Commentary on Revelation

The Venerable Bede (AD 673–735)

SermonIndex.net / Church Fathers

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Introduction

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Preface

To the most beloved brother Eusebius, greetings from Beda. The Apocalypse of Saint John, in which God has deigned to reveal the internal battles and fires of His Church through words and figures, seems to me (brother Eusebius) to be divided into seven sections. In the first section, after a copious preface, to strengthen the faith of the weak and to enumerate the Lord's sufferings and subsequent glories, the Church sees one like the Son of Man clothed; who, after mentioning what specifically has been done or is to be done in the seven churches of Asia, describes the general struggles and triumphs of the whole Church. Here, in the sixth place, He advisedly subjects the Jews to the Church and foretells the temptation of the entire world, promising that He Himself will come soon; but in the seventh place, He places the lukewarm Laodicea. For when the Son of Man comes, do you think He will find faith on earth (Luke XVIII)?

In the second section, after describing the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders in the throne of God, He sees the Lamb open the seals of the seven-sealed book, revealing the future conflicts and triumphs of the Church. Here, according to the custom of this book, He maintains the order up to the sixth number, and passing over the seventh, He recapitulates and concludes two narratives as if following an order with the seventh. But this recapitulation must be understood according to places: for sometimes He recapitulates from the origin of the Passion, sometimes from the middle time, sometimes only from the final tribulation itself, or shortly before it. He nevertheless keeps it fixed that He recapitulates from the sixth. But the third section, under the guise of seven angels sounding trumpets, describes various events of the Church. The fourth section, under the figure of a woman giving birth and the dragon pursuing her, reveals the labors and victories of the same Church; and to each of the armies, He rewards worthy prizes. Here also the sayings and deeds of the seven angels are mentioned, although not in the same manner as before. For with mystical wisdom, this number is almost everywhere

preserved, as it is also John's custom, in the Gospels and Epistles, to say nothing tepidly and briefly.

But the fifth section, through seven angels, poured out seven last plagues upon the earth. The sixth describes the condemnation of the great harlot, that is, the impious city. The seventh shows the adornment of the Bride of the Lamb, namely, the holy Jerusalem descending from heaven from God. I have thought it worthwhile to briefly mention the seven rules of Tyconius, a man very learned among his peers, by which those who study the Scriptures are greatly helped in understanding them. The first of these is about the Lord and His body, when the transition is made from the head to the body or from the body to the head, and yet it does not depart from the same person. For one person speaks, saying: "As a bridegroom has put a mitre on me, and as a bride adorned me with ornament"; and yet it must be understood what belongs to the head, what to the body, that is, what to Christ, what to the Church.

The second is about the twofold body of the Lord, or rather about the true and the simulated body of the Lord, as Saint Augustine preferred to call it. For the Church says: "I am black and beautiful, like the tents of Kedar, and like the curtains of Solomon" (Cant. I). She did not say: "I was black and now I am beautiful"; but she said she was both, because of the communion of the sacraments and because of the temporary mixture within the one net of good and bad fish. For the tents of Kedar pertain to Ishmael, because he will not be heir with the son of the free woman. The third is about promises and the law, which can be called in another way about the spirit and the letter, or about grace and the commandment. This seems to Saint Augustine more a great question than a rule, which is to be used in solving questions. For it is the one the Pelagians, not understanding, either founded their heresy or increased it.

The fourth is about species and genus. For species is a part, but genus is the whole of which that part is. Just as each city is a part of the whole province, and each province is a part of the whole world. Hence, these words have come into popular knowledge, so that even the unlearned understand what is specifically or generally established in any imperial command. This is also done concerning men, just as the things said about Solomon exceed his measure, and are more clearly related to Christ and the Church, of which he is a part. The species is not always exceeded. For often such things are said that either also or perhaps only most clearly fit him. But when the transition is made from the species to the genus, as if the Scripture were still speaking of the species, there the reader's attention must be alert.

The fifth rule he presents, which he calls concerning times, can also (as it seems to me) be called concerning numbers. He says it operates through the figure of synecdoche or legitimate numbers. The figure of synecdoche is either from a part to the whole or from the whole to a part. By this mode of speech, even the question

about the resurrection of Christ is resolved; for the last part of the day on which He suffered, unless taken for the whole day, that is, including the previous night; and the night in whose last part He rose, unless taken for the whole day, that is, including the dawning day of the Lord, cannot be three days and three nights, in which He predicted He would be in the heart of the earth. He calls legitimate numbers those which divine Scripture commends more prominently, such as seven, ten, or twelve, by which often either the universality of time or the perfection of something is designated. As: ”Seven times a day I have praised You” (Psalm 118), is nothing else but ”His praise shall always be in my mouth” (Psalm 33). They also have the same value when multiplied by ten, as seventy and seven hundred; whence the seventy years of Jeremiah can be spiritually understood for the whole time during which the Church is among strangers, either by themselves, as ten times ten is one hundred, as twelve times twelve is one hundred forty-four, by which number the universality of the saints is signified in the Apocalypse.

The sixth rule Tyconius calls recapitulation. For certain things are said in the Scriptures as if they follow in the order of time or are narrated in the continuity of things, when the narration secretly refers back to earlier things that were omitted. As in Genesis it is said: ”These are the sons of Noah in their tribes and languages. From these the islands of the nations were divided over the earth” (Gen. 10). And immediately: ”But the whole earth was of one language and of one speech” (Gen. 11). It seems to have been said as if at the time they were dispersed there was one language for all, when rather, by recapitulating, it secretly added: How the languages were divided.

The seventh rule of the same is about the devil and his body. For sometimes it is said of the devil what can be recognized not in him, but in his body, as the Lord, exposing the frauds and powers of the same enemy to blessed Job, among other things says: ”Will he make many supplications to you, or speak soft words to you? For it is not read anywhere that the devil himself is going to do penance, but his body, which, condemned at the end, will say: ”Lord, Lord, open to us” (Luke 13). These rules, therefore, not only in the Apocalypse, that is, in the Revelation of Saint John the Apostle, which the same Tyconius both understood vividly and discussed truly and sufficiently catholicly, except for those places in which, attempting to defend the schism of his party, that is, the Donatists, he laments the persecutions which they suffered from the religious emperor Valentinian, that is, as heretics, with their churches and peoples, houses and possessions handed over to the hands of the Catholics, and the priests driven into exile, and calling these martyrdoms, he boasts that these were foretold in the same Apocalypse; but whoever diligently considers it will find the same rules also operate in all canonical Scripture, and especially prophetic. Indeed, following the sense of this author in this work, we have omitted some things he placed extrinsically for the sake of brevity;

but many things that seemed open and not worth searching out to him as a clever man, and who, as it is said of him, flourished like a rose among thorns, as far as we could touch them by the tradition of teachers, by the memory of reading, or even by the grasp of our sense, we took care to add. For we also have this precept, that we should return the received talents with interest to the Lord. And since it pleased us to divide the mentioned work into three books for the sake of refreshing the mind, for somehow, as blessed Augustine says, ”thus the attention of the reader is refreshed at the end of the book, as the labor of the traveler by an inn,” nonetheless, to make the finding easier for seekers, the same uninterrupted series of chapters, as I had formerly distinguished in brief prefaces in the book itself, seemed to be preserved throughout. Indeed, thinking it necessary to consider the sluggishness of our nation, that is, of the English, which not long ago, that is, in the times of blessed Pope Gregory, received the seed of faith, and the same has cultivated it rather tepidly as far as reading is concerned, I decided not only to elucidate the meanings but also to compress the sentences. For brevity more than lengthy discourse is usually impressed on the memory. I wish you to fare well in Christ, most beloved brother, and to always deign to be mindful of your Bede.

Epigram on Blessed John and His Apocalypse

While John is exiled from the human world And forbidden to see the kingdoms of Coos’ sun, Rejoicing, the beloved of the Lord enters the hall of heaven, Rejoices to be present with the choirs of the high throne of the King. Here, where he turns his sacred eyes on the subject world, He sees the ships driven by waves running everywhere, And Babel and Jerusalem clashing in mixed camps, Here and there, taking turns in hurling weapons and fleeing. But the white-clad soldier who follows the gentle Lamb With the leader receives the blessed kingdoms of heaven. The scaly serpent, through dark Tartarus, submerges his troops In flames, plague, and famine destroys his own. His face, his purpose, the order of the war, The art, the phalanx, the palm, or the weapons, While I would like to reveal, wandering through the broad fields of the ancients I have picked a few seeds from the sacred fields,

Lest a greater abundance of the table breeds disdain, Or such a banquet prevents the preparation of the slender guest. Therefore, if my dishes please your lips, Give praise to the God reigning above the stars. Otherwise, embrace, I pray, the friendly minds, Breaking with pumice what I sing.

Chapter 1

[Revelation 1:1] -- The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him, etc. The Church, founded by the apostles, by what course it was to be spread and by what end it was to be completed, had to be revealed to strengthen the preachers of the faith against the adversities of the world. John, as is his custom, referring the glory of the Son to the Father, testifies that Jesus Christ received the revelation of the mystery from God. [Revelation 1:1] -- Which must shortly come to pass. That is, what is about to happen to the Church in the present time. [Revelation 1:1] -- And he signified it. He intertwined the same Apocalypse with mystical words, lest it be despised by being manifest to all. [Revelation 1:1] -- Sending by his angel. For the angel used the figure of Christ to John, as will be more clearly apparent in the following.

[Revelation 1:1] -- To his servant John. That through John, who, by the singular privilege of chastity, deserved to see these things before others, he might make the same known to all his servants. [Revelation 1:2] -- Who bore witness to the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus, etc. Lest you doubt the person of John, it is he who bore witness to the eternal Word of God and the same incarnate, as he saw, saying: We have seen his glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten from the Father (John 1). [Revelation 1:3] -- Blessed is he who reads, etc. Therefore, teachers and hearers are blessed, because the short time of labor is followed by eternal joys for those who keep the word of God. [Revelation 1:4] -- John to the seven, etc. Through these seven churches, he writes to the whole Church. For the universality is often designated by the number seven, as this whole age is revolved in seven days.

[Revelation 1:4] -- Grace to you, etc. He wishes us grace and peace from the eternal God the Father, and from the sevenfold Spirit, and from Jesus Christ, who in the assumed man bore witness to the Father. He names the Son third, of whom he was going to speak more. He names him last as well, because he is the first and the last, since he had already named him in the Father by saying, who is to come. [Revelation 1:5] -- The firstborn of the dead, etc. This is what the Apostle says: We have seen Jesus Christ crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of

death. And elsewhere, explaining the disgrace of the cross, he added: Therefore God also has exalted him and given him a name that is above every name. [Revelation 1:6] -- And made us a kingdom, etc. Because the King of kings and heavenly Priest, by offering himself for us, has united us to his body, none of the saints is spiritually devoid of the office of priesthood, since he is a member of the eternal Priest.

[Revelation 1:7] -- Behold, he comes with the clouds, etc. He who first came hidden to be judged will then come manifest to judge. He mentions this to strengthen the Church to endure sufferings, now oppressed by enemies, but then to reign with Christ. [Revelation 1:7] -- And those who pierced him, etc. Seeing him in the same form as a powerful judge in which they judged him as insignificant, they will lament themselves in late repentance. [Revelation 1:7] -- Even so, Amen. He affirms it without doubt by interposing ”Amen,” knowing most certainly that it will happen as revealed by God. [Revelation 1:8] -- I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, etc. The beginning, whom none precedes; the end, to whom none succeeds in the kingdom. [Revelation 1:8] -- Who is, and who was, etc. He said the same of the Father. For God the Father also came and is to come in the Son.

[Revelation 1:9] -- I, John, etc. He hints at the person, place, time, and cause of the vision. He testifies that he saw it also in the Spirit, lest he be thought deluded by a fleshly apparition. [Revelation 1:9] -- Was in the island, etc. The story is known, that John was banished to this island by Caesar Domitian because of the gospel, to whom it was fittingly given to penetrate the secrets of heaven when he was forbidden to exceed certain earthly spaces. [Revelation 1:10] -- I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day. He also indicates a suitable time for the spiritual vision. For Scripture often expresses the fixed limits of causes, as often of place, body, or air, so also of time. For the angels visit Abraham at noon, Sodom in the evening. Adam feared at the voice of the Lord walking in the afternoon. And Solomon received wisdom at night, which he would not keep.

[Revelation 1:10] -- And I heard behind me, etc. He is first admonished by the voice to turn his sight to the vision. [Revelation 1:11] -- And send to the seven churches, etc. The Church of Christ was not then only in these places, but the fullness consists in the number seven. Asia, which is interpreted as elevation, designates the proud height of the world in which the Church sojourns; and, as is the custom of divine mystery, the genus fits the species. For the Apostle Paul also writes to seven churches; not, however, the same as John. And although these seven places are a figure of the whole sevenfold Church, yet specific things happened in these which he reproaches or praises. [Revelation 1:12] -- And having turned, etc. Here the form of the Church is beautifully described, bearing the light of divine love in the brightness of a pure heart. According to what the Lord says: ”Let your loins be girded and your lamps burning” (Luke XII). He designates the perfection of its inte-

rior and exterior by the two parts of the number seven, while each one, consisting of the four qualities of the body, loves the Lord God with all their heart, all their soul, and all their strength.

[Revelation 1:13] -- And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man. He says ”like unto the Son of Man” after He had ascended into heaven with death conquered. For even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we no longer know Him. But well, ”in the midst.” For He says, ”All those around Him shall offer gifts.” [Revelation 1:13] -- Clothed with a garment down to the foot. The ”garment down to the foot,” which in Latin is called a tunic reaching to the ankles, and is a priestly garment, shows the priesthood of Christ, by which He offered Himself as a sacrifice to the Father on the altar of the cross for us. [Revelation 1:13] -- And girt about the paps with a golden girdle. He calls the two testaments the paps, with which He nourishes the holy body connected to Him. For the golden girdle is the chorus of saints, adhering to the Lord with concordant charity, embracing and keeping the testaments (as the Apostle says) in the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephes. IV).

[Revelation 1:14] -- His head and his hairs were white like wool, etc. The antiquity and immortality of majesty are shown in the whiteness of His head, to which all the chief ones cling like hair, resembling wool because of the sheep that will be on the right hand, and like snow because of the countless multitude of the purified and the chosen given by heaven. [Revelation 1:14] -- And his eyes were as a flame of fire. The eyes of the Lord are the preachers, providing spiritual fire and light to the faithful, and burning to the unbelievers. [Revelation 1:15] -- And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace. The fiery feet represent the Church of the last time, which is to be examined and tested by severe tribulations. Fine brass is brass brought to a golden color by much fire and medicine. Another translation, which says like the brass of Lebanon, signifies the Church in Judea, whose mountain is Lebanon, to be persecuted especially at the end. For the temple often received the name of Lebanon, to which it is said: ”Open, O Lebanon, your gates, and let fire devour your cedars” (Zach. XI).

[Revelation 1:15] -- And his voice as the sound of many waters. The voice of confession and preaching and praise resounds not only in Judea but among many peoples. [Revelation 1:16] -- And he had in his right hand seven stars. In the right hand of Christ is the spiritual Church. ”The queen stood at your right hand in gilded clothing” (Psalm XLIV). To whom standing on His right, He says: ”Come, blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom” (Matt. XXV). [Revelation 1:16] -- And out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword. Who judging visible and invisible things, after He has slain, has the power to cast into the hell of fire. [Revelation 1:16] -- And his face was as the sun shining in its strength. As he appeared to the disciples on the mountain, so will the Lord appear to all the saints after the judgment. For the

impious will see in the judgment him whom they pierced (John XIX). However, this entire appearance of the Son of Man also applies to the Church, with whom Christ has become one in nature, granting it the honor of priestly and judicial power, and that it may shine like the sun in the kingdom of his Father (Matt. XIII).

[Revelation 1:17] -- And when I saw him, I fell at his feet. As a man, he trembles at the spiritual vision, but the Lord's mercy dispels human fear. [Revelation 1:17] -- Fear not; I am the first and the last. The first, because all things were made through him. The last, because all things are restored in him. [Revelation 1:18] -- And I have the keys of death and Hades. He says, not only have I conquered death by resurrection; but I also have dominion over death itself. He also granted this to the Church by breathing the Holy Spirit upon it, saying, "Whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven," and so forth. [Revelation 1:19] -- Write therefore the things which you have seen, etc. Make known to all the things you alone have seen, namely, the various labors of the Church, and the wicked mixed with the good in it, until the end of the world.

[Revelation 1:20] -- The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches. That is, the rulers of the churches. For the priest, as Malachi says, is the angel of the Lord of hosts (Mal. II).

Chapter 2

[Revelation 2:1] -- To the angel of the church in Ephesus write. He reproaches part of this church according to the quality of its name and praises part. For Ephesus is said to be interpreted as a great fall and my will in it. [Revelation 2:1] -- These things says he who holds the seven stars in his right hand. That is, he holds you in his hand and governs and controls you by his power. [Revelation 2:1] -- Who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. Who, moving among you, investigates the hearts and loins of each one. [Revelation 2:2] -- I know your works, and your labor, etc. I see you, he says, diligently performing good works and patiently enduring the intolerable wrongs of the wicked; examining carefully the words and deeds of false apostles, you have not in any way wished to yield to them.

[Revelation 2:4] -- But I have this against you, that you have left your first love, etc. In some matters, indeed, you have abandoned the love you began with, which, unless they recover, I will deprive them of the promised light. However, in some matters, you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which are revealed in the following, that is, idolatry and fornication. [Revelation 2:7] -- He who has an ear, let him hear, etc. What he writes to each, he demonstrates he says to all churches. For it was not only the church of the Ephesians that was to be removed from its place if it did not repent, nor is the seat of Satan only in Pergamum and not everywhere. Thus, the other matters of each individual church are common to the whole Church. [Revelation 2:7] -- To him who overcomes, I will give to eat from the tree of life which is in the paradise of God. The tree of life is Christ, in whose vision in the heavenly paradise, and in the present body of the Church, the holy souls are refreshed.

[Revelation 2:8] -- And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write. He suggests to this church to endure persecution, to which the name also agrees. For Smyrna means myrrh, which signifies the mortification of the flesh. [Revelation 2:8] -- These things says the first and the last, who was dead and came to life. Who both created all things and restored all things by dying. A fitting preface for urging patience. [Revelation 2:9] -- I know your tribulation and poverty, but you are rich. For blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Which Fortunatus beautifully explained in a short verse, saying: ”The poor in their narrowness

reign by having God." [Revelation 2:9] -- Those who say they are Jews and are not. They profess to know God, but deny him by their deeds. For Jew is the name of religion. Hence also the Apostle: "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter."

[Revelation 2:10] -- Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested. These words apply to the universal Church, against which the devil always exercises inextricable enmities. [Revelation 2:10] -- And you will have tribulation ten days. This signifies the whole time in which the necessary commandments of the Decalogue are present. For as long as you follow the light of the divine word, it is necessary to endure the prison of the adversarial enemy. Some understand the ten persecutions of the nations from Caesar Nero to Diocletian to be signified. [Revelation 2:10] -- Be faithful unto death, etc. He shows to what extent the ten days reach, advising to keep the faith unto death. [Revelation 2:11] -- He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death. He who remains faithful until the death of the flesh will not fear the eternal death of the soul.

[Revelation 2:12] -- And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write. Pergamum is interpreted as "dividing their horns," meaning he who by judging distinguishes between the virtue of the faithful and the treachery of the Nicolaitans, so that the horns of sinners are broken, and the horns of the just are exalted. [Revelation 2:12] -- These things says he who has the sharp two-edged sword. He fittingly prefaces with judicial power, who is to reward the victors and render punishment to those who err. [Revelation 2:13] -- I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is, etc. I approve of your patience, which, residing among the reprobates who are the throne of the devil, worships me not only by name, being called Christian, but with whole faith even in times of bloody persecution. But I disapprove that I see seducers and false teachers among you. [Revelation 2:13] -- And in those days my faithful witness Antipas, etc. Some understand Antipas as a martyr who suffered in Pergamum, others as the Lord Christ, who is still killed by unbelievers, as much as it lies in them.

[Revelation 2:14] -- Eating things sacrificed to idols and committing fornication. These are the principal things by which carnal people are militant, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame. But every evil work is idolatry and spiritual fornication. [Revelation 2:15] -- Holding the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. The Nicolaitans are named after Nicholas the deacon, who, as Clement reports, was reprimanded for the zeal of a very beautiful wife and responded that anyone who wished could take her as his wife. Because of this, unbelievers taught that the apostles allowed all communal and promiscuous unions of women. It is said that the Nicolaitans also preached some fabulous and nearly pagan things about the beginning of the world, and did not separate their food from what was offered to

idols. [Revelation 2:17] -- To him who overcomes I will give hidden manna. He who despises the enticement of the flesh, although hypocrites may urge it, will justly be filled with the sweetness of the invisible bread that came down from heaven.

[Revelation 2:17] -- And I will give him a white stone. That is, a body now made white by baptism, then shining with the glory of incorruption. [Revelation 2:17] -- And on the stone a new name written. That we may be called and may be the sons of God. [Revelation 2:17] -- What no one knows except the one who receives it. Because he who says he knows God and does not keep His commandments is a liar. The hypocrite does not taste how sweet the Lord is. [Revelation 2:18] -- And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write. Thyatira is translated as sacrifice. The saints offer their bodies as a living sacrifice. [Revelation 2:18] -- These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire. He explains what the flaming eyes are below, saying: I am he who searches the minds and hearts, and I will give to each of you according to your works.

[Revelation 1:15] -- And his feet are like fine brass. And he explains that the latter works of this church are more numerous than the former. [Revelation 2:20] -- But I have this against you, that you permit the woman Jezebel, etc. Indeed, you are commendable in your work and faith, but you are reproachable in this, that you do not rebuke with worthy denunciation the synagogue of pseudo-apostles, who falsely claim to be Christians. The name Jezebel, which signifies a flow of blood, is fitting for heretics. And it is conjectured that there was a woman in the aforementioned church teaching these crimes, who was a figure of all Jezebel throughout the world, to whom he also threatens clear vengeance. [Revelation 2:20] -- To seduce my servants to commit fornication, etc. Certainly, under the name of Christ, she taught spiritual fornication and idolatry. For how could she openly teach the worship of idols, who called herself a prophet in the Church?

[Revelation 2:22] -- Behold, I will cast her onto a bed. By God’s just judgment, it happens that she lies in the bed of eternal punishment, who led the wretched into the bed of lust. [Revelation 2:23] -- And her children into death. Here he calls the posterity and works of the woman her children, threatening them with not the momentary death of the body but the eternal death of the soul. [Revelation 2:23] -- And all the churches shall know that I am he who searches minds and hearts. In minds, he signifies desires; in hearts, thoughts. [Revelation 2:23] -- And I will give to each of you according to your works. Therefore, our works and words can be known to men, but only He who sees knows what each one thinks, what each one desires, and where each one wishes to arrive through them. By what consequence is he called the knower of hidden things, punishing fornication and idolatry, which are manifest crimes, unless because these can also be called offenses even in the smallest? ”You will destroy all who commit fornication away from You” (Psalm LXII).

And the same apostle John, who hears these things, concluded when discussing false brothers: ”Little children,” he said, ”keep yourselves from idols” (1 John V).

[Revelation 2:24] -- To you I say, and to the rest who are in Thyatira. Just as he urges the impious to repent and threatens them with punishment, so he encourages the pious to patience with promises of eternal rewards. [Revelation 2:24] -- Who have not known the depths of Satan, etc. Just as those who work iniquity do not know God, even though they may preach Him. Likewise, God, although He knows all, does not recognize the workers of iniquity. [Revelation 2:24] -- I will put upon you no other burden, etc. I will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you can bear. Otherwise, he says, be wary of false prophets (Matt. VII). For I do not send you new doctrine, but what you have received, keep it until the end. [Revelation 2:26] -- To him who overcomes falsehoods and keeps my commands, etc. The Church has this power in Christ, as the body in the head. In whom, according to the Apostle, God has given us all things (Rom. VIII).

[Revelation 2:27] -- And he shall rule them with a rod of iron. He governs the meek with inflexible justice, so that they may bear more fruit; but he destroys the obstinate, so that they either perish eternally, or the earthly desires and muddy affairs of the old man are crushed in them, whatever has been contracted and ingrained from the mire of sins. [Revelation 2:28] -- And I will give him the morning star. Christ is the morning star, who, after the night of the world has passed, promises and reveals to the saints the light of eternal life.

Chapter 3

[Revelation 3:1] -- And to the angel of the church in Sardis write. He reproves this angel, that is, the priest, for being less diligent in correcting evils. However, he praises some who walk in white garments, to whom the name of the Sardis stone, indeed precious, is fitting. [Revelation 3:1] -- I know your works, that you have a name that you live, and you are dead. You appear to be alive, but if you do not watch in correcting the wicked, you will be counted among the dead. [Revelation 3:2] -- For I have not found your works perfect before my God. The works of a ruler are not perfect before God if he does not strive to rouse others, even if he seems blameless to men. [Revelation 3:3] -- I will come upon you as a thief. As in the parable of the gospel, so here by the example of a thief to be avoided, he warns to be vigilant.

[Revelation 3:4] -- But you have a few names in Sardis who have not defiled their garments. He did not say a few people, but a few names. For he calls his own sheep by name; he knows Moses by name, and he writes the names of his saints in heaven. [Revelation 3:5] -- He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments. He urges everyone to the habit of those who have kept the seamless robe of baptism unblemished. [Revelation 3:7] -- And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write. Philadelphia is interpreted as brotherly love, which is promised the open door of the kingdom and to be loved by the Lord. [Revelation 3:7] -- These things says the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David. That is, the royal authority, whether born from the lineage of David or because the prophecy of David was revealed through the dispensation of Christ.

[Revelation 3:7] -- Who opens and no one shuts, etc. The secrets of the divine law are revealed to the faithful by the power of Christ alone and are closed to the unfaithful. [Revelation 3:8] -- Behold, I have set before you an open door, etc. The door of heavenly knowledge, which Christ has opened to his Church, is never shut by any force or effort. [Revelation 3:8] -- Because you have a little strength, etc. He shows the reason that this church deserves these gifts, because it does not trust in its own strength but in the grace of Christ the King. It is the praise of the protecting God and the devotion of the Church that the door of victory is opened

to one of little faith, and that little strength is strengthened by faith. [Revelation 3:9] -- Behold, I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not. He promised this to the whole Church at that time, because not only in Philadelphia did they believe from the synagogue of the Jews, as we find in the Acts of the Apostles.

[Revelation 3:10] -- Because you have kept my word of patience, etc. Because you have kept my example in enduring adversities, I will in turn keep you from imminent tribulations; not indeed that you will not be tempted, but that you will not be overcome by adversities. And although the Church is always exercised by adversities, here the hour of temptation and the humiliation of the Jews under the time of Antichrist can be signified, so that as in the following in the sixth order often, so also here in the sixth angel the final persecution is designated. In which indeed the evil Jews, deceiving and being deceived, but others, by the teachings of the great prophet Elijah, understanding the law spiritually and incorporated into the members of the Church, are believed to be strongly victorious over the enemy. [Revelation 3:11] -- Behold, I come quickly. Hold fast what you have, etc. Lest you grow weary in enduring. For I will quickly help, lest perhaps, if you fail, another receives the reward decreed for you. Thus, the number of saints, which is fixed with God, cannot be shortened by the treachery of growing tares. If indeed a crown is given to another when lost, the place of him who lost what he held is not vacant.

[Revelation 3:12] -- He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, etc. He who overcomes adversities for my sake will gloriously fear no further loss of adversity in the temple of the Church. These pillars, that is, holy men, now strengthen the Church by supporting it, then will adorn it by standing out, just as those two in the doors of Solomon’s temple. [Revelation 3:12] -- And I will write on him the name of my God. Because indeed by adoption we are called sons of God. [Revelation 3:12] -- And the name of the city of my God, the New Jerusalem. He will be associated with the unity of the Church, which by heavenly grace is regenerated into a new life. [Revelation 3:12] -- And my new name. This is the Christian name, not because it is new to the Son of God, who had this glory before the world was made, but new to the Son of Man who was dead and has risen, and sits at the right hand of God.

[Revelation 3:14] -- And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write. Laodicea is called the beloved tribe of the Lord, or they were in the vomit. For there were those to whom he would say: I will begin to spew you out of my mouth. And to others he says: I rebuke and chasten those whom I love. From the Greek, it is interpreted as the just people. [Revelation 3:14] -- These things says the Amen, the faithful and true witness, etc. Amen is truly or faithfully interpreted. Therefore, Christ, who is in the essence of divinity the truth, reminds us that he is made the beginning of the creation of God through the mystery of the Incarnation, so that through these

things he conforms the Church to endure sufferings. [Revelation 3:15] -- I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot, etc. You are neither fervent in faith nor entirely unfaithful. If you were still unfaithful, the hope of conversion would still remain for you; but now, because you do not do the will of the Lord that you have known, you will be cast out from the bowels of my Church.

[Revelation 3:17] -- Because you say, ”I am rich and increased with goods,” etc. Content with faith alone, you falsely claim the riches of righteousness for yourself, but if you truly desire to be rich, buy the fervor of charity tested in the flame of tribulations, having left everything, and anoint the eyes of your mind not with the stibium of deceptive boastfulness but with the eye salve of divine knowledge. To anoint the eyes with eye salve is to merit the understanding of the holy Scriptures through the execution of good works. [Revelation 3:19] -- Those whom I love, I rebuke and chasten. Do not refuse to suffer adversities, since this is a special sign of being loved by the Lord. [Revelation 3:19] -- Be zealous therefore, and repent. He shows that there were those there who should have been emulated and followed. [Revelation 3:20] -- Behold, I stand at the door and knock, etc. I indeed knock at the door of your heart with the right hand of exhortation, which if you receive willingly, you will be deemed worthy to have me as a dweller and co-heir.

[Revelation 3:21] -- To him who overcomes, I will grant to sit with me on my throne. He says he will make the confessor a participant in power and judgment. He has made us sit together, he says, in the heavenly places in Christ. [Revelation 3:21] -- As I also conquered, and sat down with my Father on his throne. The Lord, having conquered, sat on the throne with the Father, because after the struggles of the passion, after the victory of the resurrection, He more clearly showed Himself to all that He was equal to the Father’s power. Note that in each church, the Lord first reveals His power, then reviews the works of the church, either to be praised or blamed, always intermingled with admonition. Finally, He repays the due reward, which can be understood in the present and in the future, to both parties. When He adds: He who has ears, let him hear, it is undoubtedly fitting to understand the ears of the heart for obedience to the commandments.

Chapter 4

[Revelation 4:1] -- After this, I looked, and behold, a door open in heaven. After describing the works of the Church, what it was and what it would be like, he recapitulates from the birth of Christ, intending to say the same things differently. For he repeats the entire time of the Church in various figures in this book. Behold, he says, a door open in heaven. Fittingly, he sees a heavenly door about to ascend, to whom high mysteries are promised to be revealed. Or because Christ is the door, he who believes in Him born and suffered ascends to heaven, that is, to the height of the Church, and sees future spiritual events as he says. [Revelation 4:2] -- And immediately I was in the Spirit. And the first voice which I heard. Certainly similar to the previous voice, which had said: What you see, write in a book (Rev. 1).

[Revelation 4:2] -- And behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sitting on the throne. The Lord inhabits the church placed in heavenly conversation. Pope Gregory interprets the throne of God in the vision of Micah as angelic powers. Presiding higher in their minds, He disposes all things below. [Revelation 4:3] -- And he who was sitting was like the appearance of a jasper and a sardius stone. Jasper's color signifies water, sardius fire. With these two, we know the judgment is celebrated. For as it was in the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man (Matt. 24). [Revelation 4:3] -- And a rainbow was around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. The rainbow, which is made by the sun shining on clouds, and after the flood was first made a sign of propitiation, by the intercession of the saints whom the Lord illuminates, signifies the Church being fortified. They are well compared to the emerald stone of great greenness; for as they expect an imperishable inheritance with perfect faith, they also powerfully protect others by praying.

[Revelation 4:4] -- And around the throne were twenty-four thrones, etc. He sees the same Church, which he had seen as one seat because of the fellowship of faith, generated from the patriarchs and apostles through the double testament, in twenty-four thrones, sitting because of its judicial dignity in Christ. For all members will sit and judge, but in one and through one head. For how can the saints sit in judgment, standing at the right hand of the Judge? The twenty-four elders can also be understood as those who complete the perfection of work, which is

commended by the number six, with the clear preaching of the Gospel. For four times six makes twenty-four. [Revelation 4:4] -- Clothed in white garments, and on their heads were golden crowns. That is, clothed in good works, seeking heavenly joys with the perpetual memory of the mind. For often the mind is understood by the name of the head.

[Revelation 4:5] -- And from the throne proceed flashes of lightning and voices and peals of thunder. This is what Mark says: But they went forth and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the accompanying signs (Mark 16). [Revelation 4:5] -- And seven burning lamps before the throne, etc. He speaks of the one Spirit in a sevenfold way, for there is one Spirit. But the sevenfold nature is perfection and fullness. Having mentioned the Holy Spirit, it is fitting that the wave of baptism follows, in which the same Spirit is believed to be received. [Revelation 4:6] -- And before the throne, there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. This refers to the faith of true baptism, which is related to glass, in which nothing different is seen on the outside than what it bears within. The grace of baptism is also figured by crystal, which is formed from water into ice and a precious stone.

[Revelation 4:6] -- And in the midst of the throne and around the throne, there were four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind. All parts of the throne of God, that is, the Church, are filled with the light of the Gospel from the knowledge of past and future things. [Revelation 4:7] -- And the first living creature was like a lion, etc. These living creatures are interpreted in various ways. But blessed Augustine, according to the order of this book, says that Matthew is understood in the lion, who narrates the royal lineage of Christ, who also conquered as the Lion of the tribe of Judah. For the cub of the lion is Judah (Gen. 49). And in whom, as a king, he is feared by a king, worshipped by the magi. Where also the king reckons with his servants, the king makes a marriage for his son, and finally, the king separates the sheep from the goats. Luke is in the calf, which was a great sacrifice in the law. For not only are his beginnings around the temple and sacrifices, but it also concludes: And they were continually in the temple praising and blessing God (Luke 24). The face of a man signifies Mark, who, saying nothing of the royal or priestly power of the Lord, simply narrates the deeds of the man Christ. But John is the eagle, who sharply looks at the birth of the Word like the rising sun. The living creatures sometimes signify the evangelists, sometimes the whole Church. Whose strength is shown in the lion, sacrifice in the calf, humility in the man, sublimity in the flying eagle.

[Revelation 4:8] -- Each of them had six wings. By the perfection of their doctrine, they lift the Church to the heights. For the number six is called perfect because it is completed by its own parts. For one, which is the sixth part of six, and two, which is the third, and three, which is half, make up the same six. Alternatively, the six

wings of the four living creatures, which are twenty-four, signify the same number of books of the Old Testament, by which the authority of the evangelists is supported and the truth is confirmed. [Revelation 4:8] -- And around and within they are full of eyes, etc. The holy Church vigilantly regards itself both before God and before men. The Psalmist had seen its inner eyes when he says: All the glory of the king's daughter is within (Ps. 45). And the outer eyes when he immediately adds: In embroidered garments, she is led to the king (Ibid.). Alternatively, whether you attend to the letter or seek the allegory, you will always find light from the Gospel. Another translation has: Full of eyes before and behind. Because the light of the Gospel shines into the mysteries of the law and infuses the world with the splendor of the new grace.

[Revelation 4:8] -- And they had no rest day and night, etc. The holy creatures, throughout the time of the age, affirm the single dominion of the Deity, the omnipotence and eternity of the Holy Trinity, with the perpetual praise of the intellectual creature remaining in the heavens. [Revelation 4:10] -- The twenty-four elders fell down before Him who sits on the throne and worshipped. When the creatures resound in praise, that is, when the evangelists proclaim the dispensation of Christ, the whole Church, which consists of leaders and peoples (for this is what the doubled number twelve signifies), immediately falls on its face and worships Him who lives forever and ever. [Revelation 4:10] -- And they cast their crowns before the throne. Namely, assigning whatever virtue, whatever dignity they had. For He created all things out of nothing.

Chapter 5

[Revelation 5:1] -- And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a book written within and on the back. This vision demonstrates to us the mysteries of the Holy Scripture revealed through the Incarnation of the Lord. Its harmonious unity contains the Old Testament as if externally, and the New Testament internally. [Revelation 5:1] -- Sealed with seven seals. That is, either covered with the fullness of all hidden mysteries or written by the disposition of the sevenfold Spirit. [Revelation 5:2] -- And I heard a mighty angel proclaiming with a loud voice: Who is worthy to open the book? This signifies the preaching of the law. For many prophets and righteous men desired to see what the apostles saw (Matt. 13). And about this salvation, as Peter says, the prophets sought and searched diligently (1 Pet. 1). This is the book which in Isaiah is sealed both to the one who can read and to the one who cannot. Yet even there its opening is proclaimed thus: In that day the deaf will hear the words of the book (Isa. 29). And concerning it, Ezekiel says: And I saw, and behold, a hand was sent to me, in which was a scroll, and he spread it before me, and it was written within and without (Ezek. 2). He also added what John was silent about, namely, what was written in the book, saying: And there were written therein lamentations, mourning, and woe (Ibid.). For the entire series of the Old and New Testaments warns us to repent for sins, to seek the kingdom of heaven, and to flee from the lamentations of hell.

[Revelation 5:3] -- And no one was able in heaven or on earth, etc. Neither angel, nor any of the righteous even freed from the bond of the flesh, could reveal or investigate the mysteries of the divine law, nor look upon it, that is, to contemplate the splendor of the grace of the New Testament. Just as the children of Israel could not look upon the face of the giver of the Old Testament, which contains the New. [Revelation 5:4] -- And I wept much. Recognizing the common misery of the human race, he grieved. [Revelation 5:5] -- And one of the elders said to me: Weep not, etc. He is forbidden to weep, because the mystery that had long been hidden was already fulfilled in the passion of Christ, when He gave up the spirit and the veil of the temple was torn (Mark 15). To whom it is said: You are a lion’s cub, O Judah; you have gone up to the prey, my son (Gen. 49), etc. He follows and describes how and where the Lion of the tribe of Judah conquered.

[Revelation 5:6] -- And I saw in the midst of the throne ... a Lamb standing as if slain. The same Lord who is the Lamb by dying innocently, also became a lion by bravely overcoming death. Tyconius says the lamb represents the Church, which in Christ has received all power. [Revelation 5:6] -- Having seven horns and seven eyes. The Spirit in Christ is sevenfold, due to the eminence of power: compared to horns, due to the illumination of grace, to eyes. [Revelation 5:7] -- And he came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. The book from the right hand of God, the dispensation itself of the Incarnation, is said to have been received by the Son of Man from the Father and from Himself, according to what He is as God, because both, along with the Holy Spirit, dwell on the throne. For Christ, who is the Lamb in humanity, is Himself the right hand of the Father in Deity.

[Revelation 5:8] -- And when He had opened the book, etc. When by His passion the Lord proved that the proclamations of both Testaments were fulfilled in Him, the Church, giving thanks, also offers itself to sufferings, so that, according to the Apostle, it may complete in its flesh what is lacking in Christ's afflictions (Col. 1). For in the harps where strings are stretched on wood, the bodies ready to die are signified; by the bowls, the hearts open wide in the breadth of charity are signified. [Revelation 5:9] -- And they sang a new song, etc. They celebrate the sacraments of the New Testament, which are completed in Christ, praising His very dispensation, which they confess belongs to Christ alone. [Revelation 5:9] -- And you have redeemed us to God by your blood, etc. Here it is further declared that the creatures and elders are the Church, which has been redeemed by the blood of Christ and gathered from the nations. It also shows in which heaven they are, by saying: And they will reign on the earth. And I saw and heard the voice of many angels around the throne, and the creatures, and the elders.

[Revelation 5:11] -- And their number was thousands upon thousands. Innumerable thousands of people flocking to the Church praise God. [Revelation 5:13] -- To whom all power in heaven and on earth has been given. For if the righteous are called the children of God, why not also the angels? Although the heavenly hosts can also sing this by rejoicing in our redemption. As the holy Pope Gregory explained, adding: "For the voice of the angels in the praise of the Creator is the very wonder of inner contemplation." [Revelation 5:14] -- And the four living creatures said Amen, etc. As the people in the Church resound with praises to the Lord, the teachers confirm the same and, by the example of their lives, together worship the Lord.

Chapter 6

[Revelation 6:1] -- And I saw when the Lamb had opened one of the seals. Since the signs are first loosened and then the book is opened, He wisely reversed the usual order. For the Lord, by suffering and rising again, taught that He is the end of the law. And ascending into heaven, sending the Holy Spirit, He strengthened the Church with the gift of a more secret mystery. Therefore, He opened the book then, and now He loosens its seals. In the first seal, the glory of the primitive Church; in the following three, the threefold war against her; in the fifth, the glory of those who triumphed in this war; in the sixth, those things that will come in the time of the Antichrist, with a brief recapitulation of the previous ones; in the seventh, he sees the beginning of eternal rest. [Revelation 6:1] -- And I heard one of the four living creatures saying: Come and see. We too are admonished with great voices of the Gospel to behold the glory of the Church.

[Revelation 6:2] -- And behold a white horse, etc. The Lord presides over the Church, which by grace is whitened beyond snow, and bearing the arms of spiritual doctrine against the wicked, receives the victor's crown among His own. Of whom it is said: He received gifts among men (Ps. 68). In which, even presiding in heaven, He was persecuted by Saul. [Revelation 6:3] -- And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature, etc. We are also commanded to diligently observe the opposing cavalry, so that just as joy is taken from the Church's successes, caution is taken from foreknowledge of adversities. [Revelation 6:4] -- And another horse went out, fiery red. Against the victorious and conquering Church went out a fiery red horse, that is, a perverse people, bloodthirsty from their rider, the devil. Although we have read in Zechariah of the red horse of the Lord; but that one is red with His own blood, this one with another's.

[Revelation 6:4] -- And the one sitting on it was given power to take peace from the earth. Namely, his own peace. But the Church received the eternal peace which Christ left to it. [Revelation 6:4] -- And a great sword was given to him. Either against those who become apostates of the faith, or against those whom he makes martyrs. About this, it is said to blessed Job: He who made him applied his sword (Job 40), meaning either that he should not tempt the saints as much as the wicked

one wishes, or that vengeance for his fury should return upon himself. [Revelation 6:5] -- And behold, a black horse, etc. The black horse represents a crowd of false brothers, who have the balance of right profession, but harm their companions through works of darkness. For when it is said, in the midst of the creatures, Do not harm, it is shown that there is someone there who harms. About this advancing horse, the Apostle says: Fightings without, fears within.

[Revelation 6:6] -- A measure of wheat for a denarius, etc. He says, Beware lest you scandalize your brother by a very bad example, for whom Christ died and who bears the marks of the sacred blood and chrism. For whether by the merits of the perfect, or even of the least, anyone in the Church imbued with faith in the Holy Trinity is redeemed at the same perfect price of the Lord's blood. And not without reason is the perfection of faith or work expressed by a double measure and not a single one, which both consist in the root of twin charity. [Revelation 6:8] -- And behold, a pale horse, etc. Heretics who mask themselves as Catholics, worthy of the inhabiting death, drag after them a host of the lost. For the devil and his ministers are metaphorically called death and hell, as they are the cause of death and hell for many. It can also be simply understood that here the spiritually dead, there eternal punishment follows.

[Revelation 6:8] -- And power was given to him over a fourth of the earth. Behold, the madness of Arius, born in Alexandria, reached as far as the Gallic Ocean, not only persecuting the pious bestially with famine of the word of God but also with physical sword. Another version translates it as a fourth part, because the three evil horses, relying on the devil as their leader, ride against the fourth cavalry of the Church. [Revelation 6:9] -- And when he had opened the fifth seal, etc. Because he had said that the Church is greatly afflicted in the present, he also speaks of the glory of souls after the punishment of bodies. I saw, he says, them under the altar, that is, in the sanctuary of eternal praise. For the golden altar, placed inside and near the ark of the Lord's body, does not offer flesh and blood, but only the incense of praise to the Lord. And those who now present their bodies as a living sacrifice will then, with the bonds of the flesh broken, sacrifice the sacrifice of praise to Him (Ps. 116). It can also be through a hyperbaton, that he saw not under the altar but those killed under the altar, that is, under the testimony of Christ's name, as it is said of the Maccabees: They fell under the covenant of God (2 Macc. 7).

[Revelation 6:10] -- And they cried out with a loud voice, saying. The great cry of souls signifies their immense desire for what they know the Lord wishes to do. For it is not proper to believe they desire anything against God's will, as their desires depend on His will. [Revelation 6:10] -- How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You not judge and avenge, etc.? They do not pray out of hatred for their enemies, for whom they interceded in this world, but out of love for justice, which they, as near the Judge, harmoniously support. They pray for the day of judgment to come, when

the kingdom of sin will be destroyed and the resurrection of extinguished bodies will arrive. For we too, although commanded to pray for our enemies, nonetheless say to the Lord in our prayers: Your kingdom come (Matt. 6). [Revelation 6:11] -- And each of them was given a white robe. Now, the souls of the saints have individual robes, rejoicing in their blessed immortality. But when their bodies rise again, according to Isaiah, they will possess double in their land.

[Revelation 6:11] -- And it was told to them that they should rest for a little while longer, etc. The desire for resurrection is not denied, but it is deferred due to the increase of the brethren yet to be gathered. For even the joy of the souls can be symbolized by the white robes, when, with the Lord revealing to them, they learn both that the wicked are to be damned at the end and that many will be joined to their number through martyrdom until the end of the world. Filled with internal charity, they prefer their joy to be deferred until the number of their brethren is completed. [Revelation 6:12] -- And I saw when He opened the sixth seal, etc. With the opening of the sixth seal, the final persecution is announced, and just as the world was shaken with darkness and fear when the Lord was crucified on the sixth day, it will be so again.

[Revelation 6:12] -- And the sun became black as sackcloth. As if the power of Christ were hidden, or His doctrine temporarily obscured, or as if He were veiled from defense, when the ministers of Antichrist are allowed to attack the servants of Christ. [Revelation 6:12] -- And the whole moon became like blood. The Church will shed blood for Christ more than usual. He said the whole moon, because the final commotion will be worldwide, whereas previously it was, as written, localized. [Revelation 6:13] -- And the stars fell to the earth, etc. Those who shine outwardly in the Church, driven by the wind of the final persecution, will be shown to have been earthly. Their deeds are rightly compared to the gross, immature, useless, and perishable fruits of the fig tree. [Revelation 6:14] -- And the sky receded like a scroll being rolled up. Just as a rolled-up scroll contains mysteries within but nothing apparent outside, so will the Church, known only to its own, retreat discreetly to avoid persecution, hidden from outsiders.

[Revelation 6:14] -- And every mountain and island was moved from its place. Mentioning various members of the Church according to their roles or strengths, he predicts that none will be exempt from this upheaval, but the movement will differ—good people will avoid by fleeing, while the wicked will be driven by following. [Revelation 6:15] -- And the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders. We understand kings as powerful people. He means to encompass every rank and condition. Besides, who but the persecutor will be kings then? [Revelation 6:15] -- They hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains, etc. When the weaker ones seek to be strengthened by the examples of the high ones in the Church, to be fortified by their advice, and to be protected by their warnings and prayers, they

figuratively ask these mountains to fall on them through their compassionate affection. For the high mountains are a refuge for the deer, and the rocks a shelter for the hedgehogs (Ps. 104:18).

[Revelation 6:16] -- And hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. So that He may find us not as reprobates, but stable in faith when He comes, with our sins covered by the intercession of the saints and the mercy of God. [Revelation 6:17] -- And who will be able to stand? Certainly, the one who now strives to watch, to stand firm in faith, and to act manfully. If you interpret this earthquake literally as referring to the very day of judgment, it is not surprising that earthly kings and princes, fearful of the holy mountains, seek refuge, as we read has already happened in the case of the rich man clothed in purple and the poor Lazarus.

Chapter 7

[Revelation 7:1] -- After this, I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth. That is, the four principal kingdoms, namely, those of the Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans. For just as in the previous seals, after witnessing the manifold conflicts of the Church, he saw the joys of the triumphant souls; so also now, he is about to prove with examples what victory follows the kingdom of the Antichrist, succeeding the preceding kingdoms of the world, which have already yielded to the rule of Christ's Church. For great causes must be confirmed by greater arguments. [Revelation 7:1] -- Holding the four winds of the earth, etc. By their own power, they, in a way, suffocate everything, allowing no one to breathe freely under their jurisdiction. The diversity of provinces on land, the islands in the sea, and the various qualities and conditions of men in the trees are signified. Alternatively, the four angels are to be understood as the same as the four winds, according to the prophecy of Daniel saying: Behold, the four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea, and four great beasts came up from the sea (Dan. 7).

[Revelation 7:2] -- And I saw another angel ascending from the east, etc. The Lord born in the flesh, who is the angel of great counsel, the messenger of the Father's will, visited us as the rising sun from on high (Luke 1), bringing the banner of the cross to mark the foreheads of His own. [Revelation 7:2] -- And he cried out with a loud voice to the four angels. The great voice of the Lord is the sublime preaching: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. [Revelation 7:3] -- Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees. Since the Lord has suffered, not only has the power of the adversary been crushed, but also the dominion of worldly principalities, as we both see with our eyes and read in the statue that the stone from the mountain shattered. [Revelation 7:3] -- Until we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads? For this reason, the dominion of the nations has been broken, so that the faces of the saints could be freely marked with the sign of faith, to which they had resisted. For the very shape of the cross signifies the Lord's kingdom extended everywhere, as the ancient saying proves: Look at the world divided into four distinct parts, to prove that the kingdom of faith holds all things.

[Revelation 7:3] -- For it was not in vain that the tetragrammaton, the name of the Lord, was written on the forehead of the high priest, because this is the sign on the forehead of the faithful, about which it is sung in the Psalm for the winepresses: O Lord, our Lord, how admirable is Your name in all the earth (Ps. 8), and so forth, until it says: That You may destroy the enemy and the avenger (Ibid.). [Revelation 7:4] -- And I heard the number of those who were sealed, etc. This finite number signifies the innumerable multitude of the whole Church, which is generated from the patriarchs, either by descent of flesh or by imitation of faith. For if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed (Gal. 3). For the increase of perfection, it pertains that twelve is multiplied twelve times, and to the total is perfected as a thousand, which is a solid squared number, signifying the stable life of the Church. Therefore, it is often figured by the number twelve because it stands firm in the faith of the Holy Trinity in a fourfold world. For thrice four is the perfect number, a double portion. Finally, the apostles, who were chosen to preach the same faith to the world, were twelve, indicating by their number the mystery of their work.

[Revelation 7:5] -- From the tribe of Judah, twelve thousand sealed, etc. It is fitting that he begins with Judah, from which tribe our Lord arose; and he omits Dan, from whom it is said the Antichrist is to be born, as it is written: Let Dan be a serpent by the way, a viper by the path, that bites the horse's heels, so that its rider falls backward (Gen. 49). For he did not intend to describe the order of earthly generation but to expound the virtues of the Church according to the interpretation of the names, which hasten from confession and praise to the right hand of eternal life. This is the meaning of the names Judah, who is placed first, and Benjamin, who is placed last. Therefore, Judah is first, which is interpreted as confession or praise, because no one attains the summit of good works before the beginning of confession. And unless we renounce evil deeds through confession, we cannot be formed rightly. The second is Reuben, which is interpreted as seeing the son. The Psalmist testifies that works are designated in the sons when he says among the blessings of the blessed man: Your sons will be like olive shoots (Ps. 128). And further: May you see your children's children (Ibid.). For one who fears the Lord is blessed, not only if he has begotten sons and received grandchildren, but because in sons are works, and in sons of sons, the fruits of works, that is, the eternal reward is designated.

Therefore, after Judah comes Reuben, that is, after the beginnings of divine confession and praise, the perfection of action follows. But because through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God (Acts 14), after Reuben comes Gad, which is interpreted as temptation or armed. After the beginning of good works, a man must be tested by greater temptations and girded for more serious battles, so that the strength of his faith may be proven. Solomon says: My son, when you come to serve the Lord, prepare your soul for temptation (Sirach 2). And the Psalmist likewise: You have girded me with strength for battle (Ps. 18). And because we

bless those who have endured suffering, therefore after Gad is placed Asher, that is, blessed, in a very fitting order. Blessed is the man who endures temptation, for when he has been tested, he will receive the crown of life (James 1). Because by the faithful promise of this blessedness they are not distressed but, rejoicing in hope, are patient in tribulation, they sing with the Psalmist: You have enlarged me in distress; and again: I ran the way of your commandments, when you enlarged my heart (Ps. 119); and with the mother of blessed Samuel, they exultingly say: My mouth is enlarged over my enemies, because I have rejoiced in your salvation (1 Sam. 2). Therefore, Naphtali follows, which means enlargement. And Manasseh follows him, which is interpreted as forgetting or necessity.

The mystery of this name warns us to forget the things that are behind, taught by the anguish of present temptations, and to stretch forth to the things that are before, according to the Apostle, so that we may make provision for the flesh, not in its desires, but bound only by the necessity of human condition (Phil. 3). For which the Psalmist, sighing for better things, prayed: Deliver me from my necessities (Ps. 25). Simeon, which means heard the sorrow or name of habitation, is placed under this, so that by the quality of this name it is more clearly instilled what is to be held here and what is to be healthily expected. For to those who here mourn fruitfully in penitence, the joy of heavenly habitation will be given. To whom it is also said: Your sorrow will be turned into joy (John 16). Therefore, Levi is added, which means added. In which we understand either those who buy the eternal with the temporal, as Solomon says: The ransom of a man's life is his wealth (Prov. 13), or those who, following the counsel of God, receive a hundredfold in this world with tribulations, and in the world to come, eternal life (Mark 10). What is written also agrees with this: He who increases knowledge increases sorrow (Eccles. 1). For to blessed Job, the bitterness of tribulations was added so that, being proven, the reward of a greater prize would be given. Hence Issachar follows in proper order, which means reward.

For as the Apostle teaches, the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us (Rom. 8). It is more fruitful to fight where a certain reward is hoped for. This, however, God works and perfects in the habitation of strength, which is called Zebulun, when strength is made perfect in weakness (2 Cor. 12), so that the body which enemies consider weak, and through whose matter they also try to bring about the soul's destruction, experiences invincibility with God's comfort and happy increase follows. This name Joseph indicates, signifying the addition of gifts of grace. Whether you understand the double repayment of talents as profits of spiritual benefit, or you take it in those things which are returned to the Redeemer God by the faithful in their religious devotion. And to understand that all those whom both the order and the interpretation of the names placed here significantly indicate will be on the right hand of Christ the eternal King in the future judgment, Benjamin, as I previously mentioned, is placed last,

meaning son of the right hand; as if he were the end of the order, with the last enemy death destroyed (1 Cor. 15), the happiness of the eternal inheritance will be given to the elect, whether each faithful one is called the son of the right hand, or the whole assembly of the Church, of which it is sung: The queen stands at your right hand in gold of Ophir, adorned with varied colors (Ps. 45).

Therefore, twelve thousand are sealed from each tribe, because in whatever virtues individual faithful advance, it is necessary that they are always strengthened and formed by the faith of the ancient fathers. For it is most certain that the number twelve often signifies the form of the teachers or the whole Church because of the sum of the apostles or patriarchs.

Whether in confession, they are praiseworthy like Judah, or in Reuben, distinguished by the offspring of works, or in Gad, strong in the exercise of temptations, or in Asher, blessed in the victory of struggles, or in Naphtali, enlarged by the abundant works of mercy, or in Manasseh, forgetful of past things, or in Simeon, still sad in the valley of tears but always rejoicing in the name of habitation, sighing for the heavenly Jerusalem, or in Levi, rejoicing in the promises of present and future life, founded in eternal good with temporal goods added, or in Issachar, firm in the contemplation of future reward, or in Zebulun, who lay down their lives for Christ, or in Joseph, who strive for the increase of spiritual substance, and offer something more over God’s commandments, either in virginity or in the quantity of their possessions, or in Benjamin, who with indefatigable vows expect the right hand of eternal happiness, each one in his profession fits the rule of the preceding fathers as if sealed with the number twelve, and from the merits of each individual person, the most perfect beauty of the Church is collected as if in the sum of one hundred and forty-four thousand.

[Revelation 7:9] -- After these things, I saw a great multitude, which no one could number. Having finished the recapitulation, which he had interposed for the sake of example, he returns to the order, proclaiming the glory of those who will overcome the wickedness of the final persecution. And what follows: From all nations, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues, etc., it can also be understood thus, that, having enumerated the tribes of Israel, to whom the Gospel was first preached, he also wishes to commemorate the salvation of the Gentiles. [Revelation 7:9] -- Clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands. By robes he hints at baptism, by palms, the triumph of the cross, and that they have overcome the world in Christ. Although the clarity which is given through the Holy Spirit is also signified by the robes. [Revelation 7:10] -- And they cried out with a loud voice, saying: Salvation to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb. With a loud voice, that is, with great devotion and unceasing praise, they profess that the Father and the Son reign on the throne, that is, in the Church, with the Holy Spirit likewise reigning together. For it is said: To the One sitting on the throne, and to the Lamb (Apocalypse V),

as it is said in the Gospel: That they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent (John XVII). It is understood: That they may know the one true God.

[Revelation 7:11] -- And all the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the living creatures. In all the angels he showed the persons of the great multitude worshipping the Lord. He says, All who are around him shall offer gifts (Psalm LXXV). [Revelation 7:11] -- And they fell before the throne on their faces, etc. Neither the multitude, nor the living creatures, nor the elders are mentioned in this place as worshipping, but only the angels. For they are the multitude, they are the living creatures and the elders. Although it can also be understood of those angelic spirits, of whom it is said, rejoicing in the salvation of the Gentiles: Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people, and let all the angels of God worship him (Romans XV). [Revelation 7:12] -- Blessing and glory and wisdom, etc. The Church offers to the Lord a sevenfold praise of virtues, which it confesses to have received from him in each of its members.

[Revelation 7:13] -- And one of the elders said to me: Who are these who are clothed in white robes, and where did they come from? etc. He asks this to teach. [Revelation 7:14] -- And he said to me: These are those who have come out of great tribulation. Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God (Acts XIV). But who does not know that the tribulation of the Antichrist will be greater than the others? [Revelation 7:14] -- And they washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. He does not speak only of the martyrs. For they are washed in their own blood. But the blood of Jesus, the Son of God, cleanses the whole Church from all sin (II Corinthians VII), therefore they are before the throne of God. For they are deemed worthy to stand in the service of God there, who here amid adversities are faithful confessors of his name.

[Revelation 7:15] -- And they serve him day and night in his temple. Speaking in our manner, he signifies eternity. [Revelation 7:15] -- And he who sits on the throne will dwell over them. The throne of God is the saints, upon whom and in whom God dwells forever. [Revelation 7:16] -- They will neither hunger nor thirst anymore. This is what the Lord himself promised: ”I am,” he says, ”the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst” (John VI). For blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied (Matthew V). [Revelation 7:16] -- Neither shall the sun strike them, nor any scorching heat. ”We have passed,” he says, ”through fire and water, and you have brought us to a place of refreshment” (Psalm LXV). [Revelation 7:17] -- For the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, will shepherd them. He says that the Lamb is in the midst of the throne, who had previously said that the Lamb received the book from the one seated on the throne, teaching that the Church

has one throne with the Father and the Son, in which through faith one dwells, the whole Trinity, God.

[Revelation 7:17] -- And he will lead them to the fountains of living waters. Surely to the fellowship of the saints, who are the fountains of heavenly doctrine. It can also signify the vision of God himself, in whom are hidden the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. As David says: ”As the deer longs for the fountains of water, so my soul longs for you, O God” (Psalm XLI). [Revelation 7:17] -- And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Having attained the fullness of immortal joys, all sorrow will be entirely consigned to oblivion. For blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. But the vision of this robed multitude can also be understood of the present time, where we are saved by hope, and what we do not see we wait for with patience.

Chapter 8

[Revelation 8:1] -- And when he had opened the seventh seal, etc. After the destruction of the Antichrist, a brief rest is believed to come in the Church, about which Daniel predicted thus: ”Blessed is he who waits and comes to the thousand three hundred and thirty-five days” (Daniel XII). Which blessed Jerome explains thus: ”Blessed,” he says, ”is he who, after the Antichrist is killed, awaits beyond the one thousand two hundred and ninety days, that is, three and a half years, forty-five days, during which the Lord and Savior is to come in his majesty.” But why there is a silence of forty-five days after the killing of the Antichrist is known to divine knowledge. Unless we might say: the delay of the kingdom of the saints is a test of patience. Note that in the sixth seal he sees the greatest pressures on the Church, in the seventh he sees rest, because the Lord, crucified on the sixth day, rested on the Sabbath, waiting for the time of resurrection. Thus far about the opening of the sealed book and the six seals. Now he recapitulates from the beginning, intending to speak the same things differently.

[Revelation 8:2] -- And I saw seven angels standing before God, etc. The Church, often commended by the number seven, is devoted to the duty of preaching, the first trumpet signifying the common destruction of the impious by fire and hail; the second, the devil expelled from the Church, more fervently inflaming the sea of the world; the third, heretics falling away from the Church, corrupting the rivers of the Holy Scripture; the fourth, the downfall of false brethren in the obscuration of the stars; the fifth, the greater infestation of heretics preceding the time of the Antichrist; the sixth, the open war of the Antichrist and his followers against the Church, and, by recapitulation from the coming of the Lord, the insertion of the destruction of the same adversary; the seventh, the day of judgment, when the Lord will render the reward to His own and will destroy those who have corrupted the earth.

[Revelation 8:3] -- And another angel came. He did not say, ”Then he came,” but proposing that the angels had received the trumpets, he goes back to explain how they had received them. For although the Church preached before the coming of the Lord, it was not everywhere, until it was confirmed by His Spirit. [Revelation

8:3] -- And he stood before the altar, having a golden censer. Clearly, he appeared in the sight of the Church, having become the censer, from which God received the odor of sweetness, and was propitiated towards the world. Another Edition has ”Upon the altar,” which means that He offered His golden censer, that is, His immaculate body conceived by the Holy Spirit, upon the altar of the cross to the Father for us. [Revelation 8:3] -- And there was given unto him much incense, etc. From the prayers of the saints he offered the incense. For to them the Church entrusted its prayers, saying: ”Let my prayer be directed as incense in thy sight” (Psalm 140). It is said that he received from the prayers of the saints and offered it, because through him the prayers of all can sweetly reach God.

[Revelation 8:4] -- And the smoke of the incense ascended from the prayers of the saints, etc. Christ the Lord offering Himself as a sacrifice of sweetness made the compunction of the hearts of the saints acceptable, which, being born from the inner fire, usually stirs up tears like smoke. [Revelation 8:5] -- And the angel took the censer, etc. Rightly he introduces the censer filled with fire. For God does not give the Spirit by measure (John 3). This we properly know was fulfilled in the humanity of Christ, in whom all the fullness of the Divinity dwells bodily (Colossians 2). [Revelation 8:5] -- And he cast it into the earth. Thus also the Lord in the Gospel: ”I came to cast fire upon the earth” (Luke 12). [Revelation 8:5] -- And there were thunders, and voices, and lightnings, and an earthquake. With the thunder of divine threat, and the voice of exhortation, and the lightning of miracles, He moved the earth, some following, others preceding, these saying: ”He is good,” but others: ”No, but he deceives the people” (John 7).

[Revelation 8:6] -- And the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound the trumpets. The Church, inflamed with the sevenfold spirit, prepared itself confidently to preach, intending to cast down the glory of the world with heavenly trumpets, as if to topple the walls of Jericho. For that seven-day circuit also indicates the entire time of the Church. [Revelation 8:7] -- And the first angel sounded the trumpet. Rightly, the preaching of the plagues of the trumpet, which is a sign of war, is compared. “Lift up your voice like a trumpet and declare to my people their transgressions” (Isaiah 58). And elsewhere, “Set the trumpet to your lips, like an eagle over the house of the Lord” (Hosea 8), that is, preach loudly that Nebuchadnezzar will come to destroy the temple. [Revelation 8:7] -- And there was hail and fire, mixed with blood, etc. It is proclaimed by the voice of preachers that the punishment of hell is due for bloodstained deeds, saying: “From excessive heat they will pass by the waters of snow” (Job 24). The name blood can also mean the death of the spiritual soul itself. Tyconius interprets this verse thus: “the wrath of God was made, which had in it the death of many.”

[Revelation 8:7] -- And a third part of the earth was burned up, etc. The life of the good consists in teachers and listeners. “Blessed is the one who reads and

those who hear the words of this prophecy" (Revelation 1). The third part of the wicked lacks both of these. For good earth, bringing forth fruit with patience (Luke 8), receives blessing from the Lord (Psalm 23). But the bad produces thorns and thistles, whose end is in burning. Thus, the farmer Father cultivates the fruitful tree, but cuts down the barren one, providing it as fuel for the fire (Matthew 7). [Revelation 8:7] -- And all green grass was burned up. All flesh is grass (Isaiah 40), which now, fattened with the softness of luxury, loses the flower of beauty under the burning sun of judgment, and, as the Lord says, today it is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven (Matthew 6). Tyconius says about the third part in this place. He calls the third part the internal enemies. However, anything outside the Church is called the third part, and the Church is the third part, which fights against the double evil.

[Revelation 8:8] -- And as it were a great mountain burning with fire, was cast into the sea, etc. With the growth of the Christian religion, the devil, swollen with pride and burning with the fire of his fury, was cast into the sea of the world, with the Lord saying: "If you say to this mountain, be taken up and cast into the sea, it will be done" (Mark 11). Not that he was not there before, but that, having been cast out from the Church, he began to rage more greatly against his own, inflicting spiritual death on them with the pride of carnal wisdom. For to think according to the flesh is death (Romans 8). But the apostles were not taught by flesh and blood, but by the Father who is in heaven (Matthew 16). For in that sea, they steered the ship of faith which offered itself to be trodden by the feet of the Lord.

[Revelation 8:9] -- And a third of them died, those that had souls in the sea. He said, "those that have souls," to show that the spiritually living were dead. Just as the Apostle says of the voluptuous widow: "Living," he says, "she is dead" (I Tim. V). [Revelation 8:9] -- And a third of the ships perished. Another Edition, by saying "And they corrupted a third of the ships," signifies that the third that died killed another third, that is, the succeeding one, with harmful tradition and useless imitation of doctrine. [Revelation 8:10] -- And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, etc. Heretics, whom Jude the apostle calls stars of seduction, falling from the height of the Church, try to infect the springs of divine Scriptures with the flame of their wickedness. They are not afraid to falsify not only the meaning but also the words frequently. They are worthy of the name "wormwood," whose slight mixing tends to embitter great sweetness.

[Revelation 8:11] -- And many men died from the waters. For many (as the Apostle says) follow their luxuries, through whom the way of truth is blasphemed (II Pet. II), yet for the people of God, as Moses teaches, every wave of the waters is drinkable. [Revelation 8:12] -- And a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, etc. The beauty of the Church, like a shining star, is often obscured by false brethren, who make it shine less by their defection, whether in the prosperity or adversity

of the world. [Revelation 8:12] -- And a third part of the day did not shine, and likewise a third part of the night. Another Edition has it thus: And a third part of the day appeared, and likewise of the night. That is, it was struck so that a third part of the day and a third of the night might appear, which belong to Christ and which to the devil. I say, it was struck for this purpose, that, being handed over to their own wills, with sins overflowing and becoming insolent, it might be revealed in its time.

[Revelation 8:13] -- And I saw and heard the voice of one eagle flying through the midst of heaven, etc. The voice of this eagle flies daily through the mouths of the eminent doctors in the Church, when they gravely announce to the lovers of the earth the wickedness of the heretics, the savagery of the Antichrist, and the day of judgment to come, saying: In the last days, perilous times will come, and men will be lovers of themselves (II Tim. III); and further: Men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith (Ibid.), and elsewhere: Then shall that Wicked be revealed, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or is worshipped (II Thess. II). And again: The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction will come upon them (I Thess. V).

[Revelation 8:13] -- Concerning the other voices of the three angels. Not that the trumpets of the angels bring plagues to the world, but that each one announces the coming or future events in their own time.

Chapter 9

[Revelation 9:1] -- And I saw a star fallen from heaven to earth, etc. The flame of heretics, which he had mentioned briefly, he explains with what kindling it has grown: indeed, the ancient enemy, whom the Lord saw falling like lightning from heaven (Luke X), opened the hearts of his own with a blasphemous doctrine, and taught them, as if they were smoke, to seek high places, to speak iniquity in lofty terms. [Revelation 9:2] -- And the smoke of the pit arose, like the smoke of a great furnace, etc. Proclaiming the great furnace, that is, the final persecution, the heretical madness rages, not only attempting to obscure the light of the weaker ones, who, like the air, touch the boundaries of the earth and heaven in some way, but also striving to obscure the light of the exalted ones, though not able to extinguish it. For even the elect will be led into error, if possible (Matthew XXIV).

[Revelation 9:3] -- And out of the smoke came forth locusts upon the earth. Just as the saints are the body of Christ, and members from a member, so also the members of the flesh of the dragon are joined together, one being born from another, and the smoke of heretical blindness generates the pride of the wicked, harming them with its mouth. But those who are shaken off by pride do not forsake earthly things. For even the smoke from which they are born, though it seeks high places, always fails in itself. [Revelation 9:3] -- And power was given to them, etc. Heretics are compared to opposing powers, seemingly innocent in appearance, but holding poison within their hind parts. [Revelation 9:4] -- And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing. He shows that the locusts are men, who are sent not to harm the grass, but men. For grass here is simply understood as men.

[Revelation 9:4] -- Except those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. They are said to have the seal of God on their foreheads, by whom it is properly held. Whose number above the angel who brought the seal of the living God from the rising of the sun has counted as inviolable and fixed. For he wished to use the manner of speaking here, by which it is said: No one can say that Jesus is Lord, except by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians XII), that is, perfectly and truly. [Revelation 9:5] -- And it was said to them that they should not kill them, etc.

Although heretics, empowered by secular authority, are allowed to attack the good temporally, they cannot kill the soul, as the Lord says. For the time of the world is signified by five months, because of the five-part sense which we use in this life. That another translation contains six months agrees with the same sense because of the six ages of the world.

[Revelation 9:5] -- And their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it strikes a man. Just as the scorpion spreads poison from its hind parts, so the impiety of the wicked harms from behind, when it compels temporal things, which are behind, to be preferred to eternal goods by threats or blandishments. This scorpion, contrary to the parable of the Gospel, the generation of vipers hands over to its offspring. [Revelation 9:6] -- And in those days men will seek death, and will not find it. Preferring to end a miserable life with a quick death. As blessed Cyprian lamented under the Decian storm: ”To those willing to die, he says, it was not permitted to be killed.” [Revelation 9:7] -- And the shapes of the locusts were like horses prepared for battle. That is, like the last persecutors. For in the last battle, which he will describe in the following angel, he says that horses fight. Or simply as horses are driven into battle not by their own reason, but by the impulse of their rider, so evil teachers, driven by a demonic spirit, attack the Church.

[Revelation 9:7] -- And on their heads were crowns like gold. The twenty-four elders, who are the Church, have golden crowns. But these, pretending to be like gold, falsely imagine foolish triumphs of victory. [Revelation 9:7] -- And their faces were like the faces of men, etc. In their human face, a simulation of reason; in the hair of women, flowing and effeminate habits; in the teeth of lions, which both tear apart and often bring a natural stench, the ferocity of the mind and the fame of bad doctrine; and in iron breastplates, hardened hearts against the truth, he notes. Those who have a form of godliness but deny its power (2 Tim. III), come in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves (Matt. VII). [Revelation 9:9] -- And the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots of many horses running into battle. It is more terrifying than it is to be explained, that so much strength grows in this army. First, the smoke rises. Then it brings forth locusts, which are first compared to scorpions, and soon to horses and lions. Their strength would suffice if they did not also come armored. Now, indeed, they are called to be both flying and like chariots fighting.

[Revelation 9:10] -- And they had tails like scorpions, etc. Just as a scorpion walks gently but strikes with its tail, so the fraudulent destruction of the wicked appears pleasant and harmless on the surface, but while it secretly kills, it covertly brings death. [Revelation 9:10] -- Their power to harm men was for six months. This again suggests this life, where lies can prevail either to capture the useless or to torment the spiritually strong temporarily. [Revelation 9:11] -- And they had over them a king, the angel of the abyss. Although God, who is supremely good,

permits an angel fitting for such people to preside over them by hidden but just judgments. [Revelation 9:12] -- One woe is past, and behold, two woes are still to come. Since he predicted that three woes were to come, he now mentions that one has already come in heretical deceit, but two remain, which will occur in the time of the Antichrist and on the day of judgment for the wicked.

[Revelation 9:13] -- And the sixth angel sounded his trumpet, etc. The sixth angel represents the preachers of the final battle, who, at the prompting of the Gospel, expose the frauds of the Antichrist. The horns of the golden altar indeed represent the preeminent Gospels of the Church. [Revelation 9:14] -- Release the four angels, etc. It indicates how much the ancient enemy with his satellites will persecute the Church at the end of the world, who from the time of the Lord's passion has been shut up in the hearts of the impious, so that he cannot harm as much as he would like, restrained by divine power. For the Euphrates, which is a river of Babylon, signifies the power of the worldly kingdom and the waves of the persecutors. This is the great mountain that he had predicted would be cast into the sea, burning with fire. [Revelation 9:15] -- And the four angels were released. In the manner of prophecy, which designates to us things to come, he himself sees the events in the spirit. He called them four angels because that persecution will rage in the four parts of the world. These are the ones he previously saw standing at the four corners of the earth, and were prevented from harming the earth and sea for the sealing of God's servants.

[Revelation 9:15] -- Who were prepared for the hour, and day, and month, etc. Malignant spirits, who at every moment of hours and times hunger for human death, will then be allowed to rage more freely to opportunely destroy the Church. What do you think they will do when released, who now harm so much while bound? [Revelation 9:16] -- And the number of the mounted troops was two hundred million. This number designates the deceptive duplicity of the perverse army. Which another translation, saying "twice ten thousand times ten thousand," can be more easily understood; and this number is also opposed by the evangelical parable to the king having ten thousand (Matt. IV), as the duplicity of the wicked resists the simple faith of Christ, to whom thousands of thousands minister and ten thousand times ten thousand stand (Dan. VII). [Revelation 9:17] -- And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and those who sat on them, etc. The malignant spirits, in whose hearts they preside, are clothed with their punishments. For we read that those worshipping the beast are to be tormented with fire and sulfur, and the smoke of their torment will ascend forever and ever. Note that in the plague of locusts he did not say he saw horsemen, but only horses. Here indeed, the magnitude of the persecutions shows the open presence of the opposing power. Thus, here the heads are of lions, while there the faces are indeed human, but the teeth are only bestial. Because often heretics show some humanity, but the ministers of the final storm extort what they persuade by words and signs even through punishments.

[Revelation 9:17] -- And from their mouths proceeds fire and smoke and sulfur. He shows what he had said about hyacinth smoke. But these things do not clearly come out of their mouths, but by harmful preaching, they generate punishment for themselves and their listeners. For, he says, I will bring forth a fire from the midst of you, which shall devour you (Ezek. XXVIII). [Revelation 9:19] -- For the power of the horses is in their mouths, and in their tails. That is, in speech and in action; for the prophet teaching lies, he is the tail. Who covers in a certain way the blind and unclean part with the volubility of a flattering tongue, saying to the wicked: You are good. [Revelation 9:19] -- For their tails are like serpents, etc. False teachers, like the ancient serpent who deceived man, supported by the patronage of rulers, harm more than if they persuaded only by speech. He sits, he says, in ambush with the rich (Ps. X).

[Revelation 9:20] -- And the rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues, etc. Because he had described false Christians and heretics, now, to encompass the entire body of the devil, he also mentions the error of the Gentiles, to whom it benefits nothing not to be killed by these plagues, as it is evident they will continue in their Gentile malice even then. For in that persecution the Gentiles will not be compelled to consent to the aforementioned but will die in their own unbelief. [Revelation 9:21] -- And they did not repent of their murders, etc. To their impious religion, they also add wicked morals. After describing the cruelty of the Antichrist, he, in his manner, recapitulates the beginning of Christ’s birth and the glory of the Church to show the ruin of the same.

Chapter 10

[Revelation 10:1] -- And I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. The Lord, the angel of great counsel, descended from heaven, clothed with the cloud of flesh. As Isaiah also says: Behold, the Lord is riding on a swift cloud and will come to Egypt (Isaiah XIX), and a rainbow was upon his head. Around the good, the promise of propitiation remains. [Revelation 10:1] -- And his face was like the sun, etc. With the face of the Lord shining, that is, his knowledge manifested through the glory of the resurrection, his feet are prepared to evangelize and proclaim peace on the mountains (Romans X), illuminated by the fire of the Holy Spirit, and established like pillars. For James, Cephas, and John seemed to be pillars of the Church. [Revelation 10:2] -- And he had in his hand a little book open. This is the book previously mentioned, which, long closed by its cover, was finally opened by the grace of the Lord, so that, according to the prophet, even the deaf might hear the words of the book (Isaiah XXIX). And his face deservedly shines like the sun, because he now carries the book open.

[Revelation 10:2] -- And he set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the land. The preaching of the Christian faith is spread by land and sea. But, allegorically, stronger members are set in greater dangers, and others in suitable places. For God does not allow us to be tempted beyond what we can bear (1 Corinthians X). [Revelation 10:3] -- And when he cried out, the seven thunders uttered their voices. When the Lord preaches mightily, the Church, also full of sevenfold grace, raises its voices to preach. For the lion roars, who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken, who will not prophesy (Amos III)? For the seven thunders are the same as the seven trumpets of which he speaks. [Revelation 10:4] -- And when the seven thunders had spoken, I was about to write. For earlier he heard: What you see, write in a book (Revelation I).

[Revelation 10:4] -- Seal up what the seven thunders have spoken, and do not write it down. The mysteries of the Christian faith are neither to be shown to all indiscriminately, lest they become cheap, nor hidden from the worthy, lest they be entirely unknown. Hence, later he heard: Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book (Revelation XXII). Both are comprehended in one verse in Daniel, where it is

said to him through the angel: Seal the book and shut up the words until the appointed time (Daniel XII). [Revelation 10:5-6] -- And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore, etc. The angel swears by the one who lives forever, as Christ, coming in the name of the Father, confirms his words with his unchangeable truth: Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away (Matthew XXIV).

[Revelation 10:6] -- Who created heaven and the things that are in it, etc. Standing on the sea and land, and reaching up to heaven, he fittingly swears by the Creator of heaven, earth, and sea. [Revelation 10:6] -- Because time shall be no more. Indeed, as the psalm says, there will be a time for the wicked forever (Psalm LXXX), but the mutable variety of secular times will cease at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will rise incorruptible, and their inheritance will be forever (1 Corinthians XV). [Revelation 10:7] -- The mystery of God will be finished, etc. The mystery which is now preached will then be completed, when the wicked will go into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life (Matthew XXV). [Revelation 10:8] -- And the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me again, etc. As the Lord reveals the mysteries of the future time, saying: For the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matthew X), the Church is also admonished to take up the same book of preaching. Although these words can also be fittingly applied to John himself, who would return to preach after exile.

[Revelation 10:9] -- And I went to the angel, saying to him that he should give me the book. Let him approach the Lord who wishes to receive the mysteries of teaching. [Revelation 10:9] -- And he said to me: Take the book and devour it. That is, insert it into your innermost parts and inscribe it in the breadth of your heart. [Revelation 10:10] -- And it will make your belly bitter, etc. When you receive it, you will be delighted by the sweetness of the divine word, but you will feel bitterness when you begin to preach and act upon what you have understood. Or indeed, it should be understood according to Ezekiel, who, when he said he had devoured the book, added, And I went in bitterness in the indignation of my spirit. [Revelation 10:11] -- And he said to me: You must prophesy again about many peoples and nations. He explains what the book eaten and the sweetness mixed with bitterness signify, namely, that, being freed from exile, he would preach the Gospel to the nations, sweet indeed with love, but bitter with the persecutions to be endured.

Chapter 11

[Revelation 11:1] -- And a reed like a rod was given to me. In the reed, he received the ministry of writing the Gospel, which is not superfluous in vain elegance, but like a rod of righteousness, the rod of the kingdom of God (Hebrews I). For he describes the eternal kingdom of Christ. [Revelation 11:1] -- Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar. He said rise, not because John was hearing these things while sitting, but because with this word he rouses the hearts of each one to measure the evangelical Scripture and deeds. For there they find how much each one advances and how much they conform to the divine rule. [Revelation 11:1] -- And those who worship in it. Because not all who seem to worship in it do so, just as he who confesses me. Finally, he commands that a part not be counted, saying:

[Revelation 11:2] -- But the court which is outside the temple, cast out, etc. Those who are joined to the Church in name only, and neither approach the altar nor the holy of holies, are cast out from the rule of the Gospel and joined with the Gentiles. For all the glory of the king’s daughter is within (Psalm XLIV). [Revelation 11:2] -- And they will trample the holy city for forty-two months. Not only are they expelled from the Church, but they also, together with their Gentile allies, attack the same Church for three and a half years. It is not that they will trample it only during that time, that is, the time of the Antichrist, but because the entire body of the wicked, as if belonging to its own head, is already now working in the ministry of iniquity. [Revelation 11:3] -- And I will give to my two witnesses, etc. Lest the savagery of the wicked frighten the listener, he recalls that the Church, united from two peoples, will be illuminated by the grace of virtues. And it is always looking at its head, namely Christ teaching in the flesh, and it is said to prophesy for three and a half years. The months of three and a half years, that is, thirty times forty-two, make up one thousand two hundred and sixty days. Daniel, however, writes of one thousand two hundred and ninety days for the same time, in which the abomination of desolation is to be set up.

[Revelation 11:3] -- Clothed in sackcloth. That is, in penitential mourning. As the prophet says: But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth (Psalm XXXV). [Revelation 11:4] -- These are the two olive trees, etc. The Church, illumi-

nated by the light of the two Testaments, always stands by the commands of the Lord. For the prophet Zechariah saw one seven-branched candlestick, and these two olive trees, that is, the Testaments, pouring oil into the candlestick. This is the Church with its unfailing oil, which makes it burn with light in the world. [Revelation 11:5] -- And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth, etc. If anyone harms the Church, he is consumed by the fire of judgment, reciprocating the harm. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword (Matthew XXVI). Hence, the Chaldean flame, which was cast on the children of God, consumed the ministers of impiety themselves. Or spiritually, by the prayers of the Church's mouth, one is consumed by spiritual fire to be changed for the better. Coals of fire, he says, you will heap upon his head (Romans XII).

[Revelation 11:6] -- These have the power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls, etc. All power in heaven and on earth is given to the Church in Christ, with the keys to bind and loose entrusted to it (Matthew XXVIII). But spiritually, the heaven is shut so that it does not rain, so that the blessing does not descend on the barren earth from the Church. As the Lord said about the vineyard of His Father: I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it (Isaiah V). [Revelation 11:6] -- And they have the power over waters, etc. They not only withhold waters but also make those that descended useless, which is to turn waters into blood. The good fragrance of Christ emanating from the Church, to some is the smell of death unto death, to others the smell of life unto life (2 Corinthians XVI).

[Revelation 11:7] -- And when they have finished their testimony, the beast, etc. He openly shows that all these things happen before the final persecution by saying, When they have finished their testimony, that is, the testimony they bear up to the revelation of the beast, which is to emerge in the hearts of the impious. Not that they will not continue to bear the same testimony then, strongly resisting the enemy, but that at that time the Church is believed to be deprived of the grace of virtues, while the adversary openly dazzles with signs of deceit. For want will precede his face, as the Lord says (Job XLI). [Revelation 11:7] -- And will overcome them and kill them. He will overcome those who succumb and kill those who are slain for the name of Christ with praiseworthy patience. Or if he overcomes and kills spiritually, we will understand a part of the witnesses. As the Lord says in the Gospel: They will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you (Matthew XXIV). Which the evangelist Luke suggests in part by saying: They will kill some of you (Luke XI).

[Revelation 11:8] -- And their bodies will lie in the street of the great city. If they persecuted me, he says, they will also persecute you. It is therefore not surprising if the city of the impious, which did not fear to crucify the Lord, also holds His servants in derision, even those who have been killed. Such things are often recorded in ecclesiastical history. [Revelation 11:8] -- Which is spiritually called Sodom, etc.

That is, mute and dark, having neither the light of faith nor the voice of confession. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation (Romans X). These provinces were visibly struck with these plagues, that is, with devouring fire and water turned into blood, as a sign of spiritual punishment. [Revelation 11:9] -- And those from the peoples and tribes, etc. He did not say: The peoples and tribes will see, but many from the peoples, who, while others believe, openly mock the saints.

[Revelation 11:9] -- And they will not allow their bodies to be laid in tombs. He spoke of their intention and opposition. Not that they are able to prevent the Church from being remembered. As: Neither do you enter yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in (Matthew XXIII), while they enter, though being opposed by them. But they will clearly act concerning the bodies of the living and the dead, for they will not allow the living to be gathered for sacred celebrations in memory, nor the dead to be commemorated, nor their bodies to be buried in memory of the witnesses of God. [Revelation 11:10] -- And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them. Whenever the righteous are afflicted, the unjust rejoice and feast, just as, when the wicked prosper, the poor are inflamed. [Revelation 11:10] -- For these two prophets tormented them. Because of the plagues with which the human race is scourged on account of the Testaments of God, even the sight of the righteous themselves burdens the unjust. As they themselves say: He is grievous unto us even to behold (Wisdom II).

[Revelation 11:11] -- And after three and a half days, the Spirit of life from God, etc. Until now, the angel has narrated what will happen, and now he introduces the event that is heard as future, that with the kingdom of the Antichrist destroyed, the saints will have risen in glory. [Revelation 11:11] -- And great fear fell upon those who saw them. He spoke of all the living, for even the surviving righteous will be fearful at the resurrection of the sleeping. [Revelation 11:12] -- And they ascended to heaven in a cloud. This is what the Apostle said: We shall be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thessalonians IV). [Revelation 11:12] -- And their enemies saw them. Here he distinguished the unjust from those whom he had said in common to have been afraid. [Revelation 11:13] -- And in that hour there was a great earthquake, etc. With the terror of the judgment impending, the entire city of the devil built upon the sand will collapse with all its builders. For both the number ten and the number seven are perfect. But if it were not, the whole would have to be understood from the part.

[Revelation 11:13] -- And the rest were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven. Who among men will boast that he has a pure heart when the powers of heaven will be shaken? [Revelation 11:13] -- And they gave glory to the God of heaven. These are the ones built upon the rock, who, while others fall from the earthquake, glorify the Lord with a righteous confession from their stability. For the righteous will

rejoice when he sees the vengeance of the wicked. Some interpret the two prophets as Enoch and Elijah, who, preaching for three and a half years, will strengthen the hearts of the faithful against the soon-following perfidy of the Antichrist. After they are killed, the same period of persecution will ensue, and finally, with the conflict renewed, they will be overcome by the saints, who were believed to be dead in the protection of hiding places. These same prophets are said to rise for the unity of one body, and seeing them again, those who thought them dead will face a heightened persecution, causing many of those considered worthy of the septenary or denary number to fall, as Daniel says: He will confirm a covenant with many for one week, and in the midst of the week he will cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and in the temple will be the abomination of desolation (Daniel IX). And later: And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days (Daniel XII). This number covers approximately three years and six months. Indeed, Elijah once destroyed his adversaries with fire and, hiding for three and a half years, withheld the rains, and finally, after the false prophets were killed, through the sacrifice that had been taken away, he turned Israel back to the Lord.

[Revelation 11:14] -- The second woe is past, and behold, the third woe comes quickly. This second woe pertains not to recapitulation but to the battle of the horses stirred by the trumpet of the sixth angel. For the eagle had predicted three woes from the voices of the three trumpets yet to come. But there, he did not say that the third would immediately follow, which pertains to the seventh angel and the end. [Revelation 11:15] -- And the seventh angel sounded his trumpet, etc. The first six trumpets, compared to the ages of this present world, announced various conflicts of wars for the Church. But the seventh, the herald of eternal Sabbath, proclaims only the victory and dominion of the true king. [Revelation 11:16] -- And the twenty-four elders worshiped God, etc. Behold, he says, the third woe will come in the voice of the seventh angel. And when it sounded, it spoke only of the Church praising God and giving thanks. From this, we understand that the reward of the good is nothing other than the woe of the wicked.

[Revelation 11:17] -- Who are, and who were, etc. You indeed have reigned from eternity, even with the wicked rebelling, but now their fury, judged by you, will be crushed. For the Lord reigns; let the peoples be angry (Psalm XCVIII). [Revelation 11:18] -- And the time has come for the dead to be judged, and to reward, etc. It corresponds to the order of the gospel reading: first, all nations will be gathered before the Judge, then the righteous will be placed in the kingdom of the Father through many mansions, while the wicked, driven outside the boundaries of the kingdom, will be tormented by the flames of damnation. [Revelation 11:18] -- And to destroy those who corrupt the earth. This is the final woe. Thus far concerning

the seven angels blowing their trumpets, now he recapitulates from the birth of the Lord, saying the same things differently and more broadly.

[Revelation 11:19] -- And the temple of God was opened in heaven, etc. The temple of the Lord, once situated on earth, covered the ark of the covenant under a mystical veil; but now in the Church, which is the temple of the living God, whose citizenship is in heaven (Philippians III), with the veil of the old temple and the middle wall of partition torn apart by the Lord's blood, the ark of His Incarnation is now revealed to the whole world. For just as heavenly manna in pure gold, so is divinity in the holy body. [Revelation 11:19] -- And there were lightnings, voices, etc. All these are the virtues of the Church's illumination, proclamation, and wars. He mentioned these as having occurred in the description of the preaching of the seven angels from the advent of the Lord, when He stood upon the altar, but generally from the beginning to the end. Then he described in parts how they were done: thus also now, saying that the temple of God in heaven was opened, and the battles followed, stating:

Chapter 12

[Revelation 12:1] -- And a great sign appeared in heaven. What now also appears in the Church: God becoming man. [Revelation 12:1] -- The woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet. The Church of Christ, clothed in light, tramples upon temporal glory: In his days shall righteousness flourish, and abundance of peace until the moon be no more (Psalm LXXII). That is, the abundance of peace will grow until it consumes all the changeableness of mortality, when the last enemy, death, is destroyed (1 Corinthians XV). Or, because the same Church, partly in heaven, enjoys Christ the sun, partly on earth, journeys away from the Lord. This can be understood by the phrase: His left hand is under my head, and his right hand embraces me (Song of Songs VIII). [Revelation 12:1] -- And upon her head a crown of twelve stars. The Church is adorned with the number of the twelve apostles on its head, whether you understand Christ, or the very beginning of the nascent Church designated by the name of the head. You have set a crown of precious stones upon his head (Psalm XXI).

[Revelation 12:2] -- And being with child, she cried out in travail. The Church, spiritually, both gives birth to those she brings forth and continues to labor for those already born. As she herself says: My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you (Galatians IV). [Revelation 12:2] -- And she was in pain to deliver. Thus the Lord in the Gospel: A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world (John XVI). Explaining this to His disciples, He added: Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice (John XVI). [Revelation 12:3] -- And behold, a great red dragon, etc. The devil, bloody in cruelty, is armed against the Church with the power of an earthly kingdom. In the seven heads, he speaks of all his kings, and in the ten horns, all his kingdoms.

[Revelation 12:4] -- And his tail drew a third part of the stars of heaven, etc. This indicates the strength and malice of the enemy, whom the Church, with the Lord’s help, overcomes, who by deceit like a tail has cast down an innumerable part of the angels or men. For the tail is a blind part, an unclean part, covering its filth with

its own veil so it does not appear. Tychonius, in his manner, interprets the third part of the stars that fell as false brethren, suggesting that one-third is the Church, one-third is external enemies, and one-third is the stars that fell. [Revelation 12:4] -- And the dragon stood before the woman, ready to devour her child as soon as it was born. The devil lies in wait for the Church, striving to extinguish the faith of Christ in the hearts of believers, so that whom she brings forth by teaching, he may kill by deceit. His plot was shown in Herod, who, like internal enemies, pretended to want to worship the Lord in order to kill Him.

[Revelation 12:5] -- And she brought forth a male child. The Church always bears Christ, despite the opposition of the dragon. He is called a male because he is the victor over the devil, who had conquered the woman. For who but a male child? Who will rule all nations with a rod of iron (Psalm II), governs the good with inflexible justice and breaks the wicked. This is also promised to the Church in the earlier parts: I will give him power over the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron (Revelation II). For the Church daily gives birth to the Church, ruling the world in Christ. [Revelation 12:5] -- And her child was caught up to God, etc. Thus Christ, spiritually born in the minds of listeners, cannot be seized by wickedness because he reigns in heaven with the Father, who has also raised us up and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ.

[Revelation 12:6] -- And the woman fled into the wilderness. The Church, living under the hope of eternal things, rejoices in the pilgrimage of the present wilderness, having received the power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the red dragon, like the Israelite people, who, fed with heavenly bread in the wilderness, by the sight of the bronze serpent, conquered the fiery serpents. [Revelation 12:6] -- Where she has a place prepared by God. Be to me, he says, a God of protection, and a place of refuge to save me. [Revelation 12:6] -- That they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days. This number of days, which makes three and a half years, encompasses all times of Christianity, because Christ, whose body this is, preached for that time in the flesh. [Revelation 12:7] -- And there was a great battle in heaven. Michael and his angels, etc. Heaven signifies the Church, in which he says Michael and his angels fight against the devil, because according to God’s will, they struggle by praying for the pilgrim Church and providing help. Daniel also said that Michael would come to the Church’s aid in the final and most severe tribulation, wherefore some believe the Antichrist will be killed by him. His angels are said to be his, as our angels are ours. The Lord says: Their angels always see the face of my Father (Matthew XVIII), meaning those whose citizens they are.

[Revelation 12:7] -- And the dragon fought, and his angels. The angels of Satan are not only those who are like him in nature and will but also humans ensnared by their traps. [Revelation 12:8] -- And they did not prevail. That is, throughout

all time. [Revelation 12:8] -- Nor was their place found anymore in heaven. That is, in holy men, who have now become heaven through his expulsion, and who, once believing, do not accept him again. [Revelation 12:9] -- And the great dragon was cast out to the earth. The ancient enemy, expelled from the spiritual realm, is confined more tightly to the earthly realm. This is to be cast out of heaven and sent to the earth. To whom it is said: You shall eat dust all the days of your life (Genesis III). On this earth, he is trampled under the feet of the saints, as it is written: You shall tread upon the asp and the basilisk (Psalm XCI).

[Revelation 12:10] -- Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, etc. It is clearly shown in which heaven these things happen. We know that the victory of Christ's salvation has been accomplished in the Church. For which he says: All power is given to me in heaven and on earth (Matthew XXVIII). Not the power he always had, but the power he began to have in the Church from the time he willed, as the head in the members. [Revelation 12:10] -- For the accuser of our brethren is cast down. The angels rejoice over the salvation of their brethren, that is, future fellow citizens, who are now pilgrims. [Revelation 12:10] -- Who accused them before our God day and night. He criticized them for using prosperity badly and for lacking patience in adversity. [Revelation 12:11] -- And they did not love their lives unto death. They rightly despise their lives for Christ, who by the blood of Christ have so greatly conquered the adversary.

[Revelation 12:12] -- Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them. Here, the inhabitants of heaven must be understood as both angels and holy men, and it is fitting for both to rejoice together in the Lord, as men are united with angels, and angels minister to the human nature in Christ. [Revelation 12:12] -- Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down, etc. Just as he taught joy to the redeemed, so he taught those perishing to expect lamentation. And a great woe awaits those whom the most wicked enemy possesses in his wrath. [Revelation 12:13] -- And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, etc. The devil, attacking the Church with inextricable cunning, persecutes all the more intensely the more he is cast down. [Revelation 12:14] -- And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, etc. The Church, supported by the two Testaments, avoiding the turbulent poisons of the world, daily seeks the solitude of a quiet and modest spirit with the affection of the mind, joyfully singing: Lo, I have fled far away and have dwelt in the wilderness (Psalm LIV). It is not inconsistent that there she seeks the dove, while here she receives the wings of an eagle. Just as the former represents the gift of the Holy Spirit, so the latter represents the high flight and keen sight with which the Church, with a pure heart, sees God. Her youth will be renewed like the eagle's.

[Revelation 12:14] -- Where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. This represents the entire time of the Church, as previously encompassed in the

number of days. For a time signifies a year, times signify two years, and half a time signifies six months. [Revelation 12:15] -- And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, etc. The flood signifies the onslaught of persecutors. Hence it is said: Perhaps they would have swallowed us up alive, like water (Psalm CXXIII). Therefore, the Church, not only lifted up by the word of God but also driven by the force of persecutions, hastens to fly out of the world. [Revelation 12:16] -- And the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood. This earth is the holy flesh of the Lord, which, swallowing the death that temporarily prevailed over it, taught us also to swallow it. It can also be understood as the Church, whose admonitions and prayers of the mouth ward off the enemy's snares.

[Revelation 12:17] -- And the dragon was angry with the woman, etc. Seeing that the persecutions could not continue because they were averted by the mouth of the holy earth, he armed himself even more to persist in the mystery of iniquity, so that he could continually lie in wait. [Revelation 12:17] -- Who keep the commandments of God, etc. To keep the commandments of God in the faith of Jesus Christ is to fight with the dragon and provoke him to battle. And thanks be to God, who has nullified the attempts of the savage dragon. For behold, having tried to destroy the Lord born in the flesh, he is frustrated by His resurrection. Then, laboring to break the confidence of the apostles in teaching, he strove to remove the woman, that is, the whole Church, from human affairs. But having failed in this, he now attacks individual ages of the faithful everywhere. Hence it follows:

[Revelation 12:17] -- And he stood on the sand of the sea. That is, over the multitude of the people, whom the wind drives away from the face of the earth. Without a doubt, it is the same enemy who is accustomed to devouring the enemy's schemes, now intending to stir up snares and wars.

Chapter 13

[Revelation 13:1] -- And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea. The beast has various interpretations according to the locations. Here, it signifies the body of the devil arising from the people of the impious. This sea is understood to be the abyss mentioned above. Hence, the dragon is called the king of all that are in the waters, and whose heads are broken in the sea, according to David. [Revelation 13:1] -- Having seven heads and ten horns, etc. He shows that the seven heads are the same as the ten horns. For he had said that the dragon carried seven diadems on its seven heads; now he says the beast carries ten diadems on its ten horns. For seven and ten are the same as receiving a sevenfold in this age. And another evangelist says a hundredfold (Matthew XIX). [Revelation 13:1] -- And on its heads names of blasphemy. For they call their kings gods, both dead and supposedly translated to heaven among the gods, and also on earth as Augusti, which is a name of divinity as they will it. Elsewhere, he says the whole beast is full of names of blasphemy.

[Revelation 13:2] -- And the beast I saw was like a leopard, etc. It is compared to a leopard because of the diversity of nations; to a bear, because of its malice and ferocity; to a lion, because of its physical strength and the arrogance of its tongue. In Daniel, we read that the kingdom of the Chaldeans is compared to a lioness, that of the Persians to a bear, and that of the Macedonians to a leopard. [Revelation 13:2] -- And the dragon gave him his power. Thus the Apostle, speaking of the body of the devil, says: His coming is according to the working of Satan with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish (2 Thessalonians II). [Revelation 13:3] -- And I saw one of its heads as if it had been mortally wounded, etc. The Antichrist, pertaining to the heads of the earthly kingdom, in imitation of our true head, dares to present himself as if he were mortally wounded and had resurrected, to be accepted in place of Christ, who truly accomplished this. It is said that the deception in Simon Magus prefigured this deceit.

[Revelation 13:3] -- And the whole earth marveled and followed the beast. He uses the genus for the species, saying that the beast is worshiped, when it is the false head, under the name of the truly slain and living head, that earthly men are to

worship. [Revelation 13:4] -- And they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast. They claim to worship God, who gave authority to Christ. [Revelation 13:4] -- And they worshiped the beast, saying: Who is like the beast? They say: Who is like Christ? Or who can defeat him? [Revelation 13:5] -- And there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. He exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped (2 Thessalonians II). [Revelation 13:5] -- And he was given authority to act for forty-two months, etc. For the first three and a half years, he does not openly blaspheme but acts in the mystery of iniquity, which, after the dissension and the revelation of the man of sin, will be exposed. Then he will say: I am Christ (Matthew XXIV); now, however: Behold, here is Christ, and there (Ibid.). By against God, it signifies against God.

[Revelation 13:6] -- To blaspheme His name and His tabernacle. The wicked one, usurping for himself the dignity of God's name, will also presume to call his own church by that name. [Revelation 13:7] -- And it was granted to him to make war with the saints, etc. By the part, he means the whole. Those who can be conquered, with the violence of the time, if possible, even the elect will be shaken. That the Jews may be condemned, who, not believing the truth, accepted the lie. [Revelation 13:8] -- And all who dwell on the earth will worship him. He said all, but he meant those who dwell on the earth. For those who depart from you, he says, will be written in the earth (Jeremiah XVII). [Revelation 13:8] -- Whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb. It is just that those who serve the author of death should not be written in the book of life, and those who are deceived by the simulated death of the beast should lack the fellowship of the Lamb who took away the sins of the world. He says,

[Revelation 13:8] -- The Lamb who was slain from the foundation of the world. The Lamb, as Peter says, without blemish, foreordained indeed before the foundation of the world, but manifest in these last times (1 Peter I). Another edition translates it as the Lamb marked from the foundation of the world. It can also be understood through hyperbaton that the names of the saints have been written in the book of life from the beginning. [Revelation 13:9] -- If anyone has an ear, let him hear. Whenever Scripture interposes this saying, it seeks an attentive listener due to the obscurity of the matter. So that the momentary kingdom of the devil is not regarded highly, it meets human thoughts by saying: He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity, that is, the devil and the beast, who now seem to capture the nations with their snares, will themselves soon be captives.

[Revelation 13:10] -- He who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. He who now persecutes the Church with either carnal or even spiritual death, the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of His mouth, and destroy with the brightness of His coming. [Revelation 13:10] -- Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. He had promised that the murderer would be killed, but because no one is crowned

unless he competes lawfully, now he says there is a need for strong spirits and firm hearts. Having first described the beast generally in hypocrisy, then with an open mouth blaspheming, he now describes it among the rulers alone, similarly in hypocrisy, then revealed. [Revelation 13:11] -- And I saw another beast coming up out of the earth. He said another in office, yet it is one. What is the sea is also the earth, according to Daniel. To whom, seeing the four beasts rise from the sea, the angel says: These four great beasts are four kingdoms that will arise from the earth (Daniel VII).

[Revelation 13:11] -- And he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. He presents the horns of a lamb to secretly insert the poison of the dragon. Because, through the hypocrisy of holiness, he falsely claims to have the unique wisdom and life that the Lord truly possessed. Concerning this beast, the Lord says: Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves (Matthew VII). [Revelation 13:12] -- And he exercised all the authority of the first beast. Miserable disciples follow their master in all things. [Revelation 13:12] -- And he caused the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast. He shows the power of seduction, having claimed both the body and the soul which inhabits it. [Revelation 13:12] -- Whose deadly wound was healed. That is, it feigned to have overcome death by rising. For Scripture said he was as if slain, just as it was said of the Jews: They did not enter the praetorium, lest they should be defiled. The evangelist did not assert that the most impure could be defiled if they entered the praetorium; nor did the Jews, conscious of such great crimes, truly fear being defiled, but he reported what they pretended as if affirming it.

[Revelation 13:13] -- And he performed great signs, so that he even made fire come down from heaven to earth. He presented the miracle of fire as the greatest among others, so that, just as the Lord Christ gave His disciples the grace of virtues with the coming of the Holy Spirit in fire, so he, with deceptive cunning, might also deceive his followers with a similar charisma. [Revelation 13:14] -- And he deceives those who dwell on the earth, etc. For his coming will be, as it is said, according to the working of Satan with all power, and signs, and lying wonders (2 Thessalonians II). It is often debated whether these are called signs and lying wonders because he will deceive mortal senses through phantasms so that what he does not actually do, he will appear to do; or because even if they are true wonders, they will lead those who believe them into falsehood, thinking they could not be done except by divine power, not knowing the power of the devil, who consumed such a great household of holy Job with such large herds by not phantasmal but real fire and whirlwind. Whether they are called signs of falsehood in this or that manner, it is without doubt in this that the temptation will appear greatest to all when the pious martyr both subjects his body to torments and yet performs so many miracles before his eyes.

[Revelation 13:14] -- Saying to those who dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, etc. That is, to be like him and thus to make an image to him, as another version says: As it has the wound of the sword and lived. That is, they should say they have died and risen with the Antichrist by that falsehood, just as he claims to constitute himself as God and mediator between himself and his followers, unlike our Lord Jesus Christ, who has no other mediator between himself and his followers. [Revelation 13:15] -- And it was granted to him to give spirit to the image of the beast. That is, to the people who fulfill this falsehood by constituting themselves as the image of the beast, he pretends to give the spirit of truth. [Revelation 13:15] -- And that the image of the beast should speak. He will not only deceive the miserable populace with a simulated spirit through fire, but he will also make them capable of teaching others.

[Revelation 13:15] -- And cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. Not that image which they say they are making, but that image to which they make the people similar. He thus makes the image of the beast worship the image of the beast, that is, makes the people worship the invention of the devil. [Revelation 13:16] -- And he causes all, small and great, etc. Not all without exception, such as the Gentiles, but those who pertain to this mystery. [Revelation 13:16] -- To receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads. The mark is the mystery of iniquity, which hypocrites receive in work and profession under the name of Christ. [Revelation 13:17] -- And that no one may buy or sell. By mentioning buying and selling, he taught that just as the Church, in a good way, has given a symbol for our salvation, so they in an evil way confine themselves to such a definition, so that neither buying nor selling is allowed, just like merchants who travel on one ship are held by a uniform sign.

[Revelation 13:17] -- Except one who has the mark, etc. That is, who shares in that deceit. For the mark, that is, the sign, and the name of the beast, and the number of his name are one. For it is the number of a man, so that we do not think, according to some opinions, that it is either the devil or a demon, but one of the men in whom Satan will dwell bodily. For he is the man of sin, the son of perdition.

[Revelation 13:18] -- Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding, etc. This number is said to be found among the Greeks in the name Titan, that is, giant, as follows: T equals 300, E equals 5, I equals 10, T equals 300, A equals 1, N equals 50. It is thought that the Antichrist will assume this name as if he surpasses all in power, boasting that he is the one of whom it is written: He rejoiced as a giant to run his course, from one end of the heaven is his going forth, etc. (Psalm XVIII). Primasius also mentions another name that completes the same number: A equals 1, N equals 50, T equals 300, E equals 5, M equals 40, O equals 70, Σ equals 200, which signifies ”contrary to honor.” Also, the word A equals 1, P equals 100, N equals 50, O equals 70, Y equals 400, M equals 40, E equals 5, meaning ”I deny.”

Through these, the quality of the person and the harshness of the Antichrist's work are indicated. However, a complex exposition is needed to explain how such an aspirant to praise would want to be marked with such a character. Otherwise, who does not know that the number six, by which the world was made, signifies the perfection of the work? Whether simple, or multiplied by ten or a hundred, it demonstrates the perfection of the sixtieth and the hundredfold fruit. Moreover, the weight of gold that came to Solomon each year was six hundred sixty-six talents. Therefore, what is rightly owed and paid as tribute to the true king, that same tribute the deceiving tyrant will presume to demand.

Chapter 14

[Revelation 14:1] -- And I looked, and behold, the Lamb stood on Mount Zion. That is, the Lord Jesus Christ, provided an example of virtue and protection to His Church, which is laboring under the burden of its struggles. By showing His body, which was both powerful enough to confound the dragon and marked with the seal, He demonstrates that the Church, shining with its usual brightness and joy in its number, should not fear having succumbed to the fury of the beast. Note that the beast stands on the sand of the sea, while the Lamb stands on Mount Zion. [Revelation 14:1] -- And with him one hundred forty-four thousand. This finite number should be understood as representing an infinite number, apt for the mystery's secret meaning, and fitting for the examination of virgins, who love God with all their heart, soul, and mind (Matthew XXII), and who are also consecrated in integrity to Him with their bodies, which consist of four qualities. For three times three makes nine, and four times four makes sixteen. Sixteen times nine completes one hundred forty-four. Therefore, when such a perfect multitude is seen among those who are on Mount Zion with the Lamb, there should be no doubt about the rest of the members of the Church.

[Revelation 14:1] -- Having his name and the name of his Father written on their foreheads. He shows the contrast with the mark on the forehead of the beast's followers, saying that God and Christ are written on the foreheads of the Church. [Revelation 14:2] -- And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters. The great voice of the saints, the great devotion of charity, which he reports hearing from heaven, while he had predicted that those who issued the voice stood on Mount Zion. To show that Mount Zion signifies the Church, raised to the joy of sublime contemplation to overcome the burdens of pressures, celebrating the struggles of their King with praise and imitation. This is truly to sing to the Lamb standing. [Revelation 14:2] -- And the voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps. Since all the saints who crucify their flesh with its vices and desires (Galatians V) are God's harpists, praising Him with the psaltery and harp (Psalm CL), how much more so are those who, with the privilege of evangelical chastity, make themselves a whole burnt offering to the Lord, uniquely denying

themselves, and taking up their cross (Luke IX), following the Lamb wherever he goes (Revelation XIV)?

[Revelation 14:3] -- And they sang as it were a new song before the throne. The old song was: Blessed is he who has his seat in Zion and his household in Jerusalem. The new song is: Rejoice, barren woman who does not bear (Galatians IV). And also, The Lord says, I will give to eunuchs a place and a name better than sons and daughters, in my house and within my walls (Isaiah LVI). [Revelation 14:3] -- And no one could learn that song except, etc. To sing the song of the Lamb uniquely is to rejoice with him forever, even in the incorruption of the flesh, above all the faithful. Although the other chosen can hear the song, they cannot sing it, for while they rejoice in the exaltation of the virgins through love, they do not rise to their rewards.

[Revelation 14:4] -- For they are virgins, etc. Blessed Augustine beautifully expounded on these matters by admonishing the virgins. ”Proceed,” he says, ”holy sons and daughters of God, males and females, celibate and unmarried, proceed perseveringly to the end. Praise the Lord more sweetly, whom you think of more abundantly. Hope more happily in Him to whom you serve more fervently. Love more ardently Him to whom you attend more diligently. With girded loins and burning lamps, wait for the Lord when He comes from the wedding. You will bring to the wedding of the Lamb a new song, which you will sing on your harps, such as no one can sing except you. For thus did one who was beloved by the Lamb above others, who was accustomed to recline on His breast, see you in the Apocalypse, twelve times twelve thousand of the holy harpists of unblemished virginity in body, and inviolate truth in heart. Follow the Lamb, for indeed the flesh of the Lamb is also virgin. Follow Him in the virginity of heart and flesh wherever He goes. For what does it mean to follow if not to imitate? For Christ suffered for us, leaving you an example, that you might follow in His footsteps” (1 Pet. 2).

[Revelation 14:4] -- These were purchased from among all as first fruits to God and the Lamb. From that holy and immaculate flock of the Church, as holier and purer sacrifices for the merits of their will, they are chosen by the Holy Spirit: what the Apostle says about them, not having a command from the Lord (1 Cor. 7), he beseeches them to present their bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, and pleasing to God (Rom. 12). [Revelation 14:5] -- And in their mouth was found no lie. It is not by the merit of chastity alone that virgins are joined to the divine company, unless they have also led an immaculate life free from all contagion of sin. Tychonius interprets this vision not specifically of virgins, but generally of the whole Church, which the Apostle espoused to one husband to present as a chaste virgin to Christ (2 Cor. 11), concluding thus: He did not say, ”No lie was in their mouth,” but ”was not found.” As the Apostle says: ”And such were some of you, but you were washed” (1 Cor. 6). And the iniquity of the wicked shall not harm him on the day he turns

from his iniquity (Ezek. 33), and he can be a virgin, and deceit not be found in his mouth. For he calls virgins those who are chaste and modest.

[Revelation 14:6] -- And I saw another angel flying through the midst of heaven, having the eternal gospel. Since he had described the uncertain and varied struggle of the church militant in the world with the dragon, it remains to show a worthy reward for each army, and to reveal what penalties follow the wicked and what rewards follow the good. The preacher, therefore, traversing through the midst of the church, bears the gospel of the eternal kingdom. [Revelation 14:6] -- To preach to those who dwell on the earth. It is fitting that those who are lifted by a heavenly flight should also elevate earthly minds from the seat of their lethargy through preaching. [Revelation 14:6] -- And over every nation, etc. He says, this gospel will be preached in the whole world, and then the end will come. [Revelation 14:7] -- Fear God and give Him glory, etc. The more you look out for your salvation, he says, the more imminent the reward awaits you, which cannot be changed eternally, fearing the Lord, the creator of the world, and not the temporal tyranny of the beast.

[Revelation 14:8] -- And another angel followed, saying: Fallen, fallen is that great Babylon. He says that the ruined city of the devil has already fallen. Either in the manner of Scripture, which usually places the past for what it knows will inevitably be fulfilled. Or because the proud are then cast down by the Lord when they are puffed up by the devil, as the Psalmist says: You cast them down when they were lifted up (Ps. 73). [Revelation 14:8] -- She has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. The city of the impious, gathered from all nations, inebriates the nations, that is, her members, with the wine of error. But the city of the Lord, exercising the vineyard of Sorec, does not want to be inebriated with the wine in which is debauchery (Eph. 5), lest it be deprived of the promised denarius of life.

[Revelation 14:9] -- And the third angel: If anyone worships the beast and its image. That is, the devil, and the head of the slain calf. [Revelation 14:9] -- And receive a mark on his forehead, etc. By saying on the forehead or on the hand, he signifies that the devil marks some by a wicked profession, and others only by their deeds. [Revelation 14:10] -- And he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, etc. By saying, ”And he also shall drink,” he shows that there is another who drinks, so that he does not separate the one who, although visibly not mingling with the nations, yet under the name of Christ worships the same beast. Justly, however, those who offer the cup of the wrath of fornication are struck down by the cup of the Lord, not so that, according to Jeremiah, they may vomit out the malice of their hearts and be cleansed, but so that they perish condemned, falling into eternal death.

[Revelation 14:10] -- And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, etc. The saints reigning with the Lord can always see the punishment of the wicked, so that they may give greater thanks to their Redeemer, and sing the mercies of the Lord forever. For the torments of the wicked seen do not sadden those agreeing with the just Judge, just as the rest of Lazarus, seen buried in the flames, could not refresh the rich man. [Revelation 14:11] -- And they have no rest day nor night, etc. They say that a lion spares a prostrate man, but this beast is fiercer than a lion, the more it is worshipped, the greater punishments it inflicts. [Revelation 14:11] -- And if anyone receives the mark of his name. Saint Augustine interprets the beast as the impious city, its image as the simulation of piety, that is, the false appearance of Christians, and the mark as the sign of a crime, which he says is worshipped, submitted to, and consented to.

[Revelation 14:12] -- Here is the patience of the saints. Although the beast rages, yet the temporary suffering does not sadden the saints, which is to be rewarded with eternal happiness, while on the contrary, the persecutors, temporarily prideful, see themselves suffering eternal punishment with the beast. [Revelation 14:13] -- And I heard a voice from heaven saying: Write. How beautiful is the concord of the preachers. Behold, one declares the kingdom of the Lord is coming, another says the city of the devil has fallen; one preaches the flames of the impious, another the rest of the blessed, which emits its voice both from heaven and commands it to be recorded as worthy of eternal memory. For the just rejoice because their names are written in heaven; the impious, however, are blotted out from the book of the living. [Revelation 14:13] -- Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. I give thanks to you, Jesus, who bless those in heaven who die in you on earth. How much more those who happily give their lives for your faith and in your faith!

[Revelation 14:13] -- From now on, says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, etc. Just as he had said that the wicked have no rest perpetually, so on the contrary, he teaches that the faithful, aided by their former works, from now on, that is, from the time of death, rest. For when He gives sleep to His beloved, this is the inheritance of the Lord (Ps. 127). But because of the cold, the sluggard will not plow; he will beg in summer, and it will not be given to him. [Revelation 14:14] -- And I saw, and behold, a white cloud, etc. Thus far the voice of the heralds having been sent forth, now it remains to show the person of the Judge Himself. He who comes to judgment covers the glory of His divinity with the cloud of flesh, so that the impious may see whom they pierced (John 19).

[Revelation 14:14] -- Having on His head a golden crown. What this crown is, he described earlier in the appearance of the woman: And on her head a crown of twelve stars (Rev. 12). Although it can also signify the victory of the one who reigns. [Revelation 14:14] -- And in His hand a sharp sickle. Namely, the judicial sentence of separating, which cannot be avoided. For we are within it, wherever

we may try to flee. For in the sickle, whatever is enclosed falls within. [Revelation 14:15] -- And another angel came out of the temple, crying, etc. The angels, whom we read as reapers of the earth in the Gospel, and who are all sent into service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation (Heb. 1), daily report to the Lord the individual merits of the Church. [Revelation 14:15] -- Put in your sickle, and reap, etc. Behold, he says, with iniquity abounding, the love of many has grown cold (Matt. 24), and with the heat of evil pressing, the harvest of the world has almost ceased to live. Therefore, lest the already ripe grains fall, for the sake of the elect, the days are shortened (Ibid.), and gather the tares and chaff for the flames, but store the heavenly fruit in the blessed barns (Matt. 13).

[Revelation 14:17] -- And another angel, etc., having a sharp sickle himself. If Christ is seen as the reaper in the white cloud, who is the grape gatherer, if not the same, elegantly repeated for the dual fruit of the Church? For He who sowed the good seed in His field (Matt. XIII), also planted a vineyard in a fertile place, but both cultivations degenerated due to the negligence of the keepers. [Revelation 14:18] -- And another angel came out from the altar, who has power over fire, etc. There is a dual office of angels, as Jerome says. Some are to grant rewards to the just, others to preside over individual torments. As it is said: He makes His angels spirits, etc. The two angels who proclaim the ripe harvest and mature vineyard can be understood as the prayers of the Church, which daily with great desire prays for the Lord's kingdom to come, saying,

[Revelation 14:18] -- Send forth your sharp sickle, etc. Just as the harvest, so too the vintage is partly earthly, partly heavenly. The ripeness of both indicates the end of the age. [Revelation 14:18] -- For the grapes are ripe. That is, sins are consummated. Although the perfection of the good can also be called ripeness. For, as the holy Pope Gregory says, "however much the end of the world hangs upon its own order, finding each more perverse, it is revealed that they are deservedly oppressed by its ruins." [Revelation 14:19] -- And the angel thrust his sickle into the earth, etc. He who has the harvesting sickle, also has the grape gathering sickle. For there is one judgment and it will occur at one time. But in the harvest and vintage, the beginning and the end of the same oppression are shown. [Revelation 14:19] -- And he cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God, etc. If this harvest and vintage pertains only to the wicked, the winepress signifies punishment. But if also to the good, the treading of the winepress and the threshing floor's tribulation crushes the useless, while proving the useful. As the Apostle says, precious metals are proven by fire, but wood, hay, and stubble are consumed (I Cor. III). Both of these are conducted outside the heavenly Jerusalem. The winepress of wrath is so called in the manner of speaking by which it is said: The Lord delivered him in the evil day (Psalm XL).

[Revelation 14:20] -- And blood came out of the winepress, etc. Vengeance came out even to the rulers of the peoples. For vengeance for the blood of the saints poured out has reached even to the devil and his angels in the final struggle. As it is written: In blood you sinned, and blood will pursue you. It was said above concerning the horses: [Revelation 14:20] -- For a distance of sixteen hundred stadia. That is, through all four parts of the world. For fourfoldness is compounded four times, as in the four-faced quadriform and wheels. Four times four hundred is sixteen hundred. Tyconius interprets the reaper and the grape gatherer as the Church, shining forth after the flames of persecutions, holding the power to bind and to loose. The angel from the temple or altar giving the command of the Lord, not with a clear voice, but by the suggestion of the Holy Spirit, who works in His body, teaching that it is now time for the wicked to be anathematized, having power over fire, namely that which comes from the mouth of the witnesses, and consumes their enemies. Thus far concerning the conflict of the Church and the ripe end of the struggle for both.

Chapter 15

[Revelation 15:1] -- And I saw another great and marvelous sign in heaven. With the order again restored, about to narrate the same plagues of the final persecution, he wanted the listener to be attentive by saying: A great and marvelous sign. [Revelation 15:1] -- The seven angels. That is, the Church full of sevenfold grace. [Revelation 15:1] -- Having the seven last plagues. Because in them the wrath of God is completed, he called them the last: for the wrath of God always strikes the rebellious people with seven plagues, that is, perfect ones, as frequently in Leviticus: And I will strike you with seven plagues (Lev. XXVI). These will be the last when the Church has departed from its midst. [Revelation 15:2] -- And I saw something like a sea of glass mingled with fire. That is, the translucent fountain of baptism, consecrated with the fire of the Holy Spirit. Or also, in regard to the quality of fire, reddened by martyrdom.

[Revelation 15:2] -- And those who have conquered the beast and its image, etc. Those who conquer the beast's deceits appear to stand by the fiery baptism, striving, according to the Apostle, to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3). [Revelation 15:2] -- Having the harps of God, and singing, etc. That is, bearing hearts dedicated to praising God, and singing with the truth of both Testaments. Or, the flesh extended on the wood of the passion. Where not only the sound of the voice, but also the effect of good work is signified. [Revelation 15:3] -- Great and marvelous are your works, Lord God Almighty, etc. This song is found in both Testaments, where the Lord, both true and merciful, is sung by all ages as the judge to be worshipped. He repeats what he had proposed, saying: [Revelation 15:5] -- And behold, the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened. The vision harmonizes with the song. For the Lord to be worshipped by all nations, that temple of God's secrets, once enclosed within the walls of a single city, has now begun to be spiritually opened to the whole world.

[Revelation 15:6] -- And the seven angels came out, having the seven plagues from the temple. This is what Mark says: But they went out and preached everywhere. [Revelation 15:6] -- Clothed in pure bright linen. As many (the Apostle says) as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ (Gal. III). For He is the supreme corner-

stone chosen. Or if you understand the singular number for the plural, it signifies various ornaments of virtues. Another translation has white linen, indicating the mortification of the heart for teachers, according to that: I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified (I Cor. IX). [Revelation 15:6] -- And girded around their chests with golden belts. Whoever wants to preach strong things should not only mortify the body but also gird the chest with the gold of wisdom. Or certainly to gird the chest with golden belts is to restrain all the movements of mutable thoughts with the bonds of God's love alone.

[Revelation 15:7] -- And one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels, etc. These are the bowls which the living creatures and elders, who are the Church, bear with odors, who are also the seven angels. For the same bowls are said to contain both the sweetness of supplications and the wrath of punishments, when they are poured out by the saints for the coming of God's kingdom, when God's judgments, no longer hidden like an abyss, but open as bowls, bring salvation to the righteous, but are proclaimed to bring ruin to the wicked, as the Apostle says: For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing (II Cor. II). [Revelation 15:8] -- And the temple was filled with smoke, etc. The Church, about to preach to the nations, first warms itself with the fire of charity, emitting the smoke of pious confession, giving thanks to God for His indescribable gift.

[Revelation 15:8] -- And no one was able to enter the temple, etc. No one can be incorporated into the members of the Church unless he hears the mysteries of faith from the preachers and learns that Jesus is appointed by God as the judge of the living and the dead. But if you interpret the smoke as the hidden secrets of God's judgments, these remain impenetrable and closed to mortals until, with the plagues of the present age finished, the Lord comes, who will both illuminate what is hidden in darkness (I Cor. IV), and reveal how much benefit or justice the advent of the Antichrist brings either for proving the faith of the Church or for blinding the Jews who did not accept the love of the truth, so that they might be saved.

Chapter 16

[Revelation 16:1] -- And I heard a great voice: Go and pour out the seven bowls, etc. The Church is given the power to impose judgment on the damned and to mercifully grant absolution to the converted. And indeed, all angels are commanded to pour out on the earth; but these earthly men receive different names due to the variety of their sins, so that just as the fullness of preaching and vengeance, so also the fullness of guilt is reckoned by the number seven. [Revelation 16:2] -- And the first went and poured out his bowl on the earth. Preachers pour out the bowls of God's wrath in two ways: either by spiritually judging and imposing punishments on the impious, as Peter did to Simon, saying: Your money perish with you (Acts VIII); or by manifesting it through preaching to the holy Church, as he also said: For their judgment is not idle, and their destruction does not slumber (II Pet. II). A third way can also be understood, in which any sinner, upon hearing the preaching of the truth, is corrupted by a more severe wound of contradiction. Of which the Lord said: If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin (John XV).

[Revelation 16:2] -- And it became a severe wound, etc. Those who, having forsaken the Lord, worship the devil, will perish spiritually by the grievous wound of the same impiety. [Revelation 16:3] -- And the second poured out his bowl on the sea, etc. Those who are not only marked with the character of the Antichrist but also attack the stability of Christ's servants with the waves of bitter persecution will be punished with a spiritual vengeance, which he calls blood; and those who boasted of living will be proven to have served the author of death. [Revelation 16:4] -- And the third poured out his bowl on the rivers, etc. And those who, to pour their poison into the unsuspecting, pretend to offer sweet things, will be punished with a worthy, eternal plague of vengeance. [Revelation 16:5] -- And I heard the angel of the waters saying, You are just, etc. By the angel of the waters, he means all the angels of the peoples, harmonizing with divine praises from their inner affection, because in avenging the blood of His servants, He has given the murderers to drink death.

[Revelation 16:7] -- And I heard another from the altar saying: Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are Your judgments. What the angels are, the altar, giv-

ing thanks to God, also signifies, that is, the inner affection of the saints, whether angels or humans, who preside over the people by teaching. [Revelation 16:8] -- And the fourth poured out his bowl on the sun, etc. The persecutors of the Church, who, like a burning sun, try to dry up the seed of God's word, are destined to be burned with the future fire of hell. Or if you interpret the sun as the splendor of the wise, it is not the angel pouring out on the sun, but the sun itself given the power to affect men with heat and fire, because when wise men, overcome by tortures, are touched by the error of evil deeds, persuaded by their example, the weak burn with temporal desires. However, the heat, as we have said, can also be understood as the body of the devil being irremediably tormented by the stability of the saints and being incited to blasphemy. Of which the prophet says: Zeal, he says, has taken hold of an uneducated people; and now fire consumes the adversaries. And now, indeed, except for the final fire of judgment.

[Revelation 16:9] -- And men were scorched with great heat. At present, indeed, as much as is permitted, the devil glorifies his own. But that clarity and joy the Holy Spirit has defined as plagues and sorrows. For we read above that the army of the devil killed men by fire, smoke, and brimstone. Not that he clearly killed them, but that he destined those who consented to these punishments. [Revelation 16:10] -- And the fifth poured out his bowl, etc. The seat of the beast, that is, his kingdom, like judicial power, is darkened by such plagues, that is, the false joy of earthly happiness, and it becomes devoid of light, as the Psalm says: You cast them down as they were lifted up (Psalm LXXIII). For he did not say, after they were elevated. [Revelation 16:10] -- And they gnawed their tongues because of pain. Just as the righteous will eat the labors of their fruits, so the wicked, exposed to the worthy punishments of their blasphemy, are as if satiated with their own tongues. They harmed themselves by blaspheming out of God's wrath, in which they thought they found joy.

[Revelation 16:11] -- And they blasphemed the God of heaven, etc. He did not attribute it to their hardness but to the just indignation of God, who gave such a kind of plague, in which they do not remember. For who, being afflicted bodily, does not feel the hand of God as Antiochus did? For he said they blasphemed, not openly, but indulging in their sins. [Revelation 16:12] -- And the sixth angel poured out his bowl on that great river Euphrates, etc. With the people perishing, the abundance of Babylon, in which nothing living, nothing green, that is not fit for fire, will remain. This is what was said above: The harvest of the earth is dried up (Rev. XIV), the holy king hastens to meet the Sun of righteousness. Alternatively, just as when the wicked boast, the poor are inflamed, so when the pestilent is scourged, the wise become more prudent. As usual, the seventh angel recapitulates briefly from the beginning.

[Revelation 16:13] -- And I saw from the mouth of the dragon and from the mouth of the beast, etc. The spirit of the devil, and the Antichrist, and the leaders of his body, who are called threefold according to the number of parts of one body, are likened to frogs, which are horrible in place, appearance, and troublesome noise. Though they seem to be inhabitants of the waters, they wallow in filth and mud. Hypocrites, promising the water of life, hide dead in the filth which believers lay down in the water. Thus Pharaoh, who, in order to destroy the people in baptism, dared to enter after them, was killed there. [Revelation 16:14] -- For they are the spirits of demons performing signs. Just as through Pharaoh's magicians, they are believed to perform signs. It is not without reason that the mention of frogs is made, unless to proclaim that the ministers of Satan will then also perform similar signs. For up to the sign of frogs, the magicians were permitted to prevail with their enchantments.

[Revelation 16:14] -- And they go forth to the kings of the whole earth, to gather them for battle, etc. Just as there are holy kings, for whom, with the Euphrates dried up, the way is prepared for the East, so also the wicked are called kings of the earth, who, not gathered from the whole world to one place, but each nation in its own place, attack the saints. The great day of the Lord is the whole time from the Lord's passion. The day can also be understood as the day of judgment; when the army of the devil, gathered throughout the whole time of this present life, will come to be cast down by the Lord, the king. [Revelation 16:15] -- Behold, I come like a thief. Another edition more fittingly has: To the great day of Almighty God. Behold, he comes like a thief. [Revelation 16:15] -- Blessed is he who watches and keeps his garments, etc. Blessed are those whose sins are covered (Psalm 31), who cover the shame of a blameworthy life before the eyes of the just with the cloak of subsequent good works. And in the Gospel, the Lord, using the example of avoiding a thief, commands the servants to be watchful.

[Revelation 16:16] -- And he gathered them together in a place called in Hebrew Armageddon. He explains this place elsewhere, saying: He gathered them for battle, and they surrounded the camp of the saints, and the beloved city (Rev. 20), that is, the Church. Conversely, the place of the wicked can be understood as the devil, who in a lost man, inflated with the pride of usurped divinity, will rejoice in recovering former deceptions, that is, those once forbidden by the Lord. For Armageddon means a return to the former, or a swollen mount. [Revelation 16:17] -- And the seventh poured out his vial into the air, etc. Just as above the blood of vengeance up to the horse bridles, namely the unclean spirits went out, so also here when the same aerial powers are drenched with the final vengeance, it is said to have happened, that is, the end is at hand, when (as the Apostle says) the last enemy, death, will be destroyed (1 Cor. 15). Thus far under the name of plagues is described the final persecution, which Tyconius wants to be understood all oppositely. A plague, he says, is incurable, and a great wrath to receive the power of sinning especially

against the saints, and not yet to be chastised by a greater wrath of God. For the outcome of the blessedness of the wicked is death, just as conversely the torments and humiliation of the Church is its glory. For at that time all the impious people will be unharmed by any bodily plague, as if they had received the full power of raging. Nor will there be a need then for the fulfillment of sins and the completion of wrath for any of the wicked to be scourged, and to be restrained from fury. He summarizes from the same persecution, describing the ruin of the impious city.

[Revelation 16:18] -- And there were lightnings and voices, etc. When at the end of the world there will be such tribulation as has not been from the beginning (Matt. 24), very great signs will also clearly appear. But whether from the side of the good, or from the side of the wicked, or from both sides converging towards each other, it is not made sufficiently clear here. As it was done with Moses and Pharaoh's magicians. [Revelation 16:19] -- And the great city was divided into three parts. The impious city inflicts a threefold war upon the Church of Christ. Which the Gentiles and Jews openly with combat, heretics with deceitful defection, false brethren with corrupt examples assail. Which was also figured above in the three bad horses, the red, black, and pale. [Revelation 16:19] -- And the cities of the nations fell. That is, all the strength and confidence of the nations. For the joy of the wicked is a great ruin, and the joy of the unrighteous is destruction.

[Revelation 16:19] -- And great Babylon came into remembrance before God, etc. Then Babylon falls, or drinks the wrath of God, when it receives power against Jerusalem, especially in the final days. Therefore he said that it fell by the earthquake that affects the Church. But if you refer this to the day of judgment, then the impious will come into remembrance before God, who now says in his heart: God has forgotten. [Revelation 16:20] -- And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. The Church, which, because of its eminence of stability, is compared to islands and mountains, cautiously hides itself from the waves of persecutors. [Revelation 16:21] -- And great hail like a talent descended from heaven upon men. The hail of God's wrath is likened to a talent, which is both heavy in weight and just in judgment, inflicted on each according to the diversity of their faults. And all the plagues of Egypt were figures of spiritual plagues.

[Revelation 16:21] -- And men blasphemed God, etc. Because some sins are the cause of sin, some the punishment of sin, and some both. As Isaiah says: Behold, you were angry, and we sinned (Isa. 64). Here, to blaspheme God because of the hail, both the sin and the punishment of sin are recognized.

Chapter 17

[Revelation 17:1] -- Come, I will show you the condemnation of the great harlot, etc. The multitude of the lost, who, forsaking the Creator, surrendered themselves to demons to be defiled, is remembered as sitting on the waters, that is, in the discord of the peoples. Conversely, the multitude of believers was of one heart and one soul. Whom the Apostle betrothed to one man to present a chaste virgin to Christ. [Revelation 17:2] -- With whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, etc. The universality prevails over the parts. For the kings and inhabitants of the earth are each individually those arrogantly seeking earthly things, whom the allurements of the world, with the lust of vices, defile and intoxicate with the madness of mind. [Revelation 17:3] -- And he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness. The wilderness represents the absence of divinity, whose presence is paradise.

[Revelation 17:3] -- And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, etc. The devil, bloody with impiety, blasphemous, inflated, exalts the corruption of the wicked with the pride of presumption. [Revelation 17:3] -- Having seven heads and ten horns. That is, having the kings of the world and kingdoms, whose glory he also showed to the Lord on the mountain. And as we have said above, the number seven and ten often indicate universality. [Revelation 17:4] -- And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet. In purple is shown the pretense of feigned rule, in scarlet the bloody habit of impiety is demonstrated. [Revelation 17:4] -- And adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls. That is, with all the allurements of simulated truth. What is, in fact, within this beauty, he explains, saying: [Revelation 17:4] -- Having a golden cup, etc. A golden cup full of impurities is hypocrisy, because hypocrites outwardly appear to people as just, but inside they are full of all filth. For what poison is in gold, this is the beast hidden under the guise of the harlot.

[Revelation 17:5] -- And on her forehead was a name written, Mystery, etc. This corruption is immediately shown on the very face to be the nurse of vices, but because it is discerned only by prudent reasoning, being most ornately adorned, it is indicated to be a mystical name. [Revelation 17:6] -- And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, etc. It is one body, opposing within and without:

although it seems separated by place, it nevertheless operates in common by the unity of the spirit. Thus, the descendants of the wicked are accused of stoning Zechariah by the same spirit, although they themselves did not do it. [Revelation 17:6-7] -- And I wondered when I saw her, with great admiration. And the angel said to me: Why do you marvel? etc. That is, the devil once ruled in the world, who, after the Lord was crucified, was cast out; but at the end of the world, he is released from the prison of his confinement and will perish forever by the spirit of the Lord's mouth (2 Thess. 2). Tyconius refers the beast to the entire body of the devil, which is replenished by the succession of departing and following generations. Especially, because he promised to show the woman sitting upon many waters, that is, peoples, he shows her sitting upon the beast.

[Revelation 17:9] -- The seven heads are seven mountains, etc. The heads of the beast, he says, are the kings of the world, equated to lofty mountains because of their pride. In these impiety wantonly rests, to oppress with force and to deceive with fraud. [Revelation 17:10] -- Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. When he described the fullness of worldly power in the number seven, whose final part, that is, the kingdom of the Antichrist, had not yet come, he consequently testifies that five kings have passed, the sixth is present, and the seventh is to come. [Revelation 17:10] -- And when he comes, he must remain for a short time. Because the Lord looks upon both the proud and the weak, he mercifully says that the days which are particularly evil are shortened. Surely to both terrify the proud with the adversity of time, and to comfort the weak with its brevity.

[Revelation 17:11] -- And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, etc. The Antichrist, who is to rule at the end of the world, because of the unity of the same body of the wicked, of which he is the head, belongs to the number of the kingdoms of the world; but because of the singular power of his wickedness, he is also contained in the order of his own proper place. [Revelation 17:12] -- And the ten horns which you saw are ten kings, etc. The kingdoms of the world have not yet fully demonstrated their power in persecuting the Church; although they now dominate many, the power of insane glory was fiercer when they deceived many with signs. Some interpret that, with the final persecution approaching, there will be ten kings who will divide the world among themselves, according to the prophecy of Daniel, who said of the fourth beast: And it had ten horns; and behold, another little horn came up among them; and three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots before it (Dan. 7); and that the Antichrist, born from Babylon, will overcome the king of Egypt and of Africa and Ethiopia, and after killing them, the other seven kings will also submit to the victor. Others, however, say that the Antichrist is placed in the number eleven to signify transgression. For eleven denotes the transgression of the denary perfection.

[Revelation 17:12] -- But they will receive power as kings for one hour with the beast. He said, as kings, because they reign as in dreams, who oppose the kingdom of Christ. [Revelation 17:13] -- These have one mind, etc. That is, with equal consent, they fully intend to fight for the devil, which is what it means to receive the kingdom after the beast, by imitating the devil and opposing Christ. [Revelation 17:14] -- These will make war with the Lamb, etc. So that human weakness would not fear the cruelty of the ancient enemy, he describes the beast with seven heads armed with the horns of secular power, defeated by Christ's triumph, and added, indicating that he triumphs in his own: [Revelation 17:14] -- And those who are with him are called, chosen, and faithful. He rightly prefixed chosen, for many are called, but few are chosen. [Revelation 17:16] -- And the ten horns which you saw, etc. The glory of the world, which they now embrace with wanton love, they will begin to detest with great hatred when they see themselves condemned at the end by the Lamb's victory. It can also be understood in another way, whether it is that there are always quarrels among the proud, or that everyone who loves iniquity hates his own soul (Psalm 10).

[Revelation 17:16] -- And they will make her desolate and naked. For they themselves make the world desolate through the wrath of God, while they are devoted to it and use it unjustly. [Revelation 17:16] -- And they will eat her flesh, etc. They will burn her, deprived of her usual luxuries, with the fires of hell. [Revelation 17:17] -- For God has put it into their hearts, etc. God, he says, the just and mighty judge, who is always pleased with righteousness, has permitted the impious to act in such a manner as a punishment for their previous sins, for which he deservedly imposes the end of the entire world, as the Gospels testify happened with Sodom and the flood. [Revelation 17:17] -- That they may give their kingdom to the beast, etc. That is, they obey the devil until the Scriptures are fulfilled, in which God said that the fourth kingdom would consume the earth, as we read in Daniel: The fourth kingdom shall be on the earth, which shall surpass all these kingdoms. And it shall devour the whole earth, and shall trample it down, and break it to pieces (Dan. 7).

[Revelation 17:18] -- And the woman whom you saw is the great city, etc. Likewise, later he is commanded to behold the bride of the Lamb, and he saw the holy city descending from heaven. As he describes it: And the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it (Rev. 21). For there are two cities in the world: one arising from the abyss, the other from the heavens. Hence, the same impiety, which he had described under the guise of the harlot, now compared to the ruins of a deserted city.

Chapter 18

[Revelation 18:1] -- After these things, I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, etc. This strong angel illuminating the earth can also be understood as the Lord incarnate and the doctors of the Church; who, endowed with heavenly light, proclaim the fall of the world, saying: The kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt. 3, 4). [Revelation 18:2] -- Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, etc. Fear not, O Jerusalem, the power of the earthly city, which falls spiritually as it prevails over you with the infestation of wicked citizens. Isaiah also describes Babylon as inhabited by unclean monsters. For there is no city except that of the devil, which captures every unclean soul, in which all uncleanness resides throughout the world. [Revelation 18:3] -- And the merchants of the earth have become rich through the power of her luxury. Those who are called rich in sins exchange their souls in an unhappy trade for temporal abundance. For the excess of luxury makes them poor rather than rich.

[Revelation 18:4] -- Come out of her, my people, etc. Likewise Isaiah: Depart from the midst of them, and touch no unclean thing. Be clean, you who bear the vessels of the Lord (Isa. 52). After predicting the fall of Babylon, he introduces the departure, which is the ruin of Babylon. For when Lot departed from Sodom, it was utterly destroyed. [Revelation 18:6] -- Repay her as she has repaid you. For visible and invisible plagues come forth from the Church into the world. [Revelation 18:6] -- And repay her double according to her works. So that she who enjoyed temporal pleasures may be tormented with eternal pains. [Revelation 18:7] -- Because she says in her heart: I sit as queen, and I am no widow, etc. Because, delighted with present luxuries, she did not wish to avoid future retribution, she will be punished in a short time with both spiritual and bodily ruin. Conversely, the citizens of the heavenly homeland, who set Jerusalem at the height of their joy, do not wish to sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land (Psalm 137), that is, to receive in the present the joy owed to the future age.

[Revelation 18:9] -- And the kings of the earth will weep and lament for her, etc. The weeping of the kings, merchants, and sailors of Babylon can be understood in two ways: either in the day of judgment, when all the glory of the world perishes,

and the wicked are left only with the memories of their past life, saying: What has our pride profited us? Or what advantage has the boast of riches brought us? All those things have passed away like a shadow (Wis. 5). Or in the present, when the abundance of things ceases, and the destruction of various nations ensues, the opportunity for the wicked to indulge in carnal delights is taken away. [Revelation 18:9] -- When they see the smoke of her burning. That is, the sign of destruction, because smoke precedes fire. For what is this rampage and destruction of the world other than the smoke of impending hell?

[Revelation 18:10] -- Standing afar off for fear of her torment. Standing afar off not in body but in mind, while each one fears for himself what he sees another suffer through calumny and power. [Revelation 18:10] -- Saying: Woe, woe, that great city Babylon, etc. The spirit names the city, but they mourn the world, intercepted by punishment in a very short time, and all their efforts stained with ruin. [Revelation 18:11] -- And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, etc. They mourn the fall of all the world's pomp, and those things which are either pleasant to the bodily senses or suitable for external uses. For precious metals pertain to sight, perfumes to smell, ointments to touch, wine, wheat, and oil to taste. Under the term of beasts and slaves, other human aids are also understood to perish. This is understood in two ways, as I said: either because these things fail with the dying world, or because the wretched survivors mourn the destruction of those who left the world's joys through death as if they were mourning the ruins of their own city, and hence they are said to stand afar off, fearing similar punishment.

[Revelation 18:15] -- Those who became rich by her will stand afar off. Wherever the Spirit speaks of those made rich by her, it signifies the riches of sins. For lower down, where it is the voice of the unjust saying: Woe, woe, that great city, in which all who had ships at sea were made rich, the riches of things are understood. For they believe they have been made rich by the cleverness of their faction. [Revelation 18:16] -- Which was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet. Is a city clothed in fine linen or purple, and not people? Thus, they mourn themselves, as they are stripped of the above-mentioned things. [Revelation 18:17] -- And every shipmaster, and all the sailors stood afar off, etc. Can all who sail the sea be present to see the burning of the city? But he means all the worshipers and workers of the world fear for themselves, seeing the ruin of their hope.

[Revelation 18:18] -- Saying: Who is like this great city? That is, the world cannot be restored to its entirety. [Revelation 18:19] -- And they threw dust on their heads. That is, reproaching the face of their leaders; by whom they were seduced and perished; or accusing the madness of their heart, which is the principal part of a man, with late repentance. [Revelation 18:19] -- For in one hour she is made desolate. Note that each of the mourning persons not only bewails the loss of riches but also the sudden and unforeseen ruin of the deceitful world. [Revelation

18:20] -- Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets. Thus also the Lord in the Gospel, predicting the ruin of the world, added: When you see these things happening, look up and lift up your heads (Luke 21), that is, cheer your hearts. [Revelation 18:20] -- For God has judged your judgment on her. This is what the souls of the saints were seeking with a great cry: How long, O Lord, holy and true, will you not judge and avenge our blood (Rev. 6)?

[Revelation 18:21] -- And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying: With this violence shall Babylon be thrown down. Or (as another edition says): Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be cast down. The city of the world, due to the weight of sins and error, is compared to an unstable millstone. For the wicked walk in a circle. It is rightly absorbed by the waves of vengeance because it oppressed the citizens of Jerusalem with the waves of infidelity, while they, sitting by the rivers of Babylon, wept for the absence of heavenly Zion. For the Lord said that the authors of scandal should be punished with such a penalty. And indeed the Church is compared to a stone, but stable and firm, which scorns the assaults of storms. The millstone can also be understood as the crushing of punishments. For blessed Ignatius is said to have said when about to suffer: ”I am the grain of God, ground by the teeth of beasts, that I may become pure bread.”

[Revelation 18:22] -- The sound of harpists and musicians, etc. He had deferred the sound of those five senses, which he now says will be taken away from the world among other things. As if to say: What is beautiful to see, melodious to hear, smooth to touch, pleasant to smell, and delightful to taste will pass away from the world. [Revelation 18:22] -- And no craftsman of any craft shall be found in you any more, etc. He says, all things that pertain to the use or pleasure of human life are taken away from the wicked. And he added the reason, saying: [Revelation 18:23] -- For your merchants were the great men of the earth. That is, because in your life you received your good things (Luke 16). [Revelation 18:24] -- And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, etc. Did the same city kill the apostles, which also killed the prophets, or all the saints? But this is the city that Cain founded with the blood of his brother, and he named it after his son Enoch, that is, all his posterity. For the seven generations of Cain are described. In the building of this city, all the righteous blood is poured out from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah (Matt. 23), that is, of the people and the priest.

Chapter 19

[Revelation 19:1] -- After this, I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying: Alleluia, etc. Now the Church says this in part; but then it will be said perfectly when the separation has been made, and when it has been more openly avenged. [Revelation 19:2] -- Who corrupted the earth with her prostitution, etc. He recalls two acts of the harlot: that she corrupted herself with evil and persecuted the good, in which I think all the crimes of the wicked are comprehended. [Revelation 19:3] -- And again they said: Alleluia. The Church praises the Lord with an unceasing affection over His judgments. For Alleluia means Praise the Lord. Indeed, the psalms that begin with Praise the Lord start with Alleluia among the Hebrews. [Revelation 19:3] -- And her smoke rises forever and ever. He said ascends, not will ascend. Babylon always goes into perdition and is already burning in part, just as Jerusalem passes into paradise, with the Lord manifesting it in the poor man and the rich man.

[Revelation 19:4] -- And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God. The Church venerates God not only with the office of the lips but with the utmost sweetness of devotion. [Revelation 19:4] -- Saying: Amen, Alleluia. Although these words can be interpreted (for they translate to faith or truth and the praise of the Lord, as I have said), out of reverence for the sanctity of the original language, the first authority of that tongue is preserved. For the Church continually sings Alleluia on the Lord’s days and throughout the entire Easter season because of the hope of the resurrection, which is to be in the praise of the Lord. [Revelation 19:5] -- And a voice came from the throne, saying: Praise our God, etc. When He commands this to be done and recalls it being done, He indicates the approved praise of the servants of the elect. He says, small and great, because the smallness of the mind does not harm, whose heart and tongue are filled with the praise of the Lord.

[Revelation 19:6] -- And I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great trumpet and the voice of many waters, etc. The great voice of the singers is the great devotion of the heart; which, with the repeated multitude of praises, celebrates both the ruin of the wicked and the eternal glory of the Lord and His own. [Revelation 19:7]

-- And let us give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come. The marriage of the Lamb is when the Church will be united with the Lord in the bridal chamber of the heavenly kingdom. [Revelation 19:7] -- And his wife has made herself ready. By constantly engaging in works of righteousness, she has shown herself worthy of the spiritual feast and eternal kingdom. This can also be understood according to the parable of the Gospel, which narrates the virgins rising at the arrival of the bridegroom, adorning their lamps, that is, accounting for their works, for which they expect to receive eternal beatitude.

[Revelation 19:8] -- And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and pure. It was given to her to be clothed with her own deeds. In contrast, the wicked, who, according to Isaiah, weave the spider's web, will not be covered by their works. For their works are useless works. [Revelation 19:9] -- And he said to me: Write: Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. He says they are called not to lunch, but to supper, because indeed the feast at the end of the day is supper. Therefore, those who, at the end of the present life, come to the refreshment of heavenly contemplation are surely called to the supper of the Lamb. [Revelation 19:9] -- These are the true words of God. That is, what I have foretold will truly happen. [Revelation 19:10] -- See that you do not do that. I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren. He had said earlier: I am the first and the last (Rev. 1). Therefore, he shows that the angel was sent in the figure of the Lord and the Church. For at the end, he also says: I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you these things in the churches (Rev. 22).

[Revelation 19:10] -- Who hold the testimony of Jesus. After the Lord Jesus elevated the assumed man above the heavens, the angel feared being worshipped by a man, evidently worshipping the man-God above himself, which we read was done by men before the Lord's Incarnation and was not forbidden by angels. [Revelation 19:10] -- The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. For whatever the spirit of prophecy said is the testimony of Jesus, who has the testimony from the Law and the Prophets. Therefore, he says, do not worship me as God, since I have come to bear witness to His virtues. Thus far concerning the fall of Babylon, henceforth concerning the future glory of Jerusalem. [Revelation 19:11] -- And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, etc. The Lord, who is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14), and to whom it is said through the prophet: For you have done wonderful things, plans formed of old, faithful and sure (Isaiah 25), ascends a white horse, that is, the seat of an immaculate body, to defeat the aerial powers.

[Revelation 19:11] -- And in righteousness he judges and makes war. He judges as the King of the ages. He makes war because he always fights, sharing the struggles of his members. [Revelation 19:12] -- His eyes are like a flame of fire. Sometimes the eyes of God are called his commandments, sometimes the spirit. Your word is a lamp to my feet, O Lord (Psalm 119). And of the Spirit: I came to cast fire on the

earth (Luke 12). [Revelation 19:12] -- And on his head are many diadems. In him we find our strength; in him, the multitude of saints is said to be adorned with a crown. [Revelation 19:12] -- He has a name written that no one knows but himself. He says, no one knows but himself, because all the Church is in him. The perfect knowledge of the Word of God is revealed to those who have deserved to be the body and members of Christ. In the same way, the Lord says: No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man (John 3).

[Revelation 19:13] -- He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood. The robe of Christ should be understood according to the context. Here, it seems to indicate the very work of the passion, so that on the white horse signifies the incorruptible birth, and in the blood-stained robe, the innocent death. [Revelation 19:13] -- And his name is called the Word of God. Because he who appeared as a man to suffer for a time was in the beginning with God (John 1). He is called the Word because there is nothing visible or corporeal in the substance of his nature, or because the Father created all things through him. The complete knowledge of whose nature, as he said above, is known only to himself and the Father. For the peace of God surpasses all understanding (Phil. 4), that is, the peace by which God himself is at peace transcends all the understanding of creatures, whether human or even angelic. For his wisdom is without number. What is said: And no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him (Matt. 11), refers to the manner of the creature.

[Revelation 19:14] -- And the armies of heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following him on white horses. That is, the Church in pure bodies imitates him, which, because of the struggle of its contest, rightly receives the name of army. [Revelation 19:14] -- Clothed in fine linen, white and clean. Which he previously explained to be the righteous acts of the saints, as the Psalmist says: Let your priests be clothed with righteousness (Psalm 132). [Revelation 19:15] -- And from his mouth proceeds a sharp sword. Thus Isaiah says: And he made my mouth like a sharp sword (Isa. 49). And the Apostle: And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Eph. 6). [Revelation 19:15] -- And he treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. He treads now also, until he treads it outside the city.

[Revelation 19:16] -- And he has on his robe and on his thigh a name written: King of kings and Lord of lords. This is the name that none of the proud know. But it is inscribed on the Church not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, on the tablets of the heart (2 Cor. 3). For the thigh signifies the progeny of the seed. Hence, Abraham used his thigh as a third witness between himself and his servant to ensure his progeny would not intermix with foreigners. About this, the Apostle, like raising seed to a deceased brother, says: For in Christ Jesus, I have begotten

you through the Gospel (1 Cor. 4). It can also be understood that the Church reigns in Christ through service, and dominates the rulers. The same name is written on the garment because the majesty and kingdom are revealed to us through the mystery of his birth and the work of his passion. He explains in the following what this garment and the king's army signify, namely the labor of the last battle and the glory of the ensuing kingdom.

[Revelation 19:17] -- And I saw an angel standing in the sun, etc. That is, the proclamation in the Church, which the more it is oppressed, the more it shines clearly and resounds more freely. [Revelation 19:17] -- Saying to all the birds, etc. He calls the saints birds, living in the life of heaven: Wherever the corpse is, there the eagles will gather (Matt. 24). Bringing them together into one body, he referred to them as an eagle flying in mid-heaven. [Revelation 19:17] -- Come, gather for the great supper of God, etc. Come, he says, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matt. 5), to the feast of the coming kingdom, where, with the fury of the proud subdued, you may be satisfied with the light of divine justice. [Revelation 19:18] -- And the flesh of horses and those who sit on them. I think these are the riders he described as coming against the white horse of the Lord during the opening of the seals.

[Revelation 19:19] -- And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth ... to make war, etc. He explains how that supper of God is prepared, namely by the devil attacking the Church but being defeated. [Revelation 19:20] -- The two were thrown alive into the lake of fire burning with sulfur, etc. This seems to indicate that the devil and the Antichrist will be punished with a greater penalty than other humans or demons, as it is much more severe to be burned alive in sulfurous flames than to be quickly killed by the blow of a sword. Unless it signifies the divine retribution already being preempted against them. For he who does not believe is already judged (John 3). Whether you understand the Antichrist as the false prophet or heretics, no mortal sins more grievously than heretics, who, after knowing Christ, deny Him. [Revelation 19:21] -- And all the birds were filled with their flesh. If now the righteous will rejoice when they see the vengeance of the wicked, how much more will they then, when present with the judge himself, become one spirit with Him. However, the birds can also be understood as unclean spirits, who will be satiated with the destruction of their own. Tyconius explains this supper as follows: "At all times, the Church eats the flesh of its enemies, while it is being eaten by them; it will be satiated in the resurrection, being vindicated from their carnal work."

Chapter 20

[Revelation 20:1] -- And I saw an angel … having the key to the abyss, etc. Recapitulating from the beginning, he more fully explains how he previously said: The beast that you saw was, and is not, and will ascend from the abyss and go into destruction (Rev. 17). Therefore, the Lord, endowed with paternal power, descended in the flesh to wage war against the prince of the world, and, having bound him, to snatch away his vessels. [Revelation 20:2] -- And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, etc. The devil is interpreted as flowing downward. In Greek, he is called the accuser. Satan means adversary or transgressor. He is called a dragon because of the malice of harming; a serpent because of the cunning of deceiving; the devil because of his fall from his status; and Satan because of his obstinacy in opposing the Lord. [Revelation 20:2] -- And he bound him for a thousand years. That is, restraining and curbing his power from seducing those who were to be freed. If he were allowed to exercise his full power with force or deceit, he would deceive many of the weak in such a long time. He said a thousand years, meaning a part, that is, the remainder of the thousand years of the sixth day in which the Lord was born and suffered.

[Revelation 20:3] -- And he threw him into the abyss. Into the hearts of the persecuting people. Not because the devil was not there before, but because, excluded from the believers, he began to possess the wicked more abundantly, who are not only alienated from God but also more bitterly hate those who serve God. The Lord also visibly showed this when He expelled him from humans into pigs. [Revelation 20:3] -- And he shut him up and sealed it over him so that he might not deceive the nations any longer. He forbade and, as if with a royal seal, closed him off, so that he might not deceive the nations, but those destined for life, whom he previously seduced, might not be reconciled to God. [Revelation 20:3] -- After that, he must be released for a little while. Then he will be released, as Saint Augustine says, when there will also be a short time (for it is read that he will rage with all his might for three and a half years), and there will be those with whom he will wage war, who cannot be overcome by his great force and tricks. If he were never released, his malignant power would appear less, the faithful patience of the holy city would be

less tested, and it would be less evident how God, the Almighty, has used his great evil so well.

[Revelation 20:4] -- And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, etc. He indicates what will be done during these thousand years in which the devil is bound. The Church, which will sit in Christ on the twelve thrones to judge, already sits, judging, as it has merited to hear from its King: Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven (Matt. 16). [Revelation 20:4] -- And the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, etc. It is understood what he will say later: They reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The Church, therefore, reigns with Christ among the living and the dead. For this reason, as the Apostle says, Christ died so that he might be Lord of both the living and the dead (Rom. 14). But he mentions only the souls of the martyrs because they particularly reign after death, having fought for the truth to the point of death. What follows:

[Revelation 20:4] -- And those who did not worship the beast, etc. We must understand this as referring to both the living and the dead, who, whether still living in this mortal flesh or having passed away, reign with Christ already now in a way appropriate to this time, throughout this entire interval signified by the number of a thousand years. [Revelation 20:5] -- The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. Whoever, during this whole time when the first resurrection, that is, of souls, is happening, has not heard the voice of the Son of God and has passed from death to life, will surely pass, in the second resurrection, which is of the flesh, into the second death, that is, eternal torments, with that very flesh. [Revelation 20:5] -- This is the first resurrection. Indeed, by which we rise again through baptism, as the Apostle says: If you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above (Col. 3). For just as the first death in this life is through sins, when the soul that sins shall die, so also the first resurrection in this life is through the forgiveness of sins.

[Revelation 20:6] -- Blessed and holy is the one who preserves what he has been reborn into. [Revelation 20:6] -- But they shall be priests of God and of Christ. Another version reads, Priests of God and of Christ. However, this is not said only of bishops and priests, who are properly called priests in the Church, but just as we are all called Christians because of the mystical chrism, so we are all called priests because we are members of the one Priest. As the apostle Peter says: You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation (1 Pet. 2). [Revelation 20:6] -- And they shall reign with Christ for a thousand years. The Spirit reported, when he wrote these things, that the Church would reign for a thousand years, that is, until the end of the world, from which there could be doubt. For it is clear about the perpetual kingdom.

[Revelation 20:7] -- And when the thousand years are completed, etc. He said completed as part of a whole, for he will be released such that three years and six

months of the last struggle will remain. But besides this trope, it is rightly said that the time is finished. For such small remnants are not to be counted, since seven hundred and as many years as God wills are called an hour by the apostle. [Revelation 20:8] -- And he will go out and deceive the nations, etc. Then he will deceive them to gather them for this battle. For even before, in the ways he could, he was deceiving through many and various evils. For it is said that he will go out: he will burst forth from the hidden places of his hatred into open persecution. Furthermore, Gog and Magog either signify the whole from a part or, according to the interpretation of their names, which are said to mean roof and from the roof, indicate hidden and open enemies. And they are the roof, because the enemy is now enclosed and ruled in them: and they will be from the roof when they erupt into open hatred.

[Revelation 20:9] -- And they ascended over the breadth of the earth, etc. It is not meant that they came or will come to one place, as if the beloved city, that is, the Church, would be confined to one place. Rather, by the term breadth of the earth, it is intended to indicate that it will be persecuted among all nations and will not abandon its struggle, preferring to use the term camp. [Revelation 20:9] -- And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. This should not be considered the final punishment, but rather the fire of envy by which they will be tormented, the adversity stemming from the firmness of the saints. For heaven is the firmament. This is the fire that came out of the mouth of God’s witnesses and devours their enemies. For on the last day, fire will not rain upon them, but the gathered and judged will be cast into the eternal fire, of which it is also said here:

[Revelation 20:10] -- And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur, etc. That is, the devil will be cast into the eternal fire at the final judgment, where all whom he has led will also go, that is, the majority of the impious city. For the beast should be understood according to the context: sometimes it means the devil, sometimes the Antichrist, sometimes the very impious city. The name of the fire descending from heaven can also signify the sudden destruction of the wicked when the Lord comes and will slay the Antichrist with the breath of His mouth (2 Thess. 2). He explains more fully how, when Christ judges, the devil with his followers is cast into the fire. [Revelation 20:11] -- And I saw a great white throne, etc. He said he saw someone sitting on the throne from whose presence earth and heaven fled away. This signifies that, after the judgment, there will be no more heaven and earth as they are, because there will be a new heaven and a new earth, meaning a transformation of things, not their complete destruction. For the figure of this world is passing away (1 Cor. 7); it does not say the substance. It is believed that the same substance will be changed for the better.

[Revelation 20:12] -- And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne. For when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His majesty, then all nations

will be gathered before Him. [Revelation 20:12] -- And the books were opened, etc. Another version says: Which is the book of the life of each one. Therefore, the opened books are called the Testaments of God. For the world will be judged according to both Testaments. The book of life is the memory of each one's deeds, not that He has a book of remembrance, but as the knower of all secrets. [Revelation 20:12] -- And the dead were judged from what was written in the books, etc. That is, they were judged according to the Testaments, based on what they did or did not do from them. The books can also be understood as the deeds of the righteous, by the comparison of which the wicked are condemned, as if in the opening of the books, they read the good that they themselves did not want to do.

[Revelation 20:13] -- And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, etc. This undoubtedly happened before the dead were judged. Therefore, he recapitulates what he had omitted and follows the order, saying: [Revelation 20:13] -- And they were judged, each one according to their deeds. This signifies that bodies will be gathered from the earth and souls from their places. The good are designated by the name of death, which has only suffered the dissolution of the flesh, but not punishment. The wicked are designated by the name of hell. It can also be taken literally, that all bodies, even those that the waves have swallowed or beasts have devoured, will be resurrected. Tyconius explains it thus: "The nations that he will find alive here are the dead of the sea. And death and hell gave up their dead, these are the buried nations." When he had said: And they were judged, each one according to their works, he briefly added how death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. He refers to the devil and his followers, whom he had previously described as being followed by hell on the pale horse. He repeats what he had already said more clearly by anticipation: And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur. What he had added there more obscurely, he explains here more clearly, that both the beast and the false prophet were thrown into the lake of fire.

[Revelation 20:15] -- And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life. That is, who was not judged by God to be alive. Hence, it seems more correct to say, as those who interpret the open books as the consciences of individuals and their revealed works. The book of life, however, is the foreknowledge of God (which cannot be mistaken) concerning those to whom eternal life will be given, in which they are written, that is, foreknown. Having finished the judgment by which he saw the wicked condemned, it remains for him to also speak of the good.

Chapter 21

[Revelation 21:1] -- And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, etc. This will be done in the order that he has already mentioned above, saying that he saw one seated on the throne from whose presence heaven and earth fled away, implying the judgment of the wicked. Then the figure of this world will pass away with the conflagration of the heavenly fires, so that, with heaven and earth transformed for the better, the quality of the transformation will correspond to the incorruption and immortality of the bodies of the saints. As for what he said: [Revelation 21:1] -- And the sea is no more. Whether it will be dried up by that great heat, or whether it will also be transformed for the better, I cannot easily say. We read that there will be a new heaven and a new earth, but not a new sea. Unless perhaps, as prophetic language often mixes literal and figurative speech, the turbulent life of this age, which will then cease, is symbolized by the sea.

[Revelation 21:2] -- And the holy city, new Jerusalem, etc. This city is said to descend from heaven because it is made by the grace of God, which is heavenly. It is prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; for there is another Jerusalem that is not adorned for her husband, but for an adulterer. [Revelation 21:3] -- Behold, the dwelling place of God is with men, etc. God himself will be the reward of eternal beatitude for the elect, which they will possess forever as they are possessed by Him. [Revelation 21:4] -- And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. Such great and exalted clarity from the gift of God will appear in that city that no traces of the old world will remain. Since the heavenly incorruption will exalt the bodies, and the vision of the eternal King will nourish the minds. [Revelation 21:4] -- And death shall be no more, etc. For he had already foretold that death was cast into the lake of fire. This same sentence can also be understood in this way: that with the holy city glorified by the final judgment, pain, mourning, and mortality will remain only in hell.

[Revelation 21:6] -- And he said to me: Write, etc. And he said to me: It is done. These things must be believed, not explained, especially since he says it is done in the past tense, so that no one may doubt about the future. [Revelation 21:6] -- I am Alpha, etc. As he testified at the beginning of the book that he is Alpha and Omega,

so it was fitting to repeat it here for the third time, that neither before him is there any God, as Isaiah says, nor after him is there believed to be another (Isaiah 43). And because the discourse is about the end of the world, the one who is called the consummator of the age can be understood as the Creator. [Revelation 21:6] -- I will give to the thirsty, etc. From this fountain, he now sprinkles believers on the way, and to those who overcome, he offers it abundantly to be drawn from in the homeland. Both, however, are given freely. For the grace of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. And from his fullness, we have all received, grace upon grace (John 1).

[Revelation 21:8] -- But for the cowardly, and unbelieving, and abominable, etc. He always mixes harsh warnings with soothing words to instill caution. Thus, Psalm 145, while abundantly declaring the grace of the Lord's mercy, suddenly introduces His strict judgment, saying: The Lord preserves all who love Him, but all the wicked He will destroy (Psalm 145). He joins the cowardly with the unbelieving because the one who fears to face the peril of struggle doubts the reward of victory. [Revelation 21:8] -- And for all liars, their part will be in the lake burning with fire. He shows that there are many kinds of lies, but the most dangerous and detestable are those that sin against religion, as mentioned above. They say, he says, that they are Jews and are not, but lie, being a synagogue of Satan. [Revelation 21:9] -- Then one of the seven angels came, etc. The same preachers who inflict the universal plague upon the wicked also reveal the future joys of the Church.

[Revelation 21:9] -- Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb. He calls the Church both the bride and the wife, which, remaining immaculate, always generates spiritual children for God. Or because now betrothed to God, she will then be led to immortal nuptials. [Revelation 21:10] -- And he took me in the spirit to a great and high mountain, etc. After the fall of Babylon, the holy city, which is the bride of the Lamb, is seen placed upon a mountain. For the stone cut out of the mountain without hands crushed the image of worldly glory, and grew into a great mountain, filling the entire world (Dan. 2). [Revelation 21:10] -- Descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. For then she will appear more beautiful, when by the Spirit through whom her spouse is believed to have been conceived and born, she has fully merited to bear the heavenly image.

[Revelation 21:11] -- Her light was like a precious stone. The precious stone is Christ, who says: The glory which you have given me I have given to them (John 17). [Revelation 21:11] -- Like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. Jasper, for the brightness of virtues; crystal, for the inner purity of the mind and unfeigned faith (1 Tim. 1). [Revelation 21:12] -- And had a great and high wall. That is, the impregnable strength of faith, hope, and charity. The Lord Himself, protecting the Church on all sides, can be understood as the great wall, of whom Isaiah also says: You shall call your walls Salvation, and your gates Praise (Isa. 26), that is, the

Lord's protection and the intercession of the saints who make a path for her by teaching into the hearts of believers. [Revelation 21:12] -- Having twelve gates. These gates are the apostles, who, by their writings or deeds, originally opened the entrance to the Church to all nations.

[Revelation 21:12] -- And at the gates twelve angels. That is, the teachers following the footsteps of the apostles in the mystery of faith and the word. [Revelation 21:12] -- And names written, etc. This signifies the memory of the ancient fathers implanted in the hearts of the preachers. Hence, the high priest entering the tabernacle is commanded to carry the memorial of the fathers on the breastplate of judgment. [Revelation 21:13] -- To the east three gates, etc. I believe that this detailed description of the gates was meant to indicate the mystery of the number twelve, by which either the sum of the apostles or the perfection of the Church is represented, because through it, the faith of the Holy Trinity was to be proclaimed to the whole world. [Revelation 21:14] -- And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, etc. What the gates are, the foundations are; what the city is, the wall is. The patriarchs can also be designated by the term foundations, who held the names, that is, the figures, of the apostles in themselves. For through them, this city has foundations, even though it was opened to the nations through the apostles as through gates. It should be noted that when foundations are mentioned in the plural, they signify the teachers or virtues of the Church, but when singularly, they signify the Lord himself, who is the foundation of foundations.

[Revelation 21:15] -- And the one who spoke with me, etc. Christ, who is the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1), reaching from end to end mightily and ordering all things sweetly (Wis. 8), measures the holy city. For, establishing all things in number, measure, and weight, he distributes the gifts of graces to each of the faithful. The teachers of the Church can also be understood as being fragile in body but heavenly in mind, who carefully examine the merits of each person. [Revelation 21:16] -- And the city lies four-square. Therefore, the city is said to lie four-square and to be placed with equal dimensions on every side, because it is not allowed to be marked by any inequality. To be perfect according to the apostle, that is, to be wise and to have peace, is truly to subsist in the solidity of the four-square. [Revelation 21:16] -- And he measured the city with twelve thousand stadia. That is, he saw the Church to be perfect in faith and deeds, or he endowed it to be so. The perfection of the four principal virtues, elevated by the faith of the Holy Trinity, composes the dignity of the Church as if by the number ten.

[Revelation 21:16] -- Its length and breadth and height are equal. This is the solidity of invincible truth, by which the Church, supported by the length of faith, the breadth of charity, and the height of hope, is not allowed to be carried about by every wind of doctrine (Eph. 4). If it lacks any one of these, the perfect stability of the Church will not be. [Revelation 21:17] -- And he measured its wall, one hundred

forty-four cubits. This total contains the four-square number of twelve (for twelve times twelve equals one hundred forty-four), signifying the stable perfection of the holy city. [Revelation 21:17] -- The measure of a man, which is an angel's. The Church, which is gathered from men and elevated by the promises of Christ, hopes to attain the equality of angels. As for the literal sense, it signifies that the angel appeared to him in the form of a man.

[Revelation 21:18] -- And the wall was built of jasper. This is what the Apostle Peter exhorts: You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house (1 Peter 2). [Revelation 21:18] -- The city itself was pure gold, like clear glass. The Church is figured as gold, often adorned with golden candlesticks and bowls for the sake of wisdom's cultivation. Glass, however, refers to true faith, because what is seen on the outside is also inside, and there is nothing simulated or opaque in the saints of the Church. It can also refer to that time when thoughts are clearly revealed to each other. [Revelation 21:19] -- The foundations of the city's wall were adorned with every kind of precious stone. The names of various stones indicate the species of virtues, their order, or their diversity, by which the entire heavenly Jerusalem is constructed. For it is difficult for each individual to flourish in all virtues. Indeed, Isaiah, when describing the adornment of the same city, says: Behold, I will set your stones in antimony, and lay your foundations with sapphires (Isaiah 54), and so on, immediately adding, as if explaining: All your children shall be taught by the Lord (Isaiah 54).

[Revelation 21:19] -- The first foundation was jasper. There are many kinds of jasper. One is green in color and appears sprinkled with flowers. Another resembles an emerald but is of a thicker color, which is said to drive away all illusions. Another has a mixed color of snow and the foam of the sea waves, with a slightly reddish hue. Thus, through jasper, the unfading green of faith is indicated, which is imbued with the sacrament of the Lord's passion through the waters of baptism and adorned with all the spiritual graces for those who grow in merit. Whoever has this faith drives away vain fears, as the blessed Apostle Peter advises: Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith (1 Peter 5). And one can say with the bride: My beloved is radiant and ruddy (Song of Songs 5). Hence, it is fitting that the wall is built of this stone here, and in Isaiah, the fortifications of the same city are strengthened and adorned with it.

[Revelation 21:19] -- The second foundation was sapphire. The color and sacrament of this stone were explained by Moses when he described the appearance of God: Under His feet was something like a pavement made of sapphire stone, as clear as the sky itself (Exodus 24). Ezekiel also says that the place where God's throne is has the appearance of sapphire, and the glory of the Lord resides in this color, which bears the image of the heavenly. Thus, one who possesses such qualities can

say with the Apostle: Our citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3). When struck by the rays of the sun, it emits a burning brilliance. For the soul of the saints, always intent on heavenly things, renewed daily by the rays of divine light, becomes more ardent and fervent in seeking the eternal and urging others to do the same. Since it is said to be found in the Red Sea, it signifies that through the Lord's passion and the sacred washing of baptism, the minds of mortals are elevated to hope for heavenly things.

[Revelation 21:19] -- The third foundation was chalcedony. Chalcedony shines with a pale light like that of a lamp and glows brightly outdoors but not indoors. This represents those who, supported by heavenly desire, remain hidden from men and perform their fasting, almsgiving, and prayers in secret. However, when commanded to come forward for public duties, whether in teaching or other services of the saints, they immediately reveal the inner brightness they possess. Because it is said to resist carvings but glow when struck by the rays of the sun or the touch of fingers, attracting straw to itself when it becomes heated, this stone aptly represents those who do not allow their strength to be overcome by anyone but rather draw the weaker to themselves into the light and ardor of their own virtue. Of one such individual, it is said: He was a burning and shining lamp (John 5). Burning with love and shining with speech. They always replenish the light of their virtues with the oil of internal charity, so it does not go out. The fact that chalcedony is found among the Nasamones, a region of Ethiopia, indicates that they shine with a fervent love while their reputation remains obscure, as if tainted by a dark complexion.

[Revelation 21:19] -- The fourth foundation was emerald. The emerald is of such intense greenness that it surpasses all other green things, such as grasses, leaves, and gems, even tinging the surrounding air with its green reflection, which enhances its verdant appearance. It is noteworthy that it thrives in green oil, despite its natural properties. There are many types of emeralds, but the most renowned come from Scythia, followed by those from Bactria, and then Egypt. The emerald signifies souls that are ever flourishing in faith. The more they are tested by the adversities of the world—symbolized by the coldness of Scythia—the more they strive to preserve the imperishable and eternal inheritance kept in heaven by hope, and to spread this hope to others through preaching. They also grow in their contempt for the world through the chalice of the Lord's passion and the internal richness of charity, which is given by the Holy Spirit. The homeland of this gemstone, a very beautiful land but uninhabitable, fittingly corresponds to these souls. Although it abounds in gold and gems, it is guarded by gryphons, ferocious flying creatures, or rather, winged beasts. They are quadrupeds, with bodies like lions and heads and wings like eagles. The Arimaspians, who are noted for having a single eye in the middle of their foreheads, fight with these gryphons to obtain the gems, driven by

a remarkable desire. The Psalmist had entered this land abundant with treasures of virtues when he said:

Behold, I fled far away and remained in the wilderness (Psalm 55), meaning he had withdrawn his soul from the allurements of the world. In this land, he encountered opposing beasts, praying: May lying lips be silenced, which speak arrogantly against the righteous in pride and contempt (Psalm 31). He also reveals that he found desirable treasures here, exclaiming with delightful admiration: How great is your goodness, Lord, which you have stored up for those who fear you (Psalm 31), and continues in this vein until the end of the psalm. Against such creatures striving to snatch away the seed of the divine word from us, the saints, who vigilantly guard it with single-minded heavenly desire, are like the Arimaspians with their singular focus, enabling them to seek out and uncover the gem of faith and other virtues. The higher the virtue, the fewer its cultivators and the greater the persecution it endures from unclean spirits, who, like horrific gryphons, are terrestrial in the degradation of their merits but aerial in the pride of their minds. They strive relentlessly not to possess spiritual riches for themselves but to take them away from men. And because such a lofty height of faith has been made known to the world through the Gospel, it is fitting that the emerald, representing this faith, is placed fourth, corresponding to the four books of the Gospel.

[Revelation 21:20] -- The fifth is sardonyx. This draws whiteness from onyx and redness from sardius, and it gets its name from both, being called sardonyx. However, there are many types of it. One kind has the appearance of red earth. Another appears two-colored, as if blood shines through a human nail. Another consists of three colors: black underneath, white in the middle, and vermilion on top. Men are compared to this: red in the suffering of the body, white in the purity of spirit, but despicable in the humility of mind, proclaiming with the apostle: ”Though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day” (II Cor. IV). And again: ”I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted” (I Cor. IV). Also the Psalmist: ”Although man walks in the image of God” (Ps. XXXVIII), that is, in the virtue of the mind, ”nevertheless he is vainly disturbed” (Ibid.), that is, by the weakness of the flesh. And since this suffering is indeed involved in the weakness of the body: ”For they who kill the body cannot kill the soul” (Luke XII); and humility comes from the frailty of the same body, when it is said: ”Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from the body of this death?” (Rom. VII). Rightly is sardonyx inserted in the fifth foundation, for it is certain that our body subsists through the five senses.

[Revelation 21:20] -- The sixth is sardius. Sardius, which is entirely of a blood-red color, signifies the glory of the martyrs, of which it is said: ”Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints” (Ps. CXV). Rightly placed in the sixth position, since our Lord was incarnate in the sixth age of the world, and was crucified

on the sixth day for the salvation of the whole world. [Revelation 21:20] -- The seventh is chrysolite. Chrysolite shines like gold, having burning sparks. Its appearance represents those who, shining with the understanding of supreme and true wisdom, pour out words of exhortation to their neighbors, or even signs of virtues, like sparks of fire. As Arator says: ”Love stands firm in their minds, ardor burns in their words,” which, since it is carried out by the gift of spiritual grace alone, very fittingly chrysolite is found in the seventh foundation. For the grace of the Holy Spirit is often represented by the number seven, of which it is said above: ”And from the seven spirits who are before his throne” (Rev. I). This meaning also agrees with the fact that a kind of this stone is found in a blue and green color. Therefore, among the Hebrews, it is called tharsis, from its similarity to the color of the sea. Green indeed refers to the integrity of faith, which is called the beginning of wisdom, while water metaphorically pertains to the Holy Spirit, as the Lord attests when he says: ”He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” Now, he said this about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive (John VII).

[Revelation 21:20] -- The eighth is beryl. Beryl, when you consider water struck by the brilliance of the sun, acquires a reddish and beautiful color. But it does not shine unless it is polished into a hexagonal shape. For the reflected brilliance of the angles sharpens its brightness. It signifies men who are indeed keen in intellect, but shine even more with the light of heavenly grace. For that water designates the depth of understanding, Solomon is a witness, who says: ”Deep waters are the words from a man’s mouth” (Proverbs XVIII). But neither human nor divine wisdom is of perfect brilliance unless the completion of works is also joined. For the number six frequently signifies the perfection of action, especially since the work of this world was completed in this number. And that it is said to burn the hand of the holder, it is undoubtedly clear that whoever is joined to a holy man is indeed revived by the fire of his good conversation.

[Revelation 21:20] -- The ninth is topaz. Topaz, as rare in finding as it is precious in value, is said to have two colors: one of the purest gold and the other shining with ethereal clarity. Its rosy fatness and modest purity, close to the chrysoprase in size or color, surpasses the brilliance of all gems when struck by the sunlight, singularly attracting the eager pleasure of the eyes. If you wish to polish it, you darken it; if you leave it to its natural state, it radiates. It is said to be marvelous even to kings, so that among their riches they recognize they possess nothing similar. The most beautiful quality of its nature is most worthily compared to the splendor of contemplative life. For holy kings, whose hearts are in the hand of God, rightly prefer this to all riches of good works and all the gems of virtues, directing the gaze and sharpness of their pure minds to it, embracing the sweetness of heavenly life all the more ardently, as they are more frequently struck by the splendor of heavenly grace. Therefore, holy men have a golden color from the inner flame of

charity, and an ethereal one from the sweetness of heavenly contemplation. Which often grows dim from the turbulence of the present age, like the attrition of a file.

For the mind cannot easily at one and the same moment be distressed by earthly labors, troubles, cares, and pains, and be delighted by the joys of that heavenly life in the state of a tranquil mind; rather, it proclaims with a sigh: ”My eye is troubled with anger, I have grown old among all my enemies” (Ps. VI). The fact that it is said to be found on the island of Topazion, from which it also takes its name, is to be understood in two ways: both because that region, especially that of Egypt, abounds with flocks of monks, and because whoever dwells near the Sun of Righteousness is undoubtedly colored by the splendor of ethereal light. And beautifully, just as in the eighth order the gem of the perfection of active life is placed, so in the ninth the gem of the sweetness of contemplative life is placed. Either because nine orders of angels are found in Holy Scripture, whose life it imitates, or because it is only one, so to speak, step away from the tenfold number of perfect beatitude. To which the prophet, sighing with utmost desire, said: ”Therefore I have loved your commandments above gold and topaz” (Ps. CXVIII), that is, above all the brightness of proven action, and above all the sublimity of contemplative joy that can occur in this world, delighting in the sweetest love of your commandments. The first and greatest of which is:

”You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength” (Matt. XXII), which can be fully perfected only in the summit of that heavenly kingdom.

[Revelation 21:20] -- The tenth is chrysoprase. Chrysoprase is a mixture of green and gold, also drawing a certain purple glow with golden specks interspersed. It originates in India. It signifies those who, by the brightness of perfect charity, earn the greenness of the eternal homeland, and reveal it to others with the purple light of their martyrdom. When they despise the present life and prefer eternal glory, they follow the examples of the Lord appearing in the flesh, showing the brightness of their merits as if in India, that is, near the rising of the sun. And because they expect to shine like the sun in the kingdom of the Father and to reign with their King, with whom they now suffer, they are rightly placed in the tenth position. For through the denarius with which the workers of the Lord’s vineyard are rewarded, the image of the eternal King to be received is symbolized, where what was not possible in the ninth rank is fulfilled through perfect love of God and neighbor in all things by the Decalogue.

[Revelation 21:20] -- The eleventh is hyacinth. Hyacinth is found in Ethiopia, having a blue color; the best is neither rare nor dulled by density, but shines with a balanced temperament, drawing out a sweetly purified bloom. However, it does not shine uniformly but changes with the face of the sky. For it is clear and pleasing when the sky is clear, but fades and withers when it is cloudy. It signifies souls

always dedicated to heavenly contemplation and approaching angelic conversation as much as is possible for mortals. They are commanded to keep their hearts with all vigilance and discretion, lest by the excessive subtlety of the mind they dare to seek higher things and scrutinize things beyond their strength (Eccl. III). For the glory of the Lord is to conceal a word, that is, to philosophize cautiously about God or Christ as man; or, conversely, they might relapse into the weak beginnings of faith and the elementary principles of the oracles of God due to sluggishness. Rather, walking the royal road, they proceed protected by the arms of righteousness on the right and on the left (II Cor. VI), and, adapting their behavior to the occasion, they change their appearance with the sky, saying to their observers: ”For whether we are beside ourselves, it is for God; or whether we are of sound mind, it is for you” (II Cor. V). Like the hyacinth surrounded by clouds, it speaks: ”You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections” (II Cor. VI). And again: ”For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified” (I Cor. II). And as if seen in serene light, it says: ”However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature” (Ibid.).

[Revelation 21:20] -- The twelfth is amethyst. Amethyst is purple with a mixed violet color, and a certain shine like that of a rose, gently emitting small flames. Yet there is something in its purple that is not entirely fiery, but rather like red wine. Therefore, the purple decoration signifies the habit of the heavenly kingdom, while the rosy and violet colors signify the humble modesty of the saints and their precious death. The minds of these saints are principally elevated to the highest things, even when they are seen outwardly suffering in lowly circumstances, always mindful of the Lord’s promise amidst adversities: ”Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke XII). They spread the flame of charity not only towards one another but also towards their persecutors, kneeling and imploring: ”Lord, do not hold this sin against them. And while drinking the cup of suffering, they are intoxicated by the constant memory of that wine which gladdens the heart of man (Ps. CIII), which the Lord promised to drink new with his disciples in the kingdom of the Father (Matt. XXVI). Thus, in jasper, the greenness of faith; in sapphire, the height of heavenly hope; in chalcedony, the flame of internal charity is represented. In emerald, the steadfast confession of the same faith amidst adversities. In sardonyx, the humility of the saints among virtues. In sardius, the revered blood of martyrs is expressed. In chrysolite, the spiritual preaching amid miracles. In beryl, the perfect operation of the preachers.

In topaz, their burning contemplation is shown. Moreover, in chrysoprase, the work and reward of the blessed martyrs. In hyacinth, the heavenly elevation of the doctors and their humble descent to human matters for the sake of the weak. In amethyst, the constant memory of the heavenly kingdom in the minds of the humble is signified. Each precious stone is assigned to its respective foundation. For although all the perfect ones, with whom the city of our God on his holy mountain

is adorned and founded, shine with the light of spiritual grace, to some through the Spirit is given the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, to another the grace of healing, to another kinds of tongues, to another faith in the same Spirit, etc. (I Cor. XII). The designer and builder of which is God, who is the foundation of foundations, and also deigned to become our high priest, so that by the sacrifice of his own blood he might wash and consecrate the walls of the same city, possessing as his own all that the Father has. Hence, the same stones were ordered to be placed on the breastplate of the high priest inscribed with the names of the patriarchs, so that the most beautiful mystery might be revealed, that all the spiritual anointings which each of the saints individually and in part received, were fully and perfectly completed in the mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ.

I seem to have expounded these things about the precious stones perhaps more copiously than the concise mode of interpretation warranted. For it was necessary to carefully explain their natures and origin, then to investigate the sacrament more diligently, and to follow the order and numbers. As far as the depth of the matter itself is concerned, I seem to have said very little, and that briefly and cursorily. And I humbly beseech the reader, if he sees that I have proceeded on the right path, to give thanks to God. But if he finds that things have turned out differently than I wished, let him ask the Lord for pardon for my error. But so much for this, let us also look at the rest.

[Revelation 21:21] -- And the twelve gates are twelve pearls, each one of the gates was of one pearl. All the glory of the head is referred to the body. And just as the true light which enlightens every man (John I) gave to the saints to be the light of the world, so also he himself, being the unique pearl which the wise merchant, having sold all, buys (Matt. XIII), nevertheless compares his own to the radiance of pearls. [Revelation 21:21] -- And the street of the city was pure gold, etc. He constructs the streets with the same metals with which he had said the city was adorned; for there are many also of a broader and lower way of life, surrounded with the highest virtues in the Church, and they shine with purity of mind and the radiance of work. [Revelation 21:22] -- And I saw no temple in it, etc. Although, he says, I described the city as constructed with stones, yet I did not signify the rest of the saints to be in a material building, of which God himself is the only house, light, and rest.

[Revelation 21:23] -- And the city had no need of the sun nor the moon to shine in it. Because the Church is not governed by the light or elements of the world, but is led by Christ, the eternal sun, through the darkness of the world. [Revelation 21:23] -- For the glory of God will illuminate it. For we will enjoy the same light in the homeland by which we are now guided while walking on the way. By this same light, being shaped, we discern between good and evil, by which then, being made

blessed, we will see only what is good. [Revelation 21:24] -- And the nations will walk by its light. It signifies that the same Lamb who is now the way for those on pilgrimage, will then be life for the citizens. [Revelation 21:24] -- And the kings of the earth will bring their glory and honor into it. Here he speaks of spiritual kings, who bring all the riches of their virtues to the Church with praise.

[Revelation 21:25] -- And its gates will not be closed by day, for there will be no night there. He recalls that the perpetual light of the Lamb, or rather the Lamb himself as the eternal light, will be in that city, with the time of night removed. But the fact that the gates will not be closed is a sign of complete security. For there it is no longer said: ”Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation” (Matt. XXVI), but rather: ”Be still and know that I am God” (Ps. XLV). [Revelation 21:26] -- And they will bring the glory and honor of the nations into it. Because it will be gathered from all nations. [Revelation 21:27] -- And nothing unclean will enter it, etc. He describes the Church of that time, when, with the wicked already separated from the midst, only the good will reign with Christ. But even now, every impure and false person is not in the Church, nor does he see the light of the city of God who hates it, because darkness has blinded his eyes.

Chapter 22

[Revelation 22:1] -- And he showed me a river of the water of life, etc. In the river of life flowing in the middle of the city, baptism is no longer celebrated, but the fruit of that sacrament is already revealed. For now, the Church sows in the Spirit, so that then it may reap eternal life from the Spirit (Gal. VI). [Revelation 22:2] -- And on either side of the river was the tree of life. The tree of life is seen around the fountain of life. Whether you interpret it as the glory of the holy cross or the Lord Christ, it is revealed both before baptism in the Old Testament and now, with the mystery of baptism shining, it nourishes the saints with heavenly fruit. For there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Acts IV). The same tree, which John described as flowering in the golden Jerusalem, Moses described in paradise, and Solomon said it is a tree of life to those who embrace it. I believe that this river prefigured the Jordan, beyond which Moses gave the people instructions of salvation, and within which Jesus opened the promised land.

[Revelation 22:2] -- Bearing twelve kinds of fruits, yielding its fruit every month. In the twelve months, it insinuates all the time of life, namely, that where it is said: And your years will not fail (Ps. CI). And again: From month to month and from Sabbath to Sabbath (Isa. LXVI). Where the face of the Lord is present, eternal health, eternal food of life. It can also be simply understood that through the doctrine of the twelve apostles, the cross of Christ bears fruit. [Revelation 22:2] -- And the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. If the fruit is taken as the reward of blessed immortality, rightly the leaves are understood as the perpetual song, which falls for the healing of those already singing in happy lot. For there, the true healing of the nations, complete redemption, and eternal happiness. [Revelation 22:4] -- And they will see his face. The vision of God is kept as the reward of faith for us, which Philip, understanding to be the highest good, said: Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us (John XIV). For it was carefully to be commended that the saints will see and possess in appearance what they believe living by faith.

[Revelation 22:4] -- And his name will be on their foreheads. The confession of the holy name, now preserved among enemies, will then glorify the victors in their

homeland. [Revelation 22:5] -- And there will be no night anymore, etc. There, the frailty of bodies will not require the light of either night or fire for rest, when God will be all in all (I Cor. XV), who is the true light (John I) and the eternal rest of the saints. If you refer these words to allegory, neither the exhortation of prophets nor the preaching of the law, which is now called a lamp in a dark place, will be necessary, since in the contemplation of God, with matters fulfilled, the perfect promise will be held. [Revelation 22:6] -- And he said to me: These words are faithful and true. He did not doubt the faith of John, but commended the true vision to the whole Church, in which he knew there would be even the little ones.

[Revelation 22:6] -- And the Lord God of the spirits of the prophets sent his angel. Do not doubt, he says, about the person giving the warning. For God himself, who usually imbues the spirits of the prophets with a heavenly vision, has sent me to show you these future things. [Revelation 22:6] -- To show his servants what must soon take place. As I said, he showed that he foresaw things generally useful for everyone. [Revelation 22:7] -- Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book, etc. It is understood, blessed am I. Thus, the blessed Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, connects these verses, while refuting some heresies that arose on the occasion of this little book and refuting their error, and transferring the meaning of the same prophecy, purified from all clouds of carnal understanding, to the eternal and heavenly promises. [Revelation 22:8] -- I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel, etc. Either he repeated what he had once done, not daring to attempt it again after being restrained, or, struck by the great amazement of the visions, he confesses he wanted to worship again.

[Revelation 22:9] -- I am a fellow servant, etc. Note how often he names both John the prophet and this book as prophecy; for there is much agreement with the prophets, not only in the senses but also in the words. For how many verses from Isaiah, how many from Zechariah, and other prophets do you find here! [Revelation 22:10] -- Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, etc. As the future judgment approaches, it was necessary for the divine precepts, judgments, and promises to be revealed, by the observance of which the meek may acquire reward, and the disobedient, having neglected them, may incur punishment. [Revelation 22:11] -- He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he who is filthy, let him be filthy still. Here he shows the hidden, yet just, judgments of God, by which wicked men are allowed to progress to worse, that is, to reach the height of iniquity, so that a just judgment may be found. This is similar to: Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad (Matt. XII).

[Revelation 22:13] -- I am the Alpha and the Omega, etc. In Alpha, he designates the divinity of the Word, and in Omega, the assumed humanity. The beginning without end, which is confirmed by frequent repetition in this book, either to often imply the divinity and humanity of the one Christ, or to signify the entire Trinity of

one nature, which says through the prophet: Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me (Isa. XLIII). [Revelation 22:14] -- That they may have the right to the tree of life. He promises a worthy reward to those clothed in white robes, that is, to those of an immaculate life, namely that they may enjoy the vision of the Lord, which is eternal life. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God (Matt. V). [Revelation 22:14] -- And may enter through the gates into the city. Those who keep the Lord's commandments, saying: I am the door; if anyone enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture (John X); undoubtedly enter through the gates into the Church. The gates of righteousness, which the Psalmist asks to be opened to him (Ps. CXVII). But whoever tries to climb up another way, that person is a thief and a robber (John X); concerning whom it is also said here:

[Revelation 22:15] -- But outside are dogs, and sorcerers, and sexually immoral, etc. For all the rage of the wicked now also attempts to intrude upon the Church, but when the master of the house has entered, and, with the saints entering with him into the wedding, has shut the door, then they will begin to stand outside and knock at the door (Luke XIII). [Revelation 22:16] -- I am the root and the offspring of David. Here he expresses the dual nature of his person, that he is both the maker of David according to divinity, and made from the seed of David according to the flesh. This is the question the Lord proposes to the Jews in the Gospel, how Christ is David's son, when David calls him his Lord in the Spirit? (Matt. XXII). [Revelation 22:16] -- The bright and morning star. Who, after the night of his passion, by appearing shows the light of the resurrection and life to the ages by his words and example. Concerning whom it is said to blessed Job: Can you bring forth the morning star in its season? (Job XXXVIII).

[Revelation 22:17] -- And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come." The head and the body of the Church, each individual member, exhort to faith. [Revelation 22:17] -- And let him who hears say, "Come." Whoever has received the inner light of faith or charity in his mind, let him call others to the same. [Revelation 22:17] -- Let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely. Thus free will is addressed by saying, "Whoever desires, let him take," so that grace is immediately proclaimed in what follows: "the water of life freely." Certainly without any preceding merits. For even the desire itself is a gift of God. [Revelation 22:18] -- If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book. He said this concerning falsifiers, not concerning those who simply say what they feel, without mutilating the prophecy in any way.

[Revelation 22:20] -- He who testifies to these things says, "Surely, I am coming quickly." The same Christ testifies, who announces to the Church that he will come. To which, in the manner of the Song of Songs, the Church devoutly responds: [Revelation 22:21] -- Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. She who daily cries out in

prayer: ”Your kingdom come” (Matt. VI). And in the psalm: ”I will sing and give praise in the way of integrity. When will you come to me?” (Ps. CI). [Revelation 22:21] -- The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. Let the Pelagians go and, trusting in their own strength, deprive themselves of the grace of the Lord. But to the Apostle Paul, seeking help and saying: ”Who will deliver me from this body of death?” (Rom. VII), let John, mindful of his own name, respond and say: ”The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. VII). And lest the Donatists boast of the singular gift of God, let them hear that when he commended the grace of God, as if saying a final farewell, he added, ”with you all.” Amen.

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.