Commentary on Acts

The Venerable Bede (AD 673–735)

SermonIndex.net / Church Fathers

Contents

Introduction 1

Chapter 1 4

Chapter 2 11

Chapter 3 17

Chapter 4 19

Chapter 5 22

Chapter 6 25

Chapter 7 26

Chapter 8 30

Chapter 9 34

Chapter 10 38

Chapter 11 43

Chapter 12 45

Chapter 13 47

Chapter 14 50

Chapter 15 52

Chapter 16 54

Chapter 17 56

Chapter 18 59

Chapter 19 **61**

Chapter 20 **64**

Chapter 21 **67**

Chapter 22 **70**

Chapter 23 **71**

Chapter 24 **72**

Chapter 25 **73**

Chapter 26 **74**

Chapter 27 **76**

Chapter 28 **78**

Introduction

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Preface
To the most desired and truly blessed Lord in Christ, Bishop Acca, Bede, perpetual greetings in the Lord.

I have received numerous letters from your blessedness, in which you have deemed it worthy to remind me not to let the sharpness of my mind languish and sleep in idle leisure, but to daily meditate and diligently examine the Scriptures with wakefulness and tireless effort. For after completing the exposition of the Apocalypse of the holy evangelist John, which I composed in three books at the request of our brother Eusebius, and which I immediately intended to transcribe for you, I also exert myself in the explanation of the blessed Evangelist Luke, following the footsteps of the Fathers as much as I can. Since I have not yet been able to do this, both because I am terrified by the vastness of the work and hindered by the necessity of urgent causes which you know better, I have, however, done what I could in the meantime so that the authority of your request might not be disregarded. For I have sent a small work on the Acts of the Apostles, which was published not many days ago, and as speedily corrected as time permitted so that your most sacred will might not be hindered. In this small work, I have attempted to elucidate, as best I could, those things which seemed to have been done mystically or said obscurely.

In this endeavor, I have been greatly aided by many other writers of the Catholic faith, most notably by Arator, the subdeacon of the holy Roman Church, who, traversing the book itself in heroic verse, has intermingled some allegorical flowers in the same meter, providing me with the occasion either to gather other insights from these or to explain the same more plainly. The Acts of the Apostles, as the blessed Jerome says, seem indeed to sound as pure history and to weave the infancy of the emerging Church; but if we know their writer Luke to be a physician, whose praise is in the Gospel, we perceive that all his words are a medicine for the languishing soul. And to explain to you, within the measure of my smallness, we will first make note that the evangelist Luke, as it has been said according to the

tradition of the ancient Church interpreters, was very skilled in the art of medicine and knew Greek letters better than Hebrew. Hence, his speech, both in the Gospel and in the Acts of the Apostles, is more polished and exudes a secular eloquence, and he uses Greek testimonies more than Hebrew.

From this, there arises something which I greatly marvel at and, struck by the vehemence of my slow understanding, cannot ascertain why with much reason that while in the Hebrew truth there are found ten generations from the flood to Abraham, Luke himself, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, which could by no means write falsehoods, chose to place eleven generations, following the Septuagint Interpreters, adding Cainan, in the Gospel. Therefore, in the prologue of the Gospel, he says that it seemed good to him to write an orderly account carefully, because many have attempted this. But we should accept those who have great authority in the Church, because those who attempted were not able to complete it to the fullest. This one, however, not only led his narration up to the resurrection and ascension of the Lord so that he would have a worthy place with the four authors of the Gospel Scripture, but also wrote things that were done by the Apostles afterwards, which he believed were sufficient for building the faith of the readers or listeners, in such a way that his book alone is considered trustworthy in the Church, telling of the acts of the apostles, rejecting all those who dared to write the deeds and words of the apostles not with the faith that was required. Indeed, Mark and Luke wrote at a time when they could not only be approved by the Church of Christ but also by the apostles themselves still living in the flesh.

For it was by the Lord’s direction that not only the apostles who had seen, but also the disciples who had learned by hearing, would write down the deeds and words of Christ, in order that the subsequent teachers of the Church might have both the trust and the authority to preach and write about things they had not seen. The Acts of the Apostles and especially those of the blessed Paul, whose inseparable companion in travel the blessed Luke was, were composed just as he had seen. The entire context of this, as far as we could perceive from other histories, contains twenty-eight years, that is, six years of Tiberius Caesar, four years of Gaius, fourteen years of Claudius. During the reign of this prince, the apostle Peter came to Rome, and in the fourth year a famine occurred; in the eighth year the Jews were expelled from Rome. Also, four years of Nero, during the last two of which the blessed Paul remained at Rome in free custody. From this, we understand that the book was composed in the same city. Furthermore, to distinguish the same times through the kings of the Jews: Herod, Philip, and Lysanias were tetrarchs for six years. Herod the king, also known as Agrippa, who perished at Caesarea, reigned for seven years. Agrippa, his son, under whom Paul was sent to Rome, reigned for fifteen years. Twelve years remained until the destruction of Jerusalem.

I have followed these details closely, so that when reviewing the history of the same book, you can clearly recognize what took place in which time. I have also sent an explication of the Epistle of the most blessed evangelist John, most extensively drawn from the homilies of Saint Augustine, with sweet eloquence spread widely, from which I made a concise summary. However, I also added some notes of my own at the end. In both works, if you find anything useful, credit it to the gifts of God; if anything excessive, bear with my frailty. May the Lord Almighty preserve your blessedness, interceding for us, safe for the governance of the Church perpetually.

Chapter 1

[Acts 1:1] -- The first treatise I have made, O Theophilus, concerning all that Jesus began to do and teach. He says that he wrote in the Gospel about all the acts and words of Christ, not that he could encompass all, lest he be opposed to John, who says: Indeed Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book (John 20), but that he chose from all to make a treatise on those he judged suitable and congruent to suffice for his dispensation. Theophilus is interpreted as lover of God, or loved by God. Whoever, therefore, is a lover of God, let him believe that it is written for him, and find salvation here for his soul since Luke the physician wrote it. And it is to be noted that he says: What Jesus began to do and teach. To do first, and afterwards to teach. For Jesus, establishing a good teacher, taught nothing except what he did.

[Acts 1:2] -- Until the day on which he was taken up, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. By hyperbaton it is to be read until the day on which he was taken up, commanding before the assumption, that is, giving precepts to the apostles which are read either here or in the Gospels. The sense therefore is: I wrote about Jesus from the time he began to perform signs and teach until the day on which, having completed these things, he returned to where he had come from. [Acts 1:3] -- Appearing to them during forty days and speaking of the kingdom of God, and eating with them, etc. To strengthen the faith in his resurrection, the Lord often appeared alive to the apostles after his passion, took food, and displayed the same flesh which he had raised from the dead to be touched. But in a higher mystery, by this forty-day conversation with the disciples, he signifies that he would fulfill in secret presence what he had promised. Behold I am with you all days until the end of the world (Matthew 28). For this number designates this temporal and earthly life either because of the four seasons of the year or because of the four winds of heaven. For after we have been buried with Christ through baptism into death, as if having crossed the path of the Red Sea, we have need of the Lord’s guidance in this wilderness, who will lead us to heavenly things, and rewarding us with the denarius of his image, will bless us with the presence of the Holy Spirit as with the true rest of jubilee.

[Acts 1:5] -- But you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now. The apostles had not yet been baptized, not with water, but with the Holy Spirit, whom we understand they had already been baptized, either with John's baptism (as some suppose), or (what is more credible) with Christ's baptism. For the ministry of baptizing had not been such that it had baptized servants through whom others would be baptized, for the ministry of that memorable humility was not lacking, when He washed their feet. Therefore, when the Lord said: For John indeed baptized with water, He did not add: But you shall baptize, but: But you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit. For neither the apostles nor their followers, who baptize even to this day in the Church, can baptize otherwise than John, that is, with water, but only by invoking the name of Christ, the interior power of the Holy Spirit is present, which, with a man providing the water, purifies both the souls and bodies of the baptized, which was not done in John's baptism. For the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not yet been glorified (John VII).

[Acts 1:6] -- Therefore, those who had come together asked Him, saying: Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? Since He appeared to them speaking of the kingdom of God, He also promised the coming of the Holy Spirit not many days later, they accordingly inquire about the same kingdom, whether they should believe that it would be restored in the present with the imminent coming of the Holy Spirit, or reserved for the saints in the future. For the disciples, still carnal, after the resurrection of Christ, believed that the kingdom of Israel would come immediately. As Cleopas said: But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. And the evangelist had stated beforehand that as the Lord was coming to Jerusalem, they thought that the kingdom of God would immediately appear. But the prophecy was to be fulfilled, which says, singing to the Father: But you have rejected, despised, and delayed your Christ (Psalm LXXXVIII). For the Father rejected and despised the Son when He deserted Him in His passion, saying: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me (Matthew XXVII)? He delayed, however, that those whom the saints thought would reign at that time, they might expect Him to come in His majesty on the day of judgment. Therefore, the Lord Himself, hinting that the spiritual Israel and the heavenly kingdom were promised by the prophets, said:

[Acts 1:7] -- It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has placed in His own authority. He said this, indicating that the time of that (kingdom) is so secret that it lies within the knowledge of the Father alone. And when He says: It is not for you to know, He shows that He Himself knows, whose are all the things that are the Father's, but it is not expedient for mortals to know, so that always uncertain about the coming of the judge, they may live every day as though they were to be judged on another day. [Acts 1:8] -- But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, etc. When the Holy Spirit comes upon you, he says, it will not bring the kingdom of

Israel, or the kingdom of God in Israel, as you suppose, but will provide you with the power to testify about me. And so far off are the times of that kingdom, that first not only this city of Jerusalem, but also all the borders of Judea, and then even the nearby region of Samaria, will be spread by the fame of the Gospel to the ends of the world.

[Acts 1:9] -- And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up. Mark, indeed, recounting another discourse of the Lord, says: And the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven (Mark 16). But since Luke added more significantly, When he had said these things, he was taken up, indeed showing that when the words he had mentioned were fulfilled, the Lord ascended to heaven. [Acts 1:9] -- And a cloud received him out of their sight. Everywhere the creation obeys its Creator. The stars point out his birth, they cover him when suffering, the clouds receive him as he ascends, and they will accompany him when he returns for judgment. [Acts 1:10] -- Behold, two men stood by them in white apparel. White garments are more fitting for exaltation than for humiliation. And so, as the Lord ascends, angels appear in white garments, who are not said to appear in white clothing at the Lord's birth, because he who appeared humble as a God in his birth, appeared sublime as a man in his ascension. For the location is also fitting, while he, who was born as a man in a humble little city, returned to heaven from a high mountain.

[Acts 1:11] -- This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven. For two reasons the angels are seen: that they might console them in their sorrow of the ascension with the remembrance of his return, and to show that he truly ascends into heaven, and not as it were into heaven like Elijah. [Acts 1:11] -- He will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven. That is, he will come to judge in the same form and substance of the flesh in which he came to be judged. To whom certainly immortality was given, but nature was not taken away. Whose divine glory, which once appeared on the mountain to the three disciples, will be seen by all the saints when the judgment is complete, when the impious will be taken away so that they do not see the glory of God. [Acts 1:12] -- Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet. Our Lord and Savior, having conquered the prince of darkness, leads the faithful to a place of peace and light. Rightly he ascended the mount of blessing, promising the holy Spirit, whose anointing teaches us about everything.

[Acts 1:12] -- He is near Jerusalem, having the distance of a Sabbath journey. According to history, it indicates that the Mount of Olives is separated by about a mile from the city of Jerusalem. For on the Sabbath, according to the law, it was not permitted to go more than a thousand paces. But according to allegory, whoever will be worthy to contemplate within the glory of the Lord ascending to the Father and to be enriched with the promise of the Holy Spirit, this one enters the city of eternal peace by the journey of the Sabbath. And for him, according to Isa-

iah, there will be a Sabbath from the Sabbath, because whoever here has ceased from perverse work will there rest in celestial recompense. But on the other hand, whoever in this age, as if through the time of six days, has neglected to work for salvation, during that time of perpetual rest, will be excluded from the boundaries of blessed Jerusalem, despising that Gospel: ”Pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.”

[Acts 1:13] -- And when they had entered the upper room, they went up where they were staying. It designates a place on high, because they had already ascended from earthly conversation of the Sabbath to the higher realms of knowledge and virtue.

[Acts 1:13] -- James of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas of James. Some think that there were two apostles called James, namely James of Zebedee and James of Alphaeus, and that the third James, the brother of the Lord, was not an apostle but the bishop of Jerusalem. That is by no means true, but according to the faith of the Gospels, it should be known that this same James, the son of Alphaeus and an apostle, was in charge of Jerusalem, who was called the brother of the Lord, because he was the son of the Lord’s maternal aunt, of whom John the evangelist mentions. However, he says, “standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary of Clopas” (John 19). Naming this Mary of Clopas from her father or family. For how could the brother of the Lord be said to be not an apostle but the third James, when Paul also names him an apostle: “But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the brother of the Lord” (Galatians 1)? And the evangelist Mark calls him the same, not the third but the other, saying: “There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the Younger and Joses, and Salome” (Mark 15). For since ”greater” and ”lesser” usually provide a distinction not among three but between two, the lesser James is called the son of Alphaeus, in distinction from the greater who was the son of Zebedee.

Read the book of blessed Jerome against Helvidius. However, Simon the Zealot is the one who is written in the Gospels as the Canaanite. For Cana interprets as zeal. He was from a village in Galilee, Cana, where the Lord turned water into wine, and after his brother James, he ruled the Church of Jerusalem and at the age of one hundred and twenty ascended the cross under Trajan. He is declared to be according to the flesh a cousin of the Savior, because Hegesippus testified that his father Clopas was the brother of Joseph. And Judas of James, that is, the brother of James, is the same as the one called Thaddeus in the Gospels, and he was sent to Edessa to Abgarus, the king of Osroene, as ecclesiastical history tells. It continues:

[Acts 1:14] -- All these were continually devoting themselves with one accord to prayer. Those who patiently continue in prayer are those who await the arrival of the Holy Spirit. For the Holy Spirit of discipline flees from deceit (Wisdom 1).

Therefore, whoever desires to receive the promised gifts of the Holy Spirit must persist diligently in prayers steeped in fraternal love. [Acts 1:15] -- There was, however, a crowd of about a hundred and twenty people together. These hundred and twenty, gradually rising from one to fifteen by increments, form the number of the fifteen steps, which mystically signifies the perfection of both laws in the Psalter, and in which the chosen vessel remains with Peter in Jerusalem. For it was necessary that the mystery, which the legislator exhibited in years, should be designated by the preachers of the new grace in their number.

[Acts 1:16] -- Brethren, it is necessary to fulfill the Scripture which the Holy Spirit foretold, etc. Peter the Apostle feared to remain in the number eleven. For all sin is 'eleven,' because through perverse actions, it transgresses the precepts of the Decalogue. Hence, because none of our justice is innocent by itself, the tabernacle that contained the Ark of the Lord was overlaid inside with eleven goat-hair curtains. And he restored the number of apostles to twelve, so that by the two parts of seven (for three times four is a fine sum), they would maintain the grace they preached and with the number, and those who were to preach the faith of the Holy Trinity to the fourfold world, as the Lord says: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19), they would also strengthen the perfection of work by the sacrament of the number. According to the higher understanding, the loss that the Church suffers from false brethren persists to the greatest extent unaddressed. But when at the end of the world, the people of the Jews who crucified the Lord are believed to be reconciled to the Church, like on the approaching fiftieth day, the number of the apostles is restored.

[Acts 1:18] -- And he indeed obtained a field from the reward of iniquity. He who sold the Lord of life, having lost the land of the living, possesses a field of blood and eternal death, the memory of his crime and his name. Otherwise, Judas himself did not deserve to possess the potter's field bought with the price of blood, who, having returned the thirty pieces of silver, immediately punished the crime of treachery with a more criminal death. But, according to the manner of sacred speech, it is said he possessed what he caused to be possessed. As the blessed Job says: "And my clothes will abhor me," that is, my corruptible members will render me abominable. [Acts 1:18] -- And he burst asunder in the middle. The mad traitor found a punishment worthy of himself, that is, the noose's knot strangled the throat from which the voice of betrayal had emerged. He also sought a fitting place of destruction, so that he who had delivered the Lord of men and angels to death, hated by heaven and earth, as if only to be associated with the spirits of the air, might perish in the midst of the air, according to the example of Ahithophel and Absalom who persecuted King David. To whom, indeed, the death itself succeeded with a sufficiently fitting outcome, so that the bowels which had conceived the deceit of betrayal were burst open and cast out into the empty air. A similar

punishment by which death is reported to have condemned Arius, the heresiarch, so that since the one sought to extinguish the humanity of Christ, the other the divinity, both, as they lived devoid of sense, thus also perished with empty bellies.

[Acts 1:20] -- Let his habitation be desolate, and let there be no one to dwell in it, and let another take his office. Indeed, these verses are clear and openly explained by the blessed Peter, because Judas received the deserved punishment for his transgression, and going to his own place, namely infernal hell, he deserted the common habitation of human conversation by an untimely and impious death, and nonetheless, with the holy Matthias taking his place in the ministry and apostleship, the most sacred sum of apostolic perfection was restored. But it is to be noted that the whole testimony is not taken from the one hundred and eighth psalm according to the Vulgate Edition, but only the final part, while the former is from the sixty-eighth, in which it is said of the Jews: Let their habitation be desolate, and let there be no one to dwell in their tents. For while the blessed Peter wished to confirm both the rejection of Judas and the election of Matthias with prophetic testimonies, he joined the testimony which was specifically about Matthias's episcopate with that which was generally placed about the rejection of the Jews, among whom Judas was also numbered. This, I know not by which first unskilled editor, was added to the one hundred and eighth psalm. When he saw these verses put together by the blessed Peter, and his Psalter not having them together, he began to think his Codex falsified, and presumed to add what he did not have.

In the same way, eight verses from the thirteenth psalm were added in the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, which he had composed from various psalms and the prophet Isaiah. The first of these is: Their throat is an open sepulcher. The last: There is no fear of God before their eyes. These things which I have said, not only the Hebrew truth and the more correct edition of the seventy interpreters confirm, but also open reason proves, that in the same one hundred and eighth psalm, excepting these verses, there are thirty curses laid upon Judas Iscariot, according to the number of pieces of silver with which he did not fear to sell the Lord. The first of which is: Set a sinner over him. The last: And let them be covered with their own confusion as with a cloak.

[Acts 1:23] -- Joseph who is called Barsabbas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. Barsabbas is interpreted as "son of rest," Matthias as "little one of God." Concerning whom Arator says: . . . . . O how far human judgments differ from those above? He who was just is deservedly surpassed by the little one in human praise.

[Acts 1:26] -- And they gave forth their lots, etc. This example, or because the prophet Jonah was caught by lot, should not be indiscriminately relied upon for lots, "since the privileges of individuals," as Jerome says, "can by no means make a common law." For there, even the Gentile men, driven by the storm, sought the

author of the danger by lot, and here Matthias is chosen by lot, lest the selection of the apostles seem to differ from the command of the old law, where the high priest was commanded to be sought by lot, as it is said about Zechariah: According to the custom of the priesthood, it fell to him by lot to put incense (Luke 1). Therefore, as I think, he was then chosen by lot, so that by the type it might be figured that a true priest should always have been sought, until he came for whom it was reserved, who not by the blood of sacrifices, but by his own blood entered once into the holy places having obtained eternal redemption (Hebrews 9). Whose sacrifice, offered at the time of Passover, but truly consumed on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit appeared in fire. For it was the custom of the old to consume victims accepted by God with heavenly fire. Therefore, until the truth was fulfilled, it was allowed to practice the figure. Hence it is that Matthias, who is ordained before Pentecost, is sought by lot; but the seven deacons afterward are not ordained by lot, but only by the election of the disciples and the prayer and imposition of hands by the apostles. But if any, compelled by some necessity, think that God should be consulted by lots as an example of the apostles, let them see that the apostles themselves did this not except by gathering the brotherhood and pouring out prayers to God.

Chapter 2

[Acts 2:1] -- And when the days of Pentecost were completed, they were all together in the same place. This is in the upper room, which they are said to have ascended. For whoever desires to be filled with the Holy Spirit must necessarily transcend the dwelling of the flesh through the contemplation of the mind. Just as the forty days during which the Lord conversed with His disciples after His resurrection signify the Church's journey in this world with the risen Christ, so the fiftieth day, on which the Holy Spirit is received, fittingly expresses the perfection of blessed rest, by which the labor of the temporal Church will be rewarded with eternal denarius. For the number forty itself, when computed by its equal parts, adds that denarius and makes fifty. The half of the number forty is twenty, a quarter is ten, a fifth is eight, an eighth is five, a tenth is four, a twentieth is two, a fortieth is one. Twenty, ten, eight, five, four, two, and one make fifty. The figure of this calculation is easily evident, because the present conflict generates for us the eternal joy of the jubilee, as the Apostle says: For our momentary and light affliction works for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure (II Cor. IV). Our true blessedness, however, is the eternal vision of the most high and blessed Trinity, wherein we glory in the immortality of both body and soul. For we consist of the four well-known qualities of the body.

In the inner man, we are commanded to love God with all our heart, all our soul, and all our mind. And this is the perfect denarius of life, to rejoice in the present vision of divine glory. It is to be noted historically that among the ancients, the day of Pentecost, that is, the fiftieth day on which the law was given, was counted from the slaughter of the lamb. However, as the blessed Augustine explains, the fiftieth day here is counted not from the Lord's Passion, but from His resurrection, on which the Holy Spirit was sent. He, by the return of the old sign's example, most manifestly consecrated the Lord's day by His coming. At that same point in time, He showed that the true Pascha is to be celebrated on the Lord's day. For just as here, so also there God appeared in the vision of fire, as Exodus says: And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke because the Lord descended upon it in fire (Exod. XIX).

[Acts 2:2] -- And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, etc. The Lord indeed appeared through fire, as Blessed Pope Gregory explains, but He made the interior communication by Himself. And neither was God the fire, nor was that sound, but by what He exhibited outwardly, He expressed what He made within. For He who made the disciples both fervent with zeal and instructed with the word inwardly, showed fiery tongues outwardly. Therefore, elements were brought in as a sign so that bodies might perceive fire and sound, while hearts were taught by invisible fire and soundless voice. [Acts 2:3] -- And there appeared to them divided tongues as of fire. For the Holy Spirit appeared in fire and tongues, because all whom He fills He makes both burning and speaking. Burning indeed from themselves, and speaking about themselves. At the same time, indicating that the holy Church, extended to the ends of the world, was to speak with the voice of all nations.

[Acts 2:3] -- And it sat upon each of them. What is said to have sat is an indication of royal power. Or certainly because His rest is indicated in the saints. [Acts 2:4] -- And they began to speak with various tongues. The unity of tongues that the pride of Babel had dispersed, the humility of the Church gathers together again. Spiritually, however, the variety of tongues signifies the gifts of various graces. But it is not inconsiderate to understand that the Holy Spirit is therefore first understood to have given the gift of tongues to men, by whom human wisdom is learned and taught from the outside, as a sign that by the wisdom of God, which is internal to them, He could easily make them wise. [Acts 2:5] -- Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men, from every nation under heaven. I think it fitting to inquire who these were, and from what captivity the Jews. Since indeed the one that was in Egypt or Babylon had already been completed. But the Jews had not yet come into captivity to the Romans, although even that itself was already impending as retribution for the sin committed against the Savior. Therefore, it remains to be understood as the captivity that took place under Antiochus, which certainly had happened not many times before.

[Acts 2:6] -- Because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. It is asked in this place how each one heard them speaking the great things of God in his own language: whether those who were speaking in different languages were delivering what was being said in the language of each one, that is, whether each of them now spoke in this, now in another language, thus running through all, or it was more marvelous in this, that the speech of those who were speaking, whatever language had been pronounced, was understood by each one hearing according to his own language, that (for example) when any one apostle was teaching in the church (for it was necessary that one should speak while the others were silent, and one speech should reach the hearing of all), that same speech would have such a force in itself, that although there were listeners of different nations, each one would receive the hearing and grasp the understanding of that one speech pro-

nounced by the apostle according to his own language. Unless perhaps it seemed more wonderful that this was a miracle of the listeners rather than of the speakers.

[Acts 2:9] -- And those who dwelt in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia. In this place, Judea does not signify the entire nation but a part of it, that is, the tribe of Judah and Benjamin, to distinguish, namely, from Samaria, Galilee, Decapolis, and other regions in the same province. Although they all spoke one Hebrew language, each had its own distinctive way of speaking. Hence also Peter, during the Lord's Passion, was identified as a Galilean by his speech. [Acts 2:10] -- The Jews also and proselytes. Proselytes, that is, they called the newcomers those who, originating from the Gentiles, preferred to choose circumcision and Judaism, as is narrated that Achior did in the book of Judith. Therefore, they say, not only those who were Jews by nature had gathered from different parts of the world, but also those who, born from the foreskin, had embraced their rite.

[Acts 2:13] -- But others mocking said: Because they are full of new wine. Though mocking, they testify mystically to the truth. For they are not filled with old wine, which failed at the wedding of the Church, but with the new wine of spiritual grace. For now the new wine had come into new wineskins, as the apostles, not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit of God, resounded the great deeds (Rom. VII). [Acts 2:15] -- For these are not drunk, as you suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. The Holy Spirit, about to proclaim the glory of the indivisible Trinity, came down fittingly at the third hour. And because it is said above: They were persevering in prayer, they rightly receive the Holy Spirit at the hour of prayer, to show readers that the grace of the Holy Spirit is not easily received unless the mind is elevated from carnal intentions to those of the heavens. For the three times at which Daniel is read to bend his knees and pray in the day, that is the third, sixth, and ninth hour, are understood by the Church. Because the Lord, sending the Holy Spirit at the third hour, ascending the cross at the sixth, and laying down His soul at the ninth, deemed fit to make known and to sanctify these hours for us more excellently than the others.

[Acts 2:17] -- I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh. The word effusion shows the largess of the gift, because, not as before to the prophets and to the priests only, but to all indiscriminately in both sexes, conditions, and persons, the grace of the Holy Spirit would be given. For what all flesh may mean, the prophet subsequently explained. [Acts 2:17] -- And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, etc. And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs on earth beneath. Wonders in heaven, when a new star appeared at the birth of the Lord, the sun was darkened when He ascended the cross, and the very heavens were covered with darkness. Signs on earth, when the Lord gave up the Spirit, the earth quaked, the graves opened, rocks were split, and many bodies of the saints who slept arose. [Acts 2:19] -- Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The blood of the Lord's side, the fire

of the Holy Spirit, the vapor of compunction and weeping. For as from fire comes smoke, so from the ardor of the Holy Spirit proceeds compunction. For it remains to believe that blood flowed from a dead body in a living stream, which is against the nature of our bodies, was done as an indication of a sign. For what other purpose, unless for our salvation and life, which indeed springs from His death? The illumination of the faithful can also be understood in the fire, and the blindness of the Jews who did not believe in the vapor of smoke. Hence, the Lord, about to give the law, descended in fire and smoke, because He illuminates the humble through the brightness of His manifestation, and darkens the eyes of the proud through the obscurity of error.

[Acts 2:20] -- The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood. This is believed to have been partly fulfilled during the Lord's Passion, and partly to occur before the great day, that is, the Day of Judgment. For at that time the sun was darkened, but the moon, turned into blood, could not plainly appear to men, since it was (as it happens during Passover) the fifteenth day, and during the day it was hidden from mortal sight by the obstruction of the earth. [Acts 2:21] -- And it shall be: Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. This is what Peter says elsewhere: For God is not a respecter of persons, but in every nation, whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him (Acts X).

[Acts 2:22-23] -- Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved by God, and so on until you afflicted and killed Him. Like a learned teacher, he first admonishes the unbelievers, whom he pities, to give advice of salvation later when pierced by just fear. And because he speaks to those who know the law, he shows that Christ Himself is the One promised by the prophets. However, he does not first call Him the Son of God by his own authority, but a man approved, a just man, a man resurrected from the dead, not in the common resurrection along with the others, which is delayed until the end of the world, but celebrated on the third day, so that the assertion of a singular glorious resurrection might bear the testimony of eternal divinity. Since the bodies of others are proven to have undergone corruption after death, this one, of whom it is said: You will not let Your Holy One see corruption (Psalm XV), is shown to be free from human frailty, and proven to have surpassed the merits of human condition, and therefore more deserving to be ascribed to God than to humans. You will learn from the story of Cornelius the centurion and in the sermon given by the Apostle Paul in Athens what kind of introduction the apostles use in their preaching to the Gentiles.

[Acts 2:25] -- I have set the Lord always before me, because He is at my right hand, that I should not be moved. Coming, he says, into the transient things, I did not take my eye off Him who always remains, foreseeing this, that after passing through temporal things I should turn to Him, because He favors me, so that I may remain steadfastly in Him, and I attribute this, that I did not commit sin nor was deceit

found in my mouth (I Peter II), not to humanity, but to divinity; on account of this, there is joy in my thoughts, and rejoicing in my words, because of the resurrection, namely, because through it the world has been delivered. [Acts 2:26] -- Moreover, my flesh will not fail in destruction, but will sleep in the hope of resurrection. For You will not leave my soul to be possessed by Hell, nor will You allow Your Holy One's body, through which others too are sanctified, to see corruption.

[Acts 2:28] -- For You have made known to me the paths of life, by which we proceed to eternity. In these, after the sorrow of passion, You will fill me with joy with Your face (Psalm XV). And ascending to heaven, You will give the delights of Your right hand continually. Because He was neither left in Hell. Thus Christ indeed descended according to the soul to Hell, to aid those who needed it, but He was not left in Hell, for He quickly returned to claim His resurrected body. [Acts 2:33] -- Exalted therefore by the right hand of God, because the Psalm had said: "Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." And having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this, which you both see and hear. You see the fiery tongues, you hear in our speech. But that which He says, that He received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father and poured it out, shows both natures of the same Christ, because He received as man, and poured out as God.

[Acts 2:34] -- For David did not ascend into the heavens. He himself says: "For these latter things, blessed David predicted, not about himself, but about his Lord's ascension, who would be sent forth from Zion, that is, from David's royal lineage, and would rule in the midst of his enemies;" so also understand those previous things he mentioned, which pertain not to David, but to Christ's death and resurrection. [Acts 2:34] -- The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand." The first name of the Lord among the Hebrews is the Tetragrammaton, which is properly used for God; the second, which is common to mortals, is that by which both kings and other men are called. If the Arian heresy wishes to oppose us with this difference, making the Son lesser, and the Father greater, we will respond that the inferior name belongs to him to whom it is commanded to sit. As blessed Peter explained: "For God made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified." For it was not the divinity that was crucified, but the flesh. And this indeed can be done, which could be crucified.

[Acts 2:35] -- "Until I make your enemies your footstool." This is what Peter elsewhere said about the Lord: "Whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things" (Acts III). For then, when all times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord, He will send Jesus Christ, who was preached to us from royal thrones, to judge the living and the dead (Wisdom XVIII). [Acts 2:37] -- And having heard this, they were cut to the heart, etc. See the prophecy of Joel fulfilled, the flesh following the fire of the Holy Spirit, compunction's vapor follows. For smoke

tends to produce tears. They begin to weep who had laughed, they beat their chest, they give their prayer to God as a sacrifice, so they might taste the blood of salvation, which they had previously invoked upon themselves and their children to their condemnation. It follows:

[Acts 2:38] -- ”Repent,” he says, ”and let each one of you be baptized.” Speaking of baptism, he first mentioned the laments of repentance, so that, following the custom of the Church, they might first immerse themselves in the water of their affliction, and afterward be washed in the sacrament of baptism. [Acts 2:41] -- And about three thousand souls were added that day. Where the baptism of the Church was first celebrated, divine mercy, by careful plan, gathered a number of souls equal to the confession of the Holy Trinity. And Moses indeed, on the fiftieth day of Passover when the law was given, commanded the solemnity of the first fruits to be initiated; but now, with the Holy Spirit coming, not sheaves of wheat, but souls were consecrated as first fruits to the Lord. [Acts 2:44] -- And they had all things in common, etc. If the love of God is poured into our hearts, it soon surely generates love for our neighbor. Hence, on account of the double ardor of charity, the Holy Spirit is read to have been given twice to the apostles. It is also a great indication of fraternal love to possess all things in common, having nothing as one’s own.

Chapter 3

[Acts 3:1] -- Now Peter and John were going up to the temple, etc. The apostles, about to enter the temple at the ninth hour, first heal a man lame from birth, and then, laboring until evening, imbue many thousands of men with the word of faith. For the teachers of the Church, coming toward the end of the world, preach both to Israel, who were first languishing, and afterwards to the Gentiles. For these are the laborers whom the father of the family brings into the vineyard at the ninth and eleventh hour (Matt. XX). [Acts 3:2] -- And a certain man, who was lame from his mother's womb, was carried. For the people of Israel were rebellious not only to the Incarnate Lord, but from the very first times of the given law, as if lame from the mother's womb. This is well figured by Jacob wrestling with the angel, blessed indeed, but limping (Gen. XXXII), because the same people, prevailing in the passion of the Lord, were in some ways blessed through faith, but in others lame through disbelief.

[Acts 3:2] -- Whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple, which is called Beautiful. The Beautiful Gate of the temple is the Lord, through whom if anyone enters, he shall be saved. To this gate, the weak Israel, unable to go on his own, is carried by the voices of the law and the prophets, so that he may beseech help from those entering the interior, by hearing the wisdom of faith. They place listeners at the gate by the prophecy of what is to come, but it is Peter's to lead them into the temple, to whom for a strong confession both the name of the rock and the keys of heaven have been given. [Acts 3:6] -- Silver and gold have I none, etc. Indeed, the old tabernacle had the justifications of worship, and the secular sanctuary distinguished by gold and silver, but the blood of the Gospel shines more precious than the metals of the law, because the people who before lay mentally weak at the gilded posts, healed in the name of the Crucified, enter the temple of the heavenly kingdom. Otherwise, the blessed Peter, mindful of the Lord's precept, which says: Do not possess gold and silver (Matt. X), used to preserve the money placed at the apostles' feet not for himself, but for the use of the poor, who had left their patrimonies.

[Acts 3:7] -- And having taken his right hand, he raised him up. He who lifts another up also strengthens him with his right hand. For the word of the teacher is worth less in the hearts of the hearers if it is not also recommended by examples of one's own action. [Acts 3:8] -- And leaping up, he stood and walked. And he entered the temple with them. The order of perfection is clear: first, he who had lain down rises, then he seizes strength, and thus he enters the gate of the kingdom with the apostles. [Acts 3:10] -- And they were all filled with wonder and amazement. Ecstasy means fear here. For ecstasy can also be said in another way, not alienated by fear, but taken up by some inspiration of revelation. [Acts 3:11] -- All the people ran to them, to the portico called Solomon's. With Israel saved by the apostles, the entire world rushes to the thresholds of the true and peaceful Solomon, of whom it is said: "His government shall increase and peace shall have no end" (Isaiah IX). This is the stone cut from the mountain, which, with the earthly realm of faith's enemy crumbling, alone holds the peaceful dominion through the world (Daniel II).

[Acts 3:23] -- And it will come to pass that every soul who does not listen to that Prophet shall be destroyed. Briefly and clearly, with the testimony of the prophets and the law, he teaches that the Lord must be listened to by all nations, condemning indeed the unbelievers and granting the faithful eternal blessing. [Acts 3:24] -- And all the prophets from Samuel and onwards. Although the patriarchs and saints of earlier times prophesied concerning Christ through their words and deeds, the proper time of the prophets, I say, is that which began with Samuel, under whom the times of the kings in Judea began, and continued until the end of the Babylonian captivity. [Acts 3:25] -- And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. The seed of Abraham is indeed Christ, in whose faith the blessing was promised to all the families of the earth, that is, to Jews and Gentiles alike. The apostle soothes the minds of the Jews to make them more prompt to believe, saying that the Healer of the whole world chose to visit and bless them first.

[Acts 3:26] -- To you first (he says) God, raising up His Son. Here it should equally be noted that it is concerning the same Son of God, whom he calls the seed of Abraham, due to the twofold nature of Christ, lest they believe Christ to be merely a man, or one son human and the other divine. By this snare of heresy, the insane Manes and Nestorius were deceived.

Chapter 4

[Acts 4:1] -- While they were speaking to the people, the priests and the magistrates of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, and so on. And the priests and the magistrates, or the temple prefect, as another edition says, who seemed to be the teachers and judges of the people, were grieved that the multitude had flocked to hear the apostles. The Sadducees, however, were grieved because they preached the resurrection. Yet both were grieved because those whom they knew as the man Jesus, whom they had killed, were claimed by them to be glorified by God the Father. [Acts 4:4] -- And the number of men became five thousand. If in the five thousand men whom the Lord fed in the desert (Matthew XIV), the people under the law are understood but were refreshed by the gift of Christ, these five thousand instructed by the apostles' teachings can also signify the people of the Gentiles, who spiritually followed the mysteries of the same law. And both are fittingly granted the heavenly gift in the evening, because when the fullness of time had come, God sent His Son (Galatians IV).

[Acts 4:11] -- This is the stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone. The builders were the Jews, who, while all the nations were dwelling in the desolation of idols, they alone were reading the law and the prophets daily for edification. As they were building, they came upon the cornerstone, which would embrace two walls, that is, they found in the prophetic Scriptures that Christ would come in the flesh and build two peoples in Himself. And because they preferred to stand on one wall, that is, to be saved alone, they rejected the stone, which was not suited to one, but to two. However, God, though they were unwilling, Himself placed this stone as the chief cornerstone, that from the two testaments and the two peoples, a building of one and the same faith might arise. [Acts 4:12] -- And there is no salvation in any other. If salvation is in no other, but only in Christ, then the fathers of the Old Testament were saved by the same Redeemer's incarnation and passion, in which we believe and hope to be saved. And though the sacraments may differ according to the times, yet the same faith agrees. For the dispensation of Christ, which we know to have been accomplished through the apostles, they learned through the prophets would come. For there is

no redemption of human captivity except in the blood of Him who gave Himself as a ransom for all.

[Acts 4:13] -- Finding out that these men were unlettered and ignorant, they marveled. Illiterate men are sent to preach, so that the faith of believers might not be thought to have been brought about by human eloquence and learning, but by the power of God, as the Apostle says: ”Not in the wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect” (I Cor. I). For those were called idiotae who, content with their own language and natural knowledge, were unacquainted with the study of letters. Indeed, the Greeks call their own, ἴδιον. [Acts 4:22] -- The man was over forty years old on whom this sign of healing was performed. According to the history, the perfect age of the man is indicated amidst the invincible critics. Allegorically, however, the people of Israel did not only seek the Egyptian impurities in the desert for forty years, despising manna, but even in the promised land, they always limped between the rituals of the Lord and of idols. Or if the number forty signifies the double fullness of the law (for four times ten makes forty), the transgressor of both, like a weak person, lying down, surpasses the forty-like perfection.

[Acts 4:24] -- Lord, you who made the heaven and the earth, etc. Hearing the threats of the persecutors, they ask for the confidence to resist through the signs of virtues. [Acts 4:27] -- Against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They interpret the name of Christ, about whom it was said: ”And against His Christ” (Psalm II), according to the word. For Christ received his name from chrism, that is, from anointing. According to what is said: ”God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness” (Psalm 45:7), that is, with the Holy Spirit. [Acts 4:31] -- And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered was shaken. Those who sought the strength of firm hearts against the deceit of the enemy received the sign of their prayer being heard through the earthquake, so that they might understand that the earthly hearts were to yield to them. When the Holy Spirit came upon them, even the earth itself was struck with fear. Although it might be understood as the joyful fear of those who, by believing, were to be subjected to the apostles, and who, with their earthly heaviness shaken off, learned to rise with Christ and seek heavenly things.

[Acts 4:32] -- And the multitude of believers was of one heart and one soul. Those who had completely abandoned the world did not boast of their noble lineage, preferring one another, but being as if born from the womb of one and the same mother, the Church, all rejoiced in the same love of brotherhood. [Acts 4:33] -- And with great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. It distinguishes the order of teachers and the attentive listeners. For the multitude of believers, having despised their possessions, were bound together by the bond of charity. The apostles, shining with powers, revealed all the mysteries

of Christ. [Acts 4:36] -- Joseph, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles. I think this Barnabas is the same who later is read to be ordained as an apostle to the Gentiles with Paul. Hence, because he was a Cypriot by birth, after separating from Paul, he returned to his native island. Although some think he was a companion of Paul rather than the one who was established by lot with Matthias in the apostleship, they overlook the fact that, according to the more correct manuscripts, this Barnabas should be called Barsabas with a changed letter, and in the Book of Hebrew Names, this Barnabas is interpreted as the son of consolation, but the other as the son of quiet.

[Acts 4:36] -- Which means the Son of Consolation. Wherever the sacred Scriptures place the names of things or persons together with an interpretation, it undoubtedly signifies a more sacred meaning in those. He is rightly called the son of consolation, who, despising present things, is consoled by the hope of future things. For the Holy Spirit is therefore also called Paraclete because He grants consolation, that is, the joy of heavenly things, through the inner infusion of His gift to those who have pressure in the world. Similarly, blessed Peter is called Bar Jona, that is, the son of the dove, because of the same grace of the Spirit. [Acts 4:37] -- And he brought the price and laid it at the feet of the apostles. About this, Arator says: They prove that they should be deprived, what they avoid touching and teach that gold should be trampled, placed under the feet. From which earthly cares come to the hearts, similarly scattered on the ground.

Chapter 5

[Acts 5:3] -- Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart? In another translation, according to the Greek text, it reads: Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart? It should be noted here that no creature can fill the soul and mind of a man according to essence, but only the Creator Trinity. For it is only according to operation and the instinct of the will that the mind is filled with things that are created. Satan indeed fills the mind of someone and the chief part of the heart, not by entering into him and into his senses, and entering the access of the heart (so to speak), since this power is peculiar to divinity alone, but as a cunning, wicked, deceitful, and fraudulent deceiver, dragging the human soul into evil affections through thoughts and the incitements of vices, with which he himself is full. Satan thus filled Ananias's heart, not by entering himself, but by inserting his venom of malice.

[Acts 5:4] -- You have not lied to men but to God. Before, he had said he lied to the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is indeed God, and the error of Macedonius was condemned before it existed. [Acts 5:5] -- Hearing these words, Ananias fell down and expired. The severe sentence was given to the transgressor not for the sake of profit, but foresaw in spirit the future weeds that would adulterate the Church's simplicity with corrupt morals (from these, the most detestable race of the Sarabaites is said to have sprung, who, not abandoning their possessions, falsely pretend to keep apostolic strictness), he did not allow the culprits to be cured by repentance, but took care to completely uproot the harmful seed to instill fear in future generations. Subsequently it follows: [Acts 5:11] -- And great fear came upon the whole Church and upon all who heard these things. No one else dared to join them. The punishment of the two who fraudulently sought to join them provided an example to others.

[Acts 5:15] -- So that as Peter came along, at least his shadow might fall on some of them and they would be healed. At that time, Peter visibly raised the sick with the shadow of his body, and even now he does not cease to strengthen the infirmities of the faithful with the invisible shadow of his intercession. And since Peter is the type of the Church, he indeed walks upright himself, but by his shadow accompanying him he raises those that lie down, because the Church, with its mind and love

intending towards heavenly things, seemingly runs through the earth shadow-like, and here renews those by temporal sacraments and figures of heavenly things, whom it rewards there with perpetual gifts. Some connect to this place what the Lord said in the Gospel: He who believes in me will do the works that I do, and greater works than these will he do (John 14).

[Acts 5:17] -- But the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him, which is the sect of the Sadducees, etc. Heresy is called in Greek from election, because each one, having rejected the sayings of others, chose what he thought should be followed. But the Sadducees, who are called just (for they claimed for themselves what they were not, as we read below), entirely denying the resurrection of the body, said that the soul perishes with the flesh. They did not believe there was an angel or any spirit, and accepting only the five books of Moses, rejected the proclamations of the prophets. And therefore these chiefly supported the leaders in persecuting the apostles, being led by zeal, because those with great power and signs of miracles gave testimony to the resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. [Acts 5:19] -- But the angel of the Lord opened the doors of the prison by night, etc. So that Thomas might not doubt it was the Lord bearing flesh and bones, whom he had seen entering while the doors were closed, behold, He Himself with his companions, still clothed in mortal flesh, went out through closed doors.

[Acts 5:23] -- We found the prison indeed closed with all diligence, and the guards standing before the doors; but opening it, we found no one inside. Why, profane Jew, are you driven by blind madness, saying that the apostles stole the Lord from the tomb? Say, I ask, do you believe the same apostles were stolen from your closed prison by theft? [Acts 5:24] -- They were in doubt about what would happen to them. They were not willing to give themselves to faith even in this way. For inborn malice hardens an unfaithful heart even against manifest signs. [Acts 5:28] -- You want to bring this man’s blood upon us. The high priest forgot the obligation he had imprecated on himself and his own, saying: His blood be on us and on our children. [Acts 5:34] -- But a certain Pharisee named Gamaliel rose in the council. This Gamaliel, as Clement indicates, was a companion in faith with the apostles, but remaining with the Jews by their counsel, so that he might calm their madness in such a commotion.

[Acts 5:36] -- For before these days Theudas rose up, etc. This Theudas persuaded many, as Josephus reports, taking their possessions from the city, to occupy the banks of the Jordan. And since he was a magician, he claimed to be a prophet and that he could provide a passage through the divided stream by his command. But a troop of horsemen, by the order of the procurator Fadus, coming upon him, killed many, captured others, and brought his head back to Jerusalem. [Acts 5:37] -- After him rose up Judas the Galilean. Josephus also writes about this man from the city of Gamala, who, taking up with a certain Pharisee named Sadduc, urged

the people not to lose their freedom by paying taxes to the Romans, citing the law that service should be given only to the Lord and that those who brought tithes to the temple should not pay taxes to Caesar. This heresy grew so greatly that it even disturbed the Pharisees and a large part of the people, so that they believed it necessary to ask the Lord Christ whether it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not.

Chapter 6

[Acts 6:1] -- There was a complaint of the Greeks against the Hebrews. The cause of the complaint was that the Hebrews preferred their widows, as supposedly more learned, in the ministry over the widows of the Greeks. [Acts 6:2] -- It is not right for us to abandon the word of God and serve tables. About this, Arator: . . . . This place indicates that the offerings of the mind are better for an unlearned people than the dishes served to the body. [Acts 6:3] -- Therefore, brothers, select from among you seven reputable men, etc. Hence the apostles, or the successors of the apostles, have now decreed that throughout all the Churches there should be seven deacons who are of higher rank than the others, and who stand near the altar like columns of the altar, not without some mystery of the number seven. [Acts 6:8] -- Stephen, full of grace and strength, performed great wonders and signs among the people. But some from the synagogue, which was called the Synagogue of the Freedmen, etc., arose. Stephen, in Greek, is called Crowned in Latin. He anticipated in his name the reality of being crowned, humbly stoned, but sublimely crowned. In Hebrew, it is interpreted as your norm. Whose? Namely, of the subsequent martyrs, of whom he was the first to suffer, setting the example of dying for Christ.

[Acts 6:10] -- And they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. This is what the Lord Himself says to His martyrs: For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict. It was fitting that in the first martyr, what He deigned to promise to all who are betrayed for His name should be confirmed.

Chapter 7

[Acts 7:2] -- The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, etc. It should be noted, according to the words of Stephen, that it was not as it appears in Genesis, that God spoke to Abraham after the death of his father, who certainly died in Haran, where the son also lived with him; but before he dwelt in the same city, even then when he was in the region of Mesopotamia, of which it is a city. [Acts 7:3] -- ”Leave your country and your kindred and come into the land I will show you.” Then he left the land, etc. The land and kindred of Abraham refers to the homeland and race of the Chaldeans, from where he had long since left, who now lived in Mesopotamia, but because he left with hope of returning and longing, he hears from the Lord: ”Leave your country.” Not to physically move himself, which he had already done, but to remove the love of it from his mind. Therefore, what follows: Then he left the land of the Chaldeans, does not signify a physical departure, but a departure of the mind, by which he separated himself forever from the conversation and people of the Chaldeans. Because according to the belief of the Chroniclers, in the same year he left Chaldea, entered Mesopotamia, stayed in Haran, and was led into the promised land.

[Acts 7:6] -- For his seed shall be a stranger in a foreign land, and they shall subject them to slavery and mistreat them for four hundred years. It should not be understood as if he said that this seed would be mistreated or subjected to slavery for those four hundred years, but by a hyperbaton it should be read that his seed would be strangers for four hundred years, during part of which time slavery also occurred. For it is written: ”In Isaac shall your seed be called” (Gen. XXI), and from the year of Isaac’s birth to the year of the exodus from Egypt four hundred and five years are counted, which Scripture, in its manner, calls four hundred years, during which that seed would be strangers, either in the land of Canaan or in Egypt. It can also be understood that from Isaac’s fifth year, when through the son of the bondwoman, affliction began, the labor of four hundred years is counted.

[Acts 7:14] -- Joseph called his father Jacob and all his kin, seventy-five souls. He follows the Septuagint in saying this, but in the Hebrew truth, only seventy souls are found. And if you wish to count the series of souls in Genesis, adding Jacob

himself and Joseph with his two sons who were in Egypt, you will find only seventy souls. [Acts 7:16] -- And he died and our fathers, and they were carried over to Shechem. Concerning Joseph alone, Scripture relates that his bones were transferred from Egypt and buried in Shechem. But from these blessed Stephen's words and from the writings of Saint Jerome, who lived in those places, it should be noted that the other patriarchs were also buried there, although the memory of Joseph is deservedly more celebrated, since he himself commanded that this be done with his bones, and the city itself belonged to his tribe. Indeed, Jerome in the history of blessed Paula relates thus: "He passed (he says) through Shechem, not as many mistakenly read Sichar, which is now called Neapolis, and around Jacob's well, built on the side of Mount Garizim, over which the Lord sat, he entered the church." And soon after: "And from there (he says) turning, he saw the tombs of the twelve patriarchs." Likewise in the book about the best kind of translation: "The twelve patriarchs are not buried in Arbes, but in Shechem." But understandably, what follows troubles:

[Acts 7:16] -- And they were placed in the tomb which Abraham bought for a sum of silver from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem. For Genesis teaches that Abraham bought the place of the tomb from Ephron, the son of Zohar the Hittite, in Cariatharba, for four hundred silver shekels, in which Abraham himself, Isaac, Jacob, and Adam the first man were buried. And also Jacob, returning from Mesopotamia, received a portion of the field near the city of Shechem, where he pitched his tents, from Hamor, the father of Shechem, for a hundred lambs given. Therefore, Abraham did not buy the sepulcher from Hamor the Shechemite but from Ephron the Hittite, in which the twelve patriarchs were not buried, but in Shechem, as we have said. However, blessed Stephen, speaking commonly, follows the common opinion more in his speech. For combining two narratives together, he aims not so much at the proper order of the surrounding history as at the cause in question, which was being discussed. For he who was accused of teaching against the holy place and the law proceeds to show how Jesus Christ is shown from the law to be promised, and that they did not choose to serve Moses then, nor the Lord now. These things I have said as I could, not prejudicing a better judgment, if one be present. Moreover, where it is said: From the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem, it is written in the Greek example: From the sons of Hamor, who was in Shechem, which seems to agree more with the history of Genesis, though it may have happened that the same Hamor had a father and son named Shechem.

[Acts 7:17] -- But when the time of the promise which God had confessed to Abraham was drawing near, namely that which was said: And after these things, they will go out and serve me in this place. [Acts 7:27] -- Who made you a ruler and judge over us? In his entire speech, he convicted them, already then being contrary to the law and Moses. [Acts 7:37] -- This is Moses who said to the sons of Israel: God will raise up for you a prophet from among your brothers, like me. Like me, visible

in the flesh, but more wonderful in majesty and more terrible in majesty than I. He says, lest the doctrine of Christ be thought new and foreign, it is Moses himself, whom your fathers did not wish to obey, who preaches and says that he will come in the form of a man and will give the precepts of life to all souls.

[Acts 7:42] -- Did you offer to me victims and sacrifices for forty years in the desert? Although they offered libations to the Lord out of necessity, they are said to have truly served idols with their hearts turned away, from the time when they transformed gold into the head of a calf. For afterwards, we read that they offered certain things to the Lord, not out of will, but as we learn from this place, out of the fear of punishments and the destruction of those who fell because of idols. However, the Lord regards not what is offered, but the will of the one offering. Therefore, wherever there was an occasion, they always turned back to Egypt in their hearts. [Acts 7:43] -- And you took up the tabernacle of Moloch. Although, he says, you appeared to bring victims and sacrifices to the tabernacle of the Lord, yet in your whole intention of heart, you embraced the shrine of Moloch. But Moloch, or Melchom, as it is often read, is the idol of the Ammonites, which is interpreted as your king.

[Acts 7:43] -- And the star of your god Remphan. You have forsaken (he says) the true and living God, and you have taken the star of Remphan, that is, your own creation, as God. But it signifies Lucifer, to whose worship the Saracen people were enslaved in honor of Venus. And because Remphan (as I said) means either your creation or your rest, the prophet subsequently added, and said: [Acts 7:43] -- The figures which you have made to worship them. It is understood, you have adopted them conjointly. [Acts 7:43] -- And I will carry you beyond Babylon. Because of these (he says) sacrileges, you will be taken captive not only into Babylon but also beyond Babylon. Nor is the first martyr to be thought erring because he said beyond Babylon instead of beyond Damascus, as written in the prophet (Amos V). He considered the understanding more than the word, because they were led into Babylon beyond Damascus, just as beyond Babylon.

[Acts 7:44] -- The tabernacle of testimony was with our fathers in the desert. Because they said he was acting against the holy place, here he shows that the Lord does not greatly esteem decorated stone but desires the splendor of heavenly souls. Where he wants it to be understood that just as the tabernacle was in the wilderness before the construction of the temple, so they should understand the temple itself to be destroyed when a better state succeeds. As Jeremiah once foretold, saying: Do not trust in lying words, saying: The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord (Jerem. VII). And after some time: I will do to this house, in which my name is called, and in which you have trust, as I did to Shiloh, where my name dwelled at the beginning, and I will cast you away from my face (Ibid.). [Acts 7:49] -- Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. This is not to be understood carnally,

as if God has members placed in heaven and on earth, as we do when we sit, but to indicate that he is within and above all, he claimed that heaven is his throne and the earth his footstool. To show that he encompasses everything, elsewhere he declares that he measures the heavens with his palm, and the earth he encloses with a handful. Spiritually, however, heaven suggests the saints, and the earth the sinners, because God inhabits and presides over the former while condemning and casting down the latter.

[Acts 7:49] -- Or what is the place of my rest? Not a golden or marble earthly dwelling place, but as the Prophet follows: Upon whom does my Spirit rest, if not upon the humble and quiet one, who trembles at my words (Isaiah LXVI)? [Acts 7:53] -- You who received the law as ordained by angels. The law is indeed ordained by angels, in the hand of a mediator. [Acts 7:56] -- Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. Since the Lord Christ is the perfect Son of both God and man, why did the blessed martyr prefer to call Him the Son of man rather than the Son of God, when it would seem to bring more glory to call Him the Son of God rather than the Son of man, except that by this testimony the unbelief of the Jews would be confounded, as they remembered that they crucified a man and did not wish to believe Him to be God? Therefore, to strengthen the patience of the blessed martyr, the gate of the heavenly kingdom is opened, and lest the innocent man being stoned waver on earth, the crucified God-man appears crowned in heaven. Hence, because standing is the posture of one fighting or assisting, he rightly saw Him standing at the right hand of God, whom he had as a helper among the persecuting men. Nor does it seem discordant that Mark describes Him as sitting at the right hand of God, which is the position of one judging, because even now He invisibly judges all things, and in the end He will come as the visible judge of all.

[Acts 7:58] -- And they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the Lord suffered outside the gate, who chose us from the world into His heavenly kingdom and glory, and Stephen, as if a stranger to the world, is stoned outside the city. For he did not have a lasting city here, but sought the one to come with his whole mind. And by just change of things, the martyr directs his gaze from the world's heart to the heavens, the persecutor of hard neck sends his hands to the stones. Hence Arator says: "Rebellious Judea, you deliriously seize stones against Stephen, you who [will] always be stony in your harsh crime." [Acts 7:60] -- But kneeling down, he cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." For himself indeed he prayed standing, for his enemies he knelt, because their greater iniquity demanded the greater remedy of supplication. And the wondrous virtue of the blessed martyr, who was so fervent with zeal that he openly reproached the guilt of their disbelief to those he was held by, so burned with love that even in death he prayed for those by whom he was killed.

Chapter 8

[Acts 8:1] -- And they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria. This is what the Lord Himself commanded: When they persecute you in one city, flee to another (Matt. X). For it was by His will that the occasion of tribulation became the seed-bed of the Gospel. [Acts 8:6] -- But the crowds paid attention to what was being said by Philip. From this chapter and from the story of the Samaritan woman, it is proven that this nation was prompt in spirit to believe. [Acts 8:13] -- Then Simon himself also believed. Either he truly believed in the Lord, having been overcome by the words and virtue of the blessed Philip, or, as it is more credible, he pretended to believe until he received baptism, so that, because he was very eager for praise, in such a way that he wanted to be considered the Christ, as the stories tell, he might learn from Him the arts by which he performed miracles. This is also said to have been done by his successors, who, initiated in their author's malevolent arts, customarily entered the Church by any deceit and secretly acquired baptism.

[Acts 8:14] -- They sent Peter and John to them. Arator beautifully explains this: Peter often makes John his companion, because the Church favors the virgin. [Acts 8:17] -- It should be noted, however, that Philip, who evangelized Samaria, was one of the seven. For if he had been an Apostle, he would certainly have been able to lay hands on them so that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For this is reserved to bishops alone. For presbyters, whether outside the bishop's presence or in his presence, are allowed to baptize and anoint the baptized with chrism, but only with chrism consecrated by the bishop; however, they are not to anoint the forehead with the same oil, which is reserved to bishops alone when they impart the Paraclete Spirit to the baptized. [Acts 8:20] -- "Your money perish with you," and other things. When holy men pronounce a sentence of cursing, they do not erupt from the desire of vengeance, but from the justice of examination. For they see the subtle judgment of God inwardly, and recognize the evils rising outwardly that ought to be carried by a curse; and they do not sin in the curse, since they do not disagree with the inner judgment. For when the innocence of the one cursing remains, and yet the curse swallows up the one who is cursed to destruction, from the outcome of both sides it is gathered that the sentence received from one in-

ternal judge is hurled at the guilty one. Thus Simon, who received the curse from Peter, perished by eternal damnation. And below, Bar-Jesus, rebuked by Paul, was immediately deprived of common light.

[Acts 8:23] -- For I see you are in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity. Therefore, the Holy Spirit descended in a dove to teach those who would receive Him to be simple. For he who retains the gall of bitterness in his heart, however baptized he may seem to be, is not freed from the bonds of his iniquity, but as if purged for a single moment at the hour of baptism, he is soon oppressed seven times more fiercely by a demon. Therefore, in vain does he attempt to buy the grace of the Spirit, who has taken care to divest himself with a raven's mind. [Acts 8:26] -- Arise and go toward the south. It is well to seek, find, and wash at noon, the one who, burning with the devotion of his heart, merited to be consecrated by God as a kind of first-fruits of the nations. In him that special saying of the Psalmist is fulfilled: Ethiopia will stretch out her hands to God.

[Acts 8:26] -- To the way that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza, this is desert. Not the road, but Gaza is called desert. For that old Gaza, which was once the boundary of the Canaanites near Egypt, was utterly destroyed, and another in its place was built elsewhere. This allegorically represents the people of the Gentiles, formerly deserted by the worship of God, nor cultivated by the preaching of any prophets. The way descending from Jerusalem to Gaza opens the spring of salvation; it is the Lord Jesus Christ, who says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John XIV). He descended from the heavenly Jerusalem to our infirmities, and whitened the blackness of our guilt in the water of baptism. [Acts 8:27] -- And behold, a man from Ethiopia, a powerful eunuch. He is called a man for the virtue and integrity of his mind; and not undeservedly, as he had so much zeal for the Scriptures that he did not cease to read them even on the way; and he bore so much love in religion that, leaving the royal court, he came from the farthest parts of the world to the temple of the Lord. Hence, while justly seeking an interpreter of the reading, he found Christ whom he was seeking; and, as Jerome says, found more in the desert fountain of the Church than in the gilded temple of the synagogue. For there, as Jeremiah in amazement proclaims, the Ethiopian changed his skin, that is, washed from the filth of sins, he ascended whitened from the washing of Jesus.

[Acts 8:27] -- The queen of the Ethiopians, Candace. And in the Book of Kings, we read that the Queen of the South came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon. For, indeed, it was the custom of that nation always to be ruled by women, and to call them Candace. [Acts 8:27] -- Who was over all her treasures. The queen of the Ethiopians, sending her treasurer to Jerusalem, designates the Church of the nations, which will offer the Lord gifts of virtues and faith. The etymology of the name also fits. For Candace can be interpreted as changed from Hebrew. It is indeed she to whom it is said in the psalm inscribed: For those who

will be changed: Hear, O daughter, and see, and incline your ear, and forget your people and your father's house (Psalm 45), and the rest. [Acts 8:29] -- And the Spirit said to Philip. The Spirit spoke in Philip's heart. For the Spirit of God, as it were, appears to speak words to us, with a hidden force prompting us to do what ought to be done.

[Acts 8:32] -- As a sheep led to the slaughter. Just as a sheep, when led to sacrifice, does not resist, so he suffered of his own free will. Or in a higher sense, just as the lamb was accustomed to be sacrificed at Passover, so Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed (1 Corinthians 5). [Acts 8:32] -- And as a lamb before its shearer is silent. He not only redeemed us with his blood but also covered us with his wool, so that we, shivering in our unbelief, might be warmed by his garment, and we might hear the Apostle speaking to us: As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Thus, he did not open his mouth, since in his passion he wished to answer Pilate and the chief priests briefly, and Herod not at all. [Acts 8:33] -- In his humiliation, his judgment was taken away. Because the judge of all did not find truth in judgment, but, without any fault, was condemned by the clamor of the Jews and the voice of Pilate.

[Acts 8:33] -- Who shall declare his generation? Either it is to be understood of his divinity that it is impossible to know the mysteries of his divine birth, of which the Father speaks: I have begotten you from the womb before the morning star (Psalm 110); or of the Virgin's birth, which can be explained with difficulty. To Mary, seeking the reason, it is said through the angel: The Holy Spirit will come upon you. So either the angel or the evangelist should declare only the sacraments of his birth, who is a rare narrator. [Acts 8:33] -- For his life will be taken from the earth. So that he would live not on earth, but in heaven. [Acts 8:35] -- But Philip opening his mouth, etc. Philip interpreted means 'the mouth of a lamp,' and it is a beautiful sense that the mouth of a lamp opened its mouth, while it brought forth the obscure things of prophecy into the light of knowledge. Although these circumlocutions according to history could signify that his speech at that time would be somewhat longer.

[Acts 8:36] -- They came to a certain water. Even today there is a village called Bethsoro in the tribe of Judah, on the twentieth milestone of those going from Chebron of Elias. Near it, a fountain bubbling up at the roots of a mountain is absorbed by the soil from which it springs. In this place, the eunuch was baptized by Philip. [Acts 8:36] -- Who prohibits me from being baptized? And he commanded the chariot to stop, and the rest. Here another translation according to the Greek exemplar has a few more verses where it is written: Behold water, who prohibits me from being baptized? But Philip said to him: If you believe with all your heart, you will be saved. And responding, he said: I believe in Christ, the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stop, and the rest. I believe, therefore, that our own

interpreter initially translated these verses as well, but they were later omitted due to the fault of the scribes.

[Acts 8:39] -- The Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away. There are some who testify that an angel did this in the Holy Spirit, as Jerome reports. [Acts 8:40] -- He preached to all the cities until he came to Caesarea. He says of Palestine, where it is described below that he had a house, which is shown to this day, as well as the room of his four prophesying virgin daughters.

Chapter 9

[Acts 9:1] -- Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord. Evidently present by afflicting with murders, and deterring the absent with threats. [Acts 9:4] -- Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? He did not say: Why do you persecute my members? but why do you persecute me? because he still suffers the unrighteous in his own body, which is the Church. He even declares that benefits bestowed upon his members are done unto him when he says: I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat (Matt. 25). And he added in explanation: As long as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me (Ibid.). [Acts 9:5] -- I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. He did not say: I am God, I am the Son of God, but he says: Accept the weakness of my humility and lay down the scales of your pride.

[Acts 9:6] -- Rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you must do. He did not immediately show him what was to be done but advised that it would be heard later in the city, so that he would stand more firmly in good things as he had previously fallen completely from his former error. [Acts 9:8] -- And when his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. He could not see well again unless he was first properly blinded, and excluding his own confounding wisdom, would he commit himself to faith in all things. [Acts 9:9] -- And he was without sight for three days. Because he had not believed that the Lord had conquered death by rising on the third day, he is now instructed by his own example, who would change the darkness of three days with the returning light. [Acts 9:16] -- For I will show him how much he must suffer for my name. He should not (he says) be feared as a persecutor, but rather be embraced as a brother, who is ready to endure the adversities which he had inflicted upon the saints, together with the saints.

[Acts 9:18] -- And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes. It is said that the entire body of the dragon is covered with scales. Because the Jews are called serpents and brood of vipers, those who followed their perfidy had covered the eyes of their heart as if with the skin of a serpent. But when the scales fell from his eyes under the hand of Ananias, it was shown in his face that he had already received true light in his mind. [Acts 9:25] -- But his disciples took him by night. That is, the

disciples of Christ. For in Greek, there is no addition of ”his”, but only ”disciples” so that they are understood generally as disciples of Christ or the Church. For Paul had not yet been read as having made disciples but only as having confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus. [Acts 9:25] -- They let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket. This kind of escape is still preserved in the Church today when someone, surrounded by the snares of the ancient enemy or the traps of this world, is not saved by his hope and faith. For the wall of Damascus, which is interpreted as drinking blood, is the adversity of the world. King Aretas, who is interpreted as descent, is understood as the devil. The basket, which is usually made of rushes and palm leaves, signifies the conjunction of faith and hope. For the rush signifies the greenness of faith, and the palm signifies the hope of eternal life. Therefore, whoever sees himself surrounded by the wall of adversity, let him quickly ascend by the basket of virtues by which he may escape.

[Acts 9:26] -- When he had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples. Let us not believe that he came to the apostles in Jerusalem immediately after being baptized, but as he himself wrote to the Galatians, first he went to Arabia and then returned again to Damascus. Then after three years, coming to Jerusalem, he saw Peter and stayed with him for fifteen days. But he did not see any other of the apostles, except James the brother of the Lord. And then, as Luke also follows, he came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. Whether he endured the plots in Damascus the first or second time is not easily evident. For it can also be understood the second time since it is said that after many days were fulfilled, the Jews made a plot to kill him. Therefore, it seems that Luke omits Arabia because he did not preach there, according to what he himself later said to King Agrippa: because I preached first in Damascus, and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and to the Gentiles.

[Acts 9:27] -- But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. This is that Barnabas, a Cypriot by race, a Levite, who is said above to have brought the price of his field and laid it at the feet of the apostles. [Acts 9:29] -- He also spoke and disputed with the Greeks. It is noted that he taught Greeks in Jerusalem and Jews in Damascus, which is a city of the Gentiles, lest perhaps it signifies that Gentiles are to be helped into the city of God and Jews are to fall into the perfidy of the Gentiles. As Isaiah says: And Lebanon shall be turned into Carmel, and Carmel shall be counted as a forest (Isaiah 29). [Acts 9:33] -- He found there a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years. This Aeneas signifies the human race, languishing previously in the pleasure of infirmities, but healed by the work and word of the apostles. For since the world itself is raised up by four directions, and the course of the age is varied by four yearly seasons, anyone who embraces present and fleeting joys is laid out powerless on a bed, counting, as it were, the twice four years in number. Indeed, the bed itself is sloth, where the sick and weak mind rests, that is, in the pleasure of the body and all worldly delight.

[Acts 9:34] -- Aeneas, the Lord Jesus Christ heals you. Rise and make your own bed. He who had been cured of paralysis was immediately commanded to rise and make his bed, spiritually suggesting that whoever perceives the foundation of faith in their heart should not only shake off the torpor in which they previously lay fatigued, but also prepare good works in which they can rest. [Acts 9:36] -- In Joppa, there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is interpreted as Dorcas. That is, gazelle or doe. It signifies souls elevated by the pursuit of virtues but contemptible in the opinion of men. For indeed, blessed Luke would not enhance the interpretation of the name unless he recognized that there was a great mystery in it. For a gazelle or doe are animals similar in nature but differing in size, residing in high mountains, and though seen from afar, they can be discerned by all who come. Hence, they are called dorcades in Greek from the sharpness of their sight. Thus, undoubtedly, the saints dwelling high in the merits of their works, sharply focus their minds on heavenly contemplation, and always vigilantly guard themselves with cautious circumspection. For although these animals are clean according to the law, they are timid and unwarlike, as Martial, expressing their nature, says: The boar is feared for its tusk, the stag defends with its antlers; the harmless does, what are we but prey? Does it not clearly signify those who strive to live simply and walk with a discerning step in action, as if advancing with a cloven hoof and continuously meditating on the word of God? If perchance, through ignorance or weakness, they incur spiritual death, they merit to be revived for the integrity of their sound intention, as it is proved to have happened with Peter himself, to whom what is written about Dorcas can most rightly be applied.

[Acts 9:37] -- And it happened that in those days she became sick and died. For when the saints, through the frailty of mortal nature, commit some wrong, they fall, as it were, into sudden infirmity in the days of their good works. But when they immediately take to tears, they ascend with hope of recovering their virtue, invoking the help of the saints, recalling their good deeds which they had interrupted, they indeed do what follows. [Acts 9:37] -- After they washed her, they laid her in an upper chamber. And other things, which are narrated about Peter’s summoning and the showing of Dorcas’s alms. [Acts 9:39] -- And all the widows stood around him weeping. Widows are the pious thoughts of the penitent soul, which for a time had abandoned the strength of their previous senses, as a wife’s governance, and who must most humbly intercede for the sinning soul.

[Acts 9:39] -- And showing him the tunics and garments, which Dorcas used to make for them. They did not entreat for the deceased with their voices, but by her own works, for almsgiving delivers not only from the second, but also from the first death. [Acts 9:40] -- He said: Tabitha, rise. She opened her eyes, and upon seeing Peter, she sat up. The most just order of the one arising is that she first opens the eyes of the mind, and then, upon hearing Peter’s voice, she sits up, reclaiming the light of her circumspection which she had lost and lives according

to the teaching of those who had helped her. [Acts 9:41] -- Giving her his hand, he raised her. Tabitha rises at the touch of Peter’s hand because a soul languishing in sins recovers in no better way than by the examples of the saints.

Chapter 10

[Acts 10:1] -- Now there was a certain man in Caesarea, named Cornelius, etc. One attains virtues not through virtues to faith, but through faith to virtues, as blessed Pope Gregory explains. For Cornelius (he says), whose alms were praised by an angel's witness before baptism, came not to faith through works, but to works through faith. For he had believed in the true God even before baptism, whom was he praying to? Or how had almighty God heard him, if he had not revealed himself to be perfected in goodness? Therefore, he knew the creator God of all, but he was ignorant that His almighty Son had been incarnated. He had the faith whose prayers and alms could be pleasing. By his good actions, he merited to know God perfectly, and to believe in the mystery of the Incarnation of His Only Begotten Son, so that he might come to the sacrament of baptism. Therefore, through faith, he came to works, but through works, he was solidified in faith.

[Acts 10:3] -- He clearly saw in a vision at about the ninth hour of the day, etc. He rightly receives the oracle to seek baptism at the ninth hour because in the death of Him, who surrendered His spirit at the ninth hour, he was to be baptized. [Acts 10:5] -- And now send men to Joppa. When alms and prayers had been accepted, immediately the teacher of salvation is ordered to be summoned, clearly implying that through those alms and prayers, he sought from the Lord the full knowledge of his salvation. [Acts 10:7] -- He called two of his domestic servants and a soldier who feared the Lord. Cornelius sent three to Peter, because the Gentiles destined to believe overcame Europe, Asia, and Africa with apostolic faith, partly by military efforts, that is, the urgency of preaching, partly by attending to domestic affairs. Note that one soldier and two domestics were sent. The stronger they are, the fewer you will find among the members of the Church; there are more who know how to hear the word than those who know how to speak it.

[Acts 10:9] -- Peter went up to the housetop. This signifies that the Church, leaving behind earthly desires, will have its conversation in the heavens. [Acts 10:9] -- To pray about the sixth hour. At the sixth hour, Peter hungered amidst the prayers, certainly for the salvation of the world, which the Lord in the sixth age of the world came to seek and save. He also wished to indicate this when at the same hour of

the day, he thirsted by the well of the Samaritan woman. [Acts 10:11] -- And a certain vessel descended as it were a great sheet. That vessel signifies the Church endowed with incorruptible faith. For a moth does not consume linen, which corrupts other garments. Therefore, whoever wishes to belong to the mystery of the Catholic Church, let him exclude from his heart the corruption of evil thoughts, and thus be incorruptibly firm in faith, so that he is not gnawed in mind by wicked thoughts as if by moths. Alternatively: The moth is a heretic, wishing to corrupt the garment of the Lord but not being able by the dispensation of the Lord. This was also prefigured in the tunic of the Lord which the soldiers did not dare to tear.

[Acts 10:11] -- Submitted by heaven to earth at four corners. The four corners, by which the sheet was hanging, designate the four regions of the world to which the Church extends. For she is indeed the city of our God in His holy mountain, expanding the rejoicings of all the earth. For what is submitted from heaven indicates that it is preserved and increased by the grace of the Holy Spirit alone. Whence John says in the Apocalypse: I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God (Rev. 21). The four corners can also prefigure the evangelists, through whom the Church is imbued and exalted by heavenly grace. [Acts 10:12] -- In which were all kinds of four-footed creatures and reptiles of the earth, and birds of the air. Those animals are all the nations impure by errors, but cleansed by the thrice immersion, that is, by the mystery of the Holy Trinity in baptism, which, leaving the image of man, took on the forms of beasts and serpents. Thus it is said to Herod because of his deceitful wickedness: Go tell that fox (Luke 13). And to the Pharisees: Brood of vipers (Luke 3). And to the lustful: Horses maddened in pursuit of mares (Jer. 5). And of the shameless: Do not give what is holy to the dogs (Matt. 7). And of the voluptuous: Do not throw your pearls before swine (ibid.). And of the proud and deceitful: The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests (Matt. 8). And generally of all: And man being in honor, that is, made in the image of God, did not understand, was compared to senseless animals (Ps. 49). But Solomon shows the true man, that is, incorrupt: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man (Eccl. 12).

[Acts 10:13] -- Rise, Peter, kill and eat. He says, rise to prepare for evangelization. Kill in the nations what they were, and make them what you are. For he who eats food outside takes it into his own body. Therefore, he commands that the nations placed outside through unbelief, with their past life killed, be incorporated into the society of the Church, which Peter signifies. According to what the Apostle Paul says about himself: For I through the law died to the law, that I might live to God and Christ. And again: It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me (Gal. 2). But those who are surrounded by heretics are as if devoured alive by death. [Acts 10:14] -- Because I have never eaten anything common and unclean. The people of the Jews, boasting themselves as part of God, call common foods those which all men use. For example, pork, oysters, hares, and such animals which do not split

the hoof, nor chew the cud, nor have scales among fish. But unclean foods are said to be the flesh of beasts or reptiles, which are not edible by any mortals.

[Acts 10:16] -- Now this happened three times, because the mystery of the Holy Trinity was to be preached by the twelve apostles to the four parts of the world, therefore four lines were let down from heaven a third time. Or as blessed Ambrose interprets, the figure repeated three times expressed the operation of the Trinity. And therefore, in mysteries, a triple question is put forth and a triple confirmation is celebrated, nor can anyone be purified except by a triple confession. Hence, Peter himself in the Gospel is asked three times whether he loves the Lord, so that by a triple response he might loosen the chains that he bound by denying the Lord. These things were shown to Peter opportunely, when Cornelius the gentile sent to summon him, so that he would not hesitate to deliver the Christian faith to the uncircumcised. For he was like those animals shown in the vessel by the Gospel. Hence also by the Holy Spirit he is confirmed to do the same.

[Acts 10:16] -- And immediately the vessel was received into heaven. After the third submission, the sheet is taken up to heaven, because after the conversation of this world, in which the Church sojourns purified by faith and baptism, the blessed and eternal heavenly habitation follows. [Acts 10:19] -- The Spirit said to him: Behold, three men seek you. He heard this in his mind from the Spirit, not in the ear of the flesh. [Acts 10:20] -- Rise therefore and go down, and go with them. He is commanded to go down from the roof and go to preach, that the Church may not only watch for the Lord by climbing high, but also may preach the same to the infirm and to those still placed outside, as it were, but knocking at the door of Simon, that is, obedience, by returning to the active life, as if rising from bed. According to what the Lord said: You will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man (John 1). Of which it is rightly remembered that his house was placed by the sea. For the sea designates the turbulent tumults and furies of the world, where wicked men, like very greedy fish, pursue and devour one another. But the conversation of the saints is in heaven (Philippians 3), who, even if the earthly house of this habitation is dissolved, have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (2 Corinthians 5).

[Acts 10:21] -- Behold, I am he whom you seek. What is the reason for which you have come? The Spirit told him that soldiers were present, and he was silent about why they had come, because to preserve the humility of the human mind, sometimes the Spirit of prophecy touches on part and does not touch on part. [Acts 10:25] -- And it happened that when Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and falling at his feet, worshiped him. By his bodily gesture, Cornelius showed what he had inwardly in his heart of devotion. For the listener met his teacher, who receives the word of faith with a pure heart, attentive ear, and eager desire. For he who is slowly drawn to believe is as if he were raised by his teacher from lying down. But

he who, blushing at the stains of his life, falling on his face shows signs of humility and modesty, rightly merits to be raised by his teacher.

[Acts 10:26] -- Peter, however, lifted him up, saying: Stand up; I too am a man. For the holiness of action has deserved the equality of communion. For in the fault of Ananias and Sapphira, the crime revealed the right of authority's vengeance. [Acts 10:28] -- And God showed me that no man should be called common or unclean. He undoubtedly showed this when the angelic voice sounded: What God has purified, do not call common. [Acts 10:30] -- From the fourth day until this hour, I was praying in my house at the ninth hour, and behold, a man stood before me, and so on. In Greek and in some Latin manuscripts it is written thus: From the fourth day until this hour I was fasting, and praying from the sixth hour to the ninth, and behold, a man, and so on. It was very appropriate that he who extended his prayer for three hours from the sixth to the ninth should be heard. At which time the Lord himself, whom he beseeched, prayed with outstretched hands on the cross for the salvation of the whole world.

[Acts 10:36] -- He sent the word to the children of Israel, announcing peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. It appears (he says) that God is no respecter of persons, because He sent His only begotten Son, who is the Lord and Creator of all, to make peace with the human race, in whose name, as the Prophets attest, the remission of sins should be received not only by the Jews but by all who believe. [Acts 10:37] -- You know the word which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and so on. He briefly included everything that is recited in the Creed: that Jesus is the Christ, that he is Lord of all, that he was sent to reconcile the world to God, that he was heralded by the voice of John, that he was anointed with the Holy Spirit, that through miracles he was declared to have God dwelling in him, that he was crucified and resurrected from the dead, and appeared to his followers, that he will come as the judge of all at the end, and that through faith, he will also spread his Church throughout the whole world.

[Acts 10:38] -- How God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and power. Another edition says: As God anointed Him. Hence John preached Jesus, as God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit, then indeed when he said: He Himself will baptize you with the Holy Spirit (Matthew III). And again: Because I saw the Spirit descending like a dove upon Him (John I). Therefore, Jesus was anointed not with visible oil, but with the gift of grace, which is signified by the visible ointment with which the Church anoints the baptized. Yet He was not then anointed with the Holy Spirit when it descended upon Him as a dove after His baptism. For then He deigned to prefigure His body, that is, His Church, in which the baptized especially receive the Holy Spirit. But He is to be understood to have been anointed with that mystical and invisible anointing at the time when the Word of God was made flesh, that is, when human nature was united with the Word of God in the womb of the virgin

without any precedents of meritorious good works so that it became one person with Him. For this reason, we confess Him born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary.

[Acts 10:38] -- Because God was with Him. That is, the Father with the Son. For it is better to understand it thus than to indicate that the divinity of the Son cohabitated with the man whom He assumed, lest we seem to duplicate the person of Christ and fall into the dogma of Nestorius. [Acts 10:41] -- For us who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead. Here blessed Peter expounds what is not recited in the Gospel, namely, that after the resurrection, he drank with the Lord. Unless perhaps we believe it was indicated there where he says: Until I drink it new with you in the house of My Father. [Acts 10:44] -- While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. Then they asked him to stay with them for some days. Lest it be doubted that baptism should be given to the Gentiles, it was confirmed by the testimony of the Holy Spirit, which customarily sanctifies the waters of the font, in a new order of precedence, which it never happened with the Jews, as occurred once for the testimony of the Gentiles' faith.

[Acts 10:48] -- And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. And the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. Since the rule of the Church is that believers are to be baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity, it is asked how Luke, throughout the entire text of this book, testifies that baptism is given only in the name of Jesus Christ. Blessed Ambrose resolved this by saying that the mystery is fulfilled through the unity of the name. For whether you say Christ, you have designated both God the Father, who anointed the Son, and the very Son who was anointed, and the Spirit by whom he was anointed; for it is written: Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit; whether you say Father, and his Son, and Spirit, you indicate equally in the mouth if you even comprehend it in your heart; or if you say Spirit, you name both God the Father, from whom the Spirit proceeds, and the Son, because the Spirit is also of the Son. Hence, that authority may also be joined to reason, Scripture indicates that we can rightly be baptized in the Spirit as well, with the Lord saying: But you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5). And the Apostle says: For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body (1 Cor. 12:13). Elsewhere: It is particularly fitting for us to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, since as the Apostle says: For as many of you as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death, etc. (Rom. 6:3).

Chapter 11

[Acts 11:6] -- And I saw the four-footed animals of the earth, and beasts, and reptiles, and birds of the sky, etc. I am amazed how these things are interpreted concerning certain foods prohibited by the old law but now allowed to be eaten, when neither serpents nor reptiles can be eaten, nor did Peter understand it this way, but that all people are equally called to the Gospel of Christ, and no one is impure by nature. For he was not rebuked for eating beasts but for associating with Gentiles, he explained the mystery of this vision. [Acts 11:12] -- But these six brothers also came with me. Beautifully, the testimony of the seven-fold number of brothers is the outpouring of the sevenfold grace of the Holy Spirit. Elsewhere. Because the world was formed in six days, the works are shown to be complete by the six brothers. They well accompany the teacher when they demonstrate to their listeners examples of perfect operation during words of exhortation.

[Acts 11:18] -- And they glorified God, saying: So then, God has given even the Gentiles repentance unto life. This is what we read in the book of blessed Job: From the north comes gold, and terrifying praise to God (Job 37:22). Because first the splendor of faith arises from the cold heart of the Gentiles, and for this unexpected faith, Judea glorifies God with fearful praise. [Acts 11:19] -- They traveled as far as Phoenicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch, etc. Here already, after the revelation of the Gospel sheet, in which the holy animals rested softly in hope from above, the affairs of the Church began to increase, with the Gospel being preached through foreign provinces, islands, and cities, not only to the Jews but also to the Gentiles. [Acts 11:25] -- But he set out for Tarsus to search for Saul. For it was said earlier that Saul would be secretly sent from Jerusalem to Tarsus.

[Acts 11:28] -- And one of them named Agabus, rising up, signified by the Spirit that there would be a great famine. Agabus can be interpreted as a messenger of tribulation, who, according to his name, both predicts the general famine here and later the bonds to the apostle Paul. [Acts 11:29] -- They decided to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. They knew that in Judea, and especially in Jerusalem, the famine would rage more fiercely. There, the poor saints, who, having sold their possessions, houses, and fields, brought the prices to the apostles, did not engage

much further in acquiring wealth. But some were also deprived of their property by the incredulous Jews because of their confession of faith. To these, the Apostle says: ”And you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property” (Hebrews 10). Among these charitable acts, the religious deed of Helena, queen of Adiabene, is remembered, who, having bought grain from Egypt, generously ministered to the needs of the Jerusalemites. Hence, she also earned an honorable burial before the gates of the same city.

Chapter 12

[Acts 12:1] -- Moreover, at that time, the great king Herod sent. Not at the time of the famine, which historical accounts refer to as happening in the fourth year of Claudius, since Herod died in the third year of the same Claudius, but undoubtedly at the time when the offerings were being carried to Jerusalem. Nor should we think that Herod, who was a tetrarch and later became a king, is designated in this chapter. For Josephus reports that Caius, upon taking the throne, immediately handed the leadership of the Jews to this Herod, son of Aristobulus, whom he nevertheless calls Agrippa, along with the tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias. And in the fourth, which is the last year of his rule, he similarly bestowed it upon the same Herod. But he condemned that Herod, who had either been the instigator of John's death or had been involved in the passion of the Lord, to perpetual exile after suffering many diseases. Furthermore, this Herod or Agrippa, in the third year of Claudius and the seventh year of his reign, having been struck by an angel, left the kingdom to Agrippa, his son. Aristobulus, however, whom he mentioned, is the one who, along with his brother Alexander, had been killed by the treacherous father, that is, the elder Herod, under whom the Lord was born.

[Acts 12:2] -- He killed James, the brother of John, with the sword. Clement of Alexandria reports a certain story about this James, which is worth remembering. And he (Clement says) who had brought him to the judge for martyrdom (namely James), was also moved and confessed himself to be a Christian. They were both led together to punishment. And as they were being led on the road, he asked James to grant him forgiveness. But James, after hesitating a little, said, "Peace be with you." And he kissed him. And thus they were both beheaded together. [Acts 12:4] -- Delivering him to four squads of soldiers. Just as a centurion has a hundred soldiers under him, so does a squad of soldiers have soldiers under him. [Acts 12:7] -- And striking the side of Peter, he raised him up. The striking of the side is a commemoration of the passion of Christ, from whose wound our salvation flowed. And to us, too, who are held by the chains of pressures, the apostle Peter himself gives such solace, saying: "Since Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same intention" (1 Peter 4).

[Acts 12:8] -- Gird yourself and put on your sandals. And we read that prophets and apostles used belts, which Peter had loosened for a moment due to the rigidity of the prison, so that, with his tunic lowered around his feet, he could somewhat temper the cold of the night, providing an example to the weak that, when we are tempted by either bodily discomfort or human injury, it is permissible to relax the rigor of our purpose a little. And because it was said, “Let your loins be girded and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace,” spiritually he is ordered to resume the emblems of virtues and of preaching the word. [Acts 12:10] -- They came to the iron gate that leads to the city. Narrow indeed and made of iron was the gate that leads to the heavenly Jerusalem, but it has now been made passable to us by the footsteps of the apostles, who conquered the iron door with their own blood. About this, Arator: “Why is it surprising if iron doors yield to Peter? Whom God appoints as the guardian of the heavenly hall and makes the head of his Church, he commands to overcome Hell.”

[Acts 12:11] -- And Peter, coming to himself. That is, having returned from the height of contemplation to what he was previously in common understanding. [Acts 12:13] -- The girl came out to hear. And the Lord, having come forth from the constraints of the tomb, was first announced to the disciples by a woman, so that where sin abounded, grace might more abound. [Acts 12:15] -- But they were saying, “It is his angel.” That each of us has an angel is found both in the book of the Shepherd and in many places of the Holy Scriptures. For the Lord also speaks of the little ones: “Their angels always see the face of my Father” (Matt. XVIII). And Jacob speaks of himself: “The angel who redeemed me from all evil.” And here the disciples believed that the angel of the apostle Peter had come. [Acts 12:19] -- Descending from Judea into Caesarea. Although it seems according to the situation of the places to refer to Caesarea Philippi, which like Tyre and Sidon is a city of Phoenicia, Josephus nevertheless teaches that this was done in Caesarea of Palestine, which was once called Tower of Strato, and is situated on the shore of the Great Sea, at the border of Phoenicia and Palestine.

[Acts 12:20] -- They were asking for peace because their regions were being fed by him. They needed the friendship of the neighboring king because their region was very narrow and was pressed by the boundaries of Galilee and Damascus. Whence, neither did their metropolis of Tyre have so much wealth from its own land that it might be the emporium of the whole world, as much as it had from the subjugation of ships. It is also very rich in purple dye and shellfish. [Acts 12:23] -- Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him. Consistently also according to Josephus: “While he did not shudder at the wickedness of illicit adulation, shortly after, looking, he sees an angel standing over his head; and immediately he felt him as the minister of his destruction, whom he had previously known as the provider of good things.” And shortly after: “Indeed, tortured by continuous pains in his bowels for five days, he violently broke off his life.”

Chapter 13

[Acts 13:2] -- Separate for me Barnabas and Saul for the work, to which I have called them. It seems that Saul, according to the order of history, in the thirteenth year after the passion of the Lord, received the apostleship with Barnabas and the name of Paul. But in the fourteenth year, according to the agreement of James, Cephas, and John, he set out to teach the Gentiles. Nor does the ecclesiastical history contradict, saying that the apostles were commanded to preach in Judea for twelve years. [Acts 13:5] -- They preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. Due to ignorance of the places, I believed it should be noted once: Wherever you see a synagogue of the Jews, know that occurrences in the city are described. [Acts 13:6] -- Whose name was Bar-Jesus. It is incorrectly read as Barjesus, when it should be read as Bar-Jew, that is, sorcerer, or in evil. I believe that the name Jesus is written with the same letters but with a mark above. For it is not fitting for a wicked man and sorcerer to be called the son of Jesus, that is, the Savior, whom conversely Paul calls the son of the devil.

[Acts 13:9] -- Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit. From Sergius Paulus the proconsul, because he subjugated him to the faith of Christ, he took the name of Paul. And the subsequent sections of this account deal with the miracles of Paul. For it was fitting that he should give the completion to apostolic acts, whom the Lord had long chosen despite him kicking against the goads. [Acts 13:11] -- Behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind. The Apostle, mindful of his own example, knew that it was possible to rise from the darkness of the eyes of the mind to light. For he did not deserve to have the eyes of the flesh, who labored to take away the eyes of the mind from others. [Acts 13:14] -- They came to Antioch in Pisidia. There are two cities named Antioch: one in Coele-Syria, founded by King Seleucus, which was formerly called Reblata, which they say has the nearby spring of Daphne, and enjoys its abundant waters, in which the disciples were first named Christians; but the other Antioch, of which there is now mention, is in the province of Pisidia.

[Acts 13:19] -- He distributed their land to them by lot, as it were after four hundred and fifty years. God had said to Abraham that his seed would be a stranger in

a foreign land for four hundred years. And again he said: ”In Isaac shall your seed be called.” From the birth of the seed until the exodus of Israel from Egypt, there were (as Exodus writes) four hundred and five years. Add to these the forty years in the desert, and five in the land of Canaan, during which it seems that the land rested from battles, and the lot was cast, and you will find four hundred and fifty years. [Acts 13:21] -- And God gave them Saul for forty years. I believe, because the Book of Kings does not explicitly state how many years Saul reigned, that the Apostle, speaking popularly, wished to say what common rumor held. But searching more diligently there, as the books of Chronicles also testify, we found that Samuel and Saul governed Israel for forty years. For it says, ”In the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel came out of Egypt, Solomon began to build the temple of the LORD, in the fourth year of his reign.” When you add to the three hundred and ninety-six years, during which the judges ruled, as indicated in their book, the forty years of David and the four of Solomon, forty remain, of which, as Josephus testifies, Samuel spent twenty and Saul spent the other twenty in governance.

[Acts 13:33] -- Because God fulfilled this promise to your children by raising Jesus, as it is written in the second psalm: “You are my Son, today I have begotten you.” It should not be thought that this example from the psalm pertains to the resurrection of Christ, which he has just mentioned, but to his very incarnation, about which he spoke earlier. For the following verse clearly testifies about the resurrection. Since he was speaking earlier about his incarnation, passion, and resurrection, he wanted to confirm both with testimonies from the psalm. Therefore, he says, ”You who are eternal, Son before the ages, now appear born in time.” Some codices have: ”As it is written in the first psalm,” which is thus explained, the first and second psalms being considered as one work, which begins in blessedness and ends in blessedness. [Acts 13:34] -- Because I will give you the holy and faithful promises of David, that is, whatever I promised David, I will surely and faithfully fulfill to you, namely, that Christ would be born from his lineage. For Isaiah, tasting the mysteries of the New Testament in this way, says: “And I will make with you an everlasting covenant, the holy and sure blessings of David” (Isaiah 55:3). This is read in the Hebrew truth: “And I will make with you an eternal covenant, the faithful mercies of David.”

[Acts 13:43] -- Many Jews and devout converts followed them. It is better read: ”And worshipers of God,” as we have seen in the Greek. This means those who were Gentiles by nature but Jews by religion, whom the Greeks call proselytes. [Acts 13:47] -- For the Lord has commanded us: I have set you as a light to the Gentiles. What was specifically said to the Lord Christ, the apostles now consider said to themselves, remembering that they are his members, just as he himself, because of the unity of the same body, said: “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” (Acts 9:4). [Acts 13:51] -- But shaking the dust off their feet against them,

they went to Iconium. The dust is shaken off the feet according to the precept of the Gospel as a testimony of their labor, that they entered their city and that the apostolic preaching reached them; or the dust is shaken off so that they take nothing from them, not even what is necessary for sustenance, who have rejected the Gospel.

[Acts 13:52] -- And the disciples were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit. In the Greek it is: ”But the disciples,” so that we may understand, while the Jews were persecuting the faith, the disciples were enriched in contrast with spiritual joy.

Chapter 14

[Acts 14:2] -- They stirred up the souls of the Gentiles against the brothers. What follows in Greek: ”But God made peace,” is missing in some Latin manuscripts. And there: ”They were preaching,” it follows in Greek: ”And the whole multitude was moved by their teaching.” [Acts 14:6] -- But Paul and Barnabas stayed in Lystra. And these little verses are not found in some of our manuscripts. [Acts 14:8] -- And a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, sat, etc. Just as that lame man whom Peter and John healed at the gate of the temple prefigures the salvation of the Jews, so also this sick man of Lycaonia, a people far removed from the religion of the law and temple, but gathered by the preaching of the apostle Paul. He says, ”They gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the Gentiles, and they unto the circumcision.” And the times agree with the exposition. For he was in the early days of faith, when the word had not yet been believed by the Gentiles; but here the Jews, having been expelled for their unbelief and sprinkled with the dust of condemnation, are healed amidst the new joys of the converted Gentiles.

[Acts 14:9] -- And seeing that he had faith to be healed. And that one seeks money in the Jewish manner, but this one seeks salvation from the apostles through faith. [Acts 14:10] -- He said with a loud voice: Stand upright on your feet. In the Greek exemplar it is read: He said with a loud voice: I say to you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, stand upright on your feet. We have added these from the translation, so that, bewildered by the variety of manuscripts, you might not be ignorant of what is true. [Acts 14:11] -- The gods, likened to men, have come down to us. The foolish error of the Gentiles, who think that whatever they see above themselves are gods. [Acts 14:12] -- And they called Barnabas Jupiter; indeed, because he seemed to be the chief among them. For they thought Jupiter was the father of gods and king of men.

[Acts 14:12] -- But Paul, Mercury, because he was the chief speaker; because they believed Mercury to grant eloquence and speech to mortals. Hence, they called Mercury as if running in the middle, that is, between ears and tongues, and the Greeks called him Hermes, which means interpreter. [Acts 14:13] -- Bringing bulls

and garlands before the gates. The bulls for sacrifice, and the garlands, either to decorate the face of the temple according to the custom of the Gentiles or to place them upon those they would sacrifice to as gods. [Acts 14:14] -- Having torn their clothes, they rushed out into the crowd, and so on. They, fearing, tear their garments because they were being honored with the worship of gods. For this is a custom of the Jews whenever they hear anything blasphemous and as if against God. But Herod, because he did not give honor to God but acquiesced to the excessive favor of the people, was immediately struck by an angel.

Chapter 15

[Acts 15:2] -- They decided that Paul and Barnabas and some others from them should go up to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem, etc. About this ascension of his, Paul himself writes to the Galatians: Then, after fourteen years, I went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also, and I communicated to them the Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles (Galatians II); where the very number that he mentioned must be reckoned in years. For we know that the apostles Peter and Paul suffered martyrdom in the thirty-eighth year after the passion of the Lord, that is, in the last year of Nero, and that the blessed Peter sat upon the episcopal throne in Rome for twenty-five years. Now, twenty-five and fourteen make not thirty-eight but thirty-nine. Therefore, it follows that we believe the blessed Peter came to Rome in the same fourteenth year after the passion of the Lord, in which Paul conversed with him at Jerusalem, in the fourth year of Claudius Caesar; and likewise, unless I am mistaken, from this position it is proven that the blessed Apostle Paul came to faith in the same year in which the Lord suffered and rose again.

[Acts 15:5] -- Saying that it is necessary to circumcise them. The Galatians were deceived by this error, believing that circumcision and the ceremonies of the law should be mixed with the grace of baptism. [Acts 15:9] -- Purifying their hearts by faith. Therefore, it is not necessary to cleanse them with the circumcision of the flesh, whose hearts such great faith purifies, that they even deserve to receive the Holy Spirit before baptism. [Acts 15:11] -- But by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we believe to be saved, even as they are. If therefore they, that is, the fathers who could not bear the yoke of the old law, believed themselves to be saved by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is manifest that this grace was what made the ancient righteous live. Since the righteous shall live by faith, there could have been different sacraments for different times, yet all converging harmoniously to the unity of the same faith.

[Acts 15:16] -- After this I will return, and build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen, and the rest. The tabernacle of David signifies the shadow of the law, which was corrupted and torn apart by the traditions of the Pharisees, but

when the Lord returns, that is, appears in the flesh, it is raised up by the spiritual grace of God, so that not only Jews but also all nations of the Gentiles may seek his name. [Acts 15:20] -- And from things strangled, and blood, that is, from shedding blood or eating with blood. These indeed were allowed for those coming from a Gentile life, as the rudiments of the faith and the ingrained habit of Gentilism, but lest they should think that the same sufficed even for the more perfect, he diligently added and said: [Acts 15:21] -- For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him in the synagogues; that is, and if they are not burdened by the severity of the precepts now, yet with passage of time, as they more frequently gather for reading of the law and the prophets, they will gradually adopt ways of life and the interrelated laws of mutual love to be preserved. For the primitive Church, still Judaizing, it is understood to have celebrated these on Sabbaths.

[Acts 15:28] -- It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us; that is, it pleased the Holy Spirit, who, being the arbiter of his own power, breathes where he wills and speaks what he wills. [Acts 15:28] -- It has also seemed good to us; not by our will alone, but by the urging of the same Spirit. [Acts 15:35] -- Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch. In those days, what the apostle Paul said was fulfilled: When Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face (Galatians 2). [Acts 15:38] -- But Paul insisted that he should not be received. Because, standing on the very forefront of the line, he had stood too tepidly, and rightly, Paul rejected him, lest others be corrupted by his influence as though it were contagion. [Acts 15:39] -- There was, however, discord. Do not think this a sin. For it is not wrong to be troubled, but to be troubled irrationally, without any just cause.

[Acts 15:39] -- And Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus. For the brother he loved and who was related to him (for they are said to have been cousins), Barnabas, separated from Paul, returned to his native island, and nonetheless carried out the evangelical work commanded to him.

Chapter 16

[Acts 16:3] -- He circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places. Not that he believed the figures of the law would bring any utility with the truth of the Gospel shining forth, but so that the Jews would not fall away from the faith because of the Gentiles. Though these old shadows were to be gradually taken away, as was the moral depravity of the Gentiles, as said above. For those legal shadows, sometimes established by the Lord, were sometimes used by the Apostles in those times to avoid the infidelity of the Jews. But the Gentile institution, truly found by Satan, was never touched by the saints. [Acts 16:6-9] -- They were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia, etc., up to Passing into Macedonia, help us. Truly the Lord is terrible in counsel above the sons of men. One promises to follow the Master in everything and is not allowed; another, commanded to follow, does not get the requested leave for burial of his father. Saul is drawn in, invincible and resisting. To Cornelius, persistent in prayers and alms, the way of salvation is shown as a reward, and God, who knows the hearts, removes the Teacher from Asia through the grace of a benefit, lest the error of a wicked heart be judged more severely for despised preaching if what is holy is given to dogs. Again, while another apostle cares elsewhere, a legate from Macedonia, whom we believe to be an angel of that nation, asks to be offered crumbs of the Lord's bread.

[Acts 16:12] -- Which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, a colony. A colony is one that, due to the lack of natives, is filled with new settlers. Hence it is also called a colony from the cultivation of fields. [Acts 16:16] -- A certain girl having a spirit of divination. What pythonic divination entails in terms of knowledge, we find in the book of Kings, where, at Saul's request, a witch summoned either the soul of Samuel or rather an unclean spirit in his stead from the underworld. This kind of magical fantasy, discovered by Apollo Pythius and named after him, is thus called. But the Hebrew name also fits, who call the Python the mouth of the abyss. [Acts 16:17] -- These men are servants of the Most High God. This is not a confession from the will, followed by a reward for confessing, but compelled by the fear of the Holy Spirit, the lying spirit speaks truth, not daring to hide its darkness any longer in the present light. But God says to the sinner: Why do you recount my statutes?

Let us not be corrupted by the bitter honey of deceit, if he who serves falsehood sings truth, as Arator says.

[Acts 16:18] -- I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. Bar-Jesus, who was an adversary of the faith, was struck blind both in physical weakness and loss of his sight. But he managed to deprive this woman, who though perverted in mind, yet spoke the truth, only of her wicked art. For it was unfitting that the word of the Gospel should be proclaimed by an unclean spirit; he commanded this one to depart and be silent, for devils must confess the Lord with trembling, not praise with joy. [Acts 16:21] -- And they proclaim a custom which it is not lawful for us to receive or to observe, since we are Romans. They speak of the faith of Jesus Christ, in whose name the spirit of Python had departed. For the Romans had already decreed that no god should be accepted unless approved by the Senate.

[Acts 16:25] -- And at midnight Paul and Silas were worshiping God, saying a hymn, and so forth. The devotion of the apostolic heart and the power of prayer are expressed together, as both they sang hymns in the depth of the prison, and their praise shook the ground of the prison, and struck its foundations, and opened the gates, and finally released the chains of the prisoners themselves. Alternatively: Whoever among the faithful considers it all joy when he falls into various temptations (James 1), and willingly glories in his infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in him (2 Cor. 12), with Paul and Silas, hymns amidst the prison's darkness, and with the Psalmist sings to the Lord: You are my refuge from the oppression that surrounds me, my exultation (Psalm 31). [Acts 16:33] -- He washed their wounds, and he was baptized himself. A beautiful variety of events. Those whose wounds of injuries he washed, by them he lost his own wounds.

Chapter 17

[Acts 17:3] -- Explaining and demonstrating that Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead, and that this Jesus is the Christ. Among the Scriptures, the Father indicated both that Christ must suffer and rise, and that this very suffering and resurrection pertains to no one other than Jesus of Nazareth. For there were some of the Jews, as there are today, so perfidious, that although they cannot deny the suffering and resurrection of Christ inserted in the Scriptures, yet they totally deny that these refer to Jesus, preferring rather to expect the Antichrist than to believe Jesus Christ. And therefore Paul not only preached the mysteries of Christ but also taught that these were fulfilled in Christ Jesus. [Acts 17:4] -- And a great multitude of worshipers and Gentiles; that is, both those who had exchanged their gentile rites for Judaism and those who had remained entirely Gentiles, many joined to Christ.

[Acts 17:11] -- These people were nobler than those who are in Thessalonica. He speaks of the nobility of soul which they had displayed in hearing and scrutinizing the word. [Acts 17:18] -- Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him. The Epicureans, following the slowness of their teacher, placed human happiness solely in bodily pleasure, while the Stoics placed it solely in the virtue of the soul. Although they disagreed among themselves, they unanimously attacked the Apostle because he taught that man consisted of both soul and body and therefore should be happy in both; but this would be achieved neither in the present time nor by human virtue, but by the grace of God through Jesus Christ in the glory of the resurrection. [Acts 17:18] -- What does this idle babbler want to say? Rightly is he called an idle babbler, that is, σπερμόλογος, because the word of God is a seed. And Paul the Apostle himself says: ”If we have sown spiritual things among you,” etc. (1 Cor. 9).

[Acts 17:23] -- I found an altar with the inscription: To the Unknown God. God is known in Judea but not received. God is unknown in Achaia, although earnestly sought through many means. Therefore, those who do not know will be ignored; those who transgress will be condemned. Neither is free from fault, but those who

have not offered faith to Christ, whom they did not know, are more excusable than those who have laid hands on Christ, whom they knew.

[Acts 17:24] -- God, who made the world and everything in it, being the Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands, and so on. The order of the apostolic discourse is to be carefully observed, in which he formed a way of dealing with the Gentiles: first teaching that there is one God, the author of the world and of all things, in whom we live and move and have our being, of whom we are the offspring. This shows that he ought to be loved not only for the gifts of light and life but also because of a certain kinship of race. Then he refuted that opinion about idols by clear reasoning, that the creator and lord of the whole world cannot be confined in stone temples, that the giver of all benefits does not need the blood of sacrifices, and that the creator and governor of all men cannot be created by the hand of man. Finally, that God, in whose image man was made, should not be thought to resemble metals, teaching that the remedy of error is the endeavor to repent. For if he had first sought to destroy the ceremonies of idols, the ears of the Gentiles would have rejected him. Therefore, when he persuaded them that there is one God, he then affirmed by His judgment that salvation had been given to us through Christ. He called Him more man than God, starting from the things He did in the body and describing them as divine, so that He seemed more than a man. He had conquered death by His power, and, rising from the dead, He (for faith grows gradually), as He was seen to be more than a man, was believed to be God. For what does it matter in what order one believes? Perfection is not sought in beginnings, but one progresses from beginnings to what is perfect.

[Acts 17:28] -- For in Him we live and move and have our being. This verse, because it is difficult to understand, should be explained by the words of blessed Augustine. ”The Apostle shows,” he says, ”that God works unceasingly in the things He has created. For indeed we do not exist in Him as in His substance, as it is said that He has life in Himself; but certainly, since we are something other than Him, we exist in Him only because He works this. And this is His work by which He contains all things, and which His wisdom extends from end to end mightily and orders all things sweetly. Through this arrangement, we live, move, and exist in Him. From this it is inferred that if He withdrew this work from things, we would neither live, nor move, nor exist.” And a little later: ”For neither heaven nor earth, and all things in them, namely the whole of spiritual and bodily creation, remain in themselves, but surely in Him of whom it is said: For in Him we live and move and have our being. For although each part can exist in the whole, which it is a part of, the whole itself does not exist except in Him by whom it was made.” The same blessed Augustine elsewhere says: ”This, if the Apostle were speaking according to the body, could also be understood of this corporeal world. For in it according to the body we live, move, and exist.” Hence, according to the mind which is made in His image, this should be taken in a certain more excellent and not visible but

intelligible mode. For what is not in Him, of whom it is divinely written: For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things (Rom. XI)?

[Acts 17:28] -- As some of your poets have said. This is what he says elsewhere: I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. For to those who did not accept the faith of the prophets, not Moses, not Isaiah, or any of the prophets, but he speaks by the testimonies of their own authors, citing the verse of Aratus, confirming his truth from their falsities, which they could not contradict. Indeed, it is of great knowledge to give food to fellow servants at the right time, and to consider the persons of the hearers. [Acts 17:28] -- For we are indeed his offspring. We are most rightly called the offspring of God, not born of His nature, but voluntarily created through His spirit, and recreated by adoption. [Acts 17:34] -- Among whom also is Dionysius the Areopagite. This is Dionysius, who later gloriously ruled the Church as bishop of the Corinthians, and left many volumes of his genius beneficial to the Church, which remain to this day, taking his cognomen from the place he presided over. For the Areopagus is the court of Athens, deriving its name from Mars. For indeed in Greek, Mars is called ἄρης, and ‘pagos’ means hill.

Chapter 18

[Acts 18:2] -- Because Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome. Josephus narrates that this happened in the ninth year of Claudius. Suetonius the historian reports it in this way: Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome, as they were continually making disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus. Whether he meant to restrain and suppress the Jews making disturbances against Christ, or also wished to expel the Christians as related religious members, it is not at all clear. [Acts 18:3] -- They were of the tent-making trade. As exiles in the land and strangers, they build tents for themselves to use on the way; σκῆναι in Greek are called tabernacles, deriving the etymology from shading, among which shade is called σκία; σκῆναι or σκηνώματα mean something like little shades, which the ancients formed from woolen, wooden, or Cilician cloths, or from the leaves or branches of trees. Mystically, just as Peter by fishing draws us from the waves of the world through the nets of faith, so Paul by setting up the tents of protection defends us from the rain of sins, the heat of temptations, and the winds of treacheries, both by word and by deed. At this point, there are two verses in Greek that are not found in some of our manuscripts. He discussed in the synagogue every Sabbath and persuaded Jews and Greeks. Then follows what both manuscripts have, added:

[Acts 18:18] -- When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, and so forth. Who had his hair cut in Cenchreae for he had a vow. Cenchreae is a port of Corinth, where he cut his hair due to a vow because, according to the law of Moses, those who vowed themselves to God were commanded to let their hair grow as long as they wished to be Nazirites, and afterward to cut it and offer it to the fire. Therefore, Paul did this, not indeed forgetting what he had decided with the other apostles in Jerusalem about the abolition of the law, but lest those who had believed from among the Jews be scandalized, he pretended to be a Jew in order to win the Jews. Some manuscripts have in the plural number ”They shaved their head, and had a vow,” meaning Priscilla and Aquila. But the distinguished doctors of the Church Jerome and Augustine, each in their letters, put it in the singular number and interpret it concerning Paul. Jerome writes thus: ”Bidding farewell to the brothers, he sailed to Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila, and he had his head shaved in Cenchreae for he had a vow.”

[Acts 18:21-22] -- He departed from Ephesus, and descending, he went up to Caesarea and greeted the church. He says Caesarea, the metropolis of Cappadocia. For he had not yet come to Syria of Phoenicia. Formerly called Mosacha from Mosoc, the son of Japheth, later it received the name Caesarea from Caesar Augustus. [Acts 18:27] -- When he came, he conferred much with those who believed. For he vigorously confuted the Jews. Another translation has: He greatly benefited the believers by grace. This is what the Apostle writes to the Achaians: ”I planted, Apollos watered” (I Cor. III).

Chapter 19

[Acts 19:2] -- And he said to them: Did you receive the Holy Spirit upon believing? This means, Did you receive the laying on of hands, by which the Holy Spirit is usually given, after baptism? [Acts 19:4] -- John baptized with the baptism of repentance. This baptism, he says, could not grant the remission of sins but could teach only repentance. For just as the sign of circumcision was a seal of the faith which they carried in the patriarchs, so this washing was accepted by the repentant people as a singular sign of their devotion: Yet this same thing was figuratively showing also the baptism of Christ, by which remission would be granted. [Acts 19:5] -- Having heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. A question is frequently discussed, whether those who, perhaps due to ignorance, were baptized by some who were not themselves baptized, yet were of the right faith, ought to be baptized again; which matter, I think, is explained in this chapter. For what difference does it make whether someone is baptized before the beginning of Christ's baptism or now without its succession, since even John himself, whom he baptized in faith and in the name of Christ, though it was to come, had baptized, said they should be baptized again, saying: "I baptize you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit" (Matt. III)? For if now, such people could be remedied sufficiently by participation in the body and blood of Christ alone, as some assert, it might have sufficed then too; nor would it have been necessary for those whom John baptized with water to be baptized by Christ's disciples, but merely to be confirmed by sharing in the blood.

[Acts 19:7] -- All the men were about twelve, etc. But the judgments of God are a great abyss. Behold, recently deemed unworthy of the visitation of the apostles, Asia is now consecrated by the Apostolic number and elevated by the prophetic gift. And it should be noted that the Holy Spirit also here showed the signs of his coming upon the twelve disciples, and above upon the one hundred and twenty, which is the number twelve multiplied by ten, that sign in Jerusalem, this in Ephesus, which is a city of the Greeks. I believe to show that whether a person believes from among the Jews or the Gentiles, they only who communicate with the unity of the Catholic and Apostolic Church are fulfilled. [Acts 19:13] -- However, certain itinerant Jewish exorcists attempted to invoke over those who, etc. Josephus reports that King

Solomon devised and taught his people modes of exorcism, that is, adjurations, by which unclean spirits, once expelled from a person, might not dare to return. This sometimes happens even through reprobates, either for the condemnation of those who do such things or for the benefit of those who see and hear, so that although men may despise those who perform the signs, they nevertheless honor God, at whose invocation such great miracles are performed.

[Acts 19:14] -- However, there were some seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva, who were doing this. It is better read according to the Greek: However, there was of a certain Sceva. Since even Satan himself transforms into an angel of light (II Cor. XI), he does not fear to color his ministers with the same pretense. Hence, since the grace of the Holy Spirit is usually designated by the number seven, in which figure the Lord, after the resurrection, feasts with seven disciples, and seven brothers come to Cornelius to baptize him with the Holy Spirit, the sons of Sceva are reckoned as if they are to expel evil spirits in the number seven. Since they invoke the name of Christ and the apostles, not believing, but testing, they are deservedly condemned not only by God but also by the very demons for their deceitful falseness. They are well called the sons of Sceva, which translates to ”little fox crying out.” This animal, very crafty and deceitful, shows Jews, Gentiles, and heretics always lurking against the Church of God and chattering with a garrulous voice. Concerning whom it is commanded by the guardians of the same Church: Catch for us the little foxes that ruin the vineyards.

[Acts 19:15] -- Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize. About this verse, Arator says, Know your madness, enemy race, the demon admits to reigning, Whom you deny has come, and you are convicted by this very fact, By the one who drives you to ruin. [Acts 19:19] -- And many of those who had followed curious arts brought their books, etc. He calls curious arts the industry of magical arts, whose followers justly burn their books, valued at a great price, when they see the very demons they served honoring Jesus Christ the Lord and his apostles. [Acts 19:19] -- They found the sum to be fifty thousand silver coins. And in the Gospel’s debtors under the number of fifty denarii, debts are forgiven. I believe that subsisting in this life with the five senses of the body, we transgress the precepts of the Decalogue. Here, however, due to the enormity of the magic crime, the number of a thousand is also added. Otherwise, the number fifty often refers to penance and the remission of sins, whence the Fiftieth Psalm of Penance, and the fiftieth year is one of remission.

[Acts 19:22] -- Sending two of his ministers to Macedonia, etc. He sent disciples ahead to prepare alms, which he was to bring to Jerusalem, so that collections would not be made when he came himself. [Acts 19:24] -- A certain Demetrius, a silversmith, etc. This Demetrius, who tries to disturb the way of the Lord, fulfills his name by his actions. For it means ”excessive persecutor.” Hence, accordingly, the temples he makes for Diana are built of nothing else but silver metal since

silver in the Scriptures is usually indicated by eloquence, just as gold signifies understanding. And the cunning gentiles try to defend their religion not with any reason of understanding but with the mere elegance of words. [Acts 19:27] -- Not only, however, will this part of our work be in danger of coming into disrepute, but also the temple of the great Diana will be considered as nothing, and be destroyed, etc.; that is, not only will our works be found vain and unworthy of reward, but our religion will also be dishonored, if Paul's teaching prevails, that idols are not gods. And the foolishness of the Gentiles is astonishing, who are not ashamed to worship those whom they know can be built or destroyed by humans.

[Acts 19:28] -- And they cried out, saying: Great is Diana of the Ephesians. When Demetrius said Diana would perish, they, on the contrary, marvel at her greatness. [Acts 19:29] -- And they rushed with one accord into the theater. The theater is a place having the shape of a semicircle, where people standing inside watched scenic plays. Hence, it received its name in Greek, from the spectacle. Therefore, as Arator says: The merit and cause of Diana deserved no other than to be treated lasciviously in the market forum, the base area of the ugliness of the assembly's work.

Chapter 20

[Acts 20:1-2] -- And he set out to go to Macedonia. After he had toured those parts and had exhorted them with many words, he came to Greece. Greece is a province of Achaia, which the Greeks call ἑλλάδα. Hence, where Latin Codices have Greeks or, to distinguish them from Jews, Gentiles, the Greek text writes ἕλληνας and ἑλληνιστὰς. So after Macedonia, Paul came to this place, because he intended, as said above, to pass from Macedonia and Achaia and to go to Jerusalem. [Acts 20:7] -- On the first day of the week, when we had gathered together to break bread, etc.; that is, on the Lord's Day which is the first from the Sabbath, when we had gathered to celebrate the mysteries. [Acts 20:7-8] -- And he prolonged his speech until midnight. There were many lamps in the upper room. Here we can allegorically say that the upper room signifies the height of spiritual gifts, night the obscurity of the Scriptures, the abundance of lamps the exposition of the hidden sayings, the Lord's Day the remembrance either of the Lord's or our resurrection; and to admonish the spiritual teacher that if at any time, by the sweetness of the resurrection and the joys of eternal life, he will invite his listeners to the heights of virtues, and by prolonged disputation touch upon any secrets of the Scriptures, he should immediately illuminate the same with the lamp of plain exposition for the sake of weak listeners. Just as the Apostle, when he said Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman, immediately explained: These are the two covenants, etc.

[Acts 20:9] -- A certain young man named Eutychus was sitting at the window, etc. Eutychus in Hebrew means insane, in Greek lucky. One of these fits him who has fallen from the height of virtues due to youthful pleasure, the other to him who, by the preacher's condescension, will return to the height of virtues. [Acts 20:9] -- Awakened from sleep, he fell down from the third loft, etc. During the words of preaching, an opportunity for healing arose, so that the word might be strengthened by the sweetness of the miracle and the doctrine, and the labor of vigils might be warded off, and the memory of the teacher soon to depart might be more deeply impressed upon minds. Indeed, the three lofts in which Paul was disputing represent faith, hope, and charity. But the greatest of these is charity (1 Cor. 13). If anyone out of laziness deserts it, and does not fear to slumber among

the voice of the Apostle, he will already be counted among the dead. For whoever offends in one point becomes guilty of all (James 2).

[Acts 20:10] -- Upon whom when Paul had descended, he laid upon him. That he descended, laid upon him, embraced him, this is what he himself says: My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you. Indeed, more laborious is the resurrection of those who sin through negligence than those who sin through infirmity. And this is expressed through Eutychus, and that through Tabitha whom Peter raised. And therefore she, sick for days, dies; he falls down and dies in the middle of the night. She, washed after death, is placed in an upper chamber; he, fallen from the third loft, is mourned dead below. He in the presence and teaching, she with the teacher absent. To him Paul descended, to her Peter ascended to raise her. She, immediately seeing Peter, sat up; he, having died in the middle of the night, finally rises in the morning, and with the breath of the sun of righteousness, is brought back to life.

[Acts 20:16] -- For he was hastening if it were possible to be present at the day of Pentecost in Jerusalem. Indeed, it was commanded by the law that all Jews should gather in Jerusalem three times a year, that is, at the time of Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles, but the Apostle, breaking the ties of the world, hastens to observe the fiftieth day, that is, the day of remission and the Holy Spirit. [Acts 20:17] -- He called the elders of the Church. For elders, the Greek uses πρεσβυτέρους. [Acts 20:23] -- Except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city. When he says through the cities, he clearly shows that what was to come for him, he knew not through himself but revealed by others about himself. Among these was the prophet Agabus, and also those disciples who, persisting in Tyre, warned him through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem.

[Acts 20:23] -- Saying, that bonds and tribulations await me in Jerusalem. So that where he once persecuted the Church, he now fights for the peace of the Church. [Acts 20:24] -- Nor do I count my life dearer than myself. He means the very life in the temporal body, which he considers as the least, who awaits eternal joy in another life. [Acts 20:26] -- Because I am clean from the blood of all of you. He believed himself to be clean from the blood of his neighbors by the fact that he did not spare their sins from being struck. [Acts 20:28] -- In which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. For above he had called the elders called from Ephesus to Miletus, whom he now names bishops, that is, overseers. For indeed one city could not have many bishops, but he signifies those same elders, as true priests under the name of bishops. For the rank is joined, and in many respects nearly similar.

[Acts 20:28] -- To rule the Church of God, which He purchased with His own blood. He does not doubt to call it the blood of God, on account of the union of the person in the two natures of the same Jesus Christ. Because of which it is also said: The Son of Man who is in heaven (John III). Therefore, let Nestorius cease to separate

the Son of Man from the Son of God and make for himself two Christs. [Acts 20:30] -- And from among yourselves will arise men speaking perverse things. Concerning these, John also says: They went out from us, but they were not of us (1 John II). [Acts 20:31] -- For three years, night and day, I did not cease to admonish each one of you with tears. This is beautifully and succinctly explained by Arator: He who sings of the Church's three doctrines, often produces a Historical, moral-sounding, and typological volume; Hence Judea, lying empty, is called the barren tree, Which, after three years, did not produce the expected fruit.

[Acts 20:35] -- I showed you all things. That is, not only must one persist in teaching amid pressures and tears, but one must also work with one's hands to support the weak so that no one is burdened. This is what was meant by: And whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I return (Luke X), namely, to preach the Gospel and not to seek support from the Gospel. [Acts 20:35] -- It is more blessed to give than to receive. He does not prefer the rich almsgivers to those who, having left all, followed the Lord; but he glorifies those most greatly who, having renounced all they possess at once, still work with their hands to produce what is good so they have something to give to those in need.

Chapter 21

[Acts 21:5] -- We set out, being escorted by wives and children, etc. The prophecy which sings of the Church is fulfilled: The daughters of Tyre will seek your favor with gifts, the rich among the people (Psalm XLIV), and the rest, up to the end of the Psalm. For no city received, held, or dismissed the Apostle with greater sweetness. Indeed, today the place in the sands where they prayed together is shown. [Acts 21:10] -- A certain prophet came down from Judea. He says from Judea because Caesarea, where they were staying, belongs to the region of Samaria, situated at the border of Phoenicia and Palestine. [Acts 21:11] -- Thus says the Holy Spirit: The man whose belt this is, will be bound by the Jews in Jerusalem in this way. He imitates the old prophets, who used to say: Thus says the Lord God. Because the Holy Spirit is equally Lord and God, as the Father and the Son, and their activity cannot be separated, whose nature and will is one. Whence we also read above: The Holy Spirit said: Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them (Acts XIII), that is, the apostleship. And Paul himself writes: Paul, an apostle not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father (Galatians I). We have said this, lest anyone, after the manner of Macedonius, thinks the Holy Spirit to be a creature or of lesser authority than the Father or the Son.

[Acts 21:18] -- The following day Paul went in with us to James. This James was the brother of the Lord, that is, of Mary, the sister of the Lord’s mother, whom John the Evangelist mentions, and he was her son. Immediately after the passion of the Lord, he was appointed bishop by the apostles and ruled the Church in Jerusalem for thirty years, that is, until the seventh year of Nero. When the Jews, who were keen to kill Paul, could not do so, as soon as Festus died and Albinus had not yet arrived in the province, they turned their hands against James, who was buried next to the temple where he had been cast down.

[Acts 21:21] -- But they have heard about you, that you teach the Jews among the Gentiles to depart from Moses, etc.; that is, they claim that you say that what was administered to the fathers by Moses should be condemned as sacrilegious and not commanded by God due to the doctrine of Christ. This had been alleged of Paul, not

by those who understood with what mind these things should have been kept then by the faithful Jews to commend the divine authority and the prophetic sanctity of those sacraments, not to attain salvation, which was already being administered in Christ through the sacrament of baptism; but by those who had spread this about Paul, who wished these things to be observed as if salvation in the Gospel could not be obtained without them. For they considered him a most vehement preacher of grace, teaching contrary to their intent, that one is not justified by those things, but by the grace of Christ, for whom these shadows in the law were ordained to foretell. Therefore, seeking to stir up envy and persecution against him, they accused him as an enemy of the law and divine commandments. He could not more fittingly avoid the envy of this false accusation than by himself observing those things which he was thought to condemn as sacrilegious, thus showing that neither the Jews at that time should be prohibited from them as impious, nor the Gentiles compelled to them as necessary. For if he indeed rejected them as had been heard, and yet undertook to celebrate them to conceal his opinion with a simulated action, James would not have said:

[Acts 21:24] -- And all will know that what they have heard about you is false; but would have said, All will think: especially since the apostles had already decreed in Jerusalem that no one should compel the Gentiles to Judaize. However, they had not decreed that no Jew should be prohibited from Judaizing then, although even the Jews were already not compelled by Christian doctrine. [Acts 21:27] -- And when the seven days were nearly completed. These days were not yet completed, but their course was ongoing, the completion was awaited. Hence it is more clearly said in Greek: When the seven days were beginning to be completed. Otherwise, the statement he made after five days of being in Caesarea to the governor cannot stand: For it is not more than twelve days since I went up to worship in Jerusalem. For if you add these seven days and those five days of the council in which he dissociated the Pharisees and Sadducees, and that in which the Jews vowed to kill him, undoubtedly more than twelve days will be found there.

[Acts 21:28] -- Here is the man who speaks against the people, the law, and this place, teaching everyone everywhere. Because they saw that the followers of the new grace attended the ceremonies of the law and the solemnities of the temple less, they feared, as it is read in the Gospel, that the Romans would come and take away both their place and nation. [Acts 21:37] -- He said: Do you know Greek? Are you not the Egyptian, etc.? For an Egyptian had come to Judea, who by magical art claimed prophecy for himself, gathered about thirty thousand Jews; and leading them through the desert, he came to the Mount of Olives, ready to rush from there into Jerusalem and subjugate the city for himself. But Felix anticipated his attempt, quickly meeting him with armed men. The Egyptian, having fled with a few, and others being killed, easily restrained the rash attempt.

[Acts 21:38] -- Four thousand men of the Sicarii. There is no controversy to be held between the tribune who spoke these things and Josephus who wrote about the Egyptian. For it could happen that he first came with a few, the same secretly leading a tyranny, but later joined many to himself by public deceit. It is read, however, that in the time of Felix, this kind of robber arose, who, not seeking hidden places or times, but carrying daggers, that is, short swords in hand, mixed among the people in the very light of day, attached themselves by blind wounds, to the point that death prevented a complaint, and the striker lay hidden. And if anyone were moved by the fact that such things were done in the middle of the city, he too perished. Thus, by fear of danger or dissimulation of the crime, the assassin was not apprehended.

[Acts 21:39] -- A townsman from Tarsus in Cilicia, a not unknown city. The Apostle was indeed born in the town of Giscala in Galilee. When it was captured by the Romans, he moved with his parents to Tarsus in Cilicia. From there, sent to Jerusalem for the study of the law, he was instructed by Gamaliel, a very learned man, as he himself recounts later. However, he calls himself not a citizen but a townsman, from the township, that is, the territory, of the same city in which he was raised. It is called a municipality, because it only pays duties or taxes. For noble and very famous causes, and those which derive from the emperor, belong to the dignity of the cities. And no wonder that he calls himself a Tarsian and not a Giscalite, since the Lord Himself, although born in Bethlehem, is not called a Bethlehemite but a Nazarene.

Chapter 22

[Acts 22:9] -- They did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me. Above, the story narrates about this vision that his companions stood stupefied, hearing indeed the voice, but seeing no one. Hence it is inferred that they heard the sound of a confused voice, but not the distinction of words. [Acts 22:23] -- As they were shouting, throwing off their cloaks, and throwing dust into the air. In the Lord's passion, the priest alone leaping from the throne tears his garments, because then the old priesthood was to be changed to the new. But now, because after the death of the apostles, the whole nation was to be stripped of the glory of the kingdom, all throw off their garments, and lift their clamor mixed with dust to heaven. According to what the Psalmist says: "The pride of those who hate you rises always" (Psalm 73).

[Acts 22:28] -- I have obtained this citizenship for a great sum of money. Another edition indicates more clearly what he had said. The tribune said: Do you say so easily that you are a Roman citizen? For I know at what price I obtained this citizenship. [Acts 22:28] -- And Paul said: But I was born so. That is, in this I am more of a Roman than you because I did not buy the Roman name elsewhere, but I was born in their city.

Chapter 23

[Acts 23:3] -- God will strike you, whitewashed wall. He did not say this disturbed in mind, but indeed he spoke prophetically, because that figurative priesthood, which was composed in the likeness of a whitewashed wall, was to be struck and destroyed when the true priesthood of Christ had come, with the apostles preaching the Gospel. And that is why he said: God will strike you. He did not say, may He strike you: indeed indicating this in the indicative mode that it would happen, not cursing in the optative. For that he spoke these things with a calm mind, he shows by the following response, saying: [Acts 23:5] -- I did not know, brothers, that he was the high priest. For although he truly knew that this was not the high priest in the new testament, nonetheless teaching others, and thus urging those who are in power to behave more modestly, he also wanted to temper himself here.

[Acts 23:6] -- Brothers, I am a Pharisee, etc. Just as the unity of the good is always useful, so the unity of the wicked is always harmful to the good. Therefore, now the Apostle strives to dissociate his persecutors so that they, united, would surround him, but divided, would release him. Thus the Red Sea, which as solid had confined the children of Israel, when divided, freed them from Egypt. But that he attests to being a son of Pharisees, or, according to the Greek, a son of a Pharisee, is what above he glories in, having learned the law and the prophets at the feet of Gamaliel, who is read to be a Pharisee. [Acts 23:12] -- And they bound themselves by an oath, saying that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. While the Lord says: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matt. 5), these contrariwise hunger for iniquity, and thirst so greatly for blood that they even renounce food for their body until satisfied by his death. But there is no wisdom nor prudence nor counsel against the Lord. For even though Paul had offered sacrifices above, shaved his head, performed ritual foot washing, made himself a Jew to the Jews, he did not escape the bonds predicted. And here, although they devise plans, bind themselves with vows, set traps, nevertheless the Apostle is preserved, so that he may bear witness to Christ in Rome as it was told him.

Chapter 24

[Acts 24:5] -- And the author of the sedition of the sect of the Nazarenes. At that time Christians were called Nazarenes as a reproach; later indeed among the Jews a heresy arose called that of the Nazarenes, who believe in Christ, the Son of God, born of the virgin Mary, and say he who suffered under Pontius Pilate and rose again, in whom we also believe. But since they wish to be both Jews and Christians, they are neither Jews nor Christians. [Acts 24:6-8] -- Whom we also apprehended. From whom you will be able, by judging all these things, to know. In this place, some of our Codices have several verses which read in Greek as follows: Whom we also apprehended, and according to our law wished to judge. But Lysias the tribune, coming with many, took him by force from our hands, ordering his accusers to come before you, hence you may be able yourself, by judging all these things, to know, etc.

[Acts 24:14] -- But I confess this to you, that according to the sect which they call a heresy, so I serve my Father God. It is better read in Greek: That according to the way which they call a heresy, so I serve the Father God. For what consistency is there for him who spoke Greek, to say: According to the sect which they call a heresy, since the same in Latin, sect, means heresy in Greek? But he said: So I serve the Father God, according namely to that way which the unbelievers call a heresy, that is, a sect, as if it has more persistence in its following than in the diligence of rightly discerning. [Acts 24:19] -- But some Jews from Asia. Join this to the preceding, that is, these are the ones who found me in the temple. [Acts 24:27] -- After two years were completed, Felix receives his successor Porcius Festus. He refers to the two years of Paul’s stay in Caesarea, not Felix’s procuratorship. For it is said above that he was a judge for that nation for many years. Especially since the histories recount that in the second year of Nero, the Apostle was sent to Rome, and that Claudius Caesar, at the time when he made Agrippa, the son of Herod, whom the angel struck down in Caesarea, king of the Jews, he also sent Felix as procurator of the whole province of Samaria and Galilee, and the region called across the Jordan.

Chapter 25

[Acts 25:11] -- No one can grant me to them. I appeal to Caesar. The reason he appeals to Caesar and hastens to go to Rome is so that he may persist longer in preaching, and when many believe from this, and with everyone he will be crowned as he goes to Christ. [Acts 25:13] -- King Agrippa and Bernice came down to Caesarea. This Agrippa who came to Caesarea with his sister is (as I said) the son of Herod Agrippa, whom we read above was killed by the angel, who held the kingdom of Judea until the destruction of Jerusalem, always friendly to the Romans, and safest from all that Jewish sedition.

Chapter 26

[Acts 26:2] -- Of all the things I am accused of by the Jews, King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate before you, since you are to defend me today. Another Edition translated this verse thusly: I consider myself fortunate, starting today to render a defense before you. Which in a certain place, Saint Jerome placed with his exposition thus: ”Of all the things I am accused of by the Jews, O King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate, since before you I am to be defended today, who especially know all the customs and questions among the Jews. For he had read that in Isaiah: Blessed is he who speaks into the ears of a listener, and knew that the words of an oration profit as much as the judge’s prudence has understood.” [Acts 26:10] -- And when they were to be killed, I delivered the sentence. Another Edition says, And I delivered the sentence on how they were to be killed, that is, I myself gave the sentence on their deaths.

[Acts 26:24] -- Festus said in a loud voice: You are insane, Paul. He deemed it insanity that a man in chains, instead of just defending himself from external accusations, made a speech about the conscience by which he gloried inside and reviewed all the miracles of the revelation by which he was transformed from a persecutor into an apostle, and discussed the dispensation of our Redeemer and argued vehemently about the resurrection of the dead. Indeed, just as there is the foolish madness of the prodigal son feeding pigs after abandoning his father, so there is spiritual madness, that is, true madness, about which the Apostle says: ”For whether we are out of our mind, it is for God; or whether we be sober, it is for you.” And in comparison to this, the Psalmist sings: ”Blessed is the man who has the name of the Lord as his hope, and has not looked to vanities and false insanities” (Psalm 39).

[Acts 26:27] -- Do you believe the prophets, King Agrippa? I know that you believe. This he speaks not in flattery, as some think, but truly. For Agrippa, as one versed in the rites and laws of the Jews, believed that the prophets spoke truth, but as a faithless man, he did not know to whom that truth referred, that is, the Lord Christ. Although it is recorded that in a certain council with the Jews, he said: But you rely

on the help of religion, since the disciples of Jesus have already filled the Roman world, or do we think that this religion grows without God’s will?

Chapter 27

[Acts 27:7] -- And after we had sailed slowly for many days, and with difficulty had come against Chios. It is better read as against Cnidus, which is an island opposite Asia. [Acts 27:11] -- But the centurion trusted the helmsman and the shipmaster. Shipmasters in Greek, in Latin are called navicularius. [Acts 27:14] -- A Typhonic wind sent itself against them. Another Latin translation says: A tempestuous wind. For Typhus in Greek is called inflation in Latin. [Acts 27:15] -- And when the ship was caught, and could not face the wind, etc. Another Translation more clearly states: And when the ship was caught, they could not face the wind, and yielded the ship to the wind, and began to gather the sails. Then we ran under an island which is called Clauda, which they could not reach, but lifeboats were sent to help the ship, girding it. They also lowered anchors, fearing they might run aground in the Syrtes. This shows that ropes from the middle of the side of the ship were lowered on both sides around its front parts, attached to anchors that were towed. Similarly, in our, that is, the British sea, they are accustomed to place millstones under the ship's stern to slow it down. They did this to retard the ship's progress, so that it might not rush into the Syrtes, terrifying even to hear about, which draw everything to them. Hence Sallustius says they were named from the dragging.

[Acts 27:16-17] -- We could scarcely obtain the lifeboat. After it was taken, they used auxiliary ropes. The lifeboat or Catascopos is a light boat, made of wicker and covered with rawhide. It is called in Greek from the act of viewing, because sailors or pirates on such a vessel used to observe lands and shores. Thus, when they had launched this lifeboat into the sea to help the larger ship, they could scarcely hold onto it, lest it slip, due to the seething wave. [Acts 27:17] -- They were being carried under control with a newly lowered sail. Another translation places it thus: "Fearing that they might fall into the Syrtic, they loosened the ropes and thus were being carried." [Acts 27:23] -- For an angel of God stood by me this night. He was not boasting of himself by saying this but was provoking them to faith. For the sea was allowed to be stormy so that by what was heard and by what was not heard, the spiritual grace in Paul might be revealed.

[Acts 27:31] -- ”Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved,” etc. Because in the danger of shipwreck, the knowledge of sailors who were experienced in the sea was more beneficial than the weapons of soldiers, they were therefore more likely to control the boat than to let the sailors be cast away. [Acts 27:33] -- And as the day was about to dawn, Paul urged everyone to take some food. In this passage, the most beautiful sense of allegory is laid open, as Paul urged those he promised would be saved from the wreck to take food. And because they were being guided by four anchors amid the force of the waves in the middle of the night, at daybreak, they made for the shore; for no one escapes the tempests of this age unless he is fed with the bread of life. And he who in the night of present tribulations leans with all his might on wisdom, fortitude, temperance, and justice, soon achieves, with the Lord’s assistance shining forth, the haven of safety he sought, so long as he seeks only the flame of love to warm his heart.

[Acts 27:40] -- And hoisting the foresail, according to the direction of the breeze, they made for the shore. The foresail is a small sail contrived more for steering the ship than for speed. [Acts 27:41] -- And when we had fallen into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground. The place is called ”bithalassum,” bicursal, because the Greeks call the sea ”thalassa.” It signifies a stretch of land projecting into the sea and surrounded on both sides by the same sea dividing itself. [Acts 27:41] -- And the prow stuck fast and remained immovable, but the stern was broken by the violence of the waves, etc. Thus this ship perished, not from a light run over the waves, but by being violently thrust into the bed of the sea itself, partly held by the ground, partly broken by the raging waves. Such indeed is the fate of a soul given to this world, which, neglecting to trample on the desires of the world, fixes the prow of its intention deeply into the earth, dissolving the entire structure of subsequent works by the waves of cares. But those who escape by fragments of this boat seek the land, as others act more cautiously by the examples of those perishing.

Chapter 28

[Acts 28:3] -- When Paul had gathered a great bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire. The Apostle, having come out of the sea, kindled a fire because of the cold, as he warmed the hearts of those he had rescued from the tempests by his teaching with the ardor of love. The sticks are called any exhortations, which, capable of kindling charity, are as if cut from the integrity of the Scriptures, like branches cut with leaves. [Acts 28:3] -- A viper came out because of the heat and fastened on his hand. Because the unclean spirit, repelled by the flame of virtues from the heart of the faithful, tries to inject the poison of persecutions into the teachers of truth to harm the hand, that is, to impede the work of spiritual doctrine. [Acts 28:5] -- And indeed he shook off the beast into the fire and suffered no harm. By the same fire that warms his own, he burns the beast, because by the same virtues both the saints make progress, and the wicked with their own author perish in envy, as the prophet says: Zeal has seized an unlearned people, and now fire devours the adversaries.

[Acts 28:8] -- It happened, however, that the father of Publius, afflicted with fever and dysentery, was lying down, etc. Why does he save an infirm unbeliever with prayer, who heals the faithful Timothy and Trophimus, one by medical art and leaves the other entirely, unless because the former was to be healed outwardly by a miracle, who was not alive inwardly, which those who were healthily alive inwardly did not need? [Acts 28:11] -- We sailed in an Alexandrian ship, which had wintered on the island and had the insignia of Castor and Pollux. I believe that at first the insignia of Castor was placed, but due to the mistake of the scribes, letters were added, just as “frustra panis” is written instead of “frusta,” and “appropriat” instead of “appropiat,” which we find often written in the oldest manuscripts. For in Greek instead of the insignia of Castor, it is written παρασήμῳ διοσκούροις, but Διόσκουροι, the twin Castors, that is, Castor and Pollux, are called in Greek. The city of the Colchians is a witness, which, made by the charioteers Amphitus and Cercyon, is called Dioscuria from their name. For this reason, the pagans invoke them as gods at sea, because in the omens of sailors, if solitary stars appear on the ship or on the masts, they are dangerous; but if twin stars, they are harbingers of a prosperous voyage. At their arrival, they say the dreadful star called Helen

is driven away. In another translation, we saw written for παρασήμῳ διοσκούροις, ”bearing the emblem of Jupiter’s sons.” For the fables say that Jupiter, transformed into a swan, ravished Leda, the wife of Theseus, and Helen was born from that. Hence it is said: That melodious bird sought Leda’s embrace, and similarly, he transformed into a star and fathered Castor and Pollux as twins.

[Acts 28:25-26] -- Because the Holy Spirit well spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers, saying: ”Go to this people and say: You will hear indeed, etc.” This prophecy, which the Apostle affirms was pronounced by the Holy Spirit, the book of the prophet itself recalls as having been spoken by the Lord. From this, it is clearly shown that the will and nature of the Lord and the Holy Spirit are one, and the name of the Lord is also understood in the appellation of the Spirit. And indeed, Paul, having no other Holy Spirit when he wrote these things about him, who was in the prophets before the coming of the Lord, was referring to the same Spirit of whom he himself was also a partaker, and all those who were brought in the faith of perfect virtue. Hence, he mentions the Spirit with the article, confirming it to be singular and one, and as he says, not simply ”Holy Spirit,” but with the added article ”the Holy Spirit,” and he recalls Isaiah prophesying with the word ”the Holy Spirit.” Peter too, in that speech by which he persuaded the present, said: ”It was necessary for the Scripture to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke (that is, ’the Holy Spirit’) through the mouth of David concerning Judas” (Acts I). He too shows that the same Spirit worked in the prophets and in the apostles. These excerpts from the books of the blessed Didymus should hold this place in our writings.

[Acts 28:27] -- For the heart of this people has grown dull, and their ears barely heard. So that we do not think the dullness of the heart and heaviness of the ears are of nature, not of will, he adds the blame of choice and says: [Acts 28:27] -- They have shut their eyes lest they should see with their eyes. That is, by their preceding merits, they were the cause that God shut their eyes. Or it should be joined to the preceding, with the Lord saying to the prophet, “Go to this people, and reproach them with sins that they may have deserved blindness, perhaps if even thus they may be worthy to hear and turn to me” (Isaiah VI). [Acts 28:30-31] -- However, he remained for two whole years in his own hired house, that is, in the lodgings he had rented for himself, preaching Christ to all, not only to the Jews but also to the Gentiles, who he said were to be saved, those who were rejected.

[Acts 28:31] -- And teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with boldness without hindrance. He was not only not prohibited from preaching in Rome, but also, with Nero’s empire not yet firmly established, and with crimes not yet erupting as much as the histories tell about him, he was sent to preach the Gospel of Christ also in the regions of the West, as he himself says to the Romans: Now therefore I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints. And shortly after: Therefore, when I have completed this, I will pass through you into Spain. Later, that is, in the last year

of Nero, he was detained by him, and was crowned with martyrdom. He explains both these things in the second Epistle to Timothy, which he dictates while being in chains: At my first defense, no one came to my support, but all deserted me. But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it, and I was rescued from the lion's mouth (II Timothy 4). Very clearly indicating that Nero is the lion because of his cruelty. And in the following: And he saved me, and will save me for his heavenly kingdom (Ibid.), which evidently indicated that he felt his impending martyrdom. Hence, in the same Epistle, he had prefaced by saying: For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith (Ibid.).

Source. English translation: an older public-domain translation as collected in the Writings-Database (HistoricalChristianFaith), mostly from the Ante-Nicene, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers and similar nineteenth-century editions. SermonIndex has only divided it into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator's own. Square brackets, Greek or Latin words and footnote-free text are as the source file prints them, and a transcription error may remain. No Greek or Latin text is shown beside it yet, and no modern English version has been made.