

Jesus in the Garden of Olives

When Jesus left the supper-room with the eleven Apostles, after the institution of the Adorable Sacrament of the Altar, his soul was deeply oppressed and his sorrow on the increase. He led the eleven, by an unfrequented path, to the Valley of Josaphat. As they left the house, I saw the moon, which was not yet quite at the full, rising in front of the mountain.

Our Divine Lord; as he wandered with his Apostles about the valley, told them that here he should one day return to judge the world, but not in a state of poverty and humiliation, as he then was, and that men would tremble with fear, and cry: 'Mountains, fall upon us!' His disciples did not understand him, and thought, by no means for the first time that night, that

weakness and exhaustion had affected his brain. He said to them again: 'All you shall be scandalised in me this night. For it is written: I WILL STRIKE THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEP OF THE FLOCK SHALL BE DISPERSED. But after I shall be risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.'

The Apostles were still in some degree animated by the spirit of enthusiasm and devotion with which their reception of the Blessed Sacrament and the solemn and affecting words of Jesus had inspired them. They eagerly crowded round him, and expressed their love in a thousand different ways, earnestly protesting that they would never abandon him. But as Jesus continued to talk in the same strain, Peter exclaimed: 'Although all shall be scandalised in thee, I will never be scandalised!' and our Lord answered him: 'Amen, I say to thee, that in this night, before the cock crow, thou wilt deny me thrice.' But Peter still insisted, saying: 'Yea, though I should die with thee, I will not deny thee.' And the others all said the same. They walked onward and stopped, by turns, for the sadness of our Divine Lord continued to increase.

The Apostles tried to comfort him by human arguments, assuring him that what he foresaw would not come to pass. They tired themselves in these vain efforts, began to doubt, and were assailed by temptation. They crossed the brook Cedron, not by the bridge where, a few hours later, Jesus was taken prisoner, but by another, for they had left the direct road. Gethsemani, whither they were going, was about a mile and a half distant from the



supper-hall, for it was three quarters of a mile from the supper-hall to the Valley of Josaphat, and about as far from thence to Gethsemani. The place called Gethsemani (where latterly Jesus had several times passed the night with his disciples) was a large garden, surrounded by a hedge, and containing only some fruit trees and flowers, while outside there stood a few deserted unclosed buildings.

The Apostles and several others persons had keys of this garden, which was used sometimes as a pleasure ground, and sometimes as a place of retirement for prayer. Some arbours made of leaves and branches had been raised there, and eight of the Apostles remained in them, and were later joined by others of the disciples. The Garden of Olives was separated by a road from that of Gethsemani, and was open, surrounded only by an earthen wall, and smaller than the Garden of Gethsemani. There were caverns, terraces, and many olive-trees to be seen in this garden, and it was easy to find there a suitable spot for prayer and meditation. It was to the wildest part that Jesus went to pray.

It was about nine o'clock when Jesus reached Gethsemani with his disciples. The moon had risen, and already gave light in the sky, although the earth was still dark. Jesus was most sorrowful, and told his Apostles that danger was at hand. The disciples felt uneasy, and he told eight of those who were following him, to remain in the Garden of Gethsemani whilst he went on to pray. He took with him Peter, James, and John, and going on a little further, entered into the Garden of Olives. No words can describe the sorrow which then oppressed his soul, for the time of trial was near. John asked him how it was that he, who had hitherto always consoled them, would now be so dejected? 'My soul is sorrowful even unto death,' was his reply. And he beheld sufferings and temptations surrounding him on all sides, and drawing nearer and nearer, under the forms of frightful figures borne on clouds.

Then it was that he said to the three Apostles: 'Stay you here and watch with me. Pray, lest ye enter into temptation.' Jesus went a few steps to the left, down a hill, and concealed himself beneath a rock, in a grotto about six feet deep, while the Apostles remained in a species of hollow above. The earth sank gradually the further you entered this grotto, and the plants which were hanging from the rock screened its interior like a curtain from

persons outside. When Jesus left his disciples, I saw a number of frightful figures surrounding him in an ever-narrowing circle. His sorrow and anguish of soul continued to increase, and he was trembling all over when he entered the grotto to pray, like a wayworn traveller hurriedly seeking shelter from a sudden storm, but the awful visions pursued him even there, and became more and more clear and distinct. Alas! this small cavern appeared to contain the awful picture of all the sins which had been or were to be committed from the fall of Adam to the end of the world, and of the punishment which they deserved. It was here, on Mount Olivet, that Adam and Eve took refuge when driven out of Paradise to wander homeless on earth, and they had wept and bewailed themselves in this very grotto.

I felt that Jesus, in delivering himself up to Divine Justice in satisfaction for the sins of the world, caused his divinity to return, in some sort, into the bosom of the Holy Trinity, concentrated himself, so to speak, in his pure, loving and innocent humanity, and strong only in his ineffable love, gave it up to anguish and suffering. He fell on his face, overwhelmed with unspeakable sorrow, and all the sins of the world displayed themselves before him, under countless forms and in all their real deformity.

He took them all upon himself, and in his prayer offered his own adorable Person to the justice of his Heavenly Father, in payment for so awful a debt. But Satan, who was enthroned amid all these horrors, and even filled with diabolical joy at the sight of them, let loose his fury against Jesus, and displayed before the eyes of his soul increasingly awful visions, at the same time addressing his adorable humanity in words such as these: 'Takest thou even this sin upon thyself? Art thou willing to bear its penalty? Art thou prepared to satisfy for all these sins?' And now a long ray of light, like a luminous path in the air descended from Heaven; it was a procession of angels who came up to Jesus and strengthened and re-invigorated him. The remainder of the grotto was filled with frightful visions of our crimes; Jesus took them all upon himself, but that adorable Heart, which was so filled with the most perfect love for God and man, was flooded with anguish, and overwhelmed beneath the weight of so many abominable crimes. When this huge mass of iniquities, like the waves of a fathomless ocean, has passed over his soul, Satan brought forward innumerable temptations, as he had formerly done in the desert, even daring to adduce various accusations against him. 'And takest thou all these things upon thyself,' he exclaimed, 'thou who art not unspotted thyself?' then he laid to the charge of our Lord, with infernal impudence, a host of imaginary crimes. He reproached him with

the faults of his disciples, the scandals which they had caused, and the disturbances which he had occasioned in the world by giving up ancient customs. No Pharisee, however wily and severe, could have surpassed Satan on this occasion; he reproached Jesus with having been the cause of the massacre of the Innocents, as well as of the sufferings of his parents in Egypt, with not having saved John the Baptist from death, with having brought disunion into families, protected men of despicable character, refused to cure various sick persons, injured the inhabitants of Gergesa by permitting men possessed by the devil to overturn their vats,⁴ and demons to make swine cast themselves into the sea; with having deserted his family, and squandered the property of others; in one word Satan, in the hopes of causing Jesus to waver, suggested to him every thought by which he would have tempted at the hour of death an ordinary mortal who might have performed all these actions without a superhuman intention; for it was hidden from him that Jesus was the Son of God, and he tempted him only as the most just of men.

Our Divine Saviour permitted his humanity thus to preponderate over his divinity, for he was pleased to endure even those temptations with which holy souls are assailed at the hour of death concerning the merit of their good works. That he might drink the chalice of suffering even to the dregs, he permitted the evil spirit to tempt his sacred humanity, as he would have tempted a man who should wish to attribute to his good works some special value in themselves, over and above what they might have by their union with the merits of our Saviour. There was not an action out of which he did not contrive to frame some accusation, and he reproached Jesus, among other things, with having spent the price of the property of Mary Magdalen at Magdalum, which he had received from Lazarus. Among the sins of the world which Jesus took upon himself, I saw also my own; and a stream, in which I distinctly beheld each of my faults, appeared to flow towards me from out of the temptations with which he was encircled. During this time my eyes were fixed upon my Heavenly Spouse; with him I wept and prayed, and with him I turned towards the consoling angels. Ah, truly did our dear Lord writhe like a worm beneath the weight of his anguish and sufferings! Whilst Satan was pouring forth his accusations against Jesus, it was with difficulty that I could restrain my indignation, but when he spoke of the sale of Magdalen's property, I could no longer keep silence, and exclaimed: 'How canst thou reproach him with the sale of this property as with a crime? Did I not myself see our Lord spend the sum which was given him by Lazarus in works of mercy, and deliver twenty-eight debtors

imprisoned at Thirza?' At first Jesus looked calm, as he kneeled down and prayed, but after a time his soul became terrified at the sight of the innumerable crimes of men, and of their ingratitude towards God, and his anguish was so great that he trembled and shuddered as he exclaimed: 'Father, if it is possible, let this chalice pass from me! Father, all things are possible to thee, remove this chalice from me!' But the next moment he added: 'Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done.' His will and that of his Father were one, but now that his love had ordained that he should be left to all the weakness of his human nature, he trembled at the prospect of death. I saw the cavern in which he was kneeling filled with frightful figures; I saw all the sins, wickedness, vices, and ingratitude of mankind torturing and crushing him to the earth; the horror of death and terror which he felt as man at the sight of the expiatory sufferings about to come upon him, surrounded and assailed his Divine Person under the forms of hideous spectres. He fell from side to side, clasping his hands; his body was covered with a cold sweat, and he trembled and shuddered. He then arose, but his knees were shaking and apparently scarcely able to support him; his countenance was pale, and quite altered in.

On the 11th of December 1812, in her visions of the public life of Jesus, she saw our Lord permit the devils whom he had expelled from the men of Gergesa to enter into a herd of swine, she also saw, on this particular occasion that the possessed men first overturned a large vat filled with some fermented liquid. appearance, his lips white, and his hair standing on end. It was about half-past ten o'clock when he arose from his knees, and, bathed in a cold sweat, directed his trembling, weak footsteps towards his three Apostles. With difficulty did he ascend the left side of the cavern, and reach a spot where the ground was level, and where they were sleeping, exhausted with fatigue, sorrow and anxiety. He came to them, like a man overwhelmed with bitter sorrow, whom terror urges to seek his friends, but like also to a good shepherd, who, when warned of the approach of danger, hastens to visit his flock, the safety of which is threatened; for he well knew that they also were being tried by suffering and temptation. The terrible visions never left him, even while he was thus seeking his disciples. When he found that they were asleep, he clasped his hands and fell down on his knees beside them, overcome with sorrow and anxiety, and said: 'Simon, sleepest thou?' They awoke, and raised him up, and he, in his desolation of spirit, said to them: 'What? Could you not watch one hour with me?' When they looked at him, and saw him pale and exhausted, scarcely able to support himself, bathed in sweat, trembling and shuddering,—when they heard how changed and almost inaudible his voice had become, they

did not know what to think, and had he not been still surrounded by a well-known halo of light, they would never have recognised him as Jesus. John said to him: 'Master, what has befallen thee? Must I call the other disciples? Ought we to take to flight?' Jesus answered him: 'Were I to live, teach, and perform miracles for thirty-three years longer, that would not suffice for the accomplishment of what must be fulfilled before this time tomorrow. Call not the eight; I did not bring them hither, because they could not see me thus agonising without being scandalised; they would yield to temptation, forget much of the past, and lose their confidence in me. But you, who have seen the Son of Man transfigured, may also see him under a cloud, and in dereliction of spirit; nevertheless, watch and pray, lest ye fall into temptation, for the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.' By these words he sought at once to encourage them to persevere, and to make known to them the combat which his human nature was sustaining against death, together with the cause of his weakness. In his overwhelming sorrow, he remained with them nearly a quarter of an hour, and spoke to them again. He then returned to the grotto, his mental sufferings being still on the increase, while his disciples, on their part, stretched forth their hands towards him, wept, and embraced each other, asking, 'What can it be? What is happening to him? He appears to be in a state of complete desolation.' After this, they covered their heads, and began to pray, sorrowfully and anxiously. About an hour and a half had passed since Jesus entered the Garden of Olives. It is true that Scripture tells us he said, 'Could you not watch one hour with me?' but his words should not be taken literally, nor according to our way of counting time.

The three Apostles who were with Jesus had prayed at first, but then they had fallen asleep, for temptation had come upon them by reason of their want of trust in God. The other eight, who had remained outside the garden, did not sleep, for our Lord's last words, so expressive of suffering and sadness, had filled their hearts with sinister forebodings, and they wandered about Mount Olivet, trying to find some place of refuge in case of danger. The town of Jerusalem was very quiet; the Jews were in their houses, engaged in preparing for the feast, but I saw, here and there, some of the friends and disciples of Jesus walking to and from, with anxious countenances, conversing earnestly together, and evidently expecting some great event. The Mother of our Lord, Magdalen, Martha, Mary of Cleophas, Mary Salome, and Salome had gone from the supper-hall to the house of Mary, the mother of Mark. Mary was alarmed at the reports which were spreading, and wished to return to the town with her friends, in order to hear something of Jesus. Lazarus, Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea,

and some relations from Hebron, came to see and endeavour to tranquillise her, for as they were aware, either from their own knowledge or from what the disciples had told them, of the mournful predictions which Jesus had made in the supper-room, they had made inquiries of some Pharisees of their acquaintance, and had not been able to hear that any conspiracy was on foot for the time against our Lord. Being utterly ignorant of the treason of Judas, they assured Mary that the danger could not yet be very great, and that the enemies of Jesus would not make any attempt upon his person, at least until the festival was over. Mary told them how restless and disturbed in mind Judas had latterly appeared, and how abruptly he had left the supper-room. She felt no doubt of his having gone to betray our Lord, for she had often warned him that he was a son of perdition. The holy women then returned to the house of Mary, the mother of Mark. When Jesus, unrelieved of all the weight of his sufferings, returned to the grotto, he fell prostrate, with his face on the ground and his arms extended, and prayed to his Eternal Father; but his soul had to sustain a second interior combat, which lasted three-quarters of an hour.

Angels came and showed him, in a series of visions, all the sufferings that he was to endure in order to expiate sin; how great was the beauty of man, the image of God, before the fall, and how that beauty was changed and obliterated when sin entered the world. He beheld how all sins originated in that of Adam, the signification and essence of concupiscence, its terrible effect on the powers of the soul, and likewise the signification and essence of all the sufferings entailed by concupiscence. They showed him the satisfaction which he would have to offer to Divine Justice, and how it would consist of a degree of suffering in his soul and body which would comprehend all the sufferings due to the concupiscence of all mankind, since the debt of the whole human race had to be paid by that humanity which alone was sinless—the humanity of the Son of God. The angels showed him all these things under different forms, and I felt what they were saying, although I heard no voice. No tongue can describe what anguish and what horror overwhelmed the soul of Jesus at the sight of so terrible an expiation—his sufferings were so great, indeed, that a bloody sweat issued forth from all the pores of this sacred body.

Whilst the adorable humanity of Christ was thus crushed to the earth beneath this awful weight of suffering, the angels appeared filled with compassion; there was a pause, and I perceived that they were earnestly desiring to console him, and praying to that effect before the throne of God.

For one instant there appeared to be, as it were, a struggle between the mercy and justice of God and that love which was sacrificing itself. I was permitted to see an image of God, not, as before, seated on a throne, but under a luminous form. I beheld the divine nature of the Son in the Person of the Father, and, as it were, withdrawn in his bosom; the Person of the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father and the Son, it was, so to speak, between them, and yet the whole formed only one God—but these things are indescribable.

All this was more an inward perception than a vision under distinct forms, and it appeared to me that the Divine Will of our Lord withdrew in some sort into the Eternal Father, in order to permit all those sufferings which his human will besought his Father to spare him, to weigh upon his humanity alone. I saw this at the time when the angels, filled with compassion, were desiring to console Jesus, who, in fact, was slightly relieved at that moment. Then all disappeared, and the angels retired from our Lord, whose soul was about to sustain fresh assaults. When our Redeemer, on Mount Olivet, was pleased to experience and overcome that violent repugnance of human nature to suffering and death which constitutes a portion of all sufferings, the tempter was permitted to do to him what he does to all men who desire to sacrifice themselves in a holy cause. In the first portion of the agony, Satan displayed before the eyes of our Lord the enormity of that debt of sin which he was going to pay, and was even bold and malicious enough to seek faults in the very works of our Saviour himself. In the second agony, Jesus beheld, to its fullest extent and in all its bitterness, the expiatory suffering which would be required to satisfy Divine Justice. This was displayed to him by angels; for it belongs not to Satan to show that expiation is possible, and the father of lies and despair never exhibits the works of Divine Mercy before men. Jesus having victoriously resisted all these assaults by his entire and absolute submission to the will of his Heavenly Father, a succession of new and terrifying visions were presented before his eyes, and that feeling of doubt and anxiety which a man on the point of making some great sacrifice always experiences, arose in the soul of our Lord, as he asked himself the tremendous question: 'And what good will result from this sacrifice?' Then a most awful picture of the future was displayed before his eyes and overwhelmed his tender heart with anguish.

When God had created the first Adam, he cast a deep sleep upon him, opened his side, and took one of his ribs, of which he made Eve, his wife and the mother of all the living. Then he brought her to Adam, who exclaimed: 'This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh... Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh.' That was the marriage of which it is written: 'This is a great Sacrament. I speak in Christ and in the Church.' Jesus Christ, the second Adam, was pleased also to let sleep come upon him—the sleep of death on the cross, and he was also pleased to let his side be opened, in order that the second Eve, his virgin Spouse, the Church, the mother of all the living, might be formed from it. It was his will to give her the blood of redemption, the water of purification, and his spirit—the three which render testimony on earth—and to bestow upon her also the holy Sacraments, in order that she might be pure, holy, and undefiled; he was to be her head, and we were to be her members, under submission to the head, the bone of his bones, and the flesh of his flesh.

In taking human nature, that he might suffer death for us, he had also left his Eternal Father, to cleave to his Spouse, the Church, and he became one flesh with her, by feeding her with the Adorable Sacrament of the Altar, in which he unites himself unceasingly with us. He had been pleased to remain on earth with his Church, until we shall all be united together by him within her fold, and he has said: 'The gates of hell shall never prevail against her.' To satisfy his unspeakable love for sinners, our Lord had become man and a brother of these same sinners, that so he might take upon himself the punishment due to all their crimes. He had contemplated with deep sorrow the greatness of this debt and the unspeakable sufferings by which it was to be acquitted. Yet he had most joyfully given himself up to the will of his Heavenly Father as a victim of expiation. Now, however, he beheld all the future sufferings, combats, and wounds of his heavenly Spouse; in one word, he beheld the ingratitude of men. The soul of Jesus beheld all the future sufferings of his Apostles, disciples, and friends; after which he saw the primitive Church, numbering but few souls in her fold at first, and then in proportion as her numbers increased, disturbed by heresies and schisms breaking out among her children, who repeated the sin of Adam by pride and disobedience. He saw the tepidity, malice and corruption of an infinite number of Christians, the lies and deceptions of proud teachers, all the sacrileges of wicked priests, the fatal consequences of each sin, and the abomination of desolation in the kingdom of God, in the sanctuary of those ungrateful human beings whom he was about to redeem with his

blood at the cost of unspeakable sufferings. The scandals of all ages, down to the present day and even to the end of the world—every species of error, deception, mad fanaticism, obstinacy and malice—were displayed before his eyes, and he beheld, as it were floating before him, all the apostates, heresiarchs, and pretended reformers, who deceive men by an appearance of sanctity. The corrupters and the corrupted of all ages outraged and tormented him for not having been crucified after their fashion, or for not having suffered precisely as they settled or imagined he should have done. They vied with each other in tearing the seamless robe of his Church; many illtreated, insulted, and denied him, and many turned contemptuously away, shaking their heads at him, avoiding his compassionate embrace, and hurrying on to the abyss where they were finally swallowed up. He saw countless numbers of other men who did not dare openly to deny him, but who passed on in disgust at the sight of the wounds of his Church, as the Levite passed by the poor man who had fallen among robbers. Like unto cowardly and faithless children, who desert their mother in the middle of the night, at the sight of the thieves and robbers to whom their negligence or their malice has opened the door, they fled from his wounded Spouse.

He beheld all these men, sometimes separated from the True Vine, and taking their rest amid the wild fruit trees, sometimes like lost sheep, left to the mercy of the wolves, led by base hirelings into bad pasturages, and refusing to enter the fold of the Good Shepherd who gave his life for his sheep. They were wandering homeless in the desert in the midst of the sand blown about by the wind, and were obstinately determined not to see his City placed upon a hill, which could not be hidden, the House of his Spouse, his Church built upon a rock, and with which he had promised to remain to the end of ages.

They built upon the sand wretched tenements, which they were continually pulling down and rebuilding, but in which there was neither altar nor sacrifice; they had weathercocks on their roofs, and their doctrines changed with the wind, consequently they were for ever in opposition one with the other. They never could come to a mutual understanding, and were forever unsettled, often destroying their own dwellings and hurling the fragments against the Corner-Stone of the Church, which always remained unshaken. As there was nothing but darkness in the dwelling of these men, many among them, instead of directing their steps towards the Candle placed on the Candlestick in the House of the Spouse of Christ, wandered with closed eyes around the gardens of the Church,

sustaining life only by inhaling the sweet odours which were diffused from them far and near, stretching forth their hands towards shadowy idols, and following wandering stars which led them to wells where there was no water. Even when on the very brink of the precipice, they refused to listen to the voice of the Spouse calling them, and, though dying with hunger, derided, insulted, and mocked at those servants and messengers who were sent to invite them to the Nuptial Feast. They obstinately refused to enter the garden, because they feared the thorns of the hedge, although they had neither wheat with which to satisfy their hunger nor wine to quench their thirst, but were simply intoxicated with pride and self-esteem, and being blinded by their own false lights, persisted in asserting that the Church of the Word made flesh was invisible. Jesus beheld them all, he wept over them, and was pleased to suffer for all those who do not see him and who will not carry their crosses after him in his City built upon a hill—his Church founded upon a rock, to which he has given himself in the Holy Eucharist, and against which the gates of Hell will never prevail. Bearing a prominent place in these mournful visions which were beheld by the soul of Jesus, I saw Satan, who dragged away and strangled a multitude of men redeemed by the blood of Christ and sanctified by the unction of his Sacrament. Our Divine Saviour beheld with bitterest anguish the ingratitude and corruption of the Christians of the first and of all succeeding ages, even to the end of the world, and during the whole of this time the voice of the tempter was incessantly repeating: 'Canst thou resolve to suffer for such ungrateful reprobates?' while the various apparitions succeeded each other with intense rapidity, and so violently weighed down and crushed the soul of Jesus, that his sacred humanity was overwhelmed with unspeakable anguish. Jesus—the Anointed of the Lord—the Son of Man struggled and writhed as he fell on his knees, with clasped hands, as it were annihilated beneath the weight of his suffering. So violent was the struggle which then took place between his human will and his repugnance to suffer so much for such an ungrateful race, that from every pore of his sacred body there burst forth large drops of blood, which fell trickling on to the ground. In his bitter agony, he looked around, as though seeking help, and appeared to take Heaven, earth, and the stars of the firmament to witness of his sufferings. Jesus, in his anguish of spirit, raised his voice, and gave utterance to several cries of pain. The three Apostles awoke, listened, and were desirous of approaching him, but Peter detained James and John, saying: 'Stay you here; I will join him.' Then I saw Peter hastily run forward and enter the grotto. 'Master,' he exclaimed, 'what has befallen thee?' But at the sight of Jesus, thus bathed in his own blood, and sinking to the ground

beneath the weight of mortal fear and anguish, he drew back, and paused for a moment, overcome with terror. Jesus made him no answer, and appeared unconscious of his presence. Peter returned to the other two, and told them that the Lord had not answered him except by groans and sighs. They became more and more sorrowful after this, covered their heads, and sat down to weep and pray. I then returned to my Heavenly Spouse in his most bitter agony. The frightful visions of the future ingratitude of the men whose debt to Divine Justice he was taking upon himself, continued to become more and more vivid and tremendous. Several times I heard him exclaim: 'O my Father, can I possibly suffer for so ungrateful a race? O my Father, if this chalice may not pass from me, but I must drink it, thy will be done!' Amid all these apparitions, Satan held a conspicuous place, under various forms, which represented different species of sins. Sometimes he appeared under the form of a gigantic black figure, sometimes under those of a tiger, a fox, a wolf, a dragon, or a serpent. Not, however, that he really took any of these shapes, but merely some one of their characteristics, joined with other hideous forms. None of these frightful apparitions entirely resembled any creature, but were symbols of abomination, discord, contradiction, and sin—in one word, were demoniacal to the fullest extent.

These diabolical figures urged on, dragged, and tore to pieces, before the very eyes of Jesus, countless numbers of those men for whose redemption he was entering upon the painful way of the Cross. At first I but seldom saw the serpent: soon, however, it made its appearance, with a crown upon its head. This odious reptile was of gigantic size, apparently possessed of unbounded strength, and led forward countless legions of the enemies of Jesus in every age and of every nation. Being armed with all kinds of destructive weapons, they sometimes tore one another in pieces, and then renewed their attacks upon our Saviour with redoubled rage. It was indeed an awful sight; for they heaped upon him the most fearful outrages, cursing, striking, wounding, and tearing him in pieces. Their weapons, swords, and spears flew about in the air, crossing and recrossing continually in all directions, like the flails of threshers in an immense barn; and the rage of each of these fiends seemed exclusively directed against Jesus—that grain of heavenly wheat descended to the earth to die there, in order to feed men eternally with the Bread of Life.

Thus exposed to the fury of these hellish bands, some of which appeared to me wholly composed of blind men, Jesus was as much wounded and bruised as if their blows had been real. I saw him stagger from side to side,

sometimes raising himself up, and sometimes falling again, while the serpent, in the midst of the crowds whom it was unceasingly leading forward against Jesus, struck the ground with its tail, and tore to pieces or swallowed all whom it thus knocked to the ground.

It was made known to me that these apparitions were all those persons who in divers ways insult and outrage Jesus, really and truly present in the Holy Sacrament. I recognised among them all those who in any way profane the Blessed Eucharist. I beheld with horror all the outrages thus offered to our Lord, whether by neglect, irreverence, and omission of what was due to him; by open contempt, abuse, and the most awful sacrileges; by the worship of worldly idols; by spiritual darkness and false knowledge; or, finally, by error, incredulity, fanaticism, hatred, and open persecution. Among these men I saw many who were blind, paralysed, deaf, and dumb, and even children;—blind men who would not see the truth; paralytic men who would not advance, according to its directions, on the road leading to eternal life; deaf men who refused to listen to its warnings and threats; dumb men who would never use their voices in its defence; and, finally, children who were led astray by following parents and teachers filled with the love of the world and forgetfulness of God, who were fed on earthly luxuries, drunk with false wisdom, and loathing all that pertained to religion. Among the latter, the sight of whom grieved me especially, because Jesus so loved children, I saw many irreverent, ill-behaved acolytes, who did not honour our Lord in the holy ceremonies in which they took a part.

I beheld with terror that many priests, some of whom even fancied themselves full of faith and piety, also outraged Jesus in the Adorable Sacrament. I saw many who believed and taught the doctrine of the Real Presence, but did not sufficiently take it to heart, for they forgot and neglected the palace, throne, and seat of the Living God, that is to say, the church, the altar, the tabernacle, the chalice, the monstrance, the vases and ornaments; in one word, all that is used in his worship, or to adorn his house. Entire neglect reigned everywhere, all things were left to moulder away in dust and filth, and the worship of God was, if not inwardly profaned, at least outwardly dishonoured. Nor did this arise from real poverty, but from indifference, sloth, preoccupation of mind about vain earthly concerns, and often also from egotism and spiritual death; for I saw neglect of this kind in churches the pastors and congregations of which were rich, or at east tolerably well off. I saw many others in which worldly, tasteless, unsuitable ornaments had replaced the magnificent adornments of a more pious age. I saw that often the poorest of men were better lodged in their cottages than the Master of heaven and earth in his churches. Ah, how

deeply did the inhospitality of men grieve Jesus, who had given himself to them to be their Food! Truly, there is no need to be rich in order to receive him who rewards a hundredfold the glass of cold water given to the thirsty; but how shameful is not our conduct when in giving drink to the Divine Lord, who thirst for our souls, we give him corrupted water in a filthy glass! In consequence of all this neglect, I saw the weak scandalised, the Adorable Sacrament profaned, the churches deserted, and the priests despised. This state of impurity and negligence extended even to the souls of the faithful, who left the tabernacle of their hearts unprepared and uncleansed when Jesus was about to enter them, exactly the same as they left his tabernacle on the altar. Were I to speak for an entire year, I would never detail all the insults offered to Jesus in the Adorable Sacrament which were made known to me in this way.

I saw their authors assault Jesus in bands, and strike him with different arms, corresponding to their various offences. I saw irreverent Christians of all ages, careless or sacrilegious priests, crowds of tepid and unworthy communicants, wicked soldiers profaning the sacred vessels, and servants of the devil making use of the Holy Eucharist in the frightful mysteries of hellish worship. Among these bands I saw a great number of theologians, who had been drawn into heresy by their sins, attacking Jesus in the Holy Sacrament of his Church, and snatching out of his Heart, by their seductive words and promises, a number of souls for whom he had shed his blood. Ah! it was indeed an awful sight, for I saw the Church as the body of Christ; and all these bands of men, who were separating themselves from the Church, mangled and tore off whole pieces of his living flesh. Alas! he looked at them in the most touching manner, and lamented that they should thus cause their own eternal loss. He had given his own divine Self to us for our Food in the Holy Sacrament, in order to unite in one body— that of the Church, his Spouse—men who were to an infinite extent divided and separated from each other; and now he beheld himself torn and rent in twain in that very body; for his principal work of love, the Holy Communion, in which men should have been made wholly one, was become, by the malice of false teachers, the subject of separation. I beheld whole nations thus snatched out of his bosom, and deprived of any participation in the treasure of graces left to the Church. Finally, I saw all who were separated from the Church plunged into the depths of infidelity, superstition, heresy, and false worldly philosophy; and they gave vent to their fierce rage by joining together in large bodies to attack the Church, being urged on by the serpent which was disporting itself in the midst of them. Alas! it was as though Jesus himself had been torn in a thousand pieces! So great was my horror and terror, that my

Heavenly Spouse appeared to me, and mercifully placed his hand upon my heart, saying: 'No one has yet seen all these things, and thy heart would burst with sorrow if I did not give thee strength.' I saw the blood flowing in large drops down the pale face of our Saviour, his hair matted together, and his beard bloody and entangled. After the vision which I have last described, he fled, so to speak, out of the cave, and returned to his disciples. But he tottered as he walked; his appearance was that of a man covered with wounds and bending beneath a heavy burden, and he stumbled at every step. When he came up to the three Apostles, they were not lying down asleep as they had been the first time, but their heads were covered, and they had sunk down on their knees, in an attitude often assumed by the people of that country when in sorrow or desiring to pray. They had fallen asleep, overpowered by grief and fatigue. Jesus, trembling and groaning, drew nigh to them, and they awoke.

But when, by the light of the moon, they saw him standing before them, his face pale and bloody, and his hair in disorder, their weary eyes did not at the first moment recognise him, for he was indescribably changed. He clasped his hands together, upon which they arose and lovingly supported him in their arms, and he told them in sorrowful accents that the next day he should be put to death,—that in one hour's time he should be seized, led before a tribunal, maltreated, outraged, scourged, and finally put to a most cruel death. He besought them to console his Mother, and also Magdalen. They made no reply, for they knew not what to say, so greatly had his appearance and language alarmed them, and they even thought his mind must be wandering. When he desired to return to the grotto, he had not strength to walk. I saw John and James lead him back, and return when he had entered the grotto. It was then about a quarter-past eleven. During this agony of Jesus, I saw the Blessed Virgin also overwhelmed with sorrow and anguish of soul, in the house of Mary, the mother of Mark. She was with Magdalen and Mary in the garden belonging to the house, and almost prostrate from grief, with her whole body bowed down as she knelt. She fainted several times, for she beheld in spirit different portions of the agony of Jesus. She had sent some messengers to make inquiries concerning him, but her deep anxiety would not suffer her to await their return, and she went with Magdalen and Salome as far as the Valley of Josaphat. She walked along with her head veiled, and her arms frequently stretched forth towards Mount Olivet; for she beheld in spirit Jesus bathed in a bloody sweat, and her gestures were as though she wished with her extended hands to wipe the face of her Son.

I saw these interior movements of her soul towards Jesus, who thought of her, and turned his eyes in her direction, as if to seek her assistance. I beheld the spiritual communication which they had with each other, under the form of rays passing to and fro between them. Our Divine Lord thought also of Magdalen, was touched by her distress, and therefore recommended his Apostles to console her; for he knew that her love for his adorable Person was greater than that felt for him by any one save his Blessed Mother, and he foresaw that she would suffer much for his sake, and never offend him more. About this time, the eight Apostles returned to the arbour of Gethsemani, and after talking together for some time, ended by going to sleep. They were wavering, discouraged, and sorely tempted. They had each been seeking for a place of refuge in case of danger, and they anxiously asked one another, 'What shall we do when they have put him to death? We have left all to follow him; we are poor and the offscouring of the world, we gave ourselves up entirely to his service, and now he is so sorrowful and so defected himself, that he can afford us no consolation.' The other disciples had at first wandered about in various directions, but then, having heard something concerning the awful prophecies which Jesus had made, they had nearly all retired to Bethphage. I saw Jesus still in the grotto, struggling against the repugnance to suffering which belonged to human nature, and abandoning himself wholly to the will of this Eternal Father. Here the abyss opened before him, and he had a vision of the first part of Limbo. He saw Adam and Eve, the patriarchs, prophets, and just men, the parents of his Mother, and John the Baptist, awaiting his arrival in the lower world with such intense longing, that the sight strengthened and gave fresh courage to his loving heart. His death was to open Heaven to these captives,—his death was to deliver them out of that prison in which they were languishing in eager hope! When Jesus had, with deep emotion, looked upon these saints of antiquity, angels presented to him all the bands of saints of future ages, who, joining their labours to the merits of his Passion, were, through him, to be united to his Heavenly Father. Most beautiful and consoling was this vision, in which he beheld the salvation and sanctification flowing forth in ceaseless streams from the fountain of redemption opened by his death.

The Apostles, disciples, virgins, and holy women, the martyrs, confessors, hermits, popes, and bishops, and large bands of religious of both sexes—in one word, the entire army of the blessed—appeared before him. All bore on their heads triumphal crowns, and the flowers of their crowns differed in form, in colour, in odour, and in perfection, according to the difference of the sufferings, labours and victories which had procured them eternal glory.

Their whole life, and all their actions, merits, and power, as well as all the glory of their triumph, came solely from their union with the merits of Jesus Christ.

The reciprocal influence exercised by these saints upon each other, and the manner in which they all drank from one sole Fountain—the Adorable Sacrament and the Passion of our Lord—formed a most touching and wonderful spectacle. Nothing about them was devoid of deep meaning,—their works, martyrdom, victories, appearance, and dress,—all, though indescribably varied, was confused together in infinite harmony and unity; and this unity in diversity was produced by the rays of one single Sun, by the Passion of the Lord, of the Word made flesh, in whom was life, the light of men, which shined in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

The army of the future saints passed before the soul of our Lord, which was thus placed between the desiring patriarchs, and the triumphant band of the future blessed, and these two armies joining together, and completing one another, so to speak, surrounded the loving Heart of our Saviour as with a crown of victory. This most affecting and consoling spectacle bestowed a degree of strength and comfort upon the soul of Jesus. Ah! He so loved his brethren and creatures that, to accomplish the redemption of one single soul, he would have accepted with joy all the sufferings to which he was now devoting himself. As these visions referred to the future, they were diffused to a certain height in the air. But these consoling visions faded away, and the angels displayed before him the scenes of his Passion quite close to the earth, because it was near at hand. I beheld every scene distinctly portrayed, from the kiss of Judas to the last words of Jesus on the cross, and I saw in this single vision all that I see in my meditations on the Passion. The treason of Judas, the flight of the disciples, the insults which were offered our Lord before Annas and Caiphas, Peter's denial, the tribunal of Pilate, Herod's mockery, the scourging and crowning with thorns, the condemnation to death, the carrying of the cross, the linen cloth presented by Veronica, the crucifixion, the insults of the Pharisees, the sorrows of Mary, of Magdalen, and of John, the wound of the lance in his side, after death;—in one word, every part of the Passion was shown to him in the minutest detail. He accepted all voluntarily, submitting to everything for the love of man. He saw also and felt the sufferings endured at that moment by his Mother, whose

interior union with his agony was so entire that she had fainted in the arms of her two friends.

When the visions of the Passion were concluded, Jesus fell on his face like one at the point of death; the angels disappeared, and the bloody sweat became more copious, so that I saw it had soaked his garment. Entire darkness reigned in the cavern, when I beheld an angel descent to Jesus. This angel was of higher stature than any whom I had before beheld, and his form was also more distinct and more resembling that of a man. He was clothed like a priest in a long floating garment, and bore before him, in his hands, a small vase, in shape resembling the chalice used at the Last Supper. At the top of this chalice, there was a small oval body, about the size of a bean, and which diffused a reddish light. The angel, without touching the earth with his feet, stretched forth his right hand to Jesus, who arose, when he placed the mysterious food in his mouth, and gave him to drink from the luminous chalice.

Then he disappeared. Jesus having freely accepted the chalice of his sufferings, and received new strength, remained some minutes longer in the grotto, absorbed in calm meditation, and returning thanks to his Heavenly Father. He was still in deep affliction of spirit, but supernaturally comforted to such a degree as to be able to go to his disciples without tottering as he walked, or bending beneath the weight of his sufferings. His countenance was still pale and altered, but his step was firm and determined. He had wiped his face with a linen cloth, and rearranged his hair, which hung about his shoulders, matted together and damp with blood. When Jesus came to his disciples, they were lying, as before, against the wall of the terrace, asleep, and with their heads covered. Our Lord told them that then was not the time for sleep, but that they should arise and pray: 'Behold the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hand of sinners,' he said: 'Arise, let us go, behold he is at hand that will betray me. It were better for him, if that man had not been born.' The Apostles arose in much alarm, and looked round with anxiety. When they had somewhat recovered themselves, Peter said warmly: 'Lord, I will call the others, that so we may defend thee.' But Jesus pointed out to them at some distance in the valley, on the other side of the Brook of Cedron, a band of armed men, who were advancing with torches, and he said that one of their number had betrayed him. He spoke calmly, exhorted them to console his Mother, and said: 'Let us go to meet them—I shall deliver myself up without resistance into the hands of my enemies.' He then left the Garden of Olives with the three Apostles, and went to meet the archers on the road which led

from that garden to Gethsemani. When the Blessed Virgin, under the care of Magdalen and Salome, recovered her senses, some disciples, who had seen the soldiers approaching, conducted her back to the house of Mary, the mother of Mark. The archers took a shorter road than that which Jesus followed when he left the supper-room. The grotto in which Jesus had this day prayed was not the one where he usually prayed on Mount Olivet. He commonly went to a cabin at a greater distance off, where, one day, after having cursed the barren fig-tree, he had prayed in great affliction of spirit, with his arms stretched out, and leaning against a rock.

The traces of his body and hands remained impressed on the stone, and were honoured later. But it was not known on what occasion the miracle had taken place. I have several times seen similar impressions left upon the stone, either by the Prophets of the Old Testament, or by Jesus, Mary, or some of the Apostles, and I have also seen those made by the body of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai. These impressions do not seem deep, but resemble what would be made upon a thick piece of dough, if a person leaned his hand upon it.