

[136] THE FORTH DAY:
MEDITATION ON TWO STANDARDS,
the one of Christ, our Commander-in-Chief and Lord;
the other of Lucifer, mortal enemy of our human nature

Prayer. The usual preparatory prayer.

[137] First Prelude. The first prelude is the narrative. It will be here how Christ calls and wants all under his standard, and Lucifer, on the contrary, under his.

[138] Second Prelude. The second, a composition, seeing the place. It will be here to see a great field of all that region of Jerusalem, where the supreme commander-in-chief of the good is Christ our Lord; another field in the region of Babylon, where the chief of the enemy is Lucifer.

[139] Third Prelude. The third, to ask for what I want: and it will be here to ask for knowledge of the deceits of the bad chief and help to guard myself against them, and for knowledge of the true life which the supreme and true captain shows and grace to imitate him.

[140] First point. The first point is to imagine as if the chief of all the enemy seated himself in that great field of Babylon, as in a great chair of fire and smoke, in shape horrible and terrifying.

[141] Second Point. The second, to consider how he issues a summons to innumerable demons, and how he scatters them, some to one city and other to another, and so through all the world, not omitting any provinces, places, states, nor any persons in particular.

[142] Third Point. The third, to consider the discourse which he makes them, and how he tells them to cast out nets and chains; that they have first to tempt with a longing for riches – as he is accustomed to do in most cases – that men may more easily come to vain honor of the world, and then to vast pride. So that the first step shall be that of riches; the second, that of honor; the third, that of pride; and from these three steps he draws on to all the other vices.

[143] So, on the contrary, one has to imagine as to the supreme and true Captain, who is Christ our Lord.

[144] First Point. The first point is to consider how Christ our Lord puts himself in a great field of that region of Jerusalem, in lowly place, beautiful and attractive.

[145] Second Point. The second, to consider how the Lord of all the world chooses so many persons – apostles, disciples, etc. – and sends them through all the world spreading his sacred doctrine through all states and conditions of persons.

[146] Third Point. The third, to consider the discourse which Christ our Lord makes to all his servants and friends whom He sends on this expedition, recommending them to want to help all, by bringing them first to the highest spiritual poverty, and – if his Divine Majesty would be served and would want to choose them – no less to actual poverty; the second is to be of contumely and contempt; because from these two things humility follows. So that there are to be three steps; the first, poverty against riches; the second, contumely or contempt against worldly honor; the third, humility to all the other virtues.

[147] First Colloquy. One colloquy to Our Lady, that she may get me grace from her Son and Lord that I may be received under his standard; and first in the highest spiritual poverty, and – if his Divine Majesty would be served and would want to choose and receive me – not less in actual poverty; second, in suffering contumely and injuries, to imitate Him more in them, if only I can suffer them without the sin of any person, or displeasure of his Divine Majesty; and with that a Hail Mary.

Second Colloquy. I will ask the same of the Son, that He may get it for me of the Father; and with that say the Soul of Christ.

Third Colloquy. I will ask the same of the Father, that He may grant it to me; and say an Our Father.

[148] Note. This exercise will be made at midnight and then a second time in the morning, and two repetitions of the same will be made at the hour of Mass and at the hour of Vespers, always finishing with the three colloquies, to Our Lady, to the Son, and to the Father; and that on the pairs which follows, at the hour before supper.

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