

“This translation of the *Vita Christi* is a colossal work making accessible to a new audience a monument of medieval spirituality that influenced such great saints as St. Teresa of Avila and St. Ignatius of Loyola. Ludolph of Saxony drew on patristic and medieval authors to weave a rich spiritual commentary breaking open the Word of God for his contemporaries. Believers will find wisdom. Students of history, theology, and spirituality will gain access to an influential worldview. A magnificent endeavor!”

— André Brouillette, SJ
Assistant Professor of Systematic and Spiritual Theology
Director, Licentiate in Sacred Theology Program (STL)
Boston College School of Theology and Ministry

“The manuscript tradition of *The Life of Christ (Vita Christi)* is extremely complex, and Walsh, while basing his translation on the edition, has gone beyond in providing critical apparatus that will be of significant use to scholars, as well as making the text available for students and all interested in the theology, spirituality, and religious life of the later Middle Ages. His introduction expertly places Ludolph’s work in the textual tradition and is itself a contribution to scholarship. Simply put, this is an amazing achievement!”

— Eric Leland Saak
Professor of History
Indiana University

“Modern readers will find Ludolph’s work fanciful. This is much here for meditation, and each section concludes with a prayer. *The Life of Christ* is not for the gullible, but it can be recommended for *lectio* and spiritual reading.”

— Sr. Sarah Schwartzberg, OSB, *Spirit & Life*

“This translation—the first into English—of *The Life of Jesus Christ* by Ludolph of Saxony will be welcomed both by scholars in various fields and by practicing Christians. It is at the same time an encyclopedia of biblical, patristic, and medieval learning and a compendium of late medieval spirituality, stressing the importance of meditation in the life of individual believers. It draws on an astonishing number of sources and sheds light on many aspects of the doctrinal and institutional history of the Church down to the fourteenth century.”

— Giles Constable

“This translation will hopefully stimulate further work on the late medieval manuscript tradition of the text, its circulation, use, and readership. It will prove an invaluable tool for scholars researching the late medieval engagement with the humanity of Christ, while simultaneously catering for general readers and religious practitioners interested in learning more about a traditional and influential imaginative meditational practice.”

— Christiania Whitehead
Professor of Middle English Literature
University of Warwick

CISTERCIAN STUDIES SERIES: TWO HUNDRED EIGHTY-THREE

The Life of Jesus Christ

PART TWO

Volume 1, Chapters 1–57

Ludolph of Saxony, Carthusian

Translated by
Milton T. Walsh



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Abbreviations for Works Cited

Unless further identification is needed, *Sermo* or *Hom* refers to a sermon or homily by an author, followed by its number. When the citation is from a biblical commentary, *Com* is followed by the biblical reference, e.g., *Com Matt 28:4*. Bracketed references in this list refer to modern critical editions of the works.

Citations given in italics in the text are from sources Ludolph uses without attribution. Biblical texts that may come from a Latin Diatesaron are given in bold print. The bold letter **R 1**, etc. refers to section headings from L. M. Rigollot, *Vita Iesu Christi* (Paris: Palmé, 1865, 1870, 1878).

Allegoriae	Richard of Saint Victor (?), <i>Allegoriae in vetus et novum testamentum (Liber exceptionum)</i>
Amoris	<i>Stimulus amoris maior</i> ; this is a fourteenth-century expansion of the <i>Stimulus amoris minor</i> written in the late thirteenth century by James of Milan; the material cited by Ludolph is not in the earlier version; in A. C. Peltier, <i>S. Bonaventurae, Opera Omnia</i> , vol. 12 (Paris: Vives, 1868)
Aquaeductu	Bernard, <i>Sermo in Nativitate Beatae Mariae, "De aquaeductu"</i> [SB 5]
Brev in Ps	PsJerome, <i>Breviarium in Psalmos</i>
Bruno	Bruno of Segni/Asti (biblical commentaries, homilies)

- Burchard Burchard of Mount Sion, *Descriptio terrae sanctae; Burchard of Mount Sion*, trans. Aubrey Stewart (London: Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society, 1896)
- CA Thomas Aquinas, *Catena aurea*
- Caillau Aug Caillau, *Augustini operum* (Paris, 1836)
- Caillau Chrys Caillau, *Chrysostomi opera omnia* (Paris: Mellier, 1842)
- Chromatius Chromatius of Aquileia, *Tractatus in evangelium S. Matthaei* [CL 9A]
- CL Corpus Christianorum Latinorum
- CM Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediævalis
- Cognitione PsBernard, *Meditationes piissimae de cognitione humanis conditione*
- Compunctione Chrysostom, *De compunctione cordis*
- Conf Augustine, *Confessiones* [CL 27]
- Cons Boethius, *De consolatione philosophiae* [CL 94]
- Cratandri *Tomus Operum Ioannis Chrysostomi* (Basel: Andrew Cratandri, 1523)
- Creat PsIsidore (7th c. Irish), *De ordine creaturarum* (Monografías de la Universidad de Santiago de Compostela #10, 1972)
- CS Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
- CSP Corpus Scriptorum Latinorum Paravianum
- Cumm Cummius, *Commentarius in Evangelium secundum Marcum*
- David David of Augsburg, *De exterioris et interioris hominis compositione* (Quaracchi, 1899)
- De civ Dei Augustine, *De civitate Dei* [CL 47–48]
- De cons Augustine, *De consensu evangelistarum* [CS 43]

De doc	Augustine, <i>De doctrina Christiana</i> [CL 32]
De exc	Eadmer, <i>De excellentia Virginis Mariae</i>
De inst	Aelred, <i>De institutione inclusarum</i> [CM 1]
De iudicio	<i>De iudicio et compunctione</i> ; S. Ephraem Syri, <i>Opera Omnia</i> (Venice: Gerardi, 1755)
De laud	Arnold of Bonneval, <i>De laudibus Beatae Virginis Mariae</i>
De moribus	Bernard, <i>De moribus et officio Episcoporum</i> (Ep 42) [SB 7]
De Trin	Augustine, <i>De Trinitate</i> [CL 50–50A]
De Vitry	Jacques de Vitry, <i>Historia Hierosolymitana</i> ; <i>The History of Jerusalem</i> , trans. Aubrey Stewart (London: Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society, 1896)
Dial	Gregory the Great, <i>Dialogues</i>
Dialogus	PsAnselm, <i>Dialogus Beatae Mariae et Anselmi de passione Domini</i>
Drogo	Drogo of Ostia, <i>Sermo de sacramento dominicae passionis</i>
Durandus	William Durandus, <i>Rationale divinatorum officiorum</i> [CM 140]
Elmer	Elmer of Canterbury, <i>De humanae conditionis</i>
Eluc	Honorius of Autun, <i>Elucidarium sive dialogus de Summa totius Christianae theologiae</i>
En Mark, Luke, John	Theophylact, <i>In quatuor Evangelia enarrationes</i>
En Ps	Augustine, <i>Enarrationes in Psalmos</i> [CL 38–40]
Ep	Epistle
Ep John	Augustine, <i>In Ioannis Epistulam ad Parthos tractatus</i>

Erasmus	Erasmus, <i>Origenis adamantii operum pars secunda</i> (Basel, 1545)
Étaix	<i>Opus imperfectum</i> , chapters not found in Migne: Raymond Étaix, <i>Revue bénédictine</i> 84 (1974)
Ety	Isidore, <i>Etymologiae</i>
Exp Acta	Theophylact, <i>Expositio in Acta Apostolorum</i>
Exp Luke	Ambrose, <i>Expositio Evangelii secundam Lucam</i> [CL 14]
Exp Or Dom	Jordan of Quedlinburg, <i>Expositio Orationis Dominice</i> [Eric Leland Saak, <i>Catechesis in the Later Middle Ages I: The Exposition of the Lord's Prayer of Jordan of Quedlinburg</i> , OESA (d. 1380) (Leiden: Brill, 2014)]
40 hom	Gregory the Great, <i>XL homiliarium in Evangelia</i> [CL 41]
Fratres	PsAugustine (early 14 th c), <i>Ad fratres in eremo</i>
Fronton	Chrysostom, <i>Opera Omnia</i> (Paris: Fronton du Duc, 1687)
Gaufrid	Gaufrid of Clairvaux, <i>Declamationes de colloquio Simonis cum Iesu</i>
Gennadius	Gennadius of Marseille, <i>Liber de Ecclesiasticis Dogmatibus</i>
Gorran	Nicholas of Gorran, <i>Enarratio in Quatuor Evangelia et Epistolas B. Pauli</i> (Lyon: Annisonios, 1692)
Grimlaicus	Grimlaicus, <i>Regula solitariorum</i>
Guigo	Guigo de Ponte, <i>De contemplatione</i>
Habitat	Bernard, <i>In Psalmum 90, "Qui habitat," Sermones 17</i> [SB 4]
Haymo	Haymo of Auxerre, <i>Homiliarum sive concionum ad plebem in Evangelia de tempore et sanctis</i> (Migne wrongly attributes to Haymo of Halberstadt)

Henry	Henry of Friemar, <i>Explanatio passionis dominicae</i> ; https://digital.library.villanova.edu/Item/vudl:234049
Hiez	Gregory the Great, <i>Homiliae in Hiezechihalem prophetam</i> [CL 142]
Hist AA	Peter Comestor, <i>Historia libri Actuum Apostolorum</i>
Hist ev	Peter Comestor, <i>Historia evangelica</i>
Hist sch	Peter Comestor, <i>Historia scholastica</i>
Hom Acta	Chrysostom, <i>Homiliae in Acta Apostolorum</i>
Hom ev	Bede, <i>Homiliarium evangelii</i> [CL 122]
Hom John	Chrysostom, <i>Homiliae in Ioannem</i>
Hom Matt	Chrysostom, <i>Homiliae in Mattheum</i>
Homiliarius	Paul the Deacon, <i>Homiliarius doctorum</i>
Hugh	Hugh of Ripelin, <i>Compendium theologiae veritatis</i> ; in A. C. Peltier, <i>S. Bonaventurae, Opera Omnia</i> , vol. 8 (Paris: Vives, 1866). The work is also attributed to Albert the Great and appears in vol. 34 of his col- lected works edited by Borgnet (Paris: Vives, 1895)
Int nom	Jerome, <i>Liber interpretationis Hebraicorum nominum</i> [CL 72]
Jordan	Jordan of Quedlinburg, <i>Opus Postillarum et sermones de tempore</i> (Strassburg: Hussner, 1483); sermons 189– 254 are also known as <i>Meditationes de Passione Christi</i>
Laon	Anselm of Laon (?), <i>Enarrationes in Evangelium Matthaei</i>
Laudibus	Bernard, <i>De laudibus virginis matris super verbi Evangelii: "Missus est angelus Gabriel"</i> ; <i>homiliae quatuor</i> [SB 4]
Legenda	Jacobus de Voragine, <i>Legenda Aurea</i>
Lib de pas	PsBernard, <i>Liber de passione Christi</i>

Lib specialis	Mechtild of Hackborn, <i>Liber specialis gratiae</i>
Lombard	Peter Lombard, <i>Liber sententiarum</i>
Lucilium	Seneca, <i>Ad Lucilium epistolae morales</i>
LV	Bonaventure, <i>Lignum Vitae</i>
Lyra	Nicholas of Lyra, <i>Postillae perpetuae in universam S. Scripturam; Biblia Sacra, cum Glossa Ordinariam, primum quidem a Strabo Fuldensi Monacho Benedictino Collecta, Tomus Quintus</i> (Antwerp: Keerbergium, 1517)
Mai	Mai, <i>Novae Patrum Bibliothecae</i> (Rome: Sacri Consilii, 1852)
Manipulus	Thomas of Ireland, <i>Manipulus florum</i>
Manuale	John of Fécamp, <i>Manuale</i>
Martin Braga	Martin of Braga, <i>Formula vitae honestae</i>
Massa	Michael de Massa, <i>Vita Christi</i> (Bayerische Staats Bibliothek: http://bildsuche.digitale-sammlungen.de/index.html?c=viewer&lv=1&bandnummer=bsb00082134&pimage=00082134&suchbegriff=&l=en)
Med	Anselm and others, <i>Meditationes</i> [Schmitt, <i>S. Anselmi opera</i> , vol. 3 (Edinburgh: Nelson, 1946)]
Med red	Anselm, <i>Meditatio redemptionis humanae</i> [Schmitt, <i>S. Anselmi opera</i> , vol. 3 (Edinburgh: Nelson, 1946)]
mor	moral: the Postilla of Nicholas of Lyra often presents moral interpretations in a separate category
Mor	Gregory the Great, <i>Moralium libri sive expositione in librum Iob</i> [CL 143–43b]
Moribus	PsSeneca, <i>De Moribus</i>
MVC	John de Caulibus, <i>Meditationes Vitae Christi</i> [CM 153]
Ogerius	Ogerius of Locedio, <i>Tractatus in Laudibus sanctae Dei genetricis</i> ; De Vries: <i>De Mariaklachten</i> (Zwolle: Tjeenk Willink, 1964)

Opus Dan	Jordan of Quedlinburg, <i>Sermones de Sanctis in Opus sermonum patris Iordani Augustiniani</i> (Paris: Hichman, 1521)
Opus imperf	PsChrysostom, <i>Opus imperfectum in Matthaem</i>
Orat	Gregory Nazianzen, <i>Orationes</i>
Orthodoxa	John Damascene, <i>De fide orthodoxa</i>
PG	Migne, <i>Patrologia Graeca</i> (Paris, 1856)
PL	Migne, <i>Patrologia Latina</i> (Paris, 1844)
Pelagius, Ad Dem	Pelagius? Prosper?, <i>Ad Demetriadem</i>
Peniteas	William of Montibus, <i>Peniteas cito</i> [Joseph Goering, <i>William de Montibus: the Schools and the Literature of Pastoral Care</i> (Toronto: PIMS, 1992)]
Peraldus	William Peraldus, sermons. These were mistakenly attributed to William of Auvergne and are found in <i>Guilielmi Alverni, Opera omnia</i> (Paris: D. Thierry, 1674)
Posteriorum	Richard of Saint Victor, <i>Posteriorum Excerptio</i>
Prosper	Prosper of Aquitaine, <i>Sententiae ex Augustino delibatae</i>
Quaest Ev	Augustine, <i>Quaestionum Evangeliorum libri duo</i> [CL 44B]
Quaest 83	Augustine, <i>De diversis quaestionibus LXXXIII</i> [CL 44A]
Quatuor	Eadmer, <i>De quatuor virtutibus Beatae Virginis Mariae</i>
Quis dabit	PsBernard (Ogerius), <i>Meditacio de lamentacione beate virginis</i> ; text in Thomas Bestul, <i>Texts of the Passion: Latin Devotional Literature and Medieval Society</i> (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996)

- Radbertus Paschasius Radbertus, *Ep 9 Ad Paulam et Eustochium, de Assumptione* [CM 56C]
- Reg past Gregory the Great, *Regulae Pastoralis*
- Roland *Chrysostomi opera* (Paris: Guilielmum Roland, 1546; Venice: Pezzana, 1703)
- SB Sancti Bernardi Opera (Rome: Publicationes Cistercienses, 1957–1963)
- SC Bernard, *Sermones super Cantica Canticorum* [SB 1–2]
- Sedulius Sedulius, *Carmen paschale*
- Selecta Origen, *Selecta in Psalmos*
- Sent Isidore, *Sententiae*
- Septem diei PsBede (13th c.), *De meditatione passionis per septem diei*
- Sermone monte Augustine, *De sermone Domini in monte* [CL 35]
- SHS *Speculum humanae salvationis* (Lutz and Perdrizet, *Speculum humanae salvationis*, Mulhouse, 1907–9)
- Spiritu PsAugustine, *De spiritu et anima* (12th-c. compilation of various authors)
- St Cher Hugh of Saint Cher, *Postillae in sacram scripturam, Tomus sextus*
- Stim Eckbert of Schönau, *Stimulus Amoris*
- Suso Henry Suso, *Horologium sapientiae*
- Super unum Peter Cantor, *Super unum ex quatuor*
- Synonyma Isidore of Seville, *Synonyma de lamentatione animae peccatricis*
- Syrus Publilius Syrus, *Sentences*
- Tr John Augustine, *In Evangelium Ioannis tractatus* [CL 36]
- VC Ludolph, *Vita Christi*

Vera et falsa	PsAugustine (11 th c.), <i>De vera et falsa poenitentia</i>
Voragine	Rudolphus Clutius, ed., Jacobus de Voragine, <i>Sermones Aurei in Omnes Totius Anni; Sermones de Tempore in omnes Dominicas</i> (Augsburg and Cracow: Bartl, 1760)
Vor Quad	Rudolphus Clutius, ed., Jacobus de Voragine, <i>Sermones Aurei in Omnes Quadragesimae Dominicas et ferias</i> (Augsburg and Cracow: Bartl, 1760)
Werner	Werner of Saint Blase, <i>Liber Deflorationum</i>
Zachary	Zachary of Besançon, <i>In unum ex quatuor</i>

Preface

We have reached the halfway point in Ludolph's *magnum opus*. The author himself divides his presentation on the life of Christ into two parts. The turning point in the narrative for him is Peter's confession of faith, which is followed by Christ's first prediction of his passion. The shift in Jesus' ministry from that of an itinerant teacher and healer in Galilee to the fulfillment of his mission in Jerusalem is underscored most dramatically in the gospel of Luke: "When the days drew near for him to be received up,¹ he set his face to go to Jerusalem."² The Greek word means "taking up," and biblical scholars observe that it can refer to Christ's going up to Jerusalem, his being lifted up on the cross, or his ascending to heaven. All of these themes are treated in Part Two of the *Life of Jesus Christ*.

As we prepare to enter into the second half of Ludolph's narrative, let us take a moment to step back and survey his prodigious enterprise. Writing is by its very nature a solitary exercise, and no doubt Ludolph found the eremitical life in the charterhouse conducive to his literary labors. However, as the vast number of sources cited in this translation indicates, Ludolph was not so much an author as a masterful editor. He was able to draw on the Christian patrimony reaching back over a millennium and to weave his source documents into a comprehensive series of spiritual meditations on the entire life and mission of Jesus Christ, indeed the whole drama of our salvation.

This lone writer in his cell crafted a monument of tradition. Countless authors, commentators, and scribes over the centuries all played a role in handing on the Gospel; Ludolph gave voice to this process.

¹ *analempseos*

² Luke 9:51

The names of many fathers are familiar to us, but individual authors need communities to preserve, copy, and disseminate their works. It is remarkable to see Ludolph cite early fathers such as Hilary, Ambrose, and Augustine, and to find that the texts at his disposal—which had been copied by hand for a thousand years—are nearly word-perfect.

Less familiar to the general reader are the later medieval sources such as the glosses and postillae upon which Ludolph relies so heavily. Authors like Zachary of Besançon (d. 1155), Hugh of St. Cher (d. 1263), Nicholas of Gorran (d. 1295), and Nicholas of Lyra (d. 1349) appear repeatedly. Their names mean nothing to most of us, but it is worth noting that their works were forged in the furnace of communal give-and-take: biblical texts, and the patristic and medieval commentaries upon them, were subject to discussion, debate, and preaching. Ludolph had been a Dominican for many years before he became a Carthusian. He drew on his experience in the pulpit and rostrum to produce his *Life of Jesus Christ*. He was not a solitary thinker recording the fruits of his own contemplation: rather, his purpose was to express the great tradition that the community of believers had handed down over the centuries.

Six hundred years later I set out to produce the first English translation of Ludolph's masterpiece. While I did not reside in a monastic cell, the work was a solitary one. But, like the Carthusian, I drew on many resources; this translation was possible because of the efforts of many people.

Here I would like to acknowledge first the tireless work of librarians who maintain the written records of our Christian history. Some unusual book might lie on a shelf unread for decades, but to find it there when it is needed is a great gift. In particular I would like to recognize:

First and foremost, the library of my alma mater, St. Patrick's Seminary in Menlo Park, California. David Kriegh, MLIS, his predecessors as Library Director, and his staff have been of great assistance—not only for sharing resources in their collection, but also for tracking down books from other libraries.

Gleeson Library at the University of San Francisco possesses a fine theological library, which was very useful.

Two important libraries in Berkeley were of great assistance:

The Flora Hamson Hewlett Library of the Graduate Theological Union;

The Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley. I acknowledge especially the kind assistance of its Deputy Director, Mr. Peter Hanff.

Finally, a word of thanks to the Special Collections Department of the University of Glasgow for permission to use beautiful miniatures from a late fifteenth-century manuscript of the *Vita Christi*.

The collections in these libraries testify to the revolution brought about by the invention of the printing press, not very long after Ludolph's death. In our own time we are experiencing another technological revolution with the advent of the Internet. This development makes it possible to consult hitherto rare works because people are busily scanning them to make them available online. For example, a book cited frequently by Ludolph is a *Vita Christi* by his contemporary, Michael de Massa. This work has never been printed, and manuscripts are rare. The Bavarian State Library has digitized its copy, so it was possible for me to consult it easily at home.

Along with making many resources easily accessible, computer technology has also given us the search engine. This tool made it possible for me to locate Ludolph's many sources quickly. In this regard, I would like to thank Fr. Luke Dysinger, OSB, who provided me with access via St. John's Seminary, Camarillo, California, to an online version of Migne's *Patrologia Latina* with a search engine.

Having completed the translation of a work of some three thousand pages, the next challenge was to find a publisher willing to undertake a book of this length. I turned to my friend Fr. Simeon Leiva-Merikakis, OCSO, for suggestions. I did not know when I did so that he was the editor of the Monastic Wisdom Series for Cistercian Publications. He suggested to the leadership of Cistercian Publications and the Liturgical Press that an English translation of this important work was a worthwhile venture.

Dr. Marsha Dutton, the Executive Editor of Cistercian Publications, has herself undertaken the arduous labor of editing this massive work. I am deeply grateful to her both for her professionalism and for her constant encouragement as we have sent chapters of Ludolph

shuttling back and forth for several years. I would also like to express gratitude to the copy editors and other production staff of the Liturgical Press, under the able direction of Mr. Hans Christoffersen. The length of the *Life of Jesus Christ* and the great number of its citations have made this a daunting enterprise. They have carried out their labors seamlessly. The superior quality of the finished volumes speaks for itself, and I am proud to see this work made available under the aegis of Cistercian Publications and the Liturgical Press.

Finally, I would like to offer thanks to friends and family who encouraged me over the long time this translation has required. In particular I wish to express profound gratitude to Wade and Jane Hughs. Their enthusiasm, over thousands of pages and many years, has been unstinting. I imagine Ludolph felt the encouragement of his friends as he labored to produce this magisterial work; I certainly have in producing this translation of it.

The Life of Jesus Christ

PART TWO

CHAPTER 1

Peter's Confession of Faith

(Matt 16:13-23; Mark 8:27-33)

*Part One of this book made no explicit mention of Christ's passion. It will be spoken of frequently in this second part, and indeed will be described in its entirety, along with all that followed it.

*R 1

*Following what was related in the previous chapter, *Jesus came into the neighborhood of Caesarea Philippi.** He came as a Savior, scattering the light of his teaching everywhere, seeking out the lost everywhere, healing the repentant everywhere.* He came to the outskirts of the city then called Caesarea Philippi, now known as Paneas. Herod's brother, the Tetrarch Philip, had renovated and enlarged the city, and from that time on he called it Caesarea Philippi in memory of his own name and in honor of Tiberius Caesar, who had given him a fourth part of the kingdom. This city is situated at the foot of Mount Libanus, from the slope of which two springs flow, called the Jor and the Dan.* These meet at the base of the mountain to form the Jordan River, which, after following a long course, empties into the Sea of Galilee near the city of Chorazin. The city was also called Caesarea Philippi to distinguish it from Caesarea of Palestine, where it is said that the centurion Cornelius lived. There is yet another Caesarea, the capital of Cappadocia, located in the region of Turkey.*

*R 2

*Matt 16:13

*Gorran
Matt 16:13

*Zachary 3:90;
PL 186:285A

*Lyra Matt 16:13

The people of Caesarea Philippi and its environs were pagans, and so it was from here that Christ chose

to reveal the mystery of the incarnation, to show that the church was to be founded on the faith of the Gentiles.* The city was located just beyond the northern border of Judea, in Phoenician territory, and this was where the headcount tax was brought for the census that Caesar Augustus had levied on the whole world. It is fitting that in this place, to which taxes from the whole world poured in, the King of kings and Lord of the world should receive the tribute of faith paid by the soul's head, that is, the mind.^{1*}

**Lyra Matt 16:13*

**Gorran
Matt 16:13*

Jesus Questions His Disciples

***R 3**

And while Jesus was praying alone on the road, he asked his disciples, saying to them: "Who do men say that I am?" He did not ask because he was in doubt or ignorant, as though he might learn something, but so that he could instruct them in the truth, and, by the disciples' answer, he could eliminate human errors. Again, he asked them in order to provide an occasion for them to merit and to strengthen us believers by their confession of faith. Finally, he asked them so that he could confirm them in their faith more strongly by the approval and promise that would follow and, by confirming them, show the difference between the apostles and the people.*

**Mark 8:27*

**Gorran Matt
16:13 approx*

Before examining the disciples' belief, he first inquired about the common opinion concerning him: to build up their faith he wanted to remove the erroneous views of others and so instruct them better about

¹ Baniyas was the site of an ancient shrine to the god Pan. In 20 BC Caesar Augustus gave the territory to Herod the Great, who built a temple in Caesar's honor there. Herod's son Philip greatly enlarged the city in AD 3 and made it his capital. The reference to the tax from the census is obscure; at the very least, it can be supposed that, as it was Philip's administrative center, taxes would have been paid there by both Jewish and Gentile communities.

the truth.* Similarly, one learned in the Gospel should demolish errors to build up the truth. The Lord wanted to expose errors so that once they were removed, he could present the truth to the disciples: they would learn this from the Lord's revelation, not popular opinion.

*Zachary 3.90;
PL 285B

In Matthew's text Jesus asks, *Who do men say that the Son of man is?** That is, the *Son of the Virgin*. The term *Son of man* could only be applied to Christ. Adam was the son of the *earth*, and everyone else is a son of *men*, because every human being has two parents. Only Christ was the Son of *man*, the son of one human being: he only had one parent on earth, just as he has only one in heaven. He also referred to himself as Son of man, not Son of God, out of humility—in contrast to those who are always putting on airs, boasting about their illustrious relatives, and keeping silent about the rest. Jerome says that he did not ask, "Who do men say I am?" even though he was speaking about himself, so that it would not seem that he wanted to boast about himself.* No, he said *Son of man* because, according to Chrysostom, he wanted the dispensation of his incarnation to be believed and to lead them to profess it.*

*Matt 16:13

*Com Matt 16:13;
PL 26:115A;
CL 77:139

*Hom Matt 54.1;
PG 57/58:533

*Gorran Matt
16:13 approx

Similarly, prelates, doctors, and great figures should ask their associates about their reputation,* for a good reputation helps leaders and teachers to bear fruit in their teaching and counsel, and a bad reputation impedes their efforts. Origen says, "Christ questioned his disciples so that we will continually try to find out what opinion others have of us: if something evil is being said about us, we can cut off the occasions for it, and if something good is being said, we can increase the occasions for it."* The assistants and household of bishops can learn from the example of the apostles to report to the bishop what they hear said about him outside his walls.* Again, the Lord asking the apostles about what the crowd believes can serve to remind

*Com Matt 12:9;
PG 13:994A;
Latin CA,
Matt 16:13
*CA, Matt 16:13

pastors that they will have to render an account for the faith of those under their charge.

*R 4

The people held various opinions about Christ. Therefore the disciples responded first that some thought he was John the Baptist, who sensed the Lord's presence while still in his mother's womb, because of this man's baptism and the excellence of his life. This was the opinion of Herod and his circle. Theophylact writes, "Many were thinking that John had risen from the dead, as even Herod believed, and that he had performed miracles after his resurrection." Others believed that he was Elijah on account of this prophet's great zeal for the truth and the power he possessed, for he brought down fire from heaven, and, because he had been taken up into heaven, it was believed that he would return from there. Others thought he was Jeremiah, a prophet distinguished by holiness, for he had been sanctified in his mother's womb, and because of Jeremiah's patience in adversity and his great compassion, for he wept and lamented for the people's sins. Others believed he was one of the prophets, perhaps Elisha, who was renowned for his wisdom because he had received a double portion of Elijah's spirit, or that one of the other prophets of old had been raised up again.

*En Mark 8:27-30;
PG 123:574C

From this it is clear that people held diverse views about Jesus. And to this very day people have different opinions about how to attain salvation and blessedness. Each of us places beatitude in what we love and honor that as God. As Augustine teaches, we worship as God that which we love above everything else.*

*Prosper 244;
PL 45:1879;
based on De doc
1.7.7; PL 34:22;
CL 32:10

Peter Answers that Jesus is Christ, the Son of God

*R 5

*Then Jesus elicited from the disciples their own confession about him, saying, "*But you* who are my disciples, separated from the others and not part of

the crowd, to whom *it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God*;* you, who are *the light of the world*;† you, to whom *all things, whatsoever I have heard of my Father, I have made known to you*:* *who do you say that I am?*”* It was as if he were saying, “Even if the others have wrong opinions about me, you should not be mistaken because you have been with me so long, you have heard my teaching, and you have witnessed so many great miracles.”

*Mark 4:11

†Matt 5:14

*John 15:15

*Matt 16:15

*Simon Peter answered** for everyone, that is, for himself and the others,* for they all knew the same thing† and felt the same way. Although all of the apostles knew, this man was the spokesman for the whole college by virtue of being the eldest and their leader and head. He spoke before the others and on behalf of the others, as one should who leads the rest and benefits the rest. From this it is evident that it pertains chiefly to the successor of Peter to resolve doubts regarding the faith and other matters related to it.

*Matt 16:16

*Lyra Matt 16:16

†Zachary 3.90;

PL 186:285C

Peter, who had been instructed not by his parents but by the heavenly Father, beheld the Son of God and the Son of Man, and encompassed both. He confessed that Christ was truly God and Man, possessing both a human and a divine nature in the same subject: *You are Christ, the Son of the living God*.* In other words, “*You are Christ*,* that is, man, according to that nature in which you have been anointed with the oil of grace *above your fellows*,” thereby confessing the humanity in which Christ was anointed above all others. And “*the Son of God* by nature, and not by adoption like others, and consequently sharing the same nature with God the Father,” thereby confessing Christ’s divinity. And he adds *living*, that is, immutable and eternal: it was customary for the Hebrews to speak of the *living God* to distinguish him from the false gods that have no life, the divinities worshiped by the pagans, which were either dead human beings or idols of lifeless materials that they set up for themselves.*

*Matt 16:16

*Ps 44:8

*Lyra Matt 16:16

approx

Christ's Promise to Peter

*R 6

*And Jesus answering said to Peter, and giving in Peter the reward to all who make a true profession, *Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona.** That is, Simon, son of John, for *Bar* means *son* and *Jona* is a diminutive of *Joanna*, with one syllable deleted; thus *Bar-Jona* can be interpreted here as *son of John*,* and Peter was sometimes addressed elsewhere as "son of John."²* Chrysostom suggests that Christ said this to show that he was by nature the Son of God, just as Peter was the son of John by virtue of sharing the nature of his progenitor.* *"Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona, for this confession of the true faith that leads to blessedness, because flesh and blood has not revealed it to you, that is, neither your parents nor any other mortal, nor has any human doctrine taught you such a great secret of the faith, but my Father who is in heaven,"* and by consequence the whole Trinity, for the works of the Trinity are indivisible."^{*} Chrysostom says, "These words apply to all, so that to each and every one it can be said, *Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood has not revealed it to you, but my Father who is in heaven.*"^{*}

*Matt 16:17

*John 21:15

*Lyra Matt 16:17

*Hom Matt 54.2;
PG 57/58:534;
Latin CA,
Matt 16:13-19

*Matt 16:17

*Lyra Matt 16:17

*Opus imperf 33;
PG 56:813

Christ continues: "You say, and you speak the truth, that I am *Christ, the Son of the living God. And I, who am unchanging truth, and for whom to speak is to make, say to you, for yourself and your companions, 'That you are Peter,'** called by me *Rock*,[‡] that is, the confessor of the true *Rock*, which is *Christ*,[†] strong in faith, firm in doctrine." Peter, who believed in Christ the *Rock*, deservedly receives this name because of his strong faith and forthright confession of Christ. He had been called *Simon*, but he is given the name

*Matt 16:18

‡*petra*

†*Lyra Matt 16:18*

² Jerome mentions this etymology in his commentary but maintains that the correct meaning of *Bar-Jona* is *son of the dove* (PL 26:117B); Ludolph, following Zachary 3.90 (PL 186:286B) and Hist ev 85 (PL 198:1581B), gives this explanation even though it was not the one preferred by Jerome.

Peter by the Lord to signify the church: just as *the rock was Christ*,* so Peter is the Christian people.†

Therefore Christ adds, "*And upon this rock that you have just confessed, and that you have laid as the foundation of faith, that is, upon Christ, I will build my church.*"* For *the rock was Christ*, and upon this foundation he himself has built. This statement accords with the words of the apostle, who said, *For other foundation no man can lay, but that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus.** This was as much as to say, "There is no foundation other than that laid by Peter when he said, *You are Christ, the Son of the living God.*" The whole church of God is built upon this rock. Again, "*Upon this rock, that is, upon this faith and confession, or the firmness of this truth and faith, as upon a strong foundation, I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*"* The enticements of the demons, the delights of the depraved, the teachings of the heretics, the tortures and coaxing of the persecutors, and the evil works, words, and example of the wicked, all of which point out the road to perdition and lead to hell, shall not prevail against a church so firmly established, because they will not separate her from the faith and charity of Christ. From this it is clear that the church is made up of those in whom there is the knowledge and genuine profession of the faith and truth.

*1 Cor 10:4

‡*this sent Aug. Sermo 76.1 approx; PL 38:479*

*Matt 16:18; *Lyra Matt 16:18*

*1 Cor 3:11

*Matt 16:18; *Zachary 3.90; PL 186:286CD approx*

The Keys of the Kingdom

*Then the Lord promised that he would entrust the keys of the kingdom of heaven to Peter. However, he did not give them yet: had he given them immediately, there would have been no place in Peter for the perverse confession he was about to make, or to his denial related in the passion narrative. And, just as Peter answered on behalf of all, so the Lord promised to give the keys of the kingdom to all in him, saying, *And I will give to you, who confessed me before the others,*

*R 7

*Matt 16:19

*the keys of the kingdom of heaven.** That is, "I will give you the power of judgment in the present church, which is called the kingdom of heaven because, when this power is worthily exercised here on earth, it follows that the heavenly realm is opened or closed."³

*this sent

Zachary 3.90;
PL 186:287BC

Bede writes,

However, the keys are not given to him yet, only promised. They had not yet been forged on the anvil of the cross or tempered in his blood. "I, too, will use them when, while they are still being shaped in the furnace of my burning passion, I will open the gate of Paradise first to a murderer and a thief, so that, following my example, you will allow publicans and prostitutes to enter. You will exercise judgment over those who confess their sins and await punishment. Therefore you will possess ordinary jurisdiction and judicial power, for which two things are required: the authority to examine and arbitrate faults, and the power to absolve and even pass judgment, which two things I give you under the name *keys*."³

Thus Bede calls the keys of the kingdom of heaven discretion and power: discretion, to discern who is worthy and who is unworthy, and power to bind and loose.* The key is a kind of power supernaturally infused and given by God, not a power that is innate or acquired. The Gloss speaks here of two keys: the wisdom to discern and the power to bind and loose.* The sun can both melt and harden things: the power is one in its source, but twofold in its effect. In the same way, the key is one in its source but double in its effects. The power to judge in the forum of the soul (not the body) is called a key, but this judicial power integrates

*Com Matt 16:19;
PL 92:79A

*Laon Matt 16:19;
PL 162:1396B

³ Source unknown. Bede speaks about the conferral of the keys in Hom 1.16 (PL 94:222D); 1.20 (CL 122:145–46). The interpretation of the two keys as the power to examine and to pass judgment is articulated by Thomas, SCG 4.72.

two things: the power to discern in the case being considered, and the power to determine a verdict with a sentence of condemnation or absolution.*

The first power is called knowledge, not that it is a habit of cognition, but it is the authority and power to discern and judge on the basis of knowledge already possessed. The second power is called the power to admit or exclude from the kingdom, according to a true judgment based on the knowledge possessed, for the unworthy should be barred entry and the worthy be welcomed in.* Bernard says, "Peter received the keys of knowledge and power given him from above. These keys are the power to open and close, to discern who should be let in and who should be kept out."*

The Lord continues, "*And whatever you bind upon earth, that is, for one living on earth, it shall be bound also in heaven, and the heavenly court will approve and confirm it, and whatever you loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.*"* According to the Gloss, this means that whoever you judge unworthy of forgiveness while they live will be judged unworthy by God, and whoever you judge worthy of forgiveness while they live will obtain forgiveness of his sins from God.*

However, the Lord did not give this power to bind and loose to Peter alone, but to all the apostles, and not only to them, but in truth to bishops and priests, and to the whole church. Note, however, that the power of authority rests in God alone, who opens by an infusion of grace; the power of excellence rests in Christ, who opens by the merit of his passion; and the power of administering rests with the pastors of the church, who open through the ministry of the sacraments.^{4*}

*Corran
Matt 16:19

*Lyra Matt 16:18
approx

*SC 69.4-5;
PL 183:1114BC;
SB 2:204

*Matt 16:19

*CA,
Matt 16:13-19

*Corran
Matt 16:18

⁴ The source of this concept of the powers of authority, excellence, and ministry is the *Summa* of Alexander of Hales, via the *Supplement of the Summa Theologica* of Aquinas (q. 17, a. 1, resp.). Ludolph wrote at a time when the theological understanding of "the power of the keys" was undergoing a major shift, and

CHAPTER 55

Christ's Gentle Reproof of His Betrayer, and Judas's Departure

(Matt 26:20-25; Mark 14:17-21;
Luke 22:22-23; John 13:21-31)

*Attend with sorrow to the third, and grievous, event of this evening. *When Jesus had said these things, he was troubled, that is, sorrowful, in spirit.** He was not troubled carnally, but was sorrowful in spirit under the guidance of his reason. He produced this inner turmoil by his own spirit and power. This disturbance existed in the sensitive part of his soul; it was not contrary to reason, but very much in accord with it. It is virtuous to be troubled in the presence of wickedness: spiritual turmoil is prompted by devotion, which leads to mercy, while carnal unrest excites wrath and anger.

Jesus *was troubled in spirit* by his mercy, either out of compassion for the disciple who betrayed him and would be lost because of this betrayal, or to show us how to respond when we see another falling into ruin on account of some outrage committed. The saints will experience just this kind of inner turmoil prompted by charity when Christ commands them to separate the wheat from the chaff before the great harvest.*

In a moral sense this suggests that if a pastor must separate a notorious sinner from the communion of holy Mother Church, he should do so with great compassion and sorrow. Augustine says, "It is plain that

*R 1

*John 13:21;
Latin Diatessaron?

*Hist ev 151 approx;
PL 198:1617A;
Massa

Christians may be troubled not by misery, but by mercy: they may fear lest others should be lost to Christ, they may sorrow when one is being lost, they may have an ardent desire to gain others to Christ, they may be filled with joy when they bring others to Christ, they may sorrow over their own estrangement from Christ, they may be earnestly desirous of reigning with Christ, and they may be rejoicing in the hope that such fellowship with Christ will yet be their lot.”*

*Tr John 60.3;
PL 35:1798;
CL 36:479

And while they were eating, he said: “Amen I say to you that one of you Twelve, who were with me everywhere, and whose feet I have washed, and to whom I made so many promises, is about to betray me, your Savior and Teacher.” One of you: in number, but not in merit; in body, but not in spirit; in appearance, but not in virtue.* The ingratitude of Judas was enormous: he betrayed his table companion, indeed his Lord and Nourisher.† As Jesus says in a different account, But yet behold: the hand of him that betrays me is with me on the table.**

*Matt 26:21

*this sent Tr John
61.2; PL 35:1799;
CL 36:481

‡Gorran
Luke 22:21

*Luke 22:21

The Lord could say the same thing today to many priests who dare to touch the Holy Table unworthily and who hand over the Son of God again to crucifixion by their sins.* Christ’s denunciation of his betrayer suggests that many traitors still come to his table.† In fact it is a greater sin to betray Christ now reigning in heaven into the hands of the sinful members of his own Body than it was to do so when he walked on earth among the Jewish sinners.*

*Gorran

Luke 22:21
‡ Lyra Mark 14:17
mor

*Gorran Mark
14:17 approx

Bede writes,

But still today, and indeed for ever, woe to wicked people who approach the Lord’s Table seasoned with treachery, who do not hesitate to share in the hidden mysteries of Christ although they are polluted to the core of their being by sin. Such people follow the example of Judas by handing over the Son of Man—not to Christ’s wicked enemies, but

to the sinful members of his own Body. They dare to dishonor the precious and sacrosanct Body of Christ. Woe, I say, to those who, at the moment of the holy sacrifice, when it cannot be doubted that Jesus is present on the sacred altars, hear the dread words, *Behold: the hand of him that betrays me is with me on the table.**

*Com Luke 22:21;
PL 92:597D-98A;
CL 120:379-80

And, as Origen says, such are the members of the church who lay snares for the brethren they meet frequently at the same table of the Body of Christ.*

*Hom Matt 81;
PG 13:1732A
‡R 2

‡The Lord foretold his betrayal and, in a manner of speaking, revealed its perpetrator, for three reasons: first, to show that he was God and could foresee events; second, to show that he went freely to his death, since by his foreknowledge he could have evaded death had he chosen; third, to give his betrayer an opportunity to repent when he saw that his deed had been discovered.* Jerome writes, "The one who had foretold his passion also predicts his betrayer. He provides an opening for repentance so that Judas might repent of his deed when he realized that Jesus knew his thoughts and the secret counsels of his heart. Yet he does not specifically point him out lest he become more impudent when being clearly indicated; he makes the charge to the group as a whole so that the one who is aware might repent."*

*Gorran
Matt 26:21

Note here that there are four means that are customarily employed to impede someone from acting wickedly, and the Lord used them all to dissuade his betrayer from evil and recall him to repentance. The first is shame, when the Lord said, *One of you is about to betray me*, and, *The hand of him that betrays me is with me on the table*. Next is fear prompted by the threat of punishment, when the Lord said, *Woe to that man by whom the Son of man shall be betrayed*.* Fear can correct a person who is not won over through shame. A third incentive is the bestowal of benefits, as Jesus gave

*Com Matt 26:21;
PL 26:194A;
CL 77:249

*Mark 14:21

Judas when he welcomed him to his table and washed his feet. Finally, there are signs of affection and terms of endearment, as when Jesus asked Judas, *Friend, why have you come?** Following Christ's example, good superiors should bestow benefits even on their bad subjects, in the hope of recalling them from their wicked ways.* But none of these words and deeds dissuaded Judas from betraying the man he knew to be the Son of God.

*Matt 26:50;
Gorran Luke 22:22

*Lyra John 13:2 mor

When we seek to meditate devoutly on the passion of Jesus Christ, its initial event is the treachery of his betrayer. Judas was so full of the venom of deceit that he handed over his Teacher and Master; he was so inflamed with greed that he sold God for silver and traded the precious Blood of Christ at a cheap price; he was so ungrateful that he gave over to death the one who had given everything to him and raised him to the heights of apostolic office; he was so hard-hearted that neither humble service, affectionate words, nor a loving kiss could recall him from his wicked course. O see the goodness of Christ towards his cruel disciple, of the Lord to his most treacherous servant!*

*LV 17

However inexplicable the traitor's iniquity, even more overwhelming is the gentleness beyond all measure of the Lamb of God, who gives us mortals an example. Human infirmity can now say it has been overpowered by a friend: *For if my enemy had reviled me, I would have borne with it. But a man of one mind, who seemed to be a guide and a familiar who ate the bread** of Christ and received sweet food at that holy Supper, extolled himself over Christ to trip him up, and *lifted his heel against him and attempted to crush him underfoot.** So today, many prelates, clerics, and religious live lavishly off of Christ's patrimony and lift their heel against Christ in his members, tripping them up and afflicting them with unjust charges and exactions.

*Ps 54:13-14

*Ps 40:10; LV 17

The Disciples' Sorrow, Christ's Gentleness, the Betrayer's Boldness

*When Jesus said to them, *One of you is about to betray me*, the words pierced the disciples' hearts like a sharp sword and prompted a holy chorus of lamentation. They were so saddened that they stopped eating and began looking at one another stunned, wondering which of them it was.* They were not only sorrowful because of the impending death of their Teacher, but because each was fearful for himself lest he be the one who would betray him.* They were amazed, because each of them (except Judas) looked within and found himself firmly in opposition to what Christ had said, and believed the same of his companions—and yet they recognized that Jesus' words were more worthy of trust than their own conscience. They did not doubt what he said but wondered by whom it would be brought about.*

*R 3

*Massa; MVC 73;
CM 153:245

*Lyra Matt 26:22

*Lyra John 13:21
approx

*Matt 26:22

And they being very much troubled, every one began to say of himself: "Is it I, Lord, who will betray you?"* The eleven apostles were certain that they had never contemplated acting against the Lord, but they believed the Master more than they believed themselves. Frightened by their frailty, they sorrowfully sought to discover some sin of which they were ignorant, as it says in the psalm, *Who can understand sins?** However holy people might be, they must be on guard about the future.*

*Ps 18:13;

Gorran Matt 26:22

*Lyra Matt 26:22

But he answering said: "He that dips his hand with me in the dish, he shall betray me."*¹ Behold the humility and patience of Christ, who allows his betrayer to share his table and dish.* Jerome exclaims, "How admirable is the Lord's patience! First he says, *One of you*

*paropsidem

‡Matt 26:23

*Gloss Matt 26:23;
PL 114:168

¹ Ludolph adds in some versions: "Matthew uses the word *paropsis*, a square dish, and Mark says *catinus*, a large earthenware serving bowl." This explanation comes from Rabanus, Com Matt 26:23 (PL 107:1104D).

is about to betray me. The betrayer perseveres in his malice. Jesus exposes him more openly, but does not reveal his name.”* The identity of the traitor could not be determined from what Christ said because all of the Twelve who were gathered around him ate from the same dish; the lesser disciples ate at a separate table.* Thus it was as if he were saying, “One of the Twelve will betray me.” From this it seems apparent that other disciples were present in the room.

*Com Matt 26:23;
PL 26:194B;
CL 77:250

*Zachary 4.155
approx;
PL 186:499A

Observe the disciples very carefully here; enter into the Lord’s suffering and theirs, for their sorrow was profound. But that traitor continued eating, as if the words had no reference to him. The others were so troubled that their hands dropped, and they could put no food into their mouths. But Judas, who was about to betray his Master, audaciously continued eating and dipped his hand into the dish with Jesus; he hoped by his boldness to feign a good conscience. Recall that the table itself rested on the ground, and, according to the ancient custom, those sharing the meal reclined on carpets spread upon the floor. It is believed that the table itself was square, each side measuring a little more than two arms’ length. (This is said to be the dimensions of the table preserved in the Lateran basilica.²) It is thought that three disciples reclined at each side of the table, and the Lord sat humbly at one corner, with John next to him; in this way, everyone could eat from the same bowl.*

*Massa; MVC 73;
CM 153:244–45

Here we see a true banquet of humility and charity: the Lord and Master sat at the same table with his poor disciples and the traitor Judas, sharing the same food and drink from the same dish and chalice. And yet today many religious do not blush to eat at a different table from their brethren!

² Ludolph’s sources may be referring to a plank of cedar wood venerated in the Lateran as part of the table used at the Last Supper.

*Foretelling the punishment to be meted out to his betrayer, Jesus added, *The Son of man indeed goes freely to his passion, as it is written of him: "He was offered because it was his own will."* But woe to that man by whom the Son of man shall be betrayed.* Woe to him, for he will be eternally lost—the word *woe* in Sacred Scripture indicates eternal damnation. Although Judas later repented, it was to no avail, for in despair he *went and hanged himself with a halter*.* Jerome writes, "Even after being rebuked not once, but twice, Judas does not retrace his steps. The Lord's forbearance serves only to fuel his audacity. Punishment is predicted, that the threat of penalty might curb the man whom shame did not conquer."*

*R 4

*Matt 26:24;
Isa 53:7*Matt 27:5;
this sent Lyra
Luke 22:22

And lest we misinterpret his most gentle rebuke, Jesus adds, "*It were better for him, if that man had not been born*"* in the womb."³ Better for such a man never to have been born because of his great and grievous sins: Judas killed his father, violated his mother, betrayed Christ, and took his own life.⁴ For, as Jerome says, it would have been better not to have been born than to suffer torment, and it is much better not to exist than to exist badly.*

*Com Matt 26:24;
PL 26:194C;
CL 77:250

*Matt 26:24

Better in this context means *less evil*: it is better not to exist than to be damned. To be damned is relatively worse than not existing, but this is not because of the punishment for sin, which does not take away creaturely existence. Rather, it is worse because of mortal

*Com Matt 26:24;
PL 26:194C;
CL 77:250

³ Albert the Great devoted much attention to the study of human generation. He held that there is a twofold birth, in the uterus and from the uterus. On the basis of this understanding he maintained that in the world to come an aborted fetus will have the same condition as an unbaptized infant (In IV Sent, d.xliv, 1, art. 44; Borgnet, 30:602).

⁴ The Legend of Judas circulated in the eleventh and twelfth century, often incorporating the story of Oepidus; *Legenda* 45 recounts a version, but the author expresses reservations about its veracity.

sin itself, which is the state of the damned. This condition does not deprive one of existence, but of sharing in the infinite, divine Good. Given the eternal misery brought about by mortal sin, it would be better not to exist at all.^{5*}

*Lyra Matt 26:24

The Conversation between Jesus and Judas

*R 5

*Since the other disciples were inquiring sorrowfully who the betrayer was, Judas also asked, although his conscience was nagging him, lest it appear that he was the guilty party. Had he kept silent, the others would have suspected him; so he said, *Is it I, Rabbi?** He did not call him *Lord* as the others did because he had thrown off the Lord's yoke, while the other disciples continued to wear it.* And, according to Jerome, Judas called him *Teacher* rather than *Lord* so that he might have an excuse that he had at most betrayed a teacher, because he denied that he was Lord.*

*Matt 26:25;
this sent Lyra
Matt 26:25

*Gorran Matt 26:25

*Com Matt 26:25;
PL 26:195A;
CL 77:250

‡Matt 26:25

*Laon Matt 26:25;
PL 162:1470B

He said to him: "You have said it."† In other words, Rabanus Maurus suggests, "You have betrayed yourself, not I."* The betrayer is refuted in the same words as Pilate, the unjust judge. Jesus did not denounce him to the others, nor make known his crime to them;

⁵ In the Christian understanding existence in itself is good, a participation in God. Aquinas comments, "Not to be may be considered in two ways. First, in itself, and thus it can nowise be desirable, since it has no aspect of good but is pure privation of good. Second, it may be considered as a relief from a painful life or from some unhappiness: and thus 'not to be' takes on the aspect of good, since 'to lack an evil is a kind of good' as the Philosopher says (Ethic. V.1). In this way it is better for the damned not to be than to be unhappy. Hence it is said (Matt 26:24), *It were better for him, if that man had not been born*, and (Jer 20:14), *Cursed be the day wherein I was born*, where a gloss of Jerome observes: 'It is better not to be than to be evilly.' In this sense the damned can prefer 'not to be' according to their deliberate reason" (ST III, 98.3; see also ST I, q. 5, a. 3, ad. 3).

rather, he wanted to indicate to Judas's conscience that he knew of his treachery. Perhaps he kept this hidden from the others so that he could move Judas even now.*

*Lyra Matt 26:25

Christ's words can be understood to mean, "I do not say this; you do." Or they can be understood as a statement about the heart: "You ask the question with your mouth, as if you did not know, but your heart speaks and with reason calls you a traitor."* Look, miserable man, you see that the Lord knows everything—he can read your heart. Concede and confess!* Here we are admonished to reprove sinners gently; if they sin again, more gravely; and if they are obdurate, more harshly still. This is the model the Lord gives us. First he said, *One of you is about to betray me.* Then, *He that dips his hand with me in the dish, he shall betray me.* And finally, *You have said it.*

*Hist ev 151;
PL 198:1617D

*Bruno Com
Matt 26:25;
PL 165:290B

Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, John, whom Jesus loved; he was shaken by Jesus' words and could not hold himself up. He was leaning on the chest of Jesus; his mouth was near Christ's face, so he was in an advantageous position to ask secretly who the betrayer was and hear Christ's answer.* While everyone was asking the question, *Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him and said to him: "Who is it of whom he speaks?"** In other words, Peter gave a sign to John to inquire privately of the Lord who it was, or he first beckoned, and when this was not successful, he spoke to John. Notice Peter's reverence: although he was greater and the prince of the apostles, he did not ask the Lord himself, but inquired through one of the lesser apostles.

*R 6

*John 13:23

*this sent Lyra
John 13:23

*John 13:24

When John asked quietly, the Lord Jesus spoke familiarly with him, as to one singularly beloved, and whispered secretly the identity of his betrayer: it was the man to whom Jesus would reach out and give the bread that had been dipped.* To John, as to a trusted confidant, Jesus expressed himself by way of a gesture;

*Hist ev 151 approx;
PL 198:1617C

but he did not give the traitor's name, nor did he tell the others. In this he shows that we should not broadcast a person's sins to others. As Chrysostom says, Christ chose not to make Judas's treachery public to teach us that we should not advertise the hidden sins of others; just as it is a mortal sin falsely to accuse another of sin, so it is wrong to expose the hidden sins of others to public scrutiny.*

*Hom John 72.2;
PG 59:392

Jesus immediately gave Judas a morsel of bread dipped into wine; this was, of course, ordinary bread and wine, not his Body and Blood, because the man who was intent on betraying the true Bread from Heaven should be indicated by ordinary bread and wine, not the Eucharist. This is why it is laid down that the faithful should not receive Holy Communion by intinction, and why the heresy must be opposed that teaches that the whole Christ is received only under both forms commingled, and is not entirely present in either form.⁶

⁶ Hist ev 151 (PL 198:1617C) and Innocent III, *De Sacramento Altaris* 4.13 (PL 217:866A). In the early church the laity received the Precious Blood from the chalice, but over time the practice grew of distributing the Eucharist by intinction. This has been the ordinary means in the Eastern churches since the ninth century. There is evidence for the practice in the West since the seventh century, but it was always a source of contention. The matter was vigorously debated in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, but this teaching of Innocent III (d. 1216) effectively ended the practice in the West for centuries. The withdrawal of the chalice from the laity was prompted primarily by a sense of reverence for the Eucharist and the desire to avoid spilling the Precious Blood but was reinforced by the doctrine of *concomitance*, which holds that the whole Christ is present in either species. Ludolph's contemporary John Wyclif (1324–1384) championed the cause of restoring the chalice to the laity, and this became a symbolic rallying point for Jan Hus and his followers in the following century. Their movement was given the name *Utraquist* (*sub utraque specie*) because of their insistence that receiving from the chalice was necessary to salvation, effectively denying the doctrine of concomitance. The Catholic

Perhaps the Lord pointed out his betrayer by the dipped morsel because it symbolized Judas's dissimulation: just as bread dipped in wine has externally a color and a taste at variance with its inner attributes, so Judas pretended to be Christ's disciple and feigned love for him, but within he was a traitor, plotting his betrayal.* John was stupefied by Christ's words, which pierced him to the heart; he turned even closer to Christ, *leaning on Jesus' bosom*. Neither the Lord nor John himself said anything to Peter, who had signaled John to ask who the traitor was; Peter was very impulsive, and would have immediately attacked the man and killed him.* The Lord did not want him to know this, lest the divine plan be obstructed.

**Lyra John 13:25*

**MVC 73 approx;*
CM 153:245

There is a spiritual meaning to the fact that Peter enjoined John to ask the question: Peter represents the active life, John the contemplative; Peter is instructed by Christ through John because in divine matters the active life is instructed through the contemplative life. Here we find a proof and example that contemplatives should not intrude into external affairs or seek to avenge offenses against God; rather, they should mourn interiorly and devote themselves intently to God through prayer and, drawing near him by contemplation, entrust everything to his providence. Understand that this refers to the times of recollection spent with the Bridegroom. Sometimes, however, contemplatives will be motivated to act by zeal for God, the good of souls, or the demands of office. Also, at times they will not enjoy their customary consolation, because the Bridegroom has withdrawn so that they will seek him with greater desire and cling to him more closely; at such times it is appropriate to be active and

position was not that it was heretical to give Communion from the chalice to the laity (concessions to allow this were granted in Bohemia), but the Hussite claim that it was necessary for salvation to receive the Eucharist under both forms was heretical.

thus bear fruit for the Bridegroom. Contemplatives should not be indolent. What this teaches us is that it is not right for contemplatives to reveal the secret of the Lord, unless perhaps they are urged to do so by zeal for the salvation of others or impelled to do so by divine inspiration.*

*MVC 73 approx;
CM 153:245

‡R 7

‡Reflect here on the Lord's kindness and how his great humility shines out here as he permits the beloved disciple to recline upon his breast. O, with what great tenderness they love one another!* Thus it is from the Lord's heart that he was drawing out the secret mystery of the Lord's wisdom, and especially the gospel that he wrote.* Drinking this in, he was inebriated.

*Massa

*Gorran John 13:23
approx

Anselm writes,

Who were you, *leaning on Jesus' bosom*, resting your head on his breast? Blessed are you, whoever you are! To be sure, now I recognize you: your name is John. O John, what sweetness, what grace and attractiveness, what light and devotion, did you draw from that fountain? There certainly *are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge** of God. There is the fountain of mercy, there the dwelling place of piety, there the honeycomb of eternal sweetness.

*Col 2:3

Why is all of this given to you, John? Are you more sublime than Peter, more holy than Andrew, more pleasing than all the other apostles? This special privilege is accorded to virginity: you were chosen to be a virgin by the Lord, and this is why you are singularly beloved. Exult, virgin, draw near, and do not delay in acquiring some of this same sweetness as your portion.⁷ If you are unable to receive these more precious gifts, leave John at

⁷ Aelred wrote *De institutione inclusarum* for his sister. In this second half of the quotation he stops addressing John and speaks to her.

that breast where he is intoxicated with knowledge of the divinity; hasten to drink the milk that flows from humanity.*

*Aelred, De inst 31
[Med 15 Anselm];
PL 158:789BD;
CM 1:668

Consider, too, the great sadness of the other disciples: hearing the Lord's words, they cannot eat; they can only look at one another, unable to take in the import of what he has said.*

*MVC 73;
CM 153:246

Satan Enters into Judas

And after the morsel dipped in wine, the sign of his betrayal, was given by Jesus to Judas, Satan entered into him. This was not the first time Satan had done so, because Judas had previously accepted payment to betray Jesus, but now he entered more fully, as into his own possession, to subject Judas completely to his will. Before, Satan had entered in to tempt and deceive Judas, but now he assumed greater control, using Judas to carry out his wicked plans. Just as the apostles received the Holy Spirit on Easter night by the Lord breathing on them, but received a fuller outpouring of that same Spirit at Pentecost, so Judas's ingratitude for the many benefits of Christ made him more subject to the devil's power than he had been previously.*

*R 8

*John 13:27

We should understand that Satan can "enter into" a person in two different ways. First, he can enter into a person's body, as in a case of someone physically attacked by the devil; in this circumstance the devil enters in an essential way. Second, he can insinuate himself into a person's mind—but this is not an essential presence, because only God can enter into the mind in this way. The rational soul does not have quantitative dimensions so that something could be in it except what gives it existence, which is there by its own power. Now where the power of God is, there also is his essence: for in God essence and power are

*Zachary 4.155;
PL 186:500AB
approx

the same. So it is clear that God is in the soul essentially. Yet the devil can enter into the human mind in the sense that a person who has been seduced by him follows him in doing evil; this is an effect of the devil's malice, which someone has loved.*

*Thomas Com
John 13:27

This is how Satan entered into Judas to possess him more completely and lead him to accomplish his wicked deed, as he had previously entered to win his consent to do evil. An illustration will be helpful here: if the door is securely locked, a thief cannot gain entrance either covertly or by violence. What does he do? He sends a little accomplice in through the window to unlock the door so he can enter. The thief is the devil, the locked house is the will, and the little accomplice is a wicked thought or attraction. When the devil gains a foothold by capturing our affections, he can then open the door of our consent and rob the soul of its goods. Origen cautions us, "Be on guard against the devil shooting his flaming arrows into your heart, for if he does, he will then lie in wait until he himself can enter."* From the fact that Satan entered more completely into Judas after he had accepted the morsel, we should weigh carefully how wicked was that ungrateful table companion who forgot the blessings he had received.

*Com John 32.14;
PG 14:803C

*R 9

*Lyra John 13:27

*John 13:27

Then the traitor was given permission, because he could do nothing unless Christ allowed it. Therefore, Jesus said to him, *That which you do by your own will, do quickly.** Rightly did he say, *That which you do*, for the intention to do wrong is tantamount to the deed itself. The Lord is hastening the good work of the salvation of souls that will be brought about by Judas's action, although it will not benefit Judas himself. Many people accomplish good things as Judas did, but the good does not redound to them, because they did not intend to do good.*

*Zachary 4.155
approx;
PL 186:500B

The Lord did not urge Judas to commit the sin of betrayal, but his words show that he was thirsting for

our salvation. His words do not convey an order or a suggestion, because a divine command cannot make a person commit evil.* Rather, he foretells what will happen and gives his consent, leaving Judas completely in charge of himself. Jesus saw that Judas's soul was yearning to bring to a swift conclusion the treachery he had begun, and he could not calm him. Even so, Judas could not accomplish this without the Lord's permission. Christ also said this to reproach Judas for his treason: while he himself was conferring blessings on Judas, Judas was threatening to kill him. Our Lord said these words because he longed for our salvation; he was not yearning to see the ruin of the traitor, but to hasten the salvation of the faithful.*

*Lyra John 13:27

He therefore, having received the morsel from the hand of the Lord, went out immediately* to find the cohort and apprehend Christ. This suggests that a priest who receives the Body of Christ unworthily places himself farther away from God;* to be ungrateful for the Lord's benefits and use a good thing in an evil way manifestly distances a person from God.

*Thomas, Com
John 13:27 approx

*John 13:30

*Lyra John 13:30
mor

The evangelist adds, *And it was night*.* This was said both to indicate that the circumstances were propitious for Judas to carry out his betrayal and to describe the darkness that filled his mind.* This was consistent with the mystery: the one who went out was a child of the night performing the works of darkness, and so he went out into the night of darkness and death.* Judas was deserving of greater punishment because he had not profited from the good company of the apostles. Chrysostom says, "Just as good and perfect people are deserving of a double reward because they have done good and not harmed others by bad example, so the wicked are deserving of double punishment not only because they have done evil when they could have done good, but also because they have not benefited from the example of good people."*

*John 13:30

*Lyra John 13:30

*Zachary 4.155;
PL 186:501A

*source unknown

Judas Is Separated from the Twelve

*R 10

When he therefore had gone out to bring about Christ's death, Jesus said to the rest of the disciples: "Now is the Son of man glorified." In other words, once the one in darkness had been expelled, only those who were clean remained, together with the One who cleansed them.* "Now," he said, "because the gloom of dark night has departed from my disciples, now the Son of man is glorified in them." Now, because Christ perceives nothing of this gloomy darkness in them. Anselm comments, "What gentleness you showed, Lord Jesus, to the evil man, because you chose not to confound him and denounce him publicly to the assembled brethren. You preferred to admonish him gently and told him to do quickly what he intended. All this did not deter him from his wicked designs on you; he hurried away more determined than ever to complete his evil mission. Only then, Christ, did your companions shine like a gathering of angels."*

*John 13:31

*Zachary 4.155;
PL 186:501A

*Eckbert, Stim
[Med 9 Anselm];
PL 158:752B

The words *now the Son of man is glorified* can be interpreted to refer to himself as the cause, even though the effect has not yet been attained: Christ is being delivered over to the passion by which he will merit *ex congruo* the glory of his resurrection and ascension.⁸ They can also be understood to refer to his Mystical Body, because Judas's departure signifies the separation of the wicked from the good.*

*Albert, Com
John 13:31
‡John 13:31

Jesus adds, *and God is glorified in him*,[‡] because he desires nothing but the Father's glory. The separation

⁸ Merit of congruity is based not upon a claim in justice, but upon a certain fitness that a return can be expected for what has been done, a bonus as opposed to a salary. Commenting on this verse, Augustine says, *Humilitas, claritatis est meritum; claritas, humilitatis est praemium* (Humility merits glory, glory rewards humility); (Tr John 104.3 [PL 35:1903; CL 36:603]). Aquinas says that Christ besought and merited his resurrection by praying, as man and not as God (ST III, q. 53, a. 4, ad. 2).

of Judas from the company of Christ and the apostles prefigures the separation of the reprobate from the company of Christ and the elect at the final Judgment. On that day Christ will appear in great glory, the members of his Body will be united to their Head, and the chaff will be cast into the eternal flames where it will be consumed. Augustine writes,

When the unclean one went out, all the clean stayed with their Purifier. Something similar will happen when the tares have been separated from the wheat and the just shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.* Foreseeing this, the Lord attested that this separation of weeds and wheat was foreshadowed when Judas left and the holy apostles remained, and so he said, *Now the Son of man is glorified*. It was as if he were saying, "See what my glory will be like, when none of the wicked will be present and none of the good will be lost."*

*Matt 13:43

*Tr John 63.2;
PL 35:1805;
CL 36:487



Lord Jesus Christ, Good Shepherd, you repeatedly invited your erring disciple to repent; call me back from all my wandering ways. O my Savior, give me the strength and courage to fight against the devil and be vigilant against his counterattacks, lest by his snares he treacherously drag me into the pit of darkness. Sustained by your help, may I arrive at the glory of that light where the righteous will shine in the kingdom of their Father, resplendent as the angelic host. Amen.