

One my-  
sterie well  
considered  
and medi-  
tated vpon,  
profiteth  
more, than  
manie  
fleightlie  
passed ouer  
in haste.

shall require. For certainlie there is more profit taken by one misterie or point well thought vpon, and dewly considered: than by many that are sleightlie passed ouer in haste. Howbeit I thought good, to note diuerse and fundrie pointes, to the intent that amonge so great varietie of considerations, euerie one might make his choise of such thinges, as might best serue his deuotion.



HERE FOLLOWE  
THE FIRST SEVEN  
MEDITATIONS FOR  
*the seven daies of the weeke,  
in the morninges.*

MONDAIE MORNINGE.

**T**HIS daie, when thou hast made the signe of the crosse, with suche preparation as shall hereafter be declared in the fourthe chapter, thou hast to meditate vpon our Sauour Christes washinge of his Apostles feete: and vpon the institution of the most blessed Sacrament of the Aultar.

The

THE TEXT OF  
THE HOLIE EVAN-  
GELISTES.



**W**HEN the hower of supper was come, our sauour Christe sat downe at the table, and his twelue Apostles with him. And he said vnto them. I haue had a great desire to eate this Passeeouer with you before my passion. And as they were eating, he said: Verely I saie vnto you, that one of you shall betraie me. And they were exciedinge sorowfull, & beganne euerie one of them to saie vnto him. Is it I, Lorde? And he answered, and said. He that dipeth his hand with me in the dishe, he shal betraie me. The sonne of man goeth his waie, as it is written of him. But wo be to that man, by whom the sonne of mā is betraied. It had bene good for that man, if

Mat. 26.  
Marc. 14  
Luc. 22.  
Ioan. 13.



## MEDITATION FOR

he had neuer bene borne. Then Iudas that betraied him, answered, & said: Is it I, master? And he said vnto him: Thou hast said.

Ioan. 13.

When supper was done, he arose vp from the table, and put of his garmentes: and takinge a towell, he girded him selfe with it. After that, he powred water into a basyne, and beganne to washe his disciples feet, and to wpe them with the towell, wherewith he was girded. Then he came to Simon Peter. Who said to him: Lord, dost thou washe my feete? Iesus answered, and said vnto him: What I doe, thou knowest not now: but thou shalt knowe it hereafter. Peter said vnto him. Thou shalt neuer washe my feete. Iesus answered him. If I washe thee not, thou shalt haue no part with me. Simon Peter said vnto him. Lord, not onely my feete, but my handes, and head also. Iesus said vnto him. He that is washed, needeth not to washe sauinge onely his feete: but

he is

## MONDAIE MORNINGE.

he is cleane eueriewhit. And ye are cleane, but not all. For he knewe who should betraie him. And therefore he said: ye are not all cleane. So after he had washed there feete, and had taken his garmentes, and was set downe againe, he said vnto them. Knowe ye, what I haue done to you? ye call me master, and Lord. And ye saie well. For so I am indeede. If I then being your Lord, and master, haue washed your feete, ye ought also to washe one an others feete. For I haue geuen you an example, that ye should do, euen as I haue done to you.

After our Sauour had thus washed there feete, he tooke bread, and when he had blessed, he brake, and gaue to his disciples, sainge. Take, and eate: this is my bodie. He toke the Cuppe likewise, and when he had blessed it, he gaue it them, sainge: Drinke ye all of this. For this is my bloud of the newe testamēt, which shalbe shed for manie



for the remission of sinnes. So often as ye shall do this thinge, do it in remembrance of me.



# MEDITATIONS VPON THESE POINTES OF THE TEXT.



CONTEMPLATE nowe (O my fowle) in this supper vpon thy sweete and mylde Iesus: And beholde this wonderfull example of inestimable humilitie, which he here sheweth vnto thee, in rysinge from the table, & washing his disciples feete? O good Iesus, what is this that thou doest? O sweete Iesus, what meaneth this so greate abasinge of thy diuine maiestie? O my fowle, what wouldest thou haue thought, if thou haddest bene there presente, and haddest seene euen almightie God himselte, kneelinge before the feete of men, yea before the feete of Iudas? O Cruell Iudas, why doth not this so greate humilitie mollifie thy stonie hart? How is it, that it causeth not euen thy

verie

verie bowells to burst, and ryue in sunder, considering this so great and wonderfull meekenes? Is it possible thou traytor, that thou hast conspired to betraye this most meeke, and gentle lambe? Is it possible that thou shouldest not feele some remorse of conscience, in beholdinge this example? O ye whyte & bewtifull handes, how cowld ye vouchsafe to towche such lothsome, and abhominable feete? O most pure and cleane handes, why disdayned ye not, to washe those verie feete, that were all to be durted in fowle waies, whiles they trauayled to shead your bloude? Beholde here o ye blessed spirites, what your creator doth? Come ye, and beholde euen from the heauens, & ye shall see euen the almightie him selte kneelinge before the feete of men, and tell me, if euer he vsed the like kynde of courtesie with you? O Lord, I haue harde thy wordes, and I was afraide: I haue considered thy workes, and was wholie amased. O ye blessed Apostles, why quake and tremble ye not, at the wonderfull sight of this so great humilitie? Peter what doest thou? What? Wilt thou condescende, that this Lorde of maiestie shall washe thy feete?

Saint Peter when he behelde our sauour kneelinge before him, wodered exceydingly, yea he was altogether astonied thereat, and beganne to saie in this wise? What meaneth this O Lord! What? wilt thou washe my feet. Art not thou the sone of the

*Abat. 3.*



liuinge God: Art not thou the creator of the worlde? the bewtie of the heauens? the paradice of the angells? the redeemer of men? the brightnes of the glorie of the father? the fountaine of the wisdom of God, which dwellest in the highest? And wilt thou (all this notwithstanding) washe my feete? What? wilt thou (being a Lord of so greate maiestie, and glorie, take such a vile and base office vpon thee? Wilt thou (I saie) thus abase thy selfe, that hast laid the foundation of the earthe, & bewtified the same with so manie wonders, that hast enclosed the wyde worlde within thy hand, that mouest the heauens, rulest the earthe, deuilest the waters, ordeineest the tymes, disposest the causes, bewtifiest the angells, directest men, & gouerneest all thinges with thy wisdom, Is it seemelie that thou shouldest washe my feete? Myne I saie, who am but a mortal man, a litle clodd of earthe, & ashes, a vessel of corruption, a creature ful freight with vanitie, and ignorance, full of infinite miseries, and (which exceedeth all miserie) full of sinnes, and yet all this notwithstanding, wilt thou o Lorde washe my feete? What? wilt thou beinge the Lord of all thinges, abase thy selfe vnder me, that am inferiour to them all? Verelie the highnes of thy maiestie, and the profunditie of my miseries, do as it were enforce me, that I can not cōsent to such a deede. Leane therefore o my Lord: (I praie thee) this base office

for

for thy seruantes: laie downe the towell, and put on thy apparell againe, and sit in thy seate, and washe not my feete. Beware, that the heauens be not ashamed of it, when they shal see how by this ceremonie, thou doest set them benethe the earthe. For by doing this seruyle office, those verie handes into whose power the father hath committed the heauens, and all other thinges, should be abased vnder the feete of men. Take heede that al naturall creatures be not verie much griued, or rather in great disdaine, to see them selues thus subiected vnder anie other feete, than thyne. Take hede also least the dawghter of kinge Sawle despise thee not, whe she shal see thee girded abowt with this towell, after the maner of a seruant, and saie, that she will not take him for her spowse, and much lesse for her God, whom she seeth to attende vpon so base, and vile an office.

Such wordes, or the like spake Saint Peter, as a man that had not as yet anie tast or feelinge of thinges appertaininge vnto almightie God: & as one that vnderstode not what great glorie laie hidde in this worke, which shewed to the cie so base, and vyle. But our sauour who knewe it right well, and was withall desirous to leane vnto vs for a memorie at that tyme, such a wonderfull example of humilitie, satisfied the simplicitie of his discipule, and went forward afterwarde in the good worcke

2. Reg. 6.



## MEDITATION FOR

*The greates  
carefulness  
of our Sa-  
uiour to  
make vs  
humble.*

*A com-  
meditation  
of the ver-  
tue of hu-  
militie.*

*Luc. 1.*

he had begonne. Here we haue to note with all diligence, what a great and earnest care our sauiour had to make vs humble, in that beinge now at the gate, and entrie into his most grieuous, and bitter passion, wherein he knewe he should geue vs such great and wonderfull examples of humilitie, as might suffice to astonishe both heauen, and earth, he thought al that not enowgh, but would furthermore adde this notable example also besides all the rest, whereby this vertue of humilitie might the better be commended vnto vs. O wonderfull vertue! how great must thy riches be, seinge thou art thus commended to vs! How can thy treasures be but notoriousslie known, seinge thou art by so manie waies set out vnto vs! O humilitie, that art preached, and tawght in all the whole life of our Sauiour Christ, songe, and praised by the mouth of his owne most blessed mother! O most bewtifull flower emonge vertues! O diuine adamant, that drawest vnto thee euen the creator of all thinges! Whosoeuer he be that bannisheth thee awaie, shalbe bannished away from almightie God; yea though he be in the highest place of heauen: And whosoeuer he be, that embraseth thee, shalbe embrased of almightie God, yea althowgh he be euen the greatest sinner in the world. Great are thy graces, and marueilous are thy effectes. Thou pleasest men: thou contentest

the

## MONDAIE MORNINGE.

the angelles: thou confoundest the dielles, & byndest the handes of the creator. Thou art the foundation of vertues, the deathe of vices, the glasse of virgins, and the habitation of the most blessed trinitie. Who so gathereth without thee, disparseth: who so buildeth, and not vpon thee, pulleth downe: And who so heapeth vertues together without thee, the dust carieth them quite awaie before the face of the wynde. Without thee the virgin is shut out of the gates of heauen, and with thee euen the publike sinner is receyued at the feete of Christ. Embrace this vertue of humilitie, O ye virgins, that hereby your virginie maie be avaleable vnto you. Ye that be religious persons, see that you seeke earnestlie also for this vertue, for without it your religion is but vaine, and to no purpose. And ye of the laietie, seeke no lesse for this vertue, than the religious doe, that by the same ye maie be deliuered from the snares of this sinfull worlde.

This beinge done, consider also how after our sauiour had wasshed their feete, he wypped them cleane with that sacred towell wherewith he was girded: And lyft vp the eies of thy soule somewhat higher, & there shalt thou see represented the misterie of our redemption. Consider how that faier towel receyued into it all the fylthe, and vncleanes of those feet, which were altogether verie foule and filthie. And as the secte

*Math. 25.*

*Luc. 7.*

*Of the wy-  
pinge of  
the Apo-  
stles feete  
with the  
towell.*

*The miste-  
rie of our  
redemption*



*shinge &  
wiping of  
the apost-  
les feete.*

*Cantic. 5.*

*Esaie. 63.*

were made cleane, and faire, so the towell contrariwise (after he had wyped their feete with it) was wholie bespotted, and defyled. Now what is more filthie, than a man conceaued in synne? And what is more cleane, and bewtiful, than our Sauour Christ conceiued of the holie Choste. My welbeloued is whyte, and well coulored (*saieth the spouse,*) and chosen out emonge thowsandes. This most sweete, and louinge Lord then, that was so faier, and so cleane, was content to receaue into him selfe all the spotted & filthynes of our soules, to witt, the paines which our synnes deserued: and that he might leane our soules cleane and free from them, he himselfe remained (as yee see him vpon the crosse,) all bespotted and defyled with the same. Infomuch that the verie angells were as it were astonied (and fuerlie not without good cause) to see their Lord, and creator, so beraied with this so strange fowlenes. And therefore they demanded by the prophet Esaie, sainge, *wherefore dost thou (ô Lord) weare garments dyed with the colour of bloud, all bespotted, and beraied like vnto them, that stampe grapes in the winepresse?* Now if this bloude, and these fowle spotted be of others, (to witt, of our synnes,) tell me o kinge of glorie, were it not more meet that men the selues should suffer thou ô most innocent Lorde, shouldest be thus defyled, and tormented for there sakes?

had

Had it not bene more decent that this filthines should haue remained vpon his owne donghill, and not vpon thee, the mirror of all bewtie? What a wonderfull pietie, and compassion was it, that moued thee to haue such a feruent desyre of the cleannes of my soule, that thou wouldest with so great charge, and losse of thyne owne bewtie, bestowe it vpon me? What man aliue would take a fyne towell wrought with golde, and wype therewith a fowle stutthe dishe, especiallie such a dish, as were greatlie broken, and rente in manie places? Blessed art thou (ô my most mercifull, and louinge Lord.) All the angells praise thee (ô God) for euermore. For that it hath pleased thee to become as it were an outcast of the worlde, takinge vpon thee all oure filthines, and miseries, (which are the paines dew vnto vs for our sinnes,) to deliuer vs quite, and make vs free from them.

After this, consider those wordes, where-with our sauour made an ende of this historie: sainge: *I haue geuen you an example, that ye shoulde doe, euen as I haue done to you.* Which wordes are to be referred not onely to this matter, & exaple of humilitie, but euen also to all the other workes, and life of our sauour Christ. For so much as his whole life is a most perfer pattern of all vertues, especiallie of that vertue which in this place is represented vnto vs, to witt of, humilitie, as the blessed martir Saint Ciprian declareth



*S. Cyprian.  
The life of  
Christe is  
a most  
perfect  
pat-  
terne of  
all vertues,  
and espe-  
ciallie of  
humilitie.*

more at large in these wordes. It was cheif-  
lie (saith he) a worke of great patience,  
and humilitie, that so high and excellent a  
maiestie would vouchsafe to come downe  
from heauen vnto the earth, and clothe  
himselfe with our claie: and that he would  
dissemble the glorie of his immortalitie,  
and become mortall, to the end, that being  
him selfe innocent, and faultles, he might  
be punished for such as were gilty. The  
Lord would be baptised of his seruante: He  
that came to pardon sinnes, would be waf-  
shed with the water of sinners: He that fee-  
deth all creatures, fasted fourtie daies in  
the wildernes, and in the end suffered hon-  
ger: which he did to this end, that all such  
as had a hongrie appetite after gods  
worde, and longed after his grace, might  
be satisfied and furnished with the same.  
He fowght with the diuell that tempted  
him, and contentinge him selfe with the  
victorie, offered his enemy no further har-  
me, but by worde onelie. His disciples he ne-  
uer despised, as a Lord doth his seruantes:  
but entertained them with great charitie,  
and beneuolence: yea he vsed them louingly  
as brethern. Neither is it to be meruayled  
at, that he thus behaued him selfe towards  
his disciples, being as they were obedient:  
seinge he could suffer that arrant traitor  
Iudas so patientlie, and beare with him euen  
vntil the end, and suffer him beinge his  
ennemie to eate together with him at his

owne

owne table, and knowinge full well where-  
abowte he went, would neuer discover  
him, but was content to receyue a kisse of  
him, euen of him (I saie) that had solde  
him with such a traiterous peace.

Moreouer, with what great patience did  
he beare with the Iewes vntill that present  
howre? How painfully did he labour to  
moue those vnbeleuinge hartes with his  
preachinge, to embrace the faith? What  
great trauaile tooke he to allure those  
vngratefull men vnto him with good  
workes? How meekly answered he to such  
as contraried him in his speech? With what  
clemencie bare he with the prowde? With  
what a wonderfull humilitie yeelded he to  
the furious rage of his enemies, and per-  
secutors? How traueiled he euen vntill the  
verie howre of his most bitter passion to  
recouer them, that had bene the murderers  
of the Prophetes, & haynous rebelles against  
almighty God. In like maner at the verie  
howre of his passion (before they came to  
the sheedinge of his most pretious blood, &  
to put him to a most cruel death,) how great  
were the opprobrious iniuries they offered  
vnto him? How patientlie gaue he them the  
hearing thereof? How great were the moc-  
kes and tauntes he suffered? How patientlie  
did he beare the vile spittinge of those in-  
fernall mouthes, that had him selfe not long  
before with the spittell of his owne mouth  
restored a blynd man to his perfit sight?

How



How suffered he their whippings, whose seruantes are wont in his name with mightie power to whippe the verie diuelles? How was he crowned with thornes, that crowneth his martirs with euerlastinge garlandes? How was he smitten on the face with the palmes of mens handes, that geueth the palme of victorie vnto such as be conquerors? How was he spoyled of his earthlie garmentes, that apparelleth the Sainctes with the garmentes of immortallitie? How was he profered most bitter gaule, that geueth vs the bread of heauen? How was he offered vynesger to drinke, that geueth vs the cuppe of saluation? He that was so innocent, he that was so iust, or rather verie innocencie, and iustice it selfe, was accompted emonge theeues: the euerlasting truth was accused with false witness: the iudge of the whole worlde was condemned by wicked men: & the worde of god receaued the sentence of death with silence? Consider moreouer, at what tyme the Sauour of the worlde was nailed vpon the crosse, & at the verie houre of his death, when the sterres were obscured, the elemētes troubled, when the earth quaked, when the light was darkened, when the sonne tourned awaie his eies, and would not suffer his beames to shyne vpon the earth, least happellie it might see such a great crueltie: Consider (I saie) how euen at this time our Sauour did not so much as once open his mouthe, or moue

him

him selfe: howe he would not at the verie last howre, and point of death, discover the glorie of his maiestie, but suffered continually that extreme, and violent conflict, euen vntill the ende, intendinge thereby to leaue vnto vs an example of perfect patience.

Yea, moreouer and all this, if those cruell blouddie ministers, that crucified, and tormented his most blessed bodie, would haue conuerted, and bene penitēte, he was readie to receaue them to his grace, and fauour, euen at the verie last instant: neither would he haue shut vp the gates of his Church fro anie man. Now therefore, what thinge in the worlde can possiblie be of greater benignitie, and patience, than the bloude of Christ, that giueth the life, euen vnto them, that shed the same bloude: But such, & so great is the patience of our sweete Sauour Christ, which if it had not bene such, and of so great power, the Church had not had Saint Pawle in it at this daie. Hetherto be the wordes of Saint Cyprian.

OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT OF THE  
*Aaltar. And of the causes wherefore it was instituted.*

K





NE of the principall causes of the comminge of our Sauiour into this worlde, was to enkindle the hartes of men in the loue of almightie God.

For so said he by saint Luke:

*Lut. 12.*

*I am come to put fier in the earth, and what would I els, but that it should burne?* This fier did our sauiour put in the earthe, when he bestowed vpon men such, and so manie wonderfull benefittes, when he wrought so great workes of loue emonge them, whereby be might steyle awaie there hartes from them, and whollie inflame them in this fier of loue. Now albeit that all the workes of his most holie life doe serue to this end: yet of al other, those doe most effectually serue for this purpose, whiche he did in the end of his life: According as Saint Iohn the Euāgelist signefieth, sainge.

*Iean. 13.*

*His fryndes that he had in the world, he loued them espetially in the end.* For at that time he bestowed greater benefittes vpon them, and discouered vnto them greatest pledges & tokens of his loue. Emōge which singular pledges, one of the most principal was the institution of the most blessed Sacrament of the Aaltar: the which thinge shall appeare verie plainlie vnto him, that will consider with good attention the causes of the institution of the same. But in this behalfe, I beseech thee (o most

mercifull

mercifull Lord) that thou wilt vouchsafe to open our eies, and graunt vs light, that we maie see what causes they were, that moued thy louinge hart to institute for vs this so wonderfull a Sacrament, and to leaue it vnto vs.

Now that we maye vnderstande somewhat of this diuine misterie, it is to be presupposed (good Christian reader) that no tounge created is able to expresse the passinge great loue, that our sauiour Christ beareth towards the Catholike Church his spowse, and consequently vnto euerie soule, that is in the state of grace: Forso-much as euerie such soule is also his spouse. For this cause, one of the thinges that the Apostel Saint Paule requested, and desired, was that almightie god would reueale vnto vs the greatnes of his loue: which vndowtedlye is so great, that it farre passeth all the wisdome, and knowledge created: yea though it were euen that wonderfull knowledge of the angelles.

Wherefore this our most sweete Bridegrome, when he minded to depart out of this life, & to absent him selfe frō the Catholike Church his deere spouse: (to the intent, that this his absence might not be anie occasion vnto her to forget him) he left vnto her for a remembrāce, this most blessed Sacrament, wherein he himselfe would remaine. For he could not beare, that betwene

K 2

*The passinge great loue Christ beareth towards his Catholike Church, & to euerie soule that is in the state of grace. Ephes. 3.*

*The causes of the institution of this most holie Sacramente. The first cause.*



him and her there should be anie lesse pledge to prouoke her to be myndefull of him, then euen himselfe. And therefore he pronouiced at that time those sweete wordes. *So often as ye shall doe this thinge, doe it in the remembrance of me: that is, doe it, that ye maie be alwaies mindfull, how much I am willinge to doe for you, and how much I goe now to doe, and suffer for your saluation.*

Luc 22:  
1. Cor. 11.

The secō-  
de cause.

Moreouer, this most sweete and louing bridegrome intended in this his longe absence, to leaue some cōpanie to his spouse, that she might not remayne solitarie, and comfortles. And therefore he left her the companie of this most holie Sacrament, where euen the bridegrome himselfe is reallie present, which is in verie deede the best, and most delitefull companie, that he could possiblie leaue her.

The  
thirde  
cause.

At that time also, our sauour would goe to suffer death for his spouse, & to redeeme and enriche her with the price of his owne most precious bloude: and to the intent that she might whensoever she would enioye this most pretious, and diuine treasure, he left her the keys thereof in this most blessed Sacramēt. For as Saint Chrysostome saith. *So often as we come to receaue this most blessed Sacrament, we must make account, that we come to laie our mowthes to Christes verie side, to drinke of his most pretious bloude, & to be partakers of this soueraigne, & diuine misterie.*

S. Chrys.

Consider

Consider therefore in what a dāgerous case those men are, that for a litle slouthfulnes doe absteine to come vnto this royall ban-ker, and to enioye such a great, and most inestimable diuine treasure. These be those vnfortunate slouggardes, of whō the wise man speaketh. *sainge. The slouggarde hideth his hand in his bosome, and suffereth him selfe rather to die for hunger, than he will lift it vp to his mowthe.* Now what greater slouthfulnes can there be imagined in a man, than this is, that because he will not abide to take so littell labour, as he should bestowe in preparinge him selfe for the receauinge of this most holie Sacrament, he will rather want the benefit of so great, and inestimable diuine treasure, which is of greater valewe, than all that euer almightie God hath created.

Prouer. 19

This heauenlie bridegrome desired also to be loued of his spouse with a passinge great loue, and therefore he ordeined this diuine mysticall morsell, consecrated with such wordes, that whosoever receaueth it worthelie, is forthwith towched, and stricken with this loue. O wonderfull misterie, worthie to be engraueu euen in the innermost parte of our hartes! Tell me (o thou vngratefull man) if a prince should beare such a great affection and loue towards a seelie wenche, that were his bondslaue, that he could finde in his hart to take her for his spouse, and make her quene, and ladie, of a'l he is Lord of, how great would

The  
fowerthe  
cause.



we saie, that the loue of that prince had bene, that would doe such a deede? And if peradventure after the mariage solemnized, this slaue should shewe her selfe coldlie affected towards the prince her husbande, and he vnderstandinge the same, woulde as a man forlorne, goe to seeke with all diligence for some pretious morsell, and geue it her to eate, whereby to winne her loue vnto him, how passinge great would we saie that the loue of that prince were, that should be thus affected towards her? Now therefore (O kinge of glorie) what meaneth this, that thou (for the entier loue thou bearest vnto me) hast vouchesafed not onely to take my soule to be thy spouse, (beinge as she was the verie bonde-slaue of thine ennemie the deuill,) but seinge her also, all this notwithstandinge verie coldlie affected towards thee, hast ordeined for her this mysticall and diuine morsell, which thou hast transformed with such wordes, that it hath vertu in it, to transforme such soules into thee, as shall feede thereon, and make the to burne with liuelie flames of loue? There is no one thinge that declareth the affection of loue more euidentlie, than when a man hath a desire to be beloued. Considering therefore that thou hast bene so greatlie desirous of our loue, that thou hast sowght it with such strange inuentions, who shall fro henceforth stand in dowte of thy loue?

Cerrayne

Cerrayne I am (O my most louinge and mercifull Lord) that if I loue thee, thou also louest me: And cerrayne I am also, that I neede not to seeke anie inuentions to allure thy hart to loue me, as thou hast sowght to allure my harte to loue thee.

That most sweet bridegrome would also be absent from his spouse, and yet because loue cannot abide to be absent from the beloued, he would depart in such wise, that he might not altogether depart from her, and he would so goe awaie, that he might also remaine with her. Wherefore consideringe that it was not expedient for our Sauour to tarrie here still, & the spouse mighte not as the goe fro hēce with him, he deuised a meane, that althowgh he wente his waie, and his spouse remained still behinde, yet should they neuer be separated, & set a sonder. For this cause therefore he instituted this diuine Sacrement, that by meanes thereof, the soules might be vnited, and incorporated spirituallie with Christ, and that with such a strōge bonde of loue, that of the two there should be made one thinge. For like as of meate, & of him that eateth the meate, there is made one same thinge: euen so likewise after a certaine maner, is there made of the soule, and of Christ: sauinge that (as S. Augustine saith) Christ is not chāged into our soules, but our soules be changed into him: not by nature, but by loue, conformitie, and likenes of life.

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Ioan. 14.

Moreouer, our Sauours will and pleasure was to assure his spouse, and to geue her a pledge of that blessed inheritace of eternall glorie, that she being fortified with the hope of this felicitie, might passe chearfullie throwghe al the trowbles, aduersities, afflictions, and persecutions of this life. For trulie there is no one thinge, that causeth vs so muche to despise all thinges, that are to be had in this life, as an assured hope of that blessednes, and felicitie, we shall enioye in the life to come. According as our Sauour signified vnto vs in those wordes, he spake to his disciples, before his passion: *If ye loued me (said he) ye would be right glad of my departure, because I goe to the father.* As though he had said, it is a great felicitie to goe to the father: For althowgh the waie to goe to him, be throwgh whippes, thornes nailes, crosses, and all other tribulations, & martirdomes of this life: Yet all that notwithstanding, it is a thinge of inestimable gaine, and comfort, to goe vnto him. Wherefore, to the intent that his spouse might haue a verie firme & assured hope of this felicitie, he left her here in pledge of this inestimable diuine treasure, which is of as great value, as all that is there hoped for: that she should not mistrust, but that almightie God will geue himselfe vnto her in glorie, where she shall liue whollie in spirit, seinge he denieth not himselfe vnto her in this vale of teares, where

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4. Reg. 2.

the liueth in fleshe.

Our Sauour purposed also at the houre of his death, to make his testament, and to leaue vnto his spouse some notable legacie, to be as a releife, and comforte for her at all times. And so he left her this most blessed Sacrament, (wherein Christe himselfe is trewlie and reallie presente,) which was the most precious, and most profitable bequest, that he could possible leaue vnto her. Elias, when he would depart awaie from the earth, left his cloke to his disciple Elizeus, as one that had none other riches, whereof to make him his heire. But our most sweete louinge Sauour, and master, when he would ascende into heauen, left here vnto vs the cloke of his sacred bodie, in this most holie Sacrament, appointing vs here to be his heires (as by the right of children) of this so great, and inestimable diuine treasure. With that mantell Elizeus passed the waters of the floude Iourdan, & was neither drowned, nor wetshod: and with the vertue, & grace of this most blessed Sacrament, the faithfull do passe the waters of the vanities, and tribulations of this life, without sinne, & without danger.

To conclude, our Sauour intended to leaue vnto our soules sufficient prouision, and foode, wherewith they might liue: forsomuch as the soule hath no lesse neede of her proper sustenance, to maintein her in the spirituall life, than the bodie hath of his

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propre foode, for mayntenance of the corporall life. If thou thinke otherwise, tell me (I praie thee,) why hath the bodie neede of his ordinarie meat euerie daie? Vndoubtedly the cause is, for that the naturall heat continuallie wasteth, and consumeth the substance of our bodies, and therefore it is nedefull, that that be restored againe with daielie sustenance, which is consumed with dailie heat. For otherwise the natural strength of man woulde verie soone be at an ende, and his powers woulde quicklie decaie. O that it pleased almightie God, that men might by this vnderstand the great necessitie they haue of this diuine Sacrament! O that they could by this conceaue the greates wisdom, and mercie of him, that hath instituted and ordeined the same for our behoufe! Is it not a thing well known, that we haue within these bowelles of oures, a certain pestilent heat, that came vnto vs by the occasiō of sinne, which consumeth all the goodnes, that is in man? This is that, which inclineth vs to the loue of the world, of our fleshe, of all vices, of all sensuall pleasures, & delites: and so by these meanes seperateth vs from almightie God, maketh vs to relente & waxe colde in the loue of him, & causeth vs to become verie dull, shouthfull, & heauie to al good workes, and verie quicke and liuelie to worke all wickednes. If than we haue this continuall waster and consumer so rooted

within

within vs, were it not good reason (trow ye) that there should be some restorative provided, to restore that alwaies againe, which is alwaies wasting, and consuming? If we haue a continuall consumer, & haue not withall a continuall repayer, what maie be loked for of vs, but a continuall decaiege, and within short time after, a most certaine & vndowted ruine? For prooffe hereof, it shall suffice to consider the course of the Christian people: by comparinge the great feruencie, and zeale in religion, of the Christians in the primitiue Church, with the littel, or rather no zeale of the Christians in our corrupt age. For in the primitiue Church, when the Christians did eate continuallie of this diuine meate, they liued therewith a verie spirituall life, and had thereby force, and strength, not onely to obserue Gods lawes, & comaundementes, but also euen to die, and suffer martirdome for Gods sake. But now alas, in this our corrupt age, the Christians for the most parte are founde to be verie weake and feable in their faythe, and verie dissolute and licentious in their liues, because they eate not of this diuine foode, and therefore in the end they perishe, and die for hunger. As the prophet signified, when he said. *Therefore was my people caried awaie into captiuetie, because they had no knowledge of God, & there nobles perished for honger, & the multitude of them died for thirst.* For this cause

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*Esa.*



therefore hath that wise phisition our Saviour Christ (who had also felt the pulses of our weakenes) ordeined this most holie & diuine Sacrament, and for this purpose hath he instituted the same in forme of meate, that the verie forme wherein he instituted it, might declare vnto vs the effect it worketh, & withall the great necessitie our soules haue of the same.

4. Regum.  
6. 29.  
Iosephus.

Consider then now, if there maie be found in the whole world, anie greater shewe of loue, than that almightie God himselfe should leaue vnto vs his owne verie fleshe, & bloude, for our susteynance, and releefe. We maie reade in manie histories, that some mothers beinge constrained with intollerable hunger, haue embrewed their handes in the fleshe & bloude of there owne littell children, to susteine the selues with feedinge vpon them, and that for the great desire they had to liue, they haue bereued their owne verie naturall children of there lifes, thereby to preserve their owne life. This haue we read often times. But who hath euer read, that anie mother hath fed her childe, that was readie to perish, and die for hunger, with her owne verie fleshe? or that she cut of one of her owne armes, to geue her childe to eate, and that she would be cruell vpon her selfe, to shewe her selfe pittiefull towards her childe? Certainlie there was neuer mother liuinge yet in the earthe, that euer hath done such a deede. But

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our most louinge & sweete saviour Christ, farre passing anie mother in loue, perceivinge thee to be readie to perish, and die for hunger, and seinge withall, that there was none other better meane to maintein thy life, than to geue thee his owne verie fleshe to eate, commeth downe from heauen, and yeeldeth himselfe here to the cruel bouchers, and tormentours to be put to deathe, that thou mightest preserve & susteine thy life, with this diuine meate, And this he doth, not at one time onelie, but his blessed will is, that it shalbe done continuallie, & therefore he ordeineth this most blessed Sacrament, that thou mightest hereby vnderstand an other degree of greater loue: which is, that as he geueth thee alwaies the same meate, to witt, his owne verie bodie in this most blessed Sacrament, so is he readie alwaies to paie the same price, & redemption, if it were necessarie for thee.

Besides all this, thou must consider, that this most holie reformer of the worlde, intended to restore man vnto his auncient dignitie, and to raise him vp againe so much by grace, as he had falle by sinne. And therefore as his falle was from a life that he had of God, (which life our first father Adam before his falle had enjoyed,) to the life of beastes (wherein after his falle he remayned:) euen so contrariwise, his will was, that he should be raised vp againe from the life of beastes, in which he re-

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Ioan. 6.

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mayned, to the life of God, which (through sinne) he had lost: and so for this ende hath our sauour Christ ordeyned the communion of this most holie, and diuine Sacrament, by meanes whereof, man atteyneth to be partaker of God, and to liue the life of God: as our sauour himselfe signifieth in those most high wordes, which he said: *He that eateth my fleshe, & drinketh my bloude, dwelleth in me, and I in him*, And like as by the dwellinge of my father in me, the life that I liue is altogether conformable to the life of my father (which is the life of God:) euen so he in whom I shall dwell by meanes of this diuine Sacrament, shall liue as I do liue, & so shall he not now liue the life of a man, but euen the life of god. For this is that most highe diuine Sacrament, wherein God is receaued corporallie: not that he is changed into men, but men are changed into him by loue, and conformance of will: forsomuch as this diuine meate worketh the same operation in him, that doth worthelie receaue it, that is wrought and represented in it, when it is consecrated. For like as by the vertue of the wordes of consecration, that which was bread, is conuerted into the substance of Christ: euen so by vertue of this holie communion, he that was man, is by a merueilous manner transformed spirituallie into God. So that like as that diuine bread is one thinge, and appeareth an other, & was one thinge

before

## MONDAIE MORNINGE.

before consecration, and is an other thinge afterwarde: euen so he that eateth the same, is one thinge before the receauing, and an other thinge afterwarde: & he appeareth one thinge outwardlie, but in verie deede is an other thinge, (& that farre more highe & excellent) inwardlie: forsomuch as he hath the beinge and substance of man, and withall the spirite of God. Now then, what glorie can be greater than this? What gifte more pretious? What benefit of more valewe? What greater shewe of loue? Let all the workes of nature kepe silence. Let all the workes of grace geue place. For this is a worke excellinge all workes: and this is a singuler grace aboue all graces. O most wonderfull Sacrament, what shall I saie of thee? With what wordes shall I commend thee? Thou art the life of our soules: the medecine of our woundes: the comfort of our troubles: the memorie of Iesus Christ: the testimonie of his loue: the most pretious legacie of his testament: the companion of our peregrination: the consolation of our bannishment: the burninge cole to enkindle the fier of the loue of God in vs: the meane whereby to receaue grace: the pledge of euerlastinge felicitie: & the treasure of the Christian life. By meanes of this diuine meate, the soule is vnited vnto her spouse: by this, the vnderstandinge is illuminated: the memorie quickened: the will ennamored: the inward tast delighted: the

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deuotion increased: the bowelles mollified, the founteine of teares opened: the passions of the mind quieted: the good motions awakened: our weakenes fortified: and by meane of this diuine meat, we receiue strength and lustines, to ascend vp euen to the hill of almightie God. What tounge is able fullie to expresse the excellencie of this most blessed Sacrament? Who can geue wortheie thanks for so great a benefit? Who will not be altogether resolued into teares, when he seeth almightie God vnited vnto him? Assuredlie, the more we goe about to consider the excellencie, and vertues, of this diuine souereyne misterie, the more doe we want wordes to expresse it: and the more doth our vnderstanding faile vs therein. Now what pleasure? what sweetness? what delightfull fauours of good life doth the soule of the iust mā feelee at that time, when he receiueth this diuine Sacramēt? There is none other sounde harde at that time, but onely sweete songes of the inwarde man, vehement burstinge out of holie desires, yeeldinge of thanks, and vteringe most sweet wordes, al tēdinge to the praise of our sweete Sauiour Christ her beloued. There the deuolue soule throwghe the vertu of this most holie & reuerent Sacrament, is altogether inwardlie renewed, and replenished with ioye. There she is recreated with deuotion: fed with peace: fortified in faith: confirmed in hope: and tied fast with bondes, & knottes

of charitie,

of charitie, vnto her most sweete sauiour, and redeemer: Whereby she waxeth dailie more feruent in loue: more stronge in resistinge temptation: more prompt, and readie, to susteine labour, and trauaile: more carefull, & diligente, to doe good workes: & more desirous to frequent this most holie misterie.

Such are thy giftes (ō sweete Iesus:) such are the workes, and delightes of thy loue, which thou art wont to communicate vnto thy frendes, by meanes of this diuine Sacrament. And this thou doest, to the end that we beinge filled with these so great, & mightie delightes, should dispise all other vaine, and deceitfull delightes. Now therefore (ō most mellifluous loue) opene the eyes of thy faithfull Catholicke people, opene them, I beseech thee, ō most diuine light, that with the bright beames of liuely faith they maie knowe thee, & dilate there hartes, that they maie receaue thee into them: that being instructed by thee, they maie seeke thee by thee, & repose & rest them selues in thee, & synallie by meanes of this most blessed Sacrament be vnited with thee, as members with their head, & as branches with their vyne, that so they may liue throwgh thy vertue, & enioye the influences of thy grace, for euer, & euer, worlde without end. Amen.

*The meditation being ended, there followe immediatelye thanks geuinge, & petition, as hath bene before declared.*