confessions, dealing with this same matter, to increase fatigue and pain to the children of Adam. The same Saint Augustine says that he hated the Greek lecterns and learned them with disgust, which was not the case with the Latin ones, and he gives a very probable reason, that all the trouble was born from the difficulty of learning a peregrine and foreign language, of which he did not understand any word, and nevertheless with serious threats and punishments, he was forced to know what he did not know, which did not happen with the Latin language, which at that time was common, and popular, indeed the saint says, that if well when he began to learn to speak Latin, he ignored not less that language, than the Greek one, nevertheless he learned it without fear, and without any cruelty, observing only what the others said, indeed he learned it among the caresses of the nurses, that joking, and making him tricks, they cheered him, taking pleasure in seeing him stammer,

while not from the stimuli of others with pain, but from his own heart he was driven to speak, for the desire to give birth with words to his concepts, and affections, for which he concludes that great man a sentence well worthy of being noted: It appears from here, that greater strength and efficacy in learning such things comes from free curiosity, than from fearful necessity. Now it is all the more bitter for our children to learn, since both languages are already alien to us, if only slightly less so for Latin than for Greek, and there is almost no place for children to learn them with pleasure, since they are already dead in the cities and provinces where they were spoken in the past centuries, while still remaining alive, as much as in the books of their ancient writers.

Chapter 27

HOW TO ENSURE THAT CHILDREN GO TO SCHOOL WILLINGLY.

There have been some who, considering that the lure of prompt action is delight, have had in mind that children should learn the Latin language in the same way as their mother tongue is learned, and as other foreign languages are learned, that is, by observing and imitating, and with imitation, preserving with others who speak Latin continuously, but if those who write Latin thoughtfully and with study, find in it much effort, and few succeed in achieving the praise of speaking Latin well, what will become of those who speak Latin suddenly? Others have argued that in order to free children from the burdens of grammar, whose terms they are unable to understand, it would be expedient for them to learn first, even if imperfectly, the Latin words and their meanings, by reading them some good writer, and vulgarizing them, and making them memorize the same Latin sentences, and then teaching them the rules of grammar, of the noun, of the verb, and of the other parts of the oration of the same author, applying in fact the general rules to the particular examples, of the things already known in some way by practice, so that they say, that remembrance, and recognition, comes to generate in the child a certain delight, for which more easily he learns the rules, and more firmly he holds them. But however much these and other similar inventions may be successful, it is not necessary to discuss them at greater length in this place, and there is no doubt that the principles of whatever art one wishes to learn, are difficult and tiring, and consequently disturbing, which then, acquiring the habit with the frequency of the acts, is always

diminished, and finally it is completely relieved, or rather it is converted into pleasure, so that it is necessary that children either of good or bad will pass beyond these thorns. The wise and prudent teacher, however, should try as much as he can to smooth the way and make the difficult path easy, making sure that he knows the ways that the most knowledgeable have, patiently lowering himself to the childish capacity, and not wanting to be too learned with the children. And on the other hand both the father and the teacher must use industry, so that the child does not have to go to school painfully but willingly. It is not possible to learn immediately and perfectly something that is very far from the understanding of the child, and because the magistral authority is terrible for children, it is appropriate that the teacher uses a certain moderation and encourages the child, filling him with good hope, that in any case he will learn well, and in that case he should have the patience to repeat the same things several times, praising him at times in the presence of his companions, and of his father, the child should receive from his father some reward for his good behaviour, the emulation of his peers is sometimes useful, as will be said later, and with similar other ways, which experience teaches better, certain spurs are added to the tender heart, to go ahead in the course of learning, and he becomes generous in heart, running for a certain affection of virtue, and of honour. And where this is not enough, it is also appropriate at the right time and place to apply the lash, as we have said elsewhere at length.

Chapter 28

HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO HAVE GOOD SCHOOL TEACHERS.

The Greek historians write, speaking of the Lacedaemonians, who were very studious in raising their children well, not only with domestic and private education, but principally with public education; they write, I say, that the teachers of the children were not mercenary men, and led at a price, but honorable and chosen persons, who treated this business as their own interest, teaching the children with great affection virtue, and good customs, and the institutions of the republic. And we also read of the Persians, that they assigned to the care of the children, old men, whose goodness and gravity could make the children good again. Now it is to be wished that in our times the same thing would be observed, and that such an important office, as giving good to man, would not be exercised for the sake of gain, and by people who are often vagabonds and unstable, and who care little what success they have in making children, indeed they themselves are sometimes such that they need to be in the school of the fear of God, and of good morals, for which reason teaching children has become a vile and contented exercise. It is not the duty of teachers, as perhaps some believe, only to teach letters, but much more to teach good morals and Christian piety, qualities which are absolutely necessary for the attainment of our goal, that is, eternal beatitude, for which reason teachers are, and should be, like second fathers, or perhaps even more important, since it often happens that the father is an idiot and uncouth man, and perhaps does not have a certain manner and ability to teach many things, which are very important for a good Christian education, others because of their poverty, forced to work all day long, others busy with things of public

government, cannot see and provide for everything, as would be necessary, others finally leave most of the care to the teachers, and rest on them, so that if the teacher does not take care of it, the poor child remains abandoned, and deprived of help in the greatest need, and in the most important. Therefore the father of a family should be at least diligent and careful in this matter, to find a good teacher, and should not make this choice at random, but should take information and advice from prudent and God-fearing men, and should always put in the first place the goodness of the teacher and in the second place doctrine.

Chapter 29

OF PUBLIC CARE IN LEADING GOOD TEACHERS.

And since in our times there is scarcely a shadow of public education left, if not that of the schools, those superiors are greatly to be commended, who, using their authority, and seeking with diligence, and not forgiving expense, take great care to have such qualified men and teachers, that as has been said their children become not only learned, but also educated and good. It amazes an ancient, noble Greek writer, even though unfaithful, that many cities do not care that their fathers raise their children as they like, and do not think at all how they can become virtuous, and yet on the other hand command, that no one steals, nor kidnaps that of others, that he does not beat unjustly, nor commit adultery, that he is not disobedient to the magistrate, and many other such things, which if anyone transgresses, they have ordered penalties and punishments; not so says that wise writer the laws of the Persians did, indeed they anticipated, and provided from the beginning, that their Citizens did not become such, that they loved and chose to do evil, and bad things. And for this reason, under the custody of some discreet old men, as mentioned above, and of mature men, they governed the children, and young people that the Greeks say Ephebi, and they had some distinct schools, appointed for this purpose, in one of which the children learned, as he writes, justice. And I will tell you how they did this in more detail, speaking with the same teachers, but for now I would like to say that if in our times the gentlemen and the citizens of Antiquity are disdainful of teaching young people themselves, at least they should try to have teachers who are so qualified as the importance of the matter requires. And because the Bishops are our fathers

according to the spirit, shepherds of the sheep of Christ, and principal teachers of piety and religion, I have no doubt that, as zealous for the honor of God and for the health of souls committed to their faith and vigilance, they will take care that there be no lack of good teachers, especially to teach the poor without cost, as the Council of Trent decrees, whose teachers, besides the sufficiency of doctrine, must be principally of upright morals, and above all must be true Catholics, obedient children of the Apostolic See, and of the Supreme Pastor, and Vicar of Christ and successor of Saint Peter Prince of the Apostles, Roman Pontiff, and in sum must not have any stain, nor any suspicion of heresy. Which I have wished to say in this place, not because the solicitude of the holy Bishops, has need of my remembrance, but because we are in calamitous times, and full of snares, and of hidden devices to sow false doctrines, and because sometimes the simple fathers of families, do not know how to discern sufficiently these very serious dangers, which is why it is necessary above all that pastoral providence should watch over them, so that innocent children and young people may not be devoured by wolves, who come in the guise of lambs and sheep; and there is no one who does not understand how much diligence is needed in general studies.

Chapter 30

OF KEEPING MASTERS AT HOME.

Considering that in public schools, where there are many children and even if the teacher is a good man, it is necessary that there are many inconveniences, because not all will be well educated, and as the saying goes, one infected sheep corrupts the whole flock, and even if there are no vicious animals, there will be at least some discouraged ones, irritable, easy to revenge themselves, and who will have other similar defects, which easily stick, besides that in a great number the master cannot easily see all the disorders, nor less can he apply with the diligence that is appropriate to the work, and his art in particular, according to what the variety of the minds, and of the natures requires; Therefore I would praise that our father of the family, especially if he is well off, should have a master in the house, adorned with those good conditions which we have mentioned, and to have such a master he should not spare himself the expense of spending a little more, not doing as we read of an avaricious father, who asking for the master's salary of a thousand drachmas, which are worth as much as one hundred shields of ours, said that with such a great price he would have bought a servant, who would have been useful to him for that, and for many other services; To which the brave man smiling sharply replied, "Indeed you will do well, for with one servant you will have two, meaning that his son will also become a servant. And so it is very important to warn not only the teachers, but also the servants and all those who govern children, because they are the ministers of education, and when they are good it is better to take account of them, and to keep them well satisfied. But going back to the teachers who are in the

house, all the problems mentioned above are avoided, and the paternal eye watches over them and sees many things, and can often excite the teacher's industry and diligence, and deliberate together with him in agreement on the things pertaining to the child. And when our father of the family is not able to spend so comfortably by himself, if nothing is more useful, than that which is made by good teachers, two or three gentlemen friends, or relatives can agree together, and at common expense lead a good man. It is true that where there are various wills, disputes easily arise, but it is not impossible to find two or three people who have the same goal in the education of their children. And in this case, perhaps it would be more expedient to excite any dissension, if the teacher were to stay in his own house, paid in such a way that he did not need to take on many pupils. But these things are left more to the prudence of the father of the family, without leaving to say, however, that I think that a small number of children, such as six or eight, not very different in age, is not to be an impediment, but rather a quicker benefit, to teach literature, and good morals, for the emulation and competition of the youngsters, where however the intention of the fathers is the same, that the children are raised in a Christian way with the same form of discipline.

Chapter 31

OF THE AUTHORITY TO BE GIVEN TO THE TEACHER.

Let the father of the family, however, take care of one thing that is very important, that is, that after he has chosen a good teacher in a mature and considered manner, he must grant him full authority over his children, warning them so that they know they must obey the teacher as if they were their own father, never accept the complaints and grievances of the children against the teacher, and in this the mother, also warned by her husband, must forget a little of maternal tenderness, and not be moved to harmful compassion, when the child comes to him with tearful eyes, on the contrary, father and mother must scold him more and less severely according to need, always reprimanding him, and sometimes comforting him not in the way of one who pities, but of one who exhorts with authority to do well, as for example by saying you see, my son, you have deserved these beatings, and the teacher has done well to correct you, but from now on be better and more diligent, and guard yourself from this and that defect, and be willing, that in doing so you will not be beaten. In short, it must be done in such a way, that the child is resolved not to have any refuge, nor any domestic court, so to speak, where he can appeal to the master's judgments, otherwise for every little thing the child will fill the air with shrieks, from which then follows confusion, and much impediment to the work of the master, and together with the profit of the child, who in this way will go in peace to obey and make, as they say, of necessity virtue. However, the teacher must behave in such a way that he is no less loved, than feared by the child, praising him at times, when he has deserved it, in the presence of the father, so that the child may be persuaded to be more

acceptable to the father, and to receive small graces and remuneration for the good relationship with the teacher. And on the other hand, when the father notices that the master exceeds or needs to be corrected in some way, he will be able to do so at a time and place in the absence of the child, not altering himself at all, but gently reminding him that the same end must be of both, that is, the benefit of the common child, since Christian charity must not be less effective in the master than natural inclination in the father.

Chapter 32

EXAMPLE OF THEODOSIUS EMPEROR ABOUT THE AUTHORITY OF THE TEACHER.

It is found written in the life of Saint Arsenio, that Theodosius, first Emperor of this name, Prince of excellent qualities, and not less religious than warlike, who reigned at that time in the East, having two sons, Arcadius, and Honorius, took great care to have for their care a teacher such as was appropriate for two children, who had to be raised for the succession of such an Empire, and above all he thought of finding one of a kind, who with learning had combined a distinguished goodness, so that not content with making inquiries in Constantinople, and in the Provinces of his Empire, he also wrote to Gratiano, Emperor also in these parts of the West, who with the advice of the Roman Pontiff sent him Arsenio, a man for his singular erudition, but much more for the great sanctity of his life very worthy of such a charge. When he arrived in the presence of Theodosius, the Emperor was immediately taken by the venerable aspect, and by the suavity of his speech, and by the modesty, and gravity of the customs of Arsenio. Therefore, very happy, he called his two sons and gave them to him as disciples, and spoke to them in this way: From now on you will be Arsenio, their father, more than myself, because it is a more excellent thing, and more proper to a father, to give good being, than only being. I entrust them to your care, and I call God to witness, that you with your grace make them such as I desire. But be careful what I will impose on you now, and I command you to study well in their presence. I do not want you to have any consideration for their Imperial Majesty, nor because they are my children do you have any respect for them; therefore I want them to be

as your children and disciples, and to be subject to you, and obey you as their own father and master, and if they do otherwise, we shall make a serious offense against them. Having said this, he wanted the school to be near his rooms, so that he could go there at his pleasure. But the good Arsenio, as the one who was most modest, doing in all the rest the work of a most diligent tutor, only in this part of the teaching of the magisterial majority he did not observe the Emperor's commandment; for that reason, showing great reverence to the two young men, and honouring them according to the height of their state, and at the same time keeping himself in the usual humility, he taught them standing while they sat down. It happened that one day Theodosius suddenly entered the school and, noticing this, became very disturbed and took Arsenio to task with serious words, who responded reverently saying: O Emperor, it is appropriate to observe the due distinction of things, and to the youth of these two gentlemen of mine to give the teaching, and the admonitions, and also to render honour to the Empire. Then the Prince, more disturbed than before, said: And who made them Emperors? and not without some indignation of his own, he took away the imperial insignia that they wore, as a purple mantle, or something else, and forced Arsenio to sit in the royal seat, and his sons, Arcadius and Honorius, who were then Emperors, one of the East, and the other of the West, he made them stand in a humble act before their master, saying moreover these memorable words, If by learning the fear of God and doing his will they will make themselves worthy of the Empire through virtue, may God give them a peaceful and well constituted Empire, for the benefit of the people whom they will have to rule, otherwise it is better that they live a private life, than to rule foolishly and dangerously. And from that time on it was necessary that Arsenio should retain in all respects the place and authority of Master. I wanted to report this example at length because of the instruction of some who, much inferior

in size to Theodosius, want the teachers to be the servants of their children, harming them in many ways, and in this especially that they become haughty and unbearable with their subjects, where to know how to command well, it is necessary first to have learned to obey.

Chapter 33

OF THE SCHOOLS OF THE VENERABLE COMPANY OF THE JESUIT FATHERS.

The Holy Spirit, of whom it is narrated in the Acts of the Apostles, who appeared above the first believers in the form of tongues of fire, gave us to understand by that visible sign, that in the holy Catholic Church, which is governed and governed by his providence, and continuous assistance, tongues of fire are never lacking, that is, men fervent in charity, and abundant in words, as it is said in the Ecclesiastical hymn of that feast. Well it is true that in many people these two qualities are not united, but separate and disjointed, so that some have a tongue, that is doctrine and eloquence, but not the fire of charity and great zeal for the honor of God, and the health of souls, others weak and simple burn with the fire of divine love, but do not have the knowledge and eloquence to teach others. But just as the Holy Church never lacks language or fire, that is to say, holiness of life and integrity of doctrine, so also there is never a lack of inflamed tongues, which have both one thing and the other, although there is a small number of them because of our sins. Now the Holy Spirit, admirable craftsman, and rich in salutary inventions, who from time to time has discovered for the benefit and ornament of the Holy Church, in these last centuries of ours, the ecclesiastical discipline being much relaxed, and the study of the sacred letters in the secular clergy, aroused the spirit of Ignatius of Loiola, born nobly in Biscay, a man truly, according to his name, inflamed with the love of God, and through him and his companions, founded the noble religion of the Clerics, called the Company of Jesus, called the Company of Jesus, which like a chosen vine, planted by the

heavenly farmer, has, as it is said in the psalm, filled the earth, and covered the mountains with its shade, and spread its palm trees, and its spread not only as far as the sea, but in the new world, and in the most remote countries from these ours, having brought in every place two fruits no less timely than necessary, one the frequent preaching of the word of God, and the other the frequency of the sacraments of confession, and of the most holy Eucharist. Now among the other excellent institutes and professions of this venerable company, which strives to unite together those two things of which we were speaking, that is, the fire of charity and the tongue of learning, there is one which has given us occasion to make this argument, namely, the teaching of letters and good morals to children and youth, which they do not deal with superficially, and with an appearance, but with much study and care, for which they have public schools, where not mercenarily, but only for love, and honor of God, they teach languages, and the letters called humanities, and in some major colleges they also read the Mathematical sciences, and Philosophy and Theology for the most experienced students, but above all they make sure that the children learn the Christian doctrine, and in their early years together with the human doctrines they drink the milk of the celestial doctrine, which is more important, that is, of the holy fear of God, so that they have a great obligation from our fathers of the family, who where they have the convenience, they can certainly send their children to the schools of these good fathers, for if well they have many teachers, nevertheless they also have a copy of teachers, and of repetents, and they distinguish the pupils in certain classes, or we want to say teams, and as separate bodies, according to the age, and the various progresses in the letters, applying to each class its own, and particular teacher, for which good order every confusion is relieved, and many inconveniences are forbidden. In some places these fathers also take care of some colleges and

seminaries of clerics, where they also admit pupils, called boarders, who outside their father's houses, live continuously under the discipline of the same fathers, learning letters and customs. It was not to be ignored in this discourse of ours, since in many cases it can be convenient for the father of a family to send one or more children, besides the fact that it not infrequently happens that the father dies, and the children remain young, and the good mother of the family can, at that time, provide sufficiently for them to be brought up together, provide sufficiently for them to be brought up in a Christian manner and to learn letters according to their state and ability, so that with this convenience of the boarding school governed, as has been said, by the Jesuit fathers, many difficulties are explained and facilitated.

And if this company alone were in charge of teaching the children in all places, I could pass on some things quietly, which I think I should remind the teachers of, but since they cannot provide for everything, I will continue to discuss with the others what I need to. And the first thing to remember is this: that the teacher, desirous of doing his office well, should inform himself diligently and in particular, of all the ways that the Jesuit Fathers teach the children and instruct them in good morals, because these good religious, through constant practice, and through the great experience that they have in the teaching of children, have a great deal of experience in the teaching of children, and for the great experience they have in the government of children, and because among them there are always very noble minds, and men of great prudence, they have made such a notomy, so to speak, of things that it is difficult to add, or remove anything.

Chapter 34

OF THE MASTER'S OFFICE, ABOUT GOOD AND CHRISTIAN CUSTOMS.

It will not surprise anyone if, since it is my custom to reason with the father of the family, I now enter into reasoning with the master, since, as has been said elsewhere, the master also takes the place of the father and it is not only his duty to teach letters, but to form the tender soul of the child to virtue, by good example, and with useful admonitions, no less than the father himself; On the contrary, the father and the teacher must be understood together, and, as is said by proverb, they must help each other, so that the child may recognize at home the master's teachings, and in the school those of the father. And in short, a large part of good and Christian education rests on the diligence of the teachers. In this regard we have a notable decree of the last General Lateran Council, which, so that the teachers may know better their duty, it has seemed to me to record word for word in this place, translating it from Latin into our vernacular in order to observe the usual style; it says thus: We believe that every age, from adolescence onwards, is inclined to evil, and to accustom oneself from tender years onwards to good, is a very important and effective thing, therefore we state and order that the schoolmasters and tutors not only teach and instruct their children, and instruct their children in Grammar, and Rhetoric, and the like, but they must also teach them the things that pertain to religion, such as the divine commandments, the articles of faith, the sacred hymns, and psalms, and the lives of the saints. And on feast days they may not teach them anything other than things pertaining to religion, and good customs, and they are obliged to instruct them in these things, and to

exhort them, and to strive as far as they can to go to church, not only to hear Mass, but also Vespers and the Divine Offices, and likewise to encourage them to hear sermons and sermons, and it should not be lawful for them to read to their pupils anything contrary to good morals, or which leads to impiety.

Up to this point these are words of the Decree. And although the sacred Council of Trent has ordered that on feast days children in each parish be taught the rudiments of our faith, as they are called, and obedience to God, and to their father and mother, it is not, however, that the teachers do not have much field left, to promote the same undertaking and since the spiritual, the carnal, and the teacher, all in their degree, have the title of father, all must strive, and work so that the child may succeed as one wishes. Therefore the good teacher should set before his eyes not an earthly and corruptible reward, but primarily the honor of God, and the public utility, and he should not consider that he has a low office in his hands, because not by his nature, but because of some teachers of bad habits, and completely mercenary, and greedy only for gain, and for such a false opinion of many he is disheartened, but how can it be a cowardly thing to lay the foundations, which then have to support all the building of the highest sciences, and the mature goodness of all the rest of life? Let our master, therefore, be blameless and exemplary in life, and let him be such that the children may see in him the image of true Christian goodness, and the citizens may have him deservedly to be esteemed, and to be reputed as the common father of their children.

Chapter 35

HOW TEACHERS MUST DAILY EXERCISE THEIR CHILDREN IN CHRISTIAN PIETY.

The divine scripture says that the fear of God is the principle of wisdom, but the good teacher should have as his main concern to insert and nourish this blessed plant in the tender soul of the child. It is not necessary to repeat in this place the things that have been discussed in detail above, from which the teacher will be able to take some instruction in applying the memories that have been given to everyday practice. But in order to touch on something more specific, I say that so that the children may be accustomed to begin all their activities in the name of God, and to commend themselves to His Divine Majesty in all their needs, the teachers must have in the middle of the school a venerable image of the Blessed Mother of God, with her child in her arms, and the more ornate and decently kept, the greater the devotion, and when entering, each child must pay homage to it, and then, before the beginning of the readings, and the other exercises of the school, all together genuflected, greet it devoutly by saying the Ave Maria, or the Salve, not with too loud voices, that make a different and indivisible noise, because of the children who do not know how to tune in this way, but with a moderate and uniform tone, and if it seems better, let one alone say the prayer with gravity, listening to the others devoutly. Likewise, in leaving to return home, let there be some sign of thanksgiving and of dismissal from the Blessed Virgin Mother, but let these actions not be very long. Often the teacher encourages the children to be devoted to Our Lady, the mother of purity, and to entrust themselves to her and to her most sweet son, so that he may make them good, and

give them intellect, docility and memory, so that they may learn well. And with these ways they gradually become accustomed to making prayer; Saint Augustine writes about himself, that being a little boy and having heard from devout men, that there was God, who if well he was not seen with the eyes, nevertheless he was present and heard our prayers, and could help us in our needs, he used to commend himself to him with great affection, so that he would not be beaten in the school. Finally, the teacher can in many ways train the child in the fear of God, and in the works of virtue, and if the Persian children, when they went to school, asked where they were going, answered that they were going to learn justice, with how much more reason the Christian child, should answer in the first place, that he goes to learn the fear of God, and then the Grammar? And that common use is not to be despised, and so ancient, that perhaps the beginning is not known, and even if by chance it might seem a light thing to some, it is not to be believed that it was introduced without serious reason, that is, that before the child pronounces the first letter of the alphabet, he greets the Holy Cross, which as the Apostle says is our glory, and the principal doctrine, that the Christian has to learn, and to make profession of it.

Chapter 36

AS THEY MUST LIKEWISE EXERCISE THEM IN EVERY MANNER OF VIRTUE.

And because, as has been said elsewhere, the things of the cherubs, although small, represent the great things of men, and among these children there are proportionately negotiations, trades, contracts, promises, pacts, differences, and quarrels, of which the teacher is the judge, he ensures that they are accustomed to being truthful, not to swear, not to swear, not to insult, not to strike, not to tower anything violently, to render to each one his own, to conserve the things lent them, so that they do not spoil them, nor worsen them, to render thanks, to observe just promises, not to slander anyone unjustly, and other such things, which the master must define, and chastise the offenders, almost with a judicial form, trying to make the child, as far as possible, capable of the just punishment, and likewise of the justness of the sentence given by the teacher, and to be satisfied with it, because if men speculate in the works of nature, they have found it even in animals, and among the smallest, such as bees and ants, they have found a form of republic and justice, how much more so with men, who are more sociable than all the other animals, and have continually to bargain together, is it appropriate from early childhood to introduce a good form of republic and to accustom them to be just? The Greek writers write of the Persians, I mean of those very ancient ones, that they taught their children modesty, obedience to the magistrates, and to be continent about eating and drinking, in the observance of which they greatly benefited from the good example of their teachers, and of the other elders, whom they also saw as obedient, modest, and temperate. They also taught them justice, in

the way we have said above, the teachers sitting as judges, and judging the complaints, and their accusations, such as theft, robbery, violence, deception, insults of words, and other things like that, chastising those who were convinced to have done unjustly and not less chastising those who had slanderously accused. And in particular it is narrated that they judged among the children the sin of ingratitude, and if they found that someone could have been grateful, and had not done so, they punished him severely, having the opinion that the ungrateful are negligent, and inconsiderate of doing their duty to God, to their parents, to their homeland, and to their friends, and they esteemed imprudence and impudence to be the companion of ingratitude, which is then a guide to all ugly and dishonest things. And if those who did not know God, as we know Him, were so solicitous to teach the children justice, by holding schools and daily exercises of this, what must the Christian teacher do? For surely it would be too serious an error to teach them to speak properly according to the laws of Grammar, and not to teach them to act justly according to the laws of God, as the glorious St. Augustine cordially regrets in his confessions, saying: "I am not a Christian, I am a Christian". Augustine in his confessions saying among many others these affectionate words, *Vide Domine Deus, vide quomodo diligere observent filii hominum pacta literarum, et syllabarum, accepta à prioribus locutoribus, et à te accepta aeterna pacta perpetuae salutis negligant? i.e.* See Lord God, see how diligently the sons of men observe the pacts of letters, and of syllables received from the first speakers, and do not care about the eternal pacts of perpetual health that they have received from you? It is not necessary to remind the teacher in particular, that he should accustom his pupils to good manners, honouring the elders, doing those acts of reverence that are required of young people in good standing, and keeping their whole body, and especially their eyes and mouths composed, observing silence, and

guarding themselves from the slightest word that is not only dishonest but also indecent, but also indecent, because these, and other similar things everyone understands, that are to be done, and above we have reasoned about it sufficiently with the father of the family, but we also mention it here, so that the teacher may compensate where necessary, for the lack, or what I wish more, so that he may help and promote the paternal diligence.

Chapter 37

OF THE OFFICE OF THE TEACHER ABOUT TEACHING, AND FIRST OF ALL WHETHER BOOKS OF THE GENTILES ARE TO BE ADMITTED.

It is no small impediment to the goal of good morals, which as has been said many times, is the principal one, and must go ahead of all other respects, that the understanding of languages, and eloquence, and the knowledge of many things must be learned from those ancient writers, who worshipped the false Gods, so that having had no other light, except that of nature, and this very much overshadowed, their writings are full of false sentences, about the human life, and very different from what our most holy religion teaches us, as those who did not know any higher end than the glory of this vain and fallacious world, I leave to say of those who have written lascivious things, and have made with beautiful and suitable words, so many nets, that pull the simple minds in the vice. For there is no lack of judicious men, who totally harm the reading to children of gentile books, and it is certain that Saint Augustine does not lightly lament that in his childhood, not having been taught yet, for what reason he must truly weep, was vainly induced to weep for the errors of a certain Aeneas, and to deplore the death of Dido, who, as the poets have pretended, killed herself for love, and in such a way, he says, he did not weep for her errors, and for the death of the soul, whose death is not to love God. The most holy man also grieved over this impetuous torrent of human custom, by which they read in his time, and it pleased God that ours too should not read of the adulteries and a thousand choices of false Gods, almost inviting the wretched youth to do the same things, as if by so doing they were imitating heavenly Gods, and no longer

demons, or chosen men, such as those called false Gods by the foolish people. But on the other hand it cannot be denied, that the reading of the books of the Gentiles done with wisdom, can bring much utility, and not only Moisé, and Daniel, as we read in the sacred letters were very learned in the sciences, and disciplines of the Egyptians, and of the Babylonians, but also our holy Doctors, the lights of the holy Church, saw the poets, and the Gentile orators, they read the historians, learned their rhetoric, and were versed in their Philosophies, but they did not read everything indiscriminately, nor did they approve of everything equally, but they knew how to distinguish the precious from the vile, and being Christians, that is, followers, and disciples of the true, and perfect, and highest wisdom, they did not serve the doctrines of the Gentiles, nor did they oblige themselves to follow their own errors; on the contrary, they made the sharpness of the argument, the vividness of the poetic flowers, the copy of speech, and every other beautiful and good thing of the Gentiles serve the Christian religion and the sacred Theology, because the light of natural reason and intellect is a gift of God, and every truth that the Poets, the Philosophers and the other profane writers have written, and the other profane writers have written, either praising virtue, or blaming vice, or dealing with the wondrous works of nature, in short, whatever is true they have known, and said, all is from God, and all that we can appropriate as something due to us, that above the light of nature we have the very clear light of faith, and we are its most just and legitimate possessors. And as we read in the divine histories, that the sons of Israel took the gold and silver vessels, and many precious things, almost on loan from the Egyptians, and stripped Egypt, according to the commandment of God, of which gold, silver, and gems, they then made various ornaments, and instruments of the temple, or true Tabernacle, for the worship of the true God, so we must convert into the service of God, and usefulness of our

neighbors, the gold of the doctrines, and the silver of the eloquence of the Gentiles, and all that, which is beautiful, and precious like gems, is scattered in their books. The Christian schoolboy does not have to learn rhetoric to oppress the poor, not to move the people to sedition, not to persuade unjust resolutions through counsel; this art is not to be in our Christianly educated young man the sword of the furious, but rather the shield for the defence of the good unjustly oppressed, and an instrument of justice, and of the public good, and of the honour of God. Our child will not learn to make verses to sing about impudent and lascivious loves, nor to break the reputation of someone with curses, but to praise the virtue and the honorable works of good citizens, and to excite more easily with the harmony and suavity of the verse the human hearts to the love of God, and to the observance of the divine law. Basil says, that the Holy Spirit found the psalms, that the holy David composed, and assimilates the numbers, and the singing of the psalms to the apple, that the wise doctor puts around the rim of the vase, so that the sick person drinks the bitter medicine.

Chapter 38

OF THE CHOICE, AND ELECTION OF THE BOOKS THAT ARE TO BE READ TO THE PUPILS.

We conclude therefore, as we began to say above, that the books of the Gentile writers, should not be completely excluded from the Christian schools, but that they should be admitted with election, and with judgement, this was the sentence of the great Basil no less holy than learned, who on this same subject, wrote a gracious discourse to some young scholars, his relatives, whose title is, Of the usefulness to be derived from the reading of the books of the Gentiles. Where he says that we must imitate the bees, who do not feed on every kind of flower, and of those same ones, on which they feed, they do not take all nourishment, but that purest part, which is necessary for their work, and the rest they leave; So we too, as prudent and discreet, must take what is true, good and profitable from profane writers, throwing away the rest, as useless dregs, and just as in the picking of the roses we guard against the thorns, so it is appropriate that from the writings and sermons of which we speak, we know how to take what is useful, and reject what is harmful. Therefore the good teacher must remember that the student whom he teaches is a Christian, whose end is eternal life, which is acquired by faith, which as the Apostle says, works for pleasure, and for charity, observing the divine commandments, so that everything that is contrary to this end, and in any way can offend the integrity of religion, or the goodness of morals, is to be fled as a plague. Therefore, those poets who have written books of love and lasciviousness, which corrupt good morals, as St. Basil reminds us, and as the Lateran Council decrees in the above mentioned decree, and lately the Holy Council of Trent in the

Roman Index of prohibited books, must be completely banned. Saint Augustine says very well that in the books and in the vain things, which his teachers read to him while he was a child, he had learned many useful words, which, however, could also be learned in the non vain things, and that, he says, is the sure way, by which children should walk. And in another place he complains about an impudent narration of the Comedian, apt to kindle lust in a young man, saying that those Latin words, with which that event is described, would have been known if such a thing had not been written down, and he concludes that Saint Augustine does not reprove the words, which are like chosen and precious vessels, but condemns the wine of error, and of corruptions, which the Jewish masters give to drink in the said vessels. Therefore the teacher should not be deceived by the beauty of the Greek or Latin language, nor by the salt and wit of epigrams and the like, but he should choose those writers who have said good things in a good language. See how the Jesuit fathers have purged some writers from places dangerous for the youth. Let him not read extravagant books and books of hard style, but the most approved ones, which are few, and among others Cicero father of Roman eloquence, a serious writer, and that very surely in many of his books can be read, even as far as customs are concerned, as in the book of friendship, of senility, nor paradoxes, and others such, because the books called books of philosophy are not for children, and nevertheless it is the duty of the wise teacher, when he needs to, to demonstrate the shortcomings of a man without the light of faith, even though he is of great intellect and knowledge, who, puffed up with himself very often allows himself to be lightly blown about by the wind of this vain and fallen glory of the world; But the Christian who knows that for himself he is dust and ashes, does not become puffed up, but gives thanks to God, from whom is all our sufficiency, and knowing that the glory of this world is a vapor, and a smoke that soon vanishes, he

does not regulate his affairs by this vain end, but by the glory of God, to whom alone is due all honor and glory, the Christian is not narrow, nor does he have a low heart for great deeds, but rather he is enkindled by a generous desire to do good works, and to help others, he disdains vice, and embraces virtue, out of true love for the same virtue, and to please God, in whose glory, in a most lofty way, all our glory and happiness is contained. With these ways the good teacher must correct, and make up for the defects of the gentle writers, who, guided only by the weak light of nature, have stumbled in many things, and often, when they say something good, they do not arrive at the perfect truth.

Chapter 39

DE LO STUDIO DEL PARLAR ET SCRIVER LATINO.

I fear that I am not overstepping the terms, of the office that I have taken on, while I am reminding the teacher of various things, pertinent to the way of teaching, and I doubt that anyone will not say, that this is a desire to be the teacher, of the same teachers. However, it seems to me that this consideration is very much in line with our main aim of education, so I will not hesitate to add some other things in the same regard.

There are some masters who train their pupils very much in poetry, and in the verse and not very much in prose. For me I do not deny that reading some poets, especially Virgil and a few others of that century, is useful; it makes poetry and poetical writing, the intellect more awake and lively; one learns the number and quantity of syllables, which is very useful for correct pronunciation and such things; But this study of verse, if I am not mistaken, should not be the principal food, but a condiment to the food, because in the end, applying these things to the use of human life, in our times, not to say always, little else is extracted from poetry, other than pleasure; hence he said, that mediocre poets cannot be suffered, where in the truly useful and necessary things mediocrity is easily accepted. Poetry has another problem, that if others immerse themselves in it too much, it is like a mistletoe that holds back, and turns away many times from the more serious studies, and too many young people fall in love with it, and give themselves to writing love affairs and the most vain things; For this reason it is necessary to pay particular attention to the style with the imitation of Cicero, and of the other few, more praised,

indeed a worthy man used to say, that one should not introduce the putti immediately into the verse, but into the prose; because, he said, versification is similar to those who jump, and lie in the air, where the prose is similar to those who go by step, and walk, which is given to us first by nature, than jumping. Therefore, let the teacher instruct the child in the understanding of languages, which are of great use to the sciences, and exercise him in the reading of Cicero, making him learn as much as he can in his mind, and in giving the dictation, or suggestion as we wish to say, to the putti, in order to explain it in Latin, take it from Cicero himself; This will have two good effects, the first is that certain low and vile concepts will be avoided, which for the most part are usually given by teachers who are not so shrewd, and on the other hand the putti will become accustomed to serious sentences, which will then serve them in civil commerce and in public affairs, of which Cicero is full; the other utility will be that the Latin of the young man will be corrected with that of Cicero himself, and comparing one with the other, the teacher will have the opportunity to better understand the difference between the sweetest and most harmonious numbers, the most Latin words, the most chosen elocutions, and the like. In my opinion, it is also necessary to take up some study of our vernacular language, which should be practiced daily as much as anyone knows, and it is a great shame to see a gentleman at this time, who does not know how to explain his concepts in familiar letters, and it is easy to combine the practice of these two languages, and not without benefit, by translating places of good authors, of one into the other.

Chapter 40

HOW SOME IN THE STUDY OF WRITING LATIN OFFENDS THE CHRISTIAN PROFESSION.

But returning to the Latin language, I say that I like not a little, that our young man is making good progress in it, but I would not like in any way, that he would be among those who seem to have made an idol of his Lord Tullius, and so much they make themselves his faithful observers, that in a certain way they forget to be Christians. And for sure it is a strange thing to see some people, who avoid saying Christian voices and terms, as if they were rocks, just because Cicero did not use them, and they use improper words and sometimes ridiculous circumlocutions, rather than speaking as Augustine, Hieronymus and the other saints, our teachers, spoke, and as the Holy Church speaks all day long. On this matter one could say a lot, and it would show, if I am not mistaken, very clearly, that men, on the other hand serious, have written with very inept manners, and have said some not inconsiderable legerdemain, in order to obey too much this surviving purity of Latin speech; and it would also show how Saint Ambrose, and other very holy men have condemned this custom, but I do not want to be longer. Therefore, our judicious and Christian master should go by virtue, and not obey these laws, which under the pretext of fleeing barbarism, open the way to Gentileism. I praise the Latin language, provided that the words are used for what they are intended for, that is, to express things, and not, on the contrary, that things have to obey the words. I praise the study of eloquence, provided that this ancilla, together with all the human faculties and sciences, serves, and is subject, as is right, to the Queen, that is to divine wisdom, and to the Christian religion.

Chapter 41

OF JOINING WITH THE READING OF THE GENTILES ANY CHRISTIAN BOOK.

In order that our youngster, in his studies, may always remember that he is a Christian, and that everything else must be in keeping with this most eminent profession, the teacher must, with the reading of the gentle books, add some useful and praised Christian books, and in particular the Roman Catechism, elegantly written, and in those parts, which are more difficult, he will be able to take the gist of it, and adapt it to the capacity of his students, but in particular the exposition of the Dominical prayer, seems to me very appropriate, and is full of excellent Christian teachings. And since, as we have seen above, the Lateran Council decreed that the lives of the saints should be read, I believe that, for this purpose, the few that St. Hieronymus has left us, such as those of St. Paul the First Hermit, and of Hilarion, as well as the life of St. Martin, written by Sulpitio Severo, and also the Ecclesiastical History, both of which, in my opinion, will not harm the good language, but will undoubtedly benefit good morals. In the same study of the lives of the saints, although more briefly, our Prothonotary Pietro Gallesino has worked with much praise, as can be seen in his copious Martyrology, recently published, which is written in very Latin. But in the matter of Rhetoric, an excellent book is the Ecclesiastical Rhetoric of Monsignor Agostino Valerio, Bishop of Verona, in which, besides being written purely and elucidatingly, there is all the good of the Rhetoric of Aristotle, of Cicero, and of the others, placed in a beautiful order, and with clear brevity, but moreover the precepts of the art are explained with Christian examples, and with very useful sentences of the Fathers, for which I exhort our young

scholar, to make himself very familiar, and especially the Clerics, for whom the Cardinal of Saint Prassede Archbishop of Milan, had it written, procuring that great servant of God with all possible ways, to raise many good workers in the vineyard of the Lord. And because the teachers are used to observe some of Cicero's serious sentences, in praise of virtue, and reproach of vice, and to make the students learn them by heart, which is a praiseworthy custom, it occurs to me that St. Basil in his rules, reminds the teacher of his novitiates, that instead of fables they should narrate to them the stories of the wonderful things done by God, described in the divine letters, and kindle them to virtue, with sentences taken from Solomon's proverbs. And if the saint was speaking for those who should be monks, it is nevertheless a useful reminder for all kinds of children, since from this seed, and from these plants, monks and religious are also to be born, it is not necessary to give an example to show how much the sayings of Sage are useful, and with not mediocre sharpness sententious, since the whole book of Proverbs, and that other one also called Ecclesiasticus, are full of very useful moral sentences. However, if by chance the teacher is not versed in the understanding of holy writ, he should seek to understand them very well first, and to penetrate to the depths of their meaning, with the help of some good expositor, so that he may better enable his pupils, although there are many that are very clear. And then, incidentally, by quoting the above-mentioned place of Saint Basil, he has mentioned fables, of which the putti are very vague, and there are some that can be usefully told to children, that is, those that the Greeks call Apologists, which the others, truly useless fables, must be excluded. I need to remember that Gabriel Faerno of good memory, made a booklet in Latin verses, very well said, and they are for the most part of that manner of verses, not very dissimilar to prose, and I had this book printed the first time, and it seems to me that our master will be able to use it at times

with his children, who will learn useful teachings and good Latin with pleasure.

Chapter 42

OF THE EXERCISE OF MEMORY AND PRONUNTIA.

Someone used to say, that we know as much as we remember, and certainly having a ready memory, and remembering when necessary, both of things and of words, is a very desirable quality, and of no small use in many occasions. It is true that nature has a great part in it, and we see from experience that, according to the variety of complexions, some learn quickly, but do not retain, others, on the contrary, later in learning, retain it better and longer; the clear and suave voice, the distinct pronuntia, the movement of the body, and the concerted and dignified action is also a gift of nature; and nevertheless all these conditions, together with the others, and with diligence, are improved, if they are good naturally, and they are corrected to a great extent, if they are defective, but especially the memory, not only is preserved, and increases with practice, but is also acquired. Therefore, even if in the child one sees a harsh voice, an impediment of the tongue, and similar other imperfections, the teacher must not immediately consider the matter as hopeless, but with charity, patience, and length of time, and more with comfort, and to encourage the poor child, that with violence of beating, he must prove to overcome nature, which is not impossible at a tender age, when the defect has not taken root high, and is not completely accustomed. It is said that Demosthenes, prince of Greek orators, had such a manner of stammering, which we see in many, that he could not utter the first letter of his profession, that is, of Rhetoric; but with long practice and fatigue, he did so much, that he then uttered it very well, so that he rightly said, that obstinate fatigue conquers all things. Now, in order to help and acquire the qualities we

mentioned above, that is, memory, pronunciation, and skill, I believe that a good way of practicing will be for the child to learn in his head some of Cicero's orations, some of which are not very long, or part of some oration, and he recites it with gravity, and with that composition, that one would make speaking in a senate, or to the people, which, as we said above, is also useful for the language, and the ears become accustomed to the sound, and to the Cicero number, and to that admirable position, and placement of the words. And because the verses are learned more easily, it will be possible to do the same exercise in some part of Virgil, and it is better to say a smaller number of verses compositely, as one who speaks in order to make himself understood, than to recite a large number of verses, devouring the words, and halving them in haste, as is usually done, which, although good for exercising the memory, is certainly very harmful for the pronunciation, and for the attitude. It is also useful for this exercise to give children a certain confidence in speaking in the presence of many people, and not to be overly afraid of that silence, when only one person has to speak, all the others are silent, and keep their eyes fixed on the speaker, which to some untrained people can cause no small fear; From hand to hand our pupil will be able to compose his own reasoning, and, walking further from the confines of the school, will come out into the open of the auditorium and public places.

Chapter 43

OF EMULATION AMONG THE CHILDREN.

And because the emulation among young people, who practice the same studies, is an incentive, which awakens negligence, and makes others work with ardor, and with all the virtue, and not remissly, therefore the teacher will make one or the other of his children practice, putting them in a certain way in comparison, and so that those who do less well, with the imitation of the best can make profit, For this reason it can also be useful to offer them some rewards, as St. Basil recalls, speaking in this same regard about the exercise of memory, but the teacher should warn them that modest emulation should not turn into envy and hatred among them, exhorting them to be diligent, so that they will not be inferior to those who often trust in the vivacity of their intellect and are less fatigued; It is also useful at times to select a putto who is better educated and well dressed, and to give him a certain understanding of a few putti, so that a noble desire may be kindled in him to do well in his own little regiment, and in other similar ways it is useful to nourish a virtuous and generous emulation in the children, as the judicious master will see fit to do.

Chapter 44

OF THE SLICING, AND OF THE ORDER.

Lastly, I do not want to forget to say that in the voice and in the gestures of the body, not only hardness and deformity must be avoided, but also every gesticulation and affectation, and a certain way of speaking that is too pronounced, that lacks that decorum and virile gravity required of a good speaker. And not only in the voice, and in the gestures, as we have said, but much more in the concepts, and in the forms of speaking, all lightness and affectation must be avoided, and a grave simplicity followed, not inculturated and without ornamentation, but without smoothness. If a certain redundancy and abundance of colors and rhetorical vagueness is not a bad sign for ingenious youngsters, it is however to be hoped that the teacher's judgement will gradually overcome certain superfluities, so that as they grow older, they will also be able to write and speak, In this regard, a great orator said well, quoting another of the same profession, who, being already old, retained the same way of speaking, which he had held as a young man, *Remanebat idem, sed non decebat idem*, that is, he remained the same, but the same did not suit him.

And since we have spoken of memory, we must not forget to say that order is one of those things that greatly aids memory, and I have seen a person who naturally has no great memory, and yet by means of order, distinguishing the subject he had to deal with from its principal parts, and then dividing each part into its parts, and making like a tree, from whose trunk certain major branches and then others minor, he was able to make his memory in this way, and dividing

each one into its parts, and making like a tree, from whose trunk some major branches were separated, and then others minor, he came in this way to make a local memory, whereby he happily made, and still makes, long and serious arguments. Order is a straight collocation of the parts, each one in its proper place, so that there is beauty and comfort in everything, and some philosopher has said that in this great machine of the universe, the most beautiful and best thing is order; Therefore I wish that our young man, not only for the help of his memory, but for a thousand other good respects, be a friend of order, accustoming himself as a child to keep his books, his writings, his dressing room in good order, which good habit of doing everything in an orderly fashion cannot be said to be of any benefit to the family, in the expediency of the negotiations, in the good dispensation of time, and finally in all the activities, just as confusion, in speaking, and in writing, and in the private, and public government brings very serious inconveniences, so that deservedly in our vulgar language, everything badly done, and harmful, we call disorder.

Chapter 45

IF ALL CHILDREN MUST LEARN LETTERS.

I am convinced that our father of the family will not have taken it amiss that I have not reasoned with him for a long time, but only with the master, since this was done by me only for the benefit of his children. Now it could be that he wished to know, if all the children have to learn grammar, and to make progress in the letters, as it seems that up to now we have assumed, and if the female children must also learn letters in the same way. To which interrogation of our father of the family I reply, that the City is like a body composed of various members, which have various operations, and pious, and less noble offences, but all necessary for the sustenance of the body, and if the whole body were only one more noble member, as for example if it were all eyes, already as the Apostle says, it would no longer be a body; Then, applying the simile to our purpose, there is no doubt that the civil community, in order to preserve itself, needs many kinds of men, and that they do different exercises, such as farmers, artisans, merchants and many others, so that not all of them can, nor should be literate, if there is need of these, it seems to me, however, that it would be a useful and praiseworthy thing, that children of any condition, even of a very humble one, should learn at least these three things, that is to say reading, writing, and numbering, because if they learn these things with not much effort, at least mediocredly, they are then useful throughout life for many uses, so also because in that first age, because of the weakness of the body, one can hardly do anything else, and one comes to give a useful occupation to childhood, and other good effects are made about education, by going to school, as can be gathered from the

things said above, Indeed, I believe it would be expedient, that those children who have to attend to commerce, and to certain major arts be introduced to grammar, and have some understanding of the Latin language, because it is a condition, which can often be useful in commerce, with foreign nations, and in many other ways. As for the sons of the noble and rich, there is no doubt that it is very good that they make good progress in human letters, and know how to speak and write Latin, and understand orators and historians and the like, and I also mean those who are not able to advance in faculties and sciences, nor to become doctors, because letters are a great ornament of a gentleman, and in the magistrates of the homeland, and in the councils and congregations that are made for pious places and other public things, where lawyers are often heard, and in the election of Ambassadors to send out, and in many other occasions, that it would take a long time to say, the greater advantage will always be had by a gentleman of understanding, than by another who is an equal idiot. Besides this, by means of the letters, one learns many things useful to human prudence, and it is not enough to say that there is a great number of books translated into the vernacular; for one who knows only how to read, does not arrive at a perfect understanding of the concepts of the author, and often they will succeed in being a little less obscure than if they were Latin. But as it is, cognition is an excellent thing, and how can a noble and rich young man best spend his time until his fifth or eighteenth year? I leave it to say, that letters are a sweet companion in all places, and at all times, and are a salutary diversion from many ways of not very honourable entertainment, and especially in old age letters are a great comfort, when every other way of lawful enjoyment is not as pleasant as it used to be, and sometimes infirmities occur, which keep one at home for a long time, and do not prevent one from studying, which makes that indisposition much less troublesome and boring.

Add to this, that when our young man will have become a father of a family, he will be able, by means of this quality, to help his children all the more; and finally with the reading of pious and holy books, the love of God is kindled and maintained, and one finds no small consolation in the afflictions of this miserable life, if one does not deny that there are also many good and devout books written in our vulgar language, which can be read by those who are less knowledgeable. And this must be said about the male children.

Chapter 46

WHETHER FEMALE CHILDREN SHOULD BE MADE TO LEARN LETTERS.

As for the females, it seems to me that generally speaking, they have to proceed in a completely different way; and as for those of humble and poor condition, there is no need for them to know how to read; those who are of average condition, certainly do not disdain knowing how to read; but as for the nobles, who must then be mothers of families of larger houses, I would praise in any case, that as was said above, they learn to read and write, and to number mediocresly. But that together with their children and under the discipline of the same teachers, they should learn languages, and know how to pray and write, I for my part do not approve of it, nor can I see what use it may be, either for the public good, or for the particular good of the same spinsters, indeed I fear that since the female sex is vain by nature, it does not become all the more arrogant, and that the women want to make a teacher, contrary to the precepts of the Apostle Paul, Moreover, it can happen that, since the father and mother have a certain ambition, because of the rarity of the thing, they cherish the fact that it is known, and they make them speak with literate men, so that occasions arise to take an interest in someone, more than is appropriate, especially by means of vague compositions, and where there is a certain conformity of minds, and of studies, the souls are softened, and the hidden flames are nourished in the breast, which then often make miserable fires; However the good father of a family should be content that his daughter knows how to say the Offence of the Blessed Virgin, and read the Lives of the Saints, and some spiritual books, and in the rest she should attend to

spinning, and sewing, and to the other women's exercises, of which we see that the holy scripture praises the virile and strong woman, in whose diligence, and sollicitude, and good government of domestic affairs, her husband's heart rests, and of her the holy scripture says at the end. de' proverbii, Quaesivit lanam, et linum, et operata est consilio manuum suarum, in which words the Sage praises the diligent woman who promptly does the exercises appropriate to her sex, as in the works of wool, and linen, and in these matters with the artifice of her own hands she toils; and many other similar things the Sage says in that place, describing an excellent mother of the family. Therefore, concluding this part, if we do not deny that every rule can suffer some excesses, we say however that the best advice is commonly speaking, that women should be content with the proper officies of the female sex, and leave to men those of the male sex.

Chapter 47

OF THE NECESSITY AND UTILITY OF RECREATION.

It is an ancient proverb, and very true, that the bow that is always outstretched slows down, and becomes less able to shoot. It is not possible to tire oneself continually, but one needs rest and recreation, which, taken opportunely and with the due measure, not only does not harm, but brings much benefit, because as the very name of recreation makes us understand, the forces of the body and the soul are renewed and in a certain way are reborn again, so that we return more lively and vigorous to our usual activities; But the philosopher said that rest and play, which resembles rest and rest, are necessary things in life; and another Philosopher said, that playing for the purpose of studying was also very well done, so that not only for secular men, but also for religious, it is not only licit, but sometimes necessary to have some honorable recreation, and it is a lack of justice to be scandalized by it, as some laymen do; which can be easily proved by examples of saints of the highest perfection, who sometimes rested a little while joking with birds, and in other such ways; and it is not long since I heard a suitable similitude in this matter said to a great religious, who had retired for a few days from very serious affairs to the villa; that it is not a waste of time when the curtain is drawn, so that it may cut better; but what more? We have the example of the master of masters Christ our Redeemer, of whom St. Mark the Evangelist writes, that when the Apostles had returned from preaching in the surrounding places, and from doing other things, according to what the Saviour had commanded them, and narrating to the most blessed master what they had done, he with those hearts of love, more tender than those of a mother towards

her little son, said to them these sweet words: Come, let us retire apart to a solitary place, and rest a while. Showing us on the one hand the necessity, and on the other hand the moderation, with which one must use this medicine of recreation, because recreation is not an end, nor must it be chosen for itself, but for the reason of working, so that those who immerse themselves so much in games and entertainment, that it seems they think of nothing else, are useless, and foolish, and worse than cherubs.

Chapter 48

OF THE RECREATIONS AND GAMES OF THE CHERUBS.

If, therefore, as we have said, recreation is necessary for mature men, how much more so must we allow it for putti, who by nature are greatly inclined to it, and do not yet have so much wisdom and perfect maturity, which would make them stable, and because of the tenderness of the body, instrument of the soul, they cannot persevere for so long in the same work, and like those who have lively and subtle spirits, are very fond of movement, and do not seem to be able to remain still. And undoubtedly the movement and agitation of the body benefits them admirably; because the natural heat is awakened, and dilating throughout, gives growth and perfection to the limbs, which with jumping, running, and with various movements are strengthened, and acquire greater agility, and robustness, so that the games of the cherubs, and of the youngsters, should not be done sitting or idly, but with exercises of the body, as has been said of jumping, and of running, and it can be said of the ball game, which is much praised by physicians, if well it seems to me that too much continuous movement is done there, and soon the sweat is broken, so that what they call the trick, seems to me better, and other similar ones, which are a combination of movement, and of quiet, having to take care, that for too much exercise, the forces do not dissolve, or in other ways incur any danger to health. For this reason it is right that the fathers of families, and the teachers, should give their children and pupils the opportunity to recreate themselves, but this should not be at their own discretion and satiety, but limited according to the discretions of the superior, at his proper time and also in appropriate places, for I would be very pleased if the

children were accustomed to having a certain verecundity in public places, and frequented, because while playing, the clothes are taken off, sometimes voices are given, and some shouts, and other things are done, that the nature of the game implies, that if well they do not go out of the terms of modesty, and honesty, however in the public streets they are somewhat disreputable, and one acquires a certain habit to not care that others see us say, or do openly what we are. Where it seems to me that already rather large putti should be accustomed to have a certain respect, in places where everyone converses, as one who considers that his words and actions are seen and noticed by many, and therefore it is not possible to do anything but serious, and composedly, which is required more in those who are born more nobly. And for this reason, where in our own houses there is the convenience of some remote room, or of gardens and similar open places, I judge that our children of the family will be able to recreate there very comfortably, and will have less occasion to mix with other children, who perhaps might not be brought up with the same discipline, to which, as has been recalled for other purposes, we must always have no mediocre regard. And because it is beneficial to the whole group, especially in respect of the head, to be accustomed to the sun and free air, it is expedient to lead the children sometimes to the vineyards, and to the meadows, and on some hills, where the prospect alone, and the vagueness of the view admirably recreates, and where the solitude, and remoteness of the place, gives greater facility to the youngsters to play their honorable games, without prejudice to modesty.

Chapter 49

SOMEBODY'S ASSISTANCE WHILE THE CHERUBS PLAY.

The game is a way of combat, and of contentment, where each one, if he is not of very slow intelligence, aspires to victory, which by nature is a sweet and desirable thing, and therefore the affections, and passions of the soul are moved in various ways, so that conforming acts follow, which in children are like certain dispositions, both for virtue, and for its contrary, For some are fraudulent in their games, others are angry and heated in their disputes and contradictions, they say insulting and rude words to their companions, and sometimes they strike and hate each other, and they make jokes among themselves, like contrary sects, others swear and perjure themselves, others say inappropriate words, or laugh and shout strangely, and they do other things very licentious and dissolute, that it is not necessary to descend to greater particulars, especially that every hour one sees these experiences in the squares, and in the districts, where the putti play at the mixture, and do, and say everything that pleases them, and that the sense and the passion suggests, without restraint, nor any respect, so that in exchange for recreating themselves, in order to be able to work more diligently, it follows that they learn a thousand bad manners, and become insolent and licentious, and then from the mouths of children who are, as is said by proverb, shorn of milk, are heard words of blasphemy and dishonesty, which are too serious for well-bearded men. So it happens that the medicine of recreation becomes venom, while there is no one who takes any care of poor childhood, that it seems almost, that we are a people without law, without order, and any discipline, and that we live at random, and not less than we can freely go around the streets of the City,

so that in what pertains to the customs, it is lawful for everyone to walk where he likes. We read in the Greek histories, that it was the custom of the Lacedaemonians, that the old men attended the games of the cherubs, observing with diligence from the debates, and their complaints, what was the nature of each, and making judgments, what success they were then to do. And passing from pueritia to adolescence, the old ones had more the eye on them, and more ordinarily they found themselves in the places where they made their armies, now in the shape of fights, since the form of that Republic was very inclined to war, and now in other ways of games, and recreations. And the historians write that the old men used to do what has been said, not only for a certain amount of time, but with such diligence, and affection, as if they had been fathers, masters, and governors of all those youngsters, so that, as the same writers say, there was never any time, nor place where there was not some present of authority, who could admonish, take back, and punish the youngsters if they had committed any foul deed. And beyond all this there was a principal man, who had the title of governor, and the particular responsibility for their care. Now who would say, that when the children take their recreation, there should be present some father of the family, for whose reverence, and in the gestures, and in the words they would be deported with all modesty, and to whose judgment in the complaints, and disputes they would all remain, and the same proportion should be observed with those of greater age, as at certain times they make like companies, and make some public recreations, so that also in the game, and in the exercises a certain honesty, and discipline would shine through; whoever would want to introduce such a custom as an ordinary thing in our times, would be considered an inventor of strange things, not to say ridiculous, and it would be impossible to put them into practice. Therefore, so that no one will say that I have taken too great a charge, and

certainly not from my own shoulders, to want to remake the world, I beg at least those few fathers of families, who wish to govern their children with somewhat greater care than the common use, and likewise the good teachers, that if the things said above have any probability of being right, they do not leave their youngsters without custody, while they play their games, so that through little caution recreation does not destroy what is being built up with study, and effort in the rest of good education.

Chapter 50

OF REPRESENTATIONS.

It is a useful and delightful way of recreation, especially for the young scholars, that which many religious use to do, that is, that some human action is imitated and represented by the same children, as if they were those same persons, who at other times really were, or it is presumed that they were operators of that action, and without doubt this is a way of comedy, but adapted to more serious, and more fruitful subjects, such as the lives of saints, and other similar ones, which can give example, and instruction of true virtue; so that the ridiculous impurities, even if under cover, must be completely banished, and only some pleasant and honorable salts can take place. And I would believe that it is well done, that the action that is taken to be represented is totally of men, and there is no part of a woman, if not perhaps of some old matron, of exemplary sanctity, and one must have a very good eye from the one who orders such representations, that there are no amatory narrations, nor anything else, that could effeminate the souls of the young people, who in the rest, in my opinion, do not have much need to obey the laws of the Comedy, neither as regards the number of the actors, nor other such observances, because this is nothing but a game, whose aim is to recreate the youth, with some fruit of the soul; However, whether it is said in the vernacular or in Latin, it must be composed judiciously and with such elegance, that even in this part one can profit from it, just as it is useful to exercise memory, alertness and aptitude, and children acquire facility and readiness to be able to reason in the presence of others, and they come to dress a certain virile person, and other similar good effects follow. However, it is necessary to take care that

the recreations are not distracting from the main studies, and that they do not waste too much time. And then, when the representation is made, it is necessary to avoid any tumult, as it almost necessarily happens, where there are many people, that there are always such, who do not observe the due honesty, and modesty, and therefore it is better that these things are done withdrawn, among the same condisciples, in the presence of the teachers, and of good fathers of families, and of some few serious persons, and costumed, but totally removed the women.

Chapter 51

OF THE HONORABLE MUMBLE.

Among the honorable recreations that well-created and civilized men are wont to have among themselves, ceasing for a while from serious business and occupation, there is one, which consists in a certain pleasantness of reasoning, sweetly mouthing words, and knowing how to give and receive with wisdom and dexterity, without uttering inhonest words, and not attacking the friend with whom they are mouthing; which is not so easily done by everyone, indeed as the Moral Philosophers have well considered, many often leave the middle way, in which this virtue of pleasantness, or urbanity, as we like to say, consists, because some abound more than is appropriate in ridiculous and false mottos, and do not care about offending others, and even do not forgive themselves, provided that they provoke laughter, which excess is harmful, and sooner deserves the name of buffoonery; but on the contrary there are some others who are so rustic and harsh, that when they find themselves in honest company, not only do they not say any witty or kind words, but if they do, they have no taste for them, and sooner or later they are attracted by them, which excess, contrary to the first, can be called rusticity, and such unpleasant men are unfit for the conversation of friends, which they have for pleasure. Now as we see that there are the harmful extremes of too much and too little, so we understand that there is a virtuous way, when one jokes and jokes with moderation and dexterity, such as is appropriate for a modest and discreet man, so that his facetiousness, and pleasantness are of a different kind, than those of the jesters, and of the vile, and plebeian men, and one sees in them a certain kindness, and wit

without insulting anyone, and without offending his own gravity, and decorum. Therefore it is expedient that this way of modestly mocking is sometimes one of the recreations of our children, especially in the presence of the teacher, who sometimes corrects the too sharpness of some, and sometimes the too severity and coarseness of others, who have no salt. The Lacedaemonians had the custom of eating together, and they made their children come there, as if to a school of temperance, and there among other things they learned with the example of their elders this virtue, of mocking each other pleasantly, without however harshly punching each other, and without frowning, so that it was a very proper thing of that nation, because of this habit made by childhood, that very easily they knew how to endure a facetious puncture, and a burlesque shot. This is necessary to do with some little children, to break them, and make them more tractable, as it was reminded elsewhere to the father of the family, speaking of the pleasures that are said at the table, because if it is true, that one should not joke in such a way that pierces, and causes pain, it is also true, that one should not be so sensitive, that for every slight puncture one has to come to blows, and break friendship, so that in human life, and conversation, not all of us, should be able to live in the same way, and human conversation, not all speak always with that weight, and with that measure, that would be convenient, although to tell the truth they do not have to impose in human commerce, such strict laws that one has always to weigh every word, so it is great prudence to know how to dissimulate and bear with sweetness and even take pleasure, when such things happen, and to this, as we have said, getting used as a child helps a lot. It also happens that mottos made in time and prudently are like medicines for some not very serious defects. And among some religious people, they use, although rarely, this way of recreation for the benefit of the young people, so that one of them, who is more able to play the game, takes pleasure in reasoning,

and with some invention, which at first seems far away, he goes skilfully outlining, and pinching this or that one on some defect, and he does it with such pleasantness, that laughing the others, he laughs the same one, who feels pricked, and has reason to amend himself, and his companions to be more cautious. In short, a man of a sweet and pleasant nature is the seasoning of companies, and they have the effect of attracting to themselves the souls of others, so that if he is a sweet and good man, who seeks the honor of God, as should be sought by all, it will be possible for him, by divine grace, to lead many to the path of virtue, as I could enclose an example of religious men, and of great spirit, which should not seem surprising, since man is a tame animal, and therefore very apt to be led where others will, by love and pleasantness.

Chapter 52

ABOUT MUSIC.

It seems to me that in the same number of honourable recreations we can include music, of which the ancient philosophers held music in the highest esteem, believing that music was very important for customs, and according to the variety of it, the souls were variously altered and became more disposed, and inclined to virtue, or to vice, and memorable examples are also recounted by Greek and Latin historians, and Latin historians recount memorable examples of the efficacy of music, and if in our times it does not seem that we see such notable effects, nevertheless we cannot deny that the lascivious and soft songs, and on the contrary the serious songs, and full of honesty, especially when the words, and the harmony are united, imprint in our souls a certain quality conforming to that sound. Therefore, not without great reason the Holy Church uses in the sacred temples the chant, as that which moves to devotion, soothes the soul, and relieves it more easily to the contemplation of the celestial things, as the authority of very serious, and very holy Doctors, and the experience itself shows us. Therefore, it seems to me that it is only right that our child learns a little bit of music, just enough for a little bit of honourable pleasure, and not to become a musician, I say speaking generally that it is not denied that some people must go ahead in this art, so that they can become excellent musicians. However, the wise father of the family must be warned, as he is always reminded, that this recreation must be understood without prejudice to good morals, and therefore the condition of the teacher must be taken into consideration, and that on this occasion no unsafe persons be brought into the house, but that music be played among

the family members of the house, not as something of great importance, but for a game, and brief entertainment, such compositions should not be sung, nor rhymes, that could inflame the soul with carnal fire, but more quickly psalms, and some divine songs, which by the work of the fathers of the Congregation of the Oratory of Rome, were printed not long ago, that there are affectionate, and moral things, that nourish the spirit, and the love of God, and can be sung by a few, and with mediocre intelligence, and such songs are much better, and more usefully learned by children, and household servants, and also by female children, to recreate themselves while they do their work, than the vain rhymes of novels, and other amorous compositions, which in the rest, as for the female children I am not of the opinion that they must learn other music, than that which the same nature teaches them, because the feminine honesty does not imply that they come in concert with men, and the voices and songs can more easily dissolve in them the vigour of the soul, and for the same reasons I do not praise learning to play, since it is not without danger to learn that which is done by men. And finally, their daughters are not to be denied the honourable recreations appropriate to their sex, but more rarely, and without the intervention of men, under the good care of their mother, and with all that caution that is required of feminine chastity and virginity.

Chapter 53

OF THE DANGERS OF ADOLESCENCE.

It is not a small undertaking to raise such a man, who lives for the glory of God, for the common benefit of other men, and the health of himself, it is not possible to gather such valuable fruits without much effort, therefore it is necessary, that the industry of our father of the family does not slow down, but trusting mainly in divine grace, proceeds vigorously going forward to meet the dangers that from hand to hand, and from age to age succeed. Saint Augustine weeps bitterly for the sins of his adolescence, which is the age that follows pueritia, beginning after the fourteenth year, and continuing until the twenty-first, or thereabouts, and he regrets that his parents did not take care to support him, so that he did not fall into the abyss of lust, ensuring only that he learned to speak well, and succeeded in the study of eloquence. Not so our father of the family, but besides having foreseen from afar the storms of this age, and having applied many remedies, and aids, as in his places we have remembered, he will not abandon the helm of his son's care in the same danger, indeed he will watch over him more than ever. This is a very dangerous age, not unlike the fading and binding of the fruit of the trees, of which the poets and sages of the world have said that adolescents are eager, greedy, and daring to try the things they desire, if their greed is fast, and often contrary to each other, and they change from one hour to the next, arising in them new desires and soon satiating themselves from the first. So they resemble the thirst caused by the ardor of fever, they are devoted to the pleasures of the hunt, and to the horses, they do not take care of money, they think little of useful and necessary things, they do not willingly listen to

those who admonish them, and resume, they are easy to be deceived, and like soft wax they are bent to sin, they stay willingly in the company of others of the same age, and easily contract friendships for the occasion of pleasures, and loneliness, being friends of laughter, and of games, and many other things are said, and they can say about the nature of the young adolescents, but the most serious enemy of them, as the Philosophers have known, is the incontinence of the flesh, by which they are more infested, and they usually make less resistance, and this is the rock where most of the miserable youngsters, are shipwrecked, as we see all day long by experience, and more in those who remain without government, either by death or also by little care of the father, or of other relatives. And certainly if a good education has not preceded this age, and if the fear of God and the love of virtue have not taken root in the soul of the young man, it is difficult, if not impossible, for him to be victorious, in the greatest and most intense boiling of blood, over this domestic adversary, with whom, as some saint says, there is a continual struggle and rare victory. And it is well to apply to this matter the saying of St. Paul, that what others have sown, the same will sow, and whoever has sown in the flesh, from the flesh will sow corruption, I mean that if the child has not been accustomed to bear the yoke of discipline, when the sense was less strong, nothing else can be expected in the following age, when the same sense is more robust, and is stimulated by more powerful objectives, if not license and dissolutione, so if well the sins of adolescence are greater, and more evident, they have however a higher beginning, that is from the same poorly educated pueritia, as elsewhere has been said abundantly. But our father of the family, who, beginning as we say, while his son was still in swaddling clothes, and then continuing for a long succession of years as we have seen up to now, will have with all solicitude attended to this noble culture, has to be of better will, and hope in God, that most of the

difficulties are already overcome; However, do not let him sleep, so that the enemy in the midst of his good grain, according to the Gospel parable, does not sow tzenia, but is vigilant, as has already been said, continuing the style of the used diligence, and adding new ones, according to the greater need, which I will discuss a little more distinctly.

Chapter 54

OF THE CONTINUATION OF THE CHRISTIAN ARMIES, AND OF THE REVERENCE TOWARDS THE FATHER.

Therefore, let the first reminder be that the virtuous and Christian exercises, in which our young man was brought up from his earliest years, should not be interrupted, but rather should increase, it being right that now that he has greater judgment, and knows God more clearly, and his innumerable benefits in the person of himself, the more you love Him and the more you are a diligent observer of His holy commandments, so that the holy institutes of frequenting the sacraments remain firm and steady, which keep us united with God, which confer on us the grace and virtue of resisting temptation, and give the soul a spiritual reflection, so that it is less greedy of going begging for false delights through the dissipated cisterns of these senses. At this time the advice and comfort of the wise confessor are more useful and necessary than ever, to whom the young man humbly recounts his struggles and fights and receives a thousand salutary warnings, not unlike a new soldier to an experienced veteran, and this same obedience, and the same obedience made to the spiritual father not only by way of confession, where it is undoubtedly most effective, but also outside the sacrament by way of conferring, and asking for help, and advice, and recommending oneself to his prayers, is most grateful to God, and the young man will always leave the talks of his spiritual father comforted, and refreshed in spirit. This good confessor, having already known the young man for a long time, will steer this boat through the waves of various temptations like a pilot ship, as he will see fit, and according to his advice he will encourage the young man to frequent the Most Holy Eucharist, the

strongest weapon against all the devil's blows, and especially against the flesh. We say the same about the preservation of the other good Christian institutes, that is, the frequency of the divine offices, of hearing the word of God often, of the most useful study of prayer, of reading, of the good and devout books, which are like oil in the vessel of our heart, and they keep alight the devotion, and the fire of the love of God, and of other things of which the soul has no less need to maintain itself in the spiritual life and vigor, than the body has need of the material food to maintain itself in the temporal life. He also warns the father of the family to maintain with his son the usual paternal authority and reverence, so that the same son does not realize in a certain way, in this part, that he has come out of a child, if the father does not however have to treat him in everything as if he were a child, which requires great prudence, because it is better to walk a certain way, not roughing up the young man, so that he does not harm love, nor less treating him too indulgently so that he does not harm fear, but keeping a serious and moderate tone, not leaving the bridle of government, but slowing it down a little in place and time, so that the son may always keep alive the disposition to obey his father, and the appreciation of his commands, and finally, in every way, the filial fear may be maintained in him, so that it may always be like a brake on him not to do anything, which may offend, or give disgust to his father, on the contrary, he may be pleased to give him contentment and satisfaction.

Chapter 55

HOW SPETIAMENTE IN ADOLESCENCE ARE DANGEROUS EVIL PRACTICES.

Although in more than one place above, for various purposes, we have discussed the practices, and conversations, nevertheless, because of the great importance of the matter, and because in this age, especially of adolescence, there is great danger, I could not fail to expressly remind in this place our father of the family, that he should keep an open eye on it. And because, as has been said, this age is disposed to make friends, and loves company, it is to be well warned, that some dissolute young man, either for the sake of companionship in his licenses, or for the hope of secretly obtaining through the youngster, the family father's wealth, or for other less honourable ends, does not insinuate himself, and intrude into the goodwill, and domesticity of our simple and credulous son; Because these people subtly observe the natures, and the appetites of the youngsters, whether they be for games, or horses, or other such things, and propose to them that bait which can attract them more, and in particular the carnal pleasures, which are the net, which more easily takes them, and more strongly holds them. With these and other artifices, therefore, having ensnared the wretched young man, the unfaithful companions and false friends then lead him wherever they wish in every principle of sin, making no resistance whatsoever. Saint Augustine writes at length in the books of his most humble confessions, written, as we can believe, by that great saint through the particular providence of the Holy Spirit, to the greater crown of his humility, and for the instruction and caution of many, he writes, I say, and mourns for various grave troubles of his

soul, which he received in the age of which we are speaking, from the commertio of bad and vicious companions of his, and among other things he says, that he had come to such blindness, that he was ashamed to do things not ashamed of his other contemporaries, whom he heard boasting about the dishonesty they had committed and the more guilty they were, the more they gloried in it, so that he did not seem to be less than them, he wanted to sin, not only for the sake of sin, but for the sake of being praised for it, and for the sake of vice, which alone is vituperable, he sought praise, and when he really had no way to match their dissolution, he pretended to have committed what he had not committed, considering himself all the more vile and cowardly the more innocent and chaste he was. He also narrates that guided by the same companions, he led himself at night time to a garden, to steal some fruits, not for anything else, but for a youthful license to do evil, abounding in fruits, and better than those were not, and the blessed saint goes with long and subtle inquisition investigating, what reason induced him to commit that theft, and after so many years being already old, exclaims in amazement; Wretched me, what thing was it that I loved in you, or my theft, or my nocturnal misdeed, in the sixth and tenth year of my life? And finally he concludes that he had no other pleasure in it, than the consorting of his companions and accomplices in the same sin, affirming several times that humble confessor, and replying before God himself, that he alone would not have committed that theft. Here we see how pernicious evil companies are, and how lightly the scab of sin is attacked, and how true is the saying of Scripture, which in this regard was added above: Qui tetigerit picem inquinabitur ab ea. And he adds: Et qui communicaverit superbo, induet superbiam. In other words, just as pitch sticks easily and soils those who touch it, so sin sticks to the soul through communication, and through the trade of sinful men. Therefore the father of a family must

take great care and vigilance to ensure that no suspicious or dangerous company is kept close to his son. And how important this point is in a good education, Sage gives us very clearly to understand in his Proverbs, a book collected for the most part for the instruction of the young, where speaking with them, as a father with his son, the first precept, and reminder that he gives in the first. is this of companions, saying: My son, if sinful men, and men of bad life flatter you, do not consent to be in their number. And to show that there is no choice in which the wretched young man does not finally fall, if he once allows himself to be led astray by evil counselors; Because, as has been said many times, from small things one arrives at the greatest and most serious things, it introduces the fact that wretched men, thieves and street murderers, try to persuade the wretched young man, that he should accompany them in the aforementioned robberies and misdeeds, proposing to him with various reasons the easy and great gain, and that they will share him in common, as good companions. The Sage, in their person, explains the reasons for this gracefully and at length; and then adds his salutary counsel in these words: My son, do not walk with them, forbid them, and turn your feet away from their paths; for their feet run to harm, and are quick to shed blood: How true this is, and how many young people are turned away by the seduction of the sad, and how from impurity and hidden thefts they come to crimes and homicides; and how finally, fleeing public punishment, the wretched young give themselves to the streets, to robberies and to assassinations, cruel, and more fierce than beasts in the blood of the innocent, how true I say this is, each one in the book of daily experience reads all too openly.

Chapter 56

OF THE USEFULNESS OF GOOD PRACTICES, AND FRIENDSHIPS.

The same holy writing, which, as we said above, affirms that practicing with the iniquitous, and sad is an occasion to fall into the same iniquity, and malice; the same writing I say in more than one place asserts that on the contrary, conversing with the innocent, and holy man is a very effective means to dispose others to the purchase of innocence, and holiness. Hence Solomon said: *Qui cum sapientibus graditur, sapiens erit.* He who walks with the wise will also be wise; giving us to understand that we become such as those with whom we converse familiarly. And it is said, as in a proverb, if you want to know who someone is, see with whom he converses. And because no one is sufficient for himself, but each one has need of friends, and servants, and of advice, and of the help of one's neighbors, and family, it is right that every effort should be made to have them good, and God-fearing. Happy and adventurous is the house where good people converse and minister, of whom David said: *Ambulans in via immaculata, hic mihi ministrabat,* that is, I wanted servants and ministers whose life and conversation was blameless and without stain. So we read that God, out of respect for Joseph, even though he was a slave in a foreign country, blessed and multiplied the abilities of his unfaithful master. Happy is the City where there are many truly good men, and fearful of God, the world knows them little, and esteems them little in the time of prosperity, but God allows, through his just judgement, that very serious calamities come, and at that time God's servants are known. The preservation of them is so useful in a City, that it would be expedient to go searching for them in very remote countries, spending every

price, and every great treasure to bring them there; and for confirmation of this no other example is needed than that of Sodom, and Gomorrah, and of the other unhappy Cities, where if only ten righteous men had been found, they would not have been submerged by the terrible flood of fire. Happy at last, and blessed are the friendships that are made with good men, which have virtue as their foundation, and not viciousness, and are bound together by the bond of charity, and by a sincere love, and not by interest, or by a brief and fleeting pleasure; The faithful friend is a strong protection, whoever finds him, has found a treasure; it is not something that can be compared to the faithful friend, and there is no weight of gold or silver, which is worthy of being matched to the integrity of his faith. The faithful friend is like a salutary medicine, both for the temporal life and for the eternal one, and whoever fears God will find him again. Up to here are the words of Sage, which show us how many goods, both temporal and spiritual, a true and good friend brings us, with help, comfort and salubrious advice, and they also teach us that something so rare and precious is a gift of God, who grants this singular benefit to his friends, and to those who have his holy fear, and therefore men are very prone to deceive themselves in this particular matter, persuading themselves that they have many friends, and above all the rich, and they do not realize that they are simulated friends, flatterers, who love the meals, and the other benefits they have at present, or hope to have, and they are friends of the happy time, and they are not firm in the time of tribulation, as Savio himself paints them with their own colors in the above mentioned place.

Chapter 57

OF THE CONVERSATION OF THE SON OF THE FAMILY WITH HIS PATERNAL FRIENDS.

Now, if our good father has any of these true and sincere friends, as he undoubtedly should have through his goodness and diligence, he will endeavour to leave them to his son as a legacy. He will then see to it that the son knows and loves his paternal friend, and sometimes enjoys his conversation, recreating himself with him and expanding his freedom to a greater extent than is appropriate for his own father, from which many comforts will be derived, for when the father of the family agrees well with his faithful friend about the education of his son, it will not infrequently happen that advice, correction, and other such things will be better done by the friend than by the father himself; Therefore it will also happen that the young man will care less about the practices of his companions, for if it is true that the like delights in the like, and consequently the young of the young, nevertheless there are men not only of middle age, but also old, who have a certain suavity, which admirably attracts the young; The old know many things through their long life, they have read much, seen much, heard much, and they have gravity, and a copy of saying, and they recount past things with a certain authority that conciliates attention, and because by nature one desires to know, and the young man, because of his young age, knows few things, it is necessary that he has the pleasure of listening to those who recount them appropriately, that at the end conversing with his companions, and contemporaries, a young man brings back little else but a superficial pleasure, which reconciles that similitude of age, where from the conversation of a judicious old man, whom

one describes, he will always return with gain, having learned now some notable history, now something pertinent to the government of the City, now some beautiful memory about the common life, now about the care of the family, and other such things, and if the old man will be literate, so much greater will be the delight, discussing now the studies of eloquence, and of languages, now various moral subjects, and now some difficult passage of some serious writer, from the taste of these things the young man, most of all well educated and of beautiful intellect, will have great satisfaction to find himself with similar old men, and I have known such a one who, being a young man at study, was much more willing to stay with a literate and eloquent man, even though very old and almost decrepit, than he did with other young men of the same age, which is no wonder, because the pleasures of the intellect, as they are nobler, are also greater, more attractive, and sweeter to those who do not have the palate of the soul infected with vices, which forbid the tasting of their flavour. But above all it is presupposed that this good paternal friend, being himself just, upright, and fearful of God, must exhort the young man to every good purpose and confirm him in the love of virtue, and of Christian piety, just as the father himself must implore him.

Chapter 58

OF CONVERSATION WITH YOUNG EQUALS.

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that what has been said above is true, that likeness is delightful, and youth is inclined to make friends, which, begun in their greenest years, and continuing for a long time, become closer with the knot of various offences and of mutual and exchangeable love, and friendships of this kind are even more stable and firm, so that our young man is not forbidden to have conversations with his peers, but not with many, nor with all of them indiscriminately, because if well in the wide and common practice that one has with the Citizens, one must be affable with each one, however a certain restricted communication which is that of true friendship, in every time, must be with few, just as the true friends are also few, but in youth more so, which age is less apt to discern the conditions of men, and the true friend from the false one. Therefore some of those same young men who in childhood have been companions of our son of the family, and we will already have some experience of them, who are of good morals, and walk in the same ways of the fear of God, and also live withdrawnly, and not with any kind of company, these same young men will also continue in this, and in the following ages, as long as they do not change style, and form of life, to be able to converse with our young man, and if any other will come again, from whose friendship it is evident that our son may receive benefit, it is not to be forbidden to him to make nine friendships as well, but the father of the family should know everything, and should first reach the bottom of the ford, as they say, and he should have many good ways of allowing his son to converse with this or that one, and nevertheless his father's eye should

never lose sight of his son as he walks along the slippery path of adolescence, and he should not leave him as far away as possible from his own side, or that of any other trusted person. Go further observing how the young man preserves the spirit, and the taste for spiritual things, how he keeps the usual modesty, and reverence towards his father, if in dressing, and in such things he shows vanity, and curiosity more than usual, and wants to take particular account of everything the young man does, showing almost that he does it more to praise him, than for a certain rigorous, and, so to speak, judicious interrogation, nor should the discreet father enter into too much distrust, nor should he slightly overshadow, nor send the young man away at all hours, indeed he should show that he has a good opinion of him where he is clearly not disobedient, but the wise father should proceed in such a way that the son notices and is certain that the eyes of his father's diligence are watching over him.

Chapter 59

OF THE CONDITION OF THE FRIENDS, AND OFFITII OF THE FRIENDSHIP.

On the occasion of dealing with good and bad company, and conversations of young people, a consideration very necessary to our main subject, as has been shown in part, we have taken the thread of the discourse, to reason about friendship, as a joint thing, because the companies and even those that are accidentally made, as in travels, and the like, are experiences of friendship, and the beginning of firm and lasting friendships. Now, the subject of friendship is such a wide field that to speak about it in full would require a long volume, which is not appropriate for me to do, since I did not have the purpose of conveying in this book the whole subject of customs, virtues and virtues, and virtues, of which in every language there is an abundance, but only to show some principal ways, and to give certain reminders to the father of a family of Christian profession, so that according to the same profession he can bring up his children in a Christian way, and of the conversations, and friendships, so much has been reasoned, and reasoned, as they can help, or impede this intention, and purpose. Therefore, deferring to the Greek and Latin philosophers, who have dealt with this question of friendship in a very perfect way, I will only say that in the election of the most close and restricted friends, I say restricted friends, because according to a civil union we must all be friends, and all the more so as Christians. Of such friends, therefore, and of those friendships which are made among a few, the principal foundation must be honesty, and virtue, and Christian love and charity, because the other friendships, which are based only on usefulness and pleasure, do not deserve this honourable name at all,

but rather are a likeness of true friendship, and in those friendships there are often many complaints and sins and they do not last long, but the true friend, loves his friend mainly for his friend's sake, and in order to the true, and perfect good, that is to God, so that a good friend is truly excellent, who is not only solicitous of our temporal comforts, but much more of the eternal ones. In the rest, therefore, friendship is an equality, so that where there are more reasons for equality, the more easily friendships are made and the more happily they are preserved; so that where there is much disparity of state, and diversity of customs, and professions, and other such inequalities, friendships are not made, or are dissolved in a short time. But those friendships are very good, where the customs are similar, the studies conform, and the ends the same, and where finally there is one and the same will and dislike. What, then, should be the offences of a true friend towards his friend, how much constancy in loving him, no less in adversity than in prosperity, how much readiness in procuring his every good, how pleasures and sorrows are common, how much communication of one's own things should be, how joyful it is to be together often, how familiar, How much familiarity and security is needed between dear friends in conferring the things pertinent to their state, how much faith and sincerity is required in advice, of these I say, and of a thousand other beneficial and good effects, which are born of true virtue and perfect love, I need not speak at length, because Christian charity will teach our virtuous son enough. And if the Saviour has commanded us that we love every neighbor as ourselves, what shall we say of our friend, of whom the Philosophers have also said that a friend is another me, besides that the good father of a family, not only with his memories, but with his own example, will show his son in fact how true and Christian friendships are made, and with what offences they are preserved, and how much

fruit they bear, and how much good they bring us in every age.

Chapter 60

OF FLEEING THE LIFE OF IDLENESS AND STRIFE.

Now returning to where we left off, our subject was to speak of the dangers of youth, under which name I understand what the Latins call adolescence. And so that the construction of good Christian education, brought about by divine grace far ahead, does not ruin these youthful ages, but rather grows from strength to strength, until it reaches perfection, we recalled the continuation of good Christian exercises, the maintenance and perseverance of both authority and paternal vigilance, the avoidance of the most harmful commerce, and the contagion of evil companions, and on the other hand the way has been shown, to have good conversations and friendships, so that our youngster does not remain deprived of that pleasure, which by nature is desired by man and which used prudently can bring not mediocre utility. Now, however, continuing to remove the impediments, which run through the course of virtue, I say that one of the greatest enemies of youth is idleness, of which we spoke a little elsewhere, discussing the remedies against the vice of lust, and another time speaking of family care, but in this place of necessity we return to detesting idleness, more in general, as the bait and foment of all vices, and of all evils. The Holy Scripture says that idleness is the master of sin, and that the idle man is full of desires, that is, of appetites and unholy greed; and so experience shows us daily that this way of men on strike, are like the bilge of the City, and no comfort comes from them, like those who do not want to do anything, so that the poorest, rather than working, go to beg, even though they are valid, and they go wandering through various countries, whom it is the public office to punish according to the authority of the civil laws,

others dissipate their small patrimony in the games, and up in the taverns, and in a thousand impudicities, and not having how to supply enough of their own, they undermine not only the honor, but the having of others. This is precisely the seminary of the quarrelsome, restless, seditious men, enemies of every good order and public discipline, and finally in the ranks of the idle and shocked is gathered all the dregs of those who have no other business but to corrupt youth, and to be ministers and instigators of a thousand ways of vices, and sins, to the license of which it is necessary that the power of the magistrates put some restraint, since it is seen that this weed abounds too much everywhere; and may it please God that the natural fathers and the political fathers may think it their duty to remedy it at an early hour, since when the vine is deep, neither iron nor fire is sufficient to eradicate it. And as far as those who were born nobly and are rich are concerned, if one should not readily believe that they do things so unworthy of their nobility as those others of whom we have spoken, it is nevertheless a disgraceful thing to see a gentleman endowed by God and nature with many goods, living idly and thinking of nothing but dressing richly, eating delicately and spending all his days in feasting, and in pleasures of the sense, as if man was born only to eat, like a brute, and not to work virtuously, and to help others, as the natural light, and much more the supernatural light of faith teaches us, and for sure it is very difficult, not to say impossible, that living a life entirely sensual, and voluptuous, one can reach that glory, and that crown of which it is written: He shall not be crowned except he who has fought lawfully. But leaving this aside for the moment, I turn to our father of the family, and I remind him, whether he be of low, mediocre or high status, that he in no way allows his children to live an idle life. In the whole of nature there is nothing idle, the Heavens, the Sun, the elements, and all creatures are in continuous motion, all the members of our body do their work, and

those parts which are more active are less visible. The divine scripture says that man is born to toil as a bird is born to flight, so that he does not deserve the name of man who does not want to toil, and it is not right that he should enjoy the toil of others, which he does not want to relieve in any way, for which St. Paul said, whoever does not toil should not eat. Therefore the good father should decide now that his son's age admonishes him to apply him to some honourable state of life, with which he can honourably support himself, and living in his own rank, as a good man and as a good Christian, help his country, to which we are all indebted as to a common mother, and at the same time faithfully negotiating his talents, be admitted by the supreme master to the participation of the eternal joys.

Chapter 61

OF THE CUSTODY OF THE FEMALE CHILDREN AND HOW THEY MUST FLEE THE IDLENESS.

Before I enter into a somewhat more detailed discussion of the election of various states, of praiseworthy life, and Christianity, it seems to me appropriate to say something about the care of female children, and how they too must flee idleness, no less than males. And although it is true that the warnings which are given for sons are to be understood proportionately also for daughters, as has been recalled more than once, nevertheless I move not without reason, as it seems to me, to give some warnings in detail. And first of all, as far as the custody of their chastity is concerned, I move for two principal reasons, one because the candor of modesty in women is of too great importance, and for many human respects, brings with it graver and more damaging consequences, than in men themselves, and every suspicion, every change in their reputation, is of the greatest prejudice; the second reason is that, having spoken above about the danger of evil practices, others could not be persuaded that they should not take care of, nor have any solicitude for, their female children, who do not ordinarily talk outside the home, before they are married, nor even now, except rarely. In the second place, with regard to avoiding idleness and to occupying oneself well, it seemed to me to recall this separately; for the exercises and the various occupations and ways of living, of which we shall speak below, are for the most part proper to men, and not accommodated to the female sex. I say, therefore, that the father and the mother of the family must always remember the saying of the wise man, which I have mentioned elsewhere, which goes like this Do you have daughters?

Watch over their bodies, and speaking specifically with the father, he added, and do not show them a cheerful face, and the reason for this saying of the wise man can be twofold, firstly so that through the indulgence of the father, the daughter does not become too bold, and bold, and makes sure to do some things, which through the fear of the father she would not have dared to do; secondly, so that her father's caresses do not accustom her to a certain familiarity with men, through which she gradually loses that veracity, which is like a shelter for feminine honesty; Therefore the intention of the wise man is not to persuade the father to be a certain rigidity, and to be continually grim towards his daughter, but to retain his gravity, and not to reveal a certain tenderness of love, which is particularly dangerous for his daughters for the reasons we have mentioned. The prudent mother of the family should also warn that unknown women should not speak to her daughter under the pretext of yarn, work or other such things, but that the mother herself should expel them, because Satan's wiles are many, and in such important matters, it is legitimate to be somewhat suspicious, even of family members and neighbors, not to make a rash judgement, nor to condemn anyone, but to observe that caution, which the superiors appreciate, knowing how much the simplicity, and fragility of that sex is, and how many have been deceived by the cunning deceivers, under the honourable and holy name of marriage, which in our times after the decrees of the sacred Tridentine Council has no place, and is not true marriage, but abominable corruption, when it is done secretly and without the due solemnities, as has been said in its proper place. In addition, the wise mother should observe whether the daughter perseveres, or if she is less assiduous in the spiritual exercises, if she is inclined to adorn herself more than the usual modesty does not allow, and she should rightly close her steps to the dangers which may occur; It is not lawful for the constituted spinster to go to all the

windows, nor to look out when she pleases, nor to see everything that is done in the streets, that to put the simple virgins openly in the sight of the youth full of the fire of lust, and to render the greeting, as perhaps it is used in some places, is an abuse so serious, that it does not seem worthy to me to have to speak of it, although some under the same hope of marriage, are excusing these little honourable loves. It is neither prudent nor praiseworthy custom to take spinsters to parties, nor to shows, nor to courses, where the licentious youths go wandering. And because the confessions, and the divine offices are not to be left at the proper time, I remind you to go to those Churches where greater discipline, and reverence are observed, and under good custody of the maternal eyes, leaving home as little as possible, and returning as soon as possible. Not without reason, for our warning, the Holy Spirit has willed that in the divine writings is recorded the story of Dina, daughter of Jacob, who being in the City a stranger, with her father and her brothers, the text says, that she went out of the house to see the women of that country and having met her by chance the son of the Prince of that Land, he was taken by love for her, and kidnapped her, and by force violated her, from which then followed serious inconveniences; giving instruction to all the women, but especially to the virgins for husband, such as Dina was, not to go wandering, and not to want to see many things curiously, because the devil has stretched his nets, where others do not think.

But above all the good mother of a family should keep her daughters well occupied, and far from idleness, master, as has been said so many times, of many sins. And not because they were born of a noble and rich father, do they disdain the bow and arrow, and the spindle, and the other exercises appropriate to that sex, just as the most noble Roman women were not disdained, and in the sacred letters, the noble and virtuous women are praised for this, as we

touched on above. And the one that in excellence and virtue advanced the angels, not that the women, Mary mother of God, treated on earth the women's artifices, to say nothing of Anne mother of Samuel, and many others. Therefore, let the noble spinsters work, let them rejoice in dressing their fathers and brothers with their own hands, let them learn to know how to take care of their belongings, let them take care of the holy education of their little brothers and sisters, and let them not be allowed to occupy themselves with vain things, nor to be idle, because idleness is the enemy of the soul and of the body. The Lacedaemonians had the custom of making the virgins do vigorous exercises of the body, thinking that in this way, when they were married, their parts were stronger, and they gave birth with less pain; and although we must not approve of the fact that the females do something too violent and virile, indecent to their modesty, we cannot deny that it is true that the too languid and idle life is harmful to the vigor of the body and to the procreation of children. I conclude that the father, and mother of the family, should keep their daughters in good custody, and that they should be feared more quickly than otherwise, because the female sex is naturally lecherous, and that age is little considered; and in the rest it is to be hoped that the previous good education and the fear of God, and the holy example of the mother, will preserve our daughter in such a family, that living holy in the paternal house, she can then be worthy and happy mother of many good sons and daughters, that for the glory of God will have to be educated by her, with the same form of chaste, and Christian education.

Chapter 62

OF THE NECESSITY OF FARMERS, AND ARTISANS.

It has been said above, that the City is like a body, composed of various more and less noble limbs, and each one does its work peacefully without schism or dissension of any kind, so that the body is kept alive, and does its work, well and happily. Not otherwise for the preservation of the City, not only magistrates, and ministers of public government are necessary, but also farmers, and shepherds of herds, and flocks, and fishermen and the like, who prepare for themselves and for all the other Citizens, part of the fruits of the earth, part of the animals, various kinds of food, and nourishment, without which one cannot live; besides that the care of the animals is also necessary for other reasons, that is for clothing and for many aids to human life; likewise necessary are the craftsmen of many ways of art, others of which make the instruments of the other arts, others make clothes, others build houses, others prepare the food given by farmers and shepherds for the use of man, others finally make other officies that would be very long to say and not necessary to our purpose, so much so that the arts that are called mechanics are necessary to be able to live naturally and civilly, and to defend ourselves from the insults, and of the Sky, and of the beasts and of the men too, that are violent, and have a bestial aspect. Hor if this is so, it is also true, that it is necessary that the fathers of families give the City men suited to these exercises, even though they are considered low, and vile, because in their rank, they have to contribute to the conservation and maintenance of the City, no less than those that are considered noble, and are commonly exercised by people of higher status.

Chapter 63

THAT THE POOR SHOULD NOT BE ATTRACTED TO THEIR
CONDITIONE.

Therefore the poor must be content with their own condition, and not be envious of the rich, for as Saint Gregory Nazianzen, the Most Grave Doctor, and other Fathers say, whoever wishes to consider, the condition of the poor is better in the things of this life than that of the rich, for the most excellent things of nature, such as sunlight, air, life, health, strength, and other things are enjoyed no less, indeed much more, by the poor than by the rich; but what is more important, the celestial gifts of God's grace, after which there is no acceptance of persons, are common to all, nor otherwise is the rich baptized, than the poor, nor less is the poor adopted by God as his son, and heir of Paradise, than the rich, indeed the saints say, that poverty is a most convenient instrument for acquiring virtue, and consequently eternal beatitude. Therefore let the poor console themselves, and think that God with great wisdom has willed in his reasonable creatures, this great variety that we see of rich and poor, of literate and idiot, of stronger, according to the body, and less acute in the intellect, and others on the contrary, so that these, and other diversities might be like so many bonds of love, that strictly bind us together, even speaking naturally, while we see that no one is sufficient for himself, but each one needs the help of the others. It is true that the poor have many labors, but let it not be thought that those of the rich and noble are less, to whom it appertains to preserve public peace, to maintain justice, to defend the poor who are not oppressed by the more powerful, to help them with money, and to give them occasion and matter to be able to exercise their crafts and to

use the strength of the body to earn a living, undoubtedly very great benefits of the rich towards the poor, for which the poor must be grateful, and remember, giving love, and observance, and fidelity to the rich, and good care, and diligence in the cultivation of the fields, and in the custody of their things. Just as the rich must protect the poor and have them as their children, all the more so because of the debt of Christian charity, since we are all one in Christ, and it is right that it should appear to the effects that we are members together, and as the foot carries the head, so the head holds the foot, and lowers itself to give it a remedy when it is sick. In this regard, some young men of the City deserve much reproach, who with pranks and jokes, mock the poor and simple men of the countryside, who give us so readily their sweat, and continuous efforts.

Chapter 64

OF THE PATERNAL CARE ABOUT MAKING THE CHILDREN LEARN THE MECANIC ARTS.

When the poorly born child reaches the age of being able to work as hard as he can, he will not have to stay in idleness, but in conformity with the ancient sentence, he will be willing to eat his bread, in the sweat of his face, however according to the condition of his poor father, and according to the strength of his body and his greater inclination, he will have to be employed in some art, either of those, which outside in the cultivation of the fields, and other things of the villa are worked, or even of the mechanical arts, which are ordinarily practiced in the City, which need more study to learn them, it will be the obligation of the father not to delay too long in sending his son there, and to elect a good teacher, and by good I mean not only an expert in that art, but of good morals, and of good reputation, in whose workshop the son of the family will not learn to blaspheme and will not fall into other serious sins, but preserves the whole of his father's Christian education, so that when it is convenient, I would believe it to be expedient that the young man return in the evening from the work, to his own house, escaping by this way many dangers, and having more often the occasion to hear the memories of his father. To whom he admonishes his son to often fear God, and to do his will, and to take care not to offend him, knowing certainly that in every state, and in whatever exercise one wishes, even the most vile, as long as it does not contradict the Christian law, and that it is rightly exercised, one can please God; but exhort him principally to two things, one that he never interrupts the good Christian exercises, that is to say, to make some prayer in the morning, dedicating to

God that day, and all his labors, and asking for help from the Father of all graces, for all his needs, both spiritual and corporal, and that in the day often with a sigh, with an elevation of mind he remember God; to have in particular devotion the Blessed Mother of God, and any Saint, as his special advocate, and above all to dispense the day of the feast in a Christian manner, reducing himself often to his spiritual father, and restricting himself to some good company, according to his advice; and in sum not neglecting, nor going back to that form of living, which it is presumed that he will have observed in his childhood, as has been discussed at length above. The second thing of which the father must often warn his son is that he should practice his art faithfully and without guile, and not be envious of those who earn money by evil means; for they provoke God's indignation, who, although he conceals it for some time by waiting for us to do penance, will not leave our sins without punishment, not only in the next life, of which there is no doubt; but often in the present life, losing the wretched craftsman in one point, what he had hardly acquired in many years; where an artisan known as a man of good in his art is loved by all good people, and many more make use of his work, and God blesses him in every way, as I remember having said above in another regard, and if the artisan is not a tavern-keeper, nor a gambler, nor in any other idle way dissipate his small honourable earnings, he will undoubtedly have enough to support himself. But what is more important, once this brief pilgrimage is over, at the end of the day he will have a part in the kingdom of God. And so the saint Tobias said well, comforting his son: My son, our state is poor, and we live poorly; but be of good cheer, and know that if we fear God, we will have many goods.

Chapter 65

MERCHANDISE.

The commerce has its principles in the same nature, so that of the things that are necessary to the sustenance of the life of the men, not all the Cities are by nature provided enough, but of some things they have in their own country a greater copy of the need, and of others they lack, Wherefore from the beginning there arose the exchange of one thing for another, and relieving men of the need for each other, although afterwards for greater convenience money was found, as a common and more certain measure of the value of each thing; For this reason merchants are necessary in the Republic, who bring out the goods of which the country abounds, and procure from other places those which are lacking. Then there is another way of trading that is less natural, and more artificial, which consists in trading the same money, and multiplying it with exchanges, and various ways, of which we do not care to speak in detail. But just as the craftsman has been reminded to live in such a way that he does not prejudice the law of God, nor the goal of his health, which must go ahead in all respects, so also, and much more so, the merchant is reminded, I say much more so because the occasions for prevaricating are greater, and it does not seem that one wishes to put an end, nor any term at all, to the acquisition of money, from which presupposition of endless enrichment, it is necessary that infinite inconveniences follow. Therefore, let the merchant be a useful instrument of his Republic, let him be content with his honourable earnings, let him not turn into a public calamity, what must be a public uplift, while he makes monopolies, while he procures famines, and sells at immoderate prices, and ill-conditioned goods, and does

other such things, not as a benefactor, but as a plunderer of his Citizens, sucking the blood of the poor in various ways, the worst of which is usury, as has been said elsewhere. Woe to the rich merchants who are illicitly enriched, woe to the dry money changers, barren of every humor of charity, who for corruptible gold, have exchanged their souls with the devil, contrary to what the Savior says: What exchange will a man make for his soul? Woe to the inventors of artificial, bland contracts, by which the ill-covered usury is concealed, most uncovered to the eyes of God. In conclusion, having perhaps exclaimed too much, I conclude that it is lawful for the father of the family to apply his son to the trade, but he must be careful to instruct him in such a way that he understands and is persuaded that the first trade of the Christian is to trade in Heaven and in the gold of charity, of which God himself says: I admonish you that you buy from me the fiery gold, so that you may be truly rich.

Chapter 66

OF THE PROFESSION OF SCIENCES, ET FACULTÀ.

The purpose of the present reasoning, which we have begun in the preceding chapters, and which is still being woven, is to occupy our son of the family, who has already become of an age suitable for this, in some honourable and praiseworthy exercise, proportionate to his condition, to the disposition of the body, and to that of the intellect as well, and this consideration is made for two principal reasons, one to avoid at the greatest danger, the idleness most harmful to youth, the other so that our same son may have throughout his life an exercise and profession, with which he may be able to do his work, and profession, with which he can support himself, and his little family, and live honorably among his citizens, not as strike-breakers, and useless, but as industrious, and profitable for his part to the community, and this comes to be the third respect no less principal, so that to the fathers of the family it is appointed to provide the City with workers, and ministers to supply various needs, so that the body of this citizenship is preserved whole, not truncated, nor lacking in any necessary part. Now having spoken so far about farmers, artisans and merchants, it seems to me to be time to speak a little more about the profession of letters, which is not the same thing as we did above when we spoke of schoolmasters, nor to say the same thing twice; However, leaving aside the fact that above we dealt only with private schools, where one learns grammar, rhetoric and the knowledge of languages, we now come to the sciences and faculties that are learned in public schools, but other than this we say, that some give work to the letters, only for the sake of knowledge, and for the ornamentation of themselves, and for private vanity, and

other similar ends, and however they are ordinarily content to make mediocre progress in them; others aspire to perfection, and to become masters, and to make an open profession for the common benefit of all those who need it, therefore with public authority, and with solemn rites they are given the rank and title of exercising any profession, and are called Doctors. And because in this part I also need to give some remembrance to our father of the family, so let no one be surprised if I linger a little in this consideration.

Chapter 67

HOW SOME POOR NAIVE YOUNGSTERS SHOULD BE HELPED.

If we said above that poor fathers should apply their children to the manual arts, contenting themselves with the knowledge of the first letters, or with a single tincture of grammar, because fathers do not have the means to spend money to bring them up in the sciences, and because it is assumed that these same children are more gifted in body than in mind, and therefore more suited to bodily toil than to that of the mind, nevertheless what was said above is not to be understood so indiscriminately, but with some limitation, so that we see from experience that it is not infrequent for them to be in a very narrow place, than to those of the mind, nevertheless what has been said above is not to be understood so indiscriminately, but with some limitation, so that it is seen by experience not infrequently, from a very low place, to rise, like a flower from arid ground, some pilgrim's wits, endowed by nature with extraordinary graces, so that it is understood that if it were cultivated with discipline, it would be able to achieve admirable success. For this reason, the father of a family must be considered, having first observed for a long time the nature and the conduct of the child. And just as in the same mechanical arts, it may be that the putto has a natural inclination towards some nobler art, so that he should not be inconsiderately led to the first artifice that comes to hand, so too, where one sees in the child excellence of intellect, and notable capacity for letters, one should not abandon him as far as possible, nor bury his joy in the mud. And it will not be difficult for an idiot father to understand what is being said, namely that a lively intellect sends out certain sparks, which give understanding, where nature calls it

most. They love books, they always want to study, they are always attentive when some learned person speaks, they imitate with gratitude the preachers, and teachers, and they want to write, and compose, and on the contrary they do not love the vile artifices, and with other such signs are manifested to a good connoisseur, and what the father will not see for himself, the master of the school will see, and some understanding and charitable friend, with the advice of whom he will deliberate on the way to employ his son more in this, than in that profession, since we are speaking here only of an excellent intellect. The father should not be frightened by his poverty, but should hope in God, and also help himself as much as he can. The ancient Seminaries of Clerics have been restored to our times, where, out of charity alone, Clerics are raised from the sons of the poor, and trained in letters, though not in every way of letters; it is enough, however, that it can easily happen that the boy has the desire to be a Cleric, and from these principles, which he can achieve in the Seminary, he proceeds, either by other opportunities, or by his own industry to greater effects. There are also, in some cities of study, colleges established by men truly worthy of praise for this purpose, so that poor young men may have the opportunity to study for a certain number of years without any expense. Sometimes a young man who has already been well introduced to the humanities may be placed with a wealthy man as a teacher of his children, where, knowing his goodness as well as his genius, it may happen that the father of the family sends him to study with them. And with these and other similar ways, raised by a noble spirit, a very useful Citizen will be raised for his country, who, being completely abandoned, perhaps the beauty of his intellect will lead him to do harm, or else he will be placed in a low position, bringing to the public a small and unimportant service.

Chapter 68

OF PUBLIC STUDIES, AND THEIR DANGERS.

The use of public studies in some noble, and principal cities, where at the expense of the Prince, or of the Republic, men of excellent learning are led in every faculty, to teach the youth who come from all parts, is very ancient, and the Supreme Pontiffs and Emperors have always very readily favored this noble institution, amply privileging the cities, where these studies are, which otherwise some call Universities, and also the professors and the same scholars, and the Emperors have always very readily favoured this most noble institution, amply privileging the Cities, where these studies are, which otherwise some call Universities, and also the professors and the students themselves, as can be seen in many decrees and laws. And certainly nothing is more praiseworthy, nor more worthy of the royal magnificence, that will raise many virtuous men, and educated in every profession, and it could be affirmed not without reason, that the studies, and universal Academies, are a way of public education of the youth, If, however, all that care and diligence were used, which would be appropriate, regarding the customs of the young, but I do not know for what misfortune of this calamitous century of ours, little thought is given to this part, at least in Italy, where, on the other hand, there are many honorable studies, On the contrary it almost seems that the study is a place of freedom, and it is no longer appropriate to retain that modesty which was observed in private schools, and in paternal homes, so that the pupils mostly live, and dress like soldiers, with great license, and many study very little, and they give themselves to practicing for their Doctors, and for other competitions, and there arise very often brawls, and

quarrels among them, and in the same schools little regard is had to the authority of the teacher, and not infrequently a few disciples disturb the whole auditorium with shouts, and with clamors. And although many people laugh at this youthful license, and even approve of it, and consider it necessary, as if it were a purgation, so to speak, and an outlet for the heat and the impetus of that age, there is no doubt about it, and daily experience proves it, that through the door of freedom one passes to many sins, and who can doubt that finding many young people gathered together, with their blood running cold, with their opportunities ready, far from their fathers, and from their guardians, invited by the company of others, and by license, and impunity, they will commit every kind of vice, and of dissoluteness? so that many return from their studies to their homeland more learned, and more awakened, and more astute, but not good enough, swollen with ambition, and estimation of themselves without fear of God, and especially muddy in the flesh. The glorious saint Augustine writes in his Confessions, which have already given us many times useful teachings for our subject, that his father, wishing that his son should make great progress in eloquence, a profession in those days greatly esteemed, sent him far from his homeland, and with greater expense than his condition did not involve, to Carthage, the principal city of Africa, where studies flourished, and the good saint complains, that his father did not care, nor did he take the solicitude that his son grow for the service of God, nor how chaste he was to be, provided that he was learned and eloquent. Arrived therefore in Carthage, free from every custody, he himself was looking for how he could be entangled by the impudent loves, which very soon he succeeded, remaining immersed in the infernal abyss of lust. In addition, he was overwhelmed by the spectacles that were performed in the theatres, full, as he says, of images and likenesses of his miseries, and of fomentation of his fire; He also tells how he observed the

quarrelsome and cavilous frauds of the forum, and how he was already mentioned in the schools of Rhetoric, in which, already swollen with the wind of pride, he wished to be excellent for the damaging end of human vanity and haughtiness, from which swelling he then followed, that when he began to read the holy writings, he despised them, as something low and unworthy of being compared to the greatness of Tullian speech, as he did, who did not even have the eyes of the spirit, now seemed to him, but what was more serious, and pernicious, being at study in this disposition, he fell into some men whom he describes very well, superbly frenetic, carnal, and talkative, in the mouth of whom were the laces of the devil, and a mistletoe made and composed of sweet, and holy, and pious words in appearance, always having Christ in their mouth, and truth, deceiving the simple ones with these ways. These were the bad heretical Manichaeans, from the laces of which the good Augustine remained for a long time taken, until it pleased God to make him, like another Paul, of persecutor, very strong defender of his Church. Such then are the fruits, that under the pretext of erudition the miserable youth, often gathers, from the peregrination of the great Cities and famous studies, while like chickens coolly escaped from under the hand of the tamer, the poor youths go wandering freely, where the sensual appetite, and the torrent of the bad habit of their companions carries them.

Chapter 69

OF THE CURA PUBLICA ABOUT THE DISCIPLINE OF GENERAL STUDIES.

I fear that perhaps I may seem more daring than is appropriate for me, if I remind those who have power and public authority to think of some suitable remedy for curbing too much schooling in certain studies. Certainly the ancient emperors thought of this, for this is not new, since youth is always the same if it is not regulated by good discipline. Saint Augustine in the fifth book of his confessions very copiously recounts the impudence and unbridled audacity of the students in the study of Carthage, where he had already become a teacher and was reading publicly, and he writes that they did insulting things with great impudence worthy of being punished by the severity of the laws, if not that evil custom was the advocate and defender of license; for which Augustine decided to leave there and come to Rome, where he understood that the young people studied more quietly, being held in check with better, and more orderly discipline, which perhaps, as can be conjectured, was the result of a notable law of Valentinian Emperor and his Consorts, written to Olibrio, the most noble Senator and Prefect of the City, which is also preserved and recorded by Theodosius Emperor in his Code, where, among other things, the Emperors say that those who wish to learn should not be in the company of infamous people, whose company they affirm is close to the same sins. Moreover they admonish the students not to go to the shows, and to the banquets, and finally they give power to the magistrate, that the discolous, and licentious, and who do not live according to the dignity, and gravity of the liberal arts, are publicly beaten, and expelled with infamy from the City.

From these orders one can understand what modesty and goodness of life those Princes sought in young students. Therefore, not without reason in our times, the sacred Council of Trent wants the Universities and the general studies to be visited with great diligence, and everything that needs to be corrected, and reformed, to be amended and reordered by those to whom it belongs for the improvement of religion and ecclesiastical discipline. It is sufficient for us to have reasoned about this matter, almost by way of accident and digression.

Chapter 70

OF THE PATERNAL PROVIDENCE ABOUT SENDING THE CHILDREN TO STUDY.

Returning to reasoning with the father of the family, as is our duty, I say that the prudent father must consider, on the one hand, the usefulness of public studies, where there are teachers of excellent learning, and where the frequency of disputation, the ease of conferring, the competition, and the emulation of so many noble minds, makes the arduous path of the sciences easier, and where finally the stimulus of honour, in order to return to the homeland with the degree of the Doctorate, awakens the awakening of a sense of honour, and emulation of so many noble minds, makes easier the laborious way of the sciences, and where finally the stimulus of honour, to return to the homeland with the degree of the Doctorate, often awakens the student from sleep, who has some judgment, and consideration of himself; On the other hand, he must also consider the dangers which, according to the common habit of living, his son may run, who with a fragile timber, that is, with his own youth, enters into a stormy sea, full of many rocks, and after this, balancing everything well, let the good father proceed with such temperament, and maturity in this deliberation, that the comforts of going to study are not lost, and the inconveniences are avoided as far as possible. First of all it is very important, as in all other things, to have a good previous education, and to be accustomed to the fear of God up to this time, because a heart that has drunk this salutary antidote almost like milk, and for many years has been nourished by it, and many years has been nourished by it, is not so easily poisoned by sin, nor does it sin so impudently, nor does it sink so deeply into the abyss of sinfulness,

remaining always a sharp remembrance of conscience, which calls it back to the virtuous life of before. Given this foundation, therefore, the father of a family must not rush into the second place, nor make this decision inconsiderately, but must have thought about it some time before, taking advice from prudent, loving and God-fearing men, and informing himself of the qualities of his studies, according to the present state, so that he may be able to choose a quieter study, and less exposed to the dangers that we have mentioned, and where in his own country there is general study, the young man should not be sent elsewhere lightly, at least in the first years, because the eye, and the paternal respect is not of little importance; But when it is appropriate to send him out, special consideration must be given to the place where the pupil is to live, and where he is to live together, because the present and continuous circumstances are a great snare, and it takes more than ordinary virtue to be able to resist the daily battles; Therefore, if the Doctor and teacher were truly Christian in life, our young man would be well off with him, both for the safety of his morals and for the profit of his studies; but when this is not possible, every diligence must be taken to have a good man as a guest, and where at least there is no danger of ruin. And in such cases it is right to make use of friends, some of whom are mature in years and authority, and, if they are able, the young man is to be recommended to the Bishop himself, and every care is to be taken to ensure that a loving eye watches over him and observes his conduct. It is not to be ignored in this regard, that there is an honorable company, or congregation, called Perseverance, which, as I have seen from a report, was founded not many years ago in the noble study of Bologna, for the purpose of helping young students, and some noble and learned persons strive for the sole zeal of the honor of God, with charity, and skill, so that the young students avoid evil practices, have honest conversation, spend their

time virtuously, and with profit of their studies, and finally join, with the knowledge of the sciences, the fear of God, and the Christian piety, for which effects, they have ordered some useful constitutions, and it is understood that by the divine gratitude the work proceeds happily under the guardianship of the Most Blessed Mother of God, and under the protection of *Mons.* Illustriss. Cardinal Paleotto Archbishop of that City, Lord greatly disposed to favour, and to promote similar enterprises. Therefore, if by chance our father of the family sends his son to that study, do not let him take advantage of this good opportunity, ensuring that he enters into that company, which it is to be hoped that he will also enter into other studies. But returning to the memories that were begun to be given to the father of the family, it would also be useful to send from home a faithful and tried teacher, a companion of the same studies, and a guardian who is not excessively annoying, but discreet. Sometimes it would be good if two gentlemen, friends or relatives, would send their children to study together, raised first under the same discipline and good Christian education, who, living together with a good servant at their side, would seem to them almost as if they were in their father's house, and would more easily retrace the ancient institutes, and would have less need to converse closely with other young people. And since our pupil will have had his spiritual father in his own country, every effort must be made to keep him in the same way while he is studying, which will not be difficult through his first father and the superiors of that same religion or of another religion, that he must have his own and ordinary confessor to whom the young man must often represent himself, and with the same spiritual father, and with other trusted friends, the father of the family will see to it that he has commerce in letters, and a good intelligence, so that he will often be warned of the things of his son. Everything, however, should be done with wisdom, and not with open suspicion.

Chapter 71

HOW THE FATHER SHOULD WANT TO BE AWARE OF HIS SON'S PROGRESS IN HIS STUDIES.

It is also expedient for what concerns the progress of studies, to want from the son one, and more times a year, a particular report, which if the father is not intelligent, he can confer with an expert person, making him come rightly to the knowledge of the same son, so that he is more aware, and is prepared to have to send from time to time to his father some worthy witness of his efforts. The schoolboy's dress should also not vary from that modesty which he was accustomed to maintain in his own country, and just as the serious dress is a restraint on youthful frivolity, so on the contrary the feathers, and the sword at the side, and other similar things are not only a foment of vanity, but an occasion for mixing in the school brigades, and making other disorders. In short, when the father sends his son to study, he should send him to you well instructed in his memories, and through letters and other appropriate means, he should restore in him from time to time the memory of his father's exhortations. And above all I command him not to enter into the sects and affairs which are often done in studies, not for the purpose of studying, but to overwhelm one nation with another, with too great a loss of time, and with the harmful consequence of a thousand other inconveniences, but on the contrary to look after himself, and to converse closely with a few, and scholars, and good ones, because bad company is dangerous everywhere, as has been said, but more so in the study where there is more freedom, and our wise student should not be concerned about being called a dumb ox because of his seclusion, as has been said elsewhere of St. Thomas Aquinas, nor should

he take account of the mockery and mockery of the students, but he should reconsider every day why he has gone to the study, which is nothing but a marketplace of science, where to return empty is a great shame, and not less harm. Therefore, since study is a place where passers-by stay and a hotel for a short time, there is little need for mockery of one's fellow students, since the true judgment will be made not long afterwards at home and in other places, where the worthy student, already a Doctor, will publicly and with great praise explain the noble goods of the knowledge he has acquired.

Chapter 72

EXAMPLE OF TWO NOBLE SCHOLARS OF CAPPADOCIA,
GREGORIO ET BASILIO SANTI.

As a seal to this discourse of ours, in which I wished to give useful warnings to our father of the family, considering that the importance of the matter requires not little from him, as a seal I say, and concluded, I have thought of transcribing a part of that eloquent oration, which Saint Gregory Nazianzen wrote in praise of Saint Basil already dead, his most cordial friend, and companion of study in the City of Athens, called mother, and teacher of the arts, and disciplines. Certainly every student, who goes to study, should read that oration and consider carefully all that is narrated, of the studies of this very rare couple of two friends, and students, who were then those two great Bishops and lights of the East of holiness, and of doctrine. But for the sake of brevity, leaving many things, I shall be content to report only a part of it as I have said. It says thus:

We were led by the same hope of doctrine, that is to say, of something that would move envy. And yet envy was banished from us, burning only for emulation; our contention was not which of us should take back the honour of the first place, but which of us should give it to his companion, because we both considered the glory of the other as our own. It seemed that a single soul was in both of us, and carried two bodies. We had only one thought, that of acquiring virtue, and of adapting the reasons and the manner of our life to our future hopes, even before death, when we departed from the earth. And so, proposing this before our eyes, we directed our lives and our actions, partly following the guidance of the divine law, partly encouraging

one another to the study of virtue, and if it is not arrogance to say so, we were among ourselves mutually exchangeable as a rule, and a norm of knowing and distinguishing the right from the wrong, because our conversation was not with the most licentious and dissolute of our companions, but with the best and most constituted, nor did we talk with the most contented, and restless, but with the most tranquil, and peaceful, and finally with those, the custom of which brought us great fruits, and benefit, having for certain thing that much more easily one takes the vice, that one does not share the virtue, as easily as one falls in the sickness, that one does not give health. As for the disciplines, our taste was not of the most delightful, but of the most excellent, so that even now youth takes the form, and quality, either of virtue, or of vice. Two ways were known to us, one the principal and most worthy, that which led to the holy house of God and to the sacred Doctors; the other was secondary, and not of the same honor and esteem, that which led to the professors of secular doctrines, all the others that led to the feasts, to the shows, to the frequent places, and to the public banquets, we had left to those who wanted them, because nothing in my opinion is very much to be appreciated, which does not help to live well and honourably, and does not make better those who study it. Up to this point, these are the words of the great Theologian, describing the image of an excellent Christian scholar, at a time when he was an excellent teacher.

Chapter 73

OF THE DOCTORS OF REASON AND MEDICINE.

It would be desirable if there were as much love and charity among the Christians as would become true disciples of Christ, that there were never any quarrels or dissensions among them, since we are all brothers in the Lord, as St. Paul showed us when, writing to the Corinthians, and regretting their quarrels and disputes, he said not without a sense of sorrow; *Fratre cum fratrem iuditio contendit*, that is brother with brother, which is to say how one Christian with another disputes and quarrels in judgment, but since we are in this valley of tears, good and evil mixed together, so that it is necessary that according to the saying of the Gospel, many scandals come, it is also necessary that the Judges prohibit them, and give back his right to each one. And therefore it is to be prayed to God that at least those who have the rank and title of teachers of reason, and of Judges to define what is just, are such that they really do with effect what is appropriate for such an office, and for such an honorable profession. But more absolutely, considering the natural fragility of our body, physicians are necessary, the work of whom, given to us by God for the preservation of our health, is undoubtedly to be greatly esteemed, because if the good disposition of the body fails, as if it were a tool for the blacksmith, the soul cannot perform many useful operations, either for the individual man, or for the common good. And generally speaking it does not seem that in this life there is anything sweet or joyful without health. And therefore it is also to be desired of the Medici that they exercise their profession and art with charity for the glory of God and the benefit of their neighbors. And these are two of the principal professions that are learned in the studies, which of the

sacred Theology Queen of all the others it is not necessary to discuss at this time.

Chapter 74

HOW THESE NOBLE PROFESSIONS ARE TO BE EXERCISED CHRISTIANLY.

Returned therefore to the homeland, and to the paternal presence the desired son, who has not uselessly consumed his time as many do, but has studied dutifully, bringing back not only the privileges of a Doctor, but also the merit and the knowledge, remembering that science is a talent given him by God to negotiate as a faithful servant, according to the intentions of his master, that is to the glory of his divine Majesty and the benefit of his neighbors. Therefore our new Jurisconsult should not be a flapjack, who immediately ignites dissensions by offering himself as an instrument of perverse men to provoke quarrels, and to oppress the poor, but on the contrary he should think that the verse of the psalm is said for him, *Tibi derelictus est pauper, orphano tu eris adiutor*, that is, the poor are commended to you, and you will be adiutor of the orphan; let him not have for his principal end gain, nor to enrich himself by any means, but the love of his Citizens, and the good opinion of all, that he is a just and righteous man, and incorruptible, let him not abandon the just causes of poor widows and children, if they have no money to pay him, but let him give them alms of his doctrine and patronage, and they will pray for him and will be heard, and riches will come with the blessing of God, and with the approval of men, and his children will enjoy them in the third and fourth generation. In sum, in advising, judging, and governing, let your eyes always be on God, and on that tremendous tribunal, where, as the Apostle says, we must all necessarily present ourselves. May God see that our Doctor, brought up by his mother's breasts, in the fear of God with such care, is then one of those, of whom God complains to

Isaiah the prophet, speaking to Jerusalem, and saying, Your magistrates are unfaithful, companions of thieves. They all love the present, and go after profit, they do not justify their pupil, and they do not listen to the cause of the widow; let not our good Doctor and Judge be of the number of these, let not the eyes of the intellect be dazzled by the splendour of gold, let him not be an acceptor of people, but let him be a defender of justice, and a preserver of peace, and concord, both private and public. These things are remembered by the same Doctors who are themselves capable of understanding them, and nevertheless the wise father of a family who at all times has to maintain authority with his son must gently admonish him to good intentions, moderating a certain youthful ardor, which is like a new wine, which is boiling and has not yet reached maturity. Saint Paul says that knowledge puffs up and charity edifies. Most of the young people come back from their studies with a great opinion of themselves, they seem to know everything, they despise others, they are fresh from disputes, and from arguing, when they arrive at home, they want to be named, they undertake difficult and nine enterprises, and they often disturb the common peace, and they acquire names of the too bold, and of the cavalier, and they damage themselves not a little for the rest of their life, and of their activities; However, the good father must admonish his son to be humble and affable, to esteem others, to think that he still has much to learn, since practice, experience and prudence are acquired after many years, and the best way to know much is to think oneself to know little. The same things are also said proportionately to the professors of medicine, that they should not have as their principal aim corruptible gain, which soon leaves us and is soon left by us, that they should medicate with charity, not less the poor than the rich, that they should not slaughter men, that they should study with diligence, because it is a grave sin to make public profession of an art

which others do not know, and to exercise it with such prejudice either to possessions or to the lives of one's neighbors. Therefore, let physicians, judges and others like them be careful to bring themselves in such a way that, with the same knowledge, they may help the needs of their country, remain modestly and moderately acquired in civil life, and what is more important, directing everything to the glory of God, they may bring back from Him the eternal reward of Paradise.

Chapter 75

OF MILITARY DISCIPLINE AND CHIVALRY.

Those who have purposely dealt with the nature of the City and its necessary parts, have sufficiently demonstrated that not only are those arts needed in it, without which men cannot live, or not well, and comfortably live, like farmers, mechanics, and the like, and that it is not only necessary that there be governors, and magistrates, and judges, and consultors, who render justice and maintain private peace among Citizens, but that it is no less necessary that there be magistrates, and judges, and consultors, who render justice, and maintain private peace among Citizens, and that it is also necessary that there be magistrates, and magistrates, and judges, and consultants, who render reason and maintain justice, and preserve private peace among Citizens, but that no less it is also necessary that there be military magistrates, and soldiers, and defenders, who defend the liberty, and the peace of the homeland, against the violence of those who unjustly wanted to disturb it; Wherefore it appears that the study of military things is good and praiseworthy, if militia and war are not electable things in themselves, because to war for the same war, that is only to win, and to oppress the less powerful, is a thing of beasts without humanity; but legitimate war is for the sake of peace, to propel the insults, and violence, and for the defense of peace, justice, and the honor of God. We see in the Divine Letters that the military profession was not condemned, not only in the time of the Old Testament, but also under the Gospel, where John the Baptist, and forerunner of the Saviour, coming to him in various ways and conditions of people, preached penance to them, and gave salutary advice, according to the state of each one,

and among the others, seeing some soldiers come to him, he did not reproach them, nor did he take back the profession they were making, rather, being asked by them what they should do, he answered, as St. Luke relates, in this way Do not do violence or insult to anyone, and be content with your salaries. For this reason the father of a family is not forbidden to educate his son with this intention, so that he may be a Knight and a soldier, if he sees that the young man is called by the disposition of his body and by a certain natural inclination, observing from a distance, as has been recalled many times, his manners, in childhood and in childhood. But a good father must strive to bring up his son in such a way that he will truly be a defender, and not a disturber of his country, and that he will serve God with the military art, and not that by living with every license as many people do, he will condemn his soul, which is not a defect of the military but of our bad will, as I will now say in more detail.

Chapter 76

THAT KNIGHTS ARE GREATLY ESTEEMED TO BE GOD-
FEARING.

It is, if I am not mistaken, something worthy of consideration for those who read the Holy Gospel, and the ecclesiastical histories, and especially those that are called Martyrologies, where the deaths, or better said the triumphs of the very strong martyrs of Jesus Christ are briefly recorded, how great a number of soldiers and knights are found there. And as far as the Gospel is concerned, do we believe that it was done by chance, and no sooner by special disposition of the Holy Spirit, than three Centurions, or Captains as we may call them, are honorably mentioned by the Evangelists? The first of whom, considering himself unworthy to receive the author of life in his house, deserved that the Savior should say of him that great witness, "Truly, I tell you, I have not found so much faith in Israel. Whose words have been so admired by the holy Church, and so desires that each one of her faithful should imitate that great humility, and faith of the Centurion, who taught us to say them, always that by taking the most holy Eucharist we receive the King of glory in this our low hospitality. The second Centurion, standing at the foot of the Cross, while the immaculate lamb was hatching in the fire of his most ardent charity, and of his most bitter passion, confessed him, being kind, as a true son of God, when the scribes, and Pharisees, and Supreme Pontiffs, and Priests, denied him, mocked him, and reputed him to be an unjust and chosen man. Of the third, who was the good Cornelius, is discussed at length in the Apostolic Acts written by Luke the Evangelist, whose prayers and alms were so acceptable to God, that he sent him an Angel, who visibly appeared to him, notified him that God had heard him, and

admonished him to send for St. Peter, who moved by a particular and mysterious vision went there, and preached the Gospel to Cornelius, and to his servants present there, the Holy Spirit fell on them, doing the same wonderful effects, which he did from the beginning on the Holy Apostles, and the first believers, so that the good Peter, without further residence baptized Cornelius, and his others, so that a Captain, and soldiers, were the first of the people, who came to baptism, after the Ascension of Christ our Lord. But passing to the Ecclesiastical histories, it is impossible to believe how many saints and martyrs have come out of the military profession, I do not say only one, two or three, but the entire legions, as it was in the time of Mark Antony, that most noble legion, which was later called “fulminatrice” (lightning), because in a great need, it implored with its prayers from God such rain, that it admirably recreated the thirst of the Roman army, and against the enemy it made the effect of boiling water, and of lightning. As was also that of the Thebeian soldiers, at the time of the Emperor Maximian very clear not only for its sanctity, as the first, but also for the effusion of blood, shed for the confession of the name of Christ, inflamed especially by the comfort of the strong martyr Mauritius. Therefore let no one think that religion, devotion, prayers and the Christian spirit, is a thing for monks, and clerics only, and not for Knights, for all these were soldiers, and soldiers of pagan Emperors, persecutors of Christians, and nevertheless with unfaithful people, they were faithful, and under the military girdle of the earthly Emperor they fought mainly for the heavenly Emperor. And because it is the custom of the Holy Spirit to use human instruments according to a certain disposition, which is found in them, and by his grace to give perfection to nature, hence it is seen, if one considers well, that precisely those soldiers and knights who are generous of heart, robust of body, and eager for glory, and of honor, and for this reason despisers of death, of these I say it is proper to love God with

greater love, applying the Holy Spirit that fervor of blood, and that military fortitude, and turning him to love God, strongly and fervently, and to do for his love great and heroic works, such as martyrdom. And if the soldiers are, as we have said, defenders of the freedom of the country, of the laws, and of the religion, who is there who does not understand for himself, that the soldiers are principally expected not to do violence or injustice, but rather to be the first observers of the human and divine laws?

Chapter 77

OF PUBLIC MILITARY DISCIPLINE, AND OF PRIVATE PATERNAL CARE.

How much care, and diligence the ancient Romans, and many other nations used in military discipline, one can still read in the Latin and Greek histories, and one knows from many constitutions of the Emperors, that today are still seen in the volumes, and Codes of reason, it cannot be said enough how much study the new soldiers, called with Latin voice *Tironi*, exercised themselves with, how they were accustomed to every kind of toil, how they were sober in eating, how obedient to their Captains, and how severely the licence of the soldiers was punished, which discipline is a little less than lost in our times, lacking in this as in many other things the providence, and public education, being for the most part our soldiers people collectivized, and tumultuously mended in the needs, so that the armies for ordinary are a gathering of licentious men, led by the greed of prey, difficult to be governed by their Captains, who for this reason are almost forced to dissimulate with them, and to tolerate many things in such a way, that it often happens that their own friends and defenders are more serious than the enemies themselves. But leaving this part to those who touch it, and continuing our usual style, I remind our father of the family once and more, that every building of whatever profession, to which he decides to apply his son, must have the fear of God as its foundation, and so he must be a good soldier, that he must be principally a good Christian, and to join these two things together, which, as we have shown above, are in excellent harmony, he must be a soldier, and a Christian Knight. Therefore all that has been said above about the good and Christian education, is presupposed in

this case also of the study of Latin letters, and of humanities, which are, as in its place has been said, a great ornament of a gentle man, and an honourable and praiseworthy diversion in every age, from the inhonest entertainments, and in particular they bring utility to the soldiers, for the knowledge of the histories, and for many other good effects, and in particular the knowledge of the mathematical sciences is considered very necessary in those, who want to make profession of war, and pretend to go ahead in the most honorable degrees, and it is a study very proportionate to the young people. But returning to the goodness of life, it is certain that all of us in holy baptism have made a solemn profession of being soldiers of Christ, to whose militia we have been ascribed, and of whose sign we have been marked in the sacrament of confirmation, as it has been said elsewhere, because every Christian is obliged to fight legitimately against the vices and sins, and to put on the same fight against the sins, and sins, and to lay down his own life, when it is necessary for the honor of God, and of his holy faith, but the soldiers and Knights, for particular reason of their state have the obligation to be defenders of the holy Church, and of her faithful, against the enemies of the Christian name, and against those who under a false name of faith, are opponents of the true faith, such as the heretics, and schismatics, besides this the Knights must be protectors of justice, rebuking the unjust, and relieving the good and in particular giving help to the widows, to the pupils, and to the orphans,, and finally the Knight has never to offend anyone unjustly with his sword, which obligations the Holy Church our mother declares to us, in her sacred, and mysterious ceremonies, when she blesses through the Episcopal hands the Emperors, the Kings, and the new Knights, giving them the blessed sword in their hands. Therefore nothing is more monstrous, and horrible, than to see Christian soldiers and knights violate the Churches, profane the living temples of God, which are the sacred

virgins, and commit a thousand ways of injustice, robbery, and barbaric cruelty, and lust, of which many old histories are full so as not to enter now to speak of our times, and all the more so are the Knights Regular bound to these obligations, who have vows, and professions, according to the various institutes of their religions. Therefore, our father of the family must educate his son so that he may be a true Knight, that is just and religious, of whom nothing is more beautiful, and the more beautiful, the more rare; he must also admonish him to serve his prince with the utmost faith, so that however much gold there is in the world, he may never stain the candour of his loyalty. It is also necessary to be very careful in practice, since militia is also a way of studying, and there are many who gird themselves with swords, and are unworthy of the honoured name of Knight, people who are idle, quarrelsome, restless, full of vices, unbearable in time of peace, timid in war. Where the truly strong, and valiant one, as we wish our family son to be, is sweet, meek, affable, not content, not a boaster, he doesn't always seem to breathe blood and death, as some vain Trasoni do, but as it has been said he is very modest, and in battle ardent, and brave. And true fortitude does not consist in a certain mad bravery, and in a reckless boldness, but it requires judgement, and prudence and it must be used for the right end, and with the right manners, as those who write about the moral virtues, have fully treated it, so that many are deceived, and it seems to them to be strong, when they are sooner bold, and reckless, not discerning the true valor from the false, nor the vice from virtue. Above all let our Knight be the enemy of blasphemy, and let him make an open profession of it for the glory of God, and let him try as much as he can to eradicate this accursed abuse, which disfigures in many the nobility of Chivalry. Of this matter, worthy of every amplification and copy of words, to detest it, I will say no more having reasoned above in its proper place.

Chapter 78

MILITARY EXERCISES, AND HUNTING.

There is little that I can remember about military exercises, since I have no knowledge of them; it is sufficient to say that our father of the family must take care that the young man has a robust body, able to withstand hard work, not soft and effeminate, In soldiers, in particular, excessive delicacies must be avoided; rather, it is necessary that they accustom themselves to heat, cold, wind, sun, and other incommodities, fleeing idleness, crapulence, and other things that enervate their strength. The knowledge of how to ride a horse is part of this profession, something that, as a Greek writer said, only the princes and the nobles do, because the horse does not know how to ride, nor does he know how to tinker with various types of weapons, how to jump, and similar things, and beyond the private armies, it is not surprising that there were private armies in the cities, like schools, where at certain times, and in separate places, some recreations of military youth were held in the presence of experienced men, and of authorities, so that everything passed with good order, and without danger, and without much expense. Since it is reasonable that the recreations be recreations, and the games games, and not be done as is customary in the public spectacles of jousts, and tournaments, spending uselessly in things of joke, what should be reserved to spend in things of duty, and often some people remain wounded, crippled, and dead, as if the games, and the exercises were bloody battles, something abhorred by the same barbarians, and with much reason condemned by the sacred Canons.

Hunting is also counted among the armies suitable for soldiers, as an image of war, where the bodies get used to fatigue, and to the inconveniences, and variety of the air, the sites of the places are recognized, and other usefulnesses follow, which confer to the military study. Therefore it is not to be denied to our son of the family, who will have chosen that kind of life. I would like, however, that there be moderation in many things, first of all that the expense does not exceed the due measure, as some people do for a vain ostentation, being able to recreate the soul, and exercise the body with little apparatus. Secondly, one should not allow oneself to be so carried away by the love of hunting, that one occupies most of one's time there with the prejudice of more noble, more fruitful, and more necessary operations. Lastly, I remember that this recreation must be done in such a way that one does not run the risk of falling ill, either from too much cold or heat or from other accidents, to which those who run unrestrainedly in their pleasures expose themselves, since it is neither reasonable nor praiseworthy that for a vain pleasure one should throw away the life of a gentleman, which must be spent judiciously, usefully and virtuously for the service of God and of the country.

Chapter 79

AS SOLDIERS AND KNIGHTS IN TIME OF PEACE MUST WELL TAKE CARE.

But it is very necessary that our soldier, knows how to spend his time praiseworthy and in a Christian way, when he is far from the armies, in the peace of the peace, being it too much disdainful, to see a Knight all the day long with cards and dice in his hand, or staying at dances and banquets or riding morning and evening carefree through the streets wandering with offense of God and bad example of his Citizens. Therefore let our Knight be like a Christian enemy of idleness and sin, a good father of a family, then, as it is probable, he will have to take a wife, he should take care to educate his children well and in a Christian way, he should review the domestic government, he should take pleasure in agriculture and rustic things, in the City he should exercise some load or magistrate according to his rank, to take care of some pious place, and to promote with charity the works of piety, not to be disdainful, indeed he considers himself honored to serve the sick in the hospitals, and to receive the pilgrims, remembering that these are precisely Knightly undertakings, as anciently did the Knights of the temple, and of the hospital of San Gio. in Jerusalem so celebrated in the histories. In short, they are not of the number of those who seem to be Knights, useless in war and restless in peace, simply because they bear the sword, dress well and live in all delights. And as for the soldiers of lesser condition, there is no doubt that after the events of the war, they must return to the usual artifices, and occupy themselves usefully, not aggravating themselves with their idleness, but rather relieving with their fatigue the needs of their country. But above all our good Knight, with a clear face, should

show himself to be a servant of God, in the attendance of the holy sacraments and in all the Christian armies, overcoming worldly fear, and desiring more to resemble Cornelius, Mauritius, and the other Knights who joined religion and goodness with valour, than to these mockers the mockery and derision of whom are worthy of being despised, and mocked, and for this reason it is still very useful to have begun at an early hour, and made a firm resolution in his heart to want to please God more than men.

Chapter 80

OF THE EXCELLENCE OF THE CLERICAL AND RELIGIOUS STATE.

After the earthly and carnal militia it is appropriate to say something about the spiritual militia, of which those who choose the Clerical state are soldiers, who with a particular obligation and with a tighter knot than others commonly do, dedicate themselves and consecrate themselves to God and want to be of the Lord's share and heredity and also want God to be their share and heredity in eternal life, to which, if well all of us of whatever state, and condition, aspire by divine grace, since we are all children of the celestial father, nevertheless the Clerics choosing a state of greater perfection, and walking along a steeper, but more expedient path, have reason to do so, and a special title for the special offering and dedication, as has been said, of themselves to divine worship, and to the ministry of the holy altar in the temple of the Lord, just as in ancient times the Levitical tribe among the Hebrews was segregated, and separated from the multitude, and deputed in particular to the service of God, and of the sanctuary, and therefore the Clerics have a habit distinct from the laity, and they carry the sign of the crown in the middle of the head, by which one understands, besides the other significations, the excellence of the royal priesthood, to which the whole order of the Clerics more and less according to various degrees belongs, and they are recognized among the others of the people as intimate relatives, and servants of the one to whom to serve, is to reign. Therefore the Clerics have a high and noble status and are worthy of great honor, because they represent the person and authority of the High King and Priest Jesus Christ, who has given them power over his true and real

body and blood, that is over the tremendous sacrifice of the altar, which they offer for themselves and for all the people, and likewise he has given them power over his body called mystical and spiritual, that is, over his faithful, of whom they are Rectors and Governors according to the spirit, directing them and promoting them with doctrine, with the sacraments, and with the authority of the ecclesiastical keys, in the way of health and in the acquisition of paradise. But the greater and more excellent is the clerical state, the greater virtue and greater perfection is required in those who make profession of it, and therefore if in the election of other states, the father of a family must be considered, certainly in this he must be considered most highly and not twist as he says to such religion, who was born earlier to bear the sword, and not to move only for human ends, and for the temporal interest of perpetuating the benefices in the houses, or of creating new ones, common thirst of our calamitous times, in which many unloving fathers of their children try, even by illegitimate ways, to make them have good benefices, not caring about making the same children good. And then the laity are scandalized, and they murmur about the life of the clergy, and about the inadequate dispensation of the ecclesiastical revenues, not considering how much of the blame falls on them, who do not raise their children well and turn them to that profession to which they themselves were not inclined, without ever telling them about the great obligations they have, without making them instruct in those exercises that are proper to that vocation and finally without doing everything possible so that they may have doctrine and habits worthy of ministers, and customs worthy of the ministers of Christ, as if to be a good cleric, and priest a long robe was enough, which sometimes is not even worn, and a contemptible title of Abbot, and of Canon, living in the rest with greater license than the seculars impinguishing the miserable body of those revenues, which are vows and oblations of the faithful, price

of sins, and patrimony of the poor, with eternal
condemnation of the body, and of the soul.

Chapter 81

OF THE CARE ABOUT THE ELECTION OF THE CLERICAL AND RELIGIOUS STATE.

Therefore the father, who cares for his own soul, and for the soul of his son, should set before his eyes the honour of God and the good of his son, should observe with diligence from the earliest age the manners and inclinations of the child, the habits of the body, and many such circumstances, because as has been said elsewhere, the nature and simplicity of the child reveals itself to those who pay attention to it, so that from the beginning some rays of love of God, of taste and delight in spiritual things, a modesty, a gentleness, and other such things emerge, which are like silent voices, which warn the father what success is to be had by his son, if good nature does not lack good and proportionate education. But because all fathers do not hear these voices when the time comes, it happens that when the son is grown and large, each one already realizing what he is, and how little the state in which he finds himself paints him, it is said by all, when there is no remedy, that this one should be a priest, and this one should be a layman, and a soldier. And this is a miserable abuse, and one of the gravest disorders in the Christian people, and it would please God that it should happen more rarely than it does, because from this evil election of the state, of which and according to which some must live, and not live, there follows such a long chain of inconvenience, that few words are sufficient to recount it. But not for this reason is it forbidden that the father and mother cannot offer their children to God, and make a proposal that they be clerics or monks; on the contrary, this thought is holy, praiseworthy and grateful to the Lord, provided that, as has been said, it is done with true

intention, and aiming at pleasing God, making particular prayers and taking advice from religious and prudent men, and maturing the deliberation with time, so that the child may be somewhat grown up, and may as much as testify of his own will. In order to better ascertain what is most expedient, I believe that it would be useful for children destined to serve God to enter some seminary or college or congregation of religious men, among whom there is discipline and fervor of spirit. On this occasion I will say something further, that even if the child, by the desire of his relatives, and by his own election must remain in the world, nevertheless it is an excellent thing to have been brought up with good servants of God, for which I can only praise those fathers, who even for education alone, and up to a certain time, place their female children in monasteries of nuns, where, however, there is spirit, and fear of God, and peace, and true observance.

And if at some time it should happen, that outside the opinion of the father of the family, he should call God the young man, or the virgin at his service, do not be perturbed, and do not fill everything with complaints, as some do, but have it as good news. We are God's, and our children are God's, and he can take them away from us with a little febricciuola, when it pleases him; therefore let the father, and the mother recognize the singular grace that makes them, not an earthly King, and Prince, but the supreme King of glory, choosing their sons, and their daughters for his intimate servants, and for his beloved wives. And therefore they take care, as much as they cherish grace and fear the indignation of the great King of Kings, not to impede in any way the holy purpose of their sons who wish to be religious, even if it is a male child, and only son, offer him promptly to God in sacrifice, in the odour of suavity, as good Abraham did with his beloved Isaac. And as in the most tender sex, did Anne the mother of Samuel, who with such joy and

exultation of spirit, offered her firstborn son to the Temple of God and to divine worship. From this she was blessed by the high priest Heli, and received from God a great reward of fruitfulness for her prayerful offering. In the time of the evangelical law, there are infinite memorable examples of this kind, as anyone reading the lives of the saints can observe. It is not forbidden, however, nor is it said that the discreet father cannot proceed with maturity and counsel, proving the youthful spirit if it is of God, and especially with the touchstone, that is, with the judgment of good spiritual fathers. But when the vocation is certain and manifest, bless him with every blessing, and let him be the first to clothe his son with his own hands in the holy habit of religion, for he could not make a more acceptable sacrifice.

Chapter 82

HOW GRIEVOUS A SIN IT IS TO COMPEL CHILDREN TO ENTER INTO RELIGION, OR TO WITHDRAW THEM AGAINST THEIR WILL.

Although the religious state, as we have said, is most acceptable to God, nevertheless, every father and mother must beware of ever, out of any human respect, doing force or violence to their son or daughter, or daring to force them by threats, by beatings, or by other such means, to enter religion against their will. And to speak particularly of the female children, where this grave sin is most often committed, the poor spinster should not dedicate herself to God in religion, or in the monastery against her will in perpetual virginity, because she was born deformed or crippled, not because the father is burdened, and there are other children to marry, not for the sake that the brothers may be richer, nor for other similar reasons of flesh and blood, where on the other hand, as was said a little while ago of the males, if the Holy Spirit breathes in her heart, even if she is beautiful, if she is unique, if she is desired as a wife by whomever she wishes, let no one be so bold as to take her away from her heavenly spouse.

And because these cases of which we are now speaking are very important and very common, everyone knows that the Sacred Council of Trent, with a most serious and formidable decree, has detested and excommunicated all those who force any virgin or other woman to enter religion, or on the contrary prevent her against her will.

But returning to our father of the family, do not think himself unfortunate to see himself burdened with children, and poor,

nor does it occur to him to have recourse to such means, which are to the offence of God, to feed them; remember that God has given him many children, and God himself is sufficient to provide them abundantly, in a thousand ways, where human prudence with its discourses would never penetrate; commend yourself to God, dilate your heart with good confidence, and do on your part what you can, and what you must, and above all, attend to bring up your children well and in a Christian manner, and to make them rich in virtue, and the more you have, the more you rejoice, for there is nothing more precious than a good child, and even to the gentle philosophers, they have placed among the human happiness, and of this life, having many, and good children.

Chapter 83

HOW, IN PARTICULAR, THE CHILDREN WHO ARE TO BE CLERICS AND RELIGIOUS ARE TO BE RAISED.

Concluding, therefore, we say that the good father must not prevent, nor force his son to choose the highest state of religion, and perpetual chastity, which state, Christ our Lord did not want from the beginning, to put under obligation, but said whoever can take, take, so that whoever wants, remains then rightly forever obliged with the bond of his free will, and of his own vow. God does not like sacrifices and offerings that do not come from the heart, but rather from effort, and it is much better to be a good layman in secular life, than a sad religious, or cleric, and generally speaking, whoever wishes to build this high tower, must first, according to the warning of the Gospel, sitting down, that is, with mature deliberation, make a good count, if he has sufficient money to lead it to perfection by divine grace, so that it is not necessary to rush into something of such importance, hastily, but in such a way as to put one's hand to the plow, that others do not turn back, but persevere until the end so that one is saved. Now, since it may be that God may give particular grace to our father of the family to call one of his sons to this sublime vocation, it should be remembered that this son, whose father's pious desire is to devote himself to God in religion, moved by the probable conjecture of the inclination of the child, and with upright and holy intention, and with prudent deliberation, that son, I say, should be brought up with greater care, and should be more exercised in those things pertinent to a religious man, such as, for example, being more assiduous in the frequency of the sacraments, in reading the lives of the saints, who are like exemplars of perfect religious, in the study of spiritual

and devout books. He should pay more attention to the knowledge of literature, and especially, when the time comes, to the sacred Canons and the sacred Theology. It will also be necessary for him to be accustomed to serving in the churches at masses and divine offices, delighting in conversing in the castles of his Lord, as if he were a new soldier. Let him frequent the works of piety more often, have less conversation with the laity, and more assiduously with priests, and other religious men, flee all the vanities of the century, and in sum learn at an early age, and take delight, as they say, in his art.

It will also be useful, especially when certain signs appear in the child that are more evident than usual, to dress him in the clerical habit from an early age, and then to promote him to the first tonsure, so that by degrees, not so much with speed as with sure and steady steps, he may ascend to the holy mountain, and to the Tabernacle of the Lord. Therefore, let the good father see to it, by means of men of doctrine and spirit, that his son, as he grows in years and intellect, knows and understands very well the obligations of those who choose the clerical and religious life, who are said to be excellent in every Christian virtue, like those who are called the salt of the earth and the light of the world, but if salt, says Christ, is insipid, how can it be made tasty? it is good for nothing, except to be thrown into the street, where it is trodden underfoot like vile mud.

Chapter 84

OF THE COURTS OF PRINCES.

It cannot be denied, what experience shows, that many, enjoying too much of the comforts and comforts of home, give themselves to a quiet life, not to say idle, living off their ordinary income, never leaving their homeland, and not caring much about acquiring honor, nor fame among men. And if he did this out of a high spirit, despising earthly things, and in order to escape as much as possible the ties and entanglements of the world, and in order to better attend to the very important business of his own health, it would not be worthy of reproach. But most of the time one sees this happen, because of such a languidness of heart, and for not wanting to endure fatigue, nor any discomfort, so that these people, not even in their own country, give themselves to any honorable undertaking, but under cover of loving quietness, and seclusion they uselessly consume the best years of their lives.

Therefore, it does not seem to me that those fathers of families, especially noble ones, who choose to send their children away from home to the Court of a secular or ecclesiastical Prince are absolutely to blame. To see various countries, cities, and customs, to converse with men of valour, and nobly bred, to negotiate grave affairs, and to pass through various incidents of human life, partly by experiencing them in oneself, and partly by seeing them in others, are things for which he who is not of obtuse intellect, and incapable at all, acquires much cognition, and experience which is the mother of prudence, and from here it happens that the oldest, are also subject to being more

prudent, for having in the long span of life seen and experienced many things.

The Courts are by nature like so many seminaries, to make men valiant in war, and in peace, in the city and outside, in the affairs, and negotiations of state, in councils, in public government, in economy and domestic regulation, and in many other things so praiseworthy, and good, there the example of others, the stimulus of honour, the need itself, and necessity make men industrious, and solicitous, and such that at home they would have been ungrateful, and of no value, succeed in the Courts men of distinction, and of great honour, and ornament to the country, and to their families. Add that the Courts, especially the ecclesiastical ones, those who consider them in their own nature, are like the image of monasteries and religions, one lives under the obedience of a lord and head, under the same roof, and often at the same table each one has his office and has the field to exercise his talent, they are like schools of kindness, of affability, and of all good manners, they are the refuge of the virtuous poor, there the judgments are refined, there the rewards for virtue and hard work are prepared, and from there men come out from time to time already tried, in order to send them to various parts for public benefit, like streams coming out of a fountain. For these and other reasons, which could easily be given in this connection, I do not dare to dissuade our father from sending any of his sons out of the house, either to a distant court, or to his own country if there is a prince and court there, being also honourable that the Prince is served by his citizens, indeed as has been said the Court should be like a school, and a public education, where the Prince raises every kind of man necessary for the City and State, and for his Kingdom, because no one is born a teacher, but discipline, and practice are necessary, and the wise Prince must not think of providing for the places, and the offices at the point of the same need, which is done with

disadvantage, and danger, but he must always have seals of every manner prepared for people to serve, not otherwise than the craftsman does with his instruments, and therefore it is opportune to raise many, of many conditions, which if it is true on the part of the Prince, as it certainly seems to be the case, it will also be true that fathers of families are expected to give the Prince their own children as material from which he can make instruments suitable for his private, and public service. But even though the above things are probably said, on the other hand those who wish to consider things not speculatively but according to practice, and according to what is most commonly seen, have no doubt that the life of the courts is full of many dangers, and of many occasions for sin, and a stormy sea, where at all hours one is about to be shipwrecked, everything being full of the snares of envy, and of simulations, and the grace of the Princes being sustained by a weak thread, which is broken by every small incident, of which I do not wish to speak at length, lest anyone should say, that I have offended more by being biting, than by being prudent.

Chapter 85

OF PATERNAL PROVIDENCE ABOUT PUTTING CHILDREN IN COURT.

But returning to our father of the family, I say that when he decides to place his son in the Court, he must first of all persuade himself that it is not a question of a small deliberation, and therefore he must not avail himself of every shadow of apparent usefulness, and of interest, and where he has the possibility of being able to elect more from one Court than from another, let him first examine well all the circumstances, which are represented, ask for the advice of the most knowledgeable, see the successes of the other courtiers, seek information on the nature of the Prince, and on the conditions of that particular Court, where he has his sights set on, and also examine the qualities of the same son, for not all of them are fit to serve, nor to know how to adapt themselves to that way of life, which requires much patience and a versatile and shrewd intellect, and who with dexterity knows how to bear many imperfections, and of the Lord and of his courtly companions, gently concealing some things, so that the impatient, the overly sensitive, and the excessively choleric, can hardly last, and on the other hand some who are not very sharp, but rather late in judgment and of a certain simple goodness, often do not bear any fruit at Court, other than being the entertainment and the fable of the courtiers. I do not think it is expedient, commonly speaking, to send children to Court while they are still young, but it is safer to let them mature a little, so that they may be better founded in the fear of God, so that they may perfect their studies, and so that they may be less exposed to the many dangers of a more tender age, I do not deny, however, that this rule may have some limitations, since

perhaps there are some princes who teach these young plants, I mean noble children, taking great care of them, and governing them, and trying to lead them to maturity in every way of virtue, Thus we read in the Holy Scriptures that King Nebuchadnezzar commanded that a choice be made of several children of the royal seed, and of the nobility of Israel, who would be without blemish, of beautiful appearance, and well trained and educated, so that they might be worthy to be in the King's palace, ordering that they be taught the language and the Chaldean disciplines, making them nobly raised, and providing them with the necessary things so that after three years, they could stay before the King, among whom was the great Daniel, and the three much celebrated children of the fiery furnace. And certainly nothing is more worthy of a great prince than to raise men and to be the father of many noble minds, to the glory of God and public benefit. Let the father dispose his sons in that way of studies, either chivalrous or clerical, which are in conformity with the Courts where he wants to send them, so that if, for example, in the Court of a King, the young man will acquire, as is probable, greater perfection, in the things that are appropriate to a noble Knight, than in his father's House, nevertheless the fact of showing the seed of valour, and of having some excellent qualities and conditions, will make him amiable, and will pave the way for him to more easily acquire the grace of the Prince. And as far as Ecclesiastics are concerned, it is useful for those who wish to pursue the profession of letters, the understanding of the Sacred Canons, and of Theology, and for others who wish to be secretaries, it is a great help to have, as they say, a good hand in writing, and it is much more useful to know how to explain concepts in Latin, and in the vernacular, and to have knowledge of history, especially of those closest to our times, and of the governments of the republics in order to be able to enter into important negotiations and affairs,

under the guidance and discipline of a practical and experienced man.

Chapter 86

AS BY THE GRACE OF EARTHLY PRINCES, ONE MUST NEVER OFFEND GOD.

And because the sum of all things consists in pleasing God above all, and saving his own soul, he must warn the father not to be the author of his son's damnation and of his own damnation, so that he does not send him to a place where candour and integrity of faith may be in danger, and in the rest he should send him armed with the fear of God, and with holy instruction, reminding him that he should seek to gain the grace of his Prince by being faithful, and the integrity of the faith can be endangered, and in the rest he sends him armed with the fear of God, and of holy teachings, reminding him that he tries to acquire the grace of his Prince by being faithful, loving, and diligent in his service, having his hands clean of all corruption, and finally with vigilance, with hard work, and with virtue, and never to be envious of those, who by crooked ways and with offence to God come to be favoured by the Princes, and therefore to declare at an early hour that he is a Christian, and so willing to serve his earthly master, that he does not want in any way to disserve his heavenly master, to whom he first obliged his faith in holy baptism, otherwise if the temporal master orders something contrary to the eternal, then it is necessary to remember the saying of the Saviour: No one can serve two masters; now it is necessary to recall the saying of the holy Apostles when they were commanded by the Jewish magistrates not to preach the name of Christ, to whom they replied: God must be obeyed more than men; Now it is time to imitate the ancient martyrs, who served the pagan kings with great fidelity, while the honor of God and their own health were not offended, but when others urged them to

rebel against God and to contravene his law, they no longer recognized them as lords or benefactors, but despised favors, stripped themselves of their dignity, trampled on riches, and if it was necessary, generously shed their blood and their lives for the glory of God.

Chapter 87

OF THE ELECTION OF THE MATRIMONIAL STATE.

We have reserved in the last place the reasoning of the matrimonial state, as that which is principal in this matter, where it is treated of raising children in a Christian way, so that the same children who then become fathers and mothers of the family raise their children with the same discipline, and education, and so it goes by divine grace from generation to generation. Now the greater part of what could be desired in this place has already been said in the beginning of the book, since the nature of the thing demands it, since one could not speak of raising children except with fathers, and legitimate fathers by means of holy and legitimate marriage. However, so that we do not pass over it completely in silence, it remains for us to remember something about the time of the marriage of sons and daughters with some brief considerations in this regard. And to begin with the female children, a matter which is usually considered more serious by the fathers, I am reminded of that saying of the wise man in the Ecclesiastic: *Trade filiam, et grande opus feceris, et viro sensato da illam.* That is, marry your daughter, and you will have done a great work and given her to a sensible and prudent man, from which words we can learn a great deal, before that, when the due time has come to marry the daughter, it is convenient that the good father satisfies this obligation of nature, and does not withhold, or for avarice, or for too much tenderness, the child, or for too much tenderness the daughter to grow old in the paternal house, always understanding that of those who do not aspire to a higher vocation to consecrate themselves to the heavenly spouse and to observe perpetual virginity, of which the Apostle speaks in that place enclosed

elsewhere, he who unites in marriage his virgin daughter does well, and he who does not unite her does better. Secondly, the wise man shows us that it is not a small, but rather a serious and important matter to marry a daughter, because it frees the father from the continual solicitude of preserving the chastity of his daughter, and also because it is not easy to find a good son-in-law. In the third place, therefore, the wise man teaches us what conditions the father of a family must look for in the one whom he designs to have as a son-in-law, which he briefly encloses in one word when he says, "from a sensible man, that is, a prudent man, and a man of judgement and good life and morals, whom many do not care to remember, and go after nobility, and riches, and those goods, which are not only of the body, but also outside of us, and which are not only of the mind, but also of the body. or are outside of us, having little regard for the true and essential goods of the soul.

Chapter 88

OF THE TIME TO JOIN IN MARRIAGE THE SONS, AND THE DAUGHTERS.

But in order to discuss more particularly the age at which it is appropriate to marry sons and daughters, the philosophers of the world have dealt with this subject, and their considerations are not entirely to be despised in this part. First of all, therefore, they consider the marriage of too young spouses, as being inimical to the good procreation of children insofar as the form and strength of the body is concerned, which is also detrimental to the soul, of which the body is an instrument, since it is seen that the parts of young animals are imperfect and small, and mostly give birth to females, Therefore, it is not to be doubted that the same thing also happens to men, and experience shows that the children of too tender fathers and mothers are weak like unripe fruit, and are produced almost by force, just as ill-disposed fathers and mothers give birth to sickly children, because childbirth takes its quality from the parents. It should be added that spinsters feel more pain in giving birth, and sometimes they die, and some naturally speaking have also taken this into consideration, that is, that it is useful for continence to marry their daughters a little later, affirming that those who marry too early are less temperate, but there is no doubt that the bodies of young husbands suffer, and their vigor and growth are prevented. There is also another difficulty which is not light, that the children of an immature father, and of too tender an age, grow up almost the same, and have more readily the image of brothers, and of peers than of sons, which takes away much of the respect and the paternal reverence, and of paternal reverence, and they observe less the filial veracity and

subjection, from which many inconveniences then originate, and about the education and about the government and the family regiment, the son being so suitable, and capable of governing as the same father; but on the contrary, the children who are born of fathers who are too old, and for too long an interval they stray from the paternal age, often remain pupils, and do not have from their fathers those aids, which were necessary to be well brought up, nor can they at the same time render to their fathers, the honour, and the gratitude, which with every offence of gratitude they are bound to render. Likewise it seems to be considered that there should not be a great disproportion and disparity of age between man and woman, as, for example, if the woman advances too far in age of the man, she will be old by the time the man is in the vigor and consistency of his age, which can only be an occasion to alienate the souls and diminish love; Therefore the same philosophers, descending more to the detail, have said some of them that the age suitable to accompany in marriage as to the woman is the eighth year, and as to the man the thirty-seventh year, placing an interval of about twenty years between the man and the woman, others have placed the age of marrying the woman in the twentieth year and of the man in the thirtieth, placing only ten years of difference between both. Now these things cannot be defined in detail, but it is good to have some regard for these respects, which are founded on probable reasons, insofar as they do not impede greater good, so that in his confessions Saint Augustine complains that, since he had already fallen into the abyss of lust in his adolescence, his parents had not taken care and provided for him with the remedy of marriage, and St. John Chrysostom is of the same opinion that children must marry very early, to escape the grave danger of incontinence, therefore it is appropriate that the shrewd father should consider many things, and if either because of the complexity of the child or because of another accident he

sees an expedient, prevent the wiles of Satan, and give a wife to his son, as the Apostle Paul, condescending to human frailty, allows him to say: Quod si non se continent, nubant, that is, if they cannot contain themselves, let them be joined in matrimony, where he does not speak of sacred virgins, nor of those who have a vow and obligation of continence, but of those who are totally free, and can also choose one state or the other. But I would like to hope that our children of the family, brought up in a Christian way, fleeing idleness, and occupying themselves usefully and observing the memories given above, will wait with chastity for the due time of marriage, so that with reason they too may be called fathers of the family, and will not run like brute animals, but like reasonable men and much more like Christians to the venerable sacrament of holy matrimony.

Chapter 89

OF SOME PATERNAL OFFITII ABOUT THE MATRIMONIAL STATE OF THE CHILDREN.

As far as conjugal offences are concerned, and the love and charity that must exist between two spouses, and many other things pertaining to domestic peace and quiet, this has already been said elsewhere to suffice, and the good father of a family must give special reminders of this to his sons and daughters, in addition to what he has taught them by his own example, and above all he must admonish them, that they know how to bear the imperfections of their dear company with patience and Christian charity, for we all have our beam, and there is nothing more necessary for us to live together peacefully, than to have continually in mind that precept of St. Paul, *Alter alterius onera portate, et sic adimplebitis legem Christi*, that is, bear the burdens, which means as much as you bear each other's faults, and so you will fulfill the law of the Lord, which is enclosed all in one commandment which is to love one another in charity.

For the rest, let the father of a family remember that the wife of his son is a much more important business than buying a house, or a farm, or anything of this kind, in which, however, buyers are usually very diligent, so much the more so in a deliberation in which so much of human happiness consists, if any happiness is to be found in this valley of tears, that is, of a good wife, who has to be of such help and uplift to her husband, both in family, earthly and spiritual matters, to live both in a Christian way, passing the marital yoke in holy works, until they reach eternal glory by divine grace. In a good wife also consists a large part of the good education of the children and the succession of posterity, and the

maintenance of the families, and a thousand other goods that would take a long time to say. Therefore, as has been recalled elsewhere, the wise father should not keep his eye principally on possessions, and on such things which, for a brief pleasure, give rise to infinite sorrow, but he should look to goodness, virtue, the equality of the state of both, the conformity of morals, and to such respect, which like strong and tenacious bonds, especially with the efficacy of the sacrament, bind the souls with perpetual love; for if it is right that the son should obey his father, and remain content with what the father determines about his wife and consort, since he must be very certain that with the greatest love and providence he procures his good, it will nevertheless be praiseworthy that the father should communicate with his son in the right way, all the more so since he is discreet, and judicious, so that with his greater satisfaction, and approval, that negotiation which is so important to him may be concluded, which likewise is understood by the mother of the family, who is just, and reasonable that for the conservation of the common peace, and for all respect, she should be a participant in so important a deliberation.

Chapter 90

HOW FAR THE PATERNAL CARE OF EDUCATION EXTENDS.

Perhaps some may ask how long it is appropriate for the father to take care of his children and when this solicitude should end, to which question, answering it, I say that we have taken this name of education widely, not only because it shows us that discipline extends to childhood and not much further, in which meaning it seems that the Latins use it, but under this heading we have understood every care, and diligence, which extends to childhood and childhood and not much further, in which meaning it seems that the Latins use it, but under this voice we have understood every care and paternal diligence, which in any way is ordered to the health and good of the child. Therefore, since the most remote and distant term of education only reaches the twenty-fifth year, at which time, according to the provisions of the Civil Laws, the authority of those who are called "curators" is determined, there is no prefixed term in which the father is not allowed, or rather is not obliged to use the power that God, nature and human laws have given him for the benefit of his son. Well it is true that, being useful in all things, that proverb of the ancient Greeks, Beware of too much, it is fitting that the prudent father should remit some of that vigour, and moderate his authority a little, not by diminishing it in effect, but by making his son share in it, recognising in him the maturity of his years, and intellect, and that prudence which through the study of literature, or by some other means, he will have acquired. So I believe that it would be expedient for the father not only to communicate many things with his son and to hear his opinion, but also in the government not to hold the reins completely in his hands, but to leave many things to his son,

reserving for himself the most important things, and at the right time and place, taking from his son a report of what is happening, so that the old father would relieve himself of many labours, give his son the opportunity to practise governing, and keep him more comforted, having that part of honour that is appropriate, with which many disgusts and complaints can be avoided. But whether it would be useful for his son, already a man and married, to set up home on his own, and to become head of the family, since this is a matter which seems to exceed our treatise, and which cannot be regulated in a certain way, since the decision depends on many particular circumstances, I shall not linger any longer, since it is time to put an end to it, so much so that I say, that in every place and in every state, our good son must be educated in a Christian manner, preserve the due obedience and reverence towards his dear father, as we read in the sacred scriptures that the good Isaac did towards Abraham his father, and towards Isaac Jacob, and towards him his sons and especially towards the beloved Josep, although he not only had sons but was already old, and with such a rank and preeminence in the empire of Egypt that he held the second place after Pharaoh.

Chapter 91

CONCLUSION OF THE WORK ET RENDIMENTO DI GRATIE À DIO. AND ULTIMATE.

We have arrived by divine grace, honorable fathers of families, I have come to the end of this perhaps too long-winded work of mine, or discourse, that it may be, and it goes likewise to the desired end of your virtuous, and Christian education of your children, we have reasoned as you must remember, from the beginning, of the things which preceded education, and then of the education itself, but in the first place, it was said of the excellence, and sanctity, of the matrimonial state, and of good, and truly Christian marriages, from which legitimate children are acquired; It was also said of the dispositions closest to education, that is, of the good form and habit of the body, and it was shown that it is necessary to begin at an early hour to bring up children well, as the basis and foundation of all this construction subsequently, because our end is God, and the eternal glory, which consists in seeing and enjoying the same God, to which end we come by the observance of the divine precepts, and this has to be the rule and norm of all our actions, therefore it was taken to show briefly almost a sum of Christian doctrine, treating however the subjects more practically, than speculatively and continually extracting Christian recollections proportionate, and suited to our purpose. Lately, proceeding from age to age, and discussing the various states of a praiseworthy and Christian life, we have tried to make our son of such a family, that we can already promise ourselves of him, and hope that with the help of the Lord he will be a useful Citizen of his earthly homeland, and finally he will be admitted to the consortium of Citizens of the heavenly homeland, to which we are

already written, and we are seeking him through this pilgrimage, full of hardships and dangers, until we reach eternal tranquility and rest. Therefore it is right that, both from you and from me, many thanks should be given to the Father of lights, from whom every gift and every good descends, and for this reason, both for me and for you I shall say this way: I bless you, and thank you my Lord God, that you have brought me this far, so that at least in some part, I may have been able to obey the desire of that beloved servant of yours, to whom it pleased you to inspire me, to command me to take on this burden far greater than my strength, I know that because of my ignorance, and because of the lesser diligence of what the matter requires, the learned and judicious men will find much more than to take up in this book, after whom I cannot, nor must I excuse myself, their humanity will excuse me a great deal from human errors. But if by chance, if you most blessed God should inadvertently, or ignorantly, want me to have written anything, which does not conform entirely to the doctrine and determination, and with the sense, and consent of your holy Church, of this I ask your humble pardon, protesting to the feet of your mercy, that this has happened outside my intention, as you my God, scrutinizer of hearts, and more intimate, and more present to me, than I myself am, you know and see; I am by your grace a Christian, I am though most unworthy, a priest, I was born, and reared by the breasts of my mother, until this time, which is the end of the 41st year of my age, in your Roman Catholic, and Apostolic Church to which today presides your Vicar and successor of your blessed Apostle Peter, Gregory the Third, Supreme Pontiff and our Lord and in this Church outside of which there is no health, I intend by your divine grace to live and die. But on behalf of my good fathers of the family and your servants, I thank you, my Lord God, that you have given and granted them children, but what is more important, good children, inspiring in the hearts of the fathers to take care to

bring up their children well and in a Christian way as they are obliged to do, and to the children to obey the exhortations and the good paternal discipline; may it please you, Lord, from time to time, to impress deeply on the hearts of all fathers who are to be, the great obligation they have to return to you the children you give them, so that after caring for their own souls, they may have no greater concern than for the souls of their children, raising them well, and in a Christian manner for you, our Lord and Father, in whom all other private and public goods are enclosed, neither outside of you, nor without you, can there be any good, for you are all good, the triune God and one, to whom be honor, glory, and thanksgiving for ever and ever. Amen.

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