

# A Treatise: To Receive the Blessed Body of Our Lord

by

Sir Thomas More

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Page and line numbers correspond to  
*The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*  
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A complete concordance to this work can be found at  
[www.thomasmorestudies.org/publications.html#Concordance](http://www.thomasmorestudies.org/publications.html#Concordance).

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Spelling standardized, punctuation modernized, and glosses added  
by Mary Gottschalk

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## Punctuation

The only punctuation marks found in the original printed version of this text are the period, comma, colon, question mark, slash, or “virgule” (/), and parentheses. Quotation marks, semicolons, dashes, exclamation points, and italics have been made use of with the goal of making the text more readily understood by present-day readers. As for the suspension points ( ... ), these are substitutes for many of More’s slashes. He often used a slash where we would use a comma, a semicolon, a dash, or italics; but he also, quite often, used one to indicate whether a certain phrase was meant to be connected more closely with the one preceding it or with the one following it; to call attention to parallel elements in different phrases; or simply to facilitate serious reflection. He also sometimes used a slash for dramatic purposes—to indicate, perhaps, a coming sly comment, or some possibly surprising conclusion. The evident thoughtfulness with which More punctuated this book leads one to suspect that he anticipated its being often read aloud, and wanted to make sure the reader got the cadence right. He writes as though he were speaking.



5 A treatise, *To Receive the Blessed Body of Our Lord... Sacramentally and Virtually Both*, made in the year of our Lord 1534 by Sir Thomas More, Knight, while he was prisoner in the Tower of London; which *he* entitled thus, as followeth.

## To Receive the Blessed Body of Our Lord... Sacramentally and Virtually Both

10 **T**hey receive the Blessed Body of our Lord both sacramentally and  
virtually... which in due manner, and worthily, receive the  
Blessed Sacrament. When I say “worthily,” I mean not that any man  
is so good, or can be so good, that his goodness could make him  
of very right and reason... worthy to receive into his vile earthly  
15 God himself, with his celestial soul therein, and with the majesty  
of his eternal Godhead; but that he may prepare himself, working  
with the grace of God, to stand in such a state as the incomparable  
goodness of *God*... will, of his liberal *bounty*, vouchsafe to take and  
*accept* for worthy... to receive his own inestimable, precious Body...  
20 into the body of so simple a servant.

Such is the wonderful bounty of Almighty God... that he not only  
doth *vouchsafe*... but also doth *delight*... to be with men, if they prepare  
to receive him with honest and clean souls; whereof he saith,

2, 8, 10 *virtually*: efficaciously    2 *made*: written    10 *which*: who  
13 *very*: actual // *vile*: base    14 *glorious*: glorified    16 *may*: can  
18, 21 *bounty*: generosity    20 *simple*: poor    21 *wonderful*: wondrous  
22 *vouchsafe*: deign    23 *honest*: upright

*Proverbs 8:30–31* “*Delitiae meae esse cum filiis hominum*”—“My delight and pleasures are to be with the sons of men.”

And how can we doubt that God delighteth to be with the “sons of men”... when the Son of God—and very, almighty God, himself—  
5 liked not only to become the Son of Man (that is to wit, the son of Adam, the first man), but over that, in his innocent manhood to suffer his painful Passion, for the redemption and restitution of man?

In remembrance and memorial whereof, he disdaineth not to take  
10 for worthy such men... as willfully make not themselves *unworthy*... to receive the selfsame blessed body into their bodies, to the inestimable wealth of their souls. And yet, of his high, sovereign patience, he refuseth not to enter bodily into the vile bodies of those...  
15 whose filthy minds refuse to receive him graciously into their souls. But then do such folk receive him only sacramentally, and not virtually. That is to wit, they receive his very (blessed) body into theirs, under the sacramental sign, but they receive not the *thing* of the sacrament; that is to wit, the virtue and the effect thereof: that is to say, the grace... by which they should be lively members  
20 incorporated in Christ’s holy Mystical Body; but, instead of that lively grace, they receive their judgment... and their damnation.

And some such, by the outrageous enormity of their deadly sinful purpose... in which they presume to receive that Blessed Body, deserve to have the Devil (through the sufferance of God) personally  
25 so to enter into their breasts... that they never have the grace after to cast him out; but like as a man with bridle and spur rideth and ruleth a horse, and maketh him go which way he list to guide him, so doth the Devil by his inward suggestions... govern and guide the man, and bridle him from all good and

4 *very*: actual    5 *liked*: was pleased    6 *over*: in addition to  
7 *restitution*: restoration    9 *memorial*: commemoration  
10 *willfully make not*: do not deliberately make    12 *wealth*: well-being  
14 *graciously*: in the state of grace; holily    16 *virtually*: efficaciously  
18 *virtue*: efficacy    19 *lively*: living    21 *lively*: life-giving  
22 *outrageous enormity*: monstrous deviation from moral rectitude  
22 *deadly*: mortally    23 *purpose*: intention  
24 *the sufferance of God*: i.e., God’s refraining from intervening  
27 *which*: whichever    28 *list*: chooses // *inward*: interior  
28 *suggestions*: promptings; temptations    29 *good*: i.e., good things

spur him into all evil, till he finally drive him to all mischief. As he did the false traitor Judas, that sinfully received that holy Body; whom the Devil did therefore first carry out about the traitorous death of the selfsame blessed body, of his most loving Master,  
 5 which he so lately so sinfully received—and within a few hours after, unto the desperate destruction of himself.

And therefore have we great cause... with great dread and reverence...

to consider well the state of our own soul... when we shall go to the board of God; and as near as we can (with help of his special  
 10 grace, diligently prayed for before), purge and cleanse our souls by confession, contrition, and penance, with full purpose of forsaking from hence forth the proud desires of the Devil, the greedy covetousness of wretched worldly wealth, and the foul affection of the filthy flesh; and be in full mind to persevere and continue in the  
 15 ways of God and holy cleanness of spirit—lest that if we presume so unreverently... to receive this precious margarite, this pure pearl, the Blessed Body of our Savior himself, contained in the sacramental sign of bread... that, like a sort of swine... rooting in the dirt... and wallowing in the mire, we tread it under the filthy  
 20 feet of our foul affections (while we set more by them than by it, intending to walk and wallow in the puddle of foul, filthy

*Matthew 8:28–34*

sin), therewith the legion of devils may

*Mark 5:1–20, Luke 8:26–39*

get leave of Christ... so to enter into us... as they

25 got leave of him to enter into the hogs of Gennesaret; and as they ran forth with them, and never stinted, till they drowned them in the sea, so run on with us: but if God, of his great mercy, refrain them and give us the grace to repent... else not fail to drown us in the deep sea of everlasting sorrow.

Of this great, outrageous peril... the blessed apostle Saint

1 *mischief*: harm    2 *false*: dastardly    3 *carry*: induce to go    5 *lately*: recently

6 *desperate* . . . *himself*: destroying himself out of despair    7 *dread*: apprehension

9 *board*: dining table    11 *purpose*: intention    13 *covetousness of*: lust for

13 *wealth*: prosperity    13, 20 *affection(s)*: passion(s)    16 *margarite*: nacre

18 *sign*: image; appearance    20 *while*: when

20–21 *set . . . it*: think more of them than of it    23, 24 *leave of*: permission from

25 *Gennesaret*: The town of Gerasa was on the eastern shore of the Lake of Gennesaret.

25 *stinted*: desisted    26 *but if*: unless    27 *refrain*: restrain

29 *outrageous*: beyond-measure

Paul giveth us gracious warning, where he saith (in his First  
*1 Corinthians 11:27* Epistle to the Corinthians), “Quicumque manducaverit  
 panem et biberit calicem Domini indigne, reus  
 erit corporis et sanguinis Domini”—“Whosoever eat the bread, and drink  
 5 the cup, of our Lord unworthily, he shall be guilty of the body and  
 blood of our Lord.”

Here is, good Christian readers, a dreadful and terrible sentence...  
 that *God* here (by the mouth of his holy apostle) giveth against all  
 them that unworthily receive this most blessed Sacrament: that  
 10 their part shall be with Pilate and the Jews—and with that false  
 traitor Judas!—since God reputeth the unworthy receiving and eating  
 of his Blessed Body... for a like-heinous offense against his Majesty...  
 as he accounteth theirs that wrongfully and cruelly killed him.

And therefore—to the intent that we may avoid well this importable  
 15 danger, and in such wise receive the Body and Blood of our  
 Lord... as God may, of his goodness, accept us for worthy... and therefore  
 not only enter with his blessed flesh and blood, sacramentally and  
 bodily, into our bodies, but also with his Holy Spirit graciously and  
 effectually into our souls—Saint Paul, in the place afore-remembered,  
 20 *1 Corinthians 11:28* saith: “Probet seipsum homo, et sic de pane illo  
 edat, et de calice bibat”; “Let a man *prove* himself...  
 and so eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.” But then  
 in what wise shall we “prove” ourselves? We may not go rashly to  
 God’s board, but, by a convenient time taken before, we must  
 25 (as I began to say) consider well, and examine surely, what state our  
 soul standeth in.

In which thing it will be not only right hard, but also peradventure  
*impossible*, by any possible diligence of ourselves... to attain  
 unto the very, full, undoubted surety thereof... without special revelation

1 *gracious*: kindly; benevolent    7 *dreadful*: fearful // *terrible*: terrifying  
 7 *sentence*: judgment    10 *part*: lot // *false*: dastardly    11 *reputeth*: reckons  
 14 *importable*: unbearable; intolerable    15 *wise*: a way  
 18 *graciously*: grace-impartingly    19 *effectually*: effectively  
 19 *place afore-remembered*: above-mentioned passage    23 *wise*: way  
 24 *board*: dining table // *convenient*: befitting    25 *surely*: thoroughly  
 27 *right*: quite // *peradventure*: perhaps    28 *of ourselves*: on our part  
 28–29 *attain unto*: arrive at    29 *very*: real // *undoubted surety*: absolute certainty

*Ecclesiastes 9:1* of God. For as the Scripture saith, “Nemo  
 vivens scit... utrum odio vel amore dignus est”—“No  
 man living knoweth... whether he be worthy the favor or hatred  
 of God.” And in another place: “Etiamsi simplex  
 5 fuero... hoc ipsum ignorabit anima mea”—“If I be  
 simple” (that is to say, “without sin”)... “that shall not my mind surely  
 know.”

But God yet in this point is, of his high goodness, content if we do  
 the diligence that we can... to see that we be not in the purpose of any  
 10 deadly sin. For though it may be that for all our diligence, God,  
 whose eye pierceth much more deeper into the bottom of our heart  
 than our own doth, may see therein some such sin as we cannot  
 see there ourselves (for which Saint Paul saith, “Nullius  
 15 sum”; “In mine own conscience I know nothing; but yet am I not  
 thereby justified”): yet our true diligence done in the search... God, of his  
 high bounty, so far forth accepteth... that he imputeth not any  
 such secret, lurking sin... unto our charge for an unworthy  
 receiving of this blessed sacrament; but rather, the  
 20 strength and virtue thereof... purgeth and cleanseth that sin.

In this proving and examination of ourselves which Saint  
 Paul speaketh of, one very special point must be... to prove and  
 examine ourselves... and see... that we be in the right faith and belief  
 concerning that holy, blessed sacrament itself; that is to wit,  
 25 that we verily believe that it is (as in deed it is), under the form  
 and likeness of bread, the very, blessed body—flesh and blood—  
 of our holy Savior Christ himself; the very selfsame body... and  
 the very selfsame blood... that died and was shed upon the  
 cross for our sins, and the third day gloriously did arise again

1 *of*: from    3 *worthy*: deserving of    6 *surely*: with certainty  
 9 *in the purpose*: i.e., on purpose in the guilt    10 *deadly*: mortal  
 15 *conscience*: consciousness / conscience    17 *high bounty*: great generosity  
 18 *secret*: hidden    20 *virtue*: power    25 *deed*: fact    26 *very*: real

to life, and with the souls of holy saints fetched out of hell, ascended  
and styed up wonderfully into heaven, and there sitteth on the  
right hand of the Father, and shall visibly descend in great glory to  
judge the quick and the dead... and reward all men after their  
works.

5 We must, I say, see that we firmly believe... that this blessed  
sacrament is not a bare *sign*, or a *figure*, or a *token* of that holy  
body of Christ; but that it is, in perpetual remembrance of his  
bitter Passion... that he suffered for *us*, the selfsame precious body of  
10 Christ that suffered it—by his own almighty power and unspeakable  
goodness... consecrated and given unto us.

And this point of *belief*... is, in the receiving of this blessed sacrament,  
of such necessity and such weight, with them that have  
years and discretion, that without it... they receive it plainly to their  
15 damnation. And that point believed very full and fastly... must  
needs be a great occasion to move any man in all *other* points to  
receive it well. For note well the words of Saint Paul therein:

1 *Corinthians 11:27–29* “Qui manducat de hoc pane, et bibit de calice,  
indigne... iudicium sibi manducat et bibit, non  
20 diiudicans corpus Domini”—“He that eateth of this bread, and drinketh  
of this cup, unworthily... eateth and drinketh judgment upon  
himself, in that he discerneth not the body of our Lord.”

Lo, here this blessed apostle well declareth... that he which in  
*any* wise unworthily receiveth this most blessed sacrament...  
25 receiveth it unto his own damnation, in that he well declareth by  
his evil demeanor toward it... in his unworthy receiving of it...  
that he discerneth it not, nor judgeth it, nor taketh it, for the very  
body of our Lord—as in deed it is.

And verily it is hard but that this point deeply rooted in our  
30 breast... should set all our heart in a fervor of devotion... toward  
the worthy receiving of that blessed Body.

But surely there can be no doubt, on the other side, but that if

1 *hell*: the Limbo of the Fathers    2 *styed*: mounted // *wonderfully*: wondrously  
2 *on*: at    4 *quick*: living // *reward*: requite; reward / punish // *after*: according to  
7 *bare*: mere // *figure*: representation // *token*: symbol    12 *point*: article / aspect  
12 *belief*: faith / belief  
13–14 *have* . . . *discretion*: i.e., have reached the age of reason and have that capacity  
15 *point*: article (of faith) // *fastly*: firmly    16 *points*: aspects  
17 *therein*: i.e., in that passage    23, 25 *well declareth*: makes it very clear  
23 *which*: who    24 *wise*: way    26 *evil*: bad // *demeanor*: behavior; comportment  
28 *deed*: fact    29 *hard but*: hard to see how it could fail to be the case / callous of us but  
32 *surely*: assuredly // *side*: i.e., hand



any man believe that it *is* Christ's very body, and yet is not  
inflamed to receive him devoutly thereby: that man were likely  
to receive this blessed sacrament *very* coldly, and far from *all*  
devotion, if he believed that it were *not* his body, but only a bare  
5 token of him instead of his body.

But, now, having the full faith of this point fastly grounded in  
our heart—that the thing which we receive *is* the very Blessed Body of  
Christ—I trust there shall not greatly need any great information  
farther to teach us, or any great exhortation farther to stir and  
10 excite us, with all humble manner and reverent behavior to receive  
him.

For if we will but consider, if there were a great worldly prince...  
which, for special favor that he bore us, would come visit us in  
our own house, what a business we would then make, and what a  
15 work it would be for us, to see that our house were trimmed up in  
every point... to the best of our possible power, and everything so  
provided and ordered that he should by his honorable receiving...  
perceive what affection we bear him, and in what high estimation  
we have him: we should soon, by the comparing of that worldly  
20 prince and this heavenly Prince together (between which twain is  
far less comparison... than is between a man and a mouse), inform  
and teach ourselves with how lowly mind, how tender-loving  
heart, how reverent, humble manner, we should endeavor ourselves to  
receive this glorious heavenly King—the King of all kings, Almighty  
25 God himself—that so lovingly doth vouchsafe to enter... not only  
into our *house* (to which the nobleman Centurio... acknowledged himself  
unworthy), but his precious Body into our vile, wretched  
*carcass*, and his holy Spirit into our poor, simple soul.

What diligence can here suffice us, what solicitude can we think  
30 here enough, against the coming of this almighty King...  
coming for so special gracious favor? Not to put us to

1, 7 *very*: actual    2 *were*: would be    4 *bare*: mere    5 *token*: symbol  
6 *fastly*: firmly    8 *greatly need*: i.e., be greatly needed  
8, 21 *inform(ation)*: instruct(ion)    12, 19 *worldly*: earthly    13 *which*: who  
14 *a business*: an exertion of effort    15 *trimmed up*: put in proper order; fixed up  
17 *ordered*: arranged // *honorable*: honor-showing; honorific // *receiving*: reception  
18 *estimation*: regard    19 *have*: hold    20 *twain*: two    21 *comparison*: similarity  
23 *endeavor ourselves*: exert ourselves; make an effort    26–27: See Matthew 8:8.  
27 *vile*: base    28 *simple*: pitiful    30 *against*: in preparation for

cost, not to spend of ours, but to enrich us of *his*—and that after so manifold deadly displeasures done him so unkindly by us... against so many of his incomparable benefits before done unto us! How would we now labor, and foresee, that the house of our soul  
 5 (which *God* were coming to rest in!) should neither have any poisoned spider, or cobweb, of deadly sin hanging in the roof... nor so much as a straw or a feather of any light lewd thought... that we might spy in the floor, but we would sweep it away!

10 But forasmuch, good Christian readers, as we neither can attain this great point of faith... nor any other virtue... but by the special grace of God, of whose high goodness every good thing  
*James 1:17* cometh—for as Saint James saith, “Omne datum optimum, et omne donum perfectum, de sursum  
 15 est, descendens a Patre luminum” (“Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, descending from the Father of lights”)—let us therefore pray for his gracious help in the attaining of this faith, and for his help in the cleansing of our soul, against his coming, that he may make us worthy to receive him  
 20 worthily. And ever let us of our own part... fear our *unworthiness*, and on *his* part trust boldly upon his goodness... if we forslow not to work with him for our own part. For if we willingly, upon the trust and comfort of his goodness, leave our own endeavor undone, then is our hope no hope... but a very  
 25 foul presumption.

Then, when we come unto his holy board, into the presence of his Blessed Body, let us consider his high, glorious *majesty*... which his high *goodness* there hideth from us, and the proper form

1 *cost*: expense // *of ours*: i.e., any of our wherewithal // *of his*: out of his; with his  
 2, 6 *deadly*: mortal 2 *displeasures*: offenses // *unkindly*: heartlessly; cold-bloodedly  
 3 *against*: in return for 4 *foresee*: see to it ahead of time 5 *were*: would be  
 5 *rest*: stay for a while 6 *poisoned*: venomous 7 *light*: slight // *lewd*: immoral  
 8 *in*: on 11 *point*: stage of development 18 *against*: in preparation for  
 20 *of*: on; with regard to 22 *forslow*: neglect 23 *willingly*: deliberately  
 24 *endeavor undone*: effort not made 26 *board*: dining table  
 198/28—199/1 *which . . . covereth*: i.e., which in his high goodness he there hides from us, and covers the natural form of his holy flesh

of his holy flesh covereth under the form of bread—both to keep us from abashment... such as we could not, peradventure, abide... if we (such as we yet be) should see and receive him in his own form such as he is... and also for the increase of the merit of our faith, in the obedient belief of that thing, at his commandment, whereof our eyes and our reason seem to show us the contrary.

And yet, forasmuch as although we believe it... yet is there in many of us that belief very faint, and far from the point of such vigor and strength... as would God it had: let us

say unto him with the father that had the dumb son,

*Mark 9:24* “Credo, Domine; adiuva incredulitatem meum!” (“I believe, Lord; but help thou my lack of belief!”);  
*Luke 17:5* and with his blessed apostles, “Domine, adauge nobis fidem!” (“Lord, increase faith in us!”).

Let us also with the poor publican... in knowledge of our own unworthiness... say with all meekness of heart, “Deus, propitius

*Luke 18:13* esto mihi peccatori!” (“Lord God, be merciful to me, sinner that I am!”). And with the centurion,  
*Matthew 8:8* “Domine, non sum dignus ut intres sub tectum

meum” (“Lord, I am not worthy... that thou shouldst come into my house”).

And yet, with all this remembrance of our own unworthiness, and therefore the great reverence, fear, and dread for our own part, let us not forget, on the other side, to consider his inestimable goodness... which disdaineth not, for all our unworthiness, to come unto us, and to be received of us—

But, likewise as at the sight or receiving of this excellent memorial of his death (for in the remembrance thereof... doth he thus consecrate and give his own, blessed flesh and blood unto us) we must

2 *abashment*: embarrassment / discomfiture // *peradventure*: perhaps 6 *show*: tell  
 9 *would God*: I wish to God 10 *dumb*: mute 12 *help*: remedy  
 15 *knowledge*: acknowledgment 23 *dread*: apprehension 24 *side*: i.e., hand  
 24–25 *his* . . . *which*: i.e., the inestimable goodness of him... who 26 *of*: by

with tender compassion... remember and call to mind the bitter  
*pains* of his most painful Passion, and yet, therewith, rejoice  
 and be glad in the consideration of his incomparable *kindness*  
 which, in his so suffering for *us*, to our inestimable benefit he  
 5 showed and declared toward us: so must we be both sore afeard of  
 our own unworthiness... and yet, therewith, be right glad and  
 in great hope at the consideration of his unmeasurable goodness.

*Luke 1:26–42*

Saint Elizabeth, at the visitation and salutation  
 of our Blessed Lady, having by revelation

10 the sure inward knowledge that our Lady was conceived with  
 our Lord—albeit that she was herself such... as else, for the diversity  
 between their ages, she well might and would have  
 thought it but convenient and meetly that her young cousin should  
 come visit her—yet, now, because she was mother to our Lord...  
 15 she was sore amarveled of her visitation, and thought herself  
 far unworthy, thereto; and therefore said unto her,

*Luke 1:43*

“Unde hoc, ut veniat mater Domini mei ad me?”

(“Whereof is this, that the mother of our Lord

should come to me?”). But yet, for all the abashment of her own  
 20 unworthiness, she conceived throughly such a glad, blessed comfort...  
 that her holy child, Saint John the Baptist, hopped in her

*Luke 1:41, 44*

belly for joy; whereof she said, “Ut

facta est salutationis tuae in auribus meis,

25 exsultavit gaudio infans in utero meo”—“As soon as the voice of thy salutation  
 was in mine ears, the infant in my womb leapt for joy.”

Now, like as Saint Elizabeth... by the Spirit of God had those holy  
 affections (both of reverent considering her own unworthiness in  
 the visitation of the mother of God... and yet, for all that, so great inward

1 *compassion*: sympathy / empathy    5 *declared*: manifested

5 *sore*: very much; seriously    8, 24 *salutation*: greeting    10, 28 *inward*: inner

11 *for*: by reason of // *diversity*: difference

13 *but convenient and meetly*: only appropriate and befitting

15 *sore amarveled of*: extremely surprised by    16 *thereto*: for that matter

18 *whereof is*: what accounts for    19 *abashment of*: embarrassment at

20 *throughly*: through her entire being // *comfort*: pleasure

21 *hopped*: jumped    27 *affections*: sentiments

gladness therewith), let us at this great, high visitation... in which not the *mother* of God, as came to Saint Elizabeth, but one incomparably more excelling the mother of God... than the mother of God passed Saint Elizabeth... doth so vouchsafe to come and visit each of us with his

5 most blessed presence... that he cometh not into our *house*, but into our *self*—let us, I say, call for the help of the same Holy Spirit... that then inspired her... and pray him at this high and holy visitation so to inspire us... that we may both be abashed with the reverent dread of our own unworthiness and yet, therewith, conceive a joyful consolation and comfort

10 in the consideration of God’s inestimable goodness. And that each of us, like as we may well say with great, reverent dread and admiration, “Unde hoc, ut veniat *Dominus meus* ad me?”—“Whereof is this, that *my Lord* should come unto me?” (“and not only *unto* me, but also *into* me”)—so we may with glad heart truly say at the sight of his Blessed Presence,

15 “Exsultavit gaudio infans in utero meo”: “The child in my belly”... that is to wit, the soul in my body (that should be then such a child in innocence... as was that innocent infant Saint John)... “leapeth, good Lord, for joy.”

Now, when we have received our Lord, and have him in our body,

20 let us not then let him alone... and get us forth about other things, and look no more unto him (for little good could he... that so would serve any guest); but let *all* our *busyness* be about *him*. Let us by devout prayer talk to him, by devout meditation talk with him.

*Psalm 85:9* Let us say with the prophet, “Audiam quid loquatur in me Dominus”—“I will hear what our Lord will

25 speak within me.”

For surely, if we set aside all other things... and attend unto him, he will not fail with good inspirations to speak such things to us within us... as shall serve to the great spiritual comfort and profit of

30 our soul. And therefore let us with Martha provide... that all our outward busyness may be pertaining to him: in making cheer to him, and to his company for his sake; that is to wit, to poor folk—of which he

3 *passed*: surpassed    7 *pray*: entreat; beg    8 *abashed*: discomfited; taken aback  
 8 *dread of*: apprehension about    11 *dread*: awe    12 *whereof is*: what accounts for  
 14 *truly*: truthfully    16 *that*: which // *a child in*: a child with respect to  
 20 *let him*: leave him    21 *could he*: i.e., would he be capable of doing    22 *serve*: treat  
 27 *surely*: assuredly    30–32: See Luke 10:38–42.    30 *outward*: external  
 31 *making cheer*: showing hospitality; giving a good reception    32 *which*: whom

taketh every one... not only for his disciple, but also as for *himself*.

*Matthew 25:40* For himself saith, “Quamdiu fecistis uni de his  
fratribus meis minimis, mihi fecistis”—“That that you

5 have done to one of the least of these my brethren, you have  
done it to myself.” And let us with Mary also sit in devout  
meditation... and hearken well what our Savior, being now our guest,  
will inwardly say unto us. Now have we a special time of prayer:  
while he that hath made us, he that hath bought us, he whom we  
10 have offended, he that shall judge us, he that shall either damn us  
or save us... is, of his great goodness, become our guest, and is personally  
present within us... and that for none other purpose but to be  
sued unto for *pardon*—and so, thereby, to *save* us. Let us not lose this  
time, therefore; suffer not this occasion to slip... which we can little  
15 tell whether ever we shall get it again... or never. Let us endeavor ourselves  
to keep him still, and let us say with his two disciples that were  
*Luke 24:29* going to the castle of Emmaus, “Mane nobiscum,  
Domine” (“Tarry with us, good Lord”)—and then shall we  
be sure that he will not go from us... but if we unkindly put him from  
us. Let us not play like the people of Gennesaret... which prayed him  
20 to depart out of their quarters... because they lost their hogs by  
him... when instead of the hogs he saved the man... out of whom he  
cast the legion of devils that after destroyed the hogs. Let not us  
likewise rather put God from us by unlawful love of worldly  
winning, or foul, filthy lust, rather than for the profit of our soul  
25 to forbear it. For sure may we be... that when we wax such, God will  
*not* tarry with us, but *we put* him, unkindly, from us. Nor let us not

2 *himself*: he himself    3 *that that*: that which    5–7: See Luke 10:39, 42  
6 *hearken well*: listen well to    7 *inwardly*: interiorly    8 *bought*: ransomed; redeemed  
12 *sued*: appealed    12–13 *lose this time*: waste this time / lose this opportunity  
13 *suffer*: allow    14 *endeavor ourselves*: make an effort    15 *still*: continually  
16 *castle*: village    17, 26 *tarry*: stay    18, 23, 26 *from*: away from    18 *but if*: unless  
18, 26 *unkindly*: ungratefully / heartlessly / villainously    18, 23, 26 *put*: drive  
19–22: See Mark 5:1–20. (Gerasa was on the eastern shore of the Lake of Gennesaret.)  
19 *which*: who // *prayed*: begged    23 *unlawful*: illicit    24 *winning*: gain  
25 *wax*: become

do as did the people of Jerusalem... which on  
 Palm Sunday received Christ royally and full  
 devoutly, with procession—and on the Friday  
 after, put him to a shameful passion. On the Sunday cried, “Benedictus  
 5 qui venit in nomine Domini!” (“Blessed be he that cometh in the name of  
 our Lord!”)—and on the Friday cried out, “Non hunc, sed Barrabam!” (“We will  
 not have *him*, but *Barabbas*!”) On the Sunday cried, “Hosanna in excelsis!”—  
 on the Friday, “Tolle! Tolle! Crucifige eum!” Surely, if  
 10 we receive him never so well, nor never so devoutly,  
 at Easter: yet whensoever we fall after to such wretched,  
 sinful living... as casteth our Lord in such wise out of our *souls*...  
 as his *grace* tarrieth not with us—we show ourselves to have received  
 him in such manner as those Jews did. For we do as much as in us  
 15 is... to crucify Christ again. “Iterum,” saith Saint  
 Paul, “crucifigentes Filium Dei.”  
 Let us, good Christian readers, receive him in such wise... as did the  
 good publican Zacchaeus, which when he  
 longed to see Christ... and, because he was but  
 20 low of stature, did climb up into a tree—our Lord, seeing his  
 devotion, called unto him and said, “Zacchaeus, come off and come  
 down—for this day must I dwell with thee.” And he made haste and  
 came down... and very gladly received him into his house. But  
 not only received him with a joy of a light and soon-sliding affection;  
 25 but that it might well appear that he received him with a sure,  
 earnest, virtuous mind: he proved it by his virtuous *works*. For  
 he forthwith was content to make recompense to all men that he  
 had wronged (and that in a large manner: for every penny a groat);  
 and yet offered to give out, also forthwith, the one half of all his  
 30 substance unto the poor men—and that forthwith also; by and  
 by, without any longer delay. And therefore he said not, “Thou

1, 17 *which*: who    2 *full*: very  
 8 “*Tolle . . . eum*”: “Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!”  
 8 *surely*: assuredly    9 *never so*: no matter how    11, 16 *wise*: a way  
 12 *tarrieth*: remains    13–14 *in us is*: is in our power; we possibly can  
 14–15 *Iterum . . . Dei*: Again . . . they are crucifying the Son of God.  
 20 *devotion*: piety // *off*: on    23 *not only received*: did not just receive  
 23 *light*: capricious // *soon-sliding*: soon-passing  
 23 *affection*: inclination    24 *well appear*: be very evident  
 24 *sure*: firmly settled; fixed    25 *mind*: disposition  
 26, 29 *forthwith*: right away    26 *content*: willing    27 *groat*: fourpence  
 28 *and . . . the*: i.e., and even offered, also right away, to give out half  
 29 *substance*: wealth    29–30 *by and by*: immediately

*Luke 19:8* shalt *hear* that I *shall* give it”; but he said, “*Ecce*,  
 dimidium bonorum meorum, Domine, *do* pauperibus”—“Lo, *look*,  
 good Lord: the one half of my goods I *do give* unto poor men.”

5 With such alacrity, with such quickness of spirit, with such  
 gladness, and such spiritual rejoicing, as this man received our  
 Lord into his house... our Lord give us the grace to receive his Blessed  
 Body and Blood, his holy soul, and his Almighty Godhead... both into  
 our bodies and into our souls, that the fruit of our good works  
 may bear witness unto our conscience... that we receive him *worthily*...  
 10 and in such a full faith, and such a stable purpose of good  
 living, as we be bounden to do. And then shall God give  
 a gracious sentence and say upon our soul... as he said upon

*Luke 19:9* Zacchaeus: “Hodie salus facta est huic domui”—“This  
 day is health and salvation come unto this house.”  
 15 Which that holy, blessed Person, of Christ, which we verily in  
 the Blessed Sacrament receive, through the merit of his bitter  
 Passion (whereof he hath ordained his own blessed body, in that  
 blessed sacrament, to be the memorial) vouchsafe, good Christian  
 readers, to grant unto us all!

10 *purpose*: intention; resolve    11 *bounden*: duty-bound    12 *sentence*: judgment  
 12 *upon*: about // *as*: i.e., what